



MISSISSIPPI State Transit Plan & Intercity Bus Study



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Title VI

I TITLE VI NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Mississippi Department of Transportation ensures compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 49 CFR, Part 21; dated October 1, 2012, and related statutes and regulations to ensure that no person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation on the grounds of race, color, or national origin; including the denial of meaningful access for Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons.

I ACCESSIBLE FORMATS

This document is available in an accessible format upon request. Paper copies of this plan as well as information regarding accessible formats may be obtained by calling MDOT's Public Transit Division **(601) 359-7800**.



Acknowledgments

The Mississippi State Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study was prepared by the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) in collaboration with transit providers, local governments, regional organizations, stakeholders, and residents throughout Mississippi.

MDOT extends its sincere appreciation to the many individuals and organizations that contributed their time, expertise, and feedback during the development of this study.

The recommendations and strategies presented in this plan reflect a statewide collaborative effort to improve access to jobs, healthcare, education, and essential services while supporting a more connected, resilient, and sustainable transportation system.

MDOT PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

- Shirley Wilson
- Roderick Bailey
- Leandrew Mayberry
- Charles Husband
- Patricia Comachio

PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Jeremiah Dumas, SMART
- Christopher Foret, CTA
- Christine Welch, JTRAN
- LaShonda McKinney, Bolivar County Council on Aging
- Carolyn Morrow, Singing River Health System
- Stephanie Gonterman, Isaacs & Associates
- Jacki Morgan

CONSULTANT TEAM

- HDR Engineering, Inc.

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Acronyms

I LIST OF COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

CTA — Coast Transit Authority

FTA — Federal Transit Administration

JTRAN — Jackson Transit System

KPI — Key Performance Indicator

LRTP — Long Range Transportation Plan

MDOT — Mississippi Department of Transportation

MPO — Metropolitan Planning Organization

MSU — Mississippi State University

OUT — Oxford University Transit

SMART — Starkville MSU Area Rapid Transit



State of Mississippi

A STATEWIDE APPROACH TO BUILDING A MORE CONNECTED AND RESPONSIVE TRANSIT SYSTEM

The Mississippi Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study provides a comprehensive framework for improving public transportation for residents, workers, and visitors across the state. The State Transit Plan assesses existing transit services by identifying mobility needs and service gaps and develops practical, implementable solutions to close those gaps through a phased approach. It also presents recommendations, funding strategies, and implementation steps to help Mississippi achieve its transportation goals and objectives.



Transit supports independence, economic opportunity, and quality of life statewide



Coordinated transit system helps services stay efficient and responsive to the state's mobility needs



The plan guides long-term transit strategies and investment priorities

Mission

The mission of the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is to promote a reliable, integrated, and customer-friendly public transit network by sufficiently administering sustainable programs and projects statewide and supporting effective use of state, federal, and local resources.

Vision

MDOT's vision is an integrated, accessible, resilient, safe, and secure public transportation system with expanded mobility options and well-maintained infrastructure that connect communities to jobs, education, healthcare, and beyond.

Statewide Goals

Mississippi's statewide transit goals guide planning, investment, and service improvements. Consistent with both our vision and mission, the goals establish and support a system that is integrated, accessible, resilient, safe, and well-maintained. Together, these goals provide a framework for understanding current conditions, incorporating input, identifying needs, and advancing solutions to improve mobility across the state.



INTEGRATION



Integrates urban, rural, and intercity networks to provide a seamless system for users and improves customer satisfaction.

ACCESSIBILITY



Is accessible for all people regardless of age, ability, income, or trip purpose.

RESILIENCE



Is resilient by responding to changes associated with funding, system disruptions, and staffing challenges.

SAFETY



Operates safely and securely through reducing the number of incidents and enhancing system reliability.

OPTIMALITY



Is optimally maintained to meet State of Good Repair requirements, ensuring vehicles, facilities, and infrastructure remain in good condition.

MOBILITY



Supports expanding mobility opportunities to enhance transit service.

Service Types and Operating Environments

Understanding how service is organized today provides the foundation for identifying needs, interpreting public and provider input, and developing solutions that fit Mississippi's different operating environments.

Transit in Mississippi operates across three primary service environments: urban transit, rural transit, and intercity services including bus and rail. Each serves a different role and together forms the statewide mobility network.



URBAN TRANSIT

Urban transit serves areas with a population of 50,000 or more within an urbanized area. These systems primarily support larger cities which provide more frequent transit service to support daily travel needs.

3 Urban-Fixed Route Systems:

- City of Jackson Transit System (JTRAN)
- Coast Transit Authority (CTA)
- City of Hattiesburg Transit (Hub City Transit)



RURAL TRANSIT

Rural transit serves areas outside of urbanized areas with populations under 50,000. In Mississippi, demand response is the most common rural service model and helps connect rural residents to essential destinations where fixed-route service may not be practical, although some rural communities also operate fixed route transit service.

48 Demand Response Providers

2 University-based Fixed Route Systems

- Starkville – Mississippi State University (MSU) Area Rapid Transit (SMART)
- Oxford University Transit (OUT)



INTERCITY TRANSIT

These services extend the transportation network beyond local service areas by connecting Mississippi communities to regional and national destinations through scheduled limited-stop bus and rail services.

2 Intercity Bus Providers

- Delta Bus
- Flix Se (operates both Greyhound and FlixBus)

