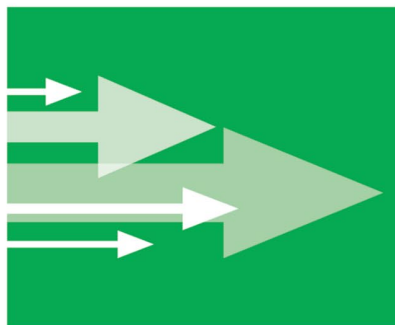




Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Current State Assessment

September 2025

Final



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List of Acronyms

ADA	American with Disabilities Act
AFC	Alternative Fuel Corridors
APTA	American Public Transportation Association
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CIG	Capital Improvement Grant

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CMPDD	Central Mississippi Planning & Development District
CNT	Center for Neighborhood Technology
CRP	Carbon Reduction Program
CTA	Coast Transit Authority
ECPDD	East Central Planning and Development District
EV	Electric Vehicle
EV Plan	Mississippi Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment Plan
EZTAG	East Central Transit Action Group
FY	Fiscal Year
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GRPC	Gulf Regional Planning Council
HPFL	Hattiesburg-Petal-Forrest-Lamar MPO
Hub City Transit	City of Hattiesburg Transit System
IIJA	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
JTRAN	City of Jackson Transit System
LRTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MATA	Memphis Area Transit Authority
MDOT	Mississippi Department of Transportation
MDOT PT	Mississippi Department of Transportation Public Transit Division
MPTA	Mississippi Public Transit Association
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MS CRS	Mississippi Carbon Reduction Strategy
NAR	National Association of Realtors
NCPDD	North Central Planning and Development District

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NDPDD	North Delta Planning and Development District
NEMT	Non-Emergency Medical Transportation
NEVI	National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
NITA	Northeast Mississippi Intermodal Transit Association
NTD	National Transit Database
PTASP	Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan
SGR	State of Good Repair
SMART	Southwest Mississippi Accessible Regional Transportation
SMPDD	Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District
STBG	Surface Transportation Block Grant
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
Study	Mississippi Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TAM	Transit Asset Management
Tech Memo	Technical Memorandum
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TOD	Transit Oriented Development
ULB	Useful Life Benchmark

1 Introduction

Public transportation plays a critical role in Mississippi's multimodal mobility network, serving the travel needs of tens of thousands of residents and visitors each day. The diverse geography – from rural communities, tourist areas, and logistics hubs – requires a transit system that is both strategically integrated and responsive to local needs. The Mississippi Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study (Study) serves to identify the present circumstances and evaluate the scope of Mississippi's current transit system. It aims to identify areas and opportunities where new services are needed, identify funding strategies to promote and support long-term transit investments, provide policy recommendations between the varying levels of agencies, and propose strategies to close service gaps in rural and underserved areas. The Study is divided into separate technical memorandums (Tech Memos) with all tech memos summarized in a final report with an implementation plan for the recommendations.

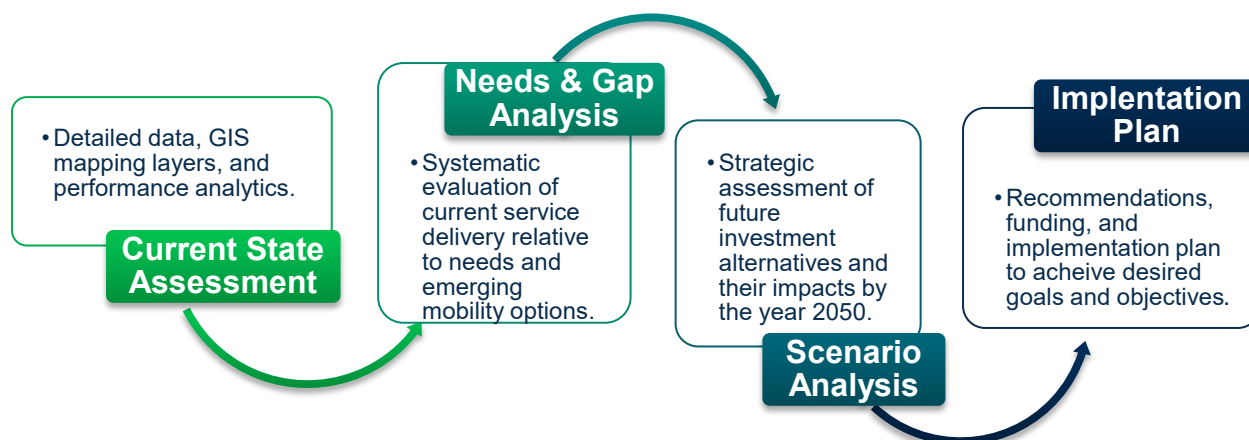
1.1 STATUTORY AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is responsible for planning how people and goods move across the state—by road, rail, bus, and more. State law (Mississippi Code Section 65-1-8) and federal law (49 U.S.C. Section 5304) both require MDOT to create a long-term transportation plan that includes all modes of travel. This Study supports this effort by taking a close look at Mississippi's public transportation system. It also supports MDOT's 2045 Multiplan and the 2050 update (currently underway) to help move the state forward by improving access to jobs, boosting the economy, and making transportation more available to everyone.

1.2 OUTLINE OF CURRENT AND FUTURE TASKS

Figure 1 captures the task flow for this study. The completion of the Current State Assessment (Tech Memo 1) feeds directly into the *Needs & Gap Analysis* (Tech Memo 2), where current service delivery is systematically evaluated in relation to user and provider needs, readiness for federal grants, and implementation of new technologies and emerging mobility options. *Scenario Analysis* (Tech Memo 3) takes the findings from the *Needs and Gap Analysis* and assesses future investment alternatives and their projected impacts through the year 2050. The *Implementation Plan* (Tech Memo 4) and final report lays out the approach to achieve the recommendations identified in Tech Memo 3 while meeting federal requirements for the Coordinated Human Services Plan and connecting the public transportation network with the larger intercity passenger rail system.

Figure 1. Task Flow



The strength of the current state assessment rests on the foundation of the methods used to gather data (**Table 1**), which includes both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Unless otherwise indicated, all data utilized in the Study are drawn from the 2023 reporting year, representing the most recent dataset available from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) National Transit Database (NTD). Furthermore, to account for disparities in the scale of regions and service providers, weighted averages are employed to normalize the data and facilitate equitable comparisons across regions and modes.

Table 1. Table of Methods

2023 Data & Inputs		Relevance
Provider Engagement & Agency Documents	Fixed route, rural, and intercity systems	Fleet age, service levels, funding mix
National Transit Database (NTD 2023)	Ridership, operating costs, safety events	Benchmarks & current performance
Population & Employment Data	Demographic & socioeconomic trends	Identifying transit-reliant populations
Surveys & Interviews	Riders, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), ConnectMS regions, advocacy organizations	Qualitative insights & service challenges
Network Analysis	Stop/route coverage, travel sheds	Spatial impartiality, access to key destinations

1.3 STAKEHOLDER ECOSYSTEM & ROLES

Mississippi's transit system involves a wide range of stakeholders whose perspectives, roles, and resources are essential to the planning and delivery of accessible and effective transportation services. Riders and community members - including end users, survey panelists, and public

meeting participants - form the foundation of the system, offering critical insights into daily needs and challenges. Transit agencies span the spectrum from fixed route operators providing service in cities, such as City of Jackson Transit System (JTRAN), Coast Transit Authority (CTA), and City of Hattiesburg Transit (Hub City Transit) to demand-response and flexible route operators in rural counties and intercity bus operators that connect less populated areas to regional hubs. Additionally, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, a sovereign Tribal Nation, operates its own transit service and engages with the broader state network, contributing a unique perspective to coordinated planning efforts. Governmental entities at various levels play vital roles: cities and counties often provide matching funds; MPOs support regional coordination and programming through Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs); the Mississippi Department of Transportation's Public Transit (MDOT PT) Division oversees state-level transit policy and capital investment; and the FTA Region IV ensures compliance and funding oversight.

Stakeholders also include advocacy groups and nonprofit organizations—including the Mississippi Public Transit Association (MPTA), disability rights coalitions, and faith-based groups who champion the needs of underserved populations. Major employers, hospitals, universities, shopping centers, and other destinations serve both as trip generators and potential partners in funding or program design. The transit technology landscape is also changing with new service concepts, fuel sources, fare strategies, and smartphone applications giving both customers and providers new options on how to use and provide public transportation. These approaches have the potential to lower costs, improve efficiencies, and expand public transportation to new customers.

1.4 REPORT STRUCTURE

Tech Memo 1 uses the following structure to lay the foundation for public transportation in Mississippi and summarize the services provided:

- **Transit Benefits** – Establishes the case for public transportation from a community, economic, and accessibility perspective.

Faith-based groups are trusted pillars in many Mississippi communities, particularly in rural and underserved areas. These organizations often serve populations that are most reliant on public transportation—including seniors, low-income individuals, and people with disabilities. Their deep community roots and outreach networks make them uniquely positioned to identify unmet transportation needs, advocate for equity in service delivery, and support efforts to increase awareness and ridership among hard-to-reach populations.

Incorporating feedback and partnership opportunities with these groups helps MDOT and local providers build trust, expand service awareness, and support mobility solutions that align with the values and rhythms of local life.

- **Policy Review** – Provides a review of key federal and state policies that shape transit planning and funding in Mississippi. This includes an overview of relevant legislation, regulatory frameworks, and strategic plans that impact operations, accessibility, and coordination across different transit providers and jurisdictions.
- **Mission, Vision, and Goals** – Establishes purpose statement for the Mississippi public transportation system, providing the desired operating condition needed to meet the diverse transportation demand of the residents and visitors in the state.
- **Existing Transit Conditions** – Summarizes existing transit services categorized by urban, rural, and intercity providers. This section outlines key characteristics of each service type, including coverage, service levels, ridership trends, and major funding sources, establishing a baseline for future analysis.
- **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats** – Presents the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) affecting Mississippi's transit system. Informed by early research and stakeholder engagement, this analysis highlights system-wide themes that will guide strategic priorities and identify areas for improvement.
- **Next Steps** – Previews the work that follows, outlining the transition into deeper analysis through the Gap Analysis and Needs Assessment. These next steps will build on the foundational research in this document and support actionable recommendations for improving transit access across the state.



Mississippi State Capitol

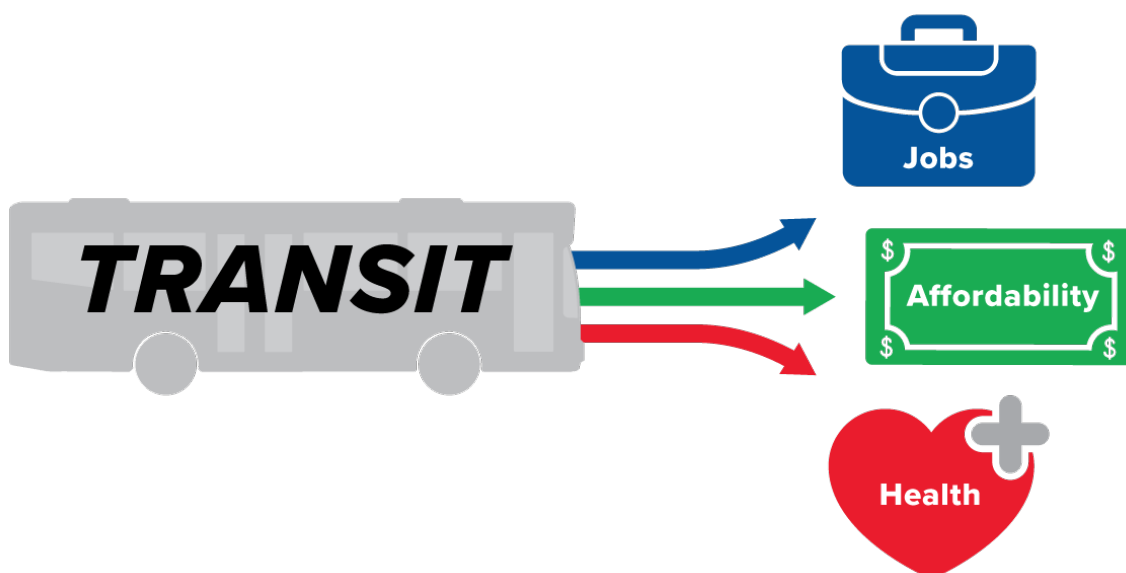
2 Transit Benefits

Public transportation is a strategic investment in Mississippi's economic resilience, public health, and workforce development for fostering long-term prosperity and stability. Across the state, transit systems serve as essential infrastructure—connecting residents to employment, healthcare, and education, particularly in areas where long commutes and limited vehicle access create persistent barriers to jobs and essential services. As the cost of living continues to rise, public transit offers an affordable, reliable alternative that supports household stability and regional growth. It also contributes to healthier communities by reducing traffic-related air pollution, encouraging physical activity, and improving access to preventive and ongoing medical care. Mississippi's transit agencies are working closely with local governments, businesses, universities, and healthcare providers to align transportation planning with broader policy goals. These partnerships deliver tangible results in the following areas:

- **Jobs** – Transit expands employment opportunities by connecting people to job centers, industrial corridors, and educational institutions—especially critical for those without reliable personal transportation.
- **Affordability** – By reducing dependence on private vehicles, transit helps lower household transportation costs, making it easier for families to manage their overall cost of living
- **Health** – Transit ensures that seniors, individuals with disabilities, and other transit-dependent populations can reach healthcare facilities and community services—supporting independent living, reducing isolation, and fostering stronger social connections.

