TheRide
Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority

Board of Director's Meeting Agenda

Meeting Date/Time: June 16, 2022, 6:30-9:00pm

Members: Eric Mahler (Chair), Mike Allemang (Treasurer), Jesse Miller (Secretary), Rich Chang, Raymond Hess, Ryan Hunter, Kathleen Mozak, Susan Pollay, Kyra Sims

Location: Ann Arbor District Library
Virtual attendance available via Zoom
Passcode: 983308

Agenda Item	Info Type	Details	Page #
1. OPENING ITEMS			
1.1 Approve Agenda	D	Mahler	
1.2 Public Comment	O		
1.3 General Announcements	O		
1.3.1 Roger Hewitt – Board Service Recognition	O		
2. CONSENT AGENDA			
2.1 Board Meeting Minutes May 19, 2022	D		2
2.2 Committee Meeting Summaries	D		6
2.3 FY 2023 Board Meeting Dates	D		12
3. POLICY MONITORING & DEVELOPMENT			
3.1 Board Retreat Planning	O	Mahler	13
3.2 Monitoring Improvements	O	Allemang	
3.3 2.10 Communication and Support to the Board	M	Carpenter	14
4. STRATEGY UPDATES: CEO			
4.1 Long-Range Plan Update	O	Yang/Carpenter	42
4.2 Corporate Business Plan	O	Carpenter	44
4.3 Budget Timeline Update (Verbal)	D	Reed	
5. OPERATIONAL UPDATES			
5.1 CEO Report	O	Carpenter	66
6. EMERGENT ITEMS			
7. CLOSING ITEMS			
7.1 Topics for Next Meetings LRP 2.2 Treatment of Staff		Thursday, July 21, 2022	
7.2 Public Comment	O		
7.3 Adjournment			

Monitoring, D = Decision Preparation, O = Other

TheRide
Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority

Board of Director's Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time: May 19, 2022, 6:30-9:00pm

Members: Eric Mahler (Chair), Mike Allemang (Treasurer), Jesse Miller (Secretary), Rich Chang, Raymond Hess, Ryan Hunter, Kathleen Mozak, Kyra Sims

Staff: Dina Reed, Forest Yang, Troy Lundquist, Rosa-Maria Njuki, Deborah Holt

Location: Ann Arbor District Library
Virtual attendance available via Zoom
Passcode: 983308

Chair Eric Mahler called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm

Agenda Item
1. OPENING ITEMS

1.1 Approve Agenda

No changes noted with the agenda. Mr. Chang motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Sims.

All in favor of accepted the agenda as presented:

Mr. Mike Allemang: Yes (attending virtually)
Mr. Rich Chang: Yes
Mr. Raymond Hess: Yes
Mr. Jesse Miller: Yes
Ms. Mozak: Yes
Ms. Pollay: Yes
Ms. Sims: Yes
Chairman Mahler: Yes

The vote passed unanimously.

1.2 Public Comment

Robert Pawlowksi shared that he has been speaking with local residents about the millage proposal and expressed a desire for the development of a millage campaign to better educate voters.

1.3 General Announcements

No general announcements.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 Board Meeting Minutes April 21, 2022

2.2 Committee Meeting Summaries

Ms. Mozak moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Mr. Miller.

In support of the motion:

Mr. Mike Allemang: Yes (attending virtually)
Mr. Rich Chang: Yes
Mr. Raymond Hess: Yes
Mr. Jesse Miller: Yes
Ms. Mozak: Yes
Ms. Pollay: Yes
Ms. Sims: Yes
Chairman Mahler: Yes

The Consent Agenda was accepted as presented.

Mr. Hunter arrived at the meeting after vote was taken.

3. POLICY MONITORING & DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Monitoring Improvements

Mr. Allemang shared that the monitoring taskforce had met the previous day and the board packet included a copy of 3 forms that pertain to monitoring deadlines, policy trends and a draft policy worksheet. The goal of the taskforce is to provide the board with more effective measures for monitoring policies. Taskforce members Raymond Hess and Kathleen Mozak shared their thoughts that the end goal for the improvements was to evaluate more efficiently and monitor the agency's performance and data points.

Mr. Chang asked the taskforce for clarification on what platform would be used for the surveys – he recommended Google sheets. Mr. Miller requested that it be a platform that is accessible and not require licensing or special software. Ms. Njuki responded that she and the taskforce are looking to use web-based technology for easy access.

Ms. Sims spoke positively of her support for the improvements as a means of better tracking compliance and non-compliance. Mr. Mahler concurred and added that his hope is that the taskforce will find a method of helping clarify the surveys to reduce outlier misinterpretations in responses that sometimes occur in the surveys. Taskforce members agreed this is an area they are continuing to look at improving.

3.2 3.0-3.8 Governance Process Policies

Mr. Mahler opened the discussion for the board survey which was a board self-evaluation on Governance Process Policies. He noted that there were several varying interpretations in sections of the survey that supported his earlier thoughts on clarifying verbiage. Ms. Sims added that the section referenced might just need to be simplified.

Ms. Mozak stated that this survey was challenging as it was a long policy and the responsibility of interpretations was board driven, instead of CEO driven. She also suggested that this monitoring report should be divided into two surveys as it is a long policy. Mr. Mahler responded that the board had one time had divided the report up.

Mr. Allemang addressed the issue of divergent opinions on interpretations and suggested it might mean a policy might need to be further reviewed. He also noted that knowledge and overall understanding of policies plays a role in how one might respond to the surveys. He and Mr. Mahler discussed several areas within the policy that could be interpreted differently.

Ms. Mozak asked fellow board members how the policies were originally developed – Mr. Mahler responded that a policy governance template had been used but much of the policy development was developed by the CEO and board as there are few transit agency policy governance models to follow.

Mr. Allemang noted that only 5 board members had responded and perhaps that wasn't an adequate representation. He expressed support with the idea of breaking the survey up into several smaller surveys in the hopes that it would garner more board responses.

3.3 Q2 Finance Report

Ms. Reed referenced the Q2 Financial report that was in the board packet with the following highlights noted: the organization is trending on budget as projected for mid-year, pandemic relief funds have all be obligated and rising interest rates with reinvested investments are being utilized.

Ms. Mozak expressed concerns about the impact of rising fuel prices – Ms. Reed noted that while fuel is over budget, it is not enough to make a major impact currently and service reductions have also helped with fuel costs.

Mr. Chang asked about the cost of increased maintenance and the impact to budget. Ms. Reed shared those costs are going up in all areas but that the maintenance department has been mindful of managing stock.

3.4 Q2 Service Report

Troy Lundquist, Manager of Fleet Services, provided the Q2 Service Report in place of Mr. Smith. He shared that fixed route ridership had remained consistent despite reduced services and cost per boarding is slowly coming down when compared to pre-pandemic costs. He noted that complaints had increased but that was most likely attributed to service reductions. Most of the gathered data can be considered as a post-pandemic baseline and the new norm until ridership starts to increase once again.

Mr. Allemang commented that it was important to continue to work on increasing ridership or Financial reserves will eventually begin to decrease.

4. STRATEGY UPDATES: CEO

4.1 Long-Range Plan Update

Mr. Yang provided the board with an overview summary report of the three public engagement rounds. From those public engagements activities, the results showed that the public was generally supporting of the long-range plans as outlined in his presentation. He shared that the next steps were that they are in the process of finalizing draft recommendations and creating a draft report which will be shared at the June board meeting. The plan is to have a final report by July.

Mr. Miller asked Mr. Yang if surveys included specific questions about zero-emission transportation and Mr. Yang responded that the questions were left open ended about improved transit efficiency yet any comments that were made specifically about that would be noted.

Mr. Mahler noted that he would like to see a more detailed plan of action for mobility services included in the final report.

5. OPERATIONAL UPDATES

5.1 CEO Report

Ms. Reed presented the CEO report – she discussed the recent mask-mandate removal that was still in effect but with rising covid cases in the area the agency was carefully monitoring. She thanked staff for diligently working to keep supplies readily available despite record inflation and supply chain shortages. She also spoke of positions that have recently been filled in the agency, while mentioning staffing shortages are still impacting operations.

Ms. Mozak asked if PPE was still available on buses and Ms. Reed said she'd need to confirm and follow up. (*Ms. Reed was later able to confirm and let the board know that masks are available on buses*)

6. EMERGENT ITEMS

Ms. Mozak asked the board to consider discussing the planning of an annual board retreat and Mr. Mahler agreed that a retreat would be appropriate after the millage in August. Planning discussion to take place at committee level meetings.

7. CLOSING ITEMS

7.1 Topics for Next Meetings
LRP
2.9 External Relationships
2.10 Communication and Support to the Board
CEO Expense Report

7.2 Public Comment

Robert Pawlowski addressed the board and made several comments regarding the Long-Range Plan public surveys and informational sessions. He was impressed by public attendance and interest as public transportation is becoming more important to the area. He thanked Forest and his team for their hard work in the planning.

7.3 Adjournment

Mr. Chang motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Miller.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah Holt

TheRide
Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority

Governance Committee Meeting Notes

Meeting Date/Time: May 31, 2022 - 9:00-10:30am

Members: Eric Mahler (Chair), Mike Allemang, Jesse Miller, Kathleen Mozak

Staff: Matt Carpenter, Bryan Smith, Dina Reed, Forest Yang, Rosa-Maria Njuki, Deb Holt

Location: REMOTE – Via Zoom
Passcode: 050646

Mr. Mahler called the meeting to order at 9:01 am

Agenda Item
1. OPENING ITEMS
1.1 Agenda (Additions, Approval) Committee added the additional topic of a recent board vacancy / board replacement to the agenda. Also, the addition of Board Retreat Planning to the board meeting agenda. No other additions noted.   **1.2 Communications** Ms. Reed shared that the FY23 budget planning a draft timeline is being finalized before it will be presented to the board.
2. POLICY MONITORING & DEVELOPMENT
2.1 Monitoring Improvements Monthly meetings for the Monitoring Taskforce continue and a plan for the next policy monitoring survey will be tested.   **2.2 Agendas** The committee agreed that a Budget Timeline Update should be added as a discussion item to each agenda.   **2.3 Board Retreat Planning** Mr. Mahler brought up the topic of planning a board retreat later in the fall. He asked the committee to consider topics for a retreat.   The committee discussed several items of importance – propulsion, annual board plan of work, diversity/equity/inclusion training focused on transit, and advocacy. Mr. Carpenter suggested a fall retreat to focus on work planning topics and a late winter retreat that would focus on board educational topics. Mr. Mahler requested retreat planning be added to the upcoming board agenda.

3. STRATEGY & OPERATIONAL UPDATES: CEO

3.1 Long-Range Plan Deadline Discussion
Mr. Yang shared he's planning to provide the board a preliminary draft presentation of the Long-Range Plan in June – a final report will be provided at the July Board meeting.

3.2 Business Plan Update (Verbal)
Mr. Carpenter shared that the organization is getting back to regular processes and planning with an annual business plan that includes a 5-year action plan of projects and work initiatives. Ms. Njuki shared a preview of a draft of the business plan from information provided by each department.

3.3 Propulsion Timeline Update (Verbal)
Mr. Carpenter shared that he will be receiving a draft propulsion report this week and will be sharing a timeline in upcoming months.

3.4 Board Vacancy
Board member Roger Hewitt will be stepping away from his position. Committee discussed creating a list of candidates to recommend to the Mayor.

3.5 Budget Timeline
Ms. Reed shared that a budget preview will be shared in July, followed with 2 public hearings and committee consideration before the final presentation being given to the board.

4. CLOSING ITEMS

4.1 Topics for Next Meeting
LRP
CEO Expense Report

4.2 Adjournment
Mr. Mahler thanked the committee and staff and the meeting adjourned at 10:32 am.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah Holt

TheRide
Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority

Service Committee Meeting Notes

Meeting Date/Time: June 1, 2022, 9:00-11:00am

Members: Kathleen Mozak (Chair), Ryan Hunter, Jesse Miller, Susan Pollay

Staff: Matt Carpenter, Dina Reed, Bryan Smith, Forest Yang, Rosa-Maria Njuki, Kevin Zelazny, Deb Holt

Location: REMOTE – Via Zoom
          Passcode: 538410

Ms. Mozak called the meeting to order at 9:01am

Agenda Item
1. OPENING ITEMS
1.1 Agenda (Additions, Approval) No new additions or changes to the agenda. **1.2 Communications** Ms. Reed shared with the committee an update about several earmark requests submitted to Senator Stabenow and Congresswoman Dingell have been moved forward for review and consideration.
2. POLICY MONITORING & DEVELOPMENT
2.1 Monitoring Improvements Monthly meetings for the Monitoring Taskforce continue and a plan for the next policy monitoring survey will be tested.
3. STRATEGY & OPERATIONAL UPDATES: CEO
3.1 Long-Range Plan Deadline Discussion Mr. Yang shared he's planning to provide the board a preliminary draft presentation of the Long-Range Plan in June – a final report will be provided at the July Board meeting. The committee discussed the merits of waiting until after the election before placing the final plan report before the board for final approval. **3.2 Business Plan Update** Mr. Carpenter shared that the organization is getting back to regular processes and planning with an annual business plan that includes a 5-year action plan of projects and work initiatives. Ms. Njuki shared a preview of a draft of the business plan from information provided by each department. .

3.3 Budget Timeline Update	
Ms. Reed shared that a budget preview will be shared in July, followed with 2 public hearings and committee consideration before the final presentation being given to the board.	

4. CLOSING ITEMS

4.1 Topics for Next Meeting
2.2 Treatment of Staff
LRP

4.2 Adjournment
Ms. Mozak thanked the committee and staff and adjourned the meeting at 9:39am.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah Holt

TheRide
Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority

Finance Committee Meeting Notes

Meeting Date/Time: June 7, 2022, 3:00 – 5:00pm

Members: Mike Allemang (Chair/Treasurer), Raymond Hess, Kyra Sims

Staff: Matt Carpenter, Forest Yang, Bryan Smith, Dina Reed, LaTasha Thompson, Rosa-Maria Njuki, Deb Holt

Location: REMOTE – Via Zoom
Passcode: 038107

Mr. Allemang called the meeting to order at 3:02pm

Agenda Item
1. OPENING ITEMS
1.1 Agenda (Additions, Approval) No new additions or changes to the agenda **1.2 Communications** No new communications were shared.
2. POLICY MONITORING & DEVELOPMENT
2.1 Monitoring Improvements Monthly meetings for the Monitoring Taskforce continue and a plan for the next policy monitoring survey will be tested. The taskforce will meet next on June 10.
3. STRATEGY AND OPERATIONAL UPDATES
3.1 Long-Range Plan Update Mr. Yang shared he's planning to provide the board a preliminary draft presentation of the Long-Range Plan in June – a final report will be provided at the July Board meeting. The committee discussed the merits of voting on the Long-Range Plan at the July board meeting vs. allowing more time for review and voting in August. **3.2 Business Plan Update (Verbal)** Mr. Carpenter shared that the organization is getting back to regular processes and planning with an annual business plan that includes a 5-year action plan of projects and work initiatives. Ms. Njuki shared a preview of a draft of the business plan from information provided by each department. The committee discussed several projects listed in the draft and Mr. Carpenter answered questions related to how the projects aligned with the long-range plan and millage proposal.

3.3 Budget Timeline Update (Verbal)

Ms. Reed shared that a budget preview will be shared in July, followed with 2 public hearings and committee consideration before the final presentation being given to the board.

4. CLOSING ITEMS

4.1 Topics for Next Meetings

2.7 Asset Protection

LRP

Budget

4.2 Adjournment

Mr. Allemang thanked the committee and staff and adjourned the meeting at 4:14pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah Holt

Board Meeting Dates: FY2023

Meeting: Board of Directors

Meeting Date: June 16, 2022

INFORMATION TYPE:
Decision Preparation

PROPOSED BOARD MEETING DATES: FY2023
Thursday, October 20, 2022
Thursday, November 17, 2022
Thursday, December 15, 2022
Thursday, January 19, 2023
Thursday, February 16, 2023
Thursday, March 16, 2023
Thursday, April 20, 2023
Thursday, May 18, 2023
Thursday, June 15, 2023
Thursday, July 20, 2023 (Tentative)
Thursday, August 17, 2023
Thursday, September 21, 2023
Note: Board meetings are usually the third Thursday of each month

Board Retreat Planning

Meeting: Board of Directors

Meeting Date: June 16th, 2022

INFORMATION TYPE:
Decision Preparation

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):
Board retreat date and agenda planning

ISSUE SUMMARY:
At the May 31, 2022 Governance Committee Meeting, a preliminary discussion to begin board retreat planning took place. Suggested retreat dates: • (2) half day board retreats – October-November and January-March Agenda Items proposed: • Propulsion (Oct. presentation from Staff) • New Annual Plan of Work • Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in transit • Legislative Agenda (Advocacy) • Futurism

BACKGROUND:
The Board participates in an annual retreat and sets an agenda that includes an annual plan of work and topics related to the enhancement of board education.

IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):
• Governance: Important for the Board to set agency direction

Monitoring Report: 2.10 Communication and Support to the Board

Monitoring Period (Mar 21-Feb 22)

Meeting: Board of Directors
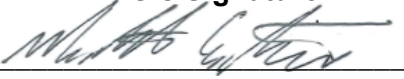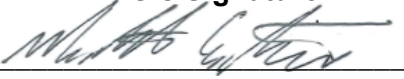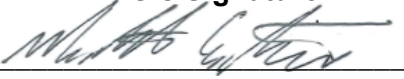
Meeting Date: June 16th[th], 2022

INFORMATION TYPE
Decision
RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):
Board members completes survey prior to the Board meeting Reviews the policy at the Board level and considers accepting the Monitoring Report as level B – Compliant except for items noted.
ISSUE BRIEF
In accordance with the Board's Policy Manual, I present the Monitoring report on Executive Limitation Policy 2.10 Communication and Support to the Board. This report consists of internal report information from staff and the Board. It covers the period of March 2021-February 2022 I certify that the information is true and complete, and I request that the Board accept this as indicating an acceptable level of compliance. **CEO's Signature**   **Date**   6/1/2022 _____   _____
BACKGROUND:
TheRide's Board of Directors establishes policies that define what methods are unacceptable to use to achieve expected results, called Executive Limitations. This monitoring report provides the CEO's interpretations of those policies, evidence of achievement, and an assertion on compliance with the Board's written goals. As with other monitoring reports, the Board decides whether the interpretations are reasonable, and the evidence is convincing.
ATTACHMENTS:
Monitoring report for Policy 2.10 Communication and Support to the Board.

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POLICIES:	Page #	Compliance
2.10 The CEO will not permit the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work. Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, the CEO shall not:	4	🟡
2.10.1 Withhold, impede, or confound information relevant to the Board's informed accomplishment of its job.	4	🟡
2.10.1.1 Neglect to submit monitoring data required by the Board in Board-Management Delegation policy "Monitoring CEO Performance" in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of Board policies being monitored, and including CEO interpretations consistent with Board-Management Delegation policy "Delegation to the CEO," as well as relevant data.	6	🟡
2.10.1.2 Allow the Board to be unaware of any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any Ends or Executive Limitations policy, regardless of the Board's monitoring schedule.	8	🟢
2.10.1.3 Allow the Board to be without decision information required periodically by the Board, including the agency and situational context and implications for a decision.	9	🟡
2.10.1.4 Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form or in a form that fails to differentiate among information of three types: monitoring, decision preparation, and other.	10	🟢
2.10.1.5 Let the Board be unaware of material internal changes, including changes in policy interpretation, significant reputational, legal, political, or financial risks, developments that have significant negative implications for the budget, threatened or pending lawsuits, relevant trends and any other incidental information requested by the Board. Incidental information includes: A. operational and financial performance metrics B. customer satisfaction metrics, C. quarterly budget to actual financial reports, D. timely notification of execution of budgeted items over $250,000. E. unbiased information on industry norms for CEO compensation at least every two years. F. advance notification of intended changes to staff rules (unionized or nonunionized), procurement manual, benefits, or compensation structure. G. CEO's personal expense report to the Governance Committee of the Board at least quarterly, with explicit notation of the expenses of any other employee which benefited the CEO, aside from group expenses where the CEO's participation was incidental. H. Annually, a presentation to the Board about relevant emerging trends and technologies with applicability to the transit authority and its services, and innovations trialed or introduced to Authority operations over the past year. I. Strategic context	11	🟡

Monitoring Report for Policy 2.10 Communication and Support to the Board

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POLICIES:	Page #	Compliance
2.10.1.6 Allow the Board to be unprepared to be responsive to community concerns or public questions.	14	🟢
2.10.1.7 Let the Board be unaware if, in the CEO's professional opinion, the Board or individual Board members may not be in compliance with the Board's own policies on Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation, particularly in the case of Board behavior that could be detrimental to the agency's reputation or the working relationship between the Board and the CEO.	15	🟢
2.10.2 Withhold from the Board and its processes logistical and clerical assistance.	16	🟡
2.10.2.1 Allow the Board to be deprived of a workable, user-friendly mechanism for official Board, officer, or committee communications.	17	🟢
2.10.2.2 Allow the Board to be deprived of pleasant, productive, and efficient settings and arrangements for Board and committee meetings.	18	🟢
2.10.2.3 Hinder access to the Board for any person who alleges unethical or unlawful action or circumstance in the organization or by its representatives.	19	🟢
2.10.2.4 Neglect to transfer policy updates to the official record of the Board's Policy Manual in a timely manner.	19	🟡
2.10.3 Impede the Board's holism, misrepresent its processes and role, or impede its lawful obligations.	20	🟡
2.10.3.1 Interact with the Board in a way that favors or privileges certain Board members over others, except when (a) fulfilling individual requests for information or (b) responding to officers or committees duly charged by the Board.	21	🟢
2.10.3.2 Neglect to supply for the Required Approvals agenda all items delegated to the CEO, yet required by law, regulation, or contract to be Board-approved, along with the applicable monitoring information.	22	🟡

🟢 Fully Compliant   🟡 Partially Compliant   🟠 Incomplete

Monitoring Report for Policy 2.10 Communication and Support to the Board

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POLICY 2.10. The CEO will not permit the Board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

Degree of Compliance: Partial Compliance

Interpretation
The Board has fully interpreted this policy in the policies below. Compliance with those policies will constitute compliance with this policy.
Evidence
Evidence is provided in the sub-policies below. In areas of non-compliance a compliance timeline is provided.

POLICY 2.10.1 The CEO shall not…Withhold, impede, or confound information relevant to the Board's informed accomplishment of its job.

Degree of Compliance: Partial Compliance

Interpretation
I interpret this policy to mean that the CEO is to provide all necessary support, information, and counsel to help the Board succeed in its role as defined below in policies 2.10.1 – 2.10.4. In addition, I further interpretate this policy to mean that the CEO is to provide all necessary support, information, and counsel to help the Board succeed in its legally required role, as defined in the enabling legislation (Act 55 of 1963) and the Articles of Incorporation: 1. Adjusting membership in the Authority 2. Calling an election (Ballot Measure) This is reasonable because these are the only roles specified to "the Board" rather than "the Authority" giving the Board the ability to delegate them further or reserve the decision for itself in Board policy (see below and section policy 3.2). I further interpret this policy to cover the Board's self-defined role as found in the Board Bylaws (Sec 6) and Section 3 of the Board Policy Manual (Governance Process) and specifically policy 3.2: Board Job Description. Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when the CEO provides adequate support, as determined by the Board, in the follow areas:

Monitoring Report for Policy 2.10 Communication and Support to the Board

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3. Linking with Owners (3.2)
4. Policy Making (3.2)
5. Oversight & Performance Monitoring (3.2)
6. CEO Contract, Performance Review, and Adjustment of CEO Salary (3.2)
7. Hiring or Terminating the CEO (Bylaws sec 6)
8. Annual Budget approval (Bylaws sec 6, 3.2)
9. Changes to fares (3.2)
10. Real-estate decisions (3.2)
11. Collective Bargaining Decisions (Bylaws sec 6, 3.2)
12. Use of the Capital Reserve (3.2)
13. Appointing or Removing Board Officers (Bylaws Art II)

These interpretations are reasonable because they fully cover the Board's legally
(legislated, incorporated) and self-defined (Bylaws, policies) roles and responsibilities.

Evidence

As policies 2.10.1 – 2.10.4 are fully discussed, interpreted, and evidenced below,
compliance with these later policies contributes to compliance with this policy, 2.10.1. No
further discussion is required here.

Regarding the Board's other legal or self-defined roles:

1. **Adjust Agency Membership** – A review of meeting minutes and communiques
   (Carpenter, 5/4/2022) found that no changes to agency membership were discussed
   or made during the monitoring period.
2. **Call an Election** – A review of meeting minutes and communiques (Carpenter,
   5/4/2022) found that the Authority did not call an election during the period but did
   have preliminary discussions about a proposal that was release just after the period
   ended. A review of communiques (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found no suggestion of
   Board dissatisfaction with staff performance during the monitoring period, although
   questions about the process were raised later.
3. **Linking with Owners** – Staff have been assisting a Board Task Force and Rose
   Mercier with Ownership linkage planning. A review of communiques (Carpenter,
   5/2/2022) found no suggestion of Board dissatisfaction with staff performance.
4. **Policy Making** – Staff have been assisting the Board with various policy-making
   efforts. A review of communiques (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found no suggestion of
   Board dissatisfaction with staff performance.
5. **Oversight & Performance Monitoring** – See 2.10.1.1 below.
6. **CEO Contract, Performance Review, and Adjustment of CEO Salary** – The
   CEO's contract (2020-2025) was not under discussion this year. See 2.10.1.5 H
   below for additional details. A review of communiques (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found
   no suggestion of Board dissatisfaction with staff performance.
7. **Hiring or Termination of the CEO –** A review of personnel records (Newsome,
   5/4/2022) determined that the CEO has not been terminated or hired during the
   period, and that staff assistance has not been requested in these matters.

Monitoring Report for Policy 2.10 Communication and Support to the Board

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8. **Annual Budget approval** – The Board approved the annual Budget in September 2021. A review of communiques (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found no suggestion of Board dissatisfaction with staff performance.
9. **Changes to fares** - As discussed in 2.10.1.3 below, the CEO is reporting only partial success with staff information in last year's fare change decision.
10. **Real-estate decisions** – A review of agency records (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found no evidence of actual or potential real-estate transaction aside from discussions and commitments-in-principle on the Y Lot (350 S Avenue) which the Board endorsed. A review of communiques (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found no suggestion of Board dissatisfaction with staff performance.
11. **Collective Bargaining Decisions** – A new collective bargain was approved by the Board in March 2022. Staff were heavily involved and led the negotiations. A review of communiques (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found no suggestion of Board dissatisfaction with staff performance.
12. **Use of the Capital Reserve** – A review of budgetary and financial documents (Reed, 5/24/2022) confirms that no Capital Reserve funds have been expended since its creation in 2020. A review of communiques (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found no suggestion of Board dissatisfaction with staff performance.
13. **Appointing or Removal of Board Officers** - A review of communiques (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found no request for staff support in this matter.

The CEO notes partial compliance for this policy due to partial compliance in 2.10.1.1 and 2.10.1.5. The compliance timeline will be provided in respective sub-policies.

POLICY 2.10.1.1 The CEO shall not…Neglect to submit monitoring data required by the Board in Board-Management Delegation policy "Monitoring CEO Performance" in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of Board policies being monitored, and including CEO interpretations consistent with Board-Management Delegation policy "Delegation to the CEO," as well as relevant data.

Degree of Compliance: Partially Compliant

Interpretation

Timeliness with this policy will be demonstrated when complete Monitoring Reports are submitted for the Board's consideration on the schedule in Appendix A of the Policy Manual. This is reasonable because the schedule is set in advance.

Accuracy and comprehensibility will be determined by the Board acceptance of the CEO's interpretation and evidence. This is reasonable because interpretations provide measurable operational definitions of the policy, a specified level or standard of achievement and the

Monitoring Report for Policy 2.10 Communication and Support to the Board

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reasoning behind those definitions and standards. Additionally, board's acceptance of a policy is a collective body decision and not an individual's decision

Evidence

A review of policy reports (Njuki, 3/15/22) indicate the following scoring on timeliness and board's conclusion of the report.

Report #	Scheduled Monitoring Date	Actual Monitoring Date	On Schedule ?	Board Conclusion
1.0	Dec 2021	Feb 2022	No	B. Is in compliance, except for items noted.
2.0	Jan 2022		No	Not submitted.
2.1	Nov 2021	Dec 2022	No	B. Is in compliance, except for items noted.
2.2	Jun 2021	Jun 2021	Yes	D. Is not in Compliance or is not making reasonable progress towards compliance. The CEO was requested to submit an issue brief within 3 months. In October, an update was provided and accepted by the Board
2.3	Oct 2021	Nov2021	No	A.Is in compliance
2.4	Sept 2021	Sep 2021	Yes	A.Is in compliance
2.5	Feb 2022	Mar 2022	No	B. Is in compliance, except for items noted.
2.5.12	Sep 2021	Sep 2021	Yes	B. Is in compliance, except for items noted .
2.6	Feb 2022	Apr 2022	No	A. Is in compliance
2.6	Aug 2021	Aug 2021	Yes	A.Is in Compliance
2.9	May 2021	May 2021	Yes	B. Is in compliance, except for items noted.
2.10	Mar 2021	Mar2021	Yes	B. Is in compliance, except for items noted.
2.11	Oct 2021	Oct 2021	Yes	E. Cannot be determined

Compliance timeline: The Board can expect staff to get the reports caught up by September 2022. This assumes that the Board will not defer any reports. Monitoring reports were on time until the Cyber-Attack happened in October 2021. It was impossible for staff to access data used for evidence in this reports as some of our internal data storage assets were comprised. They have since been recovered and monitoring has picked up albeit a month or two behind. The January 2022 Board meeting was also cancelled, and this also led to the deferring of monitoring reports by a month.

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POLICY 2.10.1.2 The CEO shall not…Allow the Board to be unaware of any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any Ends or Executive Limitations policy, regardless of the Board's monitoring schedule.

Degree of Compliance: Incomplete

Interpretation
Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when the CEO notifies the Chair or Governance Committee in writing of a known or unavoidable state of non-compliance, provided the CEO is aware of the non-compliance prior to assembling a monitoring report. This is reasonable because staff do not track compliance in real-time and may not be aware of non-compliance until a report is being written. This does not cover non-compliance noted in regular monitoring reports.

Evidence
A review of written notifications from the CEO to the Chair or Governance Committee (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found sporadic notifications of challenges and areas of *potential* non-compliance but did not find a clear record of written notifications. However, during the monitoring period the CEO has noted instances of non-compliance in written monitoring reports. The table below shows instances where the CEO has reported partial compliance or non-compliance with Executive Limitations or Ends during the monitoring period.

Policies	Partial or non-compliant items	Date of board report	Manner of report	Audience
1.0	1.1.2., 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.3.4. & 1.4	Feb 17, 2021	Monitoring report	Full board
2.1	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3,2.1.3.1, 2.1.5	Dec 16, 2021	Monitoring report	Full board
2.2	2.2.1., 2.2.1.1., 2.2.3., 2.2.4	Jun 17, 2021	Monitoring report	Full board
2.5.12	2.5.12	Sept 23, 2021	Monitoring report	Full board
2.9	2.9.3., 2.9.4	May 20,21	Monitoring report	Full board
2.10	2.10.1.1., 2.10.3.1	Mar 18,21	Monitoring report	Full board
2.11	2.11	Oct 21, 2021	Monitoring report	Full board

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POLICY 2.10.1.3 The CEO shall not…Allow the Board to be without decision information required periodically by the Board, including the agency and situational context and implications for a decision.

Degree of Compliance: Partial Compliance

Interpretations

Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when staff provide adequate information (required or requested) for the Board when the Board is making a decision it has reserved for itself via policy (as opposed to staff decisions). Those Board decisions are: approval of **annual budgets**, **meeting schedules, millage (tax) rate** or **fares**; **CEO compensation and employment contract**, **real estate transactions**, **Costs of Governance** (3.8.3) or changes to **Board policy.**

The <u>presence</u> of information is determined by the inclusion of information in Board meeting packets, and via the verbal discussions surrounding those decisions. The <u>adequacy</u> of the information, including context and implications, is determined by
   A. whether the Board suggests that its decisions were impaired by the lack of adequate information
   B. whether a decision was successfully made.

This is reasonable because, while staff can provide what they believe to be adequate information, only the Board will know if it is sufficient to aid in decisions. While individual board members may want more information, adequacy is determined by the full Board (4.1.2).

Evidence

During the monitoring period, a review of minutes (Njuki, 3/17/22) indicates that
   A. In the CEO's opinion, the Board's decision regarding fare changes was impaired by inadequate information from the CEO, especially pertaining to under-developed policy interpretations, and an approval timeline that necessitated public involvement prior to Board discussion.
   B. the following information was provided in Board meeting packets and the following decisions made.

Board Decision	Date	Information included in the Board Packet? (Y/N)	Was a Decision Made?	Board Concerns with Impairment?
Budget Approval	Aug-Sep 23, 21	Y	Y	N
Policy 2.11 amendment to adopt Governance Coach recommendations.	Oct 21, 21	Y	Y	N

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Labor Negotiations policies (2.3.6-2.3.8)	June 17, 21	N (Confidential Attorney Information)	Y	N
Fare change policy (2.5.12	Oct 21,21	Y (interpretations were incomplete)	N	Y

Compliance Timeline: Improved compliance with fare policy development is anticipated before the FY 2024 budget (Sept 2023). There are no anticipated fare changes in the FY 2023 budget.

POLICY 2.10.1.4 The CEO shall not… Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form or in a form that fails to differentiate among information of three types: monitoring, decision preparation, and other.

Degree of Compliance: In Compliance

Interpretation

Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when:
  A) Each agenda item for a Board or committee meeting includes a concise, effective summary, this is reasonable because providing briefs or summaries allows Board members to grasp the main points without having to peruse lengthy documents.
  B) Agenda items are labeled as M (Monitoring), D (Decision preparation) or O (Other). this is reasonable because that's what the policy asks for.
  C) Board members do no report that information is too extensive to be understood or does not contextualize and focus information appropriately. This is reasonable because staff may be do their best to provide information in a concise manner, but the Board is the ultimate the decision maker on whether the information was unnecessarily complex.

Evidence

A review of Board and Committee meeting packets (Njuki,3/17/22) indicate.
  A) Brief summaries identified as issue briefs were provided about 95% of the time, and that the Board and the committees have not requested information be resubmitted in a shorter or less complex form, and
  B) Almost all items were classified as M, D or O.
  C) A review of communiques from the Board (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found no instances of concern about the length or complexity of staff-prepared information, aside from ongoing concerns about the size of monitoring reports, although this is not seen as a compliance issue by the CEO.

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POLICY 2.10.1.5 The CEO shall not… Let the Board be unaware of material internal changes, including changes in policy interpretation, significant reputational, legal, political, or financial risks, developments that have significant negative implications for the budget, threatened or pending lawsuits, relevant trends and any other incidental information requested by the Board. Incidental information includes:

- A. operational and financial performance metrics
- B. customer satisfaction metrics,
- C. quarterly budget to actual financial reports,
- D. timely notification of execution of budgeted items over $250,000.
- E. unbiased information on industry norms for CEO compensation at least every two years.
- F. advance notification of intended changes to staff rules (unionized or nonunionized), procurement manual, benefits, or compensation structure.
- G. CEO's personal expense report to the Governance Committee of the Board at least quarterly, with explicit notation of the expenses of any other employee which benefited the CEO, aside from group expenses where the CEO's participation was incidental.
- H. Annually, a presentation to the Board about relevant emerging trends and technologies with applicability to the transit authority and its services, and innovations trialed or introduced to Authority operations over the past year.
- I. Strategic context.

Degree of Compliance: Partial Compliance

Interpretation

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(This policy is informally known as the "No Surprises" clause.)

Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when the CEO makes the Board aware of important developments, whether internal or external. Important developments include significant updates, unusual risks, or issues that could be significantly controversial. This is reasonable as daily operations require numerous minute changes which will not have significant implications. The following information is reported as scheduled:

A. Service performance and financial metrics are submitted quarterly.
B. Customer satisfaction metrics are shared quarterly and any other emergent risks to the public perception of the agency, political support, possible lawsuits, or changes to legislation.
C. Budget to actual financial reports is provided quarterly. Significant financial impacts that could cause the annual budget to go into deficit or draw down the reserve in an unanticipated manner are reported as soon as they are realized.
D. Notification within two months of execution of a budgeted of single purchases over $250,000
E. Information on CEO compensation from an independent and reliable source at least every two years.
F. Advance notice to staff rules or compensation changes, as necessary.
G. CEO expense reports are provided quarterly.
H. Present to the Board relevant emerging trends and technologies and innovations trialed or introduced to Authority operations over the past year.
I. Present an annual strategic plan

Evidence

During the monitoring period, a review of Board and Committee minutes (Njuki, 3/17/22) indicate the following.

Required information	Provisions during the monitoring period	Submissions
A. Operational performance metrics	Q2 FY 2021 service report (May, 21) Q3 FY 2021 service report (Aug, 21) Q4 FY 2021 service report (Dec, 21) Q1 FY 2022 service report (March, 22)	Submitted to committees and full board
B. Customer satisfaction metrics	Q2 FY 2021 service report (May, 21) Q3 FY 2021 service report (Aug, 21) Q4 FY 2021 service report (Dec, 21) Q1 FY 2022 service report (March, 22)	Submitted to committees and full board

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C. Quarterly budget to actual financial reports & financial performance metrics	Q2 FY 2021 finance report (May, 21) Q3 FY 2021 finance report (Aug, 21) Q4 FY 2021 finance report (Nov, 21) Q1 FY 2022 finance report (March, 22)	Submitted to committees and full board
D. Notification of award for budgeted items over $250,000	All budgeted items over 250,000 were noted in the FY 2022 budget contract list. Amendments to the budget were done in April 2021 and in August through resolutions no. 03/2021 and 10/2021.	Submitted to committee and full board
E. CEO Compensation (reviewed every two years)	Bi-annual Update	The CEO sent an email to the Chair regarding trends in executive compensation on 2/10/2022. The Board has not taken any actions.
F. Advance notice to staff rules or compensation changes	The Board was kept in the loop of all union Labor negotiations. There were no changes to non-union handbook or compensation besides the annual adjustment for inflation.	Notified committees and the board
G. CEO Expenses	CEO expenses were provided quarterly in November and February.	Submissions were made to the Governance committee
H. Relevant emerging trends and technologies and innovations trialed or introduced to Authority operations over the past year	The CEO did not provide this presentation during the monitoring period.	Written and verbal notifications shared with committees and the Board
I. Annual strategic plan	The Corporate Business Plan for FY 2022 was provided to the Board.	Submitted to full Board.

Compliance Timeline: The CEO did not complete item 2.10.1.5 H. This will be made compliance before the end of 2022.

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POLICY 2.10.1.6 The CEO shall not… Allow the Board to be unprepared to be responsive to community concerns or public questions.

Degree of Compliance: In Compliance

Interpretation

I interpret this policy to be concerned with A) the availability of processes and channels to help *the agency respond* in a timely and accurate manner *on behalf of* the board or board members when requested, B) the need to prepare board members in anticipation of questions on high-profile matters, and C) equipping individual board members with enough general knowledge to be comfortable engaging many questions on their own.

Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when
- A) **The Board and its members understand how to delegate inquiries to staff**. This provides board members the *option* of passing a question or concern to staff for a response. Specifically, this includes knowledge of contact mechanisms for general information (customer service phonelines, email, URL, etc.) and which member of Executive Team to contact for more complex issues. This is necessary and reasonable because the majority of inquires or concerns that may come to board members relate to operational issues best answered by staff, and because it is not practical to expect board members to personally memorize the vast amount of information necessary to personally respond.
- B) **Responsive to the educational requests to individual board member so that they are comfortable answering questions** or know how to refer a question to staff (see above). It is reasonable that individual board members may wish to be able to knowledgably respond to public questions from customers/beneficiaries, stakeholders, or a Legal or Moral Owners. In this case, general board education and training can be supplemented by personal assistance from staff (if needed) in developing a response.
- C) **The Board or its delegates (e.g., the Chair, a taskforce, etc.) have access to agency resources and staff support, if needed, for developing a direct response themselves**. This is reasonable as the Board may sometimes wish to respond directly and not through staff. For example, helping to prepare the Chair or a taskforce when speaking with Legal Owners or stakeholders, and following up to ensure responsiveness.
- D) **Board members have access to reasonably comprehensive briefings and general responses to anticipated questions** (i.e., Frequent Asked Questions, speaking points, etc.) in a timely manner. For high-profile matters or crisis (whether related to staff or Board decisions).

This is reasonable because the Board's self-defined role (see policy 3.0) can help clarify the types of concerns or inquires that may require a response from the Board or board members, as opposed to staff. These concerns include:
- Questions related to Owners Values, especially politically sensitive matters involving Legal Owners (i.e., municipal governments), and discussions around what the agency does, for whom, and at what cost.

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- Inquires related to decisions the Board has reserved for itself such as: setting fares and tax rate proposals,

Even in cases such as those listed above, the Board may wish to seek staff assistance in developing responses or delegate the response to the CEO. Almost all other decisions including routine institutional communiques, announcements, and responses to general and technical inquiries have already been delegated to the CEO and staff.

Evidence

A review of Board meeting minutes and board member communique (Njuki 3/17/22, Carpenter 5/17/22) indicate that during the monitoring period,

A) Orientation of the new board member (Pollay) on August 26th, 21 included discussions on how to seek feedback from staff

B) Individual requests for information are not formally tracked, however, anecdotally, the CEO and deputy CEOs speaks with Board members and provide information as requested. A review of emails (Carpenter 5/17/22) indicates that none of such requests were ignored.

C) The Board was provided with FAQs on the Capital Reserve Plan and on July 22nd 2021 passed a Capital Reserve Policy Resolution. The Board had several conversations with staff in board meetings prior to making a resolution on 350 S fifth avenue (Y-lot) development.

D) Two Board members (Mr. Miller and Mr. Allemang) were provided with comprehensive briefings priori to participating in a federal virtual advocacy event May 19th, 2021, this prepared them for any anticipated questions.

POLICY 2.10.1.7 The CEO shall not… Let the Board be unaware if, in the CEO's professional opinion, the Board or individual Board members may not be in compliance with the Board's own policies on Governance Process and Board Management Delegation, particularly in the case of Board behavior that could be detrimental to the agency's reputation or the working relationship between the Board and the CEO.

Degree of Compliance: In Compliance

Interpretation

Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when the CEO reports serious perceived non-compliance with policies 3.0 or 4.0 on the part of board members to the Chair (3.5.1) or Governance Committee (3.7.1). I further interpret this policy to be referring to incidents of more than passing or inconsequential non-compliance. This is reasonable because if the CEO has concerns with the Chair or Governance committee themselves, the CEO will report those concerns with the full Board (3.1.7).

Evidence

The CEO did not witness any instances of non-compliance among board members, and therefore did not report any perceived non-compliance (Carpenter 5/17/22).

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POLICY 2.10.2 The CEO shall not… Withhold from the Board and its processes logistical and clerical assistance.

Degree of Compliance: Partially Compliance

Interpretation

Compliance will be demonstrated when
    A) Policies 2.10.2.1- 2.10.2.4 are compliant as the Board has partially interpreted "logical and clerical assistance" in those policies
    B) Administrative staff support necessary to conduct its business,
    C) Meeting space
    D) Governance coaching support, and
    E) Access to legal counsel.
This is reasonable because it's necessary for the Board to efficiently complete its work.

Evidence

    A) **Policies** 2.10.2.1-2.10.2.3 are compliant. 2.10.2.4 is partially compliant**.**
    B) **Administrative Assistance:** During the monitoring period the CEO's own Administrative Assistant has been available to provide whatever assistance the Board requires. This is a part of the job description for this position. No concerns from the Board were recorded (Carpenter, 5/2/2022).
    C) **Meeting Space:** During most of the period, meetings were conducted virtually due to the pandemic. In-person meetings resumed in February 2022. No concerns from the Board were recorded (Carpenter, 5/2/2022).
    D) **Governance Support:** A contract for board training and facilitations services (Rose Mercier) was in place during through the monitoring period. Ms. Mercier has been utilized on several occasions during this period on request of the Board or board members. No concerns from the Board were recorded (Carpenter, 5/2/2022).
    E) **Legal Counsel:** Board members were involved in the selection of the corporate general counsel (i.e., lawyer) in 2018 and a contract with Dykema through the monitoring period. The Board Chair has occasionally contacted our counsel directly without the involvement of the CEO or staff. No concerns from the Board were recorded (Carpenter, 5/2/2022).

    The CEO notes partial compliance to policy since policy 2.10.2.4 is not compliant. The compliance timeline is noted in the sub-policy.

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POLICY 2.10.2.1 The CEO shall not… Allow the Board to be deprived of a workable, user-friendly mechanism for official Board, officer, or committee communications.

Degree of Compliance: In Compliance

Interpretation

Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when staff effectively
  A. Arrange Board and committee meetings, including scheduling, location/virtual location, well-organized advance reading material (minimum 5 days in advance).
  B. Staff will ensure that all board meeting information meets the requirements of the Open Meetings Act: that agenda, time date, and location are posted at least 24 hours before a meeting, are publicly available, and that minutes are kept. A similar process will be provided for confidential committee meetings.
  C. Assist the Board in arranging their annual Retreat.
These are reasonable because Board and committee meetings and retreats are the only official channels of board communication that staff can coordinate.

Evidence

A review of internal documents (Njuki 3/17/22) indicate
  A. All scheduled Board meetings were organized, scheduled, and implemented by staff either virtually or in person. The January 2022 Board meeting was cancelled by the Board Chair on the advice of the CEO due to pandemic-related concerns.
  B. All agenda packets have been publicly available at least three days before the meeting. Staff supported the board by taking meeting minutes, disseminating agendas, and uploading public packets on the website in a timely manner during all committee and board meetings.
  C. Staff supported the Board in preparing for their annual retreat which took place on August 12, 2021.
A review of communiques and schedules (Carpenter, 5/2/2022) found no instances where official duties listed above were carried out by anyone other than staff, and board members never needed to arrange for such support themselves.

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POLICY 2.10.2.2 The CEO shall not…Allow the Board to be deprived of pleasant, productive, and efficient settings and arrangements for Board and committee meetings.

Degree of Compliance: In Compliance

Interpretation
Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when: A) Monthly board meetings and retreats are held in a publicly accessible location, and all in-person meetings should be accessible via public transportation.   B) If meetings are conducted virtually, they will be open to the public.   C) Meeting spaces will be conducive to a productive meeting and will include whatever furniture, seating arrangement, audio/visual, and presentation equipment as needed.   These items are reasonable because location accessibility and meeting infrastructure (i.e., furniture, audio visual equipment, and arrangement spacing for safety concerns) are crucial for an effective meeting.

Evidence
During the monitoring period all Board meetings were conducted virtually or in a hybrid in-person/virtual manner (Njuki 3/7/22).   A) Members of the board and public were notified in advance on how to participate in virtual/ hybrid meetings. Beginning in February, in-person meetings were held at the Ann Arbor District Library, a location accessible to the public via public transportation.   B) All board meetings during the monitoring period were accessible to the general public.   C) Audio-visual capabilities during the virtual and hybrid meetings were accessible. Staff provided additional technical support as needed. Seating arrangements spaciously organized for pandemic-related reasons, masks were also availed and free to any meeting attendant who didn't have one.

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POLICY 2.10.2.3 The CEO shall not… Hinder access to the Board for any person who alleges unethical or unlawful action or circumstance in the organization or by its representatives.

Degree of Compliance: In Compliance

Interpretation

Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when the CEO does not limit speakers during public comment periods and takes reasonable steps to create official channels for whistleblower actions.
    A. All Board meetings during the monitoring period allow for public comments at beginning and closing.
    B. Speakers are not required to identify themselves or their comments in advance.
    C. The public can contact the Board Chair directly via electronic means.
    D. There is a formal whistleblower policy in place.
These are reasonable because they ensure that no person (staff or the public) is deprived a chance to address any concern they may have to the Board.

Evidence

A review of Board meeting minutes (Njuki, 3/17/22) during the monitoring period indicate
    A. All Board meetings allowed for public comments at beginning and closing.
    B. The CEO did not ask speakers to identify themselves or their comments in advance.
    C. There is an on-line form where anyone can contact the Chairperson directly via email.
    D. The Whistleblowers Protection Act of MI is available and accessible to all staff. Copies of the Act are hung in employee public areas alongside other labor posters

POLICY 2.10.2.4 The CEO shall not… Neglect to transfer policy updates to the official record of the Board's Policy Manual in a timely manner.

Degree of Compliance: Partially Compliant

Interpretation
Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when, within one month, any official changes to the Policy Manual are made to the document, posted on TheRide's website, and circulated electronically to Board members. This is reasonable because one month allows staff enough time to make and publish edits.

Evidence
A review of records (Njuki (5/7/22) indicate that due to staffing changes, uploading of policy changes was not timely but it was all complete by May 6th 2022 therefore, the CEO notes partial compliance to this policy.

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POLICY 2.10.3 The CEO shall not…Impede the Board's holism, misrepresent its processes and role, or impede its lawful obligations.

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Degree of Compliance: Partial Compliance

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Interpretation

Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when
- A) Compliance with policies 2.10.3.1 and 2.10.3.2 are achieved. This is reasonable because the Board has fully interpreted "holism" in these two policies.
- B) Board policies pertaining to the Board and CEO roles are publicly available, and the CEO clarifies them as needed to the Board's satisfaction. This is reasonable because, while the CEO cannot stop someone from misunderstanding the Board's role/processes, they can provide information and clarify when appropriate.
- C) The CEO helps the Board to fulfill its duties as per:
  - a. The legislation under which it is incorporated, Act 55 of 1963; change agency members and place a tax proposal on an election ballot; and
  - b. Its Articles of Incorporation: select officers and adopt/amend bylaws,

This is reasonable because, while the Board has reserved many other decisions to itself (budget approval, fare changes, etc.) these are done via the Bylaws or Board policies and are not a matter of illegality. Also, the Act and Articles describe all other duties as falling to "the Authority" which the Board may delegate to the CEO.

Evidence

A review of documents (Njuki 3/22/22) indicates that
- A) Policy 2.10.3.1. is compliant, Policy 2.10.3.2 is partially compliant (see below)
- B) The Board Policy Manual has information of Board governance processes and roles. Work delegated to the CEO is clearly identified as so. This document is publicly available on TheRide.org website. Further, the CEO is not aware of any Board dissatisfaction with the CEO's representations of the Board's responsibilities.
- C) During the monitoring period the Board did not change membership or tax rates, but it did select officers and adopt new bylaws. While the CEO and staff had nothing to contribute to the selection of officers, a review of electronic messages and documents (Carpenter, 5/3/2022) found that the CEO was significantly involved in helping the Board to successfully amend its bylaws.

The CEO reports partial compliance to this policy due to partial compliance in policy 2.1.0.3.2. A compliance timeline is provided in the sub-policy.

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POLICY 2.10.3.1 Interact with the Board in a way that favors or privileges certain board members over others, except when (a) fulfilling individual requests for information or (b) responding to officers or committees duly charged by the Board.

Degree of Compliance: Compliant

Interpretation

I interpret this policy to mean that the CEO and staff are not to undermine the Board's cohesiveness as a body, inadvertently or otherwise, by providing unique access to support, information, or counsel not available to other Board members, aside from general information requests and as per delegations the Board has made.

Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when the CEO and staff provide, upon request, equivalent access to information, support, resources, and counsel to all board members, notwithstanding (b) in 2.10.3 above,

This is reasonable because the Board only acts as a whole and not in part and therefore cannot provide direction unless it's in consensus. Sharing of information with the larger board ensures that no one board member is privileged to any significant information without the knowledge of other Board members.

Evidence

A) A review of board meeting videos and minutes (Njuki 3/22/22) indicate no situation where the CEO or staff provided preferential treatment to any Board member.
B) A review of communiques with board members (Carpenter, 5/25/22) indicate no instances where information requested by a member was not provided.
C) A review of the CEO communique with Board members (Njuki, 3/22/22) indicates that respective taskforces and committees were copied, and further discussion on similar topics carried over to the Board meeting. Below is a documentation of such instances.

Board member request	Other parties involved in response
Request for monitoring templates from the governance coach	Monitoring taskforce was copied
Include bus stop as a facility in the monitoring report	This conversation was carried over to the board meeting for further discussion

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POLICY 2.10.3.2 Neglect to supply for the Required Approvals agenda all items delegated to the CEO, yet required by law, regulation, or contract to be Board-approved, along with the applicable monitoring information.

Degree of Compliance: Partially Compliant

Interpretation

Compliance with this policy will be demonstrated when the CEO seeks timely Board approval via the Consent Agenda for operational decisions for which an outside body requires a Board-level approval including:
   A) MDOT grant approval,
   B) FTA approvals (Safety Plan and Title VI Plan),
   C) and various other outside approvals required from time-to-time.
This is reasonable because most state and federal Required Approvals are known in advance, but some others may be emergent and unforeseeable.

Evidence

A review of Board agendas and minutes (Njuki, 5/26/22) found that during the monitoring period the CEO sought and received Board approval for the following:

Required Approvals	Approved on	Approval required by:	Approval timely?
A) MDOT Grant Approvals (Receipt of grant funding)	Feb 2022	January 2022	No
B) FTA items that require board approval **a.** Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan **b.** Title VI Plan	a. Feb 2022 b. Feb 2020	a. Feb 2022 b. Feb 2020	a. Yes b. Yes

The Board cancelled the January Board meeting due to the pandemic. Therefore, state funding was presented and approved in the February Board meeting. The Board approval was late, but the agency coordinated with the state by submitting the original application on time and attaching the Board resolution after it was approved on February 24th

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Policy Trendline (New)

The Monitoring Taskforce proposes the inclusion of policy trendlines in monitoring reports in order to have a graphic representation of policy compliance over time.