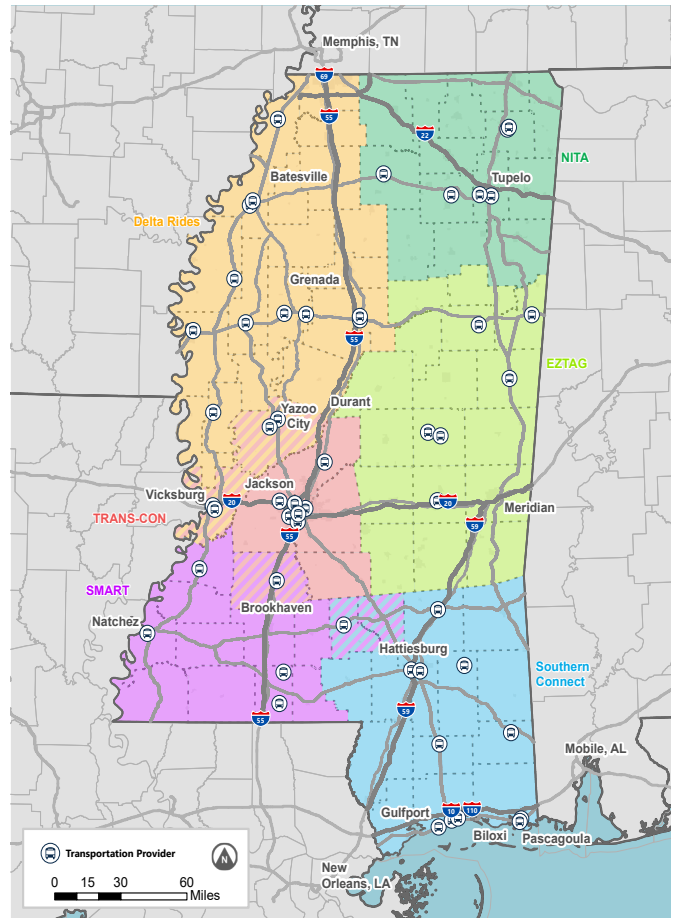
1 Intercity Rail Provider

- Amtrak

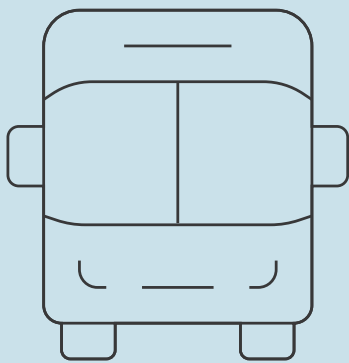
Transit Today

Mississippi's public transportation network includes urban, rural, and intercity services that support mobility across different travel markets. While this network is broad, it is not uniform – with some counties served by multiple providers and service options and other counties with no or greatly limited service availability.

The system includes fixed-route transit, demand response service, intercity bus, intercity rail, vanpool, and specialized transportation such as Non-Emergency Medical Transportation. Together, these services help residents access jobs, healthcare, education, shopping, social services, and regional destinations through affordable mobility options.