Figure 2 below illustrates how public transportation underpins three core pillars of well-being:

Figure 2. Intersection of the Benefits of Transit



2.1 SOCIOECONOMIC BENEFITS

Access to public transportation results in a variety of socioeconomic benefits for communities. These benefits can make a positive impact on the lives of those in transit accessible areas.

2.1.1 WORKFORCE ACCESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Investments in public transportation are powerful drivers of economic development. Reliable transit systems enhance workforce accessibility and stability by connecting businesses with a broader labor pool, including individuals without access to personal vehicles. This expanded access reduces employee turnover, increases productivity, and supports inclusive economic participation.

Beyond workforce benefits, transit investments generate substantial economic returns. Public transportation reduces household transportation costs, eases traffic congestion, and boosts business efficiency by accommodating a greater number of potential employees. According to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), every **\$1** invested in public transit yields an additional **\$5** in economic returns. In Mississippi, for example, the public transportation sector contributes over **\$66** million annually to the state's economy, supporting numerous jobs—demonstrating the sector's role as a catalyst for local economic growth.

2.1.2 AFFORDABILITY

Affordability remains a pressing issue in Mississippi, particularly when considering the combined burden of housing and transportation—the two largest expenses for most households. In a rural, car-dependent state, these costs are deeply interconnected and often exceed sustainable levels.

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) defines true affordability as spending no more than 45% of household income on housing and transportation combined. However, many Mississippi households surpass this threshold. Housing affordability in Mississippi is further complicated by spatial mismatches between where people live and where essential services, jobs, and transportation options are located. In many communities, especially those that are economically marginalized, affordable housing is often far from employment centers or transit corridors, forcing residents to rely heavily on personal vehicles. This increases both financial and time related burdens.¹

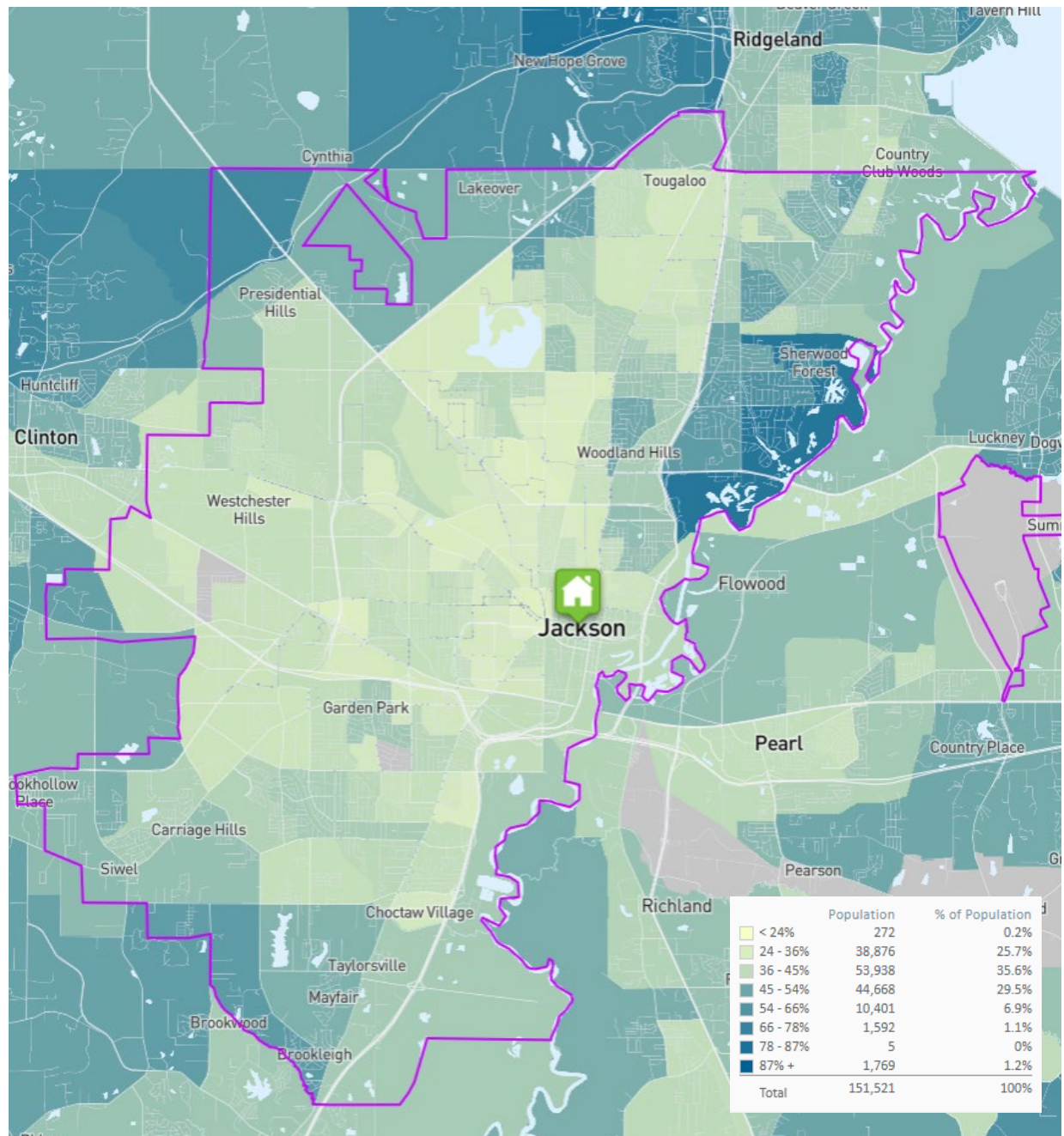
This affordability gap is especially pronounced in Jackson (**Figure 3**), where spatial and economic disparities converge. Currently, **36%** of the metro population lives in areas where housing and transportation costs exceed **45%** of household income, with some neighborhoods facing burdens as high as **68%**. These values underscore the financial strain on families, particularly in communities with limited access to affordable, reliable public transportation options. When affordable housing is not accessible by public transportation, it effectively limits residents' access to jobs, healthcare, education, and nutritious food, thus reinforcing cycles of poverty and limiting upward mobility. Integrating affordable housing development with transit planning can directly

¹ [Florida Department of Transportation Housing & Transportation Subject Brief, January 2023](#)

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

alleviate this burden by reducing the need for car ownership, lowering commuting costs, and improving access to affordable housing and employment opportunities. In Mississippi, expanding such strategies is critical in urban centers like Jackson and smaller cities like Tupelo and Oxford, where affordable housing is disconnected from vital infrastructure.

Figure 3. Combined Housing and Transportation Cost Burden Jackson, MS



2.2 PUBLIC HEALTH

Public transportation offers more than economic benefits—it plays a vital role in enhancing public health and safety. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), improving access to safe and reliable transit encourages physical activity, reduces motor vehicle-related injuries and fatalities, and contributes to a healthier environment.² Since all transit users are pedestrians at some point in their journey, transit-oriented communities naturally promote walking and active lifestyles.

Health benefits from public transportation can be understood at both the community and individual levels. At the community level, reliable transit can reshape perceptions of safety and livability. High traffic volumes, speeding, and a lack of pedestrian infrastructure often discourage outdoor activity. Expanding transit services and improving walkability can reverse these trends—encouraging walking, cycling, and other forms of active transportation. Additionally, reducing the number of personal vehicles on the road helps lower crash rates, cut air pollution, and improve overall traffic efficiency.³

Access to public transportation is a key determinant of health, particularly through its impact on nutrition.⁴ One often overlooked benefit of transit is its ability to increase access to nutritional food sites, helping address the widespread issue of food deserts. In many low-income or rural areas, residents may live miles from the nearest full-service grocery store or farmers market, with few to no options for healthy food nearby. Reliable public transportation connects these communities to locations where people can purchase fresh and affordable foods, reducing reliance on the convenience stores or fast-food outlets that often dominate underserved areas. Enhanced transit options support better nutrition by enabling more people to reach healthy food resources, contributing to lower rates of diet-related chronic diseases.⁵

At the individual level, access to public transportation is essential for reaching healthcare services. Transportation barriers are a well-documented

In March 2024, JTRAN launched a major route redesign, adding four direct lines from South Jackson neighborhoods to the Highway 18 Walmart—no transfers needed. This improved access to jobs and shopping, boosted ridership, and supported local businesses by better serving transit-reliant residents.

Following the redesign, Jackson secured over **\$13.7 million** in federal funding to upgrade its fleet with cleaner, more efficient buses. These investments reduce emissions, cut fuel costs, and improve service reliability—demonstrating how transit can drive economic growth, improve health outcomes, and deliver a significant return on the overall investment.

² [Public Transit Supports for Food Access: 2021 National Survey of Community-Based Policy and Environmental Supports for Healthy Eating and Active Living \(CBS HEAL\)](#)

³ [Benefits of Public Transportation - American Public Transportation Association](#)

⁴ [Social Determinants of Health, Diet, and Health Outcome - PMC](#)

⁵ [Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food-Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences: Report to Congress | Economic Research Service](#)

obstacle to medical care, particularly for individuals managing chronic conditions. A study by Wolfe, McDonald, and Holmes⁶ found that missed medical appointments due to transportation issues can lead to worsened health outcomes. These challenges are especially acute for low-income individuals and residents in both rural and underserved urban areas.

Public transit supports health equity by providing essential mobility for diverse population groups. Older adults often rely on transit to access medical care and maintain social connections, while low-income individuals depend on it for commuting to work and reaching vital services. Accessible transit options also empower people with disabilities to travel independently, enhancing their autonomy and quality of life. These individual-level benefits contribute to stronger community health, resilience, and inclusion.⁷

In addition to promoting health equity, transit strengthens social connections by enabling broader participation in community life. It offers reliable access to shared spaces such as parks, libraries, and cultural centers where people can interact, build relationships, and engage in civic activities. Research from organizations like Mile High Connects⁸ and MassDOT⁹ shows that transit helps reduce social isolation among vulnerable populations by linking them to services and opportunities for engagement. Well-designed transit hubs further enhance this role by serving as welcoming community gathering points that foster interaction and a sense of belonging.

Khadija McKinney, Rider

“My job is an hour and a half away from where I live. It would be very hard and very impossible to get to work every day without public transportation.”

Khadija’s experience speaks to the essential role transit plays in connecting residents to employment opportunities, particularly in areas where job centers are distant from residential communities.

2.3 COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Community impacts from transit go beyond the act of just getting someone to where they intend to go. A functional, resilient, and adaptable transportation system can impact whole communities.

2.3.1 IMPROVED PROPERTY VALUES

Public transportation significantly enhances nearby property values, particularly in areas with high-frequency transit service. A joint study by the APTA and the National Association of Realtors (NAR) found that residential properties located within half a mile of high-frequency transit stations outperformed their regional markets by an average of **41%** over a 10-year period. This value

⁶ [Transportation Barriers to Health Care in the United States: Findings from the National Health Interview Survey, 1997–2017](#)

⁷ [Benefits of Public Transportation - American Public Transportation Association](#)

⁸ [Achieving Healthy Communities Through Transit Equity](#)

⁹ [MassDOT Releases People and Transportation Project Report | Mass.gov](#)

appreciation is especially pronounced in compact, walkable communities where transit access is frequent and reliable.¹⁰

Public transportation also supports mixed-use development and increases the value of nearby affordable housing, particularly for low- and moderate-income communities. Transit-oriented developments that blend residential, commercial, and retail spaces around transit services create dense, walkable neighborhoods that are attractive to both residents and investors.¹¹ When affordable housing is strategically located near transit it becomes more accessible, reducing residents' transportation costs and increasing access to jobs, healthcare, and education. This proximity not only improves quality for lower-income households but also boosts the value and stability of these developments. Research shows that affordable housing near transit experiences stronger long-term property performance and is more likely to attract mixed-income tenants, increasing neighborhood vitality.¹² Additionally, municipalities benefit from higher tax revenues and increased economic activity without displacing vulnerable residents.