Policy	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
2.10.	2	2	2
2.10.1	2	2	2
2.10.1.1	2	2	2
2.10.1.2	3	3	3
2.10.1.3	3	3	2
2.10.1.4	3	3	3
2.10.1.5	3	3	2
2.10.1.6	3	3	3
2.10.1.7	3	3	3
2.10.2	3	3	2
2.10.2.1	3	3	3
2.10.2.2	3	3	3
2.10.2.3	3	3	3
2.10.2.4	3	3	2
2.10.3		2	2
2.10.3.1		2	3
2.10.3.2		3	2

LEGEND	
3	Compliant policies
2	Partially compliant policies
1	Non-compliant policies

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Board's Conclusion on Monitoring Report

Guidance on Determining "Reasonableness" of CEO Interpretations

The International Policy Governance Association has developed the following guidance for Board members to use in deciding whether a CEO's interpretation is "reasonable":

An interpretation is deemed to be reasonable when it provides an operational definition which includes defensible measures and standards against which policy achievement can be assessed...

Defensible measures and standards are those that:
- *Are objectively verifiable (e.g., through research, testing, and/or credible confirmation of observable phenomena.)*
- *Are relevant and conceptually aligned with the policy criteria and the board's policy set.*
- *Represent an appropriate level of fulfillment within the scope of the policy.*

- "*What makes an Interpretation Reasonable and What are the Expectations for the Operational Definition: Policy Governance Consistency Framework Report Number 2". International Policy Governance Association. June 11, 2016. Available on the IPGA website.*

Board's conclusion after monitoring the report.

Following the Board's review and discussion with the CEO, the Board finds that the CEO:

    A. Is in compliance

    B. Is in compliance, except for item(s) noted.

    C. Is making reasonable progress toward compliance.

    D. Is *not* in compliance <u>or</u> is *not* making reasonable progress toward compliance.
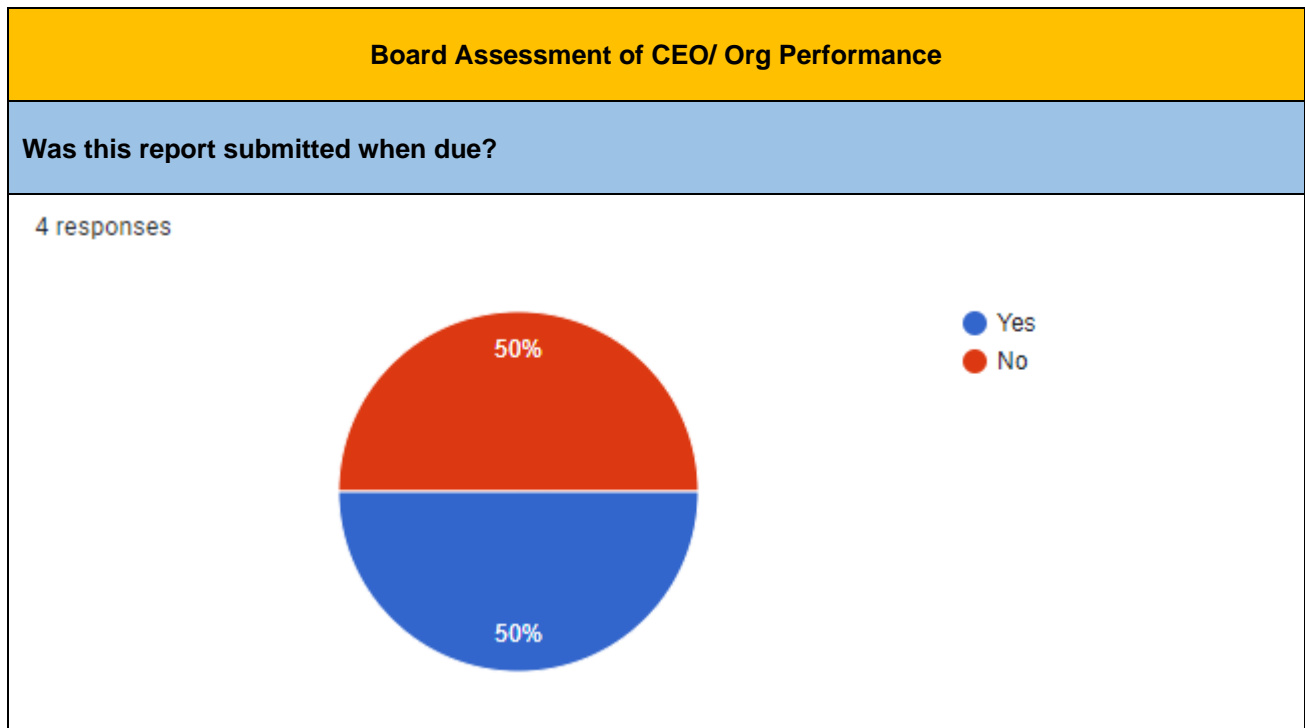
    E. Cannot be determined.

Board notes (if any)

Monitoring Report for Policy 2.10 Communication and Support to the Board

24

TheRide
Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority

SURVEY RESULTS:
Communication & Support to the Board (Policy 2.10)

Board Meeting Review Date: June 16, 2022

Survey Participants: 4 Board Members

Note: Each bullet represents a comment by a different Board member.

Board Assessment of CEO/ Org Performance
Was this report submitted when due?

4 responses

- Yes
- No

Survey Results: Communication & Support to the Board (Policy 2.10)

Do you find the CEO Interpretation for each policy/sub policy to be:

4 responses

reasonable and complete	4 (100%)
not complete (please specify policy/subpolicy and provide explanation in the next question)	0 (0%)
not reasonable (please specify policy/subpolicy and provide explanation in the next question)	0 (0%)

(bar chart axis: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4)
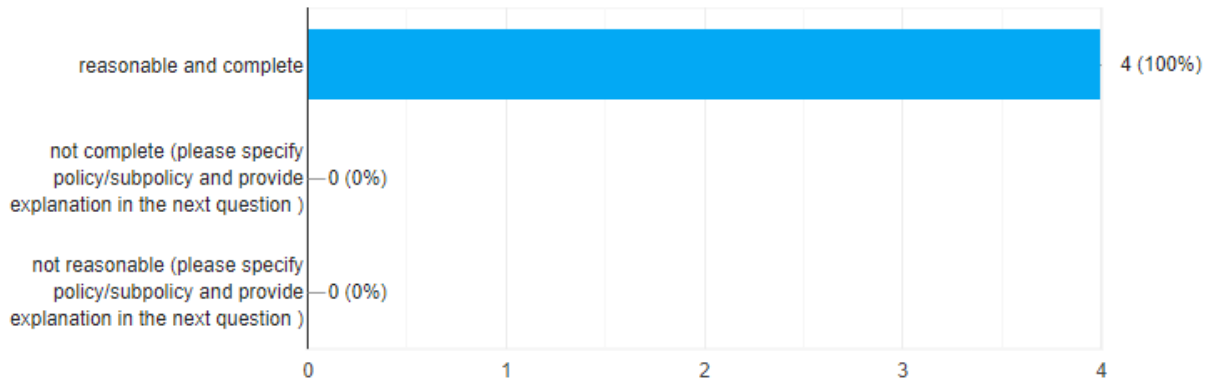
Board Assessment of CEO/ Org Performance

CEO Interpretations that were incomplete or unreasonable (if any):

0 responses

No responses yet for this question.

Do you find the CEO's evidence and data shows..?

4 responses

compliance with our policy.	0 (0%)
compliance with our policy, except for items(s) noted below and is making reasonable prog...	4 (100%)
none compliance on item(s) noted below and is not making reasonable progress toward co...	0 (0%)
cannot be determined	0 (0%)

(bar chart axis: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4)

Survey Results: Communication & Support to the Board (Policy 2.10)
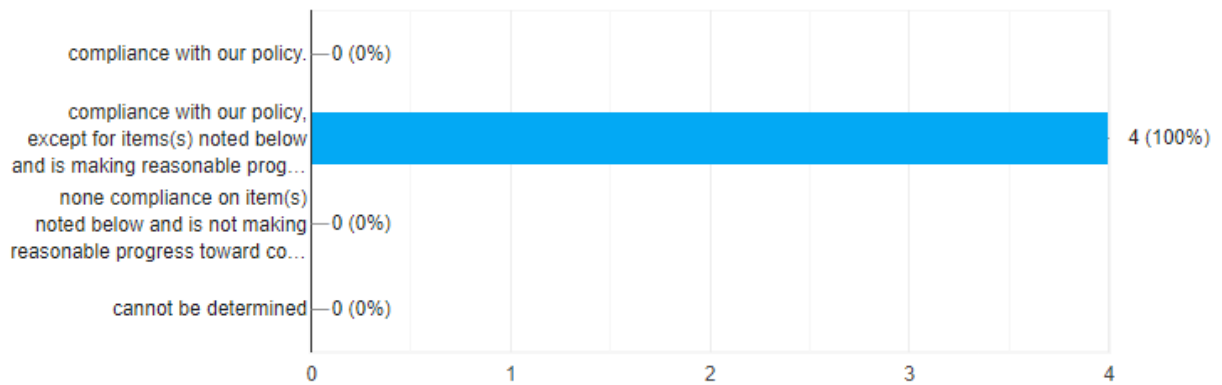
Items not in compliance (if any):

1 response

2.10, 2.10.1, 2.10.1.1, 2.10.1.2, 2.10.1.3, 2.10.1.5, 2.10.2, 2.10.2.4, 2.10.3, & 2.10.3.2

Optional: Potential Policy Development

Is there any area associated with this policy that concerns you that is not clearly addressed in existing policy? What is the value that drives your concern?

0 responses

No responses yet for this question.

What policy language would you like to see incorporated to address your worry?

0 responses

No responses yet for this question.

Optional: Comments for the CEO

Commendations on this topic:

2 responses

Thoughtful report. I appreciated the level of detail provided both the interpretation and the evidence of the policies.

Matt is _very_ good and keeping the board informed/updated. Yes, things are not perfect, but we are a very well informed board with every effort made by Matt and team to eliminate/prevent surprises.

3

Survey Results: Communication & Support to the Board (Policy 2.10)

Potential Improvement(s):
1 response
As we all know, following up and keeping tabs on the "items of partial compliance" is a known issue. However, steps are being taken to hopefully resolve this.

Comments on the report itself:
1 response
2.10.1.1 The graph provided shows that policy 2.0, Global Executive Limitations was due in January 2022 but was not submitted. When can we expect this policy?
2.10.1.2 is incomplete and yet is highlighted in green as if compliant I found this confusing and misleading. Also, states "did not find a clear record of written notification" Does this mean that written notification was not needed during the monitoring period or that communication did not happen in written format?
2.10.2.1 states that the January meeting was cancelled due to pandemic related concerns. I thought it was cancelled due to the major winter storm that day.

Survey Results: Communication & Support to the Board (Policy 2.10)

TheRide 2045 Long-Range Plan

Meeting: Board of Directors

Meeting Date: June 16, 2022

INFORMATION TYPE
Decision Preparation

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S)
Review and provide feedback on the attached draft report prior to Board's final approval of the plan.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS & POLICIES
The Board defines the outcomes/goals that TheRide is supposed to be achieving in the future (Ends policy). The Long-Range Plan is to make recommendations about the best way to achieve the Board's goals. The Board has also created constraints that apply to this planning process. These constraints are primarily focused on funding and defining the planning process itself. Policy 2.4-2.4.8, 2.10.1.3, 2.0 Policy 2.4, 2.4.3, 2.4.5, 2.4.8, 2.5 Policy 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.2.1, 2.9, 2.9.4, 2.9.5

ISSUE SUMMARY
TheRide 2045 is a Long-Range Plan for transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. The plan lays out a shared vision and strategy for transit over the next 25 years. It focuses on **improving social equity** by providing better transportation to jobs, education, services and housing, **improving our environment** by giving travelers efficient transportation alternatives, and **supporting a strong economy** by better connecting businesses and people. The result will be a more competitive transit system that will **grow ridership**, resulting in a more sustainable and vibrant community. Significant public and stakeholder engagement was held throughout the planning process. A Public Advisory Group (PAG) was also formed that met seven times and provided guidance throughout the process. In total, over 4475 points of interaction were recorded through in-person and virtual engagement sessions, surveys, email, and phone. During this engagement, the community generally communicated a strong desire for transformational change and a strong support of the draft plan. The draft report provides details of the planning process, guiding framework, recommended service network and other features, supporting infrastructure, regional connections and other collaborations, implementation staging, and financial plan. TheRide 2045 responds to the growing needs of our communities with a blueprint for preserving and expanding transit services and access to local and regional destinations. It is an ambitious vision that will require partnerships, additional investment, and

1

leadership. Through this vision, TheRide can help lead our communities towards a future with greater social equity, environmental benefits, and access to jobs.

ATTACHMENTS

1. TheRide 2045 Long Range Plan – DRAFT

2

FY23 Corporate Business Plan

Board Meeting Date: June 16th, 2022

INFORMATION TYPE
Other

BACKGROUND
The Corporate Business Plan provides a multi-year strategic planning framework. Its purpose is to increase transparency into what efforts TheRide intends to undertake, and to increase public engagement by inviting feedback on a reader-friendly plan of action without extensive details.

ISSUE SUMMARY:
TheRide's Board of Directors identifies key values and outcomes for the agency, the CEO and staff develop a proposed 5-year work plan in line with those expectations. This document provides an opportunity for the Board, the public, and stakeholders to weigh in on major decisions *before* the details of the budget are developed, hence increasing transparency and participation, while simplifying the budget process.

The 25-year Long-Range Plan provides a vision (long-term goals) with short-term implementation steps for public transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. Pending funding and staffing capacities, the elements in the Long-Range Plan will inform on this and future Corporate Business Plans.

The FY23 Corporate Business Plan will focus on
- attracting and retaining ridership,
- implementing the long-range plan and
- agency-wide continuous improvement.

ATTACHMENTS:
FY23 Corporate Business Plan (draft)

Adopting the Long-Range Plan

Designing for Vibrant Communities

Corporate Business Plan FY 2023

ANN ARBOR AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Contents

Executive Summary

TheRide, also referred to as the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA), is the public transit system for the greater Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. Our mission is to provide reliable, safe, affordable, and equitable transportation services that are adaptable to the evolving needs of the Communities we serve.

This Corporate Business Plan is a part of TheRide's multi-year strategic planning framework. Its purpose is to increase transparency into what efforts TheRide intends to undertake, and to increase public engagement by inviting feedback on a reader-friendly plan of action that avoids too many details.

After TheRide's Board of Directors identifies key values and outcomes for the agency, the CEO and staff develop a proposed 5-year work plan[1] in line with those expectations. By highlighting the overall plans in a 5-year context, the Business Plan provides an opportunity for the Board, the public, and stakeholders to weigh in on major decisions *before* the details of the budget are developed. This increases transparency and participation, while streamlining the budget process. Effectively, major budget decisions are made early, during the Business Planning process.

A major new factor in 2022 is the development of TheRide's first 25-year plan. Since the Fall of 2019, TheRide has continuously engaged with members of the public and other stakeholders to design the future of transit through what is commonly known as the Long-Range Plan. The Plan provides a vision for the long-term with shorter-term implementation steps for public transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. It focuses on improving social equity by increasing access to jobs and housing, while also contributing to a cleaner environment and a vibrant economy. Pending funding and staffing capacities, the elements in the Long-Range Plan will inform on this and future Corporate Business Plans.

In addition to the Long-Range Plan, an assessment of internal and external environments helped identify gaps and opportunities that TheRide must address in order to reach desired results in a manner that ensures efficient stewardship of resources. Informed by the Board's policies, the Long-Range plan and the assessments, the initiatives in the 5-year workplan are based on the following priorities.
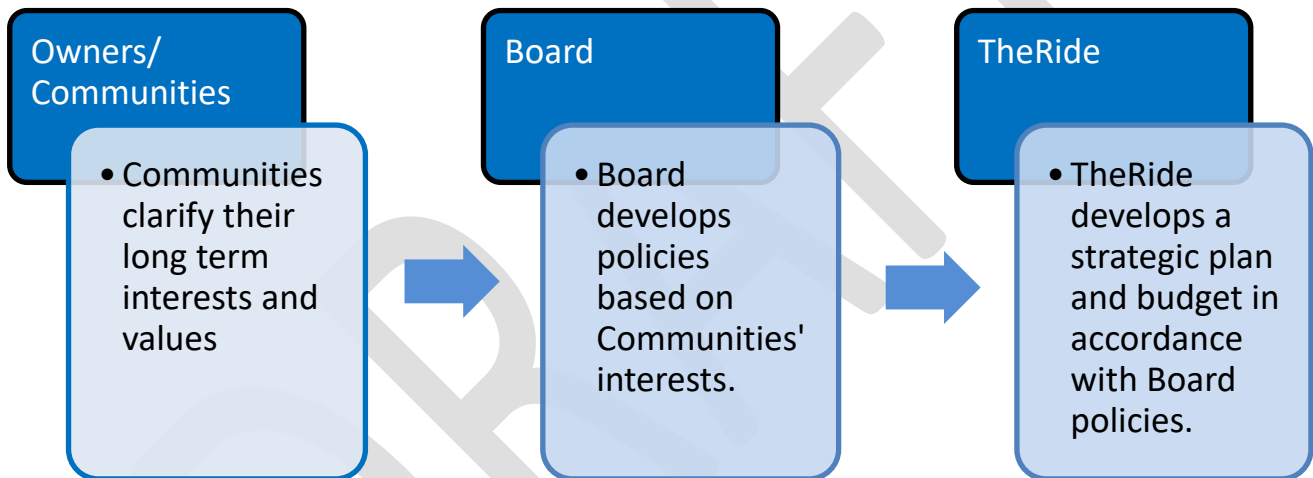
- attracting and retaining ridership,
- implementing the long-range plan and
- agency-wide continuous improvement.

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[1] See page 9-10 for the 5-year work plan.

Board's Direction and Overall Alignment

TheRide's Board of Directors functions as an informed agent of the public, passengers, and municipalities, including the City of Ann Arbor, City of Ypsilanti, and the Township of Ypsilanti; and residents, visitors, and students of the larger Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. These groups of people are collectively addressed as the '*Communities we serve'* or simply, '*Communities*' in this document.

The Board translates the values of these Communities into the overall desired outcomes for the agency. These outcomes, known to the Board as Ends Policies, define what TheRide is to achieve; for whom, and at what cost. TheRide then adopts these desired outcomes (End's Policies) as its goals. They become the basis through which all strategic initiatives and all operational activities are derived.

Owners/ Communities	Board	TheRide
• Communities clarify their long term interests and values	• Board develops policies based on Communities' interests.	• TheRide develops a strategic plan and budget in accordance with Board policies.

The graphic above shows the relationship between the Communities interests and values, Board policies and agency operations. This relationship clarifies that it is the goal of TheRide to fulfill the interests of the Communities we serve through the direction provided to the agency by the Board.

Below is the set of the current Ends policies as developed by the Board

1. AAATA exists so that an increasing proportion of residents, workers and visitors in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area utilize public transportation options that contribute to the Area's social, environmental, and economic vitality at a cost that demonstrates value and efficient stewardship of resources.

1.1. Residents in the area have equitable access to public transportation services that enables full participation in society.

1.1.1. People with economic challenges have affordable public transportation options.

1.1.2. People with disabilities or mobility impairments, seniors, minors, and non-English speakers have equitable access to opportunities and destinations in the area.

1.2. Public transportation positively impacts our environment.

1.2.1. Public transportation options are increasingly chosen over use of a personal car.

1.2.2. Public transportation options minimize energy use and pollution, and conserve natural resources.

1.2.3. Public transportation options produce conditions favorable to more compact and walkable land development.

1.2.4. Relevant public policy is transit supportive.

1.3. Public transportation positively impacts the economic prosperity of the area.

1.3.1. Public transportation facilitates labor mobility.

1.3.2. Students can access education opportunities without need of a personal vehicle.

1.3.3. Visitors use public transportation in the area.

1.3.4. Public transportation connects the area to the Metro Detroit region.

1.4. Passengers are highly satisfied with public transportation services.

1.5. Residents of the area recognize the positive contributions of public transportation to the area's quality of life.

The Board has the right and duty to change the Ends Policies in relation to the owners' interests. This consequently adjusts the strategic trajectory of TheRide.

In addition, the Board has created Executive Limitations Policies, which guide the CEO by outlining practices that would be unacceptable. These limitations empower staff to use their professional judgement when pursuing the Board's stated outcomes through oversight and fiduciary control. One key benefit of this approach is greater speed in achieving the desired outcomes. Examples of key Executive Limitations policies include:

- Ensure passengers and customers are well treated.
- Ensure staff are well treated and that TheRide is an attractive employer.
- Ensure that the Board, riders, and the public have opportunities to shape the future direction of the agency.
- Ensure transparency and accountability.
- Maintain the financial health of the organization. Do not risk fiscal jeopardy.
- Maintain assets of the organization in good condition.
- Compliance with all applicable laws. (Numerous other local, state, and federal laws also enable and constrain what TheRide can do.)

Strategic Approach

Strategic planning has three main pieces: an envisioned future state, a sound understanding of the current situation, and a plan for how to get from the current state to the desired future state. The Business Plan is a key part of planning how TheRide will sequence its work and organize its resources to achieve the future state. Let's look at each piece separately.
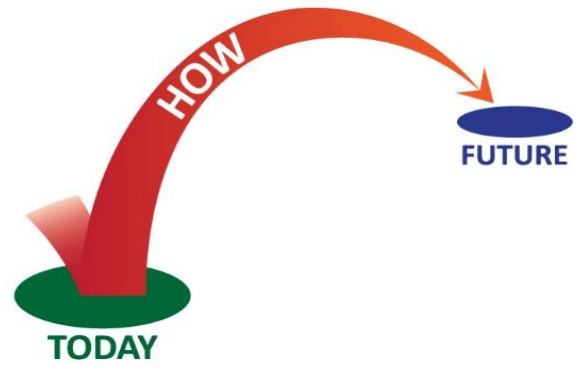
Envisioning a Future State: Having consensus on a clear, defined future state gives TheRide a target toward which it can align its efforts, judge options, and measure progress. TheRide future state is a blend of Board policies, feedback from the Communities we serve and staff insight.

Understanding Current Status: A shared understanding of the current situation and context allows TheRide to take steady aim at the targeted future. The current state of the organization is organized into strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats/challenges and that information detailed in the SWOT analysis table in Appendix 2A. To determine the position of the agency in relation to the external environment i.e., political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental (PESTLE) aspects, a PESTLE[2] analysis was conducted, and the details documented in Appendix 2B

Filling in the gap: A gap analysis[3] identifies opportunities and gaps between the current state and the desired future. It informs on the key drivers for change and the order of prioritizing agency initiatives. Based on that insight, a strategic action plan i.e., the 5-year workplan, is developed to bridge the gap between the current and the desired state.

At each step, there is plenty of room for reasonable people to reasonably disagree with each other. Ultimately, the Board holds the CEO accountable for achieving their vision, so the CEO is empowered to be the final arbiter on the methods used.

- [3] A gap-analysis for this business plan is provided on Appendix 2C.

Action Plan

Based on the Gap analysis, the CEO and staff identifies areas of prioritization and a list of prioritized initiatives over the next five years. Below are the three areas of prioritization, also known as thematic buckets.

1. **Retain and attract ridership:** With the pandemic, ridership dramatically dropped. Although it is slowly increasing, TheRide is encouraging ridership by offering contactless payment options, conducting 'rebuild ridership' campaigns, staffing bus routes etc. The Long-Range Plan intends to continue this effort by providing faster services across networks, increase off-peak services, increases frequencies with the intent of increasing ridership by 150%-165% by the year 2045.

2. **Implementing the Long-Range Plan:** Long-Range Plan lays out a shared vision and strategy for TheRide for the next 25 years. It focuses on improving social equity by increasing access to jobs and housing, while contributing to a cleaner environment and a vibrant economy. The result will be a more competitive transit system that will grow ridership, resulting in more sustainable and vibrant Communities.

3. **Agency-wide continuous improvements:** One of TheRide's business principles [4] is 'Excellence' which is defined as continuously renewing our commitment to perform well beyond set standards. TheRide prides itself in being compliant with federal, state, and local regulations but it desires and works on doing and being better. The focus points for FY23-FY27 under this category are:

   a. **Climate change initiatives:** TheRide plans to have a zero emissions fleet by 2045 as part of the Long-Range Plan. Currently studies are underway to determine feasible sustainable zero emissions options for our fleet. Additionally, the CEO plans to conduct research in FY25 to determine what it would take to have zero emissions facilities/buildings. The result of these studies will inform on our progress towards being a zero-emission organization, pending funding and staffing capacities.

   b. **Social equity:** Prior to designing service plans e.g., routes, TheRide reviews and addresses potential impact on social equity. For years, TheRide has purposely provided socially equitable services and desires to do more. However, it is not currently clear what improved social equity for the traveling public and the staff looks like. The agency therefore intends to do more research in this area in the coming years.

   c. **Internal upgrades and improvements:** This include proactively safeguarding TheRide's' network operations to deter cyber-criminal activities, upgrading hardware and software systems for better performance, improvement of facilities and existing infrastructure.

To fill in the operational gaps [5], the CEO collaborated with senior managers to identify an action plan in line with the identified priorities. Many projects were suggested but only some were selected as part of the 5-year workplan based on additional prioritization factors [6] such as risk assessment. The financial needs of all the projects in the 5-year work plan will be addressed in the FY 23 Budget. Projects that go beyond FY 23 will be accounted for in projected annual budgets.

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[4] A list of TheRide's values and business principles is provided in Appendix 1.

[5] See the gap analysis on Appendix 2C.

[6] For a list of prioritization criteria, see Appendix 2D.

The 5-year work plan

	Major initiatives	Description	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
Retain & Attract Ridership	Restore & maintain service	Hiring additional staff to keep up with service needs.	■				
	Campaign to rebuild ridership	Promotional campaigns to rebuild ridership are expected to continue through FY 23	■	■			
	Replace aging buses	Maintain service reliability by replacing aging fleet		■	■	■	■
	Contactless Payment	Consider buying validations to increase boarding speed		■			
Implement LRP	Develop legislative agenda	Identify advocacy goals and methods	■				
	Start millage-related services	New express routes, longer service hours and increased frequency will provide increased accessibility, equity and encourage ridership.	■	■			
	Blake Transit Center (BTC) Expansion	FY23 and FY24 will be used for preliminary planning and design of the BTC.	■	■			
	Transit Signal Priority	Transit Signal Priority project will continue and is expected to be completed in FY25	■	■	■		
	Ypsilanti Transit Center (YTC) Upgrade	Planning and designing of the YTC will take place in FY23 and continue to FY25. Construction may commence in FY 25 and progress into FY26	■	■	■	■	
	Garage Expansion*	The development of bus maintenance and storage facility is expected to begin in FY 23 and continue into FY28.	■	■	■	■	■
	Bus Rapid Transit* (Planning)	Initial planning including equity analysis will take place in FY 23. Public engagement is expected to continue before a final plan is developed and implemented.	■	■	■	■	■

*-Projects are subject to RAISE grant

5-year work plan continued

		Major initiatives	Description	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
Continuous Improvements	Climate Change	Zero emissions fleet	Study options for a zero emissions fleet	■				
		Zero emissions facilities	TheRide plans to begin a zero emissions building study in 2025.			■		
		Zero emissions support vehicles	Conduct further studies and implement zero emissions support fleet.				■	
	Equity	Equity reviews.	TheRide desires to continue finding ways to be equitable internally and externally. Studies are expected to commence in FY23	■	■			
	Internal Improvements	Cyber security follow through	Ensure safety of IT assets	■				
		Upgrade Accounting System	Updating financial accounting system to better serve internal customers.	■	■			
		Facility Maintenance (Placeholder)	Maintenance and upgrades of the Dawn Gabay Operations Center in order to maintain a state of good repair.	■	■	■	■	■
		Technology Upgrades (Placeholder)	Review and update technological systems to better serve internal and external customers	■	■	■	■	■

Major Considerations

The Board of Directors has clearly directed the CEO to operate *'at a cost that demonstrates value and efficient stewardship of resources.'* The CEO considers these resources to include financial, material, and human resources i.e., staff. In developing this 5-year work plan, the CEO was cognizant of the pandemic implications including and not limited to staff burn out and fatigue. Most of the front-line staff had to work overtime due to nation-wide staff shortages. Administrative staff also had to work longer hours in the triage environment. Given the extra duties expected of staff in response to pandemic implications, the CEO made the decision to scale down staff workload and sequence projects in the upcoming years to allow staff time to recuperate. This decision explains why some projects in the workplan above are scheduled to begin in later years.

Budget Planning

Initiatives in the 5-year work plan sets the stage and context for the annual budget. TheRide's Board of Directors, through written policies, requires that the agency's financial planning and budgeting be developed using:

- sound financial practices,
- incorporate strategic and multi-year planning,
- use practices that meet generally accepted accounting principles,
- comply with federal, state, and local regulations,
- detail practices of handling cash and investments,
- seek Board authorization when adjusting passenger fares, property tax rates, or buying or selling real estate.
- additional Board policies set standards for employee treatment and compensation and require TheRide's assets to be adequately insured and protected against risks.

Budget planning will take place in June through August. During this period, a draft budget will be developed, and discussions held at staff and Board level to improve it. The final budget will be ready for Board approval before the end of September 2022.

Performance Monitoring

To assess the effectiveness of initiatives in the Corporate Business Plan and their alignment to the needs of our Communities through set Board policies, TheRide uses a two-tier method of monitoring progress and operational performance:

Monitoring Reports – The Board requires that the CEO report on compliance with every Policy. These "Monitoring Reports" provide detailed interpretations of Board policies and evidence of compliance. These reports are provided at least annually and more frequently at the Board's request.

Operational Reports – The CEO and staff provide a variety of detailed reports on specific aspects of TheRide's internal workings.

- Quarterly financial reports provide information on the financial health of the authority.
- Quarterly service reports provide specific performance measures on operations.
- Monthly CEO updates provide information on specific projects at the public Board meetings. These updates most often include status updates of the projects identified in this Business Plan.

All of these reports and status updates are available on TheRide.org website.

Conclusion

TheRide strives to go above and beyond in service to its Communities. Implementing the Long-Range Plan will provide for more faster, reliable connections and consequently improve overall quality of life for our residents. Research on means to provide more socially equitable services and run zero-emissions facilities and fleet are ongoing and will inform on the type of technology the organization choses to implement.

Feedback on this Business Plan can be directed to TellUs@theride.org.

Appendix

1. Values and Business Principles

In addition to aligning with the Boards direction, staff at all the agency levels collaboratively developed values and business principles to inform on how they would engage with each other and how they conduct business respectfully. Below are those values and business principles.

VALUES:

(How TheRide's employees engage with each other)

RESPECT:
Treating one another with dignity

COMPASSION:
Understanding, sharing in and being sensitive to the situations of others.

INTEGRITY:
Having a moral or ethical conviction to always do what is right.

BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

(How TheRide's employees get the work done)

TEAMWORK:
Collaborating for a greater good

SAFETY:
Keeping yourself and others away from harm.

EXCELLENCE:
Continuously renewing our commitment to perform well beyond set standards

2. Background Analyses

A. SWOT Analysis

This analysis provides a current state assessment of the positives and negatives that impact the organization from an internal (within the organization) and external (outside the organization) perspective.

INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
STRENGTHS **(Agency Capabilities)**	**OPPORTUNITIES** **(External opportunities that the agency can impact)**

• Strong credibility & support by the Communities we serve.
  - Strong relationships with partners.
  - History of successful collaborations.
  - A tradition of excellence in service delivery and business decisions.
  - High rider satisfaction.
• Existing resources & assets in reasonable condition.
  - Existing technology allows for effective virtual/hybrid running of business.
  - Relatively stable funding.
  - Physical assets and equipment are adequate and in fair shape.
• Engaged Board and staff.
  - Strong commitment to our Communities, especially underserved populations.
  - Future-oriented and willing to innovate.
  - Rapidly modernizing internal processes, clarifying roles, & direction.
  - Willingness to listen & strive to improve.
• Safe working environment
  - Vehicle and facility sanitization
  - Improved building and vehicle ventilation
• Good interdepartmental coordination
	• Opportunity to study environmentally friendly transit options.
	• Demographics, economic and societal trends are changing.
	  - The population is growing and aging.
	  - Urban areas are growing more compact and need additional mass transit.
	  - Mobility needs are growing in suburban and rural areas as well.
	  - More transit-supportive land development could make accessing destinations easier.
	• The Long-Range Plan will help focus investments to our Communities.
	  - Provide an exciting vision for the future.
	  - Organize, leverage, and maximize resources and innovative technologies.
	  - Speed up implementation by starting with a realistic plan.
	  - Help communicate the value of public transit.
	• Potential to expand services and funding.
	  - Could seek additional funding/resources via grants, partnerships, other sources.
	  - Could expand Authority membership/change enabling legislation.
	  - Potential for additional property tax investment.
	• Advocate for outside decisions that support TheRide's desired outcomes.
	  - Influence outside decision-makers (land development, housing, transportation policy, etc.)
	  - Assume a leadership position in coordinating alternative transportation.

(Row label: Helpful)

INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
WEAKNESSES **(Areas of improvement within the organization)**	**THREATS** **(External challenges to agency success)**
- Existing structural budget deficits - Insufficient facility capacity - The bus fleet cannot grow because the garage is full - Space at the terminals is limited. - Reduced fare revenues. - Working from home and alternative learning options have led to a decline in ridership. - Limited ability to influence outside decisions (RTA, local land development)	- Dominant car-culture. - Remote working & online learning options may reduce ridership. - Constrained funding and resources limit opportunities. - Many travel needs lie outside our geographic service area and taxing authority. - Resource-constrained partners & a sometimes zero-sum environment. - Insufficient facility capacity (garage and terminals) limits service growth. - Possible loss of autonomy or funding to the RTA. - Increased operational costs - Growing demand for expensive premium services. - Traffic congestion slows buses and makes them less reliable. - Labor shortages (technical and professional staff) - Increasing construction and fuel costs. - Economic inequality, A2/Ypsi disparities and affordability. - Outside pressures/demands can divert TheRide's attention.

(Left margin rotated text: **Weak areas**)

KEY TAKEAWAYS from the SWOT analysis.

1. TheRide seeks to provide equitable services to the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. It has strong credibility and support in the community as well as from within (staff and the Board).

2. Nationwide staffing shortages, existing structural deficits, and insufficient facility (bus garage and terminal) space limit TheRide's capabilities to expand.

3. There is room to study environmentally friendly transit options, seek more funding, and advocate for outside decisions that support TheRide's initiatives

4. The Long-Range Plan will provide a more strategic direction on how to organize, leverage, and maximize resources and innovative technologies in order to provide our Communities with the best transit options.

B. PESTLE analysis

Awareness of external factors and their impact on the agency allows us to plan realistically. TheRide achieves this by conducting a Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal/Governance and Environmental (PESTLE) analysis. Here is a list of external factors and how they impact TheRide.

Political	• Changes at the federal level have led to transit favorable actions. • RTA prioritization has TheRide competing for resources with other agencies. • Politicizing of pandemic safety actions e.g., wearing of masks, may impact the agency's ability to enforce safety practices.
Economical	• Additional federal funding options have enabled AAATA to continue providing services and plan for capital projects. • The current government may repurpose unused earmarks which in turn provides more funding for transportation infrastructure. • Increased inflation will lead to increased costs • Potential millage win may help take care of structural
Social	• AAATA has a positive public image. • Presence of pro and anti- development cultures in our Communities. • There's disparity in demographics and income in Ypsilanti vs. Ann Arbor • The great resignation era and labor shortages are negatively impacting ability to provide services
Technological	• Adaptation of the public to remote working, virtual commerce, etc., impacts travel patterns and ridership. • Opportunities to advance customer experience and operational efficiency via technology platforms. • Opportunity to improve the remote worker experience. • Remote and hybrid working creates opportunities to increase and sustain cyber-security measures.
Legal / Governance	• AAATA surpasses ADA compliance requirements except for bus stops. • AAATA complies with Title VI equitable accessibility provisions. • The Board sets governing policies that serve the interest of our Communities. • Compliance to these policies is monitored periodically. • AAATA is currently compliant with laws and regulations governing the transit industry.
Environmental	• Our Communities are supportive of ecologically conscious decisions. • The federal government is considering funding clean energy transit options. • There is an opportunity to study and implement zero-emissions fleet and facilities

KEY TAKEAWAYS from the PESTLE analysis.

1. Additional federal funding options have enabled AAATA to continue providing services and planning for capital projects

2. Remote working, online schooling, virtual commerce, and telemedicine has negatively impacted ridership.

3. There is room to study and implement zero emissions fleet and facilities.

4. Gap analysis

TheRide's Board determines the desired results through its ends policies and staff conducts a current state assessment through the SWOT and PESTLE analyses. A comparison of current state and end state identify gaps and inform on how resources can be prioritized to achieve the desired end results.

Desired End State (Policy)	Current State	Gap	Mitigation
Increase ridership (1.0)	-Low ridership (compared to pre-pandemic years) -Labor shortages impact ability to provide services	Low ridership	Implement the Long-Range Plan -Increase frequency, -increase service reliability, -increase connectivity
Ensure efficient stewardship of resources (Policy 1.0)	-Existing structural deficits -Declining fare revenues due to reduced ridership	Insufficient funds to maintain and expand services	Millage increase and make use of all possible grants and funding opportunities
Equitable accessibility (Policy 1.1)	Currently compliant with Title VI requirements and equal employment regulations. However, TheRide would like to go above set guidelines to provide more equitable opportunities and results for customers and the traveling public.	Unclear on opportunities to improve equity within the agency and with customers	Research, understand and implement ways of improving equity opportunities and results for customers and staff.
Positively impact the environment (Policy 1.2)	TheRide is currently studying zero emissions options.	Zero emissions technology is unclear	Understand and implement sustainable zero emissions technology
Increase service frequency and connectivity (Policy 1.3)	Insufficient facility capacity at terminals and garage making it challenging to expand services	Potential to expand space, fleet and consequently services.	Implement the Long-Range Plan -Increase facility capacity, -expand terminal space, -grow fleet size
Increased customer satisfaction (Policy 1.4)	Currently have high customer satisfaction however, due to reduced ridership, TheRide would like to find ways to retain and attract new ridership	Opportunity to attract and retain ridership	Campaign to rebuild ridership, improve service comfort and reliability by replacing aging vehicles, continuing safety practices
Support and credibility in the community (1.5)	TheRide enjoys support from our Communities.	N/A	N/A

KEY TAKEAWAYS from the GAP analysis.

1. Implementation of the Long-Range Plan will help increase ridership over time.

2. Increased millage will address structural deficits and allow for service expansions.

3. There is room to study and implement sustainable zero emissions technology.

4. There's an opportunity to review and improve equity practices both internally and externally.

C. Strategic Planning Criteria

The Board's policies outline desired outcomes/goals and operational expectations. It is up to the CEO and staff to recommend initiatives, projects, and expenditures that will make progress in achieving the goals identified by the Board. Staff seeks public and stakeholder input, as well as advice from the Board, as they develop these recommendations. To be effective stewards of resources, TheRide prioritizes initiatives by considering the following.

• **Organizational Alignment:** Does the initiative help to advance the Board's desired outcomes? Does it mesh with what we do, for whom and at what cost? Are we focusing our energy on future goals, or reacting and spreading ourselves too thin? Are they in line with our values and business principles?

• **Roles:** Is the initiative within TheRide's legal mandate, or is it the responsibility of another group? Do we have direct control, or can we only influence others? Is the idea more appropriate for another organization? Is partnering a possibility?

• **Risks:** What risks does the initiative pose now or in the future? Are the risks acceptable?

• **Tradeoffs and Affordability:** Is this a beneficial use of limited funding or time (cost/benefit, ROI, etc.)? What trade-offs are implicit or not immediately obvious?

• **Capacity:** Does TheRide have the expertise or resources to pursue the initiative now or in the future?

• **Sequence and Readiness:** How ready is the initiative to proceed? Do other steps logically need to come first? Is there a risk of proceeding too soon? What are the impacts of deferral? Is this urgent to us and our goals, or someone else?

• **Public Commitment:** Have we committed to this project publicly? Within what timeframe? Are other external stakeholders involved in the execution of this project and to what extent?

• **External impact and influence vs. internal capacity and capabilities:** The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges/Threats (SWOT) analysis detailed in Appendix 2A; and the Political, Environmental, Social, Technological, Legal/Governance and Economical factors (PESTLE) analysis detailed in Appendix 2B Priorities and Initiatives allow the agency to make and prioritize decisions based on a reasonable balance between internal capacity and external influences.

CEO Report

Meeting: Board of Directors

Meeting Date: June 16, 2022

INFORMATION TYPE

Other

OPERATIONAL AND PROJECT UPDATES

SERVICE RESTORATION PLAN IN PLACE
Service suspended since January 30 due to low staffing levels will begin to be phased back in over the next two months. All service is planned to be restored by August 21 with the exception of route 68 planned for a September return. Overtime will be used to bring back service until the current class of motor coach operators have been trained.

JUNETEENTH
In 2021, Congress made Juneteenth (June 19th) a new federal holiday. In the last negotiation, we added it as a holiday in our contract with the Union. This year, we are starting a tradition of celebrating Juneteenth as a company, in partnership with the Union.

The celebration includes a Juneteenth polo that all staff can wear throughout the month of June, ads inside the buses, and on Monday June 20th (the day observed this year) we will have coffee and doughnuts for passengers at the transfer centers, as well as some give-a-ways (pins, stickers, and a card explaining the holiday) in the morning.

(Bryan Smith & Delisa Brown)

LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (LAC)
The Local Advisory Council met on June 7th.

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION (ANN ARBOR)
Staff continues to attend the City of Ann Arbor Transportation Commission meetings.

WATS POLICY COMMITTEE UPDATE
The April meeting of the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study Policy Committee did not meet in May, but will resume the monthly meeting in June.

STAFFING UPDATE
We are proud to announce that Robert Williams, has been selected to be the Mobility Services Manager.

Resolution 5/2022

AAATA Juneteenth Resolution

WHEREAS, the President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, declaring the slaves in Confederate territory free, paving the way for the passing of the 13th Amendment which formally abolished slavery in the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the Civil War ended with the surrender of General Lee at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865; and

WHEREAS, this news reached Texas when Union General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston Bay with Union troops. It was on June 19, 1865, that he announced: "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free."

WHEREAS, June 19th has a special meaning to African-Americans, and is called "JUNETEENTH" combine the words June and Nineteenth, and has been celebrated by the African American community for over 150 years; and

WHEREAS, on a larger scale, celebration of Juneteenth reminds each of us of the precious promises of freedom, equality, and opportunity which are at the core of the American Dream;

IT IS RESOLVED, that AAATA Board and staff recognize and commemorate the celebration of Juneteenth and encourage customers and staff to join in celebration and solidarity and raise awareness of the significance of this celebration in American History and in the heritage of our nation and community.

_____   _____

Eric A. Mahler, Chair   Jesse Miller, Secretary

June 16, 2022   June 16, 2022

Long Range Plan – DRAFT
Executive Summary

Executive Summary

TheRide 2045 is a Long-Range Plan for transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. The plan lays out a shared vision and strategy for transit over the next 25 years. It focuses on improving **social equity** by providing better transportation to jobs, education, services and housing, **improving our environment** by giving travelers efficient transportation alternatives, and **supporting a strong economy** by better connecting businesses and people. The result will be a more competitive transit system that will **grow ridership**, resulting in a more sustainable and vibrant community.

In summary, the plan calls for a vastly expanded suite of public transit services and infrastructure to be implemented over 25 years.

Highlights of the plan include:

- Two high-speed Bus Rapid Transit lines that will form the backbone of the network

- 10 minute or better service with priority features on high-use corridors

- High-frequency network of 15-minute or better services across the service area

- Better off-peak services, including a minimum of 30-minute frequency service throughout the service area, 7-days per week

- Later weekend and weeknight service hours

- Enhanced On-Demand service including overnight with expanded coverage areas and shorter wait times

- Four new transit hubs and improvements to our two Transit Centers to better connect services across our community

- A zero-emissions bus fleet

- Partnerships and collaborations to enhance regional transit, first/last mile solutions and general transit outcomes

- Infrastructure plans to enable service growth and enhance the customer experience

- Technology plans to enhance customer experience and operational efficiency
- An achievable financial plan that effectively harnesses important funding opportunities from State and Federal governments while also highlighting how TheRide can work towards developing alternative funding sources.

Benefits of the Plan

TheRide 2045 is a transformational plan that will make transit **faster** and **more attractive**, and fundamentally change how transit is provided in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. It will significantly improve transit's attractiveness, efficiency, reliability, accessibility, speed, and convenience. Transit riders will experience service that is more frequent, comfortable and reliable while also being provided with more travel options and shorter trips all day, every day. Coupled with new policies from outside partners, these enhancements will make transit even more attractive, increase ridership and access to destinations, and reduce private automobile dependency.

Each community will benefit from the resulting structural change to travel. In particular, seniors, people with disabilities, minorities, low-income groups, and anyone else with more limited access to private automobiles will have better access to jobs, education, social services, shopping, and housing. Fewer cars on the road improves the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This broader shift to transit will incentivize more walkable, vibrant, and healthy communities. Transit investments also reduce overall community costs for transportation – as it results in long-term reductions in municipal spending on roads and parking and individual spending on fuel and cars.

More equitable access to high-quality transportation for jobs, education and housing	Reduces transportation costs
More walkable, vibrant communities	Less infrastructure required for parking
Healthier environment for everyone	Reduces car dependency

Figure 1 Community benefits of TheRide 2045

Expected Outcomes

100% increase in the level of service experienced by the average rider

123% increase in the level of service experienced by those in low and very low Opportunity Index Areas[1]

39% faster travel time for the average trip taken by transit

97% of jobs will be near high-frequency transit[2]

7-11% reduction of transportation-related emissions

150-165% ridership growth expected

6.9 million car trips avoided

100% accessible services[3]

Figure 2 Expected outcomes[123]

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[1] Level of service measured as the average buses per hour passing through a .25 mile walk radius. Average rider reflects 2019 ridership data. Opportunity Index areas are defined by the Washtenaw Opportunity Index.

[2] High-frequency transit is defined as 15-minute or better service during peak times. Proximity is defined as within a .7 mile walk. All analysis is focused on the three member municipalities of TheRide (The City of Ann Arbor, The City of Ypsilanti and The Township of Ypsilanti).

[3] Bus stop accessibility is subject to municipal sidewalks and permitting

Current State and Future Context

The vision for society is changing, and transit and TheRide have a role to play. Addressing changing societal trends in population, employment, and a greater emphasis on equity and environmental sustainability will require significant improvements and investments in transportation systems, infrastructure, and policy. The Ride 2045 provides a blueprint for these short and long-term efforts. This includes capturing funding opportunities from the state and federal governments, and efficiently spending it on major infrastructure projects that are required to maintain existing service and to meet the changing needs of the community.

The COVID-19 pandemic has added to the those changing dynamics with shifts in ridership, travel patterns, and community expectations. Additionally, the challenges of operating within a diverse, multi-jurisdictional area add to the importance of establishing a clear vision for transit to unite behind and build toward. Success at TheRide requires many collaborators, including various municipalities, organizations, institutions, individuals, and TheRide itself to work together towards a common vision.

The following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges summarize the key facets of the current state and future context of transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area that have helped to drive and shape TheRide 2045. Overall, TheRide is performing strongly, with promising opportunities to build on over the next 25 years.
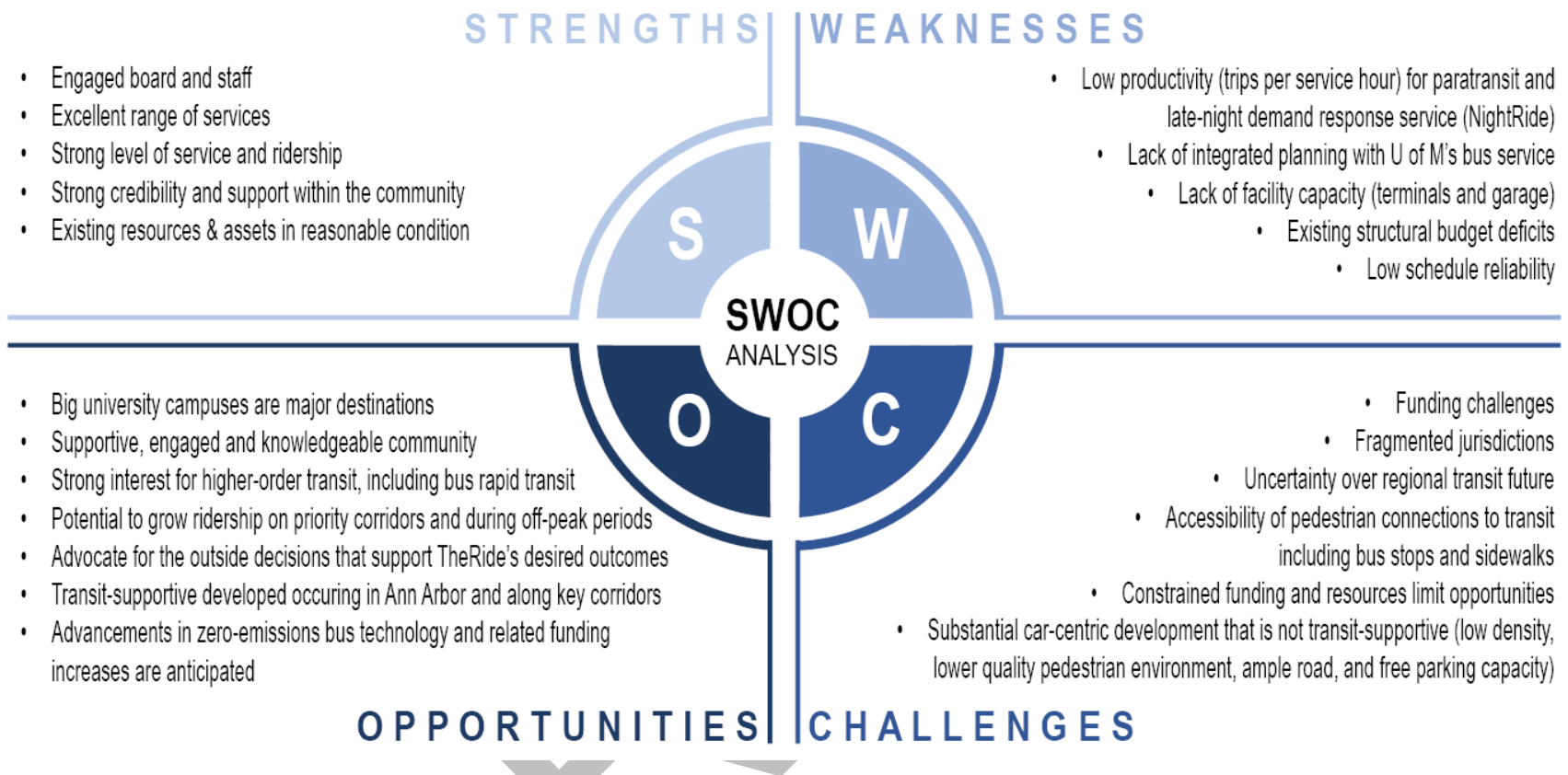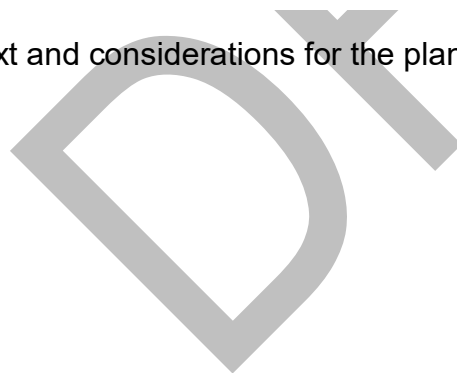
STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES

- Engaged board and staff
- Excellent range of services
- Strong level of service and ridership
- Strong credibility and support within the community
- Existing resources & assets in reasonable condition

- Low productivity (trips per service hour) for paratransit and late-night demand response service (NightRide)
- Lack of integrated planning with U of M's bus service
- Lack of facility capacity (terminals and garage)
- Existing structural budget deficits
- Low schedule reliability

SWOC ANALYSIS

S | W

O | C

OPPORTUNITIES | CHALLENGES

- Big university campuses are major destinations
- Supportive, engaged and knowledgeable community
- Strong interest for higher-order transit, including bus rapid transit
- Potential to grow ridership on priority corridors and during off-peak periods
- Advocate for the outside decisions that support TheRide's desired outcomes
- Transit-supportive developed occuring in Ann Arbor and along key corridors
- Advancements in zero-emissions bus technology and related funding increases are anticipated

- Funding challenges
- Fragmented jurisdictions
- Uncertainty over regional transit future
- Accessibility of pedestrian connections to transit including bus stops and sidewalks
- Constrained funding and resources limit opportunities
- Substantial car-centric development that is not transit-supportive (low density, lower quality pedestrian environment, ample road, and free parking capacity)

Figure 3 Key context and considerations for the plan

Process

TheRide 2045 included rigorous public engagement and analysis. The development of the plan has occurred over four phases that are outlined in the graphic below.