TRANSIT



JOBS



HEALTH



AFFORDABILITY

56

**TRANSIT
PROVIDERS**

74

**OUT OF 82
COUNTIES WITH
PUBLIC TRANSIT**

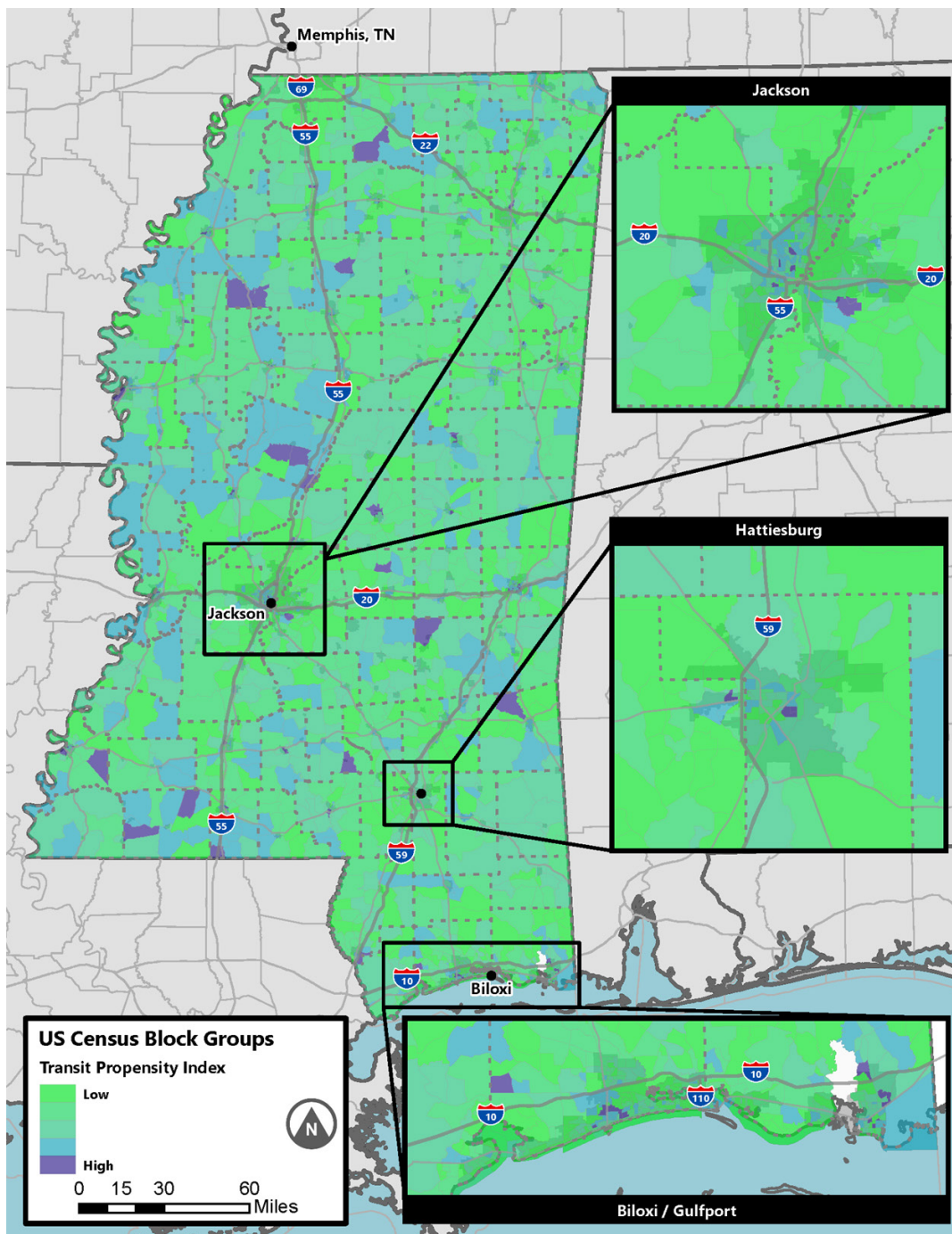
6

**REGIONAL
COORDINATION
AREAS**

Transit Service Gaps

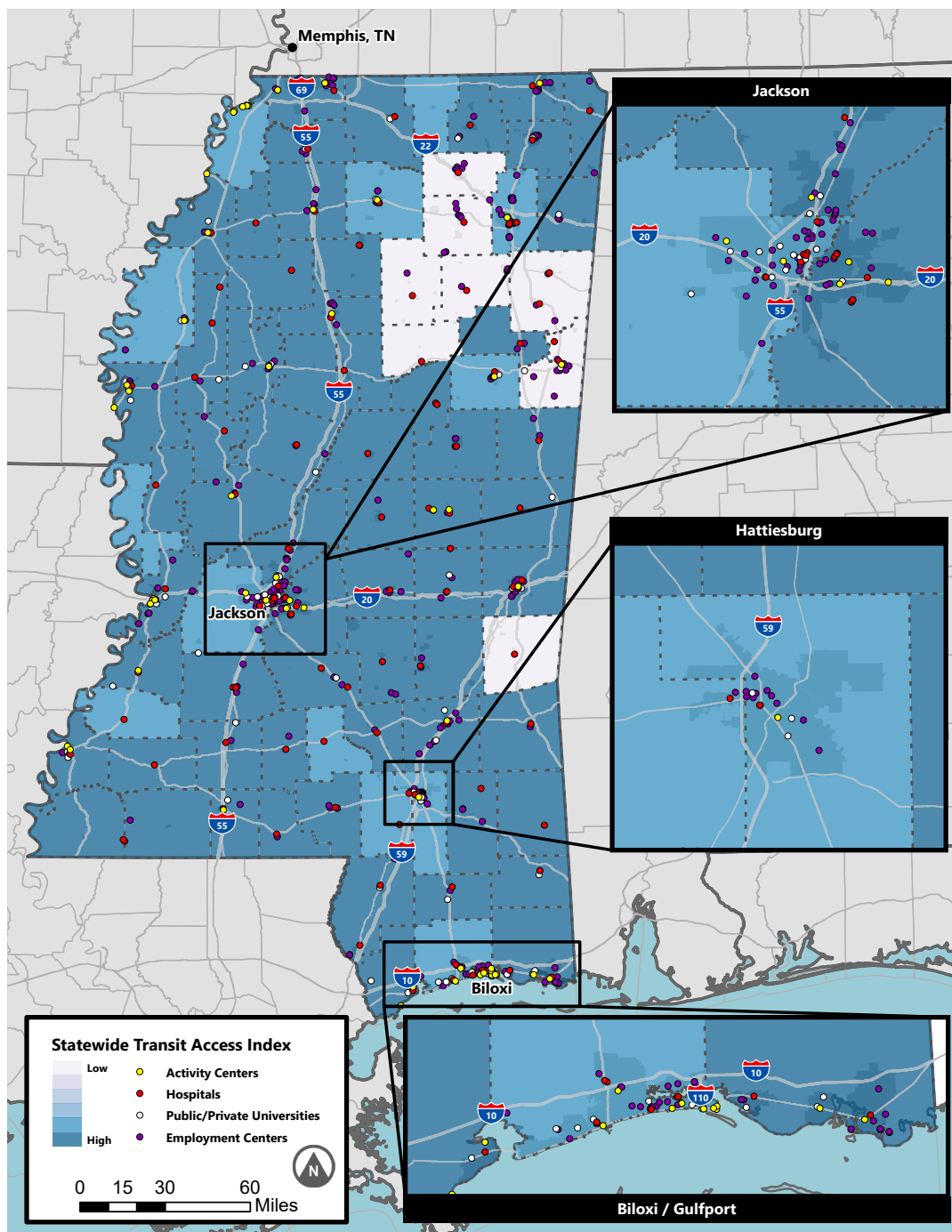
Transit propensity is an indicator of where public transportation is most likely to be used based on demographic characteristics including those without access to a personal vehicle, those with low incomes, older adults, and people with mobility impairments.

This transit-reliant population forms the basis of the transit propensity analysis. This analysis helps identify communities with elevated potential demand for transit services and informs decisions about where improvements or investments may be most impactful.



While the Transit Propensity Index identifies where transit-reliant populations are concentrated, the Transit Access Index evaluates whether those populations can reach essential destinations such as employment centers, hospitals, public and private colleges and universities, and activity centers. Darker shades of blue in the map below indicate greater levels of access.

In Mississippi, eight counties (**Union, Pontotoc, Calhoun, Webster, Chickasaw, Monroe, Lowndes, and Clarke**) currently have no intra-county transit service. Although intercity services traverse several of these counties, they currently do not provide stops within them.



Performance Snapshot

This performance snapshot provides a high-level view of transit service activity and efficiency across different service types and agencies. It highlights key metrics to help compare performance and understand how transit services are operating statewide.

Demand Response by Region*

Region	Annual Passenger Trips	Cost Per Trip	Revenue Miles	Cost Per Revenue Mile	Revenue Hours	Cost Per Revenue Hour
Delta Rides	264,643	\$21.33	3,113,780	\$1.81	127,411	\$44.31
NITA	79,586	\$15.98	1,106,729	\$2.30	68,929	\$36.90
Trans-Con	265,414	\$43.73	1,602,014	\$5.30	77,259	\$109.93
EZTAG	29,353	\$30.41	335,696	\$2.65	19,908	\$44.84
SMART	34,117	\$29.77	1,689,047	\$2.41	64,090	\$63.40
Southern Connect	677,635	\$17.74	2,236,930	\$2.86	139,848	\$45.79
Total	1,350,748		10,085,196		497,445	
Weighted Average		\$24.03		\$2.78		\$56.37

Fixed Route by Agency*

Region	Annual Passenger Trips	Cost Per Trip	Revenue Miles	Cost Per Revenue Mile	Revenue Hours	Cost Per Revenue Hour
CTA	603,135	\$9.19	779,715	\$7.11	58,614	\$94.59
Hub City	47,023	\$39.75	296,669	\$6.30	12,945	\$144.40
JTRAN	389,213	\$14.62	675,196	\$8.43	42,940	\$132.51
Oxford	507,144	\$7.98	1,118,765	\$3.62	55,639	\$72.71
Starkville-MSU	468,102	\$6.72	589,556	\$5.33	51,150	\$61.46
Total	2,014,617		3,459,901		221,288	
Weighted Average		\$10.07		\$5.87		\$91.70

Vanpool by Agency*

Region	Annual Passenger Trips	Cost Per Trip	Revenue Miles	Cost Per Revenue Mile	Revenue Hours	Cost Per Revenue Hour
CTA	76,270	\$6.45	821,104	\$0.60	15,392	\$31.94
Total	3,341,634		14,366,201		734,125	
Weighted Average		\$19.70		\$3.40		\$66.51

*FY 2023 Performance Metrics

I TOTAL STATEWIDE

Annual
Passenger Trips

3.3M

Revenue
Miles

14.4M

Revenue
Hours

735K

Average Cost
Per Trip

\$19.70



Asset Management

Benefits of Asset Management



SAFETY

Well-maintained vehicles and facilities are a crucial part of keeping riders safe.



CONNECTIVITY

Upgraded fleets improve service reliability and on-time performance.



ENVIRONMENT

Public transit reduces impacts on air and water quality.



MAINTENANCE

Staying in good repair lowers long term costs and improves efficiency.