The economic benefits of public transit extend beyond residential real estate, significantly impacting commercial property markets as well. A 2018 report by Transwestern revealed that office buildings located near transit systems command lease rate premiums averaging up to **65% higher** than comparable buildings in car-dependent areas within the same metropolitan regions. This trend is especially notable in suburban locations, where transit-accessible office spaces have rents **50% higher** than those lacking convenient transit access. These premiums reflect the increased desirability of properties that offer easy access to transit, which attracts more tenants, enhances employee accessibility, and supports greater business activity.¹³ Further supporting this, research from the Brookings Institution demonstrates that walkable, transit-connected urban environments tend to generate higher commercial rents than drivable suburban counterparts. This is due to increased foot traffic, greater accessibility for customers and employees, and the clustering of amenities and services that thrive in pedestrian-friendly areas.

Collectively, these findings highlight how investment in fixed-route transit infrastructure can create vibrant, economically robust commercial districts, improving property values and stimulating local economic growth.¹⁴

2.3.2 EDUCATION ENABLER

Reliable access to public transportation is strongly associated with improved educational outcomes, particularly for students from low-income households. A 2021 Urban Institute study found that students with access to free or reduced-fare public transit were **11%** more likely to

¹⁰ [Locations-Close-To-Public-Transit-Boost-Residential-Commercial-Real-Estate-Values-press-release.pdf](#)

¹¹ [The Real Estate Mantra: Locate Near Public Transportation](#)

¹² [Building Livable Communities with Transit: Planning, Developing and Implementing Community-Sensitive Transit](#)

¹³ <https://njbmagazine.com/njb-news-now/transwestern-examines-mass-transits-influence-on-office-market-in-major-metros/>

¹⁴ https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-economic-power-of-walkability-in-metro-areas/?utm_source

CTA Tourism Economy

CTA plays a key role in supporting Mississippi's tourism economy, specifically along the Gulf Coast where casinos are a major draw. They partner with local casinos, allowing them to sell bus tickets on-site, making transit more accessible and convenient for visitors. They also provides the casinos advertising pamphlets highlighting services and attractions, offering easy ways for riders to purchase transit passes. CTA is actively working to expand its beach line trolley service and extend its operating hours to meet the growing demand from both tourists and businesses. Through these efforts, CTA helps connect visitors to the region's top destinations, from beaches to casinos, while fueling the local tourism economy.

attend school regularly in urban districts. This correlation underscores the role of transportation in reducing absenteeism and supporting academic continuity.¹⁵

In Mississippi, several local agencies have partnered with colleges and universities to implement student-focused transit initiatives. These programs aim to reduce dropout rates and promote equitable access to higher education by addressing transportation barriers that disproportionately affect underserved communities.

2.3.3 STRENGTHENING LOCAL BUSINESS ECOSYSTEMS

Public transit significantly enhances foot traffic and retail visibility, two critical factors for small business success. According to Smart Growth America, retail corridors served by transit experience up to **30%** more customer activity, particularly in walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods. These areas benefit from a collaboration between transit access and pedestrian-friendly design, which not only attracts more visitors but also encourages them to linger, explore, and spend. This dynamic environment fosters the growth of micro-enterprises and supports a vibrant local economy.¹⁶

Transportation also serves in supporting tourism and strengthening local businesses, significantly in culturally rich regions like the Mississippi Delta. Cities such as Vicksburg, Natchez, and Clarksdale are home to iconic destinations like the Mississippi Blues Trail, historic riverfronts, and the gaming industry attract visitors to the state. However, limited transit options can constrain the economic potential of these attractions by restricting mobility for tourists alike. Expanding transportation services in these areas can enhance visitor access to hotels, restaurants, museums, casinos, and historic landmarks, encouraging longer stays and increased local spending. Transit-connected services not only enrich the visitor experience, but they also support a more inclusive tourism economy, creating jobs, sustaining local artisans, and driving investment into underserved communities.¹⁷

Moreover, transit-reliant customers tend to shop more frequently than those who drive. A study by Portland State University found that pedestrians and transit riders spend up to **65%** per month at

¹⁵ [Student Transportation and Educational Access | Urban Institute](#)

¹⁶ [Foot Traffic Ahead 2023 - Smart Growth America](#)

¹⁷ [CEEOL - Article Detail](#)

local businesses compared to drivers, due to their increased number of visits. This pattern of frequent, smaller purchases helps stabilize revenue for small retailers and service providers.¹⁸ By reducing reliance on car travel and increasing the accessibility of commercial areas, transit systems play a vital role in sustaining neighborhood-level economic resilience.



Starkville MSU Rapid Area Transit bus stop in Starkville's Cotton District

¹⁸ [Study Finds Bike Lanes Can Provide Positive Economic Impact in Cities | TREC](#)

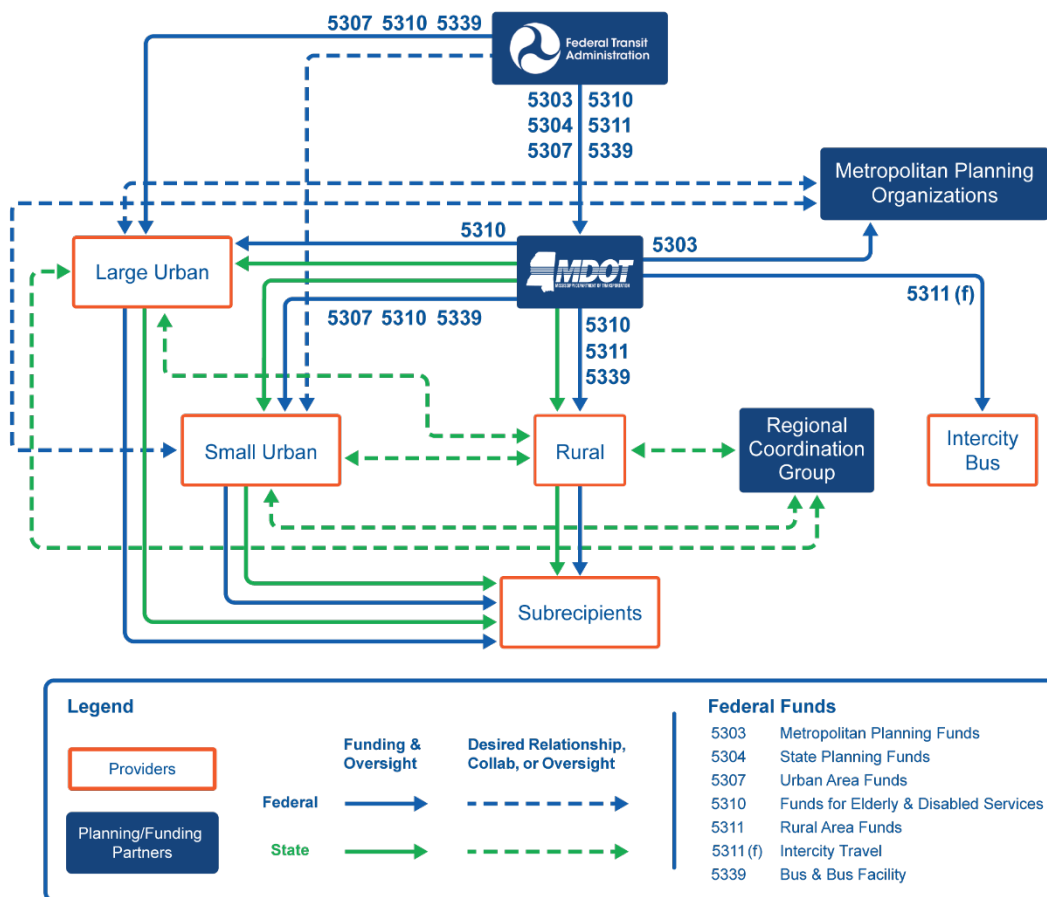
3 Policy Review

Federal and state funding programs, policy documents, and regulations guide the planning, development and operation of the public transportation systems in Mississippi. These items address various aspects of public transportation services, from specific requirements tied to federal funding programs to guidance documents that identify trends shaping the future of public transportation. This section provides an overview of federal and state funding programs and associated eligibilities, allowable uses, and program requirements. It also summarizes applicable policy plans so that the Study is developed to ensure consistency with these policy plans.

3.1 FEDERAL & STATE REQUIREMENTS

Figure 4 shows the relationship between federal and state funding programs that support public transportation services. These funding pathways create a collaborative and coordinated public transportation system in Mississippi. Each of the programs and relationships is explained in greater detail in the following subsections.

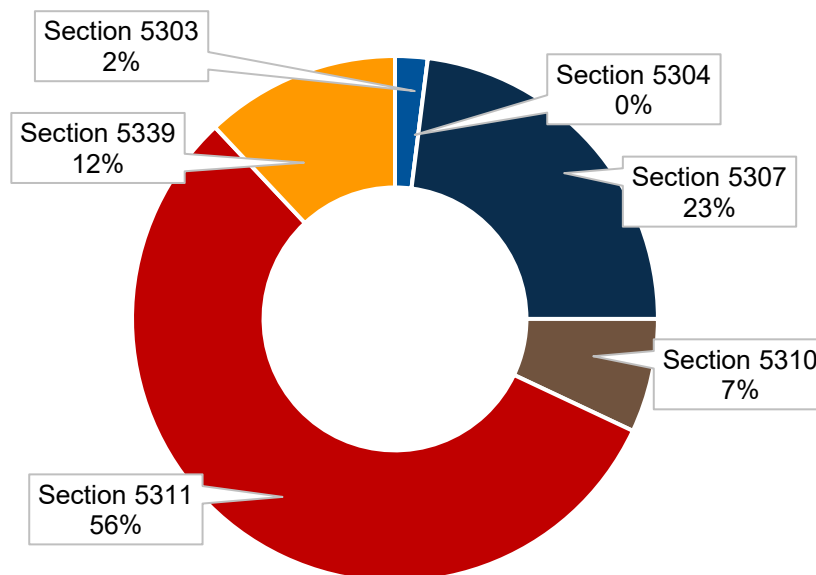
Figure 4. Federal & State Funding Pathways



3.1.1 FEDERAL FUNDING PROGRAMS

Federal funding for public transportation is authorized through the Federal Transportation Act. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), enacted in November 2021, is the latest federal funding authorization. The IIJA provides \$108 billion for federal transit programs, including \$91 billion in formula funds. These funding programs are detailed in Chapter 53 of Title 49 in the U.S. Code. Funds flow from FTA to MDOT, MPOs, and public transportation providers through annual apportionments under various federal programs. These programs support transit agency operations, capital purchasing, and planning activities for public transportation providers. Discretionary grants are awarded through a competitive process and fund system expansion, innovation, or technology upgrades. Mississippi received approximately **\$38M** in federal funds in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023. The majority of the funding received represents **Formula Grants for Rural Areas - Section 5311** Formula Grants for Rural Areas - Section 5311 (**Figure 5**).

Figure 5. Mississippi's FY23 Allocation by Federal Program



METROPOLITAN & STATEWIDE PLANNING - SECTION 5303 & 5304

Title 49 U.S.C. Section 5303 (Metropolitan Planning) and Section 5304 (Statewide Planning) establish federal programs designed to support planning activities for multimodal transportation systems in urbanized and rural areas, respectively. These programs require collaboration with local public transportation providers to develop long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement programs. These reports are compiled and constitute the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) through a cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning process. MPOs and state departments (**Figure 6**) of transportation must consult with a variety of entities — including public transportation agencies, civic organizations, municipalities, and other federal agencies — to facilitate the planning of transportation services. Mississippi received approximately **\$780,000** in planning funds in FY23 (**Figure 7**).