Phase 1: Guidance (Sep 2019- Mar 2020 & Feb- July, 2021)   **Phase 2: Analysis (Mar-Aug, 2021)**   **Phase 3: Development (July 2021- Feb, 2022)**   **Phase 4: Finalization (Jan-Jun, 2022)**
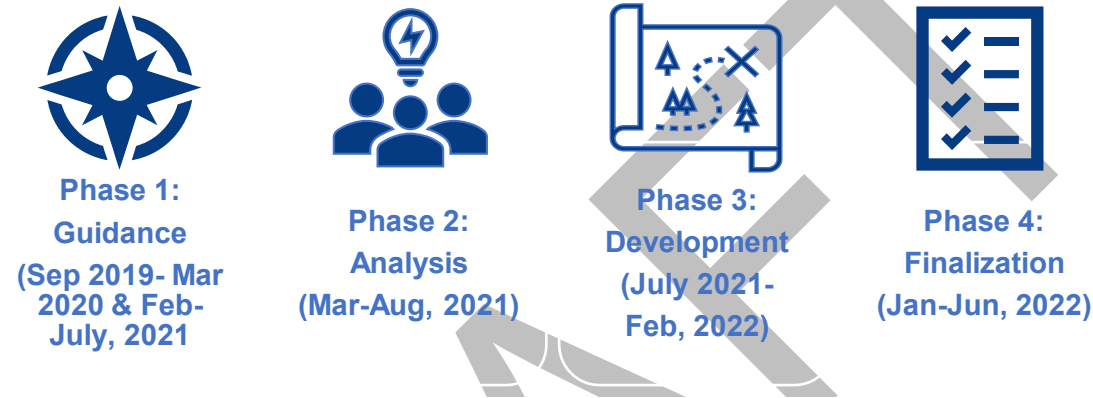
Figure 4 Process timeline

The first phase was Guidance, which developed a guiding framework for the project and established goals and objectives for the project. The next phase was Analysis, where TheRide's current situation, the changing landscape for transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area and potential solutions were evaluated. This included an assessment of how the community would change in terms of demographics, built-form, and technology over the next 25-years. In the third phase, solutions were consolidated into potential scenarios based on varying levels of funding. The last phase narrowed in on a single, final plan for transit and provided additional supporting details such as developing financial and implementation plans.

Significant public and stakeholder engagement was held throughout the planning process. Three rounds of engagement were held in Phase 1, 3 and 4 respectively. A Public Advisory Group (PAG) was also formed that met seven times and provided guidance throughout the process. In total, over 4475 points of interaction were recorded through in-person and virtual engagement sessions, surveys, email, and phone.

During this engagement, the community generally communicated a strong desire for transformational change. This included a vision of enhancing transit's role in overall mobility options for the community with a particular focus on improving transportation equity.

Guiding Framework

The development of the plan was shaped by several guiding elements. Principally, the TheRide's Board of Directors sets the outcomes/goals that the organization should seek to achieve (i.e., Ends Policies). In addition, TheRide 2045 aimed for consistency with community and transportation plans in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area such as A2Zero, the Ypsilanti Township Master Plan, Shape Ypsilanti, and the Ann Arbor Zoning Districts for Transit Corridors. Lastly, public and stakeholder engagement provided another layer of guidance, particularly related to the prioritization of various goals. Figure 5 sets out some key plan goals and corresponding sources of community values.

Community Values Drive Transit's Goals:

- Increase social equity, access to jobs, education, and housing
- Help the environment and reduce air pollution
- Support existing and new businesses

Figure 5 Plan goals and sources of community values

Service Network
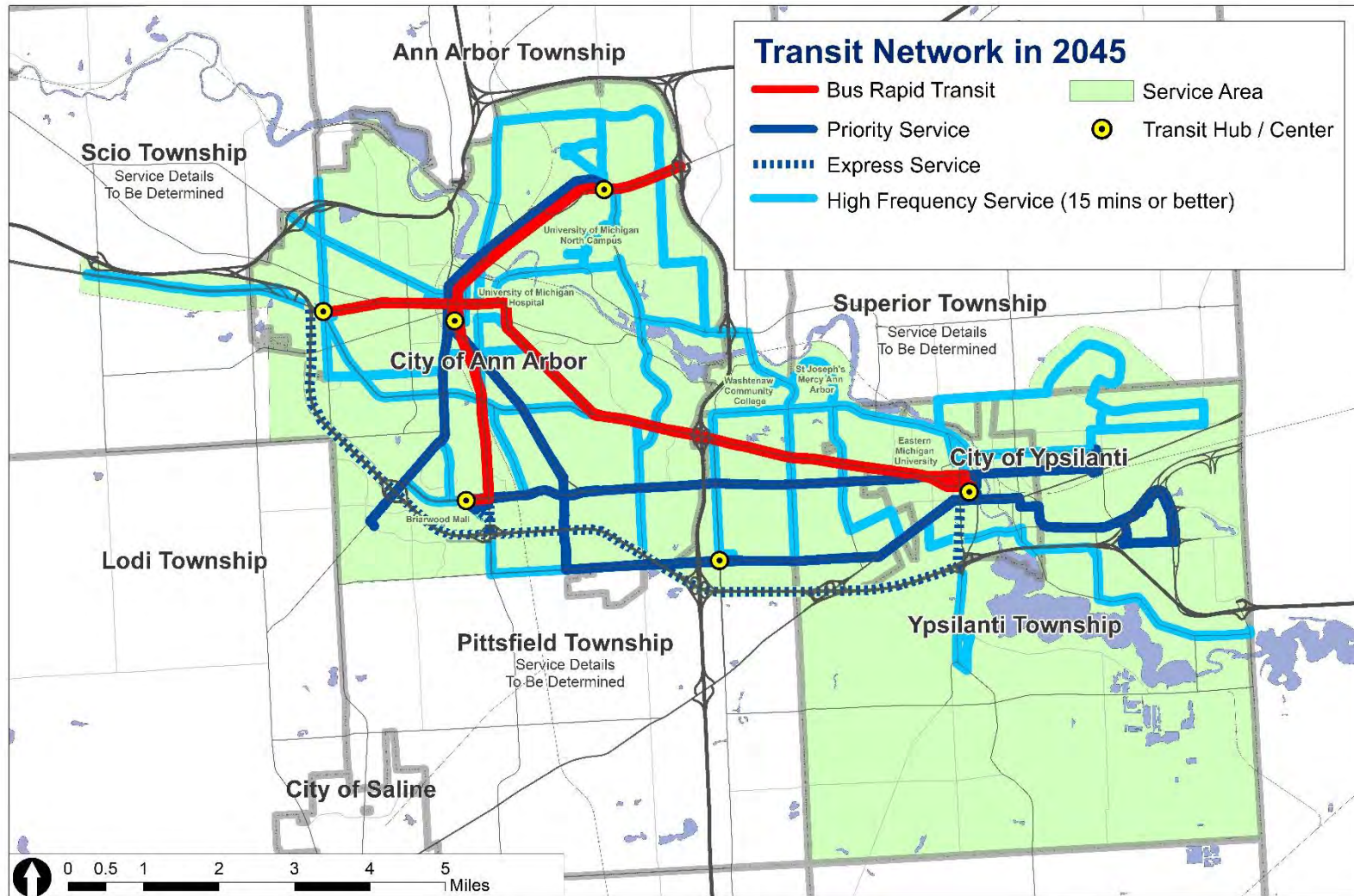
Figure 6 Planned service network in 2045

Public engagement feedback

"It is critical to have buses that operate more often, and with more routes. As a parent of small children, it is nearly impossible for me to wait with them for such delayed wait times. It is also not feasible for me to use the bus to do everyday errands. If the goal is to decrease auto use, public transportation must increase drastically!"

Figure 6 shows major components of the planned network in 2045. Additional local service routes with greater than 15-minute frequencies are proposed and are too numerous to depict on this map.

The plan envisions TheRide's fixed-route service evolving from local routes in a hub-n-spoke configuration to a high-frequency network with more opportunities for quick transfers and direct trips. The essential backbone of the new network are two Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes, providing fast and reliable north-south and east-west connections throughout the service area. The rest of the network is designed to allow riders to travel faster and maximize BRT's transportation benefits across the system. Figure 7 describes and compares the various new enhanced services that will be provided.

Express

- Point-to-point type service with a few intermediate stops

Priority

- Conventional bus
- Route is somewhat enhanced with transit priority features
- Fewer stops
- Combined with routes that serve all stops

Bus Rapid Transit

- Large vehicle
- Route is greatly enhanced with transit priority features
- Fare payment before boarding
- Fewer high-amenity stops

Transit priority features include dedicated lanes so transit does not compete with traffic, traffic signal priority and queue jump lanes. Transit priority features make service faster and more efficient and reliable.

Figure 7 New enhanced services

Figure 8 Example of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station - Ontario Growth Secretariat, Ministry of Municipal Affairs (2014)

More "One-seat" Journeys

The revised structure of the network will significantly benefit passengers by unlocking more "one-seat" journeys; direct trips where passengers don't have to make any transfers and can sit in one seat on one bus. This is accomplished by having longer routes and more routes travelling in various directions. Some of the proposed new direct connections that align with major travel needs are:

- Eastern Ypsilanti Twp – Downtown and south Ann Arbor

- City of Ypsilanti and Eastern Ypsilanti and Superior Twps – Northeast Ann Arbor

- City of Ypsilanti – West Ann Arbor

- South, southwest and west Ann Arbor – Northeast Ann Arbor

- State/Eisenhower – West Ann Arbor

- Northeast Ann Arbor – Carpenter/Ellsworth

Public engagement feedback

"It is easy to get in and out of downtown from all around (Ann Arbor). But it is really cumbersome to get to another part in town without having to go downtown. We need transit for people outside of downtown who just want to go a couple miles radius in their own neighborhood without having to go downtown."

Faster trips

TheRide 2045 would create faster travel for most trips. The map below shows some travel time changes throughout the service area.
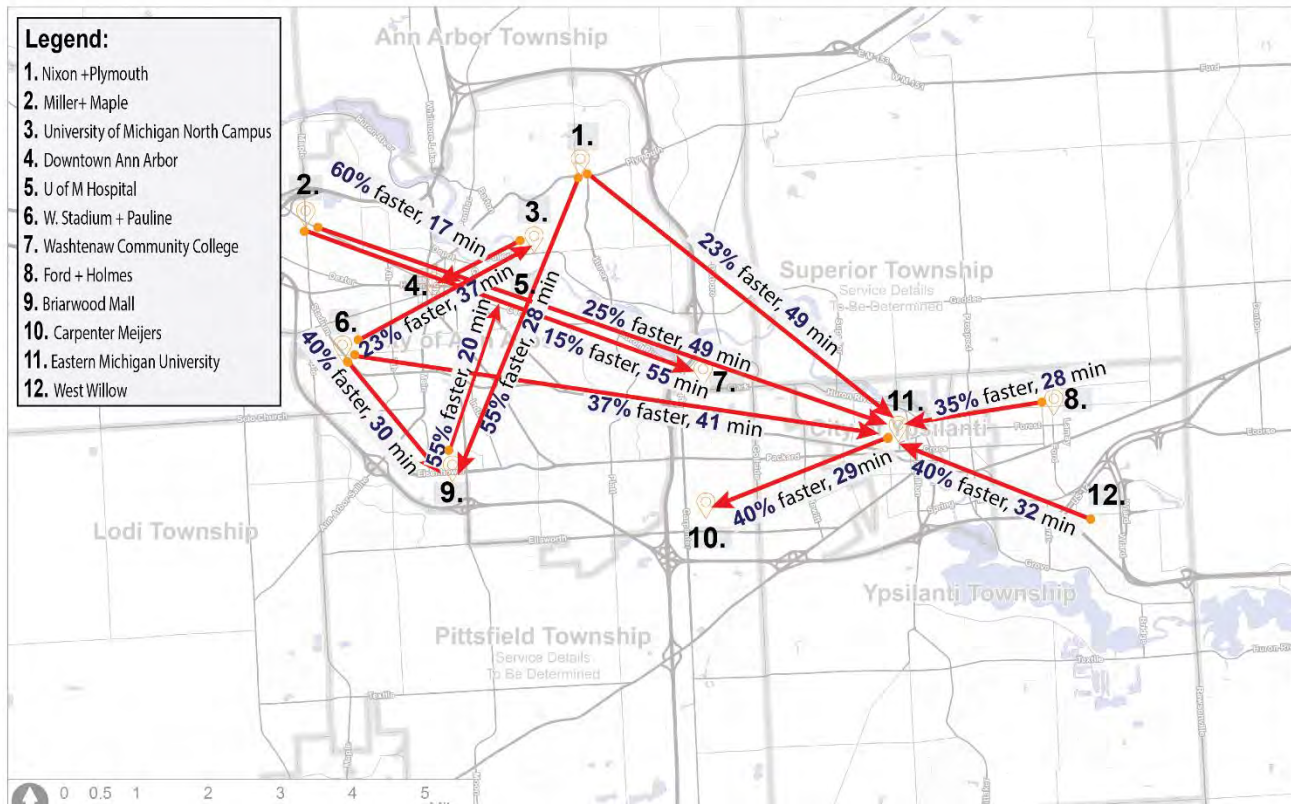
Figure 9 2045 Travel time changes between various areas[5]

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[5] Travel times were estimated using Remix which accounts for average walk times to/from origin/destination/transfer points, wait time and in-bus time

Other service features

TheRide 2045 focuses investment on off-peak service which helps people who rely on transit most. This includes essential and lower wage workers, women, students, and seniors. Figure 10 shows planned improvements to service span and minimum off-peak frequency of fixed-route services.

	Service Span	Minimum Frequency
Weekday	6 AM-12 AM	30
Saturday	7 AM-12 AM	30
Sunday	8 AM-9 PM	30

Figure 10 Off-peak service enhancements

Additionally, overnight On-Demand service will be tripled including an expansion to cover all of the member municipalities and to provide shorter wait times.

Public engagement feedback

"As someone who relied on AAATA for over a decade to get to and from my job as a food service worker, because of the winding routes and where I lived, it took over an hour to get downtown, and often on weekends I would be forced to use cabs instead of the bus because of the short hours… I know it's easy to focus resources toward the 9 to 5 crowd, but we must center those who rely on the bus exclusively for transport."

TheRide will continue to implement improvements to A-Ride recommended in the recent Paratransit Study. This includes a greater focus on service integration across all services, including A-Ride and improved accessibility measures on all services. A-Ride capacity will continue to grow to meet demographic and trip needs, and will mirror the fixed-route area.

We are also planning for dramatic improvements and access to other on-demand services across the community.

IMPLEMENT

Paratransit study recommendations, including:
- Expand service monitoring and develop service standards
- Enhance scheduling and dispatch technology

ASSESS

- On-demand service
- Alternative service delivery methods

EXPAND

- Service to cover all member municipalities
- Current network to fill coverage gaps

IMPROVE

- Existing on-demand levels of service to lower wait time
- Technology use and performance monitoring to increase efficiency
- Service standards to achieve organizational goals

EXPLORE

- Non-emergency medical transportation

Figure 11 Actions and strategies for non-fixed route service offerings

Infrastructure

Infrastructure plays a critical role in supporting the expansion and improved efficiency of transit operations. Customer-facing infrastructure, such as transit centers and bus shelters similarly have huge impact on the customer experience and accessibility. The plan considers a broad interpretation of infrastructure, including transit facilities, stops, terminals, fleet, technology, and some of the organizational changes required to support these plans, including an expanded workforce.

Facilities

Facility highlights of the plan are shown in Figure 13

Figure 12 Example of a transit hub

Improvements
- Enhance accessibility at every level
- Upgrade Blake and Ypsilanti Transit Centers
- Augment terminal wayfinding

Expansion
- Development of new bus garage
- Construction of four new Transit Hubs:
  - State & Eisenhower area
  - Carpenter & Ellsworth area
  - Nixon & Plymouth area
  - Jackson & Maple area

Exploration
- Explore mixed-use real estate at transit hubs to derive additional sources of revenue, better match demand, and improve the first-last mile and waiting experience

Highlights: Facilities

Figure 12 Facilities highlights of the plan

Fleet, technology, and Workforce

Fleet, technology, and workforce highlights of the plan are shown in Figure 13

Highlights: Fleet, Technology, and Workforce

Fleet
Diversification:
- the addition of articularted buses
- expanded use of smaller vehicles
- improved system efficiency
- 100% Zero-emission vehicles

Technology
Expand investment in technology, including enhanced performance monitoring

Modernize fare collection and trip planning

Workforce
Increase workforce capacity to successfully plan, integrate, and implement elements and recommendations of the Long Range Plan

Figure 13 Fleet, technology, and workforce highlights of the plan

Regional connections and other collaborations

Ann Arbor is a growing job center that attracts talent from across the region. It also has limited parking and congestion challenges. Successful long-distance express bus service such as AirRide and D2A2 can be expanded, including for the Ypsilanti area. TheRide can work with the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) to consider inter-county services such as that shown in Figure 15:
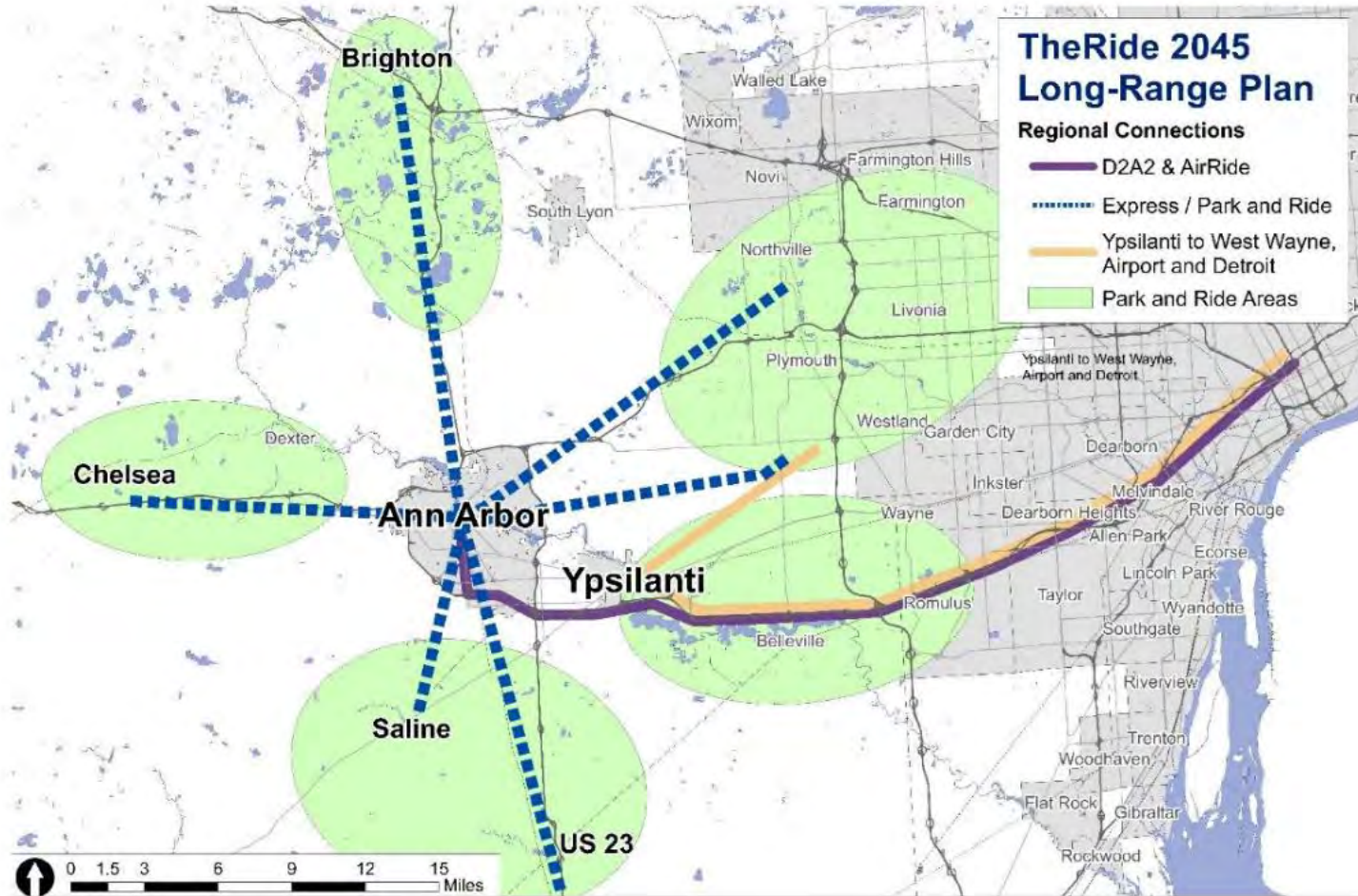
Figure 15. TheRide recommended regional connections in 2045

Advocacy & Partnerships

Advancing the goals of TheRide 2045 while building more equitable and sustainable communities will require TheRide to build new and stronger partnership with outside decision makers at the local, state, regional, and federal levels.

The demand and ease of using transit is heavily influenced by municipal land use and transportation planning decisions such as overall density, urban form, walkability, and parking policy. Regional transit development is addressed by the RTA. The State of Michigan and MDOT control many roads, as well as funding, regulatory, and key policy decisions like HOV lanes and road pricing. The federal government can provide much of the capital funding needed to implement this future vision. Clearly many of the factors influencing success of this plan are outside the direct control of TheRide. This plan recommends expanded partnerships and more robust advocacy with external stakeholders as follows:

ADVOCATE	COLLABORATE	ENGAGE	POLICY	PROMOTE	IDENTIFY
For alterative funding sources for sustainability and reduced property tax. For transit-friendly policies to encourage more transit use.	To implement first-last mile solutions by spatial context. With the University of Michigan on transit opportunities.	With non-member municipalities on the future of contracted services. With supportive organizations and advocates.	Develop guidelines to promote transit-friendly land use, street design, and parking policy.	Encourage transit-friendly traffic calming. Transit-supportive network connectivity.	Pedestrian connection enhancement priorities for transit. Transit-supportive roadways for future service areas.

Figure 16. Actions and strategies related to external collaborations

Implementation

Figure 17. Implementation plan highlights

Financial Plan

Central to the success of TheRide 2045 is financial management. TheRide must pursue new funding opportunities, carefully maximize local, state, and federal funds, and be careful not to overcommit or under-invest. Having a long-term plan that helps sequence and contextualize individual decisions is crucial. Figure 18 outlines planned operating and capital costs at each implementation stage and categorizes expenses as either Operating or Capital costs.

Operating costs are expenditures incurred daily, like employee wages, fuel, and bus maintenance. These costs are funded mostly through local property taxes with some support from passenger fares, state and federal grants and advertising revenue. While this plan makes contingencies for the continuation of this funding structure, other funding sources are recommended to be pursued to reduce the proportion of funding derived from local property tax.

	2023-2028	2029-2033	2034-2038	2039-2045
Annual Operating Cost	$63 M	$73 M	$82 M	$90 M
Increase in operating cost (from previous)	13%	16%	12%	10%
Capital Cost	$123 M	$233 M	$129 M	$174 M

Note: all figures are in 2021 dollars

Figure 18. Operating and capital budget

Capital costs are durable assets such as vehicles, buildings, and infrastructure. Figure 19 highlights the various types of capital investment. Over 25 years the largest investment is maintaining existing infrastructure, with $304 million dedicated to state of good repair and vehicle replacement over the 25-year period to 2045. Expansion of BRT and transit priority measures is the second largest investment at $176 million, and new facilities (i.e. terminals, garages, etc.) will require $113 million.
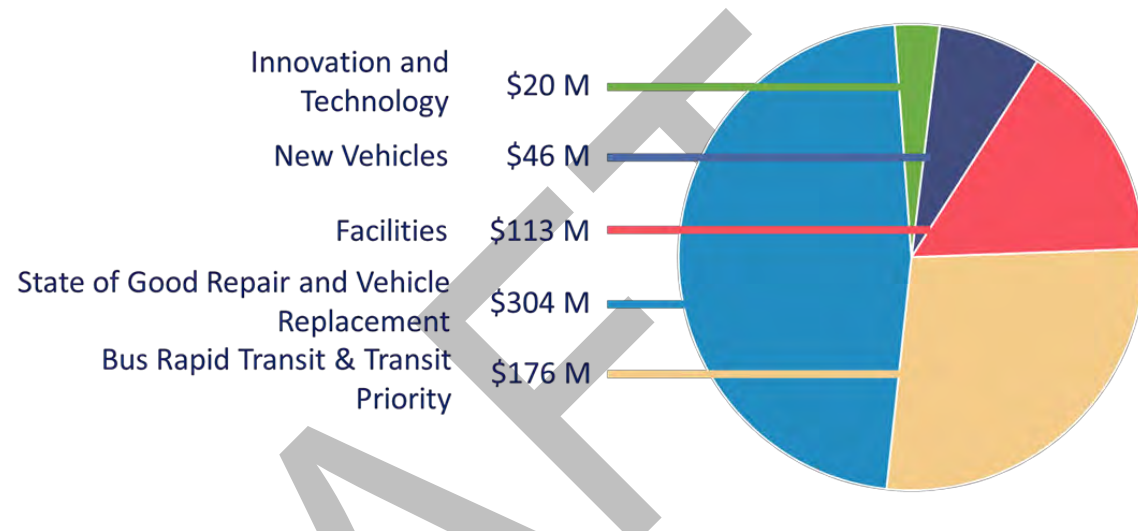
Figure 19. Capital costs

Capital funding comes from various sources. Figure 20 shows the proportional breakdown of capital funding sources. TheRide has an important opportunity to tap federal capital funding and grants to help build much of the plan's capital requirements.

6%	Capital Reserve
12%	Unidentified Sources
35%	Discretionary Grant Opportunity
47%	Stable Federal and State Funding
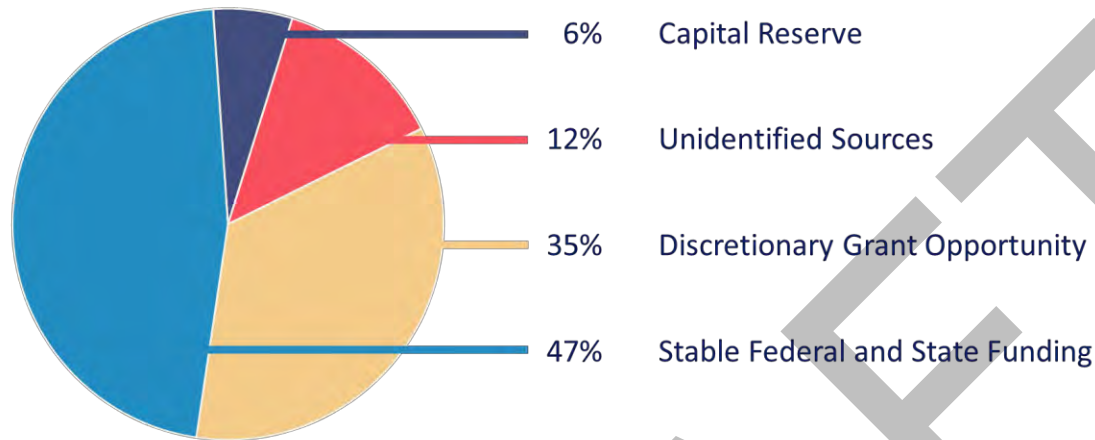
Figure 20. Capital funding sources

The biggest funding sources comes from stable federal and state *formula* funding. Discretionary grant opportunities from federal and state partners are the other big source of funding. These come from competitive grant processes that have a high likelihood of success and are generally tied to specific projects such as bus rapid transit or new facilities. Funding timelines and proportional funding sources have been planned to optimize grant application success with project impact and cost efficiency.

Smaller funding amounts come from a capital reserve fund that will be built up through the local millage. The remaining amount of 12% will be funded through currently unidentified sources. Potential sources of funding include, other grant opportunities, revenue from partnerships, additional fare revenue and various taxation opportunities. The plan outlines alternative funding sources to pursue to fill this unidentified funding and to help reduce reliance on local property taxes and provide more sustainable sources of funding. Overall, this financial plan is achievable but also flexible should any surprises arise along the journey.

In closing, TheRide 2045 responds to the growing needs of our communities with a blueprint for preserving and expanding transit services and access to local and regional destinations. It is an ambitious vision that will require partnerships, additional investment, and leadership. Through this vision, TheRide can help lead our communities towards a future with greater social equity, environmental benefits, and access to jobs.

TheRide 2045

Long Range Plan – DRAFT

June 2022
Left Turn Right Turn

Contents

Acknowledgements

TheRide 2045 project team wishes to acknowledge and thank the many contributors to the development of this plan:

- The Board of Directors, for providing high-level direction and vision for the development of the plan;

- The Public Advisory Group, for their time and insight provided through the various workshops and reviews;

- To TheRide staff, for their dedication and passion in delivering services every day, and sharing that direct knowledge with us to inform the plan;

- To the dozens of stakeholders we engaged with, for providing your perspective and knowledge to better the outputs;

- And to the thousands of individuals from our communities that we heard from, for taking the time to share your aspirations, concerns, and ideas for how to make transit better.

1 Introduction

TheRide 2045 is a Long-Range Plan that will transform transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. The plan lays out a strategy for transit over the next 25 years that will achieve the Board's stated vision:

A robust public transportation system that adapts to the area's evolving needs, environment, and quality of life.

Developing a long-range plan is a critical step toward transforming TheRide. It will allow the organization to plan further into the future and strive for substantial changes that would extend beyond the life of a typical 5-year plan. Simply put, many public transit projects (e.g., buying new buses and building new infrastructure) require significant investments and long timelines to complete. By planning with a longer-term horizon, TheRide can make sure short-term decisions align with a single shared long-term vision. The plan must be firm enough so TheRide can plan its budgets but be flexible enough to adapt to opportunities and challenges that arise.

Development of the plan began in the fall of 2019. Planning efforts were stalled due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and was resumed in 2021. Communities and stakeholders were actively engaged throughout the process, with significant input and guidance provided by TheRide's Board of Directors and a Public Advisory Group that was created for this project.

The plan focuses on improving **social equity** by providing better transportation to jobs, education, services, and housing, **improving our environment** by giving travelers efficient transportation alternatives, and **supporting a strong economy** by better connecting businesses and people. The result will be a more competitive transit system that will **grow ridership**, resulting in a more sustainable and vibrant community.

The following table summarizes the key elements covered by TheRide 2045:

Captured in the Long-Range Plan	Being addressed outside the Long-Range Planning Process
- Geography: - The core scope of evaluation covers the three member municipalities of TheRide: the City of Ann Arbor, the City of Ypsilanti, and the Township of Ypsilanti. - There is limited treatment of adjacent municipalities, with a focus on where current residents are already using TheRide's service. - Investments that are longer-term in nature, including: - Evolving the service network and introducing bus rapid transit, priority routes and high-frequency routes across the service area. - Other service features, including off-peak services, A-Ride, and on-demand services, - Changes to facilities, fleet and technologies, including construction of a new garage, transit hubs, a shift to a zero-emissions fleet, and improvements to fare and technologies - Regional connections and collaborations	- Exploration of an expanded service area or member representation within TheRide – these will be explored in consultation with other jurisdictions and based on the vision defined through this plan - Detailed planning of regional connections – this falls under the jurisdiction of the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) of Southeast Michigan - Detailed route design, that is the specific alignment for each route and service – this would be undertaken through the short-term planning process based on the overarching concepts elaborated in this plan - Organizational structure and design

TheRide

1.1 Current state

TheRide has high levels of customer satisfaction, ridership, and level of service for a transit agency of its size. Over the 10 years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, service expanded significantly. Much of the growth was driven by an ambitious 5-Year Transit Improvement Plan in 2014 that received strong community support and allowed TheRide to provide service to more places, operate more hours, and at an increased frequency. As a result, when COVID-19 started TheRide covered a larger service area, longer service span, and more frequent services along key corridors with record ridership.

As service levels increased, ridership also grew, albeit at a slower pace. The declining productivity (a key measure of service efficiency) was

Figure 1 TheRide Performance History – Source: TheRide

expected and is in line with a declining national trend in ridership productivity. Although productivity declined, the successful implementation of the 2014 plan enabled TheRide to increase ridership at a time when ridership decreased nationally due to declining gas prices and the emergence of Transportation Network Companies (e.g., Uber, Lyft).

As with transit across the country, TheRide was hard hit by COVID-19. Ridership was dramatically impacted and a temporary service plan was put into place focusing on high use corridors and essential destinations. In August 2021, TheRide reintroduced pre-pandemic levels of service, including adjustments to all routes and services. Initial data suggests ridership is beginning to return.

In addition to a strong fixed route bus service, TheRide provides a diverse array of services. Demand response services are undergoing a period of expansion and change in response to technological advances and changes in planning approaches. FlexRide has been used to replace low-demand fixed routes resulting in improved service quality and cost

efficiency. Steps are also being taken to improve the cost efficiency and service quality for A-Ride, GoldRide Demand Response, and FlexRide – Late Night and Holiday service, which are less cost-efficient compared to fixed route services.

Within the strong overall performance, various opportunities for improvement have been identified. These include high demand on certain corridors leading to overcrowding, low schedule reliability, some low productivity routes, and low levels of off-peak service. TheRide has been monitoring these issues and adjusting service to address them, and TheRide 2045 presents an opportunity to plan for adjustments to tackle them both in the near and long-term.

AAATA 2019 Ridership

The major source of ridership for TheRide is the University of Michigan Central Campus and downtown Ann Arbor. There is a large concentration of boardings at the Blake Transit Center and Ypsilanti Transit Center. Transfers represent a significant portion of these, confirming the important role that these locations play within the current and future network.

Secondary demand nodes are located at the southern end of Eastern Michigan University, Nixon Rd. and Plymouth Rd., the University of Michigan North Campus, Briarwood Mall, the Meijer on Carpenter Rd. and at Washtenaw Community College. Washtenaw Ave. provides the highest and most continuous ridership corridor in the area between two nodes in downtown Ann Arbor and downtown Ypsilanti. Other high ridership corridors lie between Plymouth/Nixon and Briarwood Mall and running north along State St. Both corridors also show high levels of ridership relative to service provided.
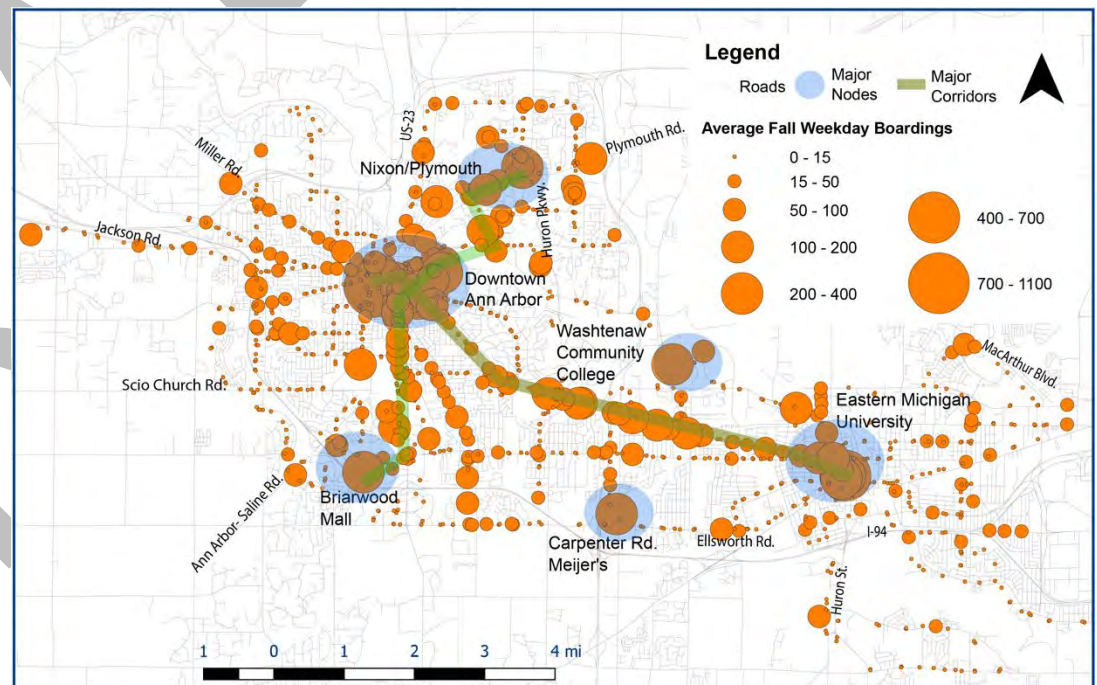
Figure 2 - AAATA 2019 Ridership – Source: TheRide

Washtenaw County Equity and Opportunities Map

Examining the equity considerations of the current transit service, the greatest equity challenges are located in the southeast service area for TheRide. While most of this area has good levels of service, the area lacks fast and direct travel to where people are going. This results in the correlation of low Opportunity Index scores (see figure) and longer trip lengths.

The Opportunity Index created by Washtenaw County measures access to opportunities in five categories: health, job access, economic well-being, education & training, and community engagement & stability. Very low opportunity areas are concentrated within the City of Ypsilanti, eastern parts of Ypsilanti Township, and southern parts of Superior Township. Improving direct and fast service to these areas would improve connectivity and access to opportunities for residents in this area and are considered in TheRide 2045.

Key
Opportunity Index

- Very Low
- Low
- Moderate
- High
- Very High
- Low Number of Households
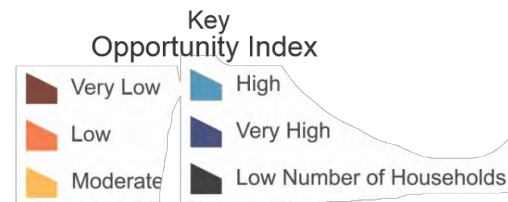
Figure 3: Opportunity Index Map – Source: http://www.opportunitywashtenaw.org/

1.2 Future context

The Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area is a dynamic region with diverse municipalities. The next 25 years will see moderate levels of change to the area, including population and employment growth in the area. While employment growth will be focused in the urban centers, population growth will be distributed through a combination of suburban sprawl as well as key urban destinations (including around University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University campuses).

Municipalities in the region have all committed to supporting their communities to be more sustainable, resilient, and vibrant. In some cases, these commitments include transit-supportive plans that result in more livable communities – aspiring to improve densities, improve pedestrian access, and introduce parking constraints in certain areas. As a result, transit will continue to play a vital role in supporting the economic, environmental, and equity goals of the area.

To that end, transit must be designed within the future context and travel needs. Population growth and employment growth are the two most significant factors used to forecast future transit demand. Demographic variables such as age, income, employment type, etc. were also considered in developing transit demand forecasts, as were municipal plans related to transportation and urban development.

Major growth in transit demand (relative to pre-COVID-19 numbers) is projected to occur in:

- downtown Ann Arbor,

- along the Plymouth Rd. corridor, and

- at the two University of Michigan campuses.

Good growth is also expected at the W. Stadium/Liberty/Jackson, Washtenaw/Huron Pkwy, Carpenter/Ellsworth nodes and along State St. Elsewhere, strong transit demand growth is projected to occur around Eastern Michigan University and along the Washtenaw Corridor.

The following sections provide additional detail regarding key factors that have been considered in forecasting transit demand, and how these factors change in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area over the next 25 years.

Population and Employment Growth

	Population Growth 2020-2045		Employment Growth 2020-2045	
	Percent Growth	Absolute Growth	Percent Growth	Absolute Growth
Ann Arbor City	8.7%	10,500	9.6%	12,750
Ann Arbor Township	12.7%	1,000	11.6%	1,250
Ypsilanti City	6.8%	1,500	9.8%	1,250
Ypsilanti Township	11.0%	6,000	10.0%	1,750
Pittsfield Township	32.6%	13,750	13.8%	3,750
Scio Township	33.3%	6,500	10.5%	1,500
Superior Township	42.1%	5,750	6.8%	750
Total	15.8%	45,000	10.1%	23,000

Figure 4: Population and Employment Growth – Source: SEMCOG Regional Forecast

The rate of population growth is most significant in suburban township areas. However, strong growth is expected in urban areas for absolute population. Specific areas of note include:

- Downtown Ann Arbor,
- Plymouth Rd.,
- Superior Township east of Leforge Rd. and south of Geddes Rd.,
- the area around Carpenter/Ellsworth Rds.,
- the area around W. Michigan Ave./ W. Textile Rd., and

- the area around Packard Rd./Eisenhower Pkwy.

Adjacent to Washtenaw County, significant growth is expected in western Canton Township. Moderate growth is also expected in southeastern Livingston County and southwestern Oakland County.
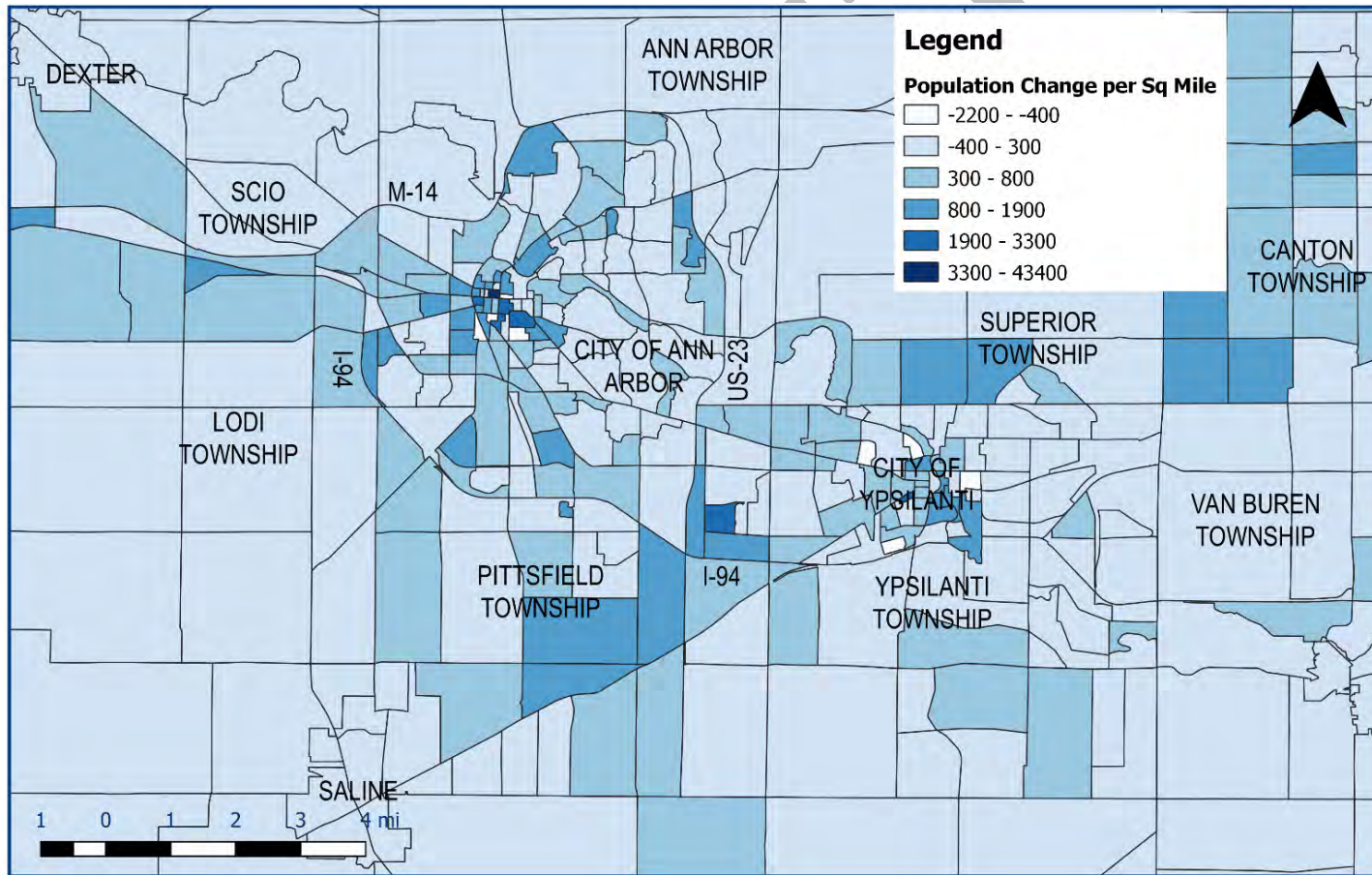
Figure 5 - Population Growth Map – Source: SEMCOG Regional Forecast

In comparison with population growth, employment growth is projected to have a far more urban focus. The University of Michigan campuses and downtown Ann Arbor will be the predominant drivers of employment growth. From a corridor perspective, projected employment growth aligns well with a linear route between Plymouth/US-23 and State St./I-94. Washtenaw Ave. east of US-23 is another area of notable projected employment growth.
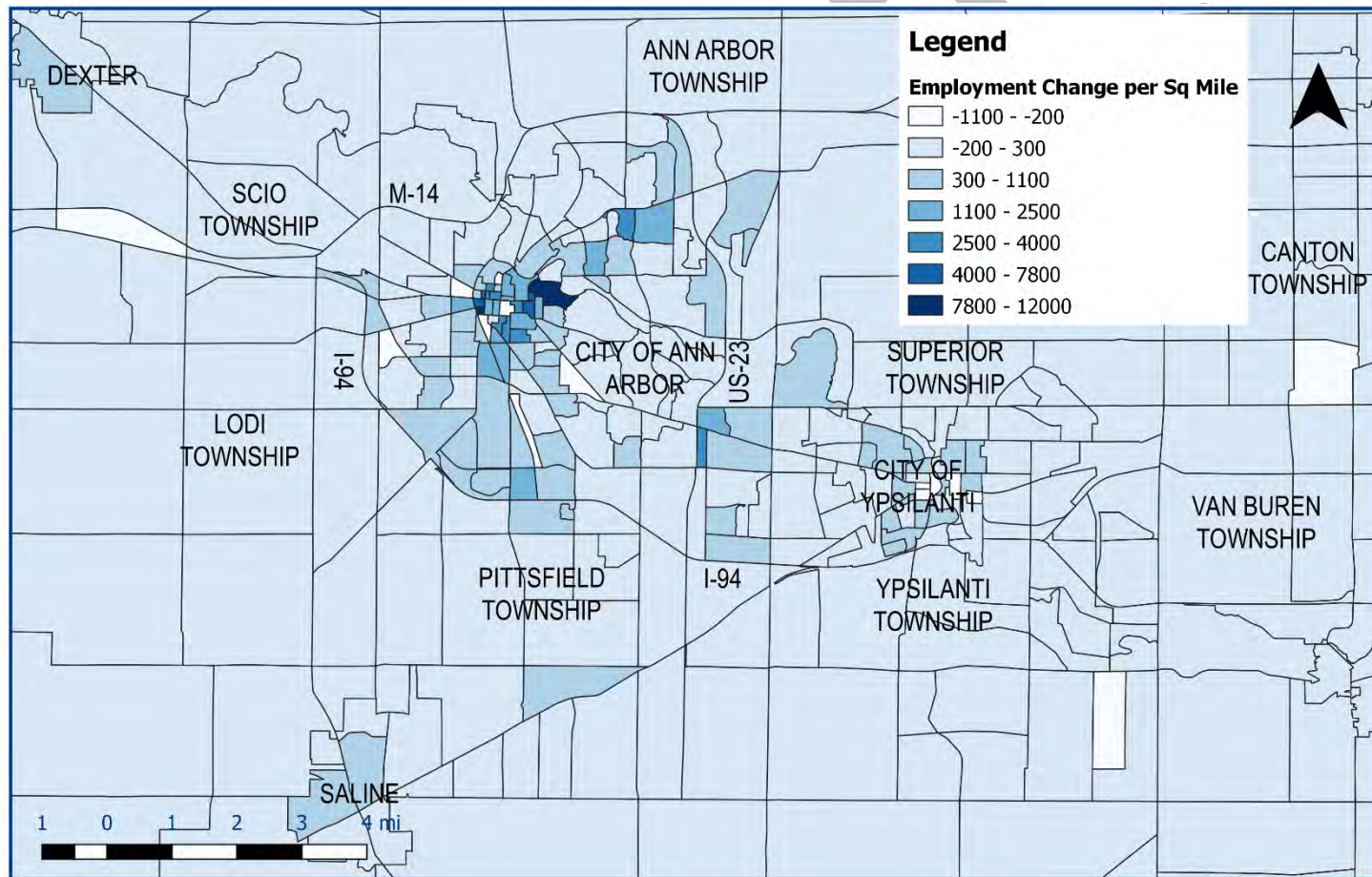
Figure 6 - Employment Growth Map – Source: SEMCOG Regional Forecast

Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area Travel Patterns 2045

Travel between the City of Ann Arbor and Pittsfield is forecasted to be the most significant inter-municipal flow in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area, which aligns with significant population growth in both. Travel in the area in general is focused on the City of Ann Arbor with large flows between the City of Ann Arbor and Scio and Ypsilanti Townships, and notable flows between the City of Ann Arbor and all area municipalities. In assessing forecasted travel flows within municipalities, travel between downtown and northeast Ann Arbor forms the dominant travel pattern. Other specific hubs of travel flows with

Figure 7 - Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area Travel Patterns 2045 – Source: SEMCOG Travel Forecast

many trips from several areas include the University of Michigan North campus, Nixon/Plymouth, Briarwood Mall, Eastern Michigan University, Washtenaw Ave. adjacent to US-23 and Carpenter/Ellsworth.

Regional Travel Patterns in 2045

Regional travel (highlighted in Figure 8) will continue to be a significant factor in the broader transportation context for the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area, with the following notable highlights:

- Travel between the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area and east (Canton Township, Dearborn, Detroit) is anticipated to continue to be the main flow by a significant margin. Canton Township is the dominant origin-destination within this Wayne County travel flow.

- Travel between the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area and southeast (Van Buren Township, Romulus Township) and southwest (Saline, Lodi Township) are projected to be other notable regional flows.

- Within the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area, the City of Ann Arbor is projected to be the dominant demand point for regional travel. Northern travel is almost exclusively to the City of Ann Arbor and is projected to have strong proportional growth.

- There are also sizable travel flows between Wayne County and the City of Ypsilanti and Townships of Pittsfield and Ypsilanti.
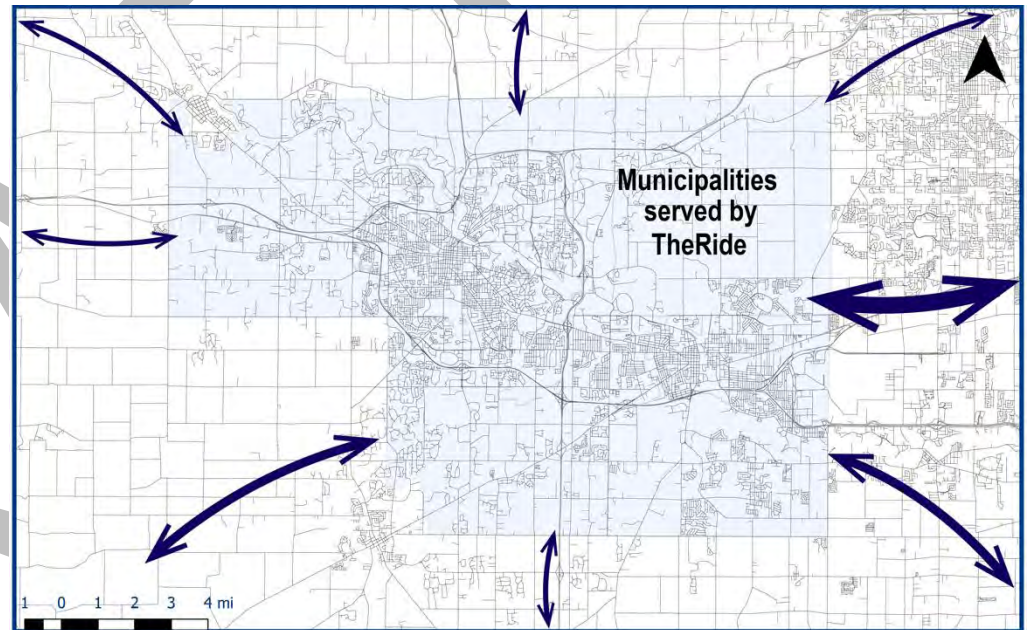
Figure 8 - Regional Travel Patterns 2045 – Source: SEMCOG Travel Forecast

12

Urban Structure and Transportation Context

Transit-supportive land use and built infrastructure conditions have a significant impact on future transit demand. Elements such as the availability of free parking, density, compactness, active transportation connectivity, the quality of active transportation environment and roadway design and capacity have all been shown to significantly influence transit ridership and transit sustainability.

Planning in the City of Ann Arbor significantly emphasizes and prioritizes transit-supportive policies, development, and infrastructure as compared to other municipalities in the region. Future ridership demand in the city is projected to exceed what would be expected considering only demographic changes. Transit-supportive changes are expected to be particularly strong in the four new Zoning District for Transit Corridors:

- Plymouth/Nixon
- State/Eisenhower
- W. Stadium/Liberty/Jackson
- Washtenaw/Huron Pkwy

The Washtenaw Ave. corridor has strong transit-supportive plans across all corridors. Conversely, new subdivision growth on the urban periphery will be considerably less transit-supportive than infill growth within existing urban areas.

COVID-19 Related Trends

The COVID-19 pandemic has added significant uncertainty to transit planning. It is expected that increased telecommuting rates, safety fears, an increase in private car purchases, and more dispersed housing purchases will have negative impacts on transit in the near term. However, stagnant incomes, increasing inequality, and greater mode share of active forms of transportation will positively affect ridership. Taking all of this into account, it is likely that the former factors will prove more influential in the short-term.