ECONOMY

Functioning transit assets links workers, businesses, and destinations.



RESILIENCE

Forethought that provides essential connections and backup routes for communities.

Maintaining vehicles, equipment, and facilities in a State of Good Repair is essential to providing safe, reliable, and comfortable transit service. Mississippi's transit assets support both daily operations and long-term mobility for communities across the state. Asset condition affects more than just maintenance planning; it shapes reliability, passenger experience, provider costs, and the ability to expand or modernize service over time. Maintaining a healthy inventory of transit assets is necessary to achieve a system that is both sustainable and resilient.

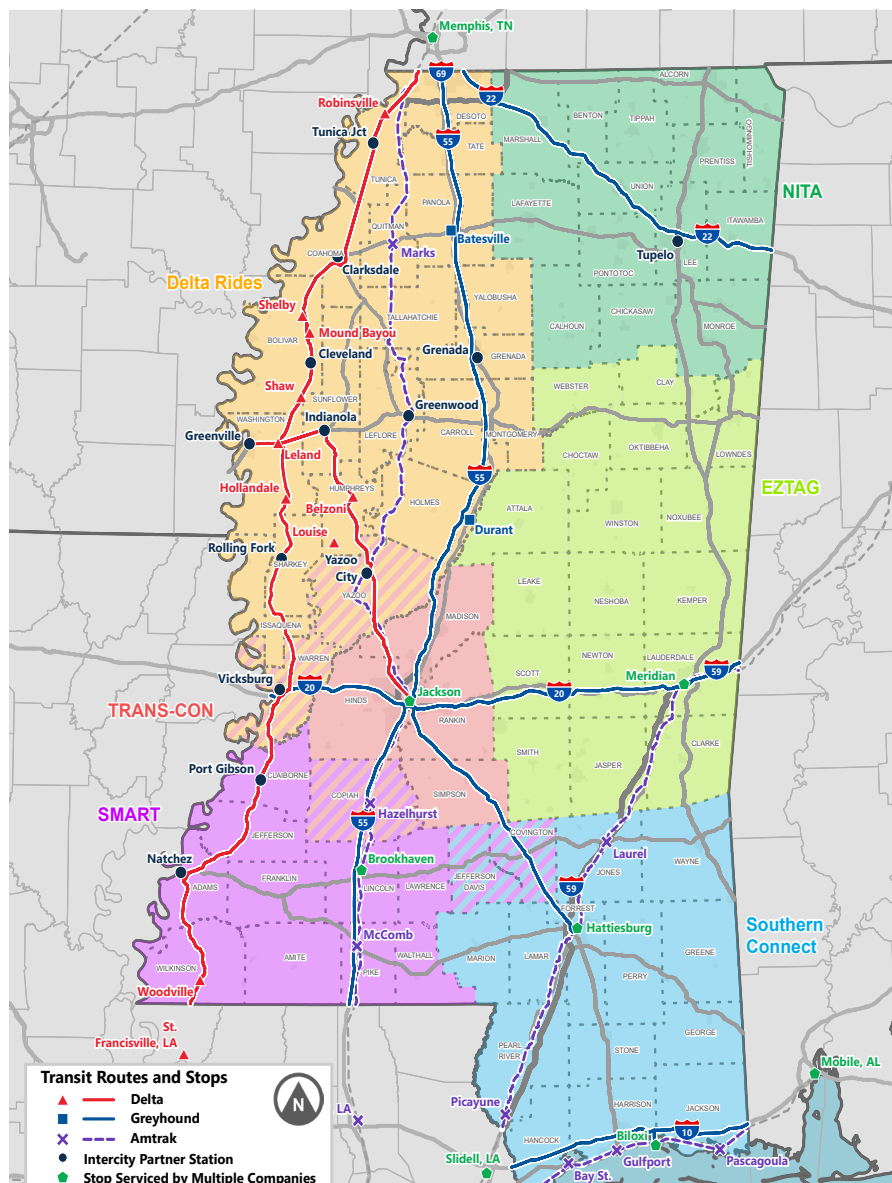
MDOT works with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to oversee transit asset management efforts and assist local providers in obtaining federal transit funding. Transit agencies across the state operate a **combined fleet of over 600 buses and vans**, along with facilities and equipment to support the fleet. MDOT has established a statewide performance goal of maintaining at least **60% of those vehicles in a State of Good Repair**. Approximately **37% of those vehicles have exceeded their useful life and are in need of replacement**. While MDOT is currently exceeding the goal, there remains an ongoing need for investment in maintaining and modernizing Mississippi's transit system.

Understanding the current conditions of the overall system helps MDOT and providers identify where investment is needed to strengthen resiliency and provide sustainable service that meets performance standards. Solutions and strategies are outlined later in this plan that improve performance across the state, helping MDOT continue to meet both existing and future goals.

Interregional and Intercity Connections

Why Connections Matter

Intercity service in Mississippi is supported by three providers. Greyhound/FlixBus provides scheduled routes with Mississippi stops in Biloxi, Jackson, Meridian, and Tupelo, with Jackson functioning as a major hub, while Delta Bus Lines provides daily service between Memphis, Baton Rouge, and Jackson, with stops in several Mississippi communities. Amtrak provides rail service through the City of New Orleans, Crescent routes, and its recently added Mardi Gras Service with Gulf Coast stops in Bay Saint Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi, and Pascagoula.



A Statewide Conversation

Mississippi residents, providers, and partners shared how transit supports daily life and where stronger connections are needed. Their input reflected both the public experience of using or trying to use transit and the operating realities behind service delivery. Together, these perspectives helped clarify the priorities that should guide future transit investment across the state.

I How and Who We Engaged

Input was collected through a mix of surveys, meetings, interviews, field visits, and solution review. These combined methods helped document current conditions, identify priorities, refine solutions, and confirm which strategies should move forward.



PUBLIC EXPERIENCE

Assesses how well transit connects residents to key destinations such as jobs, healthcare, education, and essential services, and where unmet needs remain.



PROVIDER EXPERIENCE

Evaluates what agencies require to deliver service, including funding, staffing, training, coordination, public information, amenities, and connections.



PARTNER EXPERIENCE

Measures whether providers have the capacity, resources, and documentation needed to compete for funding and implement projects.



What We Heard

Feedback from the public, providers, and partners helped identify where transit is useful today, where barriers remain, and what improvements could make service more practical, reliable, and easier to navigate. Input from all participants shaped the State Transit Plan focus areas, preferred solutions, and implementation direction.

Public Input Themes



Connections to Daily Destinations

Better links to jobs, healthcare, schools, shopping, services, and community destinations.