Figure 6. Sections 5303 & 5304 Funding Pathway

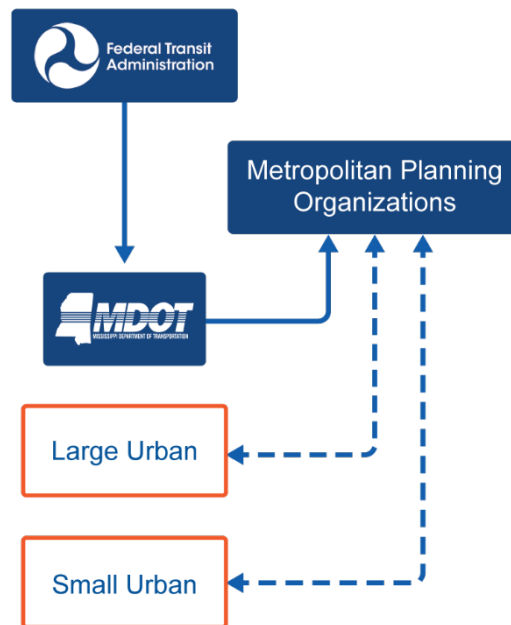
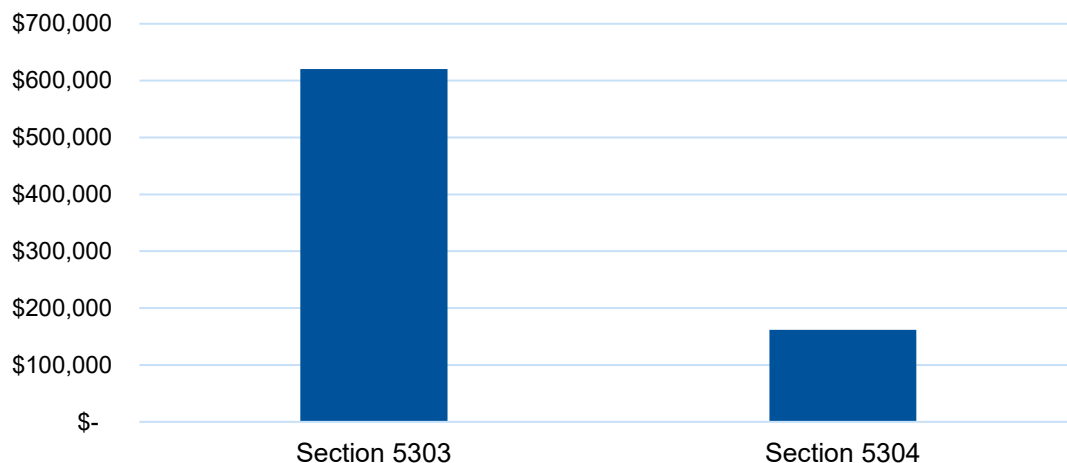


Figure 7. FY23 Section 5303 & 5304 Allocations in Mississippi



URBANIZED AREA FORMULA FUNDS - SECTION 5307

The Urbanized Area Formula Funding Program (49 U.S.C. Section 5307) provides federal funding to states and “designated” or “direct” recipients for transit operating assistance, capital purchases, and transportation-related planning in urban areas (**Figure 8**). An urban area is defined by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, as a region with a population of 50,000 or more. These areas are further categorized as either large urban (population over 200,000) or small urban (population between 50,000 and 200,000).

Transit agencies in large urban areas are designated recipients of FTA Section 5307 funds. CTA (serving the Gulfport-Biloxi urban area) and JTRAN (serving the Jackson urban area) are classified as a designated recipient of Section 5307 funding in Mississippi. In small urban areas, transit agencies can be either direct recipients or subrecipients. When transit agencies are subrecipients of these funds, they are provided to MDOT for allocation to the individual agencies. Direct recipients are authorized to receive funds directly from FTA. Hub City (serving the Hattiesburg urban area) is a direct recipient. Additionally, because a portion of the Memphis Urban Area extends into Mississippi, the Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA) receives funding based on the percentage of overall population, low-income population, and population density that is found within the Mississippi boundary.

FTA requires Section 5307 funding recipients in urban areas to provide a public transportation service that is open to the public, operates a complementary ADA service, and fully serves the entire urbanized area. If the agency operates 75 or fewer buses in peak service, up to 75% of their Section 5307 funding allocation may be used for operating assistance. If the agency operates between 76 and 100 vehicles, up to 50% of their funding may be used for operating assistance. If the agency operates more than 100 vehicles, all of their funding must be used for capital purchases.

Figure 9 provides a breakdown of approximately **\$9M** in FY23 apportionment.

Figure 8. Section 5307 Funding Pathway

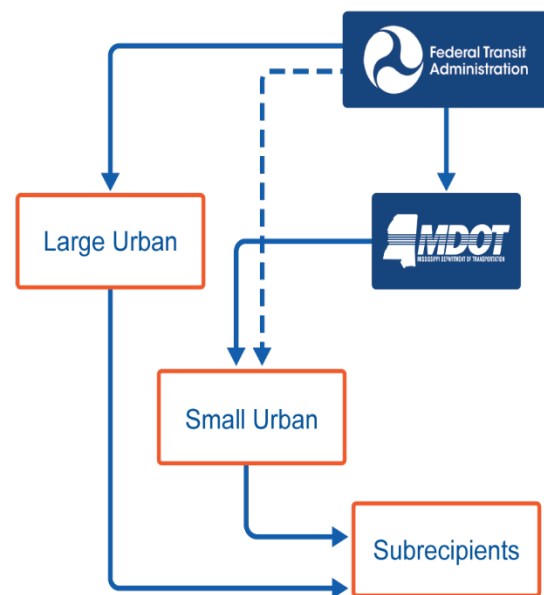
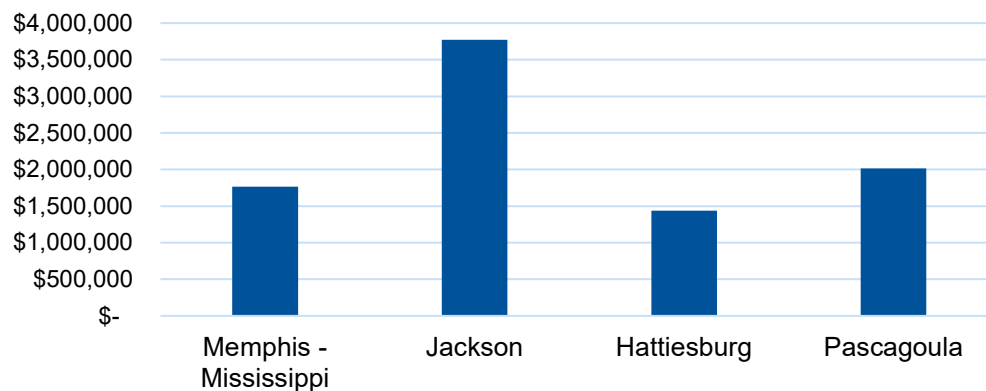


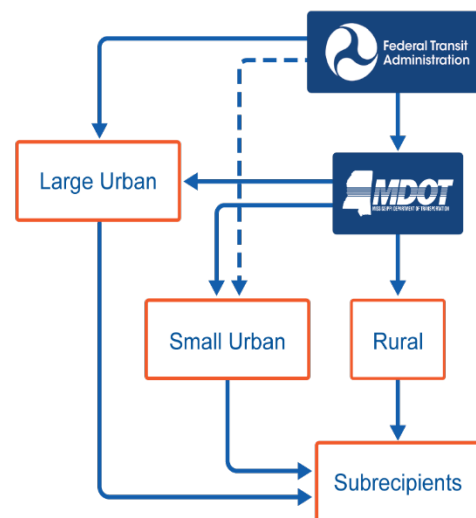
Figure 9. FY23 Section 5307 Allocations in Mississippi



ENHANCED MOBILITY FOR SENIORS & INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES - SECTION 5310

The Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (49 U.S.C. Section 5310) allocates federal formula funding to states and designated recipients to address the transportation needs of elderly and disabled populations when existing services are inadequate, unavailable, or inappropriate. Funds are distributed to each state based on its proportion of these populations. In rural and small urban areas, state departments of transportation serve as direct recipients (**Figure 10**) who further allocate funds to individual transit agencies. In large urban areas, a designated recipient is selected by the Governor. Recipients are granted flexibility in selecting subrecipient projects, which must be outlined in a state or program management plan. The selection process for subrecipient projects may be formula or project based.

Figure 10. Section 5310 Funding Pathway



The primary objective of the program is to enhance mobility by removing barriers and expanding transportation options for older adults and individuals with disabilities across all operating environments. The funds can support both "traditional" capital projects and "nontraditional" projects that go beyond the scope of American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant paratransit services.

Traditional Section 5310 project examples include:

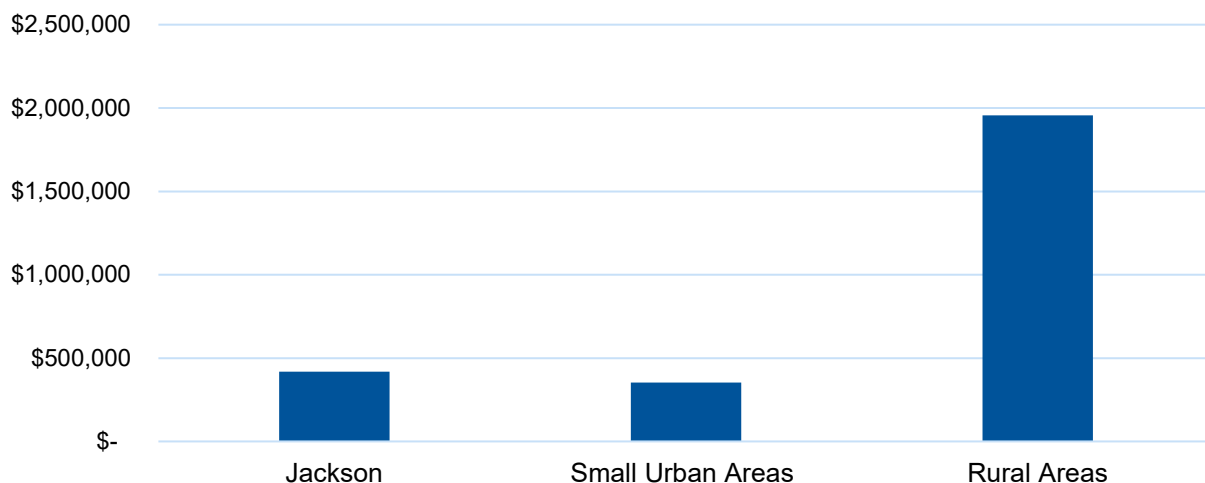
- Buses and vans;
- Wheelchair lifts, ramps, and securement devices;
- Transit-related information technology systems, including scheduling/routing/one-call systems;
- Mobility management programs; and
- Acquisition of transportation services under a contract, lease, or other arrangement.

Nontraditional Section 5310 project examples include:

- Travel training;
- Volunteer driver programs;
- Construction of an accessible path to a bus stop, including curb-cuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals or other accessible features;
- Improvements to signage, or way-finding technology;
- Incremental cost of providing same day service or door-to-door service;
- Purchase of vehicles to support new accessible taxi, rides sharing and/or vanpooling programs; and
- Mobility management programs.

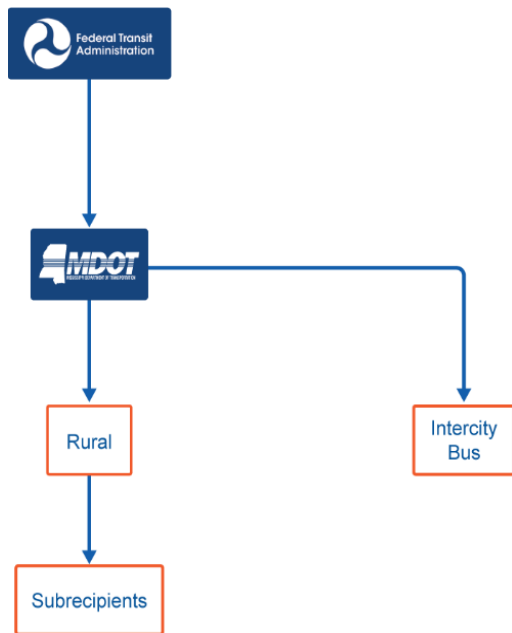
FTA requires a minimum of 55% of each state's total apportionment to be directed toward traditional capital projects. To be eligible for Section 5310 funding, a project must be included in a Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan, a locally developed document that provides an outline of how transportation services for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income populations are planned, coordinated, and delivered. This plan not only provides strategies to address these services, but it also prioritizes the services for funding and implementation. Mississippi received approximately **\$2.7M** in Section 5310 funds in FY23 (**Figure 11**).

Figure 11. FY23 Section 5310 Allocations in Mississippi



FORMULA GRANTS FOR RURAL AREAS - SECTION 5311

Figure 12. Section 5311 Funding Pathway



The Formula Grants for Rural Areas Program (49 U.S.C. Section 5311) provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations under 50,000 (**Figure 12**). In rural areas, many residents depend on public transit to access essential services, like medical appointments, employment, education and training, nutrition programs, and other life sustaining activities. The Section 5311 program also includes allocations to tribal communities. Additionally, Section 5311(f) requires each state to allocate at least 15% of its annual apportionment for the development and support of intercity bus services. However, this requirement can be waived if, after consultation with intercity bus service providers, states decide their intercity bus transportation needs are being adequately met. Mississippi received **\$21M** in FY23 Section 5311 funds, with at least **\$3.1M** available for intercity bus services.