Due to the pandemic, several other trip-taking patterns are expected to change. The number of longer commutes is anticipated to decrease per capita as more people work from home. Furthermore, their longer commute trips could translate to more frequent, shorter trips. This is due to the additional time that has been gained from their previous

commute that could be used for retail and leisure uses. As work/school commutes are generally concentrated in peak periods, it is expected that there will be less peaking of travel demand.

This short-term outlook is much closer to pre-pandemic conditions as compared to the pandemic conditions. This will be the case even more so when looking at ridership, travel patterns, and expectations in general over the 25 years.

1.3 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges

The vision for society is changing, and transit and TheRide have a role to play. Addressing changing societal trends in population, employment, and a greater emphasis on equity and environmental sustainability will require significant improvements and investments in transportation systems, infrastructure, and policy. TheRide 2045 provides a blueprint for these short and long-term efforts. This includes capturing funding opportunities from the state and federal governments, and efficiently spending it on major infrastructure projects that are required to maintain existing service and to meet the changing needs of the community.

The COVID-19 pandemic has added to the those changing dynamics with shifts in ridership, travel patterns, and community expectations. Additionally, the challenges of operating within a diverse, multi-jurisdictional area add to the importance of establishing a clear vision for transit to unite behind and build toward. Success at TheRide requires many collaborators, including various municipalities, organizations, institutions, individuals, and TheRide itself to work together towards a common vision.

The following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges summarize the key facets of the current state and future context of transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area that have helped to drive and shape TheRide 2045. Overall, TheRide is performing strongly, with promising opportunities to build on over the next 25 years.

STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES

- Engaged board and staff
- Excellent range of services
- Strong level of service and ridership
- Strong credibility and support within the community
- Existing resources & assets in reasonable condition

- Low productivity (trips per service hour) for paratransit and late-night demand response service (NightRide)
- Lack of integrated planning with U of M's bus service
- Lack of facility capacity (terminals and garage)
- Existing structural budget deficits
- Low schedule reliability

SWOC ANALYSIS

- Big university campuses are major destinations
- Supportive, engaged and knowledgeable community
- Strong interest for higher-order transit, including bus rapid transit
- Potential to grow ridership on priority corridors and during off-peak periods
- Advocate for the outside decisions that support TheRide's desired outcomes
- Transit-supportive developed occuring in Ann Arbor and along key corridors
- Advancements in zero-emissions bus technology and related funding increases are anticipated

- Funding challenges
- Fragmented jurisdictions
- Uncertainty over regional transit future
- Accessibility of pedestrian connections to transit including bus stops and sidewalks
- Constrained funding and resources limit opportunities
- Substantial car-centric development that is not transit-supportive (low density, lower quality pedestrian environment, ample road, and free parking capacity)

OPPORTUNITIES | CHALLENGES

Figure 9 – SWOC Analysis

2. Process

TheRide 2045 process included rigorous public engagement and analysis. The development of the plan occurred over four phases as outlined below.

Phase 1: Guidance (Sep 2019- Mar 2020 & Feb-July, 2021)

Phase 2: Analysis (Mar-Aug, 2021)

Phase 3: Development (July 2021-Feb, 2022)

Phase 4: Finalization (Jan-Jun, 2022)
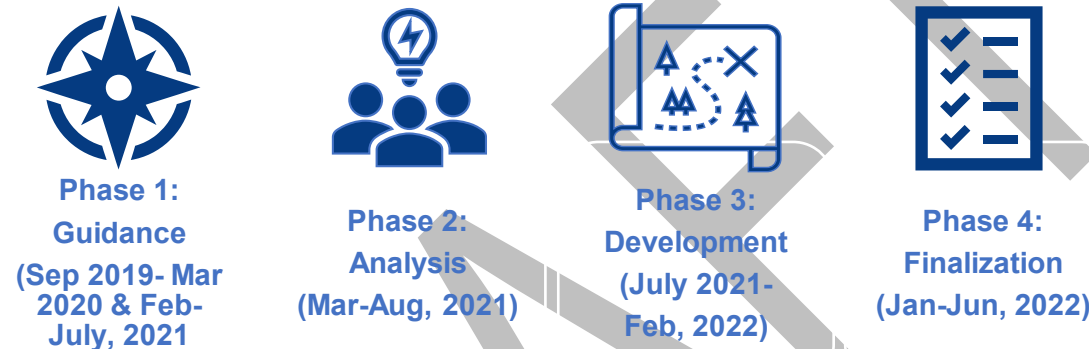
Figure 10 – Process Timeline

The first phase was Guidance, where we which developed a guiding framework including the goals, principles, and methodology to guide the remainder of the planning process. Feedback from the public, TheRide Board, and stakeholders were all considered. The Public Advisory Group was also established: 12 individuals with different backgrounds that were consulted with at regular points throughout the process to make sure that diverse perspectives were considered.

The next phase was Analysis, where TheRide's current situation was evaluated to consider what is working well and what could be improved. The future context over the next 25 years was considered next to ensure that transit was oriented to the expected changes in the community, including population, demographics, and employment. Existing plans from other municipalities and peer agencies were also considered, in addition to emerging technologies.

In the third phase, different elements and design options for the future plan were developed, before narrowing to four distinct scenarios based on different levels of funding.

In the fourth phase, Finalization, this draft plan was developed based on the results of the previous phases and the feedback received from the public and key stakeholders. The plan is intended to be an achievable roadmap that lays out the steps over the next 25 years to build a future transit system that achieves the goals developed in phase 1.

Significant public and stakeholder engagement was held throughout the planning process, including three formal rounds of engagement held in Phase 1, 3 and 4 respectively (summarized in greater detail in Section 2.2).

2.1 Planning Methodology

The development of the recommended solutions and initiatives for the TheRide 2045 is based on an assessment of the current state of the service and the future context within which service might operate against the Board's Ends (refer to Section 3.1). This included the identification of gaps and opportunities and a staged plan that continuously progresses towards the approved Ends.

The development of the plan relied on the construction and evaluation of plan options – amalgams of individual solutions and initiatives that together form a comprehensive plan that effectively advance the board's vision. These plan options vary according to the prioritization of specific gaps or opportunities, different funding scenarios, and themes related to the Board's Ends Policy such as access and equity, environmental sustainability, economic development, and transit mode share growth.

The following figure provides an overview of the planning methodology that was employed in developing the plan.
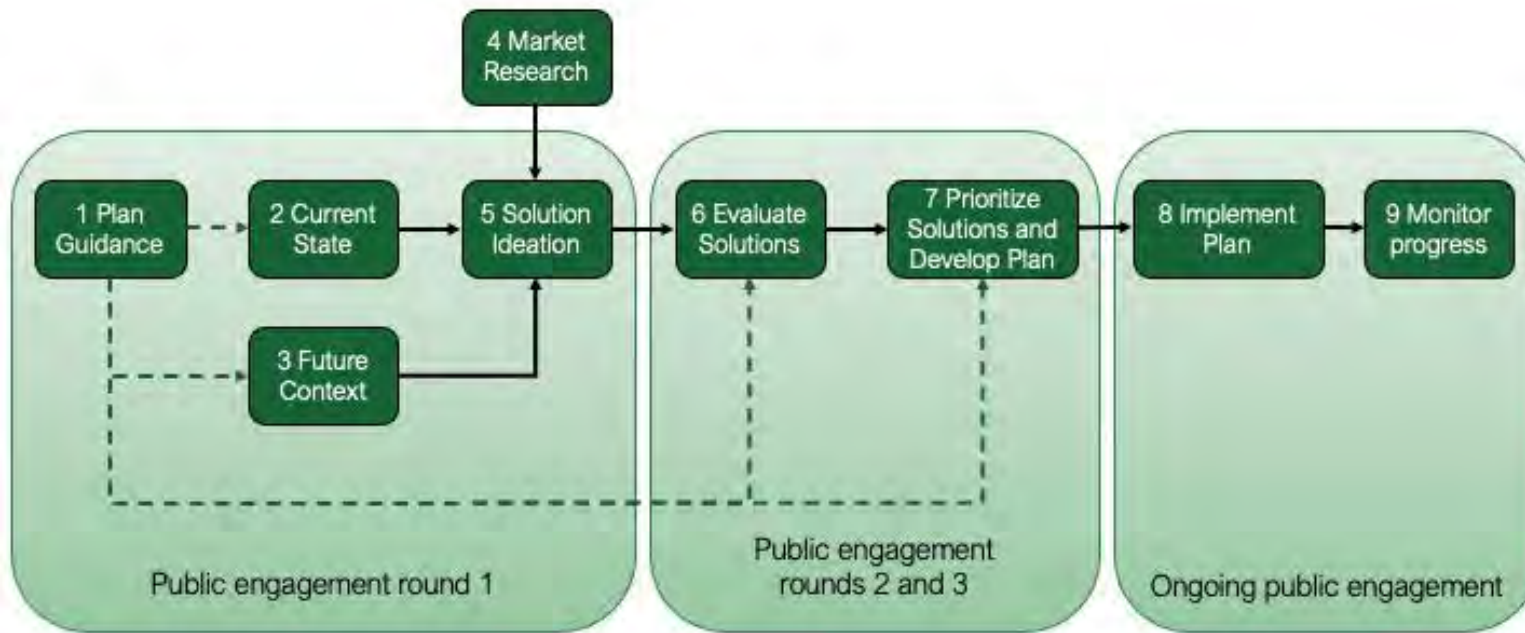
Figure 11 – Overview of Planning Methodology

Plan Guidance (1), summarized in Section 3, guided the entire project, informing areas of focus for research and analysis and establishing how solutions are evaluated and prioritized. The Current State and Future Context (2, 3), summarized in Sections 1.1 and 1.2, informed an understanding of TheRide's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOC) currently and in the future. Potential solutions (5) were generated based on the SWOC analysis, market research, and the first round of public and stakeholder engagement. Evaluation of the solutions (6) and then final selection and prioritization (7) were informed by the Plan Guidance and additional public engagement and are summarized within this plan. Following implementation of the plan (8), progress will be monitored and informed by ongoing public engagement.

Ridership and emission modelling was conducted to help establish a future context and to support the development and evaluation of solutions. Ridership projections consider both projected demographic changes (e.g.., population and jobs)

and the impacts of various service changes on ridership. The projected demographic changes are drawn from the SEMCOG regional forecast.[1] A sample of these outputs is found in Figures 8 and 9 in the future context section. The impacts of service changes on ridership are drawn from industry research.[2]

Greenhouse gas emissions modeling was developed based on the City of Ann Arbor's GHG inventory.[3] The modelling considers projected changes in zero-emission vehicle usage, demographic changes, and changes to the proportional use of transit relative to private car travel.

2.2 Public and Stakeholder Engagement Summary

TheRide2045 included significant public and stakeholder engagement at three key points of the process. The first round of public and stakeholder engagement included collecting comments from conversations with stakeholders and the public. Key themes were identified and each comment was tagged with the themes that applied. Based on this engagement some measures of success were then identified.

The second round of public and stakeholder engagement was open for comment from October 18 to November 24, 2021. During that time, the project team spoke to almost 700 people through direct in-person or on-line engagement, received 653 responses to the on-line survey, and had over 50 additional points of interaction (including emails, phone calls and contacts through social media). In this round the team made special efforts to speak with elected officials from all three members of the authority.

The third round of public and stakeholder engagement was open for comment from March 14 to April 22, 2022. During that time, the project team spoke to approximate 880 people through direct in-person engagement, 210 people in on-line public and stakeholder meetings, received 478 responses to the on-line survey, and over 25 additional points of

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[1] https://semcog.org/regional-forecast

[2] Litman, Todd. "Transit price elasticities and cross-elasticities." *Victoria, Canada: Victoria Transport Policy Institute* (2019).

Dunkerley, Fay, et al. "Bus fare and journey time elasticities and diversion factors for all modes." *RAND Corporation* (2018).

Coogan, Matthew, et al. Understanding changes in demographics, preferences, and markets for public transportation. No. Project H-51. 2018.

[3] https://www.a2gov.org/departments/sustainability/Carbon-Neutrality/Pages/Greenhouse-Gas-Inventory.aspx

interaction (including emails, phone calls and contacts through social media). In this round the team made special efforts to speak with non-transit users.

In total, over 4475 points of community interaction were recorded through in-person and virtual engagement sessions, surveys, email, and phone. During this engagement, the community generally communicated a strong desire for transformational change. This included a vision in overall transportation options for the community with a particular focus on improving transportation equity.

2.3 Public Advisory Group

A Public Advisory Group (PAG) was also formed that provided guidance throughout the process. The group comprised of 12 individuals of diverse backgrounds and helped inform key decisions. The PAG was established to reflect the demographics of TheRide customers, accounting for diversity of race/ethnicity, age, income, place and type of residence, transit ridership, disability, and gender identity. At every stage of the project development, the group provided insight based on their own personal experiences. The first meeting of the group was used to gain feedback on the current strengths and challenges of the various services offered by TheRide, and the overall vision for Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti's future regarding transit. Through subsequent meetings, the PAG helped review solutions, plan scenarios, and draft recommendations. They also helped frame public engagement material and review and reflect on community feedback. Due to Covid-19, all meetings were held online.

3. Guiding Framework

The development of the plan was shaped by several guiding elements. Principally, the TheRide's Board of Directors sets the outcomes/goals that the organization should seek to achieve (i.e. Ends Policies). In addition, TheRide 2045 aimed for consistency with community and transportation plans in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area such as A2Zero, the Ypsilanti Township Master Plan, Shape Ypsilanti, and the Ann Arbor Zoning Districts for Transit Corridors. Lastly, public and stakeholder engagement provided another layer of guidance, particularly related to the prioritization of various goals. Figure 12 sets out some key plan goals and corresponding sources of community values.

Community Values Drive Transit's Goals:

- Increase social equity, access to jobs, education, and housing
- Help the environment and reduce air pollution
- Support existing and new businesses

Figure 12 Plan goals and sources of community values

3.1 Board's Vision and Goals

The Board of Directors defines the outcomes/goals that TheRide is supposed to be achieving in the future (i.e. Ends Policies). The "vision" for the plan is to achieve, or make headway on achieving, _**all**_ of these outcomes, at least to some degree.

The Board establishes its Ends policies within its Vision for public transportation:

A robust public transportation system that adapts to the area's evolving needs, environment, and quality of life.

The Board of Director's Ends (outcomes/goals):

1. AAATA exists so that an increasing proportion of residents, workers, and visitors in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area utilize public transportation options that contribute to the Area's social, environmental and economic

vitality at a cost that demonstrates value and efficient stewardship of resources.

1.1. Residents in the area have equitable access to public transportation services that enables full participation in society.
1.1.1. People with economic challenges have affordable public transportation options.
1.1.2. People with disabilities or mobility impairments, seniors, minors, and non-English speakers have equitable access to opportunities and destinations in the area.

1.2. Public transportation positively impacts our environment.
1.2.1. Public transportation options are increasingly chosen over use of a personal car.
1.2.2. Public transportation options minimize energy use and pollution, and conserve natural resources.
1.2.3. Public transportation options produce conditions favorable to more compact and walkable land development.
1.2.4. Relevant public policy is transit supportive.

1.3. Public transportation positively impacts the economic prosperity of the area.
1.3.1. Public transportation facilitates labor mobility.
1.3.2. Students can access education opportunities without need of a personal vehicle.
1.3.3. Visitors use public transportation in the area.
1.3.4. Public transportation connects the area to the Metro Detroit region.

1.4. Passengers are highly satisfied with public transportation services.

1.5. Residents of the area recognize the positive contributions of public transportation to the area's quality of life.

3.2 Board's Planning Framework

The Board of Directors has also created a planning and governance framework within its governance policies that primarily focus on funding and defining the planning process itself. The key policies are summarized below:

1. **Strategic Framework** As a long-term planning exercise, the process and outcomes captured in this plan must show progress towards the Board's defined Ends. Part of that process includes defining multi-year plans that include the best available information on financial implications, and clear staging plans (captured in the Implementation Plan in Section 8) that will allow staff to recommend changes to the Board based on new information over time. This plan must be prudent and in line with common business practices and must also identify and evaluate risks for staff to manage. [4]

2. **Financial Planning and Stewardship:** In developing a long-term plan, it is always necessary to balance short-term financial constraints with longer-term aspirations. This means that the plan must be financially realistic, even if based on financial resources or funding sources not currently available. This long-term plan should not be constrained by the current financial environment but must be developed with clear assessment of financial requirements, potential funding sources and levels, and consideration of the risk to the plan and its alternatives if additional funding is not secured. Ultimately, the plan must demonstrate value and efficient stewardship of resources, and be based on realistic and transparent financial assumptions. [5]

3. **Public and Stakeholder Involvement:** Public and stakeholder engagement is a cornerstone of the Board's approach, and vital to the development of this long-term plan. The planning process must meaningfully engage

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[4] Board's policy #2.4-2.4.8, 2.10.1.3, 2.0

[5] Board's policy #2.4, 2.4.3, 2.4.5, 2.4.8, 2.5

riders, residents, stakeholders, partners, and staff. There should be good communication and transparency to the planning process and rely on and develop collaborative partnerships with community stakeholders.[6]

3.3 Other guiding documents

In addition to complying with and supporting the Board's policy Ends, the plan also builds on previous and current planning studies addressing long-term planning for TheRide. Specifically:

- TheRide's Corporate Business Plan (FY 2022) set four medium-term priority areas for the organization:
  - Support community recovery (including restoring services, and ensuring safe operations)
  - Planning for the future (including developing a long-range plan, advocacy strategy and expanding terminals)
  - Servicing customers (including enhancing fare collection and fare structure as proposed in the 2018 Fare Study and planning for the bus rapid transit)
- Modernizing TheRide (including implementing recommendations from a 2019 paratransit study and conducting a propulsion study)

3.4 Additional Considerations

The following additional considerations reflect early-stage input from the public, stakeholders, and staff. These very much echoed themes and areas of importance highlighted by the Board's Ends.

- Be an attractive transportation option

The overarching priority for the Board, which was echoed unanimously by customers, stakeholders, and staff alike, is that public transportation be a viable and increasingly selected mode of travel for travelers. Thus, success of the plan will

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[6] Board's policy # 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.2.1, 2.9, 2.9.4, 2.9.5

revolve around increasing modal share of TheRide services within the community, and specifically trips per capita. To get people out of cars and choosing public transit, the Plan must address customers' service design concerns:

- More reliable off-peak service including extended service span

- Enhanced quality of experience including customer amenities

- Increased service frequency

- Faster trips

- More reliable service

- Be a fully integrated public mobility provider

Many stakeholders emphasized the importance of providing a variety of services to meet the diverse travel needs of the community. This desire was also expressed as growth towards becoming a mobility-as-a-service provider for a streamlined user experience and for better planning integration around diverse internal and external services.

- Organizational sustainability

TheRide's stakeholders felt that the organization needed to be financially sustainable over the long-term to ensure it is able to continually operate and support the community. This includes having the finances necessary to grow and develop.

- Focus on integrating transit infrastructure to surrounding community development

Stakeholders specifically voiced desires that fit within a general vision for influential community collaboration. There is a desire to improve external elements that have a significant bearing on transit success such as land use/transportation policy; improved access and maintenance of stops and supporting infrastructure, and better regional collaboration.

- Enhance regional connections

Customers and stakeholders specifically focused on the importance of establishing better regional connections.

- Contribute to affordable and equitable communities

The public and stakeholders expressed a desire to help improve affordability and equity through the provision of affordable and high-value transportation and by working to reduce inequities in transportation along income, racial and ADA-related perspectives.

- Efficient service provision

Public feedback leans toward improved frequency over increased coverage of the service. With fixed resources, that means focusing on improving system efficiency. This focus on service efficiency also captures frequently cited visions for better matching of service to demand, such as on high demand corridors, efficient use of service different modes and a network that meets the travel patterns of current and potential customers.

4. Overview of the Plan

TheRide 2045: Long Range Transit Plan is the result of 18-month-long process involving significant analysis and input from thousands of individuals and stakeholders. The plan will effectively advance the organization toward the goals and vision laid out by the Board and echoed by the community. The following table highlights the key elements of TheRide 2045. These are explored in greater detail in the subsequent sections of this report.

Highlights of the plan

- Two high-speed Bus Rapid Transit lines that will form the backbone of the network

- 10 minute or better service with priority features on high-use corridors

- High-frequency network of 15-minute or better services across the service area

- Better off-peak services, including a minimum of 30-minute frequency service throughout the service area, 7-days per week

- Later weekend and weeknight service hours

- Enhanced On-Demand service including overnight with expanded coverage areas and shorter wait times

- Four new transit hubs and improvements to our two Transit Centers to better connect services across our community

- A zero-emissions bus fleet

- Partnerships and collaborations to enhance regional transit, first/last mile solutions and general transit outcomes

- Infrastructure plans to enable service growth and enhance the customer experience

- Technology plans to enhance customer experience and operational efficiency

- An achievable financial plan that effectively harnesses important funding opportunities from State and Federal governments while also highlighting how TheRide can work towards developing alternative funding sources.

Figure 13 – Proposed Service Network

5. Service Network

The plan envisions TheRide's fixed-route service evolving from local routes in a hub-n-spoke configuration to a high-frequency network with more opportunities for quick transfers and direct trips. The essential backbone of the new network are two Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes, providing fast and reliable north-south and east-west connections throughout the service area. The rest of the network is designed to allow riders to travel faster and maximize BRT's transportation benefits across the system.

TheRide 2045 proposes an 97% increase in vehicle service hours. The scale of this investment is essential to achieve the structural network changes that will result in greater efficiency and lead to a transformational improvement to the area's transportation system. The proposed network provides value and will lead to a more equitable community, a better economy and a more sustainable environment.

5.1 Service Types

The network reorganization is founded on new transit priority measures and the introduction of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) spine. This BRT spine provides fast and reliable north-south and east-west connections throughout the service area and is the backbone of the system and essential to the enhancements that are provided. The rest of the network is designed to funnel into the BRT to maximize BRT benefits across the system. The rest of the service network is provided by a diversity of service types, highlighted by numerous high-frequency routes that broadly crisscross the service area. More diverse service types are introduced to better meet the needs of different types of customers, enhance efficiency and to provide the best transit service to the most people and in an equitable fashion.

Summary of Service Types

	Description	Frequency (Peak periods)	Stop spacing	Proportion of fixed route service hours
Bus Rapid Transit	Fast and the most frequent service. Significant transit priority measures, high-capacity buses and higher quality amenities.	5 minutes	0.5-1.0 miles	16%
Priority	Limited stop, very frequent service with some transit priority features. The routes serve the busiest corridors and are intended to move people quickly across the area.	Corridor – 10 minutes	0.5-1.0 miles	23%
Express	A point-to-point type service. Intended to effectively use high-speed roadways and move customers quickly over long distances.	15 minutes	3+ miles between stop clusters	2%
High Frequency	Routes with frequencies of 15-minutes or better during peak periods. Run along busier corridors and are broadly spread throughout service area.	15 minutes or better	Follows current stops spacing standards - .25mile target	46%
Base Routes	Routes with frequencies of 16-30 minutes during peak periods. Serve lower-demand corridors and help to improve transit choice.	16-30 minutes	Follows current stops spacing standards - .25mile target	13%
On-Demand	Provided in areas of low demand and to fill coverage gaps to improve access to transit.	Not applicable	No stops	Not applicable

The above frequency and stop descriptions do not constitute standards but describe what is envisioned for the transit network in 2045.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
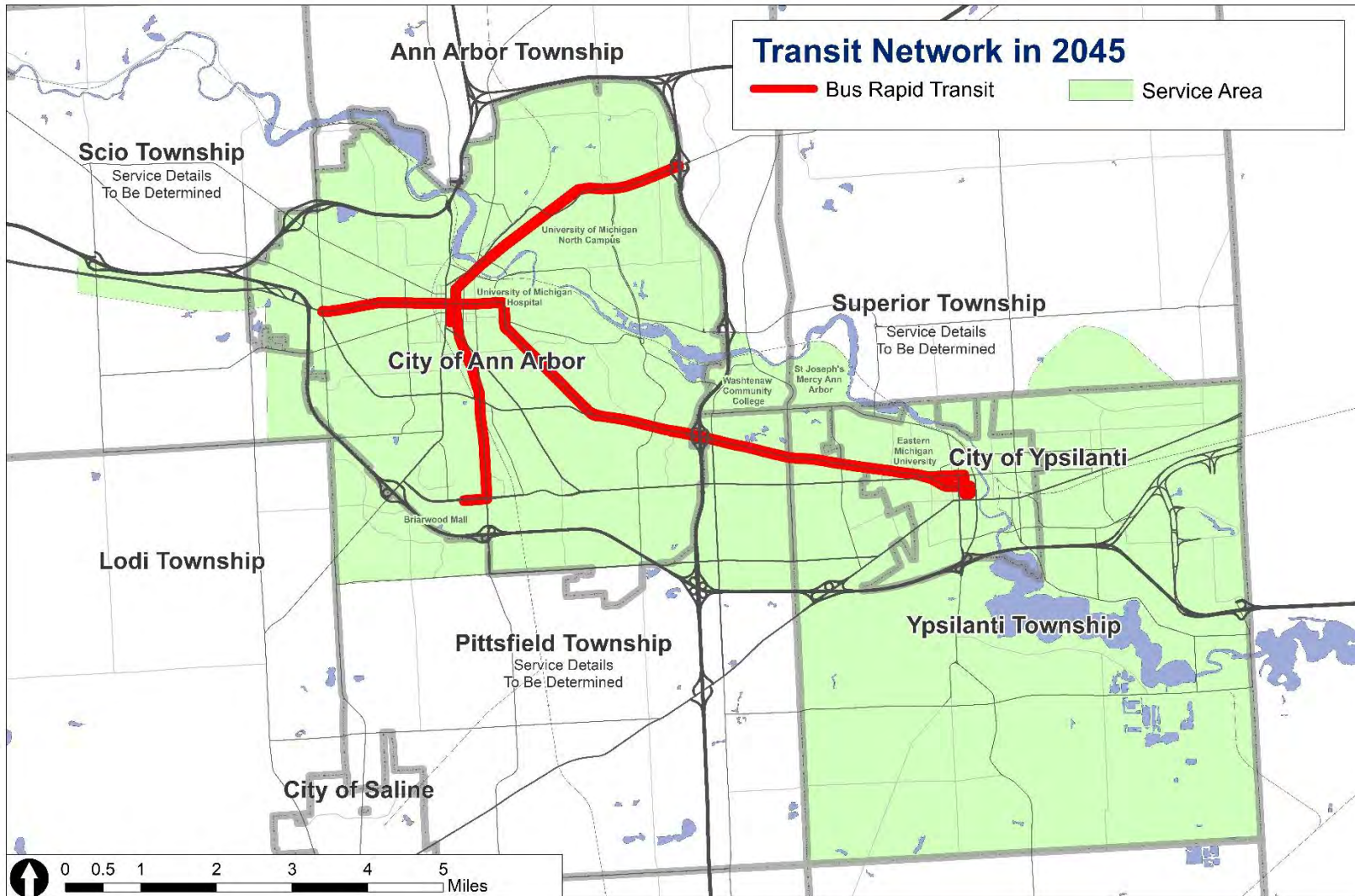
Figure 14 – BRT Network

Bus Rapid Transit, or BRT, are frequent, comfortable and fast services that will form the spine of the future network and reshape transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. BRTs can provide faster service through transit priority features, longer distances between stops and off-door fare boarding. Transit priority features are a variety of elements that help to improve transit operations relative to private automobile travel. These features include:

Dedicated lanes: Transit-only lanes that could be separated by a barrier or demarcated as transit only lane often using paint. They allow transit vehicles to avoid competing with traffic which improves speed and allows buses to meet scheduled times more reliably.

Traffic signal priority: Traffic signal technology and the backend control system that senses transit vehicles at signalized intersections and tries to maximize green signals for them.

Queue jump lanes: Short dedicated transit lanes strategically located for transit vehicles to bypass traffic buildup. Often located at intersections.

The BRT in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area is envisioned to significantly use these measures with more than half of routing being provided by a dedicated transit lane. While the potential for dedicated lanes was considered when determining the approximate BRT routing alignment, the exact BRT alignment and usage of transit priority features will be determined in later

Figure 15 – Example of a BRT station Example of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station - Ontario Growth Secretariat, Ministry of Municipal Affairs (2014)

studies. These studies will involve discussions with State and municipal officials to determine optimal right-of-way configurations along the BRT routes.

Transit priority features help to make a transportation system become more efficient and cost-effective by providing optimal prioritization for a mode of transportation that can move more people and do so at lower overall cost to the community.

In addition to BRT corridors, transit priority features will be built strategically across the service area. These features will be targeted at areas based on their potential to create customer travel time savings, enhance reliability, and be feasibly implemented. Areas that are likely to achieve these goals will have traffic congestion, be served by numerous or high-frequency routes, and have high through volumes of transit customers. Figure16 shows TheRide's proposed areas for transit priority features. These areas will guide TheRide in discussions with municipalities to determine final locations. Specific transit priority features will also be established in discussions with municipalities.
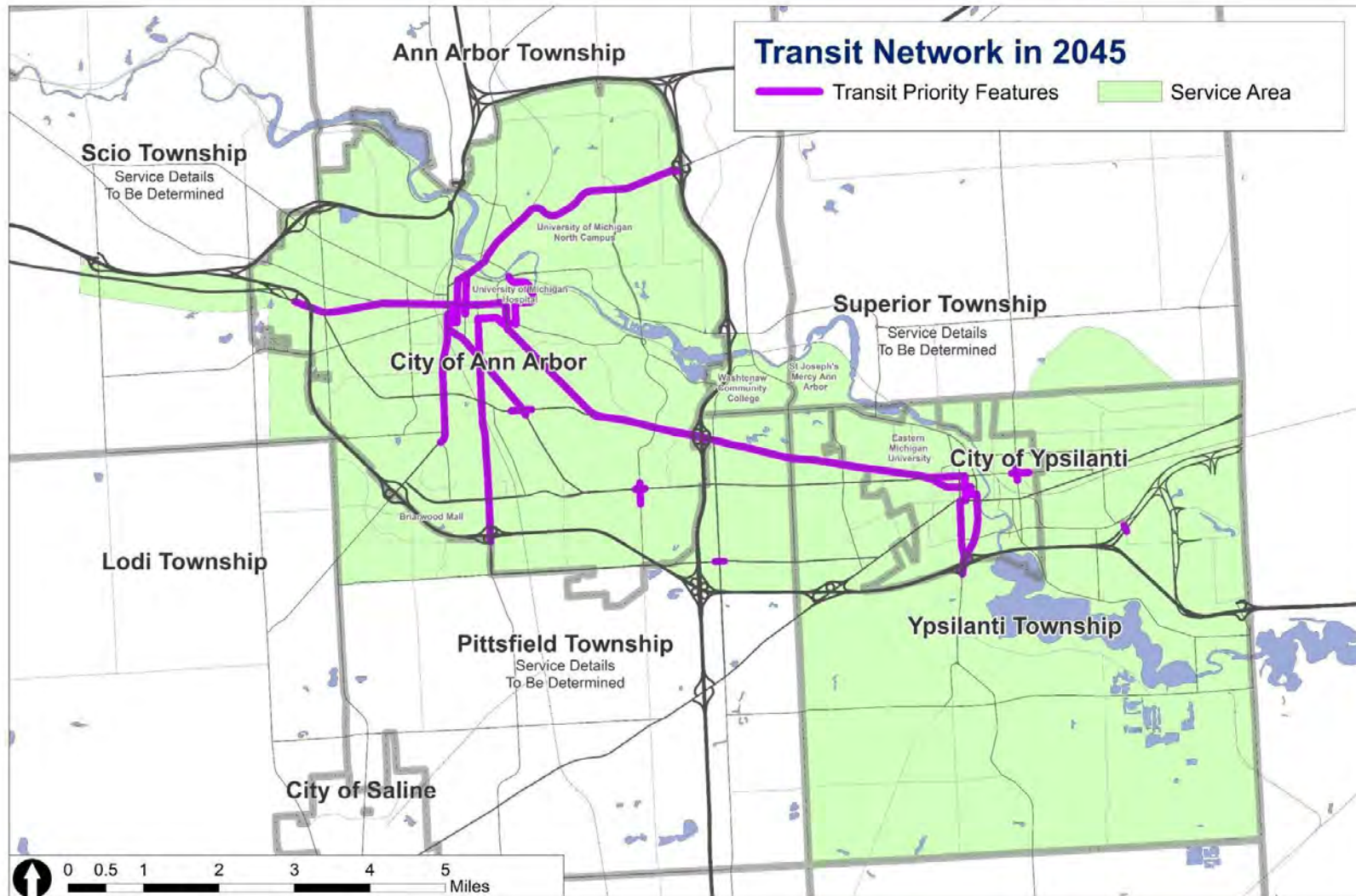
Figure 16 – Recommended areas for transit priority features

TheRide's BRT system will also include articulated buses that allow more people to be more comfortable funneled into the BRT spine. The proposed network is designed to funnel a greater proportion of riders into the BRT as compared to those corridors now. Due to the network focus on the BRT, the routes will also have a higher degree of amenities at stops and on buses. Stops might have real-time information, larger shelters with unique branding, wayfinding information and ticketing machine among other items.

Two BRT lines will span the service area. The Washtenaw BRT will run between the City of Ypsilanti and Maple/Jackson, roughly spanning the service area from east to west. The North-south BRT will run between Plymouth/US-23 and Eisenhower/State, spanning the service area from north to south.

The approximate proposed routing for the BRT is intended to provide a centralized, high-demand and direct high-speed corridor. The centralized corridor relative to demand minimizes connecting route time into the BRT, increases the proportion of a trip taken on the faster BRT service. Focusing the BRT on high demand areas helps to minimize transfers and maximize its time saving impact. Direct BRT routing helps to make it the system as fast as possible for the most amount of people.

The exact BRT alignment will be established in a subsequent study. A specific focus for future alignment analysis will be the area between downtown Ann Arbor and Nixon/Plymouth of the North-south BRT. It should be noted that the University of Michigan Hospital will likely be served by the North-south BRT, a Priority Route or both.

Priority
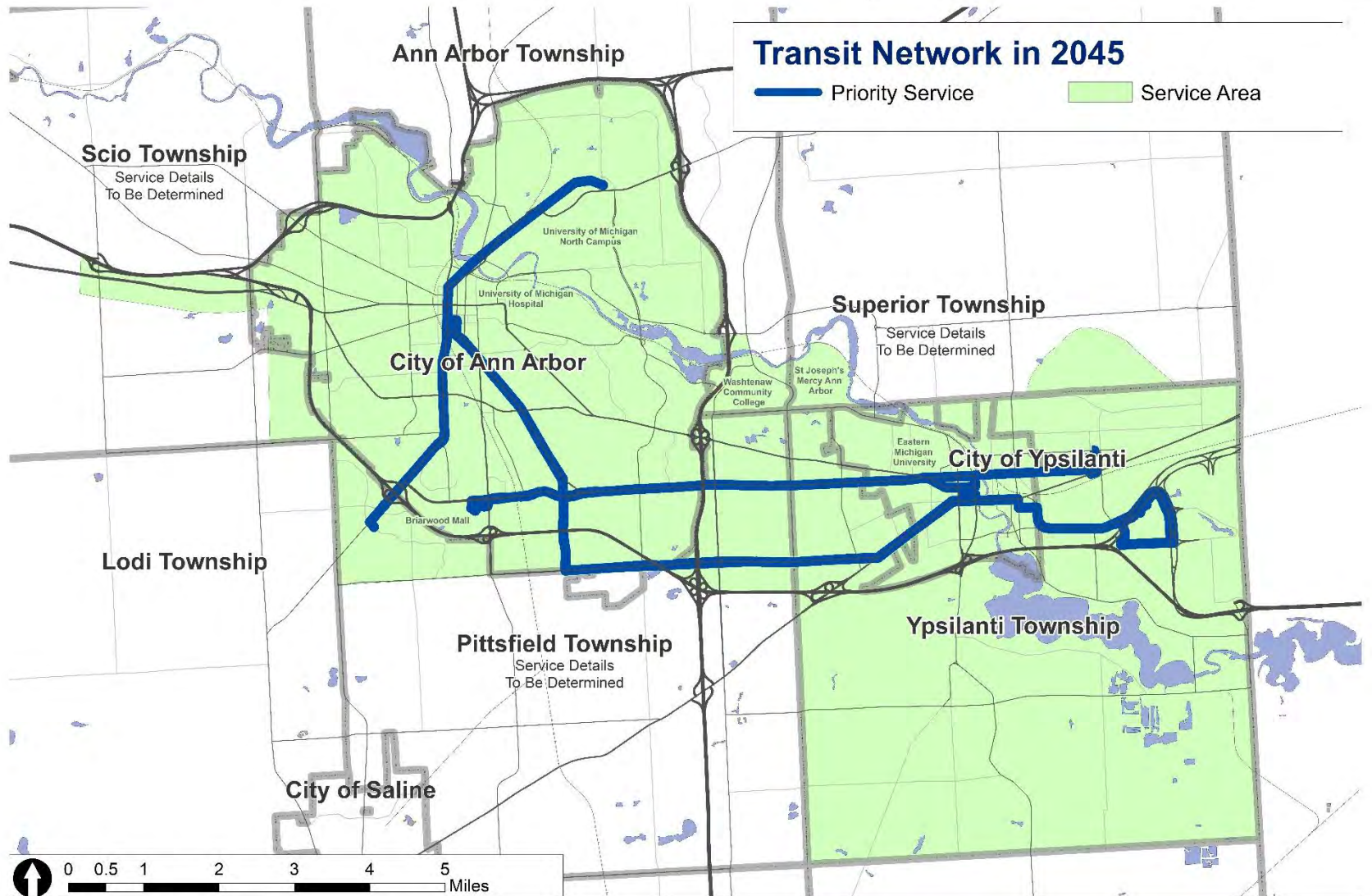
Figure 17 – Priority Route Network

These routes provide some of the beneficial elements of a BRT and are a secondary level of enhanced service. The priority service is intended to provide higher frequency service to higher demand areas and facilitate fast longer trips. The routes are somewhat enhanced by transit priority features with transit signal priority and queue jump lanes as more likely solutions. Stop spacing is like that of BRT but the service would be provided for the most part alongside a high-frequency or base route on a corridor, creating both rapid and slower/high access options. Routes would be served by conventional 40 ft buses as their capacity is deemed sufficient considering frequency and projected demand.

Frequency on priority routes would range 15-20 minutes during peak periods but reach 10 minutes for the combined corridor frequency when paired with high-frequency or base route. This higher level of services matches the higher demand arterial corridors that priority routes are planned for.

Priority is also planned to facilitate faster long trips across the service area and fill projected higher demand long trip travel patterns that the BRT spine does not provide a convenient option for. To enable these fast and long trips, routes are long with limited deviations.

Three priority routes are planned:

End Point	End Point	Routing
Downtown Ann Arbor	West Willow	Packard, Ellsworth & Ecorse
Nixon/Plymouth	Ann Arbor Saline/Oak Valley	Ann Arbor Saline, Main & TBD*
Eisenhower/State	Cross/Harris	Eisenhower, Cross & Packard

*Priority alignment will be established during the BRT detailed design process

Express
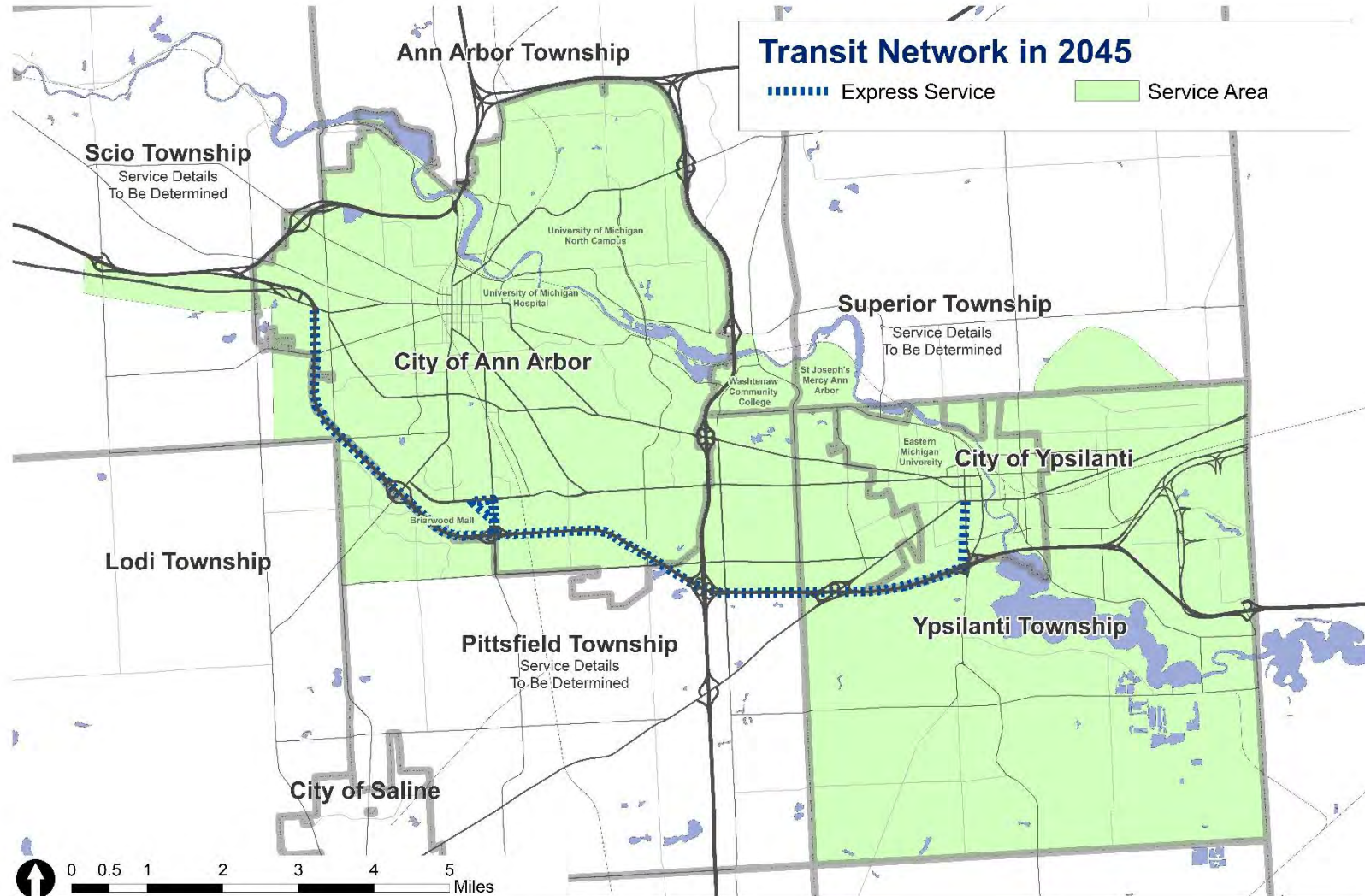
Figure 18 – Express Network

Express routes are a point-to-point type of service centered on the I-94. The route is intended to effectively use this high-speed roadway to move customers quickly over long distances in the service area. It is the fastest proposed service with stops located in The City of Ypsilanti, the Eisenhower/State area and the Jackson/Maple area. These areas would be served by a stop or stops ranging from one to several. All three stop areas would connect into the BRT spine.

Using shoulder lanes on the I-94 would help improve the service's speed, efficiency, and reliability. Discussions should be held with the Michigan Department of Transportation to explore this opportunity.

Figure 19 Example of transit bus using a highway shoulder lane "Metrobus shoulder bypass in Arlington, VA" by SounderBruce is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

High-Frequency
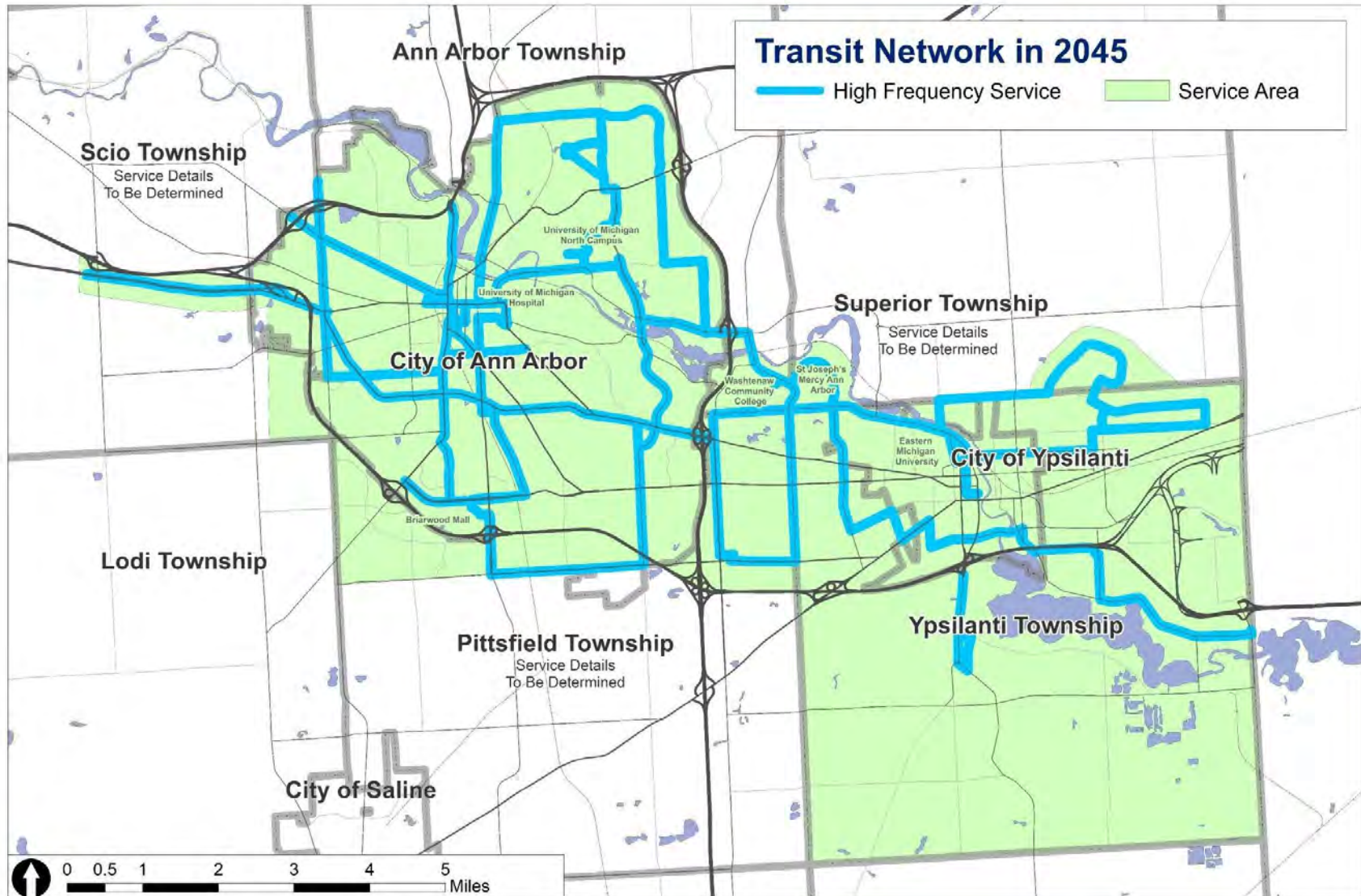
Figure 20 Map of High Frequency Routes

High-frequency routes cover most of the service area and are conventional routes operating at 15-minute or better frequencies during peak periods. They have stop spacing of approximately 0.25 miles. High-frequency routes are intended to cover moderate to higher demand areas.

Providing access to high-frequency service is an important step in making transit more convenient and growing ridership. Frequency of service was a commonly mentioned and prioritized area of improvement during public engagement. At a 15-minute frequency, people tend to start feeling like they can take transit at anytime and not rely on a schedule.

In addition to broad service coverage, high-frequency routes cross each other and other frequent routes at short intervals. This allows convenient high-frequency trips to be taken in various directions from most locations in the service area. Having this broad grid network of high-frequency routes is essential to facilitating transfers outside of the downtown cores. The ability to do so accomplishes the following:

- Improves travel between non-downtown locations

- Provides more travel options in different directions

- Better uses less congested streets leading to faster travel speeds and greater efficiency

- Allows routes to travel longer distances, creating more one bus journeys and generally allows routes to cover the service area more efficiently.

While this long-range plan identifies where high-frequency service will be provided, the exact routing details will be determined in medium-term planning processes. Conceptual base routes were developed to guide modelling of metrics,

Base

Base routes are conventional routes with frequencies of 16-30 minutes in peak periods. These routes are intended to provide local service connections in areas of lower to moderate demand and to enhance transit options with new travel directions.

The specific routing of base routes has not been determined in this long-range plan and will be determined in short- and medium-term planning processes guided by service standards. To guide modelling of metrics, conceptual base routes were developed. The entire service area not within 0.25 miles of other fixed route services, will have either base routes or on-demand coverage. The specific service will be determined in short-term planning processes

Like the high-frequency routes, base routes are intended to cross other routes at even intervals and to feed into the BRT or into transit hubs.

5.2 Transit Hubs

Four transit hubs will be developed outside of the downtown cores to facilitate better connectivity between peripheral areas.

- o State & Eisenhower area
- o Jackson & Maple area
- o Carpenter & Ellsworth area
- o Nixon & Plymouth area
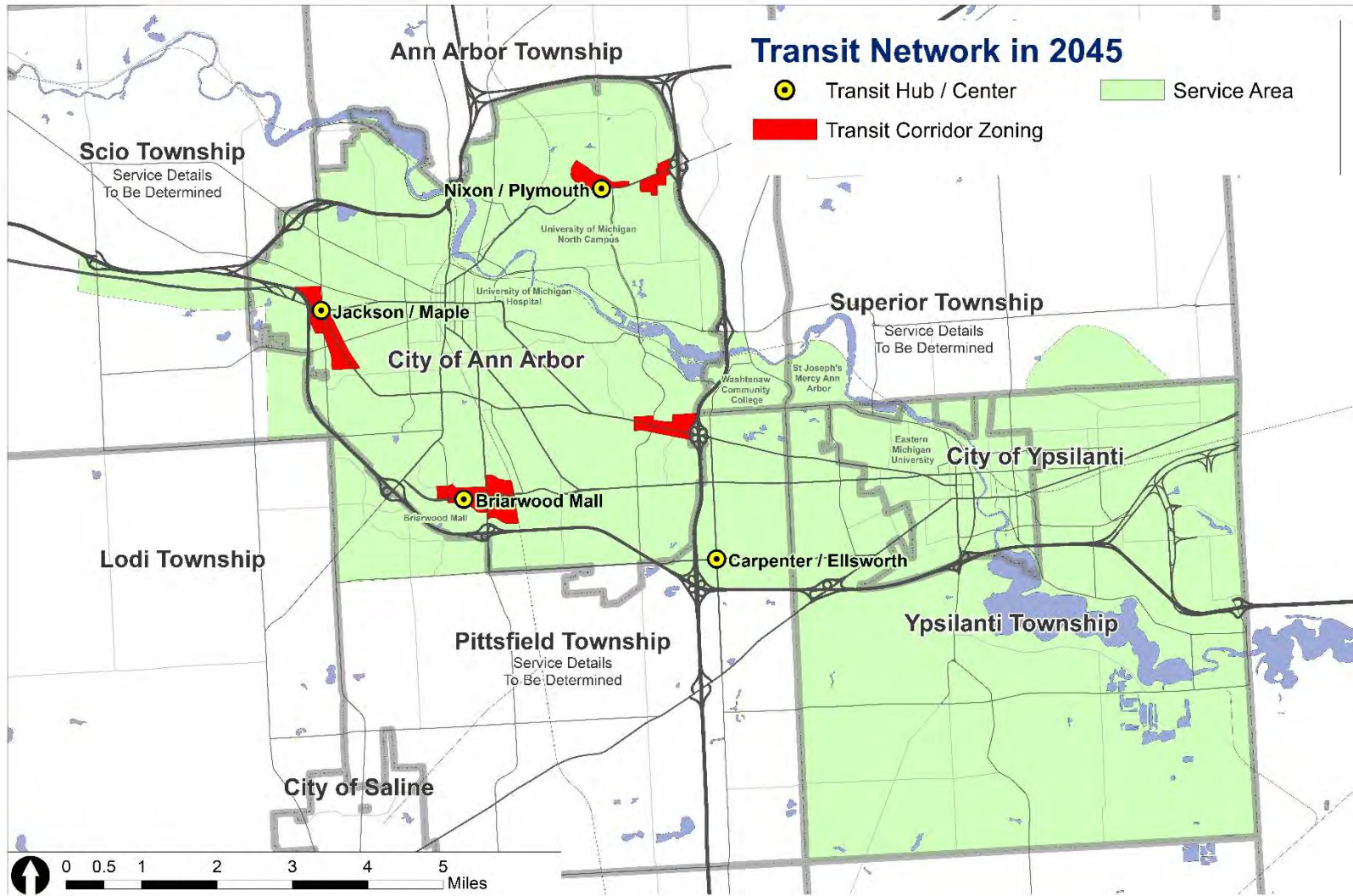
Figure 21 Map of transit hubs and their relation to transit supported development districts

The hubs are placed in strategic areas that currently have high demand, are projected to have significant growth in demand and are located at logical connection points between numerous routes. The service network is further designed to connect into these points with several frequent services. The proposed hubs are closely tied to the City of Ann Arbor's Transit Supported Development Districts.