“There are still areas that the bus does not go to that are too far for many to walk.”

RESIDENT, HARRISON COUNTY



Regional and Intercity Access

Stronger connections between communities, regional hubs, and longer-distance destinations across Mississippi.

“With the recent growth in housing and infrastructure between Gulfport and Wiggins, there is a need for additional intercity bus stops in Wiggins and along the route connecting Gulfport and Wiggins... Expanding the bus network in these areas would make it easier for people to travel for work, school, and daily activities, ultimately improving mobility and quality of life.”

RESIDENT, HARRISON COUNTY



Clearer Information

Easier information about available services, providers, routes, schedules, and how to ride.

“Better branding or rebranding shows a commitment to improving the system for everyone.”

RESIDENT, MADISON COUNTY



Safety and Comfort

Safer, more comfortable trips, including stops, waiting areas, vehicles, and amenities.

“Accessible, safe, and comfortable bus stops. Ex. Benches, covered/weather protected, trash cans, landscaping with sidewalk access.”

RESIDENT, HINDS COUNTY



Flexible Mobility Options

More flexible services where fixed-route transit may not meet varied travel needs.

25% of respondents told us that they do not ride public transportation because it didn't access where they needed to go.

SPRING 2025 COMMUNITY SURVEY



Lower Barriers to Use

Reduced barriers related to cost, access, information, availability, and convenience.

“I think public transportation should be provided for when individuals want to attend school at night.”

RESIDENT, WARREN COUNTY

What Providers Shared

Providers highlighted the operating realities behind transit service via staff interviews and facility or service area tours. Providers cited challenges with staffing, rising costs, aging vehicles and facilities, local funding, and serving low-density rural areas, all of which can constrain daily operations and limit service improvements.



Driver shortages, rising labor costs and fuel costs affect day-to-day service delivery.



Aging vehicles and facilities shape reliability, maintenance needs, and investment priorities.



Local funding constraints and low-density rural service make service expansion difficult.

Provider Needs Identified



WORKFORCE CAPACITY

Support recruitment, retention, and driver availability.



OPERATING RESOURCES

Address rising labor, fuel and day-to-day service.



FLEET AND FACILITIES

Plan for vehicle replacement and facility needs.



PROVIDER CAPACITY

Strengthen local match & funding options for service delivery.



Understanding Transit Needs

To better understand Mississippi's transit needs, transit gaps were evaluated across four focus areas: **User Needs, Provider Needs, Readiness, and Innovation**. These areas provide insight into current system performance, structural limitations, and opportunities for improvement.

An overview of each focus area is provided below, along with dial graphics that visually represent progress made in addressing identified gaps within each focus area. Darker blue indicates that more gaps have been overcome and stronger performance has been achieved, while lighter gray indicates areas where additional improvement opportunities remain. The dials are not intended to represent a passing or failing score, but illustrate current performance and identify opportunities for future improvement.

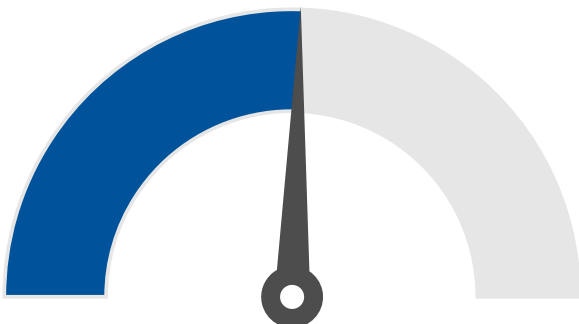
USER NEEDS

Assesses how well transit connects residents to key destinations such as jobs, healthcare, education, and essential services, and where unmet needs remain. User needs exist across all types of communities and are especially important in areas where residents may have fewer transportation options due to income, age, disability status, or limited access to a vehicle.

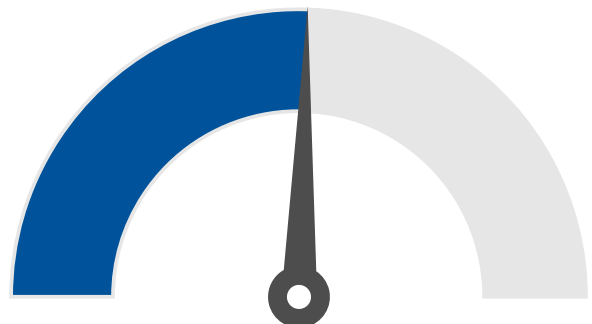
PROVIDER NEEDS

Evaluates what agencies require to deliver service, including funding, staffing, training, coordination, public information, amenities, and connections. Providers already have many of the basic pieces needed to deliver service. The opportunity is to strengthen the systems around that service: shared tools, regional coordination, technical support, workforce stability, and resources that help agencies respond to demand without stretching limited capacity further.

50%



50%



I READINESS

Measures whether providers have the capacity, resources, and documentation needed to compete for funding and implement projects successfully. This focus area is about preparation, not deficiency. Readiness strengthens project preparation efforts, technical capacity, and funding management by ensuring clear scopes, adequate support, and effective oversight for successful project delivery.

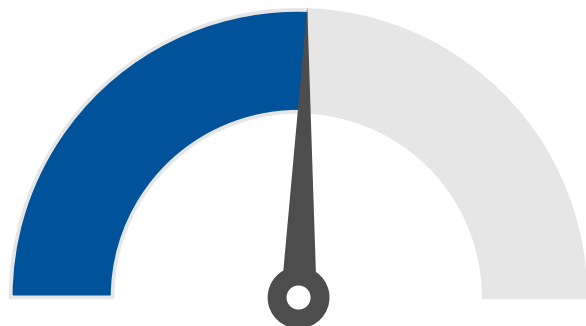
60%



I INNOVATION

Examines the use of new technologies, pilot programs, and multimodal strategies to improve service, information, and system connectivity. This includes tools for daily operations, customer information, asset management, on-demand service, fare payment, scheduling, dispatch, and connections between local transit, intercity bus, intercity rail, pedestrian access, and other transportation modes.

50%



I SYSTEMIC AND ONGOING CHALLENGES

While each focus area shows where different types of barriers appear, many of the root causes and challenges are **systemic** and contribute to ongoing challenges across Mississippi's transit network:

- **Limited and inconsistent funding:** Makes it difficult to maintain, improve, and expand transit services.
- **Staffing and workforce challenges:** Many agencies lack enough staff or specialized expertise to support new programs and technologies.
- **Fragmented systems and coordination:** Various agencies and regional practices can make it harder to coordinate services and improve connections.
- **Limited data and performance tracking:** Gaps in data and reporting make it harder to measure success, plan improvements, and compete for funding.
- **Policy and regulatory challenges:** Local priorities and projects do not always align with state or federal funding and compliance requirements.