GRANTS FOR BUS AND BUS FACILITIES - SECTION 5339

The Grants for Bus and Bus Facilities Program (49 U.S.C. Section 5339) provides funding to designated recipients, state departments of transportation, or local governments that operate fixed route service in urban or rural areas (**Figure 13**). These funds are used to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses, vans, and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities. Mississippi received **\$4.6M** in FY23 Section 5339 funds.

Figure 14 provides a breakdown of Section 5339 funds in the FY23 apportionment.

Figure 13. Section 5339 Funding Pathway

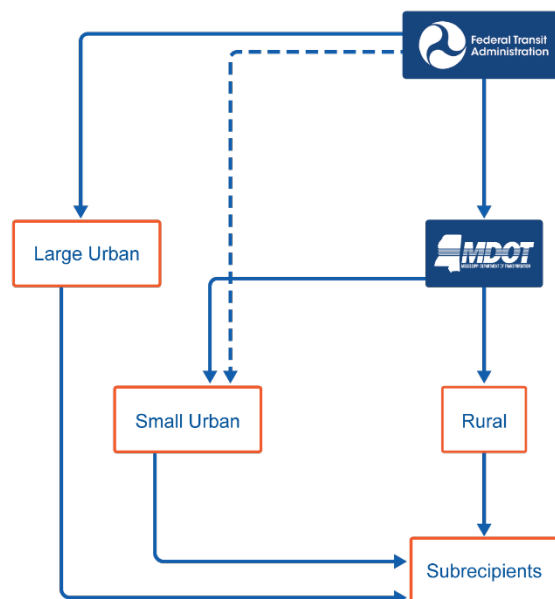
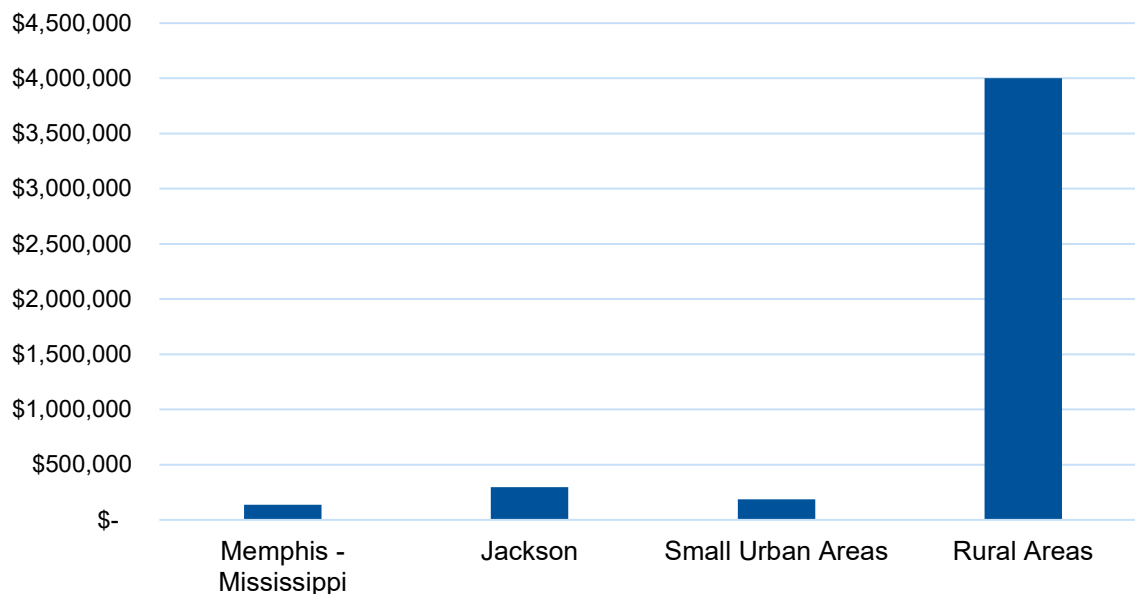


Figure 14. FY23 Section 5339 Allocations in Mississippi



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT

While not part of the federal regulatory framework guiding public transportation systems, the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program is a flexible federal funding source that supports a wide range of transportation projects, including transit operations and capital improvements. Eligible capital projects include purchasing new vehicles, constructing or upgrading transit facilities, and implementing infrastructure enhancements like dedicated bus lanes or transit signal priority systems. Mississippi received **\$178.7M** in STBG funding in FY23. These funds were distributed across both urban and rural areas, with urban areas receiving allocations based on population and transportation needs and rural areas receiving allocations based on state priorities.

DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

In addition to federal formula funds, FTA offers discretionary or competitive grants to states and public transportation providers. Discretionary grants have a wide range of eligible uses including system upgrades, innovative solutions, and new technologies. Examples of discretionary grant programs include:

- [Areas of Persistent Poverty](#) – Competitive grant program designed to provide planning, engineering, or development of technical or financing plan for new transit service within Areas of Persistent Poverty or Historically Disadvantaged Communities as identified by FTA.
 - Clairborne County Human Resource Agency, MDOT, and four partnering agencies received **\$650,000** in FY22 to create and launch a shared online reservation and

dispatching portal. The project aims to dispatch buses and pick up customers more efficiently to lower costs and decrease travel times.

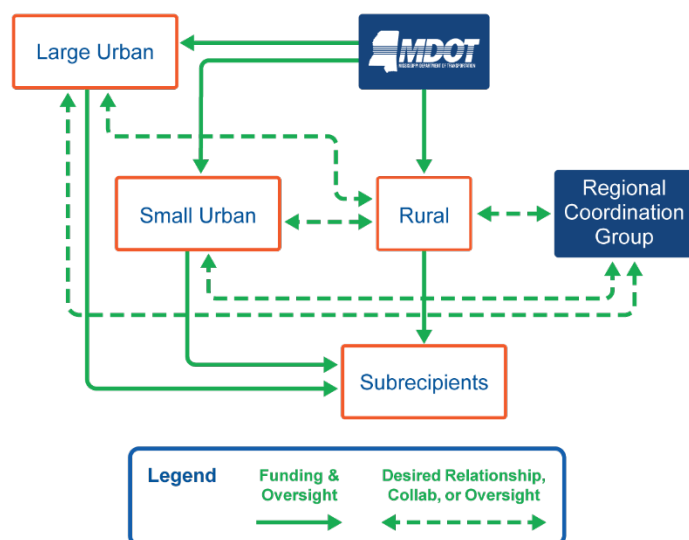
- [Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development \(BUILD\)](#) – This program provides grants for surface transportation infrastructure projects with significant local or regional impact.
- [Low or No Emission](#) – This program provides funding to state and local governmental authorities for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses as well as acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities.
 - Both CTA (\$1.76M) and Hub City (\$6.46M) received Low or No Emissions funding in FY23
 - JTRAN received \$13.72M in Low or No Emissions funding in FY24.
- [Capital Improvement Grant \(CIG\)](#) - This FTA discretionary grant program funds larger, “premium” transit capital investments, including heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars, and bus rapid transit (BRT). Federal transit law requires transit agencies seeking CIG funding to complete a series of steps over several years.
- [Pilot Program for Transit Oriented Development \(TOD\) Planning](#) – This grant provides funding to local communities to help integrate land use and transportation planning with a new fixed guideway project. Projects funded through this program must improve economic development and ridership, promote multimodal connectivity and accessibility, improve transit access for pedestrians and cyclists, engage the private sector, identify infrastructure needs, and/or enable mixed-use development near potential transit stations.
 - In FY18, JTRAN received \$1M to reshape development along the ONELINE project, a BRT system running from Fondren through downtown to Jackson State University.

3.1.2 STATE FUNDING PROGRAMS

Title 65, Chapter 1, Article 7 establishes the Multimodal Transportation Improvement fund in Mississippi. The funds are managed by MDOT and are used to improve airports, seaports, railroads, and transit systems. The allocation of funds for transit systems is as follows:

Sixty percent (60%) of the funds are allocated equally to CTA and JTRAN. For the remaining funds, transit systems must file an application with MDOT detailing the use of funds and providing the required information (Figure 15). The committee reviews applications and determines funding

Figure 15. State Funding Pathway



based on appropriate criteria. Approximately **\$1.6M** was utilized for public transportation projects in the urban areas in FY23.

3.2 POLICY ENVIRONMENT

In addition to federal and state regulations, statewide policy documents also influence how public transportation is planned and delivered in Mississippi. These documents were developed in response to federal programs and/or further the transportation vision of the state. Each of the policy documents will influence the development of this Study as it relates to project identification, prioritization, and funding strategies.

3.2.1 2045 MULTIPLAN

Mississippi's Unified Long-Range Transportation Infrastructure Plan (MULTIPLAN) is a coordinated effort to develop MDOT's statewide long-range transportation plan alongside the L RTPs for the Central Mississippi Planning & Development District (CMPDD), Hattiesburg-Petal-Forrest-Lamar (HPFL), and Gulf Regional Planning Council (GRPC) MPOs. MULTIPLAN ensures consistency among these plans and their respective goals while building a foundation for strategic transportation investment across the state over a 25-year horizon. The 2050 MULTIPLAN is currently underway and will guide the development of the Study.

The goals of the 2045 MULTIPLAN include:

- Establishing effective transportation partnerships and collaborations while increasing awareness of the benefits and needs of an intermodal system;
- Providing reliable funding and financing options for the transportation system and allocating funds efficiently;
- Ensuring a safe transportation network for all users;
- Expanding and modernizing the transportation network while being mindful of its effect on the environment and attempting to mitigate impacts;
- Preserving and maintaining existing transportation infrastructure;
- Investing in strategic transportation improvements to support the State's economy and competitiveness; and
- Improving connectivity and travel of residents, commerce, and industry.

The 2045 MULTIPLAN identified a minimum transit investment need of **\$1.053B** to maintain performance targets for vehicles and facilities, while also allowing for strategic investments. An additional **\$500M** would be required to exceed these targets and address unmet transit needs across Mississippi. However, the anticipated level of funding will only be sufficient to maintain current service levels.

3.2.2 CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGY

In November 2023, MDOT adopted the Mississippi Carbon Reduction Strategy (MS CRS) to reduce carbon emissions produced by the transportation sector as required by the IIJA's federal

Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). The MS CRS is designed to meet the following CRP requirements:

- Supporting the reductions of transportation emissions in the State and efforts to reduce transportation emissions;
- Identifying projects and strategies to reduce transportation emissions;
- Facilitating the use of vehicles or modes of travel that result in lower transportation emissions as compared to existing approaches; and
- Ensuring strategies are appropriate to the population density and context of the State, including any MPO designated in the State.

MS CRS supports a wide range of strategies including:

- Public transportation projects, such as BRT, or dedicated bus lanes;
- Alternate mode transportation projects, such as multi-use paths for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized modes;
- Congestion management techniques;
- Intelligent Transportation Systems, including transit signal prioritization; and
- Projects or programs that support the deployment of alternative vehicles/zero emission vehicles.

Mississippi's anticipated CRP apportionment for FY22 – FY26 is approximately **\$81M** with 65% of these funds suballocated to urban areas. The remainder is suballocated to agencies in urban and rural areas at MDOT's discretion.

3.2.3 ELECTRIC VEHICLE DEPLOYMENT PLAN

The Mississippi Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment Plan (EV Plan) was developed to support the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program. The NEVI Formula Program provides funding to every state to invest in electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure network to support convenient, reliable, affordable, and equitable deployment of EV infrastructure for all users, including transit and shared-use vehicles. Mississippi is anticipated to receive approximately **\$50.6M** between FY22 - FY26. The initial focus for this funding is to develop EV charging stations along Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFC) in the state to support travelers and the public. Subsequent phases could potentially support providing dedicated charging infrastructure for electric buses.

4 Mission, Vision, and Goals

Developing a comprehensive statewide public transportation plan requires a clear and unified direction, grounded in a well-defined mission, an inspiring vision, and strategic goals and objectives. The mission articulates the fundamental purpose of the MDOT PT Division—serving the mobility needs of all residents, enhancing economic vitality, and using resources effectively. The vision sets the long-term aspiration for an integrated, accessible, connected, and resilient transportation network to support thriving communities across the state. To bridge the gap between mission and vision, specific goals and measurable objectives are established to guide policy decisions, infrastructure investments, and service improvements. Together, these elements form the strategic foundation for a transportation system that is connected, forward-thinking, and responsive to the evolving needs of Mississippi’s diverse population.