5.3 Service Outcomes

The service network has been designed to meet several objectives that help further organizational goals. These include aiming to: make the average trip taken by transit as fast as possible, provide the average person with the most amount of service as possible, provide more one-bus connections, make more direct routing, focus service enhancements on low opportunity areas, provide broad access to high quality transit and better match service to demand. These objectives help to improve the quality of transit service, grow ridership, provide more cost-efficient service, and achieve other goals of TheRide and the community. The projected beneficial outcomes of this network are shown in Figure 22

100% increase in the level of service experienced by the average rider

123% increase in the level of service experienced by those in low and very low Opportunity Index Areas[7]

39% faster travel time for the average trip taken by transit

97% of jobs will be near high-frequency transit[8]

7-11% reduction of transportation-related emissions

150-165% ridership growth expected

6.9 million car trips avoided

100% accessible services[9]

Figure 92 Expected outcomes

7 89

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[7] Level of service measured as the average buses per hour passing through a .25 mile walk radius. Average rider reflects 2019 ridership data. Opportunity Index areas are defined by the Washtenaw Opportunity Index.

[8] High-frequency transit is defined as 15-minute or better service during peak times. Proximity is defined as within a .7 mile walk. All analysis is focused on the three member municipalities of TheRide (The City of Ann Arbor, The City of Ypsilanti and The Township of Ypsilanti).

[9] Bus stop accessibility is subject to municipal sidewalks and permitting

TheRide

More "One-seat" Journeys

The revised structure of the network will significantly benefit passengers by unlocking more "one-seat" journeys; direct trips where passengers don't have to make any transfers and can sit in one seat on one bus. Direct one-seat journeys are increased by making routes longer, increasing travel options (direction) from any given location, and by reorganizing the network for routes to better capture high projected travel patterns. Longer routes are enabled by increasing transfer connectivity out of downtown areas through a grided network of high frequency routes and the establishment of peripheral transit hubs. An indication of the increased multi-directional travel options and access to transit is the increase in stops, which goes from approximately 1200 now to 1350. This increase is even more substantial when you consider then introduction of numerous limited stop routes.

Below are some proposed new direct connection highlights:

- Eastern Ypsilanti Twp – Downtown and south Ann Arbor

- City of Ypsilanti and Eastern Ypsilanti and Superior Twps – Northeast Ann Arbor

- City of Ypsilanti – West Ann Arbor

- South, southwest and west Ann Arbor – Northeast Ann Arbor

- State/Eisenhower – West Ann Arbor

- Northeast Ann Arbor – Carpenter/Ellsworth

Faster Trips

TheRide 2045's network will significantly reduce the travel times for the average trips taken by transit. The BRT, transit priority features, and a revised network structure that funnels trips into the BRT is a principal reason for this. Faster trips are also enabled by the introduction of limited stop services such as the Priority and Express services.
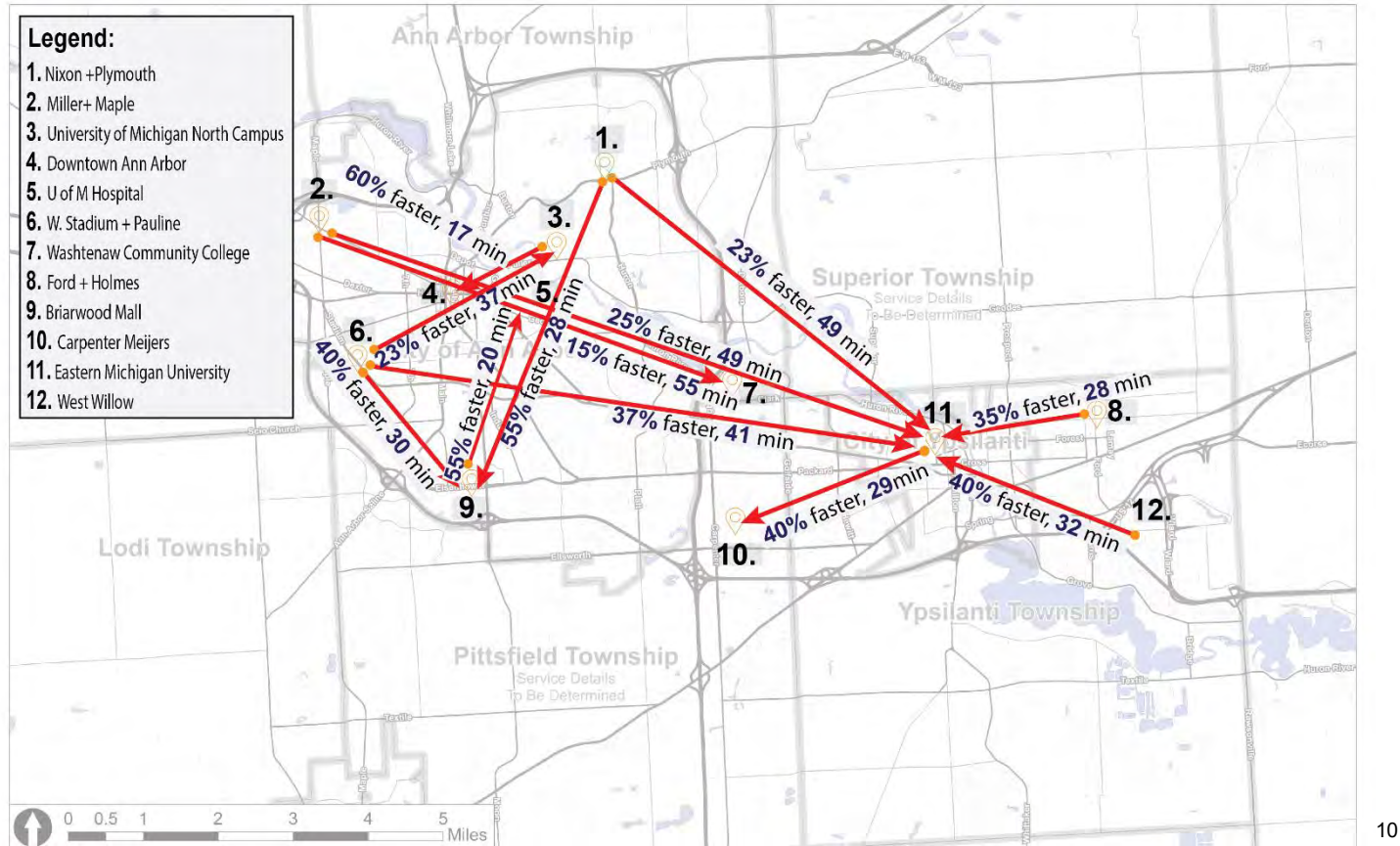
Figure 23- Map of travel time changes between various areas

[10] Travel times were estimated using Remix which accounts for average walk times to/from origin/destination/transfer points, wait time and in-bus time

Routing has generally been designed to create the shortest possible trips for the most amount of people. Part of the strategy has been to create:

More "One-seat" Journeys

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New Direct Connections Highlights

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- City of Ypsilanti and Eastern Ypsilanti and Superior Twps – Northeast Ann Arbor

- City of Ypsilanti – West Ann Arbor

- South, southwest and west Ann Arbor – Northeast Ann Arbor

- State/Eisenhower – West Ann Arbor

- Northeast Ann Arbor – Carpenter/Ellsworth

More direct routes with fewer deviations

More linear and direct routes help to make routes move faster and tend to reduce overall passenger travel times, even though some passengers might be forced into longer first/last mile connections. They also help to reduce the complexity of a transit, making it easier to use. Routes have been streamlined in several ways including removing point-based

deviations and reducing looping and branching. Route looping can be particularly frustrating to riders as you can be travelling in the opposite direction that you wish to go.

The rationale for eliminating point-based deviations is supported by an expectation that over the 25-year period, land use and transportation development should be made in transit-supportive manner that reduces the need for deviations that are problematic for transit.

Service enhancement focused on low opportunity index areas

While the network improves overall efficiency, reliability, accessibility, speed and convenience, these improvements are even more focused on low Opportunity Index areas, as defined by the Washtenaw County Opportunity Index. While there is 100% increase in the level of service experienced by the average rider, the average rider in Low and Very Low Opportunity Index areas experience an 123% increase. Areas such as West Willow, MacArthur Blvd, Heritage Park, and Bryant would see the introduction high-frequency routes and an expansion of routes serving their areas. The former two neighborhoods would have new direct connections to downtown Ann Arbor.

Broad access to high quality transit

The extensive high-frequency network will bring nearly everyone in the member municipalities to within access to a high-frequency route and most to within access to two or more high frequency routes. The high-frequency network was purposely spread widely to increase access to high quality transit. 97% of jobs will be near high-frequency transit.[11]

Better focus service to demand

The proposed network increases service in areas of high current and projected demand. High frequencies and numerous connecting routes are provided along the high-demand and high growth potential BRT corridors. 10-minute frequencies are available along busy Priority service corridors on Main, Plymouth, Packard, Eisenhower, Cross and Ellsworth. Higher levels of service are provided for areas with large projected increases in population and employment such as Northeast Ann Arbor and the Carpenter/Ellsworth area.

Matching service to demand helps makes transit service more cost-efficient, improves the overall quality of transit experienced by the average rider and is usually an effective means of growing transit ridership. Due to improved matching

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[11] Proximity defined as within 0.7 miles of a 15-minute or better frequency route during peak periods

of service to demand, ridership per service hour is projected to increase from 21 in 2019 to 30 in 2045. Ridership is projected to grow by 150-165% and result in an increase in transit mode share from 5% in 2019 to 11% in 2045.[12]

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[12] 2019 mode share is drawn from the 2019 American Community Survey for the Ann Arbor Metro Area

6. Other Service Features

Beyond significant changes to the service network, TheRide 2045 includes substantial investment in other service features, including off-peak services, paratransit, and on-demand service delivery.

6.1 Off-Peak Services

Off-peak schedules that include more frequent service and broader spans of service help people who rely on transit and increase the attractiveness of transit as a choice. Increased off-peak services meet a broader range of travel needs, enhancing the flexibility of transit with more travel options.

Off-peak service increases not only affect trips that occur within the off-peak hours but can also support ridership increases in peak services. Potential passengers with one trip beginning or ending in peak periods are attracted to transit as the off-peak services grow. This can include essential and lower wage workers, women, students, and seniors. Figure 25 shows the planned improvements to service span (the start and end of service on any given day) and minimum off-peak frequency for fixed route services.

Currently, the majority of TheRide routes operate at infrequent services levels (60-minute intervals or more) during weekday evening hours, and almost all routes operate at similar levels on weekends. To support increased usefulness of off-peak services for all area residents, and to support peak ridership growth, **TheRide2045 includes recommendations for more consistent spans of later services on Weekdays and Saturdays, as well as later service on Sundays. Minimum service levels of 30 minutes** *at all times* **will also make the service more convenient and attractive.**

	Service Span	Minimum Frequency
Weekday	6 AM-12 AM	30
Saturday	7 AM-12 AM	30
Sunday	8 AM-9 PM	30

Figure 24 - Off-peak service enhancements

6.2 Paratransit Service (A-Ride)

Paratransit services continue to be a top priority for TheRide, designed to meet the needs of an aging community. Population projections indicate that continued growth in the seniors population will continue through about 2030, then slow to about one percent annually. During this same period, however, the average age of a senior will continue to increase, with significant growth on the over-85 age cohort, who typically have lower travel rates, but increased accessibility needs.

The 2018 paratransit report (which examined potential ridership to 2030 came to similar conclusions) developed recommendations to meet the growth projections to ensure effective, efficient service for the community of people with disabilities. These were updated as part of TheRide 2045 plan, to recommend service increases in each stage of the plan. At the same time, as accessibility needs grow, and A-Ride services increase to meet those needs, it will be critical to ensure that service remains available to those that need it most. This means expanding the family of services approach to provide a wide range of services to meet a variety of needs. A family of services approach is one that tailors specific service delivery models and vehicles to specific user needs including integration of paratransit service and accessible fixed route service for riders with accessibility needs. The result of a family of services approach could be that riders with disabilities who are comfortable and able to ride accessible fixed route service may take trips that include multiple services, e.g., they book an A-Ride trip to a transit hub and then transfer onto fixed route for the remainder of their trip. The specific configuration of a family of services approach would recognize and accommodate for individual riders' needs.

Currently, services such as GoldRide, FlexRide, Late Night & Holiday service and others provide a range of services to meet the needs of passengers with different functional needs and different travel patterns. An expansion of the family of service approach would involve expanding the service options available to those with accessible needs, developing a better understanding of those needs for each respective customer and better integrating services.

Three focus areas for expanding service options are in making fixed route transit more accessible, providing same day accessible On-Demand service and expanding the fleet mix to better meet individual needs. By better understanding accessibility needs, TheRide can work with riders to identify how a mix of paratransit, fixed route and other services can meet their specific mobility needs. Enhanced accessibility across all services and integration of those services along with needs identification can lead to a better overall experience for some riders including a greater sense of independence and greater travel flexibility. Faster trips are also possible, particularly with the introduction of BRT and other high-speed services. This integrated service approach also has the potential to improve the efficiency of the paratransit and lead to more accessible booking and enhanced service quality. As fixed route services grow and expand the geographical coverage, A-Ride services will also be expanded to ensure coverage to new areas and the comparability of paratransit service.

TheRide 2045 recommends the expansion of on-demand services (as described below) as well as continued focus on the accessibility of the fixed route system to allow A-Ride to focus on the higher accessibility needs of eligible customers. Not only will this help ensure the availability of service, but increase the flexibility of travel for other passengers, with increased periods of service and potential for more spontaneous travel.

Over the life of TheRide 2045 plan, there is the potential to merge key elements of the paratransit service and a broader range of on-demand services, particularly in the trip booking and service scheduling areas, with more integrated technology and customer service. The focus of the A-Ride paratransit service, however, will always be to prioritize the needs of people with disabilities that limit their choices of other services.

TheRide 2045 also recommends the implementation of outstanding recommendations from the 2018 Paratransit study which include:

- Enhance scheduling and dispatch technology to improve effectiveness and cost-efficiency

- Expand service monitoring and develop service standards to allow effective monitoring of service performance and needs

6.3 On-demand Service Delivery

Current on-demand services such as FlexRide or Late Night & Holiday service are designed to fill gaps in service areas and service span for those with travel patterns cannot be cost-effectively met with fixed route services. These services provide a basic level of service that often included long wait times that can discourage their use and limit customers' mobility.

Expansion of these services should be done in a systematic and rationale way, within an overall framework of consistent fare structures, clear service delivery guidelines and monitoring, and a focus on organizational goals. This means developing service standards and guidelines that address the overall role of on-demand services, including

- supporting A-Ride's ability to meet paratransit requirements

- introducing service in new areas ahead of planned fixed route service

- fulfilling service requirements in low demand areas and time periods

- providing a range of flexible services to meet a variety of passenger needs

Recent developments in technology have allowed much more effective on-demand scheduling, while smartphone-based booking has increased the convenience and accessibility of these services. This means that the various services can be

integrated into a single on-demand framework with flexible service in different periods and areas that meet unique needs but maintain a level of consistency that strengthens TheRide's overall offering.

TheRIde 2045 recommends a tripling of on-demand service including an expansion to cover all of the member municipalities and to provide shorter wait times.

TheRide 2045 also recommends initiatives to support the expansion of on-demand services including:

- Updating service standards and guidelines to better guide on-demand services expansion recognizing technological developments, the increased attractiveness of these services in particular demographics, and the role of on-demand in supporting A-Ride

- Conducting an on-demand service study to assess alternative service delivery models in various service areas, within the proposed service framework

- Improving efficiency through enhanced technology and performance monitoring

- Exploring new markets including non-emergency medical transportation

7. Infrastructure

Infrastructure plays a critical role in supporting the expansion and improved efficiency of transit operations. Customer-facing infrastructure, such as transit centres and bus shelters similarly have huge impact on the customer experience and accessibility. This section takes a broad interpretation of infrastructure, including transit facilities, stops, terminals, fleet, technology, and some of the organizational changes required to support these plans.

7.1 Facilities

TheRide's numerous facilities serve a lot of different purposes. Some are strictly for transit operations, but most are for both transit operations and for riders. Therefore, an important aspect of facilities is that they need to be efficient for transit operations while also being customer-friendly and accessible for riders.

Figure 25 Photo of the Blake Transit Center

Transit Centres

Presently, all of TheRide's facilities are over-capacity and/or in need of significant upgrades. This includes the Blake Transit Center and the Ypsilanti Transit Center, which both need upgrades and expansions.

Upgrades to the BTC and YTC have been identified as high priority, near-term projects, with the YTC being the highest priority. The 2018 YTC Needs Assessment selected the locally preferred alternative at the current site. While these projects are being developed in the near future, they should be designed with the long-range plan in mind. More specifically, considering a near doubling of service hours by 2045, the transit centers must be designed to efficiently accommodate the increased service.

Transit Hubs

Another key component of TheRide 2045 is the **construction of four new transit hubs** at:

- State & Eisenhower area

- Jackson & Maple area

- Carpenter & Ellsworth area

- Nixon & Plymouth area

The new transit hubs will be important transfer points for riders and will provide additional customer amenities. As TheRide facilities, they will be intentionally designed to enable efficient and safe transit operations as well. This differs from some current transfer points that are more limited because they are not owned by TheRide.

The locations of the new transit hubs are strategically selected where multiple routes meet and intersect. This will provide greater connectivity and will also be a more comfortable transfer and waiting location for passengers. Additionally, transit hubs will be designed to have good pedestrian access and have space allocated for active transportation modes and first and last mile solutions. That means that people will be able to ride their bike to a hub and park it there, or pick-up or drop-off an e-scooter in a designated space near the hub. In terms of the customer experience, the hub will provide comfortable waiting spaces that are sheltered from the elements as well as real-time information on screens, good wayfinding, vending machines, and access to technologies like Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs). Having staff on-hand to help riders could be another customer service aspect of these transit hubs.

Figure 26 Example of a transit hub

Bus Stops

An ongoing challenge related to facilities is that some facilities are not owned by TheRide and therefore TheRide has limited control over them. The biggest problem is related to bus stops and the surrounding areas. Feedback from riders

highlighted that some bus stops don't have a shelter, are sometimes not cleared in the winter, or are disconnected from the sidewalk network and therefore difficult to get to safely. All these concerns have a huge impact on customer experience, customer safety, and system accessibility. While TheRide does not have direct control over these spaces, TheRide can engage with the municipalities and work together to make these stops more accessible and rider-friendly. **As part of this long-range plan, it is recommended that TheRide develops a bus stop guideline that outlines the elements of adequate stops, such as sidewalk connectivity, lighting, clearing in winter, signage, shelters, and requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).** The public guideline can be used in discussions with municipalities and to engage residents on this issue.

Figure 27 Examples of bus stop guidelines

New Garage

To support the increased service and alleviate the current over-capacity garage, a new bus garage will be required. Similar to the BTC and YTC which are presently in need of upgrades, the design of a new garage is a near-term project but should consider the implications of the increased service proposed within the long-range plan.

The current garage was already identified as operating over-capacity in an Operational Facilities Needs Study completed in 2017. Particular limitations the study highlighted were an at capacity vehicle maintenance area, insufficient parking for both the fleet and employees, insufficient work and conference space for administration and operators, and lack of maintenance equipment storage space. These challenges not only limit what TheRide can achieve presently, it prohibits opportunities for growth and expansion that is included in this plan for the next 25 years.

Therefore, a new garage is critical for enabling the recommendations of this plan, especially as it relates to service expansion. The new garage is anticipated to increase capacity for the fleet by 100 buses. It will also be critical in supporting the transition to zero-emission vehicles with respect to different charging/refueling and maintenance requirements. The location of the new garage has not yet been decided but some options include locating it close to the

existing garage or at a further distance. There are potential benefits of both alternatives, such as efficiencies from having all resources under one roof or being able to cover a larger geographical area more efficiently.

Designing for Customer Experience and Accessibility

Figure 28 Wheelchair accessibility is critical for all the fleet and facilities

With an anticipated ridership increase of 150-165%, it is critical that the customer experience is a central design feature for the transit center upgrades and the new transit hubs. Centering the customer experience includes enhancing accessibility at every level and establishing excellent wayfinding. Accessibility should be considered in the physical infrastructure design on-board vehicles and within transit centers, as well as in information systems, technology, and wayfinding. New riders and riders with disabilities in particular may need clear and accessible ways to learn about the transit system, plan their trips, book and pay for their trip, and then take their trip, which may also include transferring safely.

Another element of improving TheRide's accessibility is better integration of all services, including paratransit A-Ride, fixed route, and other demand-responsive services (GoldRide, FlexRide, MyRide, etc.). Paratransit and fixed route services in particular will be moving towards a Family of Services approach wherein riders with disabilities and mobility needs may be using a combination of accessible services to meet their travel needs. The new transit hubs and the BTC and YTC will play a critical role as transfer points to enable better integration of services. To accomplish this integration, riders need to feel comfortable and confident transferring between different services. The transfer points, wayfinding, and information systems should all be designed with that goal in mind.

In addition to enabling more efficient transit operations, transit facilities can also have important impacts on the community they're situated in. This is especially true when transit hubs are designed to incorporate mixed-use real estate, such as housing and commercial spaces. Developing new transit hubs or upgrading existing transit centers to include housing and commercial spaces can attract investment into the space and may also result in additional sources of revenue for TheRide. Mixed-use development at terminals can change neighborhoods and can result in increased transit mode share by increasing both population density and the number of destinations at and near the terminal. People are more likely to take transit if it is convenient and in near proximity to their key destinations, including home, work, shopping, and other services. In this way, mixed-use real estate at terminals can better match demand to service and improve the first-last mile for people who live, work, and shop in the area. By contributing to a more vibrant community space and attracting retail and other destinations, this can greatly improve riders' waiting experience. A more livable, walkable, and transit-friendly neighborhood can also have significant environmental benefits, including avoided car trips and better air quality.

7.2 Fleet

By 2038, 100% of TheRide's vehicles are expected to be zero-emission vehicles. Achieving this target will have significant environmental benefits including reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving local air quality. A concurrent study at TheRide is evaluating different propulsion alternatives to recommend a specific type of zero-emission vehicle. Once the propulsion study is completed, there will need to be a significant planning effort for achieving 100% zero-emission vehicles. Different types of vehicles will have different implications for service planning, particularly around range and charging schedules. The type of charging or refueling infrastructure required will also have implications for TheRide's facilities and workforce. A thorough training program and staff engagement process will ensure that operators and maintenance staff are equipped to work on the new vehicles.

Figure 29 A zero-emissions bus charging by pantograph (photo by Steve Morgan)

Another strategy for improving overall system efficiency is fleet diversification. Fleet diversification means purchasing and utilizing a more diverse fleet of vehicles to best match the vehicle to different services and different routes. For example, articulated buses can accommodate more passengers and are therefore well-suited to busy routes and for Bus Rapid Transit. On the other hand, cars and vans may be more suitable for on-demand services. TheRide can expect to realize cost savings as a result of efficiently using the right vehicle for the right service, while maintaining accessibility of all vehicles. An implementation challenge with diversifying the fleet is that TheRide must adjust its business processes accordingly. Planning and scheduling staff need to account for the diverse fleet in the service and schedule development, while operators and maintenance staff need to familiarize themselves with more vehicle types.

Car	Van	Bus	Articulated Bus
• Good for on-demand services	• Good for on-demand services	• Good for routes with moderate demand	• Good for BRT and routes serving high-load points
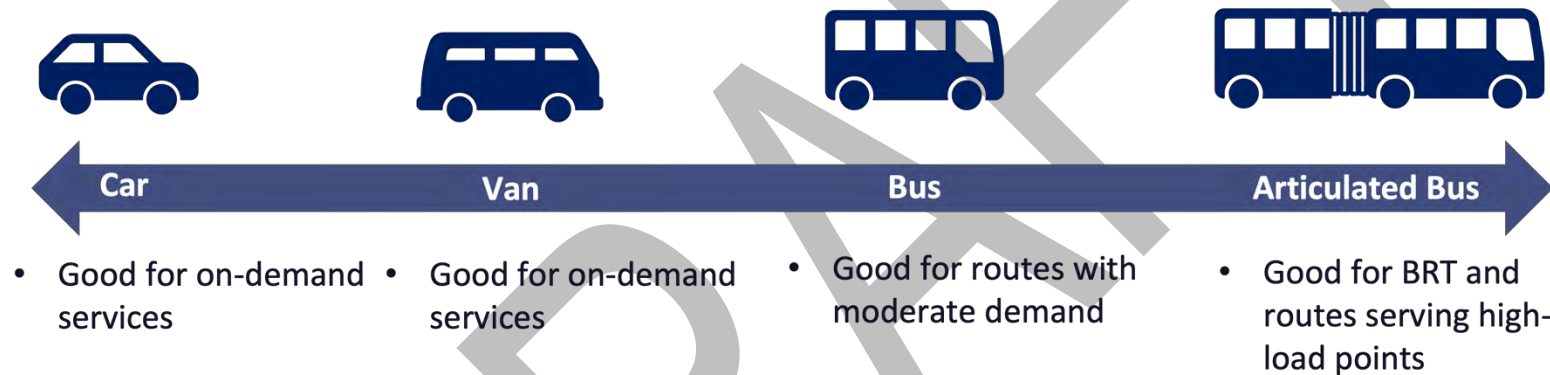
Figure 30 The spectrum of potential vehicles TheRide might use for different services

7.3 Technology

Improvements and innovation in technology are changing what transit looks like today and creating new opportunities for what it might look like in the future. While some current trends are anticipated to continue into the next 25 years, TheRide must also stay nimble and flexible to adjust to future technological improvements. Looking at a long-term horizon, it is difficult to predict the specific technologies that should be implemented. Therefore, dedicated funding has been allocated for three categories of technologies that will be important in the next 25 years:

- Operations and operational efficiency

- Customer experience

- First and last mile solutions and integrations

This plan recommends expanding investment in technology and leveraging the mass amounts of data to enhance performance monitoring. The anticipated technology, along with the transformational nature of this long-range plan overall, will require increased workforce capacity to successfully plan, integrate, and implement these projects. New technologies will only successfully realize benefits for riders and for TheRide if the right resources are allocated to their implementation.

Some areas that are anticipated to have a technological solution include:

- **Fare collection:** Riders have come to expect a modern and efficient fare collection system. This includes technological solutions like a smart card system and mobile ticketing. As TheRide looks to enable expansion of regional transit services and better integrate mobility services, fare payment integration will become increasingly important. This could include fare integration with the WAVE/People's Express or first and last mile solutions. Integration with the RTA will build off the 2019 regional fare integration study.

- **Trip planning:** Especially in the context of the long-range plan, which is introducing new services and changing other services, it is critical that all customers have access to modern trip planning tools. These tools should aim for

Figure 31 An interactive trip planner kiosk (photo by Northwest)

seamless trip planning capabilities across services and other transportation modes. They must be intuitive for new riders as well as accessible for riders with disabilities.

- **First and last mile solutions:** Riders and potential riders whose home or destination is a little too far from transit are often unlikely to take transit. First and last mile solutions can encourage these riders and potential riders by making transit more accessible to them. While the specific solution may differ depending on the context of the neighborhood, potential solutions include technologies like e-scooters and trip booking integrations with Transportation Network Companies (TNCs). More detail on first and last mile solutions and strategy is found in section 8.2 on collaborations.

- **Customer experience and accessibility:** Another trend in transit technology is technologies aimed at improving customer comfort, experience, and accessibility. Examples include public wi-fi, infotainment, charging ports at terminals and on buses, interactive wayfinding, and accessibility beacons for riders with disabilities.

Related to implementing modern fare collection systems is to continue to implement the recommendation from the comprehensive 2018 fare study. Key recommendations from that fare study include:

- Establish a fare policy
- Establish indicator that initiates fare increase
- Implement fare capping
- Expand third-party business pass program and develop pricing methodology
- Establish consistent discounts on services using current discount rates

7.4 Workforce

To effectively achieve this plan, targeted enhancements to workforce capacity are needed. Most workforce enhancements are tied to service hour increases. This includes operators, dispatchers, supervisors, and mechanics. However, this plan recommends infrastructure enhancements, strategies, and actions that go beyond what is tied to current service hour levels. This will require additional capacity in all parts of the organization including Operations, Facility Services, Fleet

Services, Community Relations, Human Resources, Finance and Procurement, Information Technology, Planning and Innovation, and Administration.

8. Regional Transit Network

The Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area is a growing job center that attracts talent from across the region. It also has limited parking and congestion challenges. To facilitate the areas role as a regional hub and to effectively address its transportation challenges, TheRide must operate and work effectively within a well-designed regional transportation network. The particulars of regional connections depend on partnerships and outside funding, particularly with the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA). Figure 33 displays regional transit elements recommended by TheRide:

The regional vision is characterized by five goals.

1. Provide a connection between the Ypsilanti area to Western Wayne County

This connection was a commonly expressed desire during public engagement, particularly amongst current transit users in the Ypsilanti area. TheRide will work towards connecting the Ypsilanti area with both the SMART system and to Canton Township.

2. Add a Ypsilanti connection to both the Airport and Detroit

This service could either be designed to integrate with the current D2A2 and AirRide services or be provided as a separate service.

3. Develop an Express / Park and Ride system

An Express / Park and Ride network is sought to effectively capture regional commuters into and out of the Ann-Arbor-Ypsilanti area and align with the City of Ann Arbor Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Park and Ride lots would be developed at locations adjacent to regional travel corridors and with higher local demand. Express bus service would be provided between the lots and major trip generators within the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area.
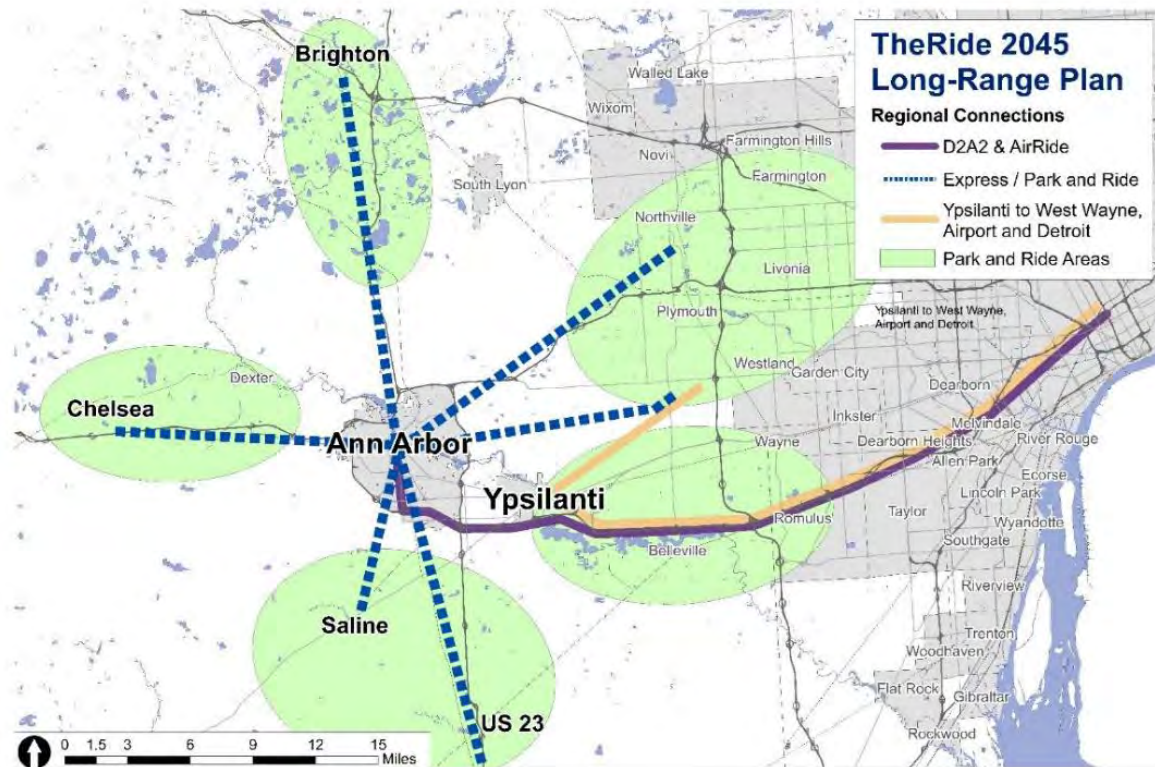
Figure 33 TheRide recommended regional connections in 2045

- Collaborate with the Michigan Department of Transportation, the RTA and other transit agencies in the State to allow bus operations on shoulder lanes and High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes.

Shoulder lane operations on limited access highways would be an important element in enhancing the competitiveness of and the business case for a regional transit service. Transit use could be used in conjunction with a HOV lane. The I-94 between State St. and Huron St. is a priority implementation area that would benefit the existing D2A2 and AirRide services and the proposed I-94 Express.

4. Engage with Non-AAATA Member Municipalities in Washtenaw County on the future of contracted services

TheRide serves a broad service area, but only the cities of Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Ypsilanti Township are current members of the AAATA. The other townships are serviced under a purchase of service agreement. Membership enables TheRide to plan more effectively. To enable sustainable growth of TheRide's services, discussions should be conducted with interested non-AAATA member municipalities in Washtenaw Country on the future of transit provision and contractual arrangements.

TheRide will work with these municipalities to identify local needs and by doing technical analysis and public engagement to make recommendations based on local needs and the financial commitment desired.

Several areas have been identified that would have good transit ridership potential and serve trips for people or jobs in the member municipalities. These include the Domino Farms / East Medical Campus area, the West Ann Arbor Health Center area, northeast of the Carpenter/W Michigan area, and north and east of the Harris and MacArthur area,.

9. Advocacy & Partnerships

TheRide's success depends on many factors outside the agency's direct control and on numerous entities and individuals. Various municipalities, the Michigan Department of Transportation and Washtenaw County control the roads that buses operate on and where stops are situated. Before boarding a bus or upon leaving a bus, a customer must travel to/from their ultimate origin or destination via pedestrian networks developed and maintained by municipalities. Municipal policy influences transit demand through elements such as land use planning and parking policy. Other mobility providers, such as the University of Michigan, influence the use of TheRide either as a complement for it or in competition with it. All of these elements will influence the quality of a customer's experience and TheRide's goals. This plan strives to expand and better focus partnerships and advocacy. The focus of expanded partnerships and advocacy is in four areas: transit

friendly municipal policy, first and last mile solutions, transit-supportive and transit adjacent groups and the University of Michigan. In addition to the recommendations outlined below, TheRide will conduct a comprehensive review of advocacy and partnership opportunities to guide future work.

Transit friendly municipal policy

Municipal policy has a significant influence on transit success in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. While not directly under the control of TheRide, dedicating resources to advocate and educate on transit-friendly municipal policy is an effective means to achieving organizational goals. TheRide should be advocating for municipal policies that encourage more transit use and improve the customer experience.

An important area for improvement is in the first and last mile experience, particularly for pedestrians. New development in the Ann Arbor- Ypsilanti area is often characterized by transportation networks and land use planning that provide limited active transportation connectivity to transit efficient arterial roadways. TheRide should advocate for supportive transportation network connectivity including ensuring new development is easily accessible by foot to an efficient transit corridor and that safe infrastructure and crossing are in place. To aid in advocacy and to improve general knowledge, TheRide will identify pedestrian connection enhancement priorities, develop guidelines for transit-friendly land use and street design and identify existing and transit-supportive roadways for future potential services areas.

To improve first and last mile comfort and safety, TheRide should encourage municipalities to pursue transit friendly traffic calming. At bus stops, TheRide will aim to work with municipalities to ensure high levels of accessibility, comfort, and safety. This includes ensuring that all stops are 100% accessible. To maximize the stop experience and generally improve the public realm, TheRide will advocate to direct urban development spending towards bus stops and adjacent infrastructure.

Transit-supportive and transit adjacent groups

Collaborating with transit advocates is often an effective means to help advance transit-supportive policy and projects. Within the broader public, there are individuals and organizations who are passionate about transit. TheRide recognizes that their passion can be harnessed to make transit better and transit projects more successful. TheRide will continue in their public engagement and expand it to ensure that there are regular and meaningful opportunities for transit advocates to get involved, learn more and provide insight. Positive and vocal support from the public can positively impact transit implementation.

TheRide shares goals with many community organizations. This can include those working for healthier and more equitable and economically and environmentally sustainable communities. Organizations with shared goals will be assessed as well as potential synergies with them. Collaborations with these groups will be pursued.

First and last mile solutions

In addition, to walking and biking, an increasing array of first and last mile solutions harnessing new technologies are being developed that can help to improve transit access. Certain types of services (e.g., on-demand service or bike/scooter share) can also be designed to feed into high-frequency and high-capacity routes to provide transit access to low demand or hard to reach areas.

These services can be operated by an array of organizations, including increasingly, private companies. At times, these new services can compete with transit to the detriment of the overall transportation network. TheRide should look to partner on first and last mile solutions to ensure an efficient and high-quality public transportation system that enhances the first and last mile experience. To effectively direct these partnerships, TheRide will study appropriate first and last mile solutions relative to the local transit context throughout the service area.

University of Michigan

The University of Michigan Campus Transit is a tremendous benefit to the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti community and to TheRide itself. The service is extensive, high quality and serves the general community for free. There is, however, opportunity to mutually benefit both services through increase service collaboration as there is significant system overlap and potential redundancies. Large increases in population and employment are projected on or near University of Michigan campuses and the University will continue to act as dominant travel node in the area. Ensuring efficient planning to accommodate changing and growing demand will be important. TheRide will pursue further service collaboration with the University of Michigan to provide the best possible transit system for the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area and University of Michigan students and staff.

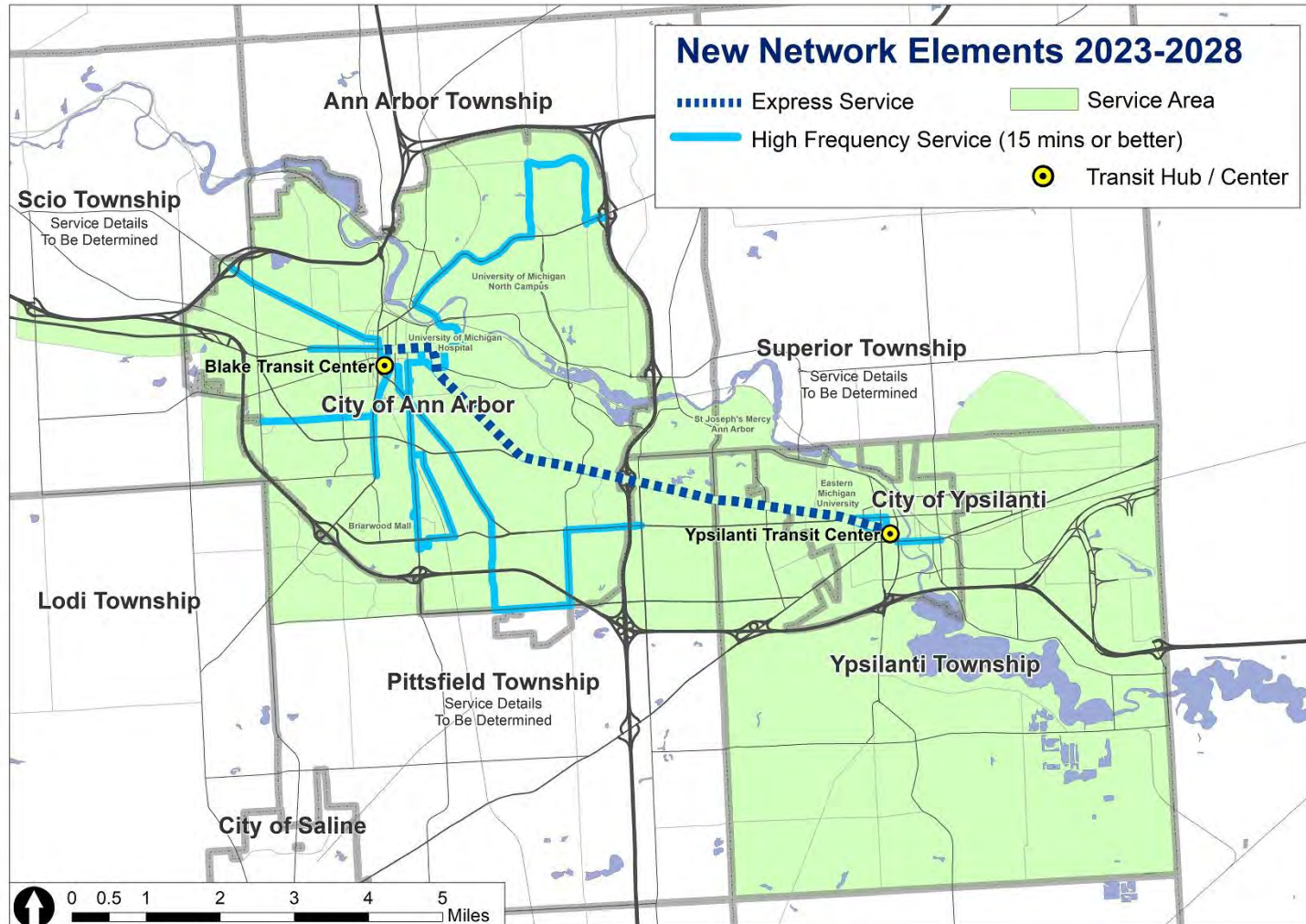# 10. Implementation

2023-2028

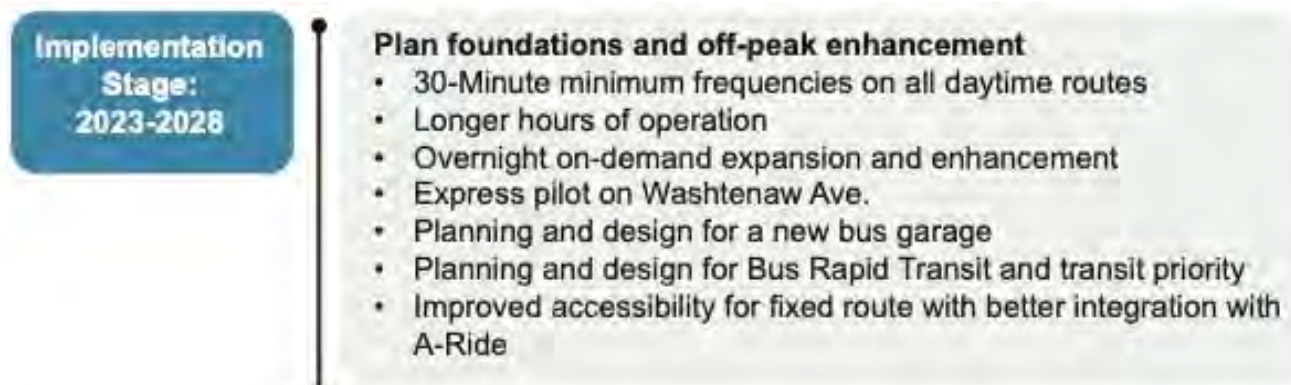*Figure 34 New Network Elements 2023-2028*

Figure 35 Implementation stage elements - 2023-2028

Between the years 2023 to 2028, our focus will be to lay the groundwork for future states while investing in service improvements that require less infrastructure to increase equity and grow ridership. This includes extending our hours of service, introducing a minimum 30-minute frequency on all routes during the daytime including weekends, and a pilot express route on Washtenaw Ave. This express pilot service will provide enhanced service along the corridor to build ridership in preparation for the BRT for the following stage. We will upgrade the Ypsilanti Transit Center and expand the Blake Transit Center and start the design work for the new garage which will let us grow the bus fleet in later stages to support increased services. The BRT and transit priority planning studies which will be conducted during this phase are crucial to grant applications needed to support the funding of such construction.

Overall, this stage of the plan focuses on confirming alignment, looking at land requirements, community integration and implementing quick wins. These quick wins include incremental infrastructure enhancements that will be done of the Washtenaw BRT corridor based on ease of implementation. This includes super stops, Transit Signal Priority and potentially a pilot on dedicated bus lanes on small stretches of the network, such as 4th and 5th Ave. connecting to the terminal or Huron St.

Other projects that will take place include enhancing the family of services for those with accessibility issues. This will involve enhancing fixed route accessibility including at stops and through improved travel training. Work will be conducted to better integrate A-ride with fixed route service. Integration might also take place through the development of a single On-Demand services app. A service review will be conducted for all On-Demand service with an aim to match services most effectively with differing needs of customer areas.
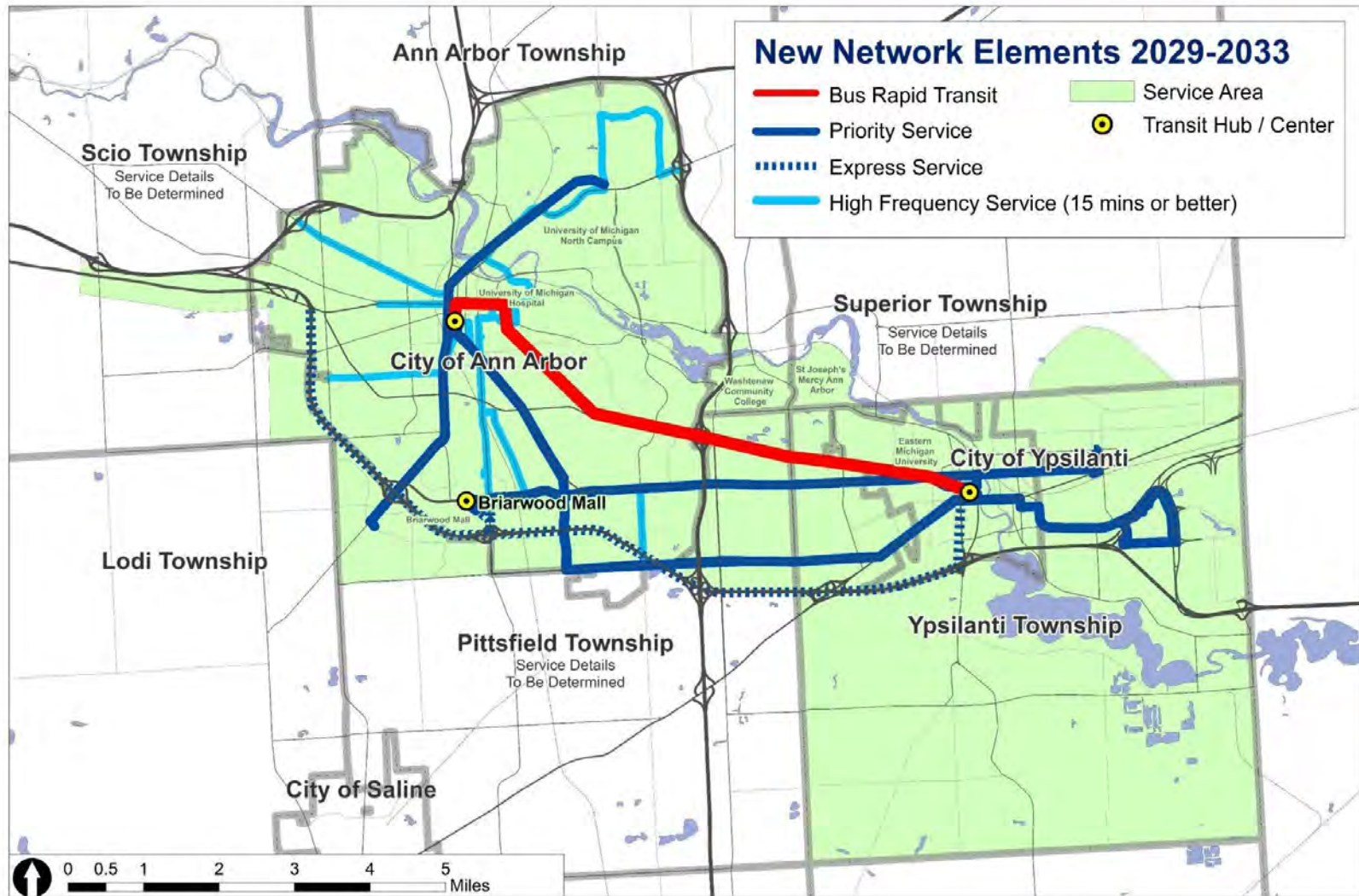
2029- 2033

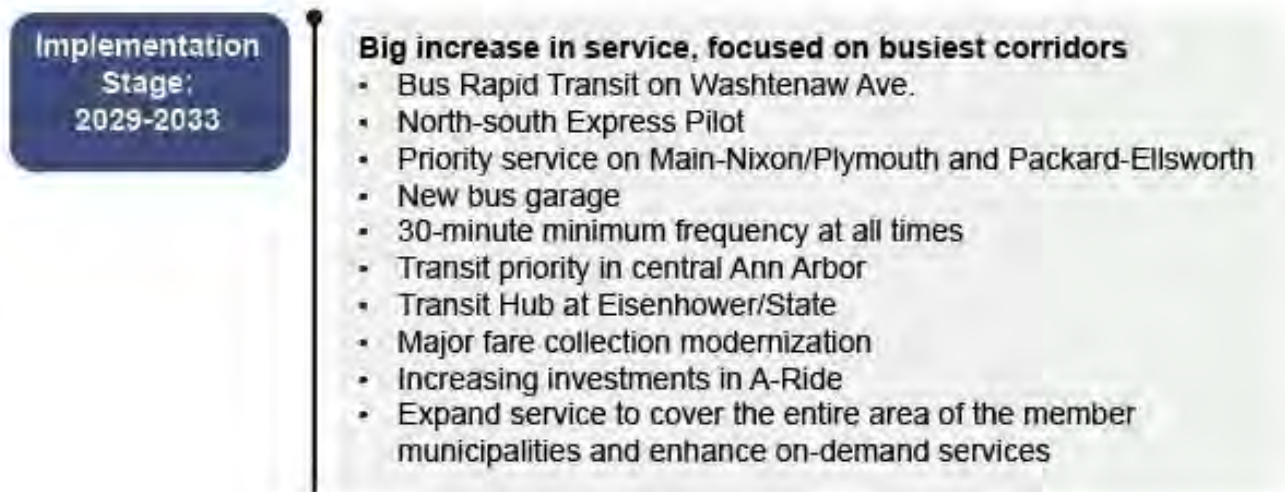*Figure 36 New Network Elements 2029-2033*

Implementation Stage: 2029-2033

Big increase in service, focused on busiest corridors
- Bus Rapid Transit on Washtenaw Ave.
- North-south Express Pilot
- Priority service on Main-Nixon/Plymouth and Packard-Ellsworth
- New bus garage
- 30-minute minimum frequency at all times
- Transit priority in central Ann Arbor
- Transit Hub at Eisenhower/State
- Major fare collection modernization
- Increasing investments in A-Ride
- Expand service to cover the entire area of the member municipalities and enhance on-demand services

Figure 37 Implementation stage elements - 2029-2033

The second phase of implementation takes place from 2029 to 2033. Starting in 2029, the second phase of the plan includes significant increases in service with an expanded bus fleet. This includes increased service in both peak and off-peak service. The express service launched in stage 1 on Washtenaw Avenue will be upgraded to a Bus Rapid Transit service with better stops, queue jump lanes and transit priority features along the route. BRT implementation is important at this stage to capture unique time sensitive funding opportunities from the Federal government and to enable preceding network changes. The efficiencies BRT creates enables network restructuring and significantly improves efficiencies, which eases proceeding enhancements. The Washtenaw BRT was identified as the priority corridor during public engagement and in modelling, providing widespread benefits. An express route on the North-south corridor from Eisenhower/State to the Plymouth Road Park and Ride will also be introduced with the intent to start building momentum for the North-south BRT. Additionally, priority services will be introduced on the Main/Plymouth, and Packard/Ellsworth corridors. At this stage 30-minute minimum frequencies will be set at all times of the day and 7 days a week. During this phase, we will continue to invest in A-Ride to improve service delivery for people with disabilities. Finally, this phase includes construction of the first transit hub, the modernization of the fare collection system and both expands and improves FlexRide.
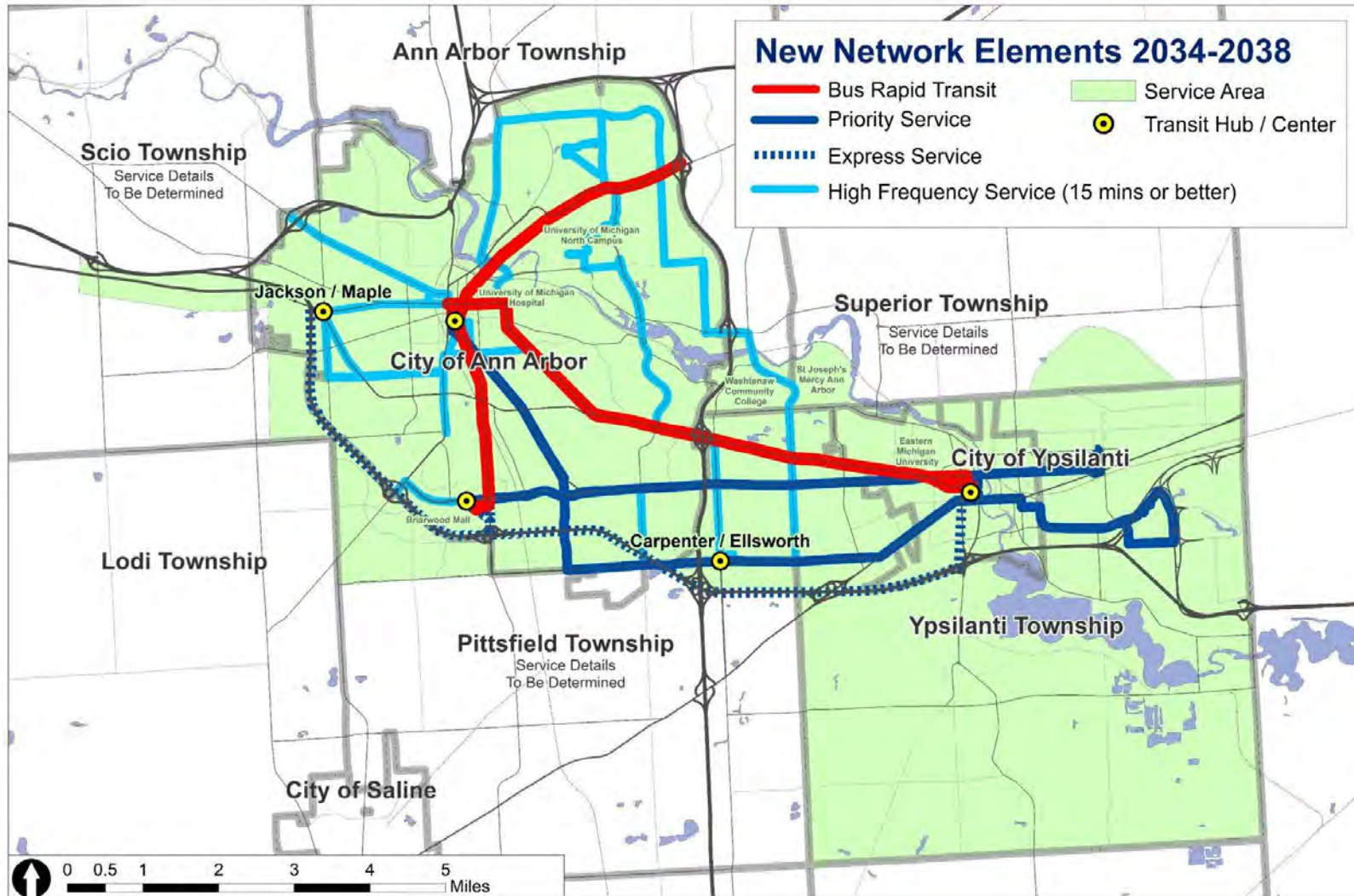
2034-2038
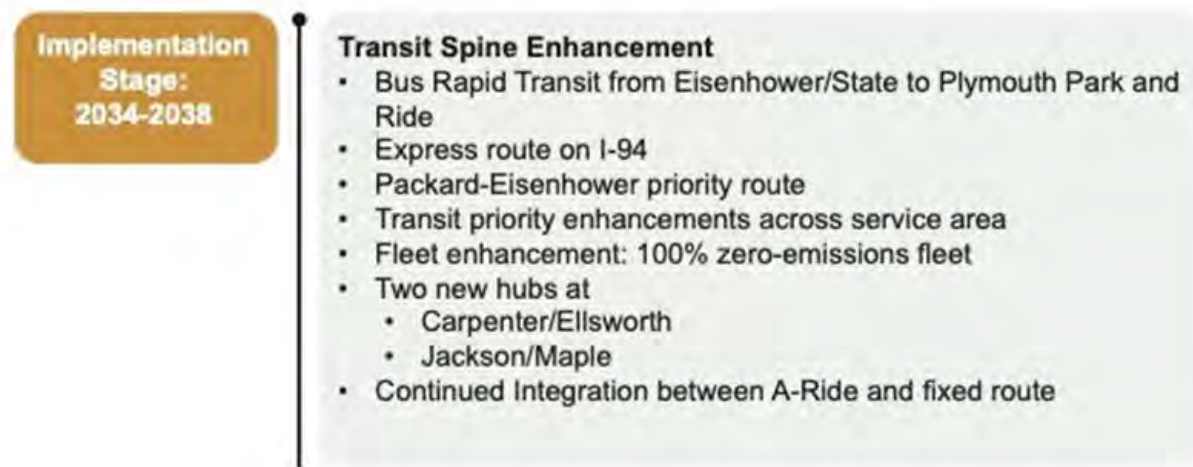

Figure 38 New Network Elements 2034-2038

Figure 39 Implementation stage elements - 2034-2038

In the third phase of implementation, improvements will be made to the backbone of the network. This includes upgrading the north-south express route from Eisenhower/State to Plymouth Park and Ride to a Bus Rapid Transit service. The plan also includes the launch of a new express route on I-94 and a priority route on Packard-Eisenhower. These upgrades will be coupled with transit priority enhancements across the service area. In this stage, two new transit hubs are planned for Carpenter/Ellsworth and Jackson/Maple. To help feed these higher order services and the plan adds high-frequency routes. Finally, the plan for this phase includes investments in integrating A-Ride and the fixed route network, to provide seamless, accessible options for everyone and a non-emergency medical transportation study.