A set of solutions was then developed to help address these gaps and is discussed further on the following page.

Planning for a Changing Future



Identify

Build the
Solution Set



Evaluate

Test for
Statewide Fit



Refine

Ground in
Provider Reality

Building from the needs **identified** across the four focus areas, an initial set of solutions was developed for further evaluation. These solutions were **evaluated** to determine which best addressed the needs identified by both the public and transit providers, resulting in a **refined** set of 20 priority solutions.

Each solution was then tested against five scenarios. The scenarios were developed recognizing that Mississippi's transit system will continue to evolve over time as technology, customer preferences, and regional mobility patterns change. This helped us determine which strategies could remain effective and adaptable over the long term.

SCENARIO 1: CURRENT CONDITIONS

Existing conditions are maintained in this scenario with no notable changes over the 20-year horizon.

SCENARIO 2: NEW TECHNOLOGY

TREND: Real-time vehicle tracking, digital fare payment, trip-planning platforms, data-driven planning, fleet management systems, artificial intelligence (AI), predictive analytics, and micromobility/microtransit options are increasingly adopted by providers.

IMPACT: These advancements help agencies coordinate operations more efficiently, increase reliability and safety, and provide riders with more accurate, accessible, and convenient mobility options.

I SCENARIO 3 : CHANGING CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

TREND: Remote work, telehealth, e-commerce, and delivery services have changed when, where, and why people travel.

IMPACT: Reduced commuting demand, fewer peak-hour trips, especially to downtown areas, and increased demand for flexible and discretionary travel options.

I SCENARIO 4: REGIONAL MOBILITY

TREND: Transit providers within Mississippi's six regions coordinate services through regional partnerships, shared operations, and improved connections between transportation modes.

IMPACT: Mobility hubs improve transfers, expand regional travel options, strengthen coordination across jurisdictions, and provide stronger connections to services such as intercity buses, biking, scooters, and rideshare.

I SCENARIO 5: HYBRID

TREND: Rapid technology adoption, changing travel patterns, and stronger regional coordination occur at the same time, increasing demand for flexible, tech-enabled mobility options.

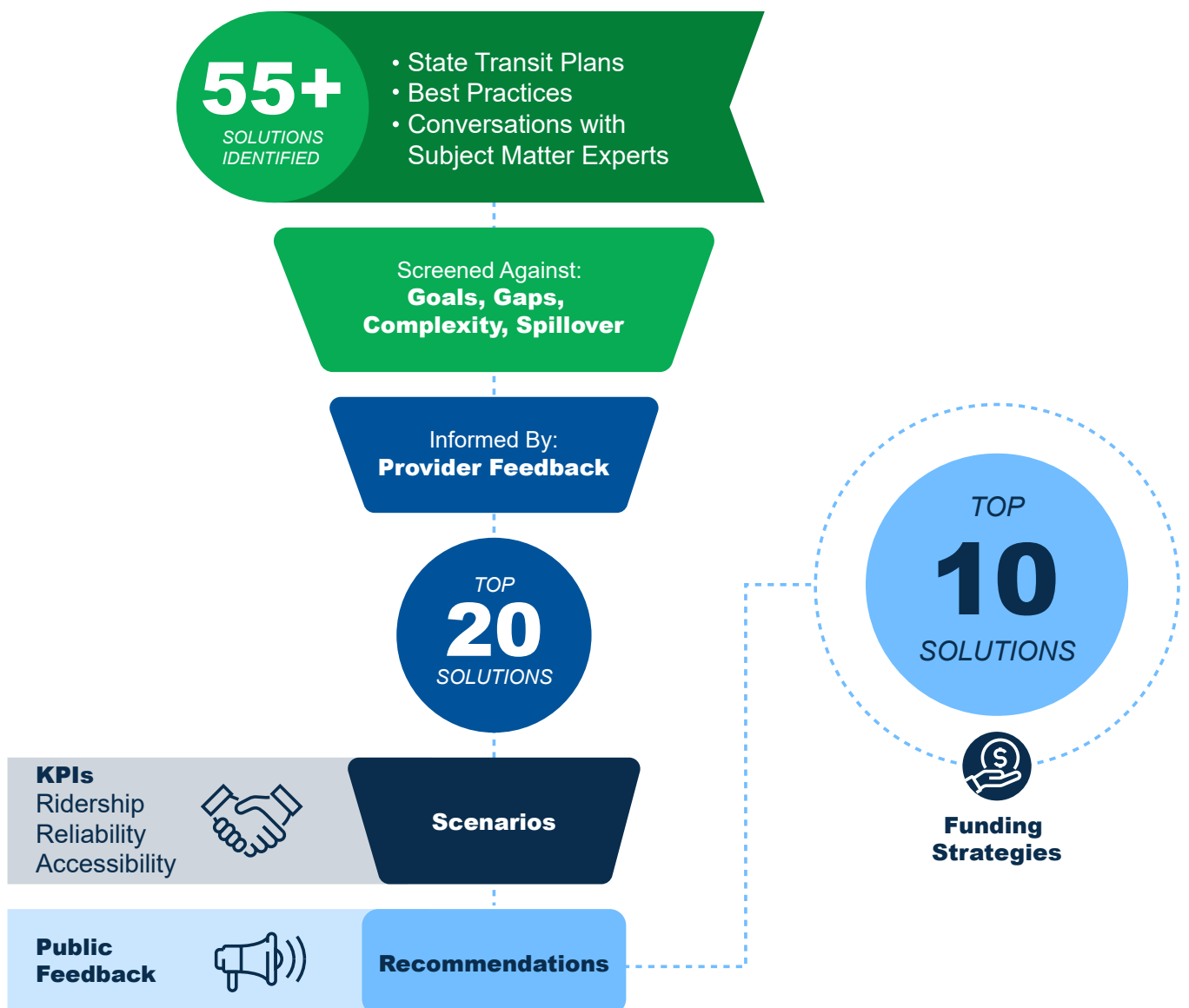
IMPACT: Greater need for real-time information, on-demand services, regional coordination, and adaptable transit systems that can respond to changing customer expectations and travel behaviors.

During this scenario screening, solutions were reviewed for their potential to support three key performance indicators (KPIs): **ridership, reliability, and accessibility**. This helped identify which strategies offered the strongest value across different future conditions.

Solutions Moving Forward

171 RESPONSES RECEIVED

Stakeholder feedback helped identify practical, responsive solutions aligned with needs across Mississippi.