4.1 MISSION

The mission of the Public Transit Division 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.

4.2 VISION

Our 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.

4.3 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Establishing clear goals and objectives is essential to guiding effective public transportation planning and investment. In the context of Mississippi’s evolving mobility landscape, these priorities serve as a roadmap for aligning resources, partnerships, and strategies with the needs of communities across the state. By articulating what success looks like—whether in terms of access, affordability, or public health—these goals help ensure that transit initiatives are both impactful and accountable. **Table 2** outlines the key goals and objectives that will shape the direction of future mobility efforts and measure their success over time.

Table 2. Study Goals & Objectives

The Mississippi Public Transportation System:		
	Integrates urban, rural, and intercity networks to provide a seamless system for users, improving customer satisfaction.	• Promote agency coordination for intercity trips to minimize waiting times between connections. • Support the development of mobility hubs to provide transfer opportunities between different transportation modes. • Foster coordination between agencies, regions, and states to streamline travel options for transit-reliant populations. • Leverage relationships within MDOT to account for transit needs in all transportation projects
	Is Accessible for all people, regardless of age, ability, income, or trip purpose.	• Provide connections to intrastate and interstate destinations. • Support connections with major employers and activity centers in Mississippi for economic development and employment opportunities. • Support connections to healthcare facilities located within and adjacent to Mississippi to improve community health. • Support connections to colleges, universities, vocational schools, and other institutes of higher learning to increase educational opportunities for Mississippians. • Disseminate information to promote knowledge and understanding of available public transportation options.
	Is Resilient by responding to changes associated with funding, system disruptions, and staffing challenges.	• Invest strategically in maintenance, planning, transit service, and capital improvements to preserve and enhance public transportation. • Pursue new funding strategies to provide required grant matches and minimize disruptions. • Demonstrate the value of public transportation, and thus the transit agencies that support it, in securing sustained and increased funding from government partners. • Collaborate regionally to improve service reliability and minimize disruptions. • Develop strategies and programs to recruit, retain, and train new transit employees to support continuity of operations. • Increase the mean distance between major mechanical failures each year.

Table 2 Continued.

	Operates Safely and Securely through reducing the number of incidents and enhancing system reliability.	• Reduce the number of fatalities and injuries each year. • Decrease the number of safety incidents (e.g., collisions) each year. • Reduce the number of security-related incidents (e.g. vandalism of bus stops/stations, operator-customer incidents) reported each year. • Promote coordination with area first responders inclusive of emergency preparedness drills.
	Supports expanding mobility opportunities to enhance transit service.	• Expand the portfolio of mobility options available to transit-reliant populations. • Support pilot projects to test new transit services or delivery models. • Support utilization of technologies and services that support customer trip planning and scheduling.
	Is Optimally Maintained to meet State of Good Repair requirements to ensure that vehicles, facilities, and other capital infrastructure remain in good condition.	• Continue to support rural and small agencies through monitoring and updating the Group Transit Asset Management Plan. • Explore purchasing agreements or other strategies to improve vehicle acquisition. • Conduct periodic inspections of agency assets to assess quality. • Support the formation of maintenance agreements or related partnerships to help agencies maintain vehicles. • Develop transit infrastructure standards to promote consistency and ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

5 Existing Transit Conditions

Section 5 explores the existing conditions of transit in the State of Mississippi. Sections 5.2 and 5.3 provide an overview of classifications and structure of the transit delivery system, and review issues including asset management, funding, performance, and mobility management. Sections 5.4-5.9 summarize the six geographic areas created by MDOT to regionally coordinate and deliver transportation. Topics in these sections include transit availability, partnerships/initiatives, and other relevant information informing the existing transit portfolio in Mississippi.

Insights gained through public and stakeholder engagement were a key part of understanding and validating existing conditions across the system. In-person stakeholder interviews and/or service area tours were conducted with several transit providers including Greyhound/Flixbus, JTRAN, Hub City Transit, Coast Transit Authority, Oxford-University Transit, Starkville-MSU Area Rapid Transit, Delta Area Rural Transit System, and Destiny Rides. Discussions also took place with a representative of the Memphis Area Transit Authority to better understand connectivity needs between Memphis, TN, and northern Mississippi.

In-person public engagement was held at Union Station in Jackson and Pascagoula Medical Center in Pascagoula. Digital engagement included the creation of an online ArcGIS StoryMap that included the same information and opportunities for feedback as the in-person activities. In total, 206 Mississippians completed the public survey with 39% of participants stating that they, or someone in their home, uses transit, and 55% of participants stating that they do not (6%, or 12 respondents, chose, “N/A”). Participation varied across the different regions leaving some questions not sufficiently answered to provide analysis. The public engagement results are provided in **Appendix A – Public Engagement Summary**.



Coast Transit Authority in Gulfport, Mississippi

5.1 OVERVIEW

Mississippi's public transportation provider network is comprised of various agency types that are responsible for operating and administering services through these service types:

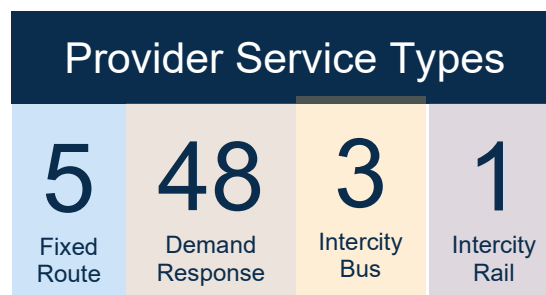
- **Fixed Route:** Transit on set routes and schedules;
- **Demand Response:** On-demand service dispatched in response to passenger requests;
- **Intercity:** Scheduled service with limited stops connecting urban or rural areas, typically run by private providers; and
- **Vanpool:** Ridesharing for pre-arranged groups.

Each of these service types operate within either an urban or rural operating environment. Some providers offer specialized service, such as Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT), which is subsidized through contracts for specific clientele who qualify to receive transportation under specific criteria, such as Medicaid. Additionally, intercity regional services (bus and rail) are provided through private carriers and Amtrak, respectively, with stops throughout the state. For this report, these service types are classified based on their urban, rural, and intercity operating environments.

5.2 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN MISSISSIPPI

Public transportation services are operated in 74 of Mississippi's 82 counties. Some counties have limited transportation services available, while other counties have multiple providers operating within their boundaries.

The transportation network consists of 57 providers with five (5) operating FR systems with complementary DR service and 48 operating only DR service, primarily in rural areas. Some of these providers offer connections between rural and urban areas. These providers are supported by two (2) intercity bus providers and Amtrak providing intercity rail.



5.2.1 INTERCITY

Intercity regional services provide an important transportation link for Mississippians traveling for both business and pleasure. MDOT supports the intercity bus services through the administration of FTA Section 5311(f) program funding, a set aside percentage of the state 5311 allocation (at least 15%). Intercity providers include Greyhound Bus/Flixbus, Delta Bus Lines and Amtrak.

Greyhound Bus (Greyhound) and its parent company, **Flixbus**, currently provide fifteen scheduled routes with stops in Mississippi. The bus routes originate in Memphis, TN, Atlanta, GA, Dallas, TX, Houston, TX, and Baton Rouge, LA. The Mississippi stops include urban areas in Biloxi and Jackson, and rural areas in the communities of Meridian and Tupelo. Jackson is the major hub for Greyhound in Mississippi and operates out of the intermodal center, Union Station.

Direct trips from Jackson include several major cities such as New Orleans, Memphis, Dallas, Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, and Atlanta.

Delta Bus Lines provides daily service from Memphis, TN, to major destinations including Baton Rouge, LA, and Jackson, MS. Delta Bus Lines have stops in Mississippi cities including Tunica Junction (flag stop ¹⁹), Clarksdale, Cleveland, Indianola, Greenville, Belzoni (flag stop), Yazoo City, Jackson, Rolling Fork (flag stop), Port Gibson (flag stop), Natchez, and Woodville (flag stop).



Delta Bus Lines terminal in Clarksdale, Mississippi

Amtrak currently operates four trains per day in Mississippi as part of the following routes: City of New Orleans (daily Chicago-Carbondale-Memphis-New Orleans) and Crescent (daily New York-Washington-Charlottesville-Charlotte-Atlanta-Birmingham-New Orleans). These trains stop at multiple locations in Mississippi (**Table 3**). Amtrak is starting the Mardi Gras Service in FY25 which will provide service from New Orleans, LA to Mobile, AL, with stops in Mississippi including Bay Saint Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi, and Pascagoula. Amtrak is also currently in the design stages of modifying Jackson station's platform to ensure ADA compliance. This will include a new platform with associated ramps, stairs, railings, and signage for the station. This project is expected to be completed in FY26.

Table 3. Amtrak Services in Mississippi

Amtrak Route	Destination	Counties Served	Stops in Mississippi
City of New Orleans	Chicago to New Orleans	Leflore, Yazoo, Hinds, Rankin, Lincoln, and Pike	Greenwood, Yazoo City, Jackson, Hazlehurst, Brookhaven and McComb
Crescent	New York City to New Orleans	Lauderdale, Neshoba, Hancock, and Pearl River	Meridian, Laurel, Hattiesburg and Picayune
Mardi Gras	New Orleans to Mobile	Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson	St. Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi, and Pascagoula

5.2.2 REGIONAL DELIVERY

Mississippi uses a regional approach to coordinate and deliver transportation services around the state. The six regions include:

- Delta Rides
- Northeast MS Intermodal Transit Association (NITA)
- Transportation Connections (Trans-Con)
- East Central Transit Action Group (EZTAG)

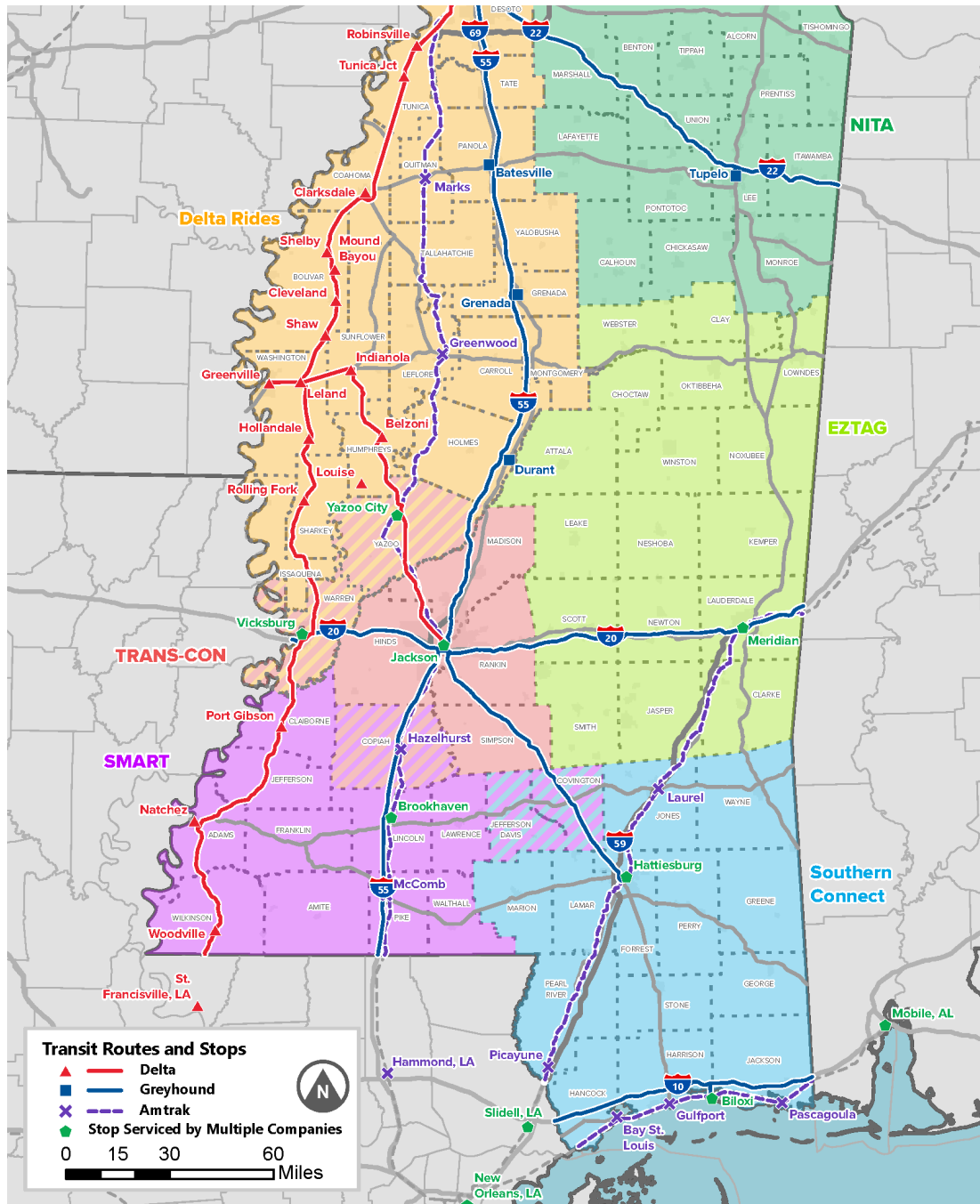
¹⁹ A flag stop is a stop requested by a customer to board or alight.