2039-2045
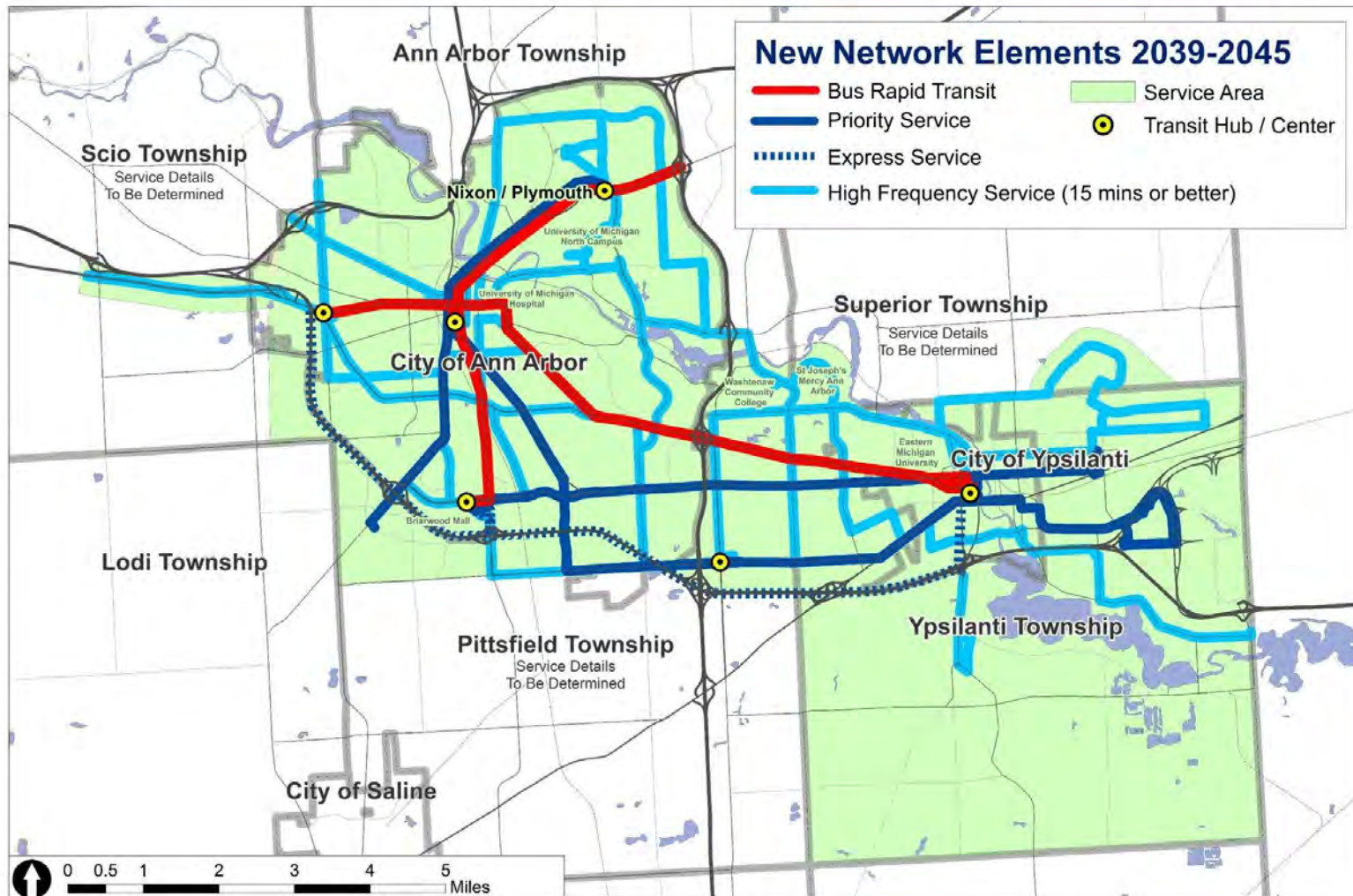
Figure 40 New Network Elements 2039-2045

High-frequency network expansion

Implementation Stage: 2039-2045

- Focused service investment in high-frequency network
- Final build-out of BRT on north-south route
- BRT on Huron/Jackson
- Transit Hub at Nixon/Plymouth
- Regional fare system integration
- Full Integration between A-Ride and fixed route
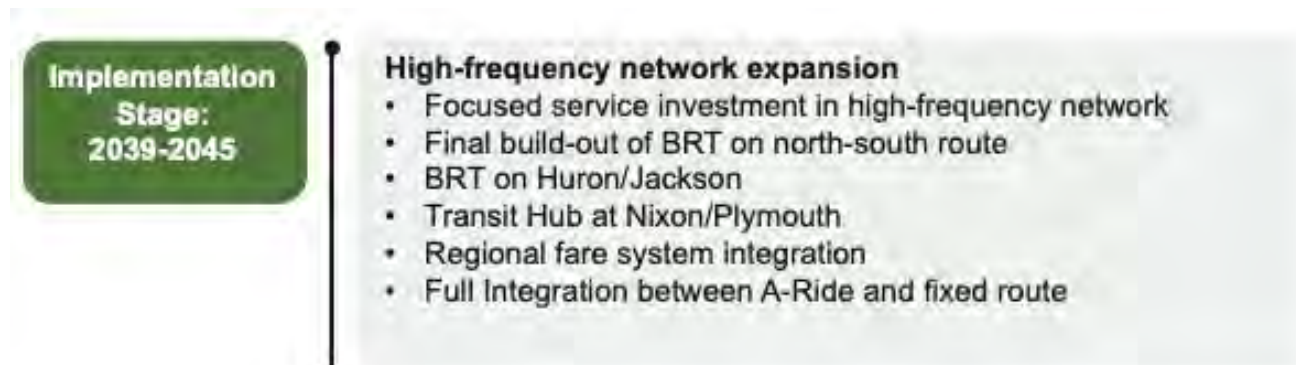
Figure 41 Implementation stage elements - 2039-2045

In the last phase of implementation, the backbone of the network will be upgraded and expanded. Here, the full Bus Rapid Transit network will be completed, as will be the high-frequency network. During this phase new transit hubs will be built at Nixon/Plymouth. Additionally, we expect to have regional fare payment system integration in place to facilitate regional travel.

Beyond 2045

TheRide will continue build and enhance the area's transit system beyond 2045. Numerous aspirational transit features were not included as part of this plan due their lower likelihood of implementation in the next 25 years and the importance of focusing attention in this plan to maximize its efficacy.

For implementation beyond 2045, TheRide will keep monitoring for consideration several elements that are of interest to the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti community and have the potential to further improve the area's transit. These include elements like automated vehicles, which could prove particularly beneficial on BRT corridors. Rail corridors will continue to be potential long-term options. Municipalities have in the past, built out BRT, developed significant corridor ridership before transition to rail. Alternative funding sources, congestion pricing and regional structure are three other potential transformational items that might have improved likelihood of implementation and transition in the time beyond this plan scope.

10.1 Implementation and Performance monitoring

TheRide already has a formal process for monitoring its progress against the approved Ends Policy, including access equity, environmental impact, economic development, customer satisfaction and public perception. A number of detailed measures contribute to this evaluation, explained in more detail in Section 3.

In addition to this existing monitoring and reporting framework, it will be important for TheRide to monitor the progress in achieving elements of TheRide2045 plan. This process should be closely linked to the key considerations outlined in the plan guidance report, including

- Being an attractive transportation option

- Being a fully integrated mobility provider

- Organizational stability

- Transit infrastructure integration

- Regional connections

- Contributing to affordable and equitable communities

- Efficient service provision.

Each of these considerations was incorporated into the design of service and program alternatives and their evaluation. As the agency proceeds with TheRide 2045 plan, it will be important to monitor both the implementation progress as well as to evaluate the performance of the various service recommendations against their planned performance.

Implementation Monitoring

TheRide2045 includes recommendations for several service initiatives which will change or add to the existing service delivery. These include expanded span of service, increased frequency on existing and re-aligned routes, new route alignments and service delivery plans.

Annually, TheRide should review the progress made in implementing specific elements of the plan to evaluate the status of progress and understand the reasons for and implications of significant deviations from the plan. This review process

should inform not only mid-course adjustments as required but also contribute to the comprehensive review of the long-range plan every five years.

Performance Monitoring

Performance of new service initiatives should be monitored to ensure their cost-effectiveness and the ability to contribute to the broader service objectives within TheRide's Ends Policy. This includes ensuring that the current data collection and reporting procedures provide a consistent framework for evaluation performance of TheRide 2045's service initiatives.

Frequent

Key operational data should be (and currently is) collected on a regular basis to ensure the effective operation of the service, including ridership counts and vehicle location data. These data can be used to evaluate the performance change of new service initiatives on existing routes resulting from route re-alignments, service increases, changes in span of service and new services. New service standards will be developed to guide this evaluation including the development of standards around diverse services such as On-Demand, BRT and Priority routes. These data can also contribute to the longer-term performance measures. Regular data collection and reporting should include:

- Ridership (by route and period)
- Boardings per Rev Vehicle Hour (by route and period)
- Vehicle location and on-time performance

These data are already collected as part of the regular operational procedures and used to monitor transit operations to ensure cost-effective operation and customer satisfaction.

Annual

Annual review and assessments of performance are important for keeping each of the stages of the long-range plan on track and informing five-year reviews of the plan. Annual service adjustments based on these assessments can ensure cost-effective operation, adherence to End Policy and consistent progress in each stage of the plan. Deviations from planned progress for new service initiatives should be evaluated to assess root causes (operational, demographic, economic etc) and to adjust the Plan within each stage. Changes to initiatives because of this process are brought forward to the five-year review process.

- Ridership per Capita

- Trip Duration (vs private automobile)
- Cost per rider

Periodic

Land use and demographic factors will change slowly over time once a service change is implemented. These measures should be monitored less frequently and provide input to reviews of the plan. Several of these factors were used to evaluate the selection of service options and should be monitored periodically to check performance and re-evaluate priorities. These include:

- Transit mode share
- percent of residences and jobs within .25 miles of bus stop
- percent of low income and minority racial groups within .7 miles of high-frequency transit (vs total population)
- percent of residents and jobs within .7 miles of high-frequency transit

For services in new areas, or in areas and time periods with new service delivery formants (such as on-demand), it will be important to provide sufficient time for the service to develop, attract ridership and reach maturity. A minimum of one year, and in some cases two years should be allowed to establish the performance of new services. During this time performance targets should be adopted on a sliding scale leading towards the final target. This will provide the agency with information to evaluate the service against reasonable expectations and provide an opportunity to adjust services to correct significant performance issues.

- First quarter: 25% of the minimum performance target

- Second quarter: 50% of the minimum performance target

- Third quarter: 75% of the minimum performance target

In each quarter of the implementation period, services should reach at least 75 percent of the minimum target and be showing evidence of improvement. Without this performance, the service should be re-evaluated and adjusted to improve performance.

11. Financial plan

Central to the success of TheRide 2045 is financial management. TheRide must purse new funding opportunities, carefully maximize local, state and federal funds, and be careful not to overcommit or under-invest. Having a long-term plan that helps sequence and contextualize individual decisions is crucial. Figure 42 outlines planned operating and capital costs at each implementation stage and categorizes expenses are either Operating or Capital costs. Operating costs are expenditures incurred daily, like employee wages, fuel, and bus maintenance. These costs are presently funded through local property taxes with some support from passenger fares, state and federal grants, and advertising revenue. Capital costs are durable assets such as vehicles, buildings, and infrastructure.

	2023-2028	2029-2033	2034-2038	2039-2045
Annual Operating Cost*	$63 M	$73 M	$82 M	$90 M
Increase in operating cost (from previous)	13%	16%	12%	10%
Capital Cost	$123 M	$233 M	$129 M	$174 M

Figure 42. Operating and capital budget. Note all figures are in 2021 dollars

11.1 Operating Budget

The operating budget is divided into four-line items. All current operating costs are tied to service hours provided by either fixed route or other services. This includes operator wages, vehicle and facility maintenance, fuel and administration. These costs are assumed to rise in line with a rise in service hours for the respective service. Additional other operating expenses capture operating costs that are expected to increase beyond the rise in service hours. This includes costs associated with expanding facility and technology infrastructure and additional staffing capacity required to implement elements of this plan more efficiently. Operating costs are shown in Figure 43.

Figures are listed in (000,000s)	2023-2028	2029-2033	2034-2038	2039-2045
Fixed-route service	$45 M	$52 M	$59 M	$66 M
Demand response service	$11 M	$12 M	$13 M	$13 M
Other services	$6 M	$6 M	$6 M	$6 M
Additional operating expenses	$1 M	$3 M	$4 M	$5 M

Figure 43. Operating budget. Note all figures are in 2021 dollars

Funding

Funding for operating costs is mostly sourced through local property taxes with some support from passenger fares, state and federal grants, and advertising revenue. In 2022, local property taxes are expected to make up 35% percent of total operating costs. Without expanded revenue streams, this is expected to increase to 45-55%. This is mostly due to federal funding being redirected towards capital projects of the plan. Due to projected increases to ridership and efficiency, fares are expected to cover a greater proportion of costs, rising from 9% currently, to 16% in 2045. Under this funding structure, the millage rate (local property tax rate) would rise by 1.7 for the first phase of implementation before seeing more gradual increases of between 0.3-0.5 for the final subsequent three phases.

The significant millage rate rise in the first phase is partially attributable to addressing a structural deficit and to account for rising inflation for costs that is significantly outpacing funding sources.

Figures are listed in (000,000s)	2023-2028	2029-2033	2034-2038	2039-2045
Fares	$5 M	$8 M	$11 M	$13 M
State and Federal	$23 M	$26 M	$29 M	$31 M
Other revenue (Purchase of service agreements and advertising)	$2 M	$2 M	$2 M	$3 M
Local Property Tax	$33 M	$37 M	$40 M	$43 M

Figure 44. Operating funding. Note all figures are in 2021 dollars

While this plan makes contingencies for the continuation of this funding structure, it is recommended that other funding sources be pursued to reduce the proportion of funding derived from local property tax. Most states have more diverse and sustainable means of raising funds for public services as compared to Michigan. Section 10.3 provides additional information on potential alternative funding sources.

11.2 Capital Budget

The total capital expenditures over the duration of this plan (2023 to 2045) are estimated at $658 million. These expenses include the following:

- Purchase of additional 40′ buses

- New articulated buses

- Cutaways and accessible vans

- Support vehicles

- Construction of a new garage

- Bus rapid transit (BRT) lines

- Transit priority measures

- New technologies for fare collection, customer experience, first and last solutions, and operations

- State of good repair including vehicle replacement, facility maintenance, and technology replacement
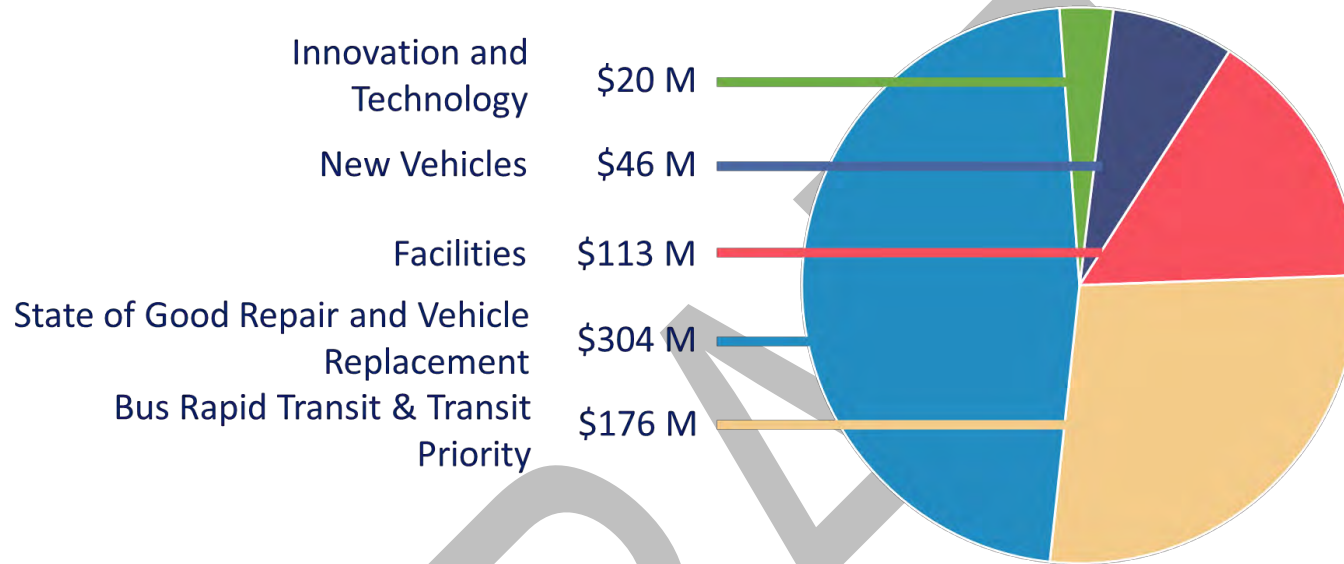

Innovation and Technology	$20 M
New Vehicles	$46 M
Facilities	$113 M
State of Good Repair and Vehicle Replacement	$304 M
Bus Rapid Transit & Transit Priority	$176 M

Figure 45. Estimated capital costs by category

Figures are listed in (000,000s)	2023-2028	2029-2033	2034-2038	2039-2045	Total
New Vehicles	$0 M	$15 M	$15 M	$15 M	$46 M
Facilities	$35 M	$69 M	$6 M	$3 M	$113 M
Bus Rapid Transit and Transit Priority	$15 M	$80 M	$37 M	$44 M	$176 M
Innovation and Technology	$4 M	$6 M	$5 M	$6 M	$20 M
State of Good Repair and Vehicle Replacement	$69 M	$62 M	$67 M	$106 M	$304 M
Total	$123 M	$233 M	$129 M	$174 M	$658 M

Figure 46. Estimated cost for each category of expenditure according implementation stage. Note all figures are in 2021 dollars

Revenue to pay for these capital costs will come from a variety of local, state, and federal sources. About $306.6 million, or 46 percent of the total program, will be available from formula funds and matching dollars. The remainder is expected to come from federal Small Starts and state match, new grant programs under the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, other grant opportunities, and the local capital reserve account. About $28.8 million in local funds are required beginning in 2034 to meet a funding shortfall. Figure 52 shows the anticipated funding by source and plan period.

The capital program has been designed to maximize the benefit of the once-in-a-generation investment from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This Act significantly increases the funding to FTA to support the capital and planning needs of transit agencies across the country. The Act increases formula funding by about 30 percent each year over the next five years, increases funding for competitive capital grant programs such as Small Starts, and introduces several new funding programs to improve equity and encourage the shift to lower emissions vehicles.

A significant portion of the capital expenditures will be spent locally on construction projects. Through programs such as the federal Disadvantaged Business program and the Small Business Administration certification program it is expected that minority and disadvantaged businesses will benefit from the capital program. The AAATA will ensure that minority

and disadvantaged business are aware of opportunities and benefit from the significant capital construction programs anticipated during the planning horizon.
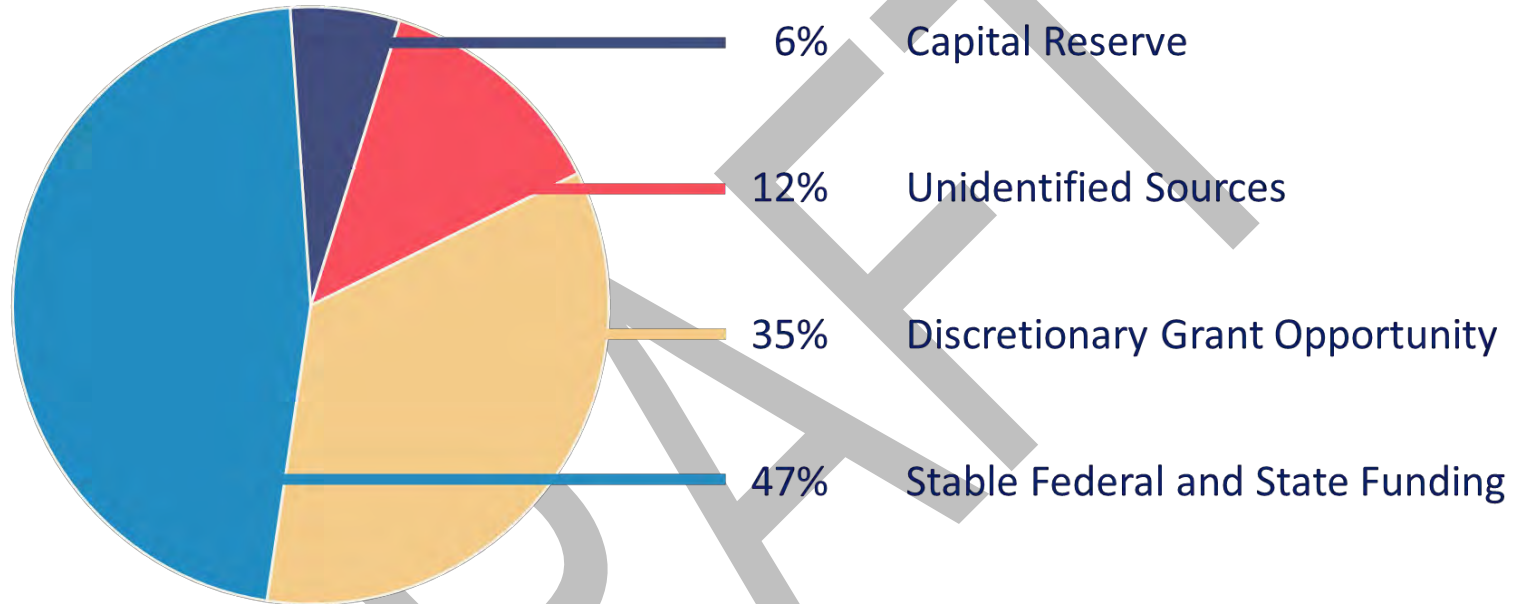

6%   Capital Reserve

12%   Unidentified Sources

35%   Discretionary Grant Opportunity

47%   Stable Federal and State Funding

Figure 47. Funding sources

Figures are listed in (000,000s)	2023-2028	2029-2033	2034-2038	2039-2045	Total
Years in each period	6	5	5	7	
Stable Federal/State Funds	**$91 M**	**$64 M**	**$64 M**	**$89 M**	**$308 M**
5307 Formula Funds & State Match	$71 M	$49 M	$49 M	$69 M	$239 M
5339 Formula Funds & State Match	$9 M	$6 M	$6 M	$8 M	$29 M
CMAQ Federal Funds & State Match	$10 M	$9 M	$9 M	$12 M	$39 M
Earmark and MDOT	$1 M	$0 M	$0 M	$0 M	$1 M
Discretionary Grant Opportunity	**$17 M**	**$131 M**	**$38 M**	**$45 M**	**$231 M**
Federal Small Starts BRT Competitive & State Match	$9 M	$73 M	$38 M	$45 M	$164 M
Federal Infrastructure Bill	$9 M	$59 M	$0 M	$0 M	$67 M
Local Capital Reserve	**$10 M**	**$24 M**	**$3 M**	**$0 M**	**$37 M**
Unidentified Sources	**$5 M**	**$14 M**	**$24 M**	**$40 M**	**$82 M**
Other Grant (Federal + State)	$5 M	$14 M	$14 M	$21 M	$53 M
Additional Local Funds Required	$0 M	$0 M	$10 M	$19 M	$29 M
Total	**$123 M**	**$233 M**	**$129 M**	**$174 M**	**$658 M**

Figure 48. Total Capital Revenues by Sources and Plan Period

Major Capital Programs

Vehicles

The first articulated buses will enter the fleet in 2029 to coincide with Washtenaw corridor BRT project opening. It is anticipated the fleet of articulated buses will grow to 35 vehicles by 2045. The fleet of 40′ buses will increase to 127 by 2045. It will also be necessary to purchase 209 40' buses to replace those that have reached the end of their useful life from 2023 to 2045. Cutaway-style buses are used for A-Ride service. This fleet will grow to 55 buses in 2045.

Facilities

The capital budget includes funds to expand and improve the Ypsilanti (YTC) and Blake Transit Centers (BTC), build new transit hubs, acquire a site to build a new maintenance and storage facility, and improve bus stops. Grant funding is available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Bus Rapid Transit and Transit Priority

The plan calls for construction of two BRT lines and various transit priority measures. The first BRT line will be located on the Washtenaw Corridor. Development of this line will require coordination with MDOT as well as the cities, townships, and businesses along the proposed route. We anticipate that up to 80 percent of the funding for this project will come from the FTA Small Starts program.

Technologies

Capital investment in technologies will include for fare collection, customer experience, first and last mile solutions and operational innovations. Grants may be available from the state or federal government, especially for systems that can be shown to improve equity.

State of Good Repair

A state of good repair program is included to ensure that facilities and vehicles remain in good condition. This includes purchasing replacements or rehabilitating existing vehicles and facilities. $54 million of the total $304 million state of good repair budget is dedicated to the replacement of new vehicles and maintenance of new facilities.

Capital Program Funding Sources

The following table highlights the capital funding sources that will be used to develop this plan.

Funding Source	Description
FTA 5307	The FTA 5307 award amounts are set in each transportation reauthorization bill, and the apportionment is determined by a formula based on a combination of bus revenue vehicle miles, bus passenger miles, fixed guideway revenue vehicle miles, and fixed guideway route miles as well as population and population density.
FTA 5339	FTA 5339 is a formula grant designed to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities.
CMAQ	The CMAQ program funds transportation projects or programs that will contribute to the attainment or maintenance of the national ambient air quality standards. CMAQ works like a formula fund; grants are apportioned annually to each state according to the air quality in the state.
Earmarks	Earmarks are congressional provisions that direct funds to be spent on specific projects.
FTA Small Starts	The FTA Small Starts program is one of several competitive capital investment grant programs offered to transit agencies. The law requires Small Starts projects to complete project development before the grant award. Project development includes design and environmental clearances.
Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act FTA	The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has increased formula funding and the funds available for capital investment grants. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law creates increased support for bus facilities, stations and stops. It also provides planning activity support for low-density and low-income portions of cities and adjoining rural areas.
FTA 5337	The State of Good Repair program provides capital funds for the maintenance, replacement, and rehabilitation of bus systems to allow transit agencies to keep their systems in good repair. Funds can be used for buses, facilities, passenger stations and terminals, and security systems as well as to develop Transit Asset Management plans.
Other Grants (Federal and State)	Transit projects are eligible for the RAISE program, which is designed to support infrastructure investment. The RAISE program has been used to fund transit priority measures, including bus lanes. RAISE grants are for capital investments in surface transportation that will have a significant local or regional impact.

Figure 49. Capital program funding sources

11.3 Additional Funding Sources

Additional funding sources are required to fill the remaining capital funding shortfall. Additional sources of funding will also be pursued to reduce the local property tax contribution for operating costs to make funding more sustainable. The following are potential funding sources that TheRide will pursue and/or advocate for to provide transit in the most cost-efficient way possible for the residents of the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area.

Funding Source	Description
Michigan State Infrastructure Bank	The Michigan State Infrastructure Bank loan program was created to provide loans to public agencies for transportation improvements. The program is designed to attract new public and private investment in transportation infrastructure in Michigan. A loan amount of up to $2 million will be considered.
Public Private Partnerships (P3)	P3s are an innovative method of financing the construction and operation of major public infrastructure. In Michigan. P3s are complex and take significant work to organize and implement.
Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA)	If the RTA is successful in the future with a transit millage or other form of taxation, it may produce enough revenue to support improvements in Washtenaw County.
Municipal Governments Grants	Municipal governments control most of the roadways that buses use and the sidewalks that passengers use to access transit. At various time local governments may provide grant opportunities to jointly enhance the infrastructure for the benefit of the community as well as passengers.
More Diverse Taxation	***Parking Tax and Fines*** A region-wide parking tax could generate significant revenue if it was levied on both paid and unpaid parking. A parking tax is related to transportation, and if it caused parking rates to increase, it could result in an increase in transit ridership. The State of Michigan does not have a legal basis for allowing special districts to tax parking, and a new legislation would be required. ***Sales Tax*** A sales tax is not directly relatable to transportation costs, and its cost of implementation would be minor because the state already has a mechanism in place for sales tax collection. Sales taxes are widely used to fund transit and nationwide fund about 38% of capital costs and 27% of operating expenses. The state law in Michigan currently does not permit special

Funding Source	Description
	districts such the TheRide to enact sales taxes. To have a local sales tax within TheRide service area, the State of Michigan would need to pass enabling legislation.
	Payroll Tax Payroll Tax could provide a stable funding source because the tax is somewhat related to transportation demand, and workers would likely need transportation to their jobsite. The tax would need to apply to the entire service area and not just the downtown cores to avoid employment shifting. Michigan State law does not have a provision to implement a payroll tax; therefore, a change to state law would be required.
	Fuel Tax Fuel tax is controlled by the state and would require a new legislation to dedicate a portion to transit. The tax has the potential to encourage transit use because higher fuel costs could cause motorists to look for less cost alternatives.
	VMT Tax VMT taxes could incent small vehicles or penalize higher polluting engines. A VMT tax would likely encourage transit use as well as raise money to fund transit. Strategically, a VMT tax would discourage sprawling. State legislation would be required.
Business Improvement Associations	Local business improvement associations or similar organizations may be willing to contribute to improvements that benefit transit and their district.

Figure 50. Potential sources of additional funding

12. Conclusion

TheRide 2045 is a Long-Range Plan that will transform transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. Development of the plan began in the fall of 2019. Planning efforts were stalled due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and resumed in early 2021. Community and stakeholders were actively engaged throughout the process, with significant input and guidance provided by TheRide's Board of Directors and a Public Advisory Group that was created for this project.

The plan calls for a vastly expanded suite of public transit services and infrastructure to be implemented over 25 years. The following table highlights the key investments called for in TheRide 2045, with supporting details provided throughout this final report. By committing to this plan, the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area will see the build out of a transformed public transportation system that improves the lives of all residents in the community. Many of the ideas and investments called for this in this plan extend beyond the typical 5-year horizon of most transit planning processes. As TheRide moves forward, it will use the long-term strategy laid out in this plan to guide the short-term planning efforts that drive transit.

Highlights of the plan

- Two high-speed Bus Rapid Transit lines that will form the backbone of the network

- 10 minute or better service with priority features on high-use corridors such as Main, Plymouth, Packard, Ellsworth and in West Willow

- High-frequency network of 15-minute or better services across the service area

- Better off-peak services, including a minimum of 30-minute frequency service throughout the service area, 7-days per week

- Later weekend and weeknight service hours

- Enhanced On-Demand service including overnight with expanded coverage areas and shorter wait times

- Four new transit hubs and improvements to our two Transit Centers to better connect services across our community

- A zero-emission bus fleet

- Partnerships and collaborations to enhance regional transit, first and last mile solutions and general transit outcomes

- Infrastructure plans to enable service growth and enhance the customer experience

- Technology plans to enhance customer experience and operational efficiency

- An achievable financial plan that effectively harnesses important funding opportunities from State and Federal governments while also highlighting how TheRide can work towards developing alternative funding sources.

Benefits of the Plan

TheRide 2045 focuses on key goals defined by our Board and echoed by the broader community. It is a transformational plan that will make transit **faster** and **more attractive**, and fundamentally change how transit is provided in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. It will significantly improve transit's attractiveness, efficiency, reliability, accessibility, speed, and convenience. Transit riders will experience service that is more frequent, comfortable, and reliable while also being provided with more travel options and shorter trips all day, every day. Coupled with new policies from outside partners, these enhancements will make transit even more attractive, increase ridership and access to destinations, and reduce private automobile dependency.

Each community will benefit from the resulting structural change to travel. In particular, seniors, people with disabilities, minorities, low-income groups, and anyone else with more limited access to private automobiles will have better access to jobs, education, social services, housing, and shopping. Fewer cars on the road improves the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This broader shift to transit will incentivize more walkable, vibrant, and healthy communities leading to improved health outcomes overall. Transit investments also reduce overall community costs for transportation – as it results in long-term reductions in municipal spending on roads and parking and individual spending on fuel and cars.

Figure 55. Community benefits

In closing, TheRide 2045 responds to the growing needs of our communities with a blueprint for preserving and expanding transit services and access to local and regional destinations. It is an ambitious vision that will require partnerships, additional investment, and leadership. Through this vision, TheRide can help lead our communities towards a future with greater social equity, environmental benefits, and access to jobs.

List of Appendices

1. Plan Guidance Report

2. Round 1 What we Heard Report

3. Round 2 What we Heard Report

4. Round 3 What we Heard Report

TheRide 2045
Plan Guidance Report

July 28, 2021

Left Turn Right Turn

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1 – Introduction

This Plan Guidance Report presents the guiding framework for the development of TheRide 2045, a long-range plan for the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA). The framework outlined here sets out how analysis throughout the project will be framed and how decisions will be made. The development of strategic options and the evaluation of those options will be based on the guidance of this framework.

This Plan Guidance Report is intended to be a living document throughout the project. As new understandings are developed, the guiding framework may be adjusted and refined.

2 – Strategic Framework

2.1 – Board's Vision and Goals

The Board of Directors defines the outcomes/goals that TheRide is supposed to be achieving in the future (i.e. Ends Policies). The "vision" for the plan is to achieve, or make headway on achieving, __all__ of these outcomes, at least to some degree. To be clear, the Board has identified _what_ TheRide will achieve, not _how_ the goals should be achieved. It is the role of this planning process to make recommendations about the best way to achieve the Board's goals in consideration of the constraints and situational context TheRide must work within. A challenge for any planning process is to help balance a community's aspirations with what it can realistically accomplish.

The Board seeks public feedback on its outcomes/goals to ensure they accurately reflect the aspirations of the community, residents, and passengers. While public comments to-date tend to focus on attributes of future services and the priorities of various groups, any feedback that suggests a change and update to the Board's goals will be forwarded to the Board for its consideration.

The core geographical scope of evaluation for this plan covers the three member municipalities of TheRide: the City of Ann Arbor, the City of Ypsilanti, and the Township of Ypsilanti. Options will be evaluated based on their ability to achieve the vision and priorities defined in the guiding framework within the member municipalities. However, the scope of analysis will cover adjacent municipalities where the expansion or continuation of services might reasonably enable the following guidance to be better achieved in the member municipalities, or where current residents are already using TheRide's service. This might include the exploration of an expanded service area or member representation within TheRide. Regional connectivity to best accommodate broader travel patterns will also be explored.

The Board establishes its Ends policies within its Vision for public transportation:

A robust public transportation system that adapts to the area's evolving needs, environment, and quality of life.

The Board of Director's Ends (outcomes/goals):

1. **AAATA exists so that an increasing proportion of residents, workers, and visitors in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area utilize public transportation options that contribute to the Area's social, environmental and economic vitality at a cost that demonstrates value and efficient stewardship of resources.**

   1.1. **Residents in the area have equitable access to public transportation services that enables full participation in society.**
      1.1.1. People with economic challenges have affordable public transportation options.
      1.1.2. People with disabilities or mobility impairments, seniors, minors, and non-English speakers have equitable access to opportunities and destinations in the area.

   1.2. **Public transportation positively impacts our environment.**
      1.2.1. Public transportation options are increasingly chosen over use of a personal car.
      1.2.2. Public transportation options minimize energy use and pollution, and conserve natural resources.
      1.2.3. Public transportation options produce conditions favorable to more compact and walkable land development.
      1.2.4. Relevant public policy is transit supportive.

   1.3. **Public transportation positively impacts the economic prosperity of the area.**
      1.3.1. Public transportation facilitates labor mobility.
      1.3.2. Students can access education opportunities without need of a personal vehicle.
      1.3.3. Visitors use public transportation in the area.
      1.3.4. Public transportation connects the area to the Metro Detroit region.

   1.4. **Passengers are highly satisfied with public transportation services.**

   1.5. **Residents of the area recognize the positive contributions of public transportation to the area's quality of life.**

2.2 - Board's Planning Framework

The Board of Directors has also created a planning and governance framework within its governance policies that primarily focus on funding and defining the planning process itself. The key policies are summarized below:

1. **Strategic Framework** As a long-term planning exercise, the process and outcomes of this study must show progress towards the Board's defined Ends. Part of that process includes defining multi-year plans that include the best available information on financial implications, and clear staging plans that will allow staff to recommend changes to the Board based on new information over time. This plan must be prudent and in line with common business practices and must also identify and evaluate risks for staff to manage. [1]

2. **Financial Planning and Stewardship:** In developing a long-term plan, it is always necessary to balance short-term financial constraints with longer-term aspirations. This means that the plan must be financially realistic, even if based on financial resources or funding sources not currently available. This long-term plan should not be constrained by the current financial environment but must be developed with clear assessment of financial requirements, potential funding sources and levels, and consideration of the risk to the plan and its alternatives if additional funding is not secured. Ultimately, the plan must demonstrate value and efficient stewardship of resources, and be based on realistic and transparent financial assumptions.[2]

3. **Public and Stakeholder Involvement:** Public and stakeholder engagement is a cornerstone of the Board's approach, and vital to the development of this long-term plan. The planning process must meaningfully engage riders, residents, stakeholders, partners, and staff. There should be good communication and transparency to the planning process and rely on and develop collaborative partnerships with community stakeholders.[3]

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[1] Board's policy #2.4-2.4.8, 2.10.1.3, 2.0

[2] Board's policy #2.4, 2.4.3, 2.4.5, 2.4.8, 2.5

[3] Board's policy # 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.2.1, 2.9, 2.9.4, 2.9.5

2.3 - Other guiding documents

In addition to complying with and supporting the Board's policy Ends, the plan will also build on previous and current planning studies addressing long-term planning for TheRide. Specifically:

o   TheRide's Corporate Business Plan set three medium-term priority areas for the organization:
  - Planning for the future (including developing a long-range plan, advocacy strategy and expanding terminals)
  - Servicing customers (including enhancing fare collection and fare structure and expanding real-time information)
  - Modernizing TheRide (including implementing recommendations from a 2019 paratransit study, reviewing sustainability of bike share, and conducting a propulsion study)

o   The 2018 Paratransit Study provides three strategic takeaways for A-Ride and GoldRide:
  - Enhance efficiency
  - Tighten eligibility policies
  - Increase administrative support and focus on paratransit

o   The 2018 Fare Study provided a fare structure review that assessed the current state and found it to be too complex but with strong third-party pass programs. Key recommendations include:
  - Establish indicator that initiates fare increase
  - Procure smart card + Mobile ticketing
  - Shift to offboard enforcement
  - Transition to a time-based fare
  - Eliminate or adjust various fare products

3 - Public and Stakeholder Input

The interests and aspirations of the general public and passengers are an important input into the planning process. **Public and stakeholder engagement** was initiated in 2019 and further public and stakeholder engagement has occurred in 2021. The What We Heard (Round 1) Report summarizes the feedback received and further details the engagement process. The timeline of engagement has spanned from prior to the Covid-19 pandemic to during it, resulting in changing priorities for respondents. The pandemic

will leave lingering effects on travel behavior and transit that must be considered in this plan. However, even in the near-term, the post-pandemic conditions will more closely resemble pre-pandemic conditions at TheRide as compared to pandemic conditions. In the 25-year horizon, this is even more so the case.

This Plan Guidance Report attempts to reconcile this reality by focusing predominately on pre-pandemic visions but also attempting to consider what new priorities will linger over the long-term.

Staff too, provide a great deal of knowledge, drawn from years of on-the-ground service and administration of the system. They are able to provide specific insight into challenges and opportunities to help TheRide develop over the next 25 years.

The key considerations reflected by the public, partners, and staff echoed the themes and areas of importance highlighted by the Board's Ends. These will be important to consider in developing the plan. The key considerations include:

- **Be an attractive transportation option**

  The overarching priority for the Board, which was echoed unanimously by customers, stakeholders, and staff alike, is that public transportation be a viable and increasingly selected mode of travel for travelers. Thus, success of the plan will revolve around increasing modal share of TheRide services within the community, and specifically trips per capita. To get people out of cars and choosing public transit, the Plan will have to address customers' service design concerns:

  - More reliable off-peak service including extended service span
  - Enhanced quality of experience including customer amenities
  - Increased service frequency
  - Faster trips
  - More reliable service

- **Be a fully integrated public mobility provider**

  Many stakeholders emphasized the importance of providing a variety of services to meet the diverse travel needs of the community. This desire was also expressed as growth towards becoming a mobility-as-a-service provider for a streamlined user experience and for better planning integration around diverse internal and external services.

- **Organizational sustainability**

  TheRide's stakeholders felt that the organization needed to be financially sustainable over the long-term to ensure it is able to continually operate and support the community. This includes having the finances necessary to grow and develop.

- **Focus on integrating transit infrastructure to surrounding community development**

  Stakeholders specifically voiced desires that fit within a general vision for influential community collaboration. There is a desire to improve external elements that have a significant bearing on transit success such as land use/transportation policy; improved access and maintenance of stops and supporting infrastructure, and better regional collaboration.

- **Enhance regional connections**

  Customers and stakeholders specifically focused on the importance of establishing better regional connections.

- **Contribute to affordable and equitable communities**

  The public and stakeholders expressed a desire to help improve affordability and equity through the provision of affordable and high-value transportation and by working to reduce inequities in transportation along income, racial and ADA-related perspectives.

- **Efficient service provision**

  Public feedback leans toward improved frequency over increased coverage of the service. With fixed resources, that means focusing on improving system efficiency. This focus on service efficiency also captures frequently cited visions for better matching of service to demand, such as on high demand corridors, efficient use of service different modes and a network that meets the travel patterns of current and potential customers.

4 – Planning Methodology

The development of the recommended solutions and initiatives for the TheRide's 25-Year Long-Range Plan will be based on an assessment of the current state of the service and the future context within which service might operate against the Board's Ends. This will include the identification of gaps and opportunities and a staged plan that continuously progresses towards the approved Ends.

The development of the plan will rely on the construction and evaluation of plan options – amalgams of individual solutions and initiatives that together form a comprehensive plan that effectively advance the board's vision. These plan options will vary according to the prioritization of specific gaps or opportunities or themes related to the Board's Ends Policy such as access and equity, environmental sustainability, economic development and transit mode share growth.

The following figure provides an overview of the planning methodology to be employed in developing the plan.
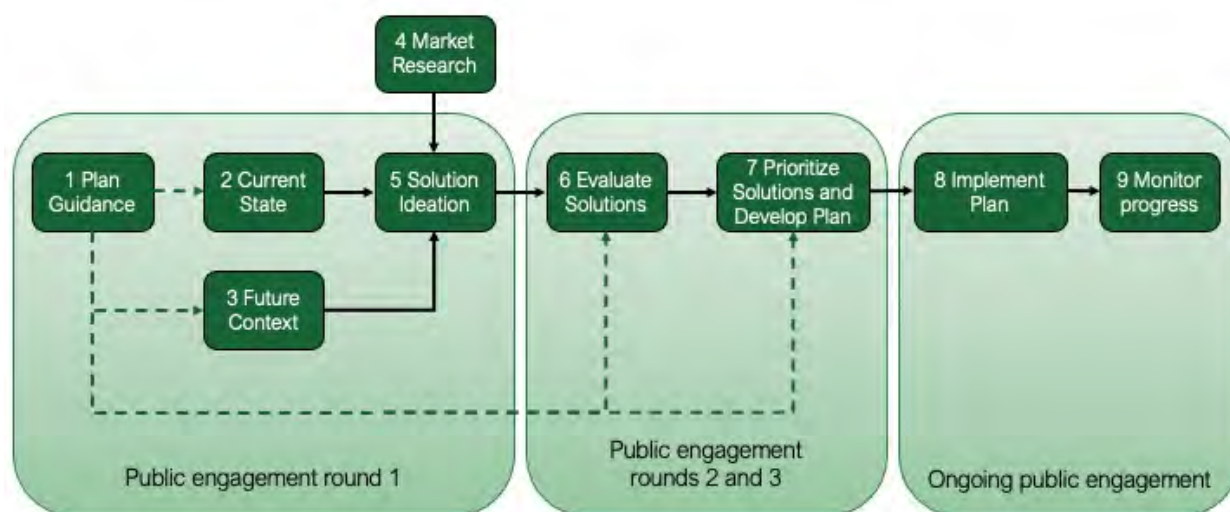
Figure 1 - Overview of Planning Methodology

The Plan Guidance (1) will be the guiding document for the entire project, informing areas of focus for research and analysis and establishing how solutions are evaluated and prioritized. The Current State and Future Context (2, 3) will result in a clear understanding of TheRide's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOC) currently and in the future. Potential solutions (5) will be generated based on the SWOC analysis, market research, and the first round of public and stakeholder engagement. Evaluation of the solutions (6) and then final selection and prioritization (7)

will be informed by the Plan Guidance and additional public engagement. Following implementation of the plan (8), progress will be monitored and informed by ongoing public engagement.

The following categories of solutions will be considered in Step 5 of this planning project:

Potential Solutions

- **Network elements**, including routes and services, higher-order transit connections, and other regional connections;
- **Fleet and facilities**, considering potential trends in fleet *electrification, autonomous vehicles* and needs for garage and customer facilities including transit terminals and stops.
- **Technology and fares**, including innovations in *fare payment technology*, *customer information*, and *microtransit*;
- **Service Design and Scheduling**, including all non-spatial features of fixed route service provision and scheduling practices
- **Delivery models,** including *family of services*, and *alternative delivery* and *contracting options*;
- **Governance**, including evolving *key partner relationships* and the overall structure of the organization;
- **External transit-supportive objectives**, including collaborative or advocacy strategies in concert with land use and transportation planning processes;

The solutions will be assessed in two stages. First, solutions will be evaluated individually and at a higher level to ascertain the value they bring to the organization.

Next, solutions will be combined to form more comprehensive plan options. Plan options will be clearly defined and characterized to facilitate public review and input – with consistent communication and transparency of evaluation. Each plan option will be comprehensively evaluated against the Board's Ends and will be presented to allow the public and stakeholders to assess the priorities of the progress towards the Board's Ends.

The framework outlined in TheRide's Corporate Business Plan will be employed at both stages as follows:

Evaluation Lens for Step 6	Individual Solutions	Plan Options
Organizational Alignment	• Does this idea help to advance the Board's desired outcomes? To what degree? • Does it mesh with what TheRide does, for whom and at what cost? • Is this focusing energy on future goals, or reactionary? • Does this idea provide an alternative to a different solution that is focused on a different End?	• Does the plan option effectively advance *all* of the Board's desired outcomes? What quantitative and/or qualitative key performance indicators demonstrate this? • Does it mesh with what TheRide does, for whom and at what cost? • Is the plan option moving TheRide forward strategically?
Roles	• Is the idea within TheRide's legal mandate, or is it the responsibility of another group? • Does TheRide have direct control, or can the organization only influence others? • Is this idea more appropriate for another organization? Is partnering a possibility?	• What elements of the plan option are reliant on the support of other organizations? • What level of external support and involvement is required to achieve success?
Risks	• What risks does the idea bring with it, now or in the future? Are those risks acceptable?	• What risks does the plan option carry that may impact achievement of the desired outcomes? • What risks does the plan option introduce to the organization, now or in the future?

Value and Affordability	• What are the funding requirements to implement and support this solution? • Is this a good use of limited funding or time (cost/benefit, ROI, etc.)? • What trade-offs are implicit or not immediately obvious?	• What are the funding requirements to implement and support this plan option? • Is this a good use of limited funding or time (cost/benefit, ROI, etc.)? • Does the plan option demonstrate value and efficient stewardship of resources? • Is the plan option based on realistic and transparent financial assumptions?
Capacity	• Does TheRide have the expertise to pursue this idea now or in the future?	• Does TheRide have the expertise to pursue this plan option now or in the future? • Does TheRide have the capacity of resources to pursue this plan option now or in the future?
Sequence and Readiness	• How ready is the solution to proceed? • Is there a risk of proceeding too soon? • What are the impacts of deferral? • Is this urgent to TheRide and its goals, or someone else?	• To be considered in the development of the implementation plan for the recommended option.
Public Commitment	• What commitments have been made regarding this this solution? Within what timeframe? • Are other external stakeholders involved in the execution of this solution and to what extent?	• Does the plan option deliver on commitments made? • What level of support will the plan option garner?

Document Control

Title:	Plan Guidance Report
Version:	Version 1
File Path:	C:\Users\Kbook\Desktop\Officeatwork\Theride_Report_Template_V3 - KB Officeatwork 3.Docx
Originator/ Author:	Left Turn Right Turn
Approver:	Name of Approver

What We Heard
Round 1 Engagement

July 2021

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TheRide

THERIDE 2045 LONG-RANGE PLAN

TheRide 2045 Long-Range Plan is creating a comprehensive and long-term vision for public transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. Work on TheRide 2045 began with initial public and stakeholder engagement in Fall of 2019. Due to the pandemic, further work on the plan was delayed. Now we are restarting our effort to develop a long-range plan. The project will span from Feb 2021 to Mar 2022 and is primarily planned to be completed over 4 phases:

**Phase 1:
Guidance
(Feb-July, 2021)**

**Phase 2:
Analysis
(Mar-July, 2021)**

**Phase 3:
Development
(July 2021-
Feb, 2022)**

**Phase 4:
Finalization
(Jan-Mar, 2022)**

Public and stakeholder engagement plays a crucial role in guiding the content of the Long-Range Plan. Most of the public engagement will occur in the fall of 2021 and the earlier winter of 2022.