Implementation Plan

Solutions were organized into three implementation tiers:

- Tier A – Set the Foundation (Short Term: 0-5 Years)
- Tier B – Build Capacity (Medium Term: 3-7 Years)
- Tier C – Transform the Network (Medium/Long Term: 7-10 Years)

While the tiers represent a recommended order, they are intentionally flexible. Tier B or Tier C solutions can be advanced sooner if funding, readiness, or needs support faster implementation.



Set The Foundation

I SHORT TERM: 0 TO 5 YEARS

A

I TIER A SUMMARY

Establishes the institutional, planning, and policy foundation necessary for statewide coordination, consistency, and long-term sustainability of transit and mobility initiatives.

1

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT COORDINATING COUNCIL

A statewide group of representatives from transit agencies, transportation service partners, and community advocates works together to spot where service is missing and create practical, shared solutions.



Better
Coordination



Shared
Priorities



Reduced
Duplication

WHY THIS MATTERS

Reduces transportation gaps by helping transit providers better connect communities and essential destinations.

BENEFITS:  Rural Providers



2

STATEWIDE TRANSIT
INNOVATION CENTER

A hub where agencies, universities, and private companies test new technologies and share lessons learned from pilot projects.



Technical
Assistance



Data
Support



Provider
Capacity

WHY THIS
MATTERS

Encourages innovation that improves transit access, reliability, and service quality for riders statewide.

BENEFITS:  Rural Providers  Urban Providers

3

FLEET PLANNING &
RIGHT-SIZING GUIDANCE

Guidelines to help agencies select the appropriate vehicle size and type based on standards previously established for routes, schedules, and performance.



Lower
Costs



Smarter
Investments



Consistent
Standards

WHY THIS
MATTERS

Using vehicles that better fit rider demand improves service quality and reduces capital costs in the long term.

BENEFITS:  Rural Providers  Urban Providers



Build Capacity

I MEDIUM TERM: 3 TO 7 YEARS

I TIER B SUMMARY

B

Builds technical capacity and improves how transit providers plan, coordinate, and manage service by expanding access to shared tools, technical expertise, data resources, long-term planning frameworks, and collaborative purchasing opportunities statewide.

1

STATEWIDE MOBILITY RESOURCE LIBRARY

An online library that allows regional mobility managers to share performance data, system information, and best practice tools to support greater consistency statewide.



Shared Best Practices



Consistency



Improved Data Access

WHY THIS MATTERS

Shared tools, data, and successful service strategies improve public transit.

BENEFITS:  Rural Providers

2

STATEWIDE TRANSIT COVERAGE MAP AND PLANNING TOOL

A GIS-based map and set of analytical tools that help agencies coordinate service coverage and identify and reduce gaps.



Identify Service Gaps



Improve Coordination



Supports Rural Access

WHY THIS MATTERS

Resolving service gaps improves public access to jobs, healthcare, and essential destinations.

BENEFITS:  Rural Providers

3

REGIONAL EXPERTISE SHARING PROGRAM

Regional Mobility Managers develop expertise in specific focus areas, such as grant writing or marketing, and support statewide improvement by sharing tools, templates, and technical knowledge with their peers across the state.



Technical Assistance



Shared Expertise



Expand Staff Capacity

WHY THIS MATTERS

Establishes the institutional, planning and policy foundation necessary for statewide coordination, consistency, and long-term sustainability of transit and mobility initiatives.

BENEFITS:  Rural Providers  Urban Providers

4

FIVE-YEAR TRANSIT PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Funded transit systems prepare a five-year plan plus annual updates to guide service development, performance, and budgeting.



Long Term Planning



Accountability



Performance Tracking

WHY THIS MATTERS

Improves transit reliability and service quality through consistent long-term planning and performance tracking.

BENEFITS:  Rural Providers  Urban Providers

5

SHARED PURCHASING FOR TRANSIT AGENCIES & JOINT PROCUREMENT

Agencies purchase vehicles, technology, or services jointly to reduce costs and speed up procurement.



Lower Costs



Faster Procurement



Shared Purchasing Power

WHY THIS MATTERS

Helps agencies reduce costs so more funding can support transit service and rider improvements.

BENEFITS:  Rural Providers  Urban Providers  Intercity Providers

Transform the Network

I MEDIUM/LONG TERM: 7 TO 10 YEARS

C

I TIER C SUMMARY

Transforms how transit service is delivered by supporting innovative programs, expanding mobility partnerships, and improving access to transportation across Mississippi.

1

STATEWIDE TRANSIT INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM

Creates a state-funded innovation grant program that improves transit reliability, access, and mobility options through the use of innovative technology.



Encourages
Innovation



Improves
Reliability



Expands
Access

WHY THIS MATTERS

Communities have improved access to reliable, high quality mobility options.

BENEFITS:  Rural Providers  Urban Providers

2

RURAL DRIVER & MOBILITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

A program designed to expand the driver workforce, support volunteer transportation, and partner with nonprofits, healthcare providers, and employers to offer free rides.



Workforce
Access



Rural
Mobility



Aging
Population
Support

WHY THIS MATTERS

Improves access to essential destinations in rural communities.

BENEFITS:  Rural Providers



Funding Approach

Solutions vary in cost, scale, and readiness and require different funding approaches. Lower-cost actions may use existing resources, while larger investments may require new funding, partnerships, or more flexible funding strategies. This layered strategy allows Mississippi to begin with achievable actions while preparing for larger future investments.

Four funding approaches were developed for this State Transit Plan, including three standalone and one hybrid approach that integrates elements of each.

I Reallocation of Existing Resources

- Uses existing federal and state funding in different ways to better support statewide transit needs and priorities.
- Focuses on improving coordination and capacity gaps without requiring new revenue sources.

I New Funding Sources

- Expands overall investment capacity through additional state, local, or non-traditional funding sources.
- Supports service expansion and capital investment needs.

I Smarter Utilization

- Combines multiple programs to maximize available resources by stretching limited funding further.
- Improves grant competitiveness.

I Hybrid Strategy (Recommended)

- Combines elements of all three funding approaches to create a more flexible and practical funding strategy.
- Allows different funding tools to support different solution types.

RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS OVERALL COSTS

Base cost ranges were developed for each solution. The total shown below consists of planning, operations, capital, and administrative activities.