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

- Southwest Mississippi Accessible Regional Transportation (SMART)
- Southern Connect

These regions enable the state partners to coordinate, plan, develop, and implement mobility solutions that are tailored to the unique needs and resources in each area. A map of these regional boundaries is shown in **Figure 16**.

Figure 16. Mobility Coordination Regions in Mississippi



5.2.3 ASSET MANAGEMENT

Maintaining transit assets in a state of good repair is critical to providing a safe, reliable, and comfortable environment for transit providers and the customers they serve. MDOT prepared a group Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan on behalf of twenty-four providers, including FTA 5311 funding recipients and Hub City. The remaining FTA 5307 funding recipients developed their own TAM Plans in accordance with FTA regulations. TAM Plans are required to cover four-year periods and establish and update annual State of Good Repair (SGR) performance targets.

Table 4 conveys Mississippi has 708 public transportation assets (rolling stock, equipment/service vehicles, and facilities) with a projected total replacement cost of **\$127M**. Approximately 37% of the rolling stock and equipment/service vehicles have exceeded the Useful Life Benchmark (ULB). There are some facilities, such as the transfer centers and passenger facilities, in the JTRAN system that have a 1 TERM rating indicating a need for immediate repair and being well past their ULB.

Table 4. Statewide Asset Inventory, Condition, and Capital Replacement Costs

TAM Sponsor	Inventory			Condition		Total Capital Replacement Cost
	Qty Rolling Stock	Qty Equipment	Qty Facilities	% Assets exceeding Useful Life Benchmark	Average Facility Term Rating	
MDOT Group Plan	527	14	11	51%	3.9	\$58,570,550
CTA	42	12	14	26%	4.0	\$36,270,000
JTRAN	33	8	4	34%	3.0	\$31,941,036
Total	602	34	29	37% (Avg)	3.6 (Avg)	\$126,781,586

Sources: MDOT TAMP Program (October 2022); JTRAN FY2024 NTD Narrative Report, & CTA TAM (July 2025))



Starkville MSU Area Rapid Transit bus fleet in Starkville, Mississippi

5.2.4 MOBILITY MANAGEMENT

Each regional planning group sets regionally based goals and objectives that are specific to the needs, resources, and capabilities of each area. This structure allows transit providers, partners, and other interested agencies and individuals to actively address the public's mobility needs. Regions are championed through a lead agency that employs a mobility manager tasked with coordinating and facilitating the regional portfolio of services.

Mississippi's regional mobility management teams primarily focus on collaboration with state departments, local transportation providers, and other partner entities that help fund and deliver transportation services to residents in their region. In addition to receiving grants from the FTA and MDOT, the regional management teams can coordinate funding opportunities with human service departments that support elderly, disabled, and low-income residents who require access to community and home-based services. Some of these human service state programs include the Division on Medicaid, Department of Human Services, Department of Rehabilitation, and the Department of Mental Health. As rural transportation providers often struggle with resource constraints, some mobility management teams also coordinate joint procurements and shared assets between transit providers within a region. A survey was distributed to all Mobility Managers in Mississippi to understand each region's transit priorities and ascertain the scope of the mobility management activities. The activities are performed by each region's Mobility Management team (Table 5).



Starkville MSU Area Rapid Transit is the Mobility Manager for the EZTAG region

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Table 5. Mobility Management Activities by Region

Region	Mobility Management Lead Agency	Coordination Activities										
		Client Eligibility Screening	Trip Scheduling	Marketing	Creating New Services	Coordinating Trips Between Agencies	Coordinating Interregional Trips	Coordinates Human Services Funding	Facilitates Joint Procurement	Asset Sharing	Access to Shared Trip Management Software	Manages Subcontracts
Delta Rides	DART		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
NITA	Oxford University Transit System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Trans-Con	N-Route	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
EZTAG	SMART (Starkville)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
SMART	Natchez Transit System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Southern Connect	DJ Transit			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	

✓ indicates current activities

5.2.5 SAFETY & SECURITY

Safety and security are vital to the success of public transportation and a major priority in the state of Mississippi. A safe and secure system protects passengers, staff, and infrastructure, encourages ridership, improves system reliability, reduces transit agency liability, and supports efficient emergency response.

Safety and security are shared responsibilities of MDOT, public transit providers, nonprofit organizations, emergency responders, and the users of the system.

- **MDOT** is responsible for safety and security oversight of transit agencies to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements. The State distributes federal funding to transit agencies each year and therefore is responsible for ensuring subrecipient compliance with these regulations.
- **Public Transit Providers** (5307 recipients) are responsible for creating a safe and accessible environment for their customers. This begins with the development and implementation of a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) which meets requirements with 49 CFR part 673. PTASP must establish roles and responsibilities for transit staff, establish safety objectives and approaches, identify hazards, and assess and mitigate safety risks. The public transit providers should establish a system for monitoring and measuring safety, managing change, and identifying deficiencies in their system. Additionally, the public transit provider should establish and implement a comprehensive safety training program.
- **Public and private nonprofit transit providers** that receive FTA funds are also required to establish policies and procedures to ensure they are operating in a safe and secure environment. These policies and procedures, while less prescriptive than the urban transit providers, are critical to the safety, security, and reliability of the system.
- **First responders** such as police and firefighters are critical in responding to transit-related events. Transit agencies should maintain positive relationships with emergency responders and collaborate to address potential safety and security risks, ensure roles and responsibilities are established in the event of a major incident, and participate in training. MDOT has a Hazard and Security template plan in place for agencies to use to meet compliance requirements. The plan includes requirements to interface with first responders to ensure quick responses to emergencies.
- **Users of the system** should follow passenger codes of conduct and be courteous to transit staff and other passengers.

5.2.6 FUNDING

Funding categories are delineated by the primary source of federal funds-**Urbanized Area Formula Funds - Section 5307** or **Formula Grants for Rural Areas - Section 5311**. The total funding allocated to each agency for FY23 is provided in **Appendix B – Urban Agency Profiles** and **Appendix C – Rural Agency Profiles**. **Table 6** summarizes it by regional mobility coordinator and urban area for comparison. Directly operated funds are those generated directly by the transit agency, such as the farebox or advertising revenues, where local funds are those

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provided by municipalities. **Table 7** summarizes the breakdown between operating and capital expenditures.

TOTAL FUNDING BY SOURCE

Table 6. FY23 Mississippi Grant Usage and Funding Sources

Region	Federal	State	Local	Directly Generated	Total Funding
Rural Funding by Region					
Delta Rides	\$7,389,567	\$414,710	\$561,229	\$1,396,213	\$9,761,719
NITA	\$5,456,666	\$127,789	\$2,998,734	\$601,949	\$9,185,138
Trans-Con	\$2,832,390	\$120,398	\$726,748	\$821,912	\$4,501,447
EZTAG	\$3,340,862	\$265,581	\$1,308,049	\$515,960	\$5,430,452
SMART	\$3,350,469	\$125,614	\$734,720	\$811,376	\$5,022,178
Southern Connect	\$2,547,892	\$107,043	\$80,099	\$1,392,016	\$4,127,050
Rural Total	\$24,917,845	\$1,161,135	\$6,409,579	\$5,539,425	\$38,027,984
Urban Funding by Agency					
JTRAN	\$5,686,547	\$480,000	\$4,850,972	\$306,729	\$11,324,248
Hub City	\$3,209,039	\$0	\$975,381	\$157,524	\$4,341,944
CTA	\$9,547,300	\$1,165,854	\$5,311,644	\$2,387,999	\$18,412,797
Urban Total	\$18,442,886	\$1,645,854	\$11,137,997	\$2,852,252	\$34,078,989
State Totals	\$43,360,731	\$2,806,989	\$17,547,576	\$8,391,677	\$72,106,973

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

Table 7. FY23 Operating & Capital Expenditure Breakdown by Region and Urban Agency

Source	Operating	Capital
Rural by Region		
Delta Rides	\$7,007,215	\$2,754,504
NITA	\$6,589,044	\$2,596,094
Trans-Con	\$3,719,806	\$781,641
EZTAG	\$4,036,131	\$1,394,321
SMART	\$4,187,101	\$835,077
Southern Connect	\$3,323,669	\$803,381
Rural Total	\$28,862,966	\$9,165,018
Urban by Agency		
CTA	\$9,325,565	\$9,087,232
Hub City	\$1,978,505	\$2,363,439
JTRAN	\$10,563,326	\$760,922
Urban Total	\$21,867,396	\$12,211,593
State Total	\$50,730,362	\$21,376,611

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

5.2.7 PERFORMANCE

Where funding is grouped by the main federal grant received, agency performance measures are assessed by service type since they each have different operating characteristics. This section provides a comparison between the service types to illustrate how they perform in comparison to each other. **Table 8** presents the performance of these service types with the complementary paratransit service operated by fixed route systems included in the demand response section of the table. The full breakdown of performance by agency is provided in **Appendix B – Urban Agency Profiles** and **Appendix C – Rural Agency Profiles**. Providers in Mississippi serve approximately **3.3M** passenger trips. The table reveals notable differences in cost efficiency and service delivery models across the state.



Greyhound station providing intercity bus services in Jackson, Mississippi

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Table 8. FY23 Mississippi Public Transportation Performance Metrics

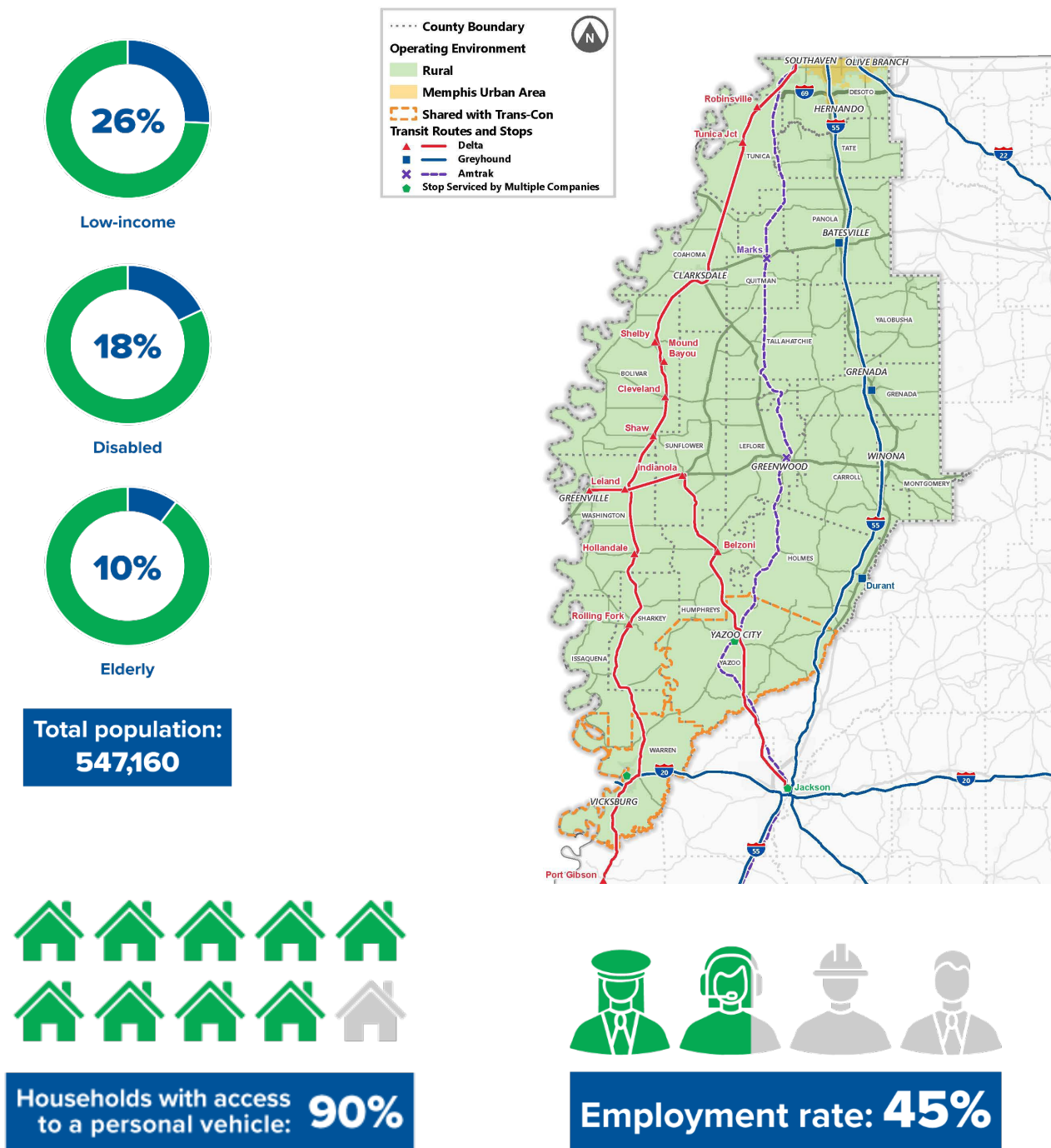
Service Type	Annual Passenger Trips	Cost per Trip	Revenue Miles	Cost per Revenue Mile	Revenue Hours	Cost per Revenue Hour
Demand Response by Region						
Delta Rides	264,643	\$21.33	3,113,780	\$1.81	127,411	\$44.31
NITA	79,586	\$15.98	1,106,729	\$2.30	68,929	\$36.90
Trans-Con	265,414	\$43.73	1,602,014	\$5.30	77,259	\$109.93
EZTAG	29,353	\$30.41	336,696	\$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	1,354,104		10,085,196		497,445	
Weighted Average		\$24.03		\$2.78		\$56.37
Fixed Route by Agency						
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						
CTA	76,270	\$6.45	821,104	\$0.60	15,392	\$31.94
State Total	3,347,629		14,366,201		734,125	
State Weighted Average		\$19.70		\$3.40		\$66.51