This report summarizes the key findings from the public and stakeholder engagement to date.

MOST COMMON COMMENTS

This is a summary of the most common comments received from all engagement activities to date. While every comment is unique, sorting them like this allows TheRide to see themes at a glance. See section 0 Discussion for more detail on each subject.
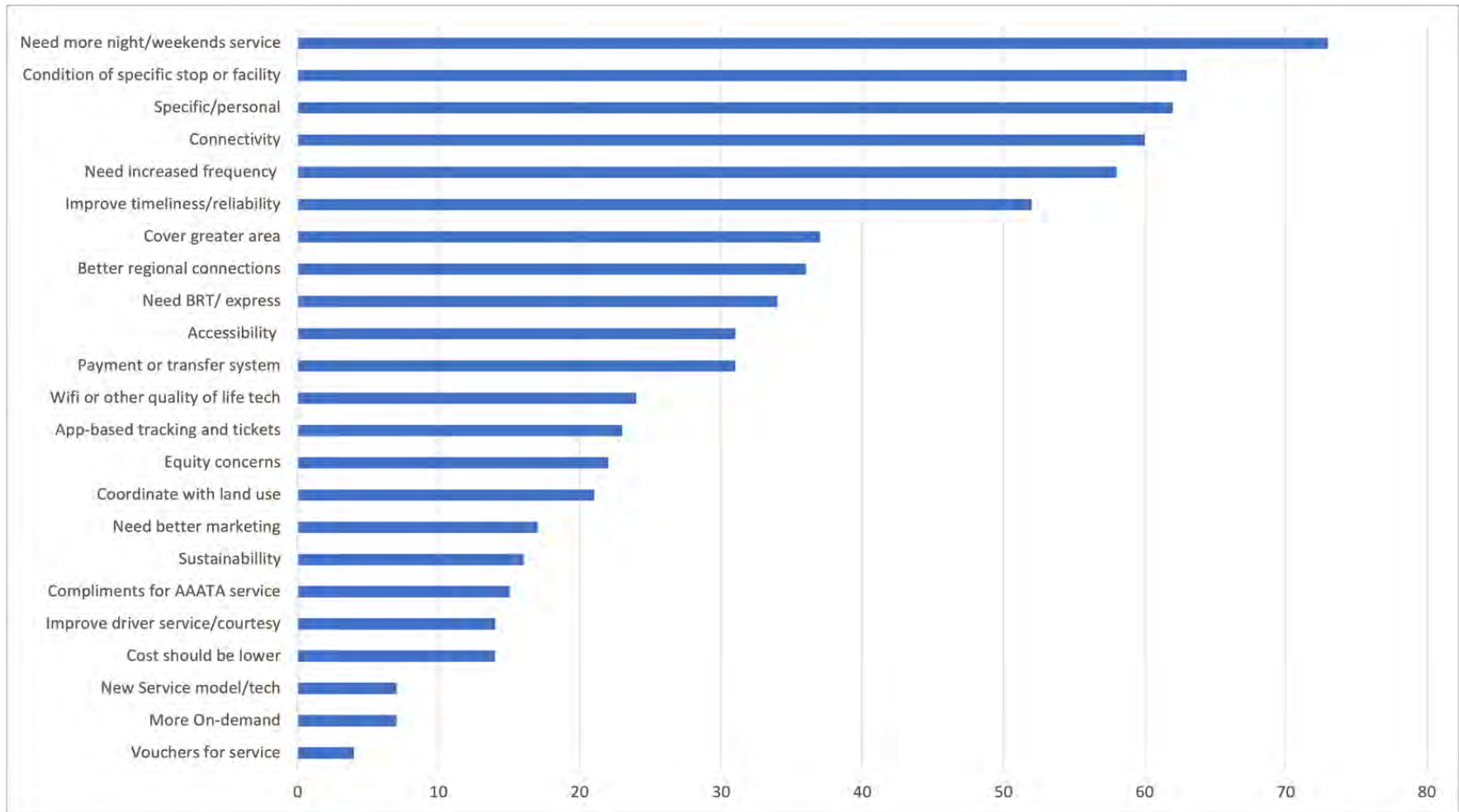
ENGAGEMENT TO DATE

Fall 2019 to Spring 2021

The first round of public and stakeholder engagement draws upon findings from previous public and stakeholder engagement activities held in 2019. Here, we set the stage for TheRide 2045 Long-Range Plan by focusing the engagement on a few key objectives:

1. Create the guiding framework and key measures of success that will guide the development of the Long-Range Plan.

2. Identify challenges and obstacles in using the service as reflected by riders.

3. Identify opportunities to improve customer experience and operational efficiencies.

The public and stakeholder engagement began in 2019 but was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Below is a summary of the key activities from the first round of public and stakeholder engagement process.

Engagement in 2019

This engagement process took pace in the fall of 2019 and included:

1. Public meetings
   - Ypsilanti Library
   - Ann Arbor Library
   - Spark East
   - Ypsilanti Public Hearing
   - Ann Arbor Public Hearing
2. Station Pop Ups
   - Blake Transit Centre
   - Ypsilanti Transit Centre
3. Comments through email and website
   - Over 200 comments received
   - 16 Stakeholder meetings

Engagement in 2021

1. TheRide website comment form (Apr 2021)

    The webpage for TheRide 2045 launched in April 2021, offering a section for visitors to leave general comments regarding the project and to sign up for email updates on its progress. Since its launch, the webpage has received approximately 60 comments from visitors, the findings from these comments are integrated into the themes in the What We Heard section below.

2. External stakeholders (April –June 2021)

    a. Stakeholder Webinar April 21, 2021: Project Introduction

        i. A stakeholder webinar was held in Apr 2021 to familiarize external stakeholders in the area with the project as well as to engage stakeholders in discussion to help develop the vision and guiding principles for the Long-Range Plan. The webinar revolved around discussion questions and gave participants the opportunity to comment on these questions using a virtual engagement tool called ConceptBoard.

    b. Stakeholder survey (Apr 2021)

        i. Prior to the stakeholder webinar, a survey with questions similar to those discussed in the webinar was circulated to the stakeholders with the intent of providing them the opportunity to reflect on these key themes prior to the webinar discussions. Some stakeholders submitted their response before the webinar, while others submitted afterwards.

            1. Please provide a brief description of your organization and the stakeholder group you represent.
            2. What services/features of TheRide best serve the group you represent?
            3. What are comments that you often hear and/or your perceptions about TheRide's service?
            4. What near-term changes would you like to see to improve service?
            5. Are there areas not currently being served by TheRide that you believe should be?
            6. What is your vision for public transportation in the Ann-Arbor-Ypsilanti Area and for TheRide over the next 25 years? (This can be a high-level vision or describe specific features)

7. What things do you think TheRide should be considering in developing a 25-year plan?

8. What does public transportation success in the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti Area mean to you?

9. How would you describe your current relationship with TheRide?

10. Describe your ideal relationship with TheRide and how your current relationship can be enhanced?

11. Do you have expectations or desires for the next transit millage?

3. Public Advisory Group Meeting #1, June 9, 2021

The first meeting of the Public Advisory Group (PAG) took place on June 9th, 2021, via Zoom. This meeting included the 12 members selected as part of the PAG. The objective for this first round of engagement was to gain feedback on the current strengths and challenges of the various services offered by TheRide, and the overall vision for Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti's future regarding transit. The PAG will meet 5 more times over the course of the project on the following dates:

a. PAG Meeting #2 Solutions Workshop (July 2021)

b. PAG Meeting #3 Refine Solutions (August 2021)

c. PAG Meeting #4 Public Engagement (September 2021)

d. PAG Meeting #5 Revision of Feedback (December 2021)

e. PAG Meeting #6 Revision of Final Implementation Package (February 2022)

4. Elected Officials Webinars June 22 and 24, 2021:

   a. Webinars were held on June 22 and 24, 2021, with elected officials from the City of Ann Arbor, City of Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township. The webinars were designed to familiarize elected officials representing members of the Authority with the project, as well as to receive initial input to help develop the vision and guiding principles for the Long-Range Plan. The webinars included a series of 4 questions and gave participants the opportunity to comment on these questions using a virtual engagement tool called ConceptBoard. The questions asked were as follows:

      i. What is public transportation success in the Ann Arbor- Ypsilanti Area of the next 25 years?

      ii. What do you see as the current issues with public transportation in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area?

      iii. What are the future considerations that TheRide needs to account for in developing a 25-year plan?

      iv. What are the transit solutions that you believe should be pursued or evaluated over the next 25- years?

WHAT WE HEARD

Method

Representatives from TheRide collected the comments received from conversations with stakeholders and the public. We looked through every comment and pulled out the key themes. Then, each comment was tagged with the themes that applied. That means that we read all of the specific requests to see the trends out of the large number of comments at the same time.

Measures of Success

Based on our stakeholder engagement in particular, we have identified some measures of success. These are important later in the process so that we can look back to see whether the goals and objectives of the Long-Range Plan are being carried out effectively.

Key Themes

Our public and stakeholder engagement to date has revealed some key themes. By tracking and analyzing the hundreds of comments receive, we can see what people are talking about.

Discussion

Similar themes arose across many stakeholder and public events. This section characterizes the discussions on various topics.

- Need more night/weekends service
  - Many people commented on the need for extended hours on particular routes. While the routes and services differed, the request for extended hours is clear.
- Condition of specific stop or facility
  - These comments all addressed the cleanliness or state of repair of stops, or facilities.
- Improve timeliness/reliability
  - Any comment relating to on-time performance of our services were tagged in this category.
- Need increased frequency
  - There were many comments that indicated the need for more frequent service in certain areas.
- Need BRT/ express
  - BRT means 'Bus Rapid Transit', which is a service model where express buses are given dedicated lanes on major routes. These comments were different from the ones above that requested greater frequency or reliability in that they specifically called out the need for BRT or express buses.
- Cover greater area
  - Many people felt that TheRide should service either a wider area or have more routes within Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti.
- Better regional connections
  - These comments were different from the requests to cover a greater area because they mentioned the need to connect to other locations like the airport or downtown Detroit.
- Payment or transfer system
  - Some customers suggested new modernized fare payment and/or transfer systems.
- App-based tracking and tickets
  - Like reliability, some customers specifically mentioned the ability to use apps to track their buses in real time, or purchase tickets through an app.

- Connectivity
  - Many people felt that TheRide should be better integrated with other modes to create a seamless journey. Some examples of comments heard include: connecting with bikeshare, connecting with other services offered by TheRide, connecting with other transit agencies, or transfer between bus routes.
  - Better integration is needed with the University of Michigan.
- Compliments for AAATA service
  - These comments were all complimentary to our services and facilities. We appreciate our customers, and it is nice to know that TheRide is appreciated too.
- Specific/personal complaints
  - There was a wide variety of incidental service complaints or specific requests that did not fit into any other category. While these complaints are handled through TheRide's regular customer service, they still reveal opportunities for us to improve in the future.
- Improve driver service/courtesy
  - Some customers mentioned bad experiences with drivers on our service. While most drivers are great most of the time, we are all human. We hear your concerns and strive to improve.
- Need better marketing
  - Some comments related directly to TheRide's public image or promoting our services.
- Wifi and other quality of life technologies
  - There are many new amenities for a modern world that could be included into TheRide service over the next 25 years. The most frequent request is wifi.
- Cost should be lower
  - A few comments requested that the cost of service be reduced or wholly subsidized.
- Vouchers for service
  - Some customers felt that vouchers for taxis or other services could replace lack of service or service disruptions.
- Accessibility
  - Accessibility means universal access for all people, regardless of ability. Some customers and stakeholders have expressed the need for greater accessibility across our service.

- Equity
  - Some customers feel that transit needs to serve those who need it most. People who are heavily reliant on transit at the edges of the system have significantly less access to jobs. This disproportionately affects already disadvantaged communities.
- Land use
  - High housing costs in Ann Arbor pushes people to low-density, outlying areas that are difficult and expensive to service with transit. Planning for greater housing density along transit routes can ensure that people will live where they can be served by transit.
- Sustainability
  - Customers noted the importance of transit as a more sustainable mode of transportation than cars.
- More on-demand services
  - On-demand services means services like FlexRide, where customers use smartphone apps to summon rides within certain service areas.
- New Service Models and Technologies
  - There are many different ways to offer transit. Some customers have offered creative solutions to use new technologies or infrastructure upgrades to change the way TheRide functions.

USING YOUR FEEDBACK

Feedback that we heard on what transit success means for the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Area will help to shape the guiding framework for the plan. We also heard from TheRide board and staff, strategic plans, the area's municipalities, and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). This guiding framework will help shape our priorities when solutions are evaluated throughout the plan's creation.

We have also been using your feedback to inform the "Analysis" phase of TheRide2045 Long-Range Plan. We have been studying the current context by looking at the issues that you identified, like the low frequencies at night or on weekends, schedule reliability, stop conditions, and the travel challenges between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor.

Your feedback is also guiding us to look at industry leading technology and transit trends, emerging types of transportation, and changing travel behavior and living preferences including remote working and a desire for more sustainable and vibrant spaces. We are considering demographic projections and ridership modeling along with local developments and community master plans.

The assessments of the current state and future context will help guide future projects and solutions development for TheRide 2045 Long-Range Plan. The feedback received to date provides suggestions for these solutions and the guiding framework to refine and prioritize the list. Once we have a list of possible solutions, grouped into themes and projects, we hope to hear from you again in the next round of engagement.

NEXT STEPS

This concludes our round 1 engagement. The next rounds will occur in the fall of 2021 and the earlier winter of 2022.

The Round 2 engagement will focus on refining and prioritizing the projects that we propose based on the information that we received from Round 1. The final round of engagement will focus on polishing the projects that were prioritized in Round 2.

Rounds 2 and 3 Engagement will include:

- Public Meetings

- Pop-ups at key station

- Webinar with stakeholders

- Stakeholder Working group meetings

- Online Surveys

Throughout the entire process, there are ongoing opportunities to engage and have your voice heard. **Check out our website at Theride.org for updates, to sign up for our newsletter or leave a comment at any time.**

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Title:	TheRide 2045 Round 1 Engagement - What We Heard
Version:	1
Author:	Left Turn Right Turn
Date:	July 22, 2021

TheRide 2045

What We Heard
Round 2 Engagement

December 2021

Left Turn Right Turn

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

TheRide 2045 is a long-range plan for the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority. It will guide our decisions and investments over the next 25 years toward a vision that works for everyone. This report summarizes what we heard from our second round of public and stakeholder engagement in the fall of 2021. We spoke directly with almost 700 people through online meetings or in-person events and received over 400 responses to our survey. What we heard is summarized in the table below, organized by a few key themes.

Desire for transformational change

- The resounding message that we heard was a desire for a major enhancement to our transit system that will transform the way people move around our community.
- We heard that people wanted to be able to get around without a car.
- People wanted to improve social equity through transit service enhancement, providing access to jobs, school and housing for those who need it most.
- People value our environment and want to address our climate goals with a cleaner way to travel.
- There is an understanding that transformation will require significant investment, and people are generally willing to pay if the benefits are clear.

Desire for convenience, reliability and dependability

- People clearly wanted more high frequency routes across the service area.
- Customers want better off-peak service with more frequent buses for evenings, weekend.
- We heard a desire for fast, reliable Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and express service on major corridors.
- Customers want better connections between central locations across the service area.
- Beyond our service area, customers would like better connections to other destinations in the region.

Considerations when making transit better

- We need to collaborate with other organizations in the area, like municipal governments, the University of Michigan, and the Regional Transit Authority.
- Some people will be adversely affected by an increase to local millage, and so costs must be carefully weighed against the benefits they provide.
- Transit priority features, especially dedicated bus lanes, will require road space that is already in high demand.

Feedback by Member Municipality

- We heard in the City of Ann Arbor the need to focus on climate change and providing equitable service for those who need it most.
- In the City of Ypsilanti, we heard the need for equity in how we design and operate our services.
- In the Township of Ypsilanti, we heard the need to make sure our plan is affordable.

TheRide2045 Long-Range Plan

The Plan (phases, timeline)

TheRide 2045 Long-Range Plan is creating a comprehensive and long-term vision for public transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. Work on TheRide 2045 began with initial public and stakeholder engagement in Fall of 2019. Due to the pandemic, the plan was delayed. We restarted in February of 2021 and are scheduled to finish in June of 2022. The project is taking place over four phases; we are currently in phase 3.

Phase 1:
Guidance
(Feb-July, 2021)

Phase 2:
Analysis
(Mar-Aug, 2021)

Phase 3:
Development
(July 2021-
Feb, 2022)

Phase 4:
Finalization
(Jan-Jun, 2022)

Public and stakeholder engagement plays a crucial role in guiding the content of the Long-Range Plan. This report summarizes the key findings from the second round of public and stakeholder engagement, from October 18 to November 24, 2021. The next round of public engagement is scheduled to take place in the late winter of 2022.

Round 2 Engagement

The first round of public and stakeholder engagement took place in the spring of 2021, drawing upon findings from previous engagement activities held in 2019. The feedback from that first round of engagement helped us to establish the goals and values to guide our analysis. This led to the development of four scenarios based on levels of service enhancement, which we used to spark the conversations around the second round of engagement. See Appendix A: Scenarios Presented for more details.

The intention for this round of engagement was to:

1. The gauge the level of service enhancement the community would be willing to support over the next 25 years.
2. Identify the key areas to focus that service enhancement.

Public Advisory Group

Our Public Advisory Group (PAG), comprised of 12 individuals of diverse backgrounds, helps us ground our key decisions in the community. The PAG was established with a demographic split to reflect the customers of TheRide. They have helped us to frame our public engagement material and review the feedback.

Round 2 Engagement PAG Meeting Dates
Aug 11, 2021
Sept 22, 2021
Dec 1, 2021

PAG Meeting, December 1, 2021, with staff and some PAG members (some absent in photo).

Public and Stakeholder Meetings

The second round of public and stakeholder engagement was open for comment from October 18 to November 24, 2021. During that time, we received over 50 emails, phone calls and contacts through social media, and spoke to almost 700 people through direct in-person or online engagement and received 427 responses to our survey. For a more details on the specific events, please see Appendix B: Engagement Activities.

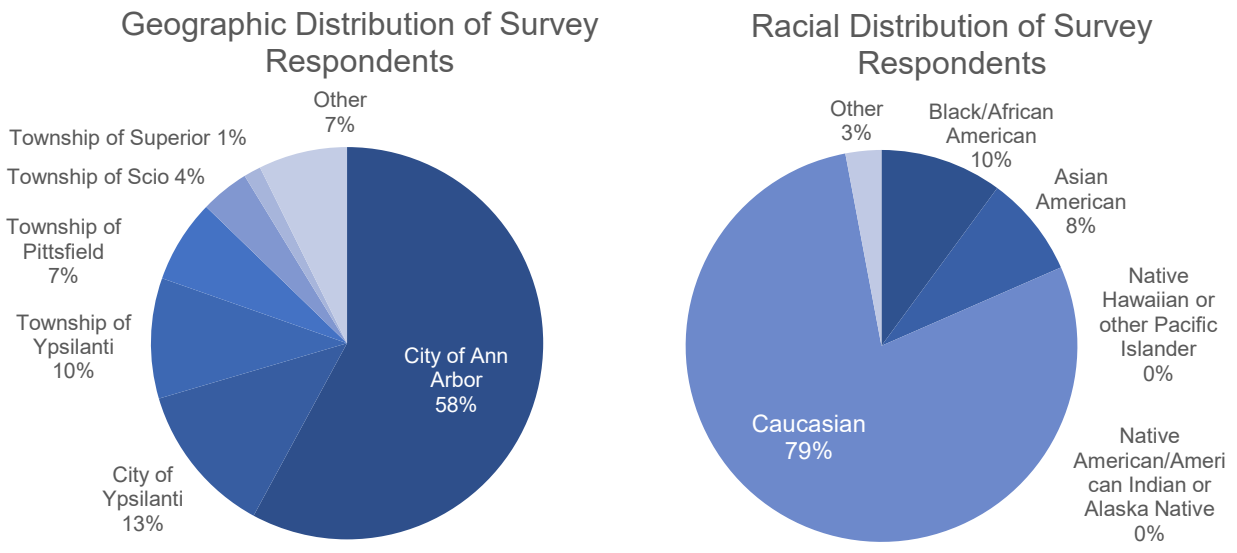| Oct 18 – Nov 24	People
Online Survey	427
Online Meetings • Public • Stakeholder • Staff	290+
In-Person Sessions	400+
Email, phone and social media contacts	50+

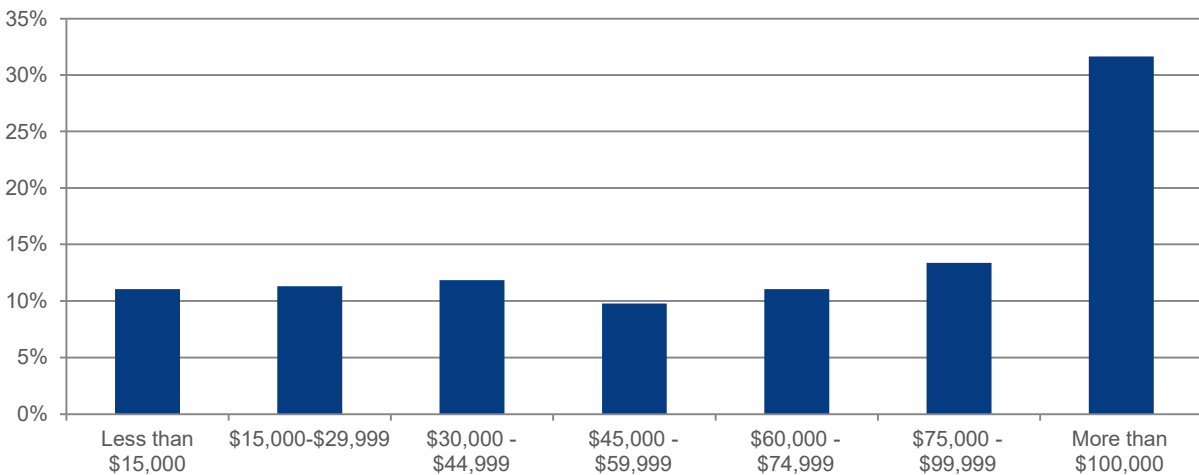*Ypsilanti Transit Center Public Engagement November 8, 2021*

Who We Heard From

As part of the engagement, we ran a public survey to collect community feedback. We received 427 responses representing various viewpoints. However, as we integrate the feedback from this survey, we must keep in mind the voices that we heard and the voices that we did not. The respondents to the survey were mostly Caucasian with a higher household income. Not all of them are frequent transit users, but people likely do self-select to participate if they have some interest in transit.

Our in-person engagement feedback at the transit centers and particularly the Ypsilanti Transit Center (YTC), represented a higher proportion of African Americans and frequent transit riders. We included all feedback in the What We Heard section but we acknowledge that the results of the survey are not a full representation of the demographics in our service area.

Geographic Distribution of Survey Respondents

- Other 7%
- Township of Superior 1%
- Township of Scio 4%
- Township of Pittsfield 7%
- Township of Ypsilanti 10%
- City of Ypsilanti 13%
- City of Ann Arbor 58%

Racial Distribution of Survey Respondents

- Other 3%
- Black/African American 10%
- Asian American 8%
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander 0%
- Native American/American Indian or Alaska Native 0%
- Caucasian 79%

Annual Household Income Distribution of Survey Respondents

Income Bracket	Percentage
Less than $15,000	~11%
$15,000-$29,999	~11%
$30,000 - $44,999	~12%
$45,000 - $59,999	~10%
$60,000 - $74,999	~11%
$75,000 - $99,999	~13%
More than $100,000	~32%

What We Heard

The survey results echoed the what we heard through our on-line and in-person engagements. See Appendix C: for more details. This section represents all feedback received and is grouped into a few key themes.

Transformational Change

The resounding message that we heard was a desire for a major enhancement to our transit system that will transform the way people move around our community. We heard that people wanted to be able to get around the area conveniently and quickly. Providing a better transit service for people who need it most improves the access to jobs, school, and housing. This was a very common reason why people felt we should transform our transit system. Another major reason was to reduce our carbon footprint; better transit leads to fewer car trips, which mean less emissions, which is good for our climate.

Most of the people that we spoke to understood that transformational change will have a cost associated with it, but they indicated a willingness to pay the increased millage when the benefits are clear. However, we also heard concerns, especially from Ypsilanti Township, about the effect higher tax rates will have on people, particularly those with lower incomes.

Scenario Choice

The feedback was structured around four scenarios, as described in Appendix A: Scenarios Presented. Many people were very excited about the idea of high-frequency network, transit priority features, and Bus Rapid Transit in Scenarios 3 and 4 as major selling features and saw coordination with municipal governments' land use planning as a key to the project success. Once successful, scenario 4 especially will mean the best results for our desired outcomes of improving equity, achieving our climate goals, and stimulating our local economy. The desire for transformational change was the same for frequent and infrequent transit users among survey respondents.

Scenario Choice by Transit Usage
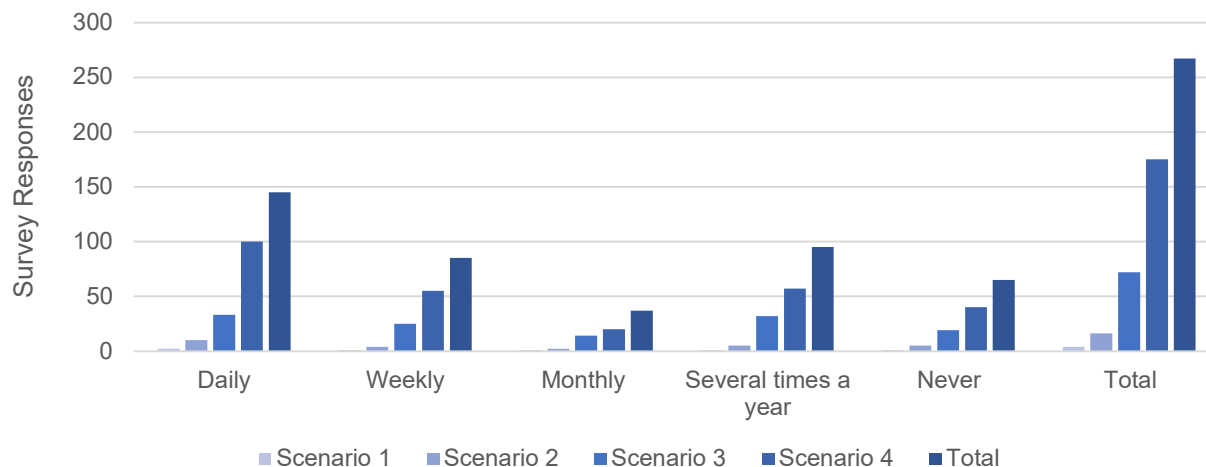
Survey respondents from the City of Ann Arbor, the City of Ypsilanti, the Township of Ypsilanti, the Township of Pittsfield, and the Township of Scio are supportive of scenario 4. Respondents from the Township of Superior are more supportive of Scenario 3.

Survey respondents who are African American, Asian American, retired, over the age of 65, or under the age of 19 were still generally in favor of Scenario 4 but with a less clear preference than other groups.

In total 64% of respondents preferred Scenario 4, 29% preferred Scenario 3, 6% preferred Scenario 3 and only 1% preferred Scenario 1. We must keep in mind that the people most interested in transit are the most likely to participate in this kind of engagement.

Convenience, Reliability and Dependability

The people we spoke with generally would like to see high frequency network across the entire service area for longer hours each day, and on weekends. They are interested in shorter, more reliable trips and not just to the downtown centers, but also connecting anywhere across the service area. They saw the importance of local partnerships, like the University of Michigan and municipalities both in the service area and in the broader region.

High Frequency Service

A major topic of interest is high frequency service, meaning routes with 15 minute or better service. Different demographics in the survey often had different priorities. However, when asked to choose their top three priorities, almost everyone across race, income level, work situation, age, transit usage, and municipality of residence included high-frequency network making it the most common choice by a wide margin.

We heard that people want faster service with less waiting time. Many people said that frequency is a key driver to making transit easier and more convenient to use. This is not only important for those travelling into the downtowns, but also to those travelling across town outside of the centers. See section Multi-Directional Connecti, below.

> *I went to Kerrytown by bus 65 at Noon today. The bus comes every 30 minutes, but 30 minutes felt too short for my errands plus getting to and from the bus… I ended up waiting 20 minutes at the bus stop. The errand ended up taking like 1 hr 20 mins when it could've taken less than an hour total, say if the busses came every 20 minutes. So this would incentivize me to take the bus more, if I knew I didn't have to rush for a bus in 30 mins at Noon or have to spend 1+ hours on my errands.*

Off-Peak Service

Many people talked about the need for more service on the evenings, and weekends. We heard a desire for 30-mintue service in off-peak times, expanding the hours of operation into the morning and evening. While some people did request more NightRide service, including better availability and expanding it to cover the entire daytime service area, it was overall less of a

priority to most people. We saw from the survey respondents that off-peak service was the second most common priority after high frequency service. Off-peak service was ranked very highly for people in most age brackets and work situations except for students and people under 19, who ranked it much lower. African Americans also rated it much lower than other races, favoring FlexRide instead.

We heard that someone planning a trip outside the peak times needs to plan a lot more to coordinate travel. This includes work and leisure. If someone's time obligation is within the regular service hours but it ends when there is infrequent or no service, they may not choose transit at all.

As someone who relied on AAATA for over a decade to get to and from my job as a food service worker, because of the winding routes and where I lived, it took over an hour to get downtown, and often on weekends I would be forced to use cabs instead of the bus because of the short hours… I know it's easy to focus resources toward the 9 to 5 crowd, but we must center those who rely on the bus exclusively for transport.

Express and Bus Rapid Transit Service

The people we spoke to were generally interested in the idea of integrating faster routes with fewer stops that use transit priority features along major corridors. Many of the concerns that we heard about present service were related to long trip times and reliability, indicating a desire to resolve these issues. Many customers said that BRT services were needed on high demand corridors, especially between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor along Washtenaw Avenue, with a focus on the downtown areas.

When respondents to the survey chose their top 3 priorities, Express and BRT services were very close in number, with a slight preference toward BRT. There may have been some confusion among respondents about the difference between these services, but even together they rank lower than the desire for high frequency service. Express and especially BRT services were less important to people with an annual household income between $30,000 and $60,000; all other income groups ranked them much higher. This may be due to where these people live in relation to the proposed routes.

A frequent concern was about a BRT competing for space on a busy roadway. To make a BRT project successful, we will need to align the interests of many different stakeholders. Even while acknowledging the benefit of a BRT, there was some pessimism about the feasibility.

Some of the attributes of BRT such as signal prioritization, queue jumping and limited stops could be implemented on any major transit route.

Regional Connections

Many survey respondents cited that we need better regional connections, however it was not often the top priority. Infrequent transit users, and those from the Township of Ypsilanti ranked Regional Connections much higher than other groups. This is consistent with what we heard

from other conversations, where connections from Ypsilanti to Western Wayne County were raised as priorities. Stronger regional connections would improve access to jobs for people in a broader area, with an emphasis on local connections to SMART. We heard a need to access to other areas such as U of M medical facilities, Scio Township and Ann Arbor Township, Superior Township, and Dixboro.

There was some mixed discussion on the need for new or larger park and ride lots across the region with service to Ann Arbor or Ypsilanti. Some people felt that bringing people in from a broader catchment area will mean more fare revenue and ultimately better service. Others felt that a large expansion of park and rides would be a poor return on investment and may detract from ridership growth. Generally, park and ride expansion was not a high priority for survey respondents, particularly current riders.

Ann Arbor needs a connection to western Wayne County, not just downtown Detroit or the airport. Needs a connection to SMART in particular. The gap needs to be closed.

Multi-Directional Connectivity

We heard that when customers travel, it is not always to downtowns but across town outside of the centers. For these diverse trips, High Frequency Service on two routes that cross means less waiting and faster transfers.

It is easy to get in and out of downtown from all around A2. But it is really cumbersome to get to another part in town without having to go downtown. E.g., from my house, if I want to go 75 degrees to the left or right, it would be nice to get there straight instead of having to go downtown and transfer to a second bus to get me where I want. It takes way too much time for a short distance. We need transit for people outside of downtown who just want to go a couple miles radius in their own neighborhood without having to go downtown

Things to Consider while making Transit Better

The need for better collaboration came through as a theme in many of the conversations that we had about the future of transit in the area. Collaboration with the University of Michigan to coordinate planning and operations was consistently raised.

The municipal governments were mentioned as a key player, for both new projects and daily operations. The success of transit priority features, especially fully dedicated bus lanes depends on the municipal, County and State partners to support changing the streetscape. There was concern that such a big change would not be supported by the whole community or the local and State governments. Land use planning can also encourage denser development around transit nodes and major corridors.

The municipalities have a major role in ensuring good pedestrian connections to TheRide's services. If there are more buses and the same number of cars, it may become more dangerous for pedestrians or cyclists without safe street design. This includes the repair and snow clearing of the sidewalks and bus stops. Poorly cleared bus stops and sidewalks can render otherwise accessible transit service unusable for people with mobility issues.

Another concern was the burden of the increased millage on those who are least able to pay for it. It makes it more difficult that those are also the people who often need good transit service the most. To gauge this problem, we turn to the elected officials that we spoke to. There was a mix of skepticism and optimism about whether the service would improve in time to justify the tax increase for those affected most. Each politician had different concerns, but most were supportive of the more transformational changes proposed in scenarios 3 and 4 and the benefits that those changes will have on their constituents in the long-term.

> *I am loving the idea of one of the top budget plans. As a rider most of everything proposed will benefit me. I do have a concern though with a millage increase and property taxes go up, how will this impact rent prices and home prices and the cost of living in Washtenaw County. The cost of living is already way too extreme. I am a food service worker downtown and I believe I make a fair wage and I work for a small business who is just barely getting by.*

Engagement material used in November 2021 public events.

Using Your Feedback

Voices We Did Not Hear

While using the feedback we received, it is always important to keep in mind who it is coming from and recognize the gaps in our knowledge. As we take the next steps in presenting a single plan, we must use our professional judgement to interpret the data with this context in mind.

The respondents to the survey were mostly Caucasian with a higher household income. This is not reflective of the transit users in the area. As a result, we place more emphasis on in-person engagement feedback at the transit centers and particularly the Ypsilanti Transit Center, where we spoke with a higher proportion of African Americans. We also acknowledge the need to hear from non-transit riders, who were probably less interested in participating our public engagement are underrepresented in our feedback.

Creating a Plan That Works for Everyone

We heard through many conversations the need to serve those in our community who need it most. The importance of equity came through in many of our conversations and helps us to frame our approach, see section Next Steps for more details. We found that most of the priorities for low-income survey respondents lined up with the general trends. See Appendix C: Important Features.

We are able to review some of the survey responses in detail when we look at specific demographics and use our conversations to help put that feedback in context. For example, most demographic groups did not prioritize increasing FlexRide except for African and Asian Americans. This seems to run contrary to the most other feedback, where we heard that people would generally prefer a fixed route rather than on-demand service. These groups favored the idea of first and last mile solutions, and mobility as a service more than other groups. This may be due high housing prices in the centers forcing demographics that tend to have lower incomes to the outskirts where they are less served by transit.

The connection thread is probably a lack of access to transit. By providing easily accessible high frequency routes to the places identified in the Opportunity Index, we can hopefully address the reason for the responses from these groups in particular. The Opportunity Index is an important tool for identifying which communities have access to structural privilege and which do not. The index can guide future decisions about where to invest our collective resources and how to consider policy changes to advance equity.

We also heard that switching to zero-emission buses was very high priority among most survey respondents. While there is a parallel propulsion study being undertaken by TheRide, it helps to tell us that many people felt the need to have a positive impact on the environment.

Funding

Once we understand the appetite of the community to invest in transit, we can add the features that are most important to the community. Gauging that level of investment is therefore the key to our next step but we do not have enough information on the people who did not participate in our engagements. Since a significant portion of transit funding in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area comes from local millage, a successful transit plan must be accepted by the whole community, not just transit users.

Understanding the level of investment that the entire community supports will determine the breadth of the plan that we put forward. Being most in touch with their own voters, we are using our conversations with elected officials to help us understand their perspective. While there was some concern over the impact of a tax increase, the feedback was largely supportive.

As we develop a single plan from here, we must work closely with the board of TheRide, who makes decisions on future tax rates, to make sure our plan is feasible.

Where Should We Start?

The scenarios as presented were examples of how features could be packaged. Based on this feedback, we will start with the most popular scenarios as a base and adjust from there. We will make those adjustments based on what we learned from the feedback.

Many people liked scenario 4 because it creates transformational change to the system that achieves our desired outcomes. Elements that were most important were high frequency network, off-peak service, faster and more direct connections to variety of locations, not just the downtowns. All of these services work together and cannot be achieved without a significant level of investment. This scenario has the greatest benefits to our goals of equity, the environment, and the economy, which resounded with the community.
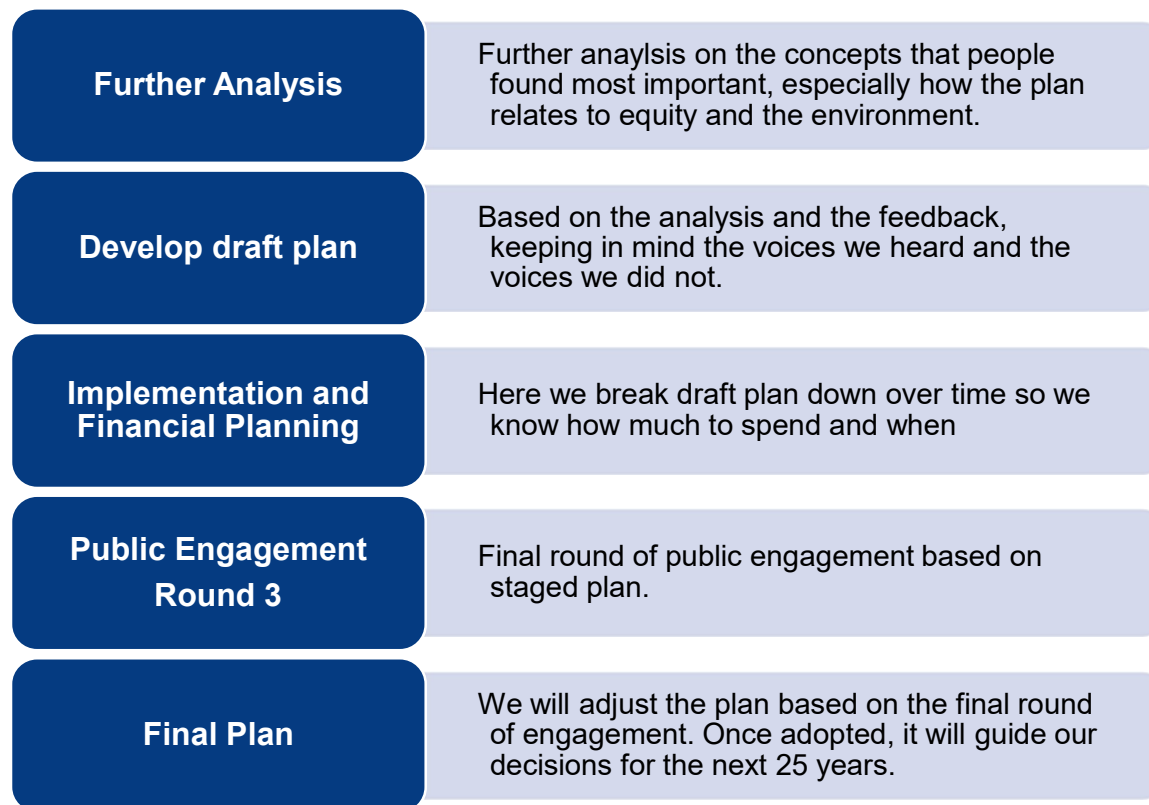

On board TheRide

Next Steps

This concludes our second round of engagement. The next and final round is scheduled to occur in late winter of 2022. As we put the feedback we received into context, we will spend the next several weeks working on the implementation staging and financial plan for a single scenario. The final round of engagement will focus on tweaking this draft plan.

The next steps in the process will be:

Further Analysis	Further anaylsis on the concepts that people found most important, especially how the plan relates to equity and the environment.
Develop draft plan	Based on the analysis and the feedback, keeping in mind the voices we heard and the voices we did not.
Implementation and Financial Planning	Here we break draft plan down over time so we know how much to spend and when
Public Engagement Round 3	Final round of public engagement based on staged plan.
Final Plan	We will adjust the plan based on the final round of engagement. Once adopted, it will guide our decisions for the next 25 years.

Round 3 Engagement would include drop-ins and pop-ups at Stations, webinars with stakeholders, online public meetings, and an Online survey. **Check out our website at Theride.org for updates, to sign up for our newsletter or leave a comment at any time.**

2021				2022	
Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring
	Round 1				
		Round 2			
				Round 3	
Ongoing: Public Advisory Group meetings, website comment form, emails to TheRide					

Document Control

| Title:	TheRide2045 Round 2 Engagement – What We Heard

Appendix A: Scenarios Presented

Scenario 1 Baseline

Scenario 1 was presented as the baseline or status quo scenario with minimal to no investment and stagnant or declining ridership.

There is minimal to no increase in local millage, meaning there is minimal to no investment and stagnant or declining ridership. In scenario 1 there are minor adjustments over the next 25 years. In all scenarios upgrades to Blake Transit Center and Ypsilanti Transit Center are made.

In this scenario, 63% of the population and 82% of jobs are close to high frequency service (15 minutes or better).
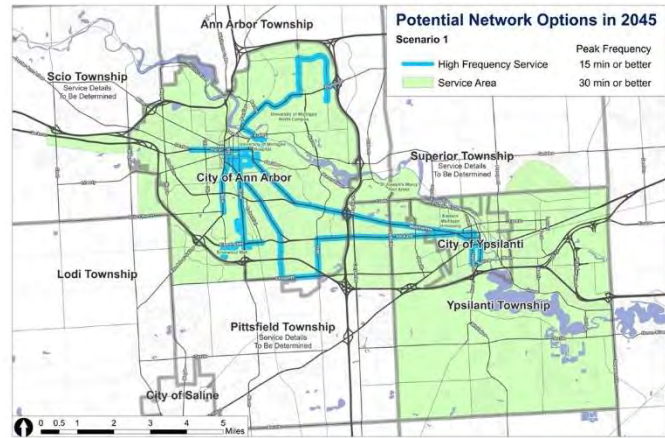

Scenario 2 Minor Enhancement

In scenario 2, there are minimal investments made resulting in limited ridership increase.

There is a small increase to local millage. Minor enhancements in scenario 2 include:
- New express services
- Concentration of service on major corridors
- Buses are on time more often
- More off-peak service including NightRide

In this scenario, 77% of the population and 93% of jobs are close to high-frequency service (15 minutes or better).
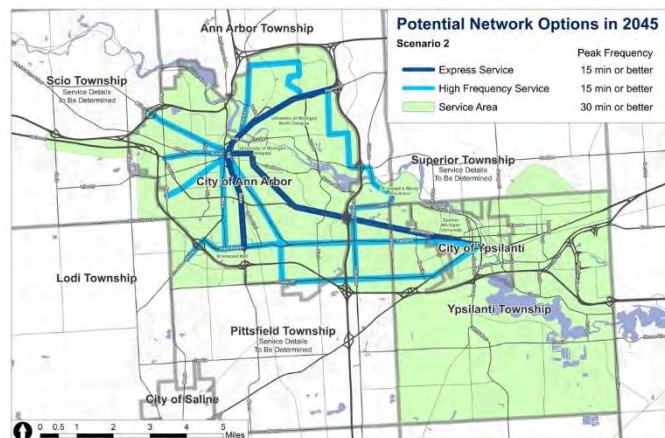
Scenario 3 Modest Enhancement

In scenario 3, there is a modest increase to local millage. Here, we present better service all around, with new types of transit such as:

- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
- High frequency service in more places
- Better transfers
- Buses are on-time, more often
- More off- peak service including NightRide

In this scenario, 86% of the population and 96% of jobs are close to high-frequency service (15 minutes or better).
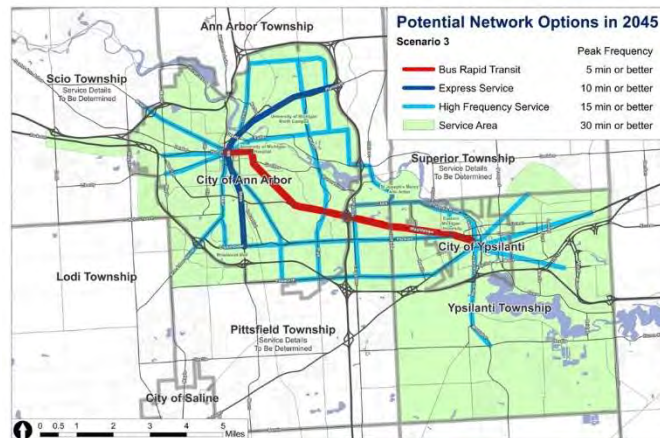

Scenario 4 Major Enhancement

In scenario 4, there is a large increase to local millage. With this investment, scenario 4 sees a transformational change of the entire transit system. Better services change how people get around the area:

- More Bus Rapid Transit
- Broad network of high frequency service
- Better transfers
- Buses are on time, more often
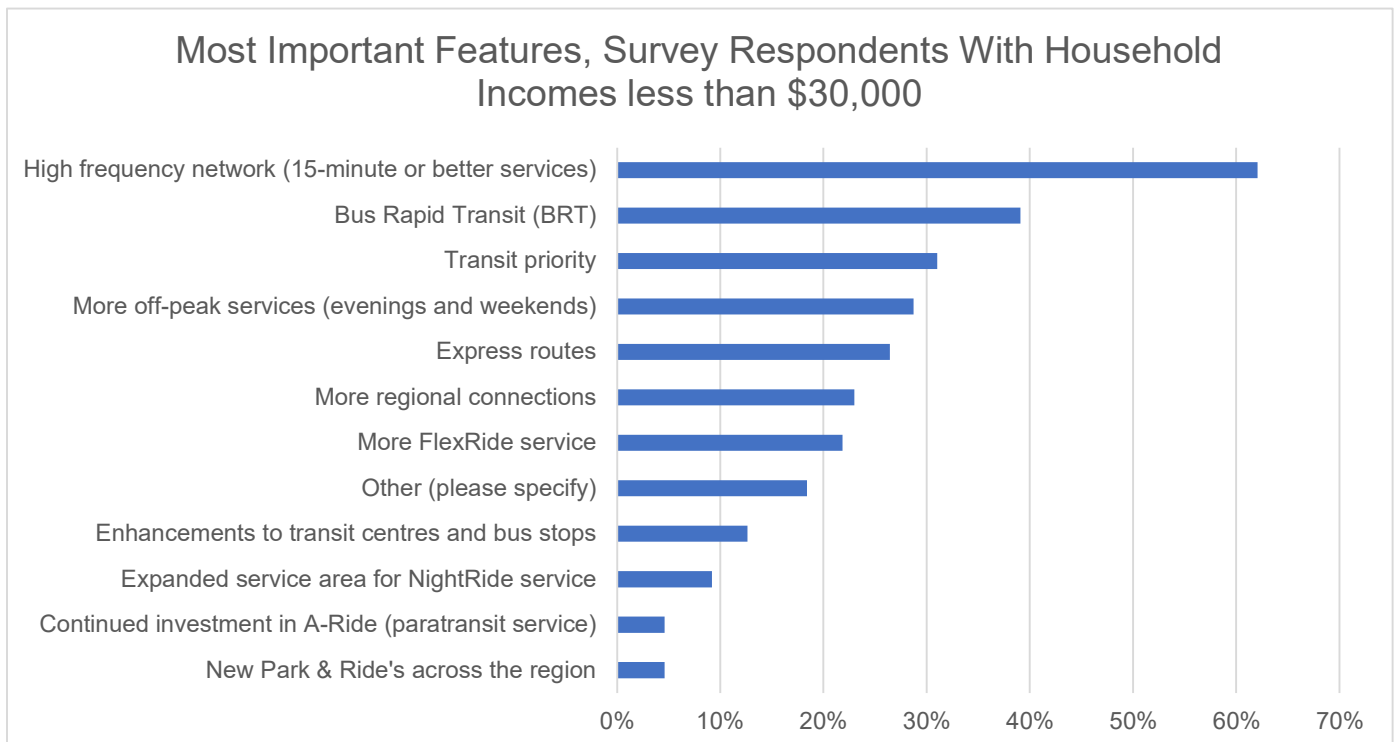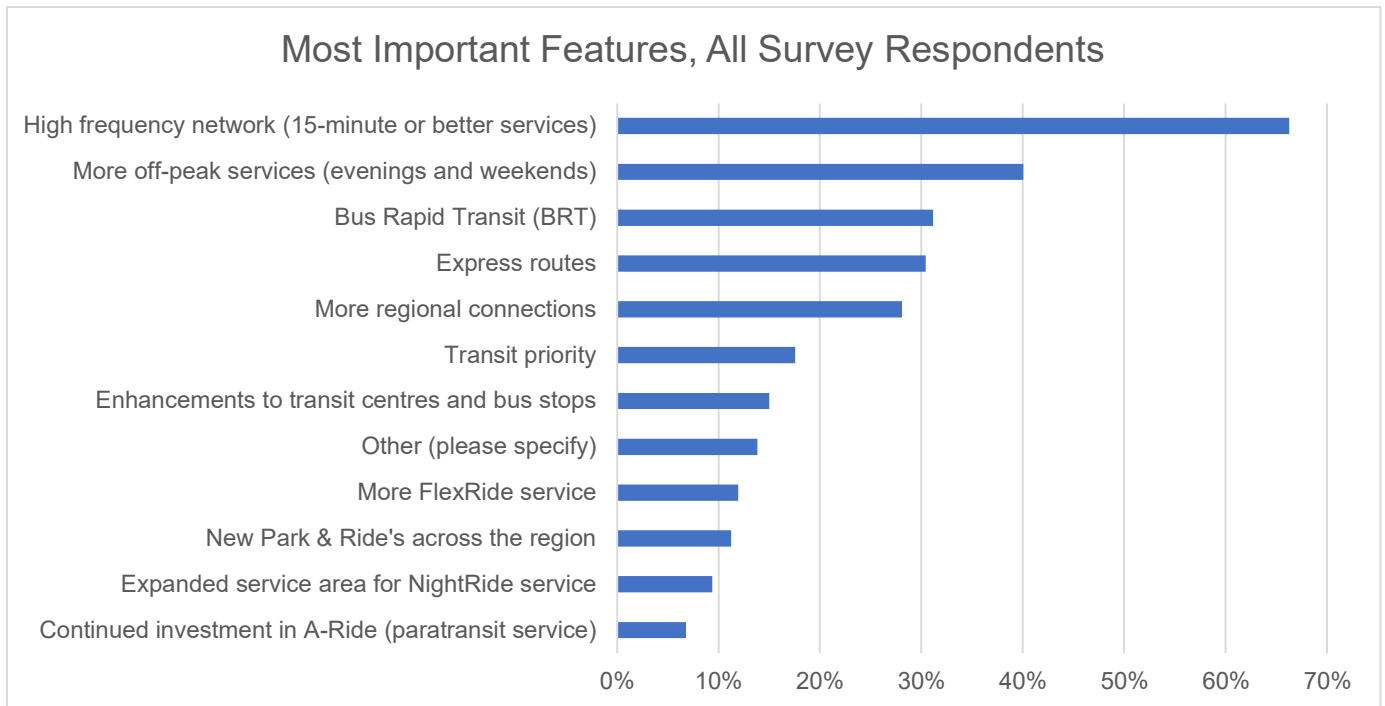- Even more off-peak service including NightRide