SOLUTION	TOTAL
Statewide Mobility Management Coordinating Council	\$250k - \$500k
Rural Driver & Mobility Partnership Program	\$500k - \$1M
Statewide Mobility Resource Library	\$0 - \$250k
Fleet Planning & Right-Sizing Guidance	\$250k - \$500k
Statewide Transit Coverage Gap & Planning Tool	\$500k - \$1M
Five-Year Transit Planning & Performance Program	\$500k - \$1M
Transit Technology Grants	\$3M+
Regional Expertise Sharing Program	\$0 - \$250k
Shared Purchasing for Transit Agencies	\$0 - \$250k
Statewide Transit Innovation Center	\$3M+
TOTALS	\$8M - \$10.75M+

The cost ranges are not fixed budgets or funding commitments. They provide a planning-level view of the scale of investment needed to move recommended solutions forward. Operations and capital represent the largest cost areas, reflecting the resources needed to support service delivery, technology, fleet needs, and larger system improvements. Planning and administrative costs are generally lower, but they are still important for building the coordination, data, and program capacity needed to implement solutions effectively.

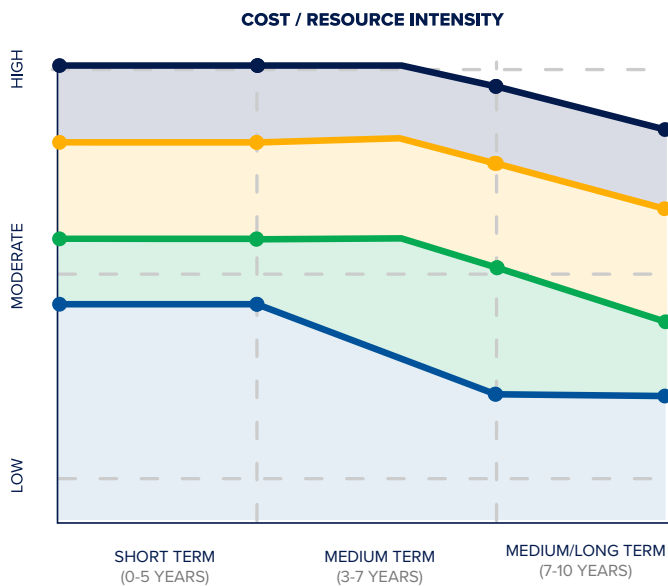
Many recommendations are designed to be modular and scalable, meaning they can begin with smaller investments and expand as funding, staffing, and provider capacity grow. This allows Mississippi to advance near-term actions while preparing for larger investments over time.

RESILIENT COST SAVINGS

Several of the identified solutions increase reliability and long-term system resiliency by improving coordination, operational flexibility, and preparation for disruptive events such as infrastructure failures, severe weather, and other system shocks. These enhancements improve statewide service continuity, reduce service interruptions, and lessen long-term recovery costs a transit system may have when disruptive events occur.

Funding and costs are also influenced by how future conditions unfold. The base cost ranges for each solution were applied to the previously presented scenarios to better understand how each may be affected under different conditions. The graphic below illustrates the resulting cost trajectories. Overall costs are expected to decrease over the medium and long term as solutions are implemented and become established.

SCENARIO COST TRAJECTORIES OVER TIME



HYBRID SCENARIO

Greatest financial investment across all categories with long-term operating & capital replacement expenses.

NEW TECHNOLOGY SCENARIO

Large capital investments in technology & ongoing operating costs for both customer-facing systems & back-end software & hardware.

REGIONAL MOBILITY SCENARIO

Upfront investment in regional operations centers, mobility hubs, & coordination. Cost savings improve over time.

CHANGING CUSTOMER PREFERENCE SCENARIO

Costs shift toward planning, operations, & early fleet changes to support more flexible demand response services.



FROM FOUNDATIONAL TO TRANSFORMATIONAL

Establish statewide administrative structures, policies, and planning processes to build foundational capacity in the near term.



Develop shared systems, data resources, and regional coordination mechanisms to enable effective implementation in the near/mid-term.



Advance more complex, scalable, and innovative strategies in the medium/long term once foundational elements are in place.



The proposed implementation sequence below proposes a ten-year timeline for the state to prepare, operationalize, and monitor the recommended solutions.

TIER	SOLUTION	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
A	Statewide Mobility Management Coordinating Council										
	Statewide Transit Innovation Center										
	Fleet Planning & Right-Sizing Guidance										
B	Statewide Mobility Resource Library										
	Five-Year Transit Planning & Performance Program										
	Statewide Transit Coverage Gap & Planning Tool										
	Regional Expertise Sharing Program										
	Shared Purchasing for Transit Agencies										
C	Transit Technology Grants										
	Rural Driver & Mobility Partnership Program										

Moving Mississippi Transit Forward

The State Transit Plan reflects a shared vision for a more reliable, accessible, and innovative transit system that meets today's needs while preparing for future demands.

Stakeholder input, combined with a rigorous analysis, shaped a set of recommended solutions that prioritizes improvements in three key areas – accessibility, reliability, and ridership – to deliver meaningful benefits to Mississippians.

A flexible and phased implementation approach will enable the state to advance the State Transit Plan's core goals by supporting an integrated, accessible, resilient, safe, and well-maintained system while expanding mobility options across Mississippi.

I DELIVERING ON WHAT MATTERS MOST



ACCESSIBILITY

Expanding connections to jobs, healthcare, education, and essential services.



RELIABILITY

Strengthening on-time performance and service dependability.



RIDERSHIP

Supporting increased use of transit through better service and improved customer experience.

FROM PLAN TO ACTION, WHAT COMES NEXT

The next phase focuses on the state implementing the solutions. This is brought about by:



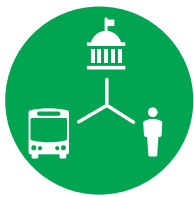
ADVANCING SOLUTIONS

through the tiered approach.



SEEKING FUNDING

to make the plan possible.



STRENGTHENING COORDINATION

with MDOT, transit providers,
local governments, and partners.



TRACKING PERFORMANCE

to ensure progress and scale success.

GET INVOLVED. STAY ENGAGED. SUPPORT THE VISION.

There are many ways to stay involved:

- Support local and regional transit providers by **making your voice heard**
- **Advocate** for transit in your **local community**
- Take part in an **agencies pilot program**
- **Share feedback** on service changes

MDOT appreciates the time, input, and effort of all those who made this plan possible. Mississippi is in a position to deliver a transit system that is more connected, resilient, and responsive due to your support.

This plan comprehensively captures the unmet transit needs and barriers to transit access in the State of Mississippi.

The proposed solutions will help improve access to employment, education, activity centers, and healthcare for those who need it most.



Mississippi Department of Transportation

401 North West Street

Jackson, MS 39201

mdot.ms.gov | (601) 359-7074