In scenario 4, 93% of the population and 99% of jobs are close to high-frequency service (15 minutes or better).
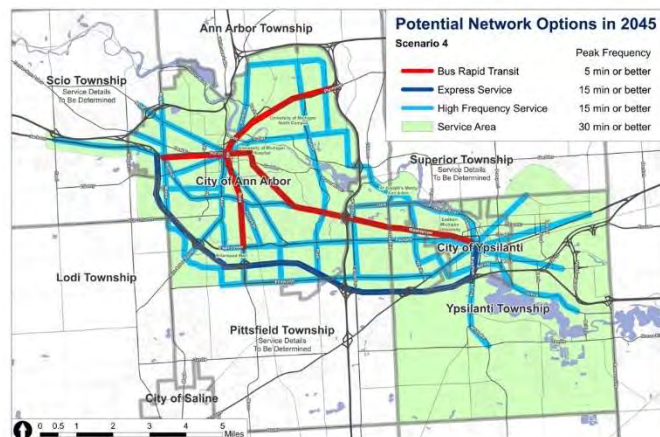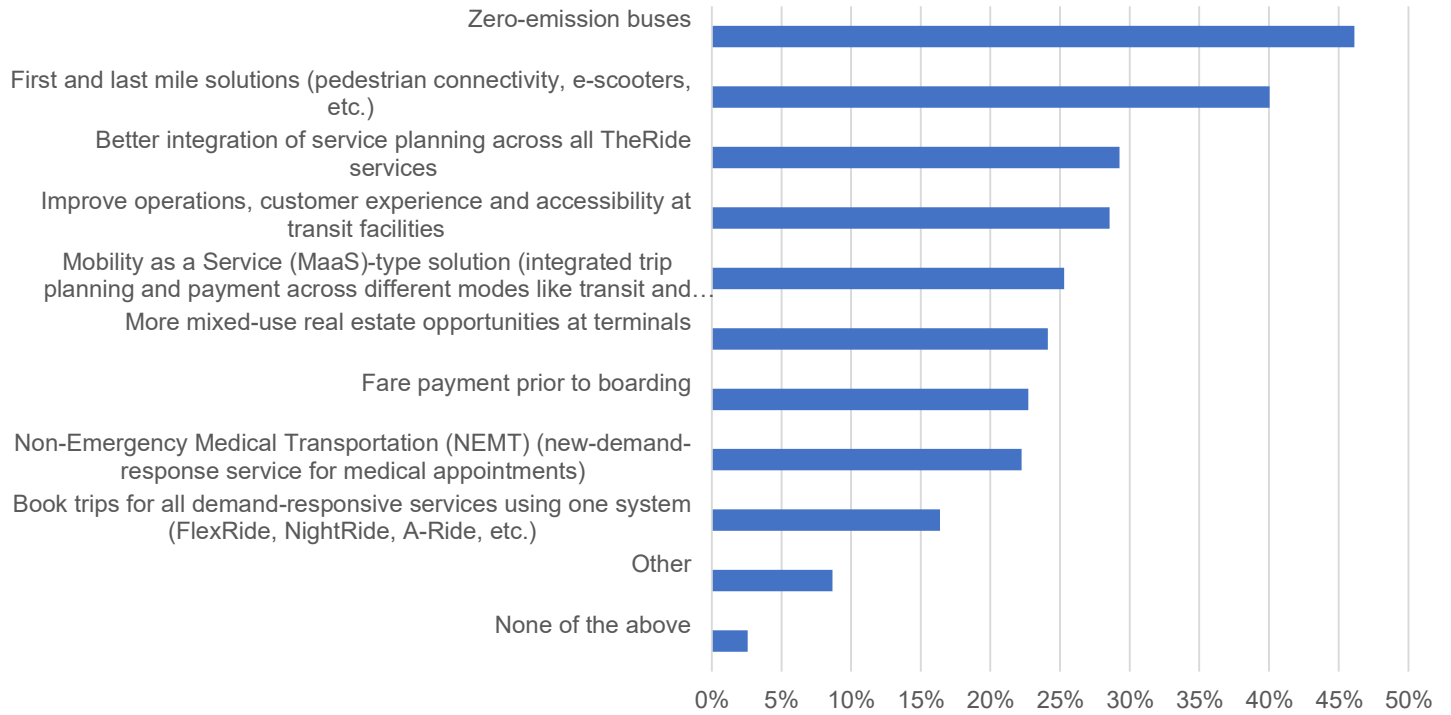
Appendix B: Engagement Activities

| Stakeholder Group	Date
Board Meeting	6-Oct
Staff Town Hall 1	14-Oct
Staff Town Hall 2	14-Oct
Local Advisory Council	9-Nov
Stakeholder Webinar 1	20-Oct
Stakeholder Webinar 2	25-Oct
Ann Arbor Transportation Commission	20-Oct
Ann Arbor Transportation and Planning	19-Nov
A2ZERO Ambassadors Transportation Instructors Follow up	22-Oct
DDA Affordable Housing and Econ. Dev. Comm.	10-Nov
Ypsilanti City Council	19-Oct
YDDA Board	16-Dec
Ypsilanti Township Leadership Team	4-Nov
Ypsilanti Township Board	16-Nov
Scio Transportation Alternatives Planning Committee	10-Nov
Pittsfield Township Board	10-Nov
Washtenaw County Commission	20-Oct
WATS Policy Committee	17-Nov
WATS Technical Committee	3-Nov
RTA staff/consulting team	17-Nov
WCC Webinar	16-Nov
Online Public meeting #1	26-Oct
Online Public meeting #2	28-Oct
Online Public meeting #3	3-Nov
Online Public meeting #4	4-Nov
In-person Session: Ypsilanti Transit Center	8-Nov
In-person Session: Blake Transit Center	9-Nov
In-person Session: Ypsilanti District Library	10-Nov
In-person Session: Central Campus Transit Center	10-Nov
In-person Session: Eastern Michigan University	11-Nov
In-person Session: University of Michigan North Campus	12-Nov

Appendix C: Important Features

Most Important Features, All Survey Respondents

Feature	
High frequency network (15-minute or better services)	~66%
More off-peak services (evenings and weekends)	~40%
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	~31%
Express routes	~30%
More regional connections	~28%
Transit priority	~18%
Enhancements to transit centres and bus stops	~15%
Other (please specify)	~14%
More FlexRide service	~12%
New Park & Ride's across the region	~11%
Expanded service area for NightRide service	~9%
Continued investment in A-Ride (paratransit service)	~7%

Most Important Features, Survey Respondents With Household Incomes less than $30,000

Feature	
High frequency network (15-minute or better services)	~62%
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	~39%
Transit priority	~31%
More off-peak services (evenings and weekends)	~29%
Express routes	~27%
More regional connections	~23%
More FlexRide service	~22%
Other (please specify)	~19%
Enhancements to transit centres and bus stops	~13%
Expanded service area for NightRide service	~9%
Continued investment in A-Ride (paratransit service)	~4%
New Park & Ride's across the region	~4%

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Other Ideas By Importance, All Survey Respondents

Other Ideas By Importance, Survey Respondents With Household Incomes less than $30,000
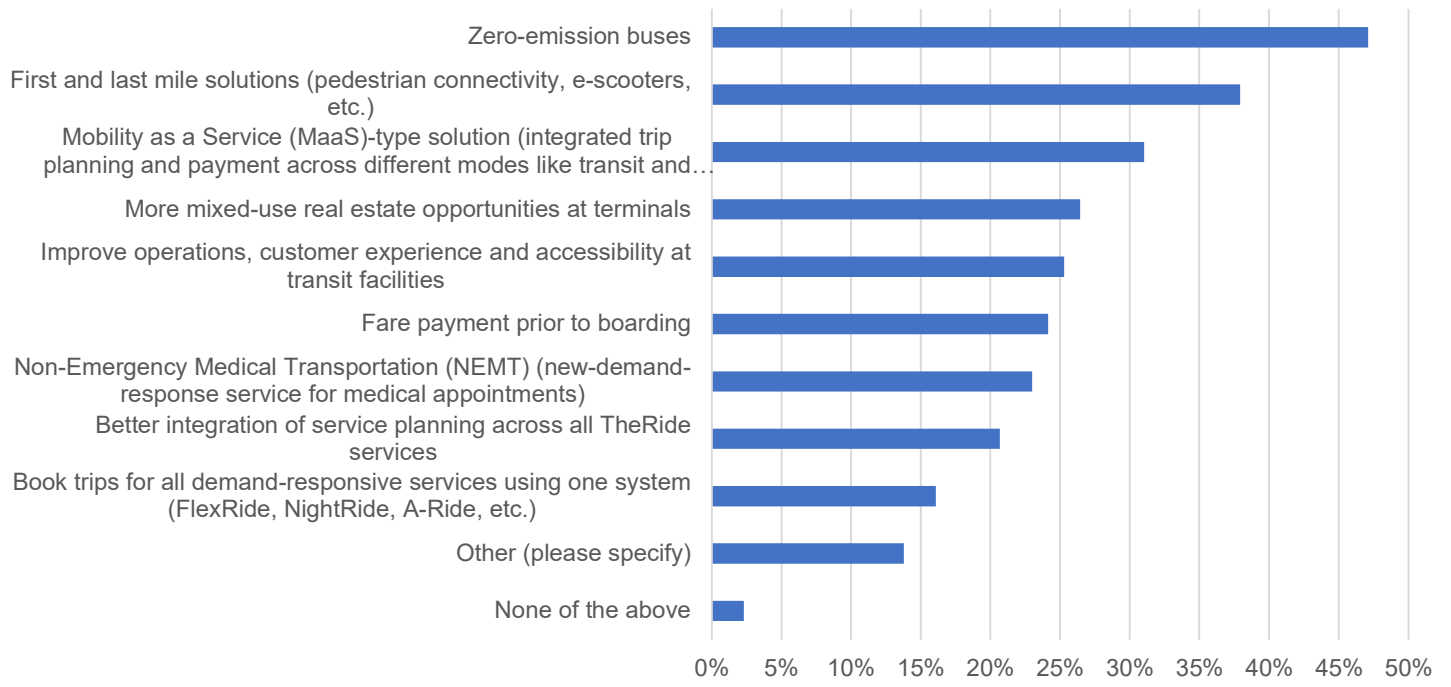
What We Heard
Round 3 Engagement

May 2022

Left Turn Right Turn

ANN ARBOR AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

TheRide 2045 is a long-range plan for the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority. It will guide our decisions and investments over the next 25 years toward a vision that works for everyone. This report summarizes what we heard from our third and final round of public and stakeholder engagement in the spring of 2022. We spoke directly about the Long-Range Plan with almost 1100 people through online meetings or in-person events and received 478 responses to our online survey. What we heard is summarized in the table below, organized by a few key themes.

Support

The people we spoke to were overwhelmingly supportive of the plan, many were willing to advocate for it. People understand that change takes time and money but appreciate the long-term vision.

Transit for Those Who Need It Most

Social Equity: we heard the strongest support for improving social equity and providing service to the people that need it most
Accessibility: means weaving accessibility into every aspect of our plan
More off-peak service: those who rely on transit need it at all times of day.

Efficiency, Reliability

Transit efficiency and faster travel times: means greater return on investments, faster travel, and better integration of services.
High-frequency routes: we heard a desire for a network of high-frequency routes across the service area, not just to downtown locations.
Sustainability: we heard people say we need a more sustainable transportation system.

Connections

Bus Stops and Transit Hubs: need to be accessible and connect to first/last mile solutions
Connections to other mobility services: inside our service area and beyond.
Collaboration with Municipalities and other partners: greater community benefits through an integrated planning approach

Cost

The cost of this plan: Most of the people that we spoke to understood that big change will have a cost associated with it. However, a minority of people that we spoke with did feel that the costs are too high and that alternative funding source should be explored

TheRide2045 Long-Range Plan

The Plan (phases, timeline)

TheRide 2045 Long-Range Plan is creating a comprehensive and long-term vision for public transit in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. Work on TheRide 2045 began with initial public and stakeholder engagement in Fall of 2019. Due to the pandemic, the plan was delayed. We restarted in February of 2021 and are scheduled to finish in June of 2022. The project is taking place over four phases; we are currently in phase 4.

Phase 1:
Guidance
(Feb-July, 2021)

Phase 2:
Analysis
(Mar-Aug, 2021)

Phase 3:
Development
(July 2021-
Feb, 2022)

Phase 4:
Finalization
(Jan-Jun, 2022)

Public and stakeholder engagement plays a crucial role in guiding the content of the Long-Range Plan. This report summarizes the key findings from the third and final round of public and stakeholder engagement, which took place from March 14 to April 22, 2022.

The comments and feedback provided in this report relate to the Long-Range Plan only.

Round 3 Engagement

The first round of public and stakeholder engagement took place in the spring of 2021, drawing upon findings from previous engagement activities held in 2019. The feedback from that first round of engagement helped us to establish the goals and values to guide our analysis. This led to the development of four scenarios based on levels of funding, which we used to spark the conversations around the second round of engagement.

Based on the responses in the second round of engagement, we developed a single draft plan. See Appendix A: Draft Plan Presented for more details. The intention for this round of engagement was to gauge the level of support for the draft plan in order to adjust our final Long-Range Plan. To do that, we spoke to TheRide Board and staff, external stakeholders, the public and our Public Advisory Group.

Public Advisory Group

Our Public Advisory Group (PAG), comprised of 12 individuals of diverse backgrounds, helps us ground our key decisions in the community. The PAG was established with a demographic split to reflect the customers of TheRide, including race/ethnicity, age, income, place and type of residence, transit ridership, disability, gender identity. At every stage of the project development, this group lent us their insight based on their own personal experiences. In the third round of public engagement, they gave comment on the material before it was presented to the public and debriefed on the preliminary findings afterward. Due to Covid-19, all meetings were held online.

PAG Meetings	
June 9, 2021	Introduction
July 7, 2021	Solutions workshop
Aug11, 2021	Refine solutions
Sept 22, 2021	Prep for public engagement Round 2
Dec 1, 2021	Review feedback Round 2
Feb 23, 2022	Prep for public engagement Round 3
April 27, 2022	Review feedback Round 3

Figure 1 PAG Meeting, December 1, 2021 with staff and some PAG members (some absent in photo)

Figure 2 PAG Meeting, April 26, 2022 with staff and some PAG members (some absent in photo)

Public and Stakeholder Meetings

The third round of public and stakeholder engagement was open for comment from March 14 to April 22, 2022. During that time, we received over 25 emails, phone calls and contacts through social media, and spoke to approximate 880 people through direct in-person engagement. We spoke to at least 210 people in our online public and stakeholder meetings and received 478 responses to our survey. We made special efforts to speak with non-transit users. For a more details on the specific events, please see Appendix B: Engagement Activities.

Figure 3 Washtenaw Community College March 22, 2022

Oct 14 - April 22	People
Online Survey	478
Online Meetings • Public • Stakeholder • Staff	210+
In-Person Engagements	880+
Email, phone and social media contacts	25+

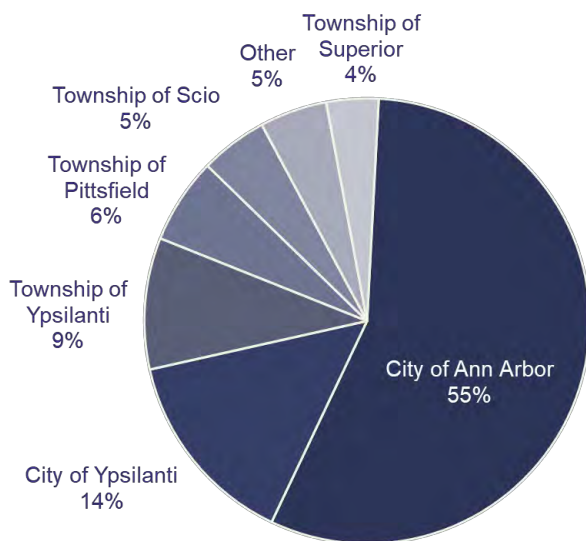*Figure 4 Eastern Michigan University Student Center, March 21, 2022*

Figure 5 Briarwood Mall, April 9, 2022

Who We Heard From

As part of the engagement, we ran a public survey to collect community feedback. We received 478 responses representing various viewpoints. However, as we integrate the feedback from this survey, we must keep in mind the voices that we heard and the voices that we did not. The respondents to the survey were mostly Caucasian with a higher household income. About half of our respondents were between 30 and 64. Not all of them are frequent transit users, but people likely do self-select to participate if they have some interest in transit.

Our in-person engagement feedback at the transit centers and particularly the Ypsilanti Transit Center (YTC), represented a higher proportion of African Americans and frequent transit riders.

Geographic Distribution

Township of Superior 4%
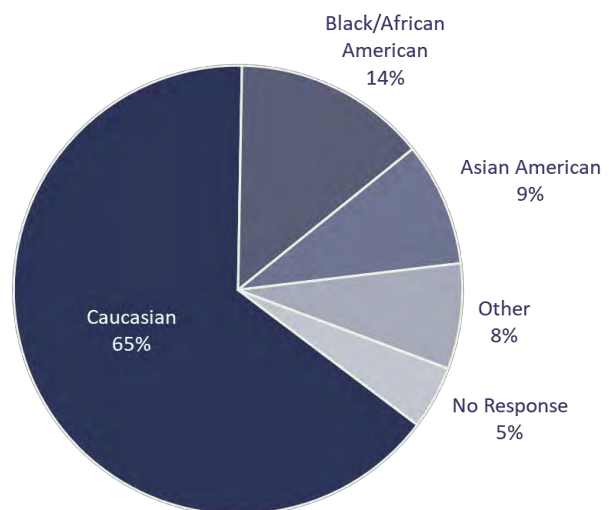Other 5%
Township of Scio 5%
Township of Pittsfield 6%
Township of Ypsilanti 9%
City of Ann Arbor 55%
City of Ypsilanti 14%

Racial Distribution

Black/African American 14%
Asian American 9%
Caucasian 65%
Other 8%
No Response 5%

Figure 6 Geographic and racial distribution of survey respondents

Household Incomes

25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%

Less than $15,000
$15,000-$29,999
$30,000-$44,999
$45,000-$59,999
$60,000-$74,999
$75,000-$99,999
More than $100,000

Transit Usage

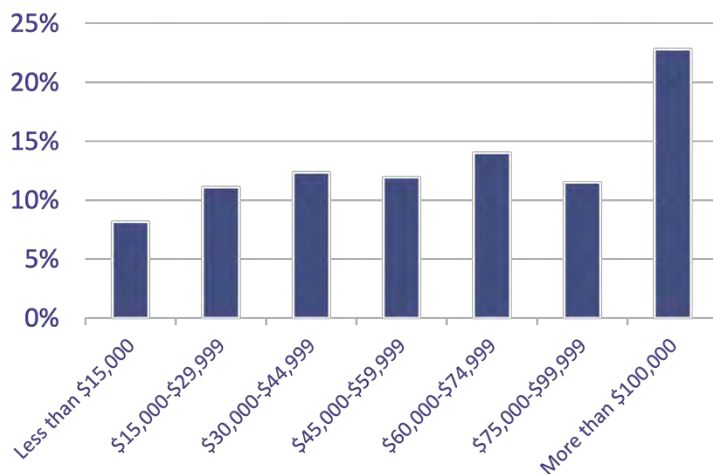Never 21%
Daily 28%
Several Times a year 20%
Weekly 18%
Monthly 10%

Figure 7 Survey Respondents by household income. Does not include 'no response'

Figure 8 Survey Respondents by transit usage. Does not include 'no response'

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Voices We Did Not Hear

While using the feedback we received, it is always important to keep in mind who it is coming from and recognize the gaps in our knowledge. As we take the next steps in presenting the final plan, we must use our professional judgement to interpret the data with this context in mind.

The respondents to the survey were somewhat skewed toward Caucasian with a higher household income. This is not reflective of the transit users in the area. As a result, we place more emphasis on in-person engagement feedback at the transit centers and particularly the Ypsilanti Transit Center, where we spoke with a higher proportion of African Americans. We also acknowledge the need to hear from non-transit riders, who were probably less interested in participating in our public engagement and may be underrepresented in our feedback. In our survey, non-transit users were the least supportive group of respondents. To engage more non-transit riders, we held in-person events at various public destinations such as the Briarwood Mall, Meijer store, and Ypsilanti District Library.

In our planning, we use the Washtenaw County Opportunity Index, which is an important tool for identifying which communities have access to structural privilege and which do not. The index can guide future decisions about where to invest our collective resources and how to consider policy changes to advance equity.

Our Public Advisory Group helped us to contextualize the feedback that we heard from the perspective of diverse communities.

Figure 9 Briarwood Mall, April 9, 2022

What We Heard

Representatives from TheRide collected the comments received from conversations with stakeholders and the public. We reviewed the survey and looked through every comment to pull out the key themes. We read all the specific requests to see the trends out of the large number of comments at the same time. See Appendix C: Important Features for more detail on the preferred features from the survey. This section explores the key themes that arose from our engagement and the actions that we will take when refining the final plan.

Support for the Plan

The meeting attendees and people that we spoke to in our in-person engagements were extremely supportive of the plan and our survey respondents were generally very supportive of the plan; 30% of survey respondents were strongly supportive and willing to advocate for the plan, another 35% were strongly supportive and 80% were at least generally supportive. Of the remaining respondents, 7% were neutral, 2% would be supportive with some small changes, and 11% would need major changes to the plan to be supportive.

The most supportive groups are those with household incomes less than $45,000 and daily transit users. The least supportive groups are those with household incomes from $60,000 - $90,000, and people who never use transit.

Overall, this is a very high level of support. This section will examine who and where the support is coming from, and what changes we should make to the final plan.
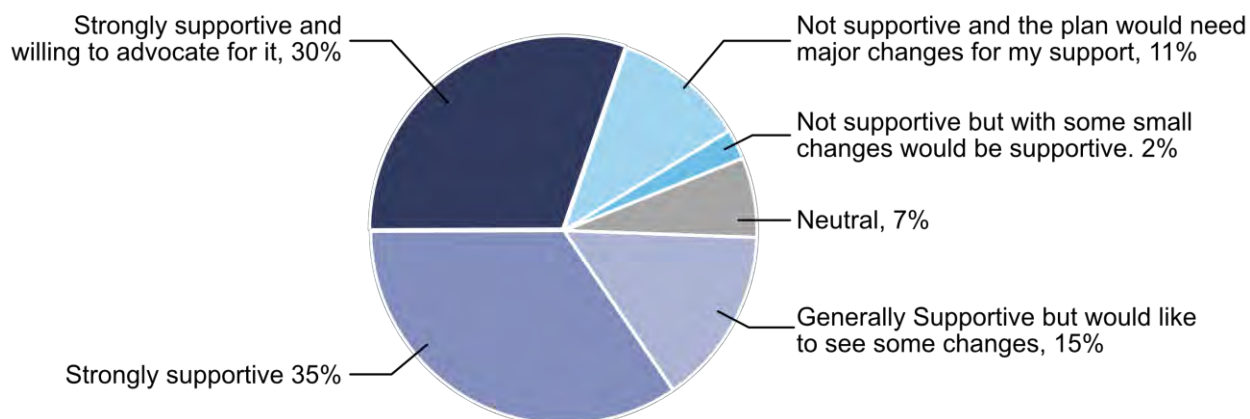

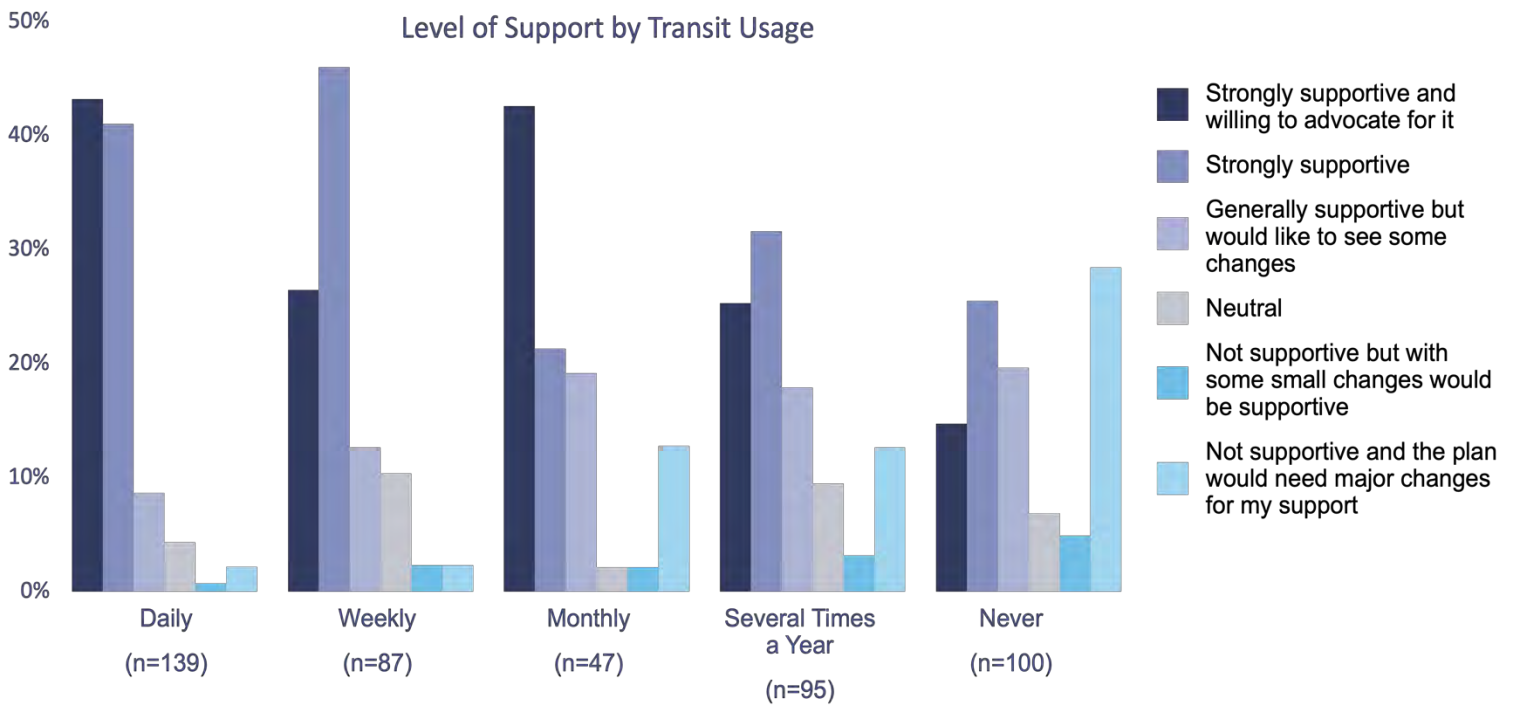*Figure 10 All Survey Respondents by Level of Support. Does not include 'no response'*

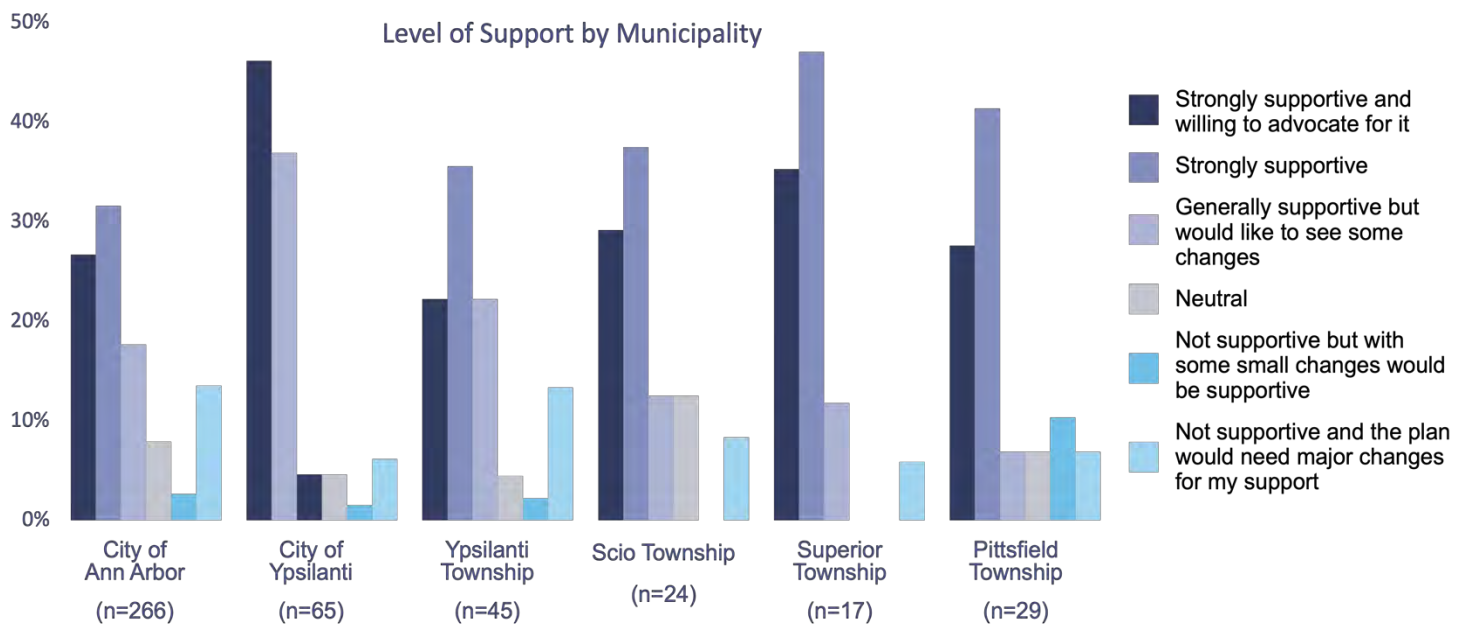*Figure 11 Survey Respondents Level of Support by Transit Usage. Does not include 'no response'*

Figure 12 Survey Respondents Level of Support by Municipality. Does not include 'no response'
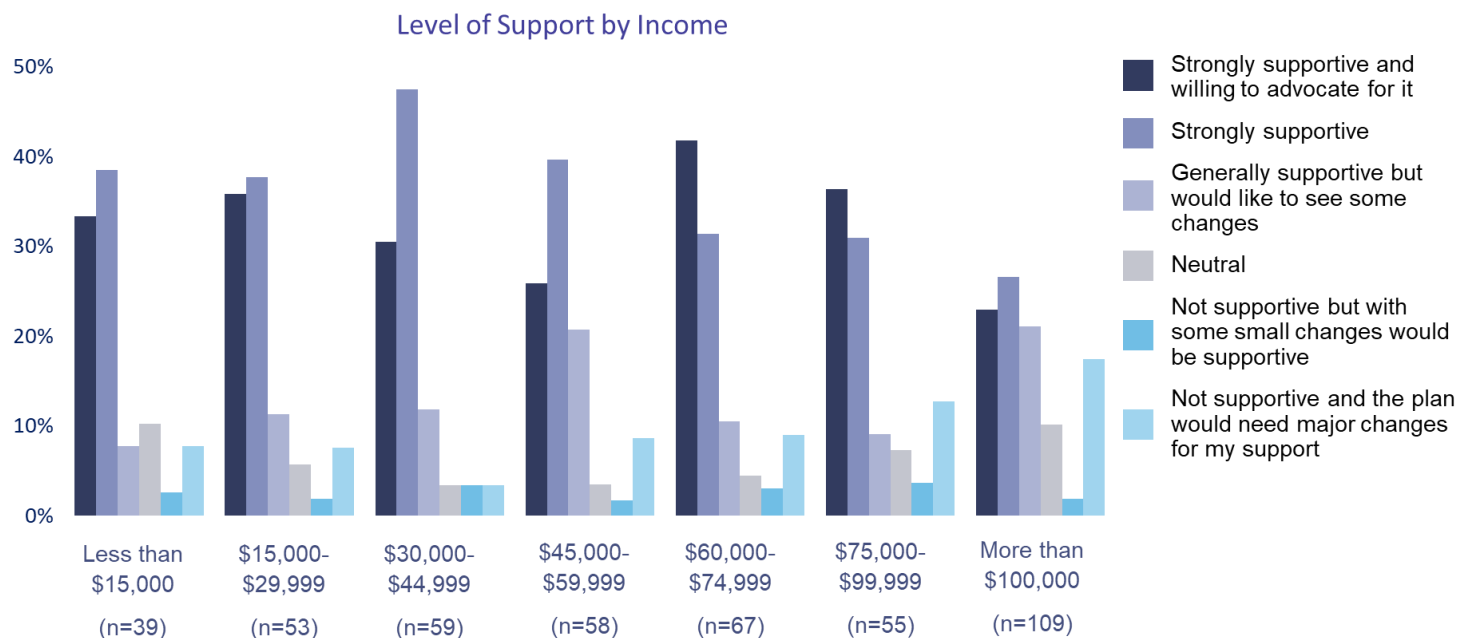
Level of Support by Income

Legend:
- Strongly supportive and willing to advocate for it
- Strongly supportive
- Generally supportive but would like to see some changes
- Neutral
- Not supportive but with some small changes would be supportive
- Not supportive and the plan would need major changes for my support

Figure 13 Survey Respondents Level of Support by Income. Does not include 'no response'

Transit for Those Who Need It Most

Equity

Transit needs to serve those who need it most. The greatest theme from all our engagement was support for our goal to improve social equity with this plan. Survey respondents who said they were the most supportive of the plan ranked social equity as the most important feature. This is consistent with what we heard from our in-person engagements.

To ensure that the plan works for everyone, we compared the responses from African American, Asian American, and lower income groups to the group as a whole. Both African American and Asian American survey respondents were even more supportive of the plan than the group as a whole. the preferred features for people with household incomes less than $30,000 were not significantly different than the group as a whole. See Appendix C: Important Features.

Plan Action: Equity is one of the cornerstones of this plan and we will continue to work toward providing high quality transit to those who need it most.

Accessibility

We heard that accessibility improvements are needed for existing bus stops, new vehicles, and new facilities. Any new fare payment or information system that we include must work for everyone, not just those who are tech-savvy.

While investments in accessibility enhancements was not ranked highly by most survey respondents, serving transit-dependent people with disabilities is a key aspect of this plan.

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The term 'disability' over-simplifies the many different experiences, so accessibility must be included at every level of planning. Looking at specific accessibility-related comments helps us to prioritize. The insight feedback from our Public Advisory Group were especially helpful in this regard.

Plan Action: Ensure that universal accessibility is integrated at all levels of the plan as something for us to work towards.

More off-peak service

People who are completely reliant on transit need it at all times of day. Extension of service hours on evenings, weekends and overnight was a reoccurring theme. This was ranked as the most important feature by survey respondents that would like to see changes to the plan to be more supportive.

Plan Action: While some aspects of the plan need big infrastructure changes over time, adjusting service hours do not. Therefore, we can provide off-peak service sooner, in the first implementation stage from 2023-2028.

Efficiency, Reliability

Transit Efficiency and Faster Travel times

Nearly everyone agreed that improving transit and transportation efficiency is one of the most important aspects of this plan. That means greater return on investments, easier movement, less congestion, and better integration of every service we offer. Transit and transportation efficiency was the overall the most important feature ranked by survey respondents. While the entire plan aims to increase efficiency and overall travel times, certain features will work toward that goal.

Plan Action: Continue to prioritize features like Bus Rapid Transit on our busiest routes, on-demand services, and smaller vehicles in low-demand areas that will improve the overall efficiency of the system.

High-Frequency Routes

There were many comments supporting high-frequency transit routes in general and some comments requesting routes for specific areas. People were supportive of our planned network that will allow customers to transfer across the service area without going downtown. High-frequency service was the second most important feature ranked by survey respondents. This type of network also serves to improve overall transit efficiency.

Plan Action: The exact routing will be determined as they are implemented. At each stage the network design will focus on even coverage of the service area while ensuring service for the people and places that need it most.

Sustainability

The timeline that we proposed in the plan for ensuring that our entire fleet is carbon neutral by 2045 is not soon enough for some respondents. TheRide is currently doing a parallel Propulsion Study to determine the best technology to use in our bus fleets in the future.

Plan Action: based on this feedback, we are working to confirm if a 100% carbon neutral fleet can be achieved sooner. While this Long-Range plan agrees that it is important to move away from fossil fuels as soon as possible, the Propulsion Study will determine the exact timing and technology that we implement.

Connectivity

Bus Stops and Transit Hubs

Connecting to/from and using the bus stops and transit centers can be challenging. That means Connection for the first and last mile of a trip. We heard that the level of accessibility, the state of repair, and snow clearing of bus stops means that people cannot always use them. We heard a desire for better connection points, but some confusion around our proposed transit hubs.

Plan Action: Collaboration with Municipalities and Other Partners for transit centers, hubs and stops. Clarify and elaborate on transit hubs in the final plan. Gradually introduce improvements at transit hub locations rather than waiting for a single large project.

Connections to Other Mobility Services

We heard that connections from TheRide's service to other forms of transportation, considering a customer's entire journey. That means park-n-ride lots in the outskirts, connections to new and existing trail networks, bike or scooter share programs in central areas, and other transit agencies, such as WAVE, SMART, Amtrak or the University of Michigan.

Plan Action: The goal of the long-range plan is not to decide the specific routes but the network as a whole. That vision will guide the specifics we make at the time that we implement new routes. We will continue to work with the municipalities, peer agencies and community groups when planning those routes and build-in creative first and last mile solutions to transit hubs and centers.

Collaboration with Municipalities and Other Partners

The land use planning decisions we make now will affect how our community will grow and change over the next 25 years. We need to work with municipalities to ensure that our transit system grows and supports those changes and vice versa. That means coordinating transit planning with big picture decisions like zoning, and small picture decisions like roadway design, bike lanes and pedestrian infrastructure. This is especially relevant as we build out our transit priority features and Bus Rapid Transit system on busy streets with a lot of competition for space.

Plan Action: We will change our plan so we do not differentiate between BRT and BRT lite, blending dedicated lanes and transit priority features as needed on roads depending on future detailed studies. The key to success lies with collaboration with municipalities and other partners on land use planning and roadway redesign.

Cost

Most of the people that we spoke to understood that big change will have a cost associated with it. However, we also heard concerns, especially from Ypsilanti Township elected officials, about the effect higher tax rates on people, particularly those with lower incomes. Some people felt that those who need the service most may be most affected by the tax increase. With everything else happening in the world and our community, now is not the time to raise taxes.

Some people felt that they do not use transit enough to warrant the increased tax burden that will affect them. We also heard the taxes should go elsewhere, rather than increasing service. There was a variety of responses here, from providing free fares for everyone to increasing fares so only the current ridership bears the cost of improved service.

There were some questions about other funding sources for these improvements, like the federal or municipal governments. It is important to note that TheRide will leverage external funding as much as possible for this long-range plan. The current funding structure of TheRide depends in part on a Millage levy. About half of the total cost associated with the improvements in the draft plan will come from stable state and federal funding, and a third will come from other grants.

Plan Action: TheRide is conscious of the costs of this plan, and how it will affect people. We are also aware how improved service will benefit communities that need it most. The majority of people that we spoke to were supportive of the scale and cost of the investments. We will continue exploring other funding opportunities to manage the costs allocated to local residents. Some of these comments came from people living in the Township of Ypsilanti so in the final plan, we will review and adjust the timeline of some service improvements to ensure those who may be most affected by the taxes will benefit sooner.

Next Steps

Creating a Plan That Works for Everyone

In general, we heard an overwhelming support for the plan. People agreed with our focus on equity, and efficiency with a Bus Rapid Transit core surrounded by interconnected, high-frequency routes and on-demand services. The feedback we heard will affect the staging and adjust some of our priorities, but this draft plan that we put forward in this round of public engagement is a strong base.

We heard concerns about the cost of the plan and the burden of taxes, especially among the mid-range household incomes. One factor may be that high housing prices in the centers forcing lower income people to the outskirts where they are less served by transit. The farther away they are pushed, the more acutely they feel the lack of transportation options. While there are economic challenges today, connecting jobs, education and housing with high-quality transportation is exactly what will help the people who need it most. Investments in transit mean cost reductions not only in personal cost-of-living, but collective costs for the entire transportation system including roads and parking.

Transit in outlying areas becomes more expensive with fewer people and longer trips, while the challenge of central areas is having enough service to cover demand. There is no single solution, so TheRide will diversify its fleet, matching the type of service to where it's needed most. By seamlessly integrating these services with modern technology, we can broaden our customer base and create a transit system that works for everyone.

Finalization

This concludes our final round of engagement. As we put the feedback we received into context, we will spend the next several weeks refining the draft plan into a final recommended Long-Range Plan for the next 25 years. This means refining both the final plan for 2045 and the implementation staging. The next steps in the process will be:

Refine Draft Plan into Final Plan	Focus on aspects and features that were most important to the community and refine the implementation plan.
Final Reccommendations to the Board	As the governing body of TheRide, once the board adpots the plan, it will become TheRide's official Long-Range Plan.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our public engagement process. All of your feedback is being used to build a better future for our communities.

Check out our website at Theride.org for updates, to sign up for our newsletter or leave a comment at any time.

TheRide

Document Control

| Title:	TheRide2045 Round 2 Engagement – What We Heard

Appendix A: Draft Plan Presented

Draft Plan: TheRide 2045

- Transformation of entire transit system
- Bus Rapid Transit forms the backbone
- Other main corridors are served by Express and Priority Service
- High-frequency routes across the service area
- New transit hubs at key locations:
    o Briarwood Mall
    o Jackson & Maple
    o Carpenter & Ellsworth
    o Nixon & Plymouth
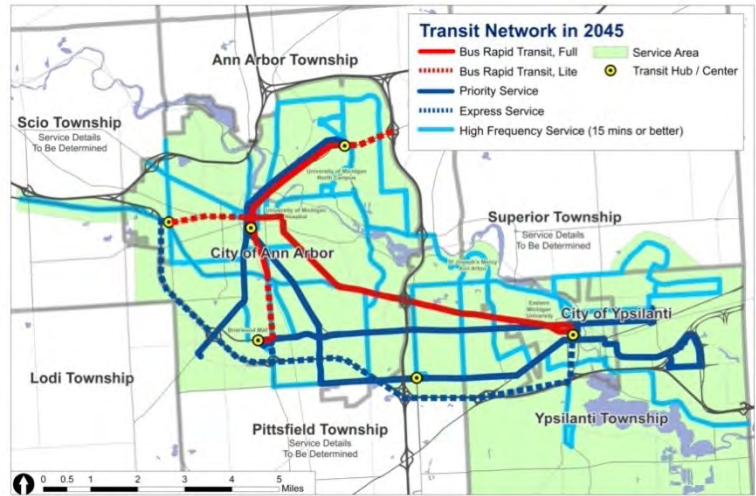
Draft Plan: 2023-2028

This phase of implementation lays out the groundwork for future stages while increasing Off-peak service. It includes:

- BTC and YTC upgrades
- Washtenaw express pilot
- Better off-peak service
    - 30-minute minimum frequencies during the daytime
    - Longer hours of operation
    - NightRide expansion and enhancement
- Improved accessibility for fixed route with better integration with A-Ride
- Planning and design for
    - New bus garage
    - BRT and transit priority
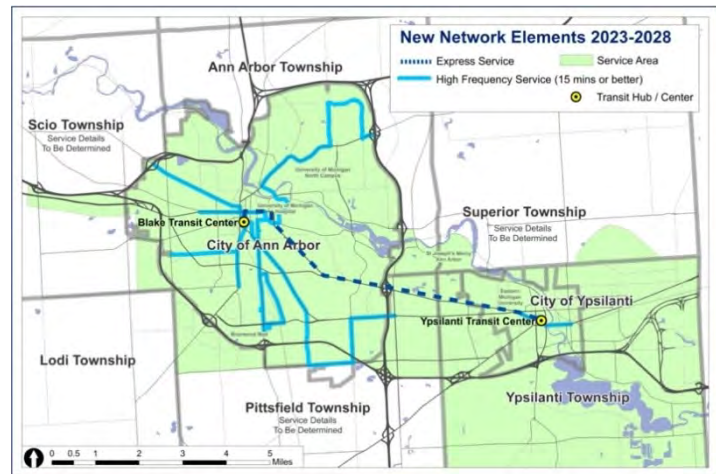
Draft Plan: 2029-2033

- Focus on increasing service on busiest corridors
    - Bus Rapid Transit Lite on Washtenaw Ave
    - North-South express pilot
    - Priority Service on Main-Plymouth and Packard – Ellsworth
- New bus garage
- 30-minute minimum frequency at all times
- Transit priority in central Ann Arbor
- Transit hub at Briarwood Mall
- Major fare collection modernization
- Increasing investments in A-Ride
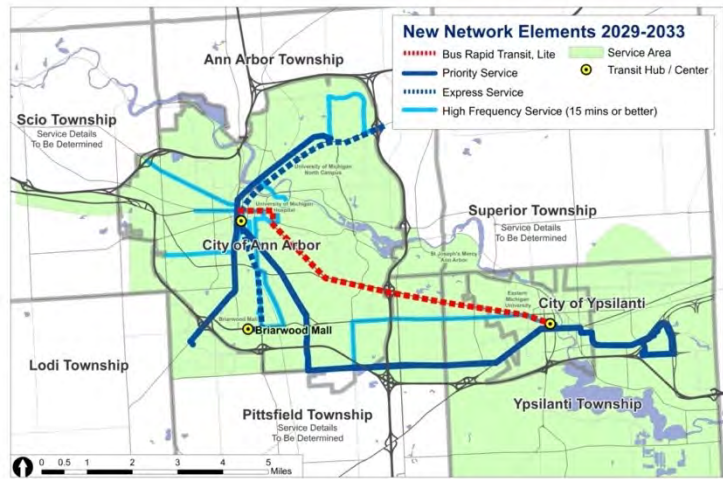
Draft Plan: 2034-2038

This portion of the plan includes large improvements to the backbone of the network including:

- Full Bus Rapid Transit on Washtenaw Ave
- N-S Bus Rapid Transit Lite from Briarwood Mall to Plymouth Park n Ride
- Express route on I-94
- Packard-Eisenhower priority route
- Transit priority enhancements across service area

Two new transit hubs at:
- Carpenter/Ellsworth
- Jackson/Maple

Expansion of high frequency network and FlexRide and continued integration between A-Ride and fixed route.
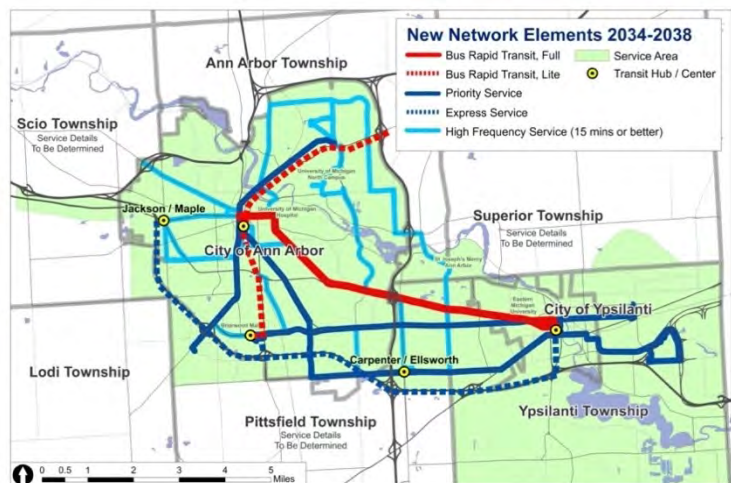
Draft Plan: 2039-2045

- Further improvements to the backbone of the network along with high-frequency routes across service area
  - Final buildout of BRT on N-S route
  - BRT Lite on Huron/Jackson
- Transit hub at Nixon/Plymouth
- Fleet enhancement: 100% zero-emissions fleet
- Regional fare system integration
- Full integration between A-Ride and fixed route
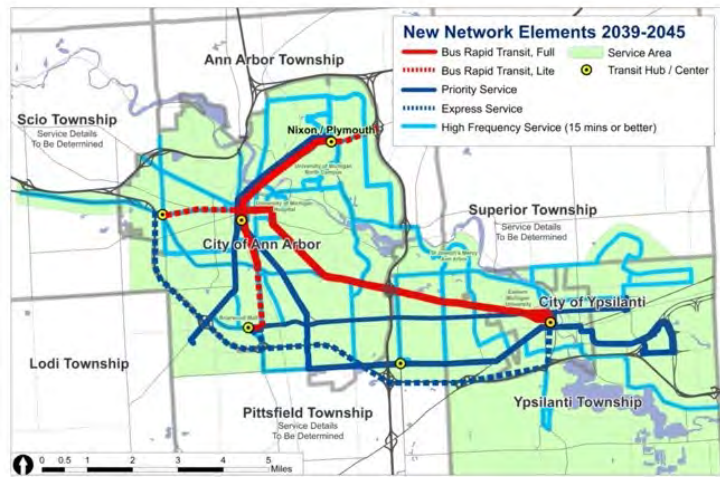
Appendix B: Engagement Activities

Stakeholder Group	Date
TheRide 2045 Public Advisory Group	23-Feb
TheRide 2045 Public Advisory Group	27-Apr
AAATA Board	17-Mar
AAATA Staff Town Hall 1	17-Mar
AAATA Staff Town Hall 2	18-Mar
Local Advisory Committee	12-Apr
AAATA Union	15-Apr
Ann Arbor Transportation Commission	16-Mar
Stakeholder Webinar 1	17-Mar
Stakeholder Webinar 2	22-Mar
Ypsilanti City Council	05-Apr
Ypsilanti Township Board	05-Apr
WATS Technical Committee	06-Apr
Washtenaw County Commission	06-Apr
Ann Arbor Transportation and Planning	07-Apr
Pittsfield Township Board	13-Apr
Scio Transportation Alternatives Planning Committee	13-Apr
YDDA Operations and Finance Committee	13-Apr
Superior Township Board	18-Apr
Online Public Meeting 1	29-Mar
Online Public Meeting 2	31-Mar
Online Public Meeting 3	06-Apr
Online Public Meeting 4	07-Apr
In person Session: Eastern Michigan University	21-Mar
In person Session: Washtenaw Community College	22-Mar
In person Session: Ypsilanti Transit Center	23-Mar
In person Session: Blake Transit Center	24-Mar
In person Session: University of Michigan - Central Campus	25-Mar
In-person Session: Ypsilanti District Library – Ypsilanti Township	05-Apr
In person Session: Meijer on Carpenter	08-Apr
In person Session: Briarwood Mall	09-Apr

Appendix C: Important Features

Preferred Features, All Respondents

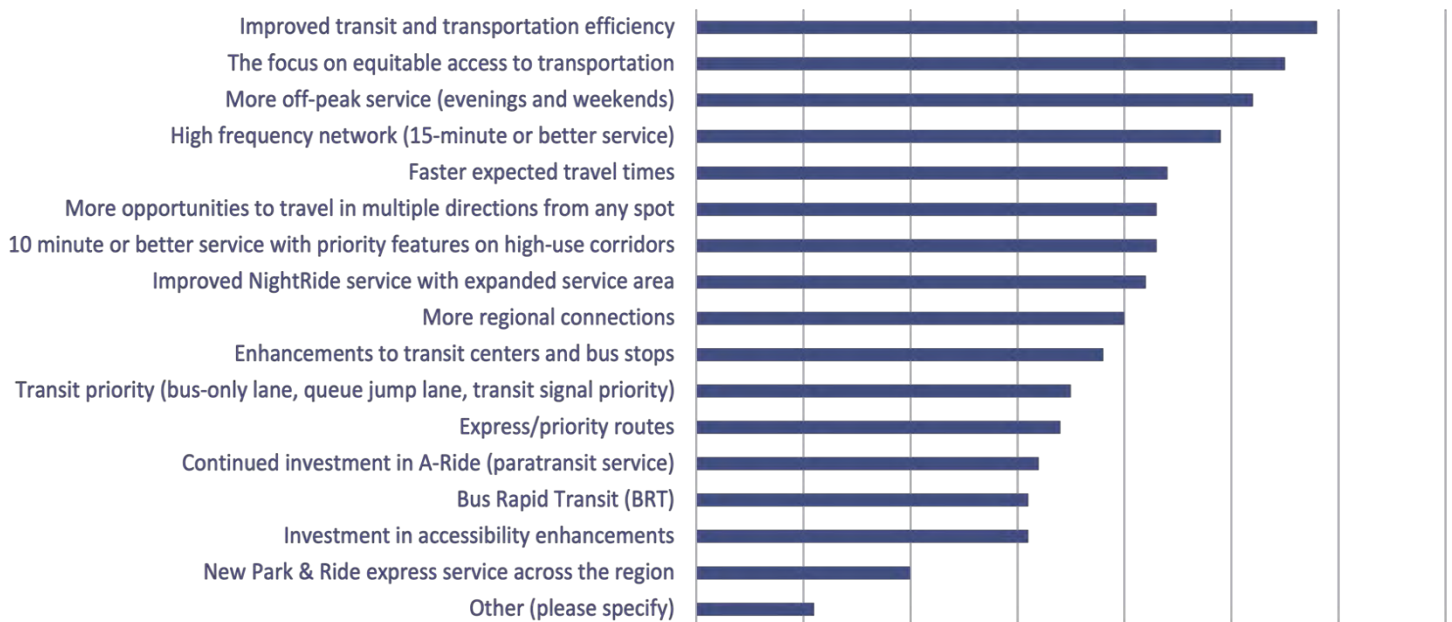| Feature |
|---|
| Improved transit and transportation efficiency |
| High frequency network (15-minute or better service) |
| The focus on equitable access to transportation |
| More off-peak service (evenings and weekends) |
| Faster expected travel times |
| More regional connections |
| Enhancements to transit centers and bus stops |
| Express/priority routes |
| More opportunities to travel in multiple directions from any spot |
| Improved NightRide service with expanded service area |
| 10 minute or better service with priority features on high-use corridors |
| Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) |
| Transit priority (bus-only lane, queue jump lane, transit signal priority) |
| Investment in accessibility enhancements |
| Continued investment in A-Ride (paratransit service) |
| New Park & Ride express service across the region |
| Other (please specify) |

All Survey Respondents Preferred Features. Does not include 'no response'

Most Important Features- Survey Respondents With Household Incomes less than $30,000

Feature
Improved transit and transportation efficiency
The focus on equitable access to transportation
More off-peak service (evenings and weekends)
High frequency network (15-minute or better service)
Faster expected travel times
More opportunities to travel in multiple directions from any spot
10 minute or better service with priority features on high-use corridors
Improved NightRide service with expanded service area
More regional connections
Enhancements to transit centers and bus stops
Transit priority (bus-only lane, queue jump lane, transit signal priority)
Express/priority routes
Continued investment in A-Ride (paratransit service)
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
Investment in accessibility enhancements
New Park & Ride express service across the region
Other (please specify)

Survey Respondents With Household Incomes less than $30,000 Preferred Features. Does not include 'no response'