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

5.3 DELTA RIDES REGION

The Delta Rides region is comprised of twenty-one counties in northwestern Mississippi. Public transportation providers operate within the urban and rural areas with Amtrak and Delta Bus Lines also traveling throughout the region. A map of the region is provided in **Figure 17**.

Figure 17. Delta Rides Region



5.3.1 URBAN

MEMPHIS URBAN AREA

Located in northwestern Mississippi at the border with Arkansas and Tennessee, Desoto County is part of the Memphis Urban Area. The total urban area population is 1,335,549, with 193,247 residing in Desoto County. There is no fixed-route public transportation service within the county. The Memphis Area Transportation Authority (MATA) operates seven routes (7, 28, 30A & B, 39A & B, and 42) just north of the state line. Desoto County's population, including low-income residents and average population density, contributes to FTA apportionments to MATA.

Despite discussions starting in 2013 with the DeSoto Transit Feasibility Study, there are no plans to add public transportation routes. Recommendations from that plan included hiring a mobility manager, providing commuter service to Tunica Casinos, and operating public transportation along Goodman Road. The 2021 Memphis Coordinated Public Transit - Human Transportation Service Plan also recommended hiring a mobility manager.

Subsequent planning efforts, such as the Memphis MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), downplay the need for transit due to lower density and desired activity centers. Desoto County is identified as an air quality non-attainment area, making it eligible for Congestion Management Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. Eligible projects include transit improvements, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and a shared micromobility program.

Of note are two other public transportation providers—Delta Area Rural Transit System and Northeast Mississippi Community Services—that are based in rural areas offering trips into the urbanized area.

5.3.2 RURAL

Thirteen (13) public transportation programs comprise the rural transportation network, with many providers operating in multiple counties. All counties in the Delta Rides region are served by at least one provider, with more than half of the counties served by multiple providers. Public transportation services are operated and administered by a variety of agencies serving the public and specialized populations with unique mobility needs.

The following is a list of rural transportation providers in the Delta Rides region:

Destiny Center is a non-profit organization in Desoto County that has been providing transportation services for over five years. They offer rides to seniors, veterans, low-income residents, and those with mobility challenges, using volunteer drivers and donated cars. They take referrals from word of mouth or medical centers for people who need more help than what other transport services provide. Destiny Center averages 8 to 12 trips a month within a 50-mile radius (except Memphis), for non-emergency medical visits (not dialysis) and shopping. Their goals include serving special needs clients and improving coordination with local providers.

Bolivar County Council of Aging is based in Cleveland (Bolivar County) and provides demand response services across ten counties for the general public, as well as specialized populations, with trips to employment, educational, healthcare, food services, and adult daycare.

Bolivar County Council on Aging provides NEMT services through contractual agreements with Modivcare and Medical Transportation Management (MTM), Inc. They have purchase of services agreements with 5310 providers River Ridge Behavioral Health, Quality Mental Health and Mississippi Christian Family Services. They collaborate with three additional providers to provide transportation services in the City of Jackson for senior and disabled clients through a contractual agreement with Jackson Medical Mall Foundation. Bolivar County Council on Aging also operates intercounty commuter routes and serves as an authorized ticket agent for Delta Bus Lines.

Central Mississippi, Incorporated is based in Winona (Montgomery County) and provides demand response services to the general public across six counties, focusing on individuals with limited transportation options.

City of Tunica – Tunica County Recreation Commission is a local government organization located in Tunica and provides intra-county demand response service to their own clients so they can access recreation activities.

DARTS is operated by Aaron E. Henry Community Center and based in Clarksdale (Coahoma County). DARTS offers demand response and specialized transportation services to the general public in seven counties, connecting residents to employment, medical facilities, education opportunities, and childcare programs.

DARTS has a purchase of services agreement with 5310 provider Quality Mental Health and a contractual agreement with 5310 provider North Delta Planning Development District to provide transportation services for seniors. DARTS also provides NEMT services through contractual agreements with Modivcare and MTM, Inc.

Mississippi Christian Family Services is a private, nonprofit company located in Rolling Fork and provides demand response services to their own clients across four counties for transportation services to and from their adult day center and training facility. They also provide transportation services to the public for a fee.

Mississippi Valley State University Mass Transit operates under the Division of Economic Development and Public Service to provide demand response services to the general public across seven counties for educational, medical, and job-related needs. The agency also supports

Aaron E. Henry Community Health Services Center, Inc. is the subrecipient for FTA Section 5311 funding to operate DARTS. The center provides various medical practices and serves as a social/recreational center, while also managing multiple satellite clinics and other program sites in various communities. By making medical care more accessible for their rural residents, DARTS and the Aaron E. Henry Community Health Services Center are contributing to the overall health of their residents who may not have another way of accessing these services.

Project Smart Start, an initiative focusing on meeting the mobility needs of low-income, elderly, and disabled residents in rural areas.

Mississippi Valley State University Mass Transit has a purchase of services agreement with 5310 provider Quality Mental Health and a contractual agreement with 5310 provider North Delta Planning Development District to provide transportation services for seniors.

North Central Planning and Development District is a nonprofit organization based in Winona (Montgomery County) and governed by a Board of Directors that serves as a liaison between local government and the federal and state programs that fund community services. The planning district facilitates demand response services across seven counties for the Medicaid Waiver program in Mississippi, as well as for the Area on Aging supporting elderly residents.

North Delta Planning and Development District is a nonprofit organization based in Batesville (Panola County) and governed by a Board of Directors that serves as a liaison between local government and the federal and state programs that fund community services. The planning district facilitates demand response services across seven counties for the Medicaid Waiver program in Mississippi, as well as for the North Delta Area Agency on Aging supporting elderly residents.

Quality Mental Health, Incorporated is a private, nonprofit company based in Greenwood (Leflore County) that provides demand response service to their clients across seven counties so they can access mental health services. Quality Mental Health, Inc. also use 5310 funds to purchase services from DART, Bolivar County Council on Aging, and MS Valley Transportation.

Sunflower-Humphreys Counties Progress, Incorporated is based in Indianola (Sunflower County) and offers demand response services to the general public across five counties. The agency also offers NEMT services through contracts with Modivcare and MTM, Inc., with additional services offered for private paying clients.

Warren-Washington-Issaquena-Sharkey Community Action Agency is a private, nonprofit company based in Greenville (Washington county) that provides demand response service to their clients across five counties for families and elderly to access community services.

Yazoo County Human Resource Agency works under the umbrella of the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District. The agency is a nonprofit organization based in Yazoo City that provides demand response services to elderly residents through the Yazoo County Area Agency on Aging programs.

5.3.3 SERVICE DELIVERY IN DELTA RIDES

Transit plays a critical role in the region for those who rely on it, as it is often their primary mode of transportation. With a quarter of households in the Delta Rides region considered low income, transit dependence in the region is low, with an average of only one third of households claiming to use public transit services, primarily to access work and school. The average transit ride for these users is 20-40 minutes long.

Figure 18 shows the composition of public transit users in the Delta Rides region, while **Figure 19** shows the various trip purposes for these riders.

Figure 18. Transit Riders in the Delta Rides Region

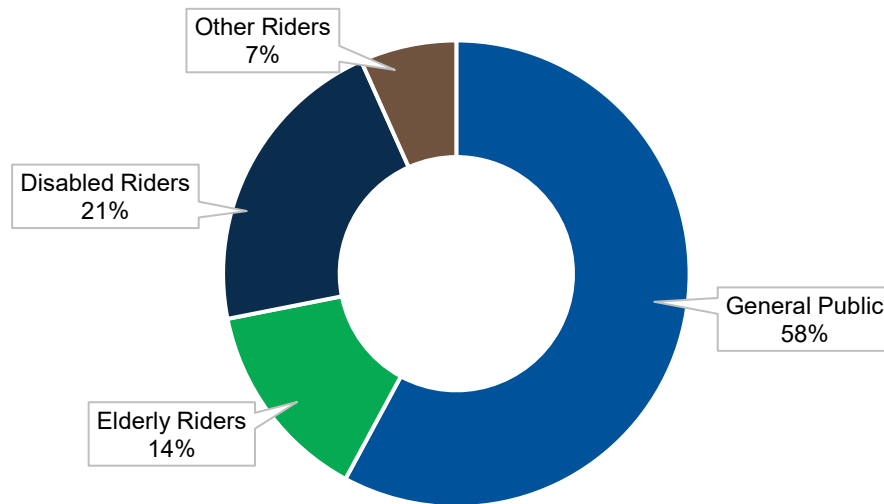
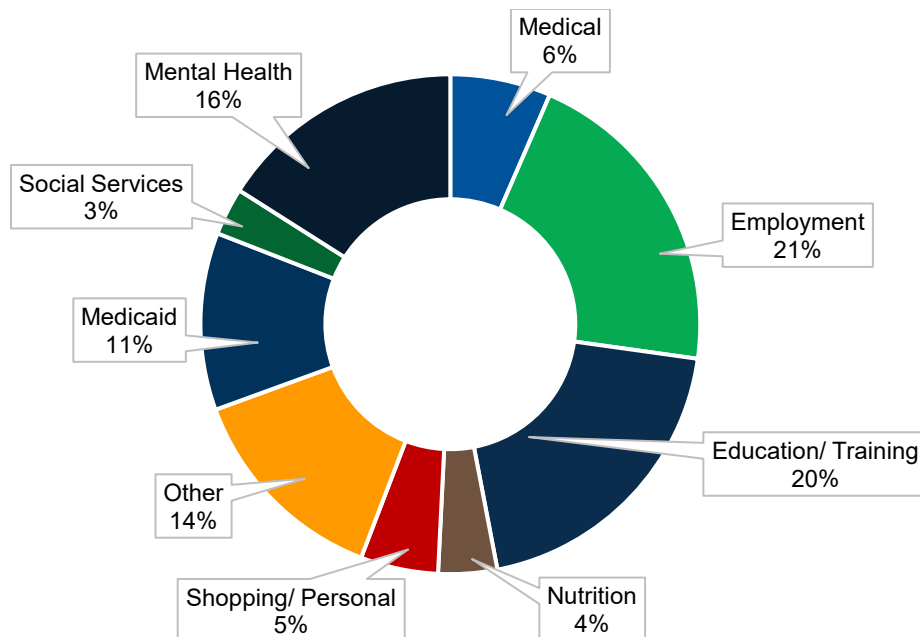


Figure 19. Delta Rides Trip Purposes



Intercity travel is a frequent need in the region, with two thirds of the population claiming to travel between cities for work or recreation purposes on a routine basis. Those who do not use public transportation services claim they cannot access their desired destinations with the current transit system. They also cite the need for more information on transportation providers in the area and how to use the transit system. This public feedback highlights the need for expansion of services

and existing transportation routes, as well as continued outreach and communication in the region. However, the mobility management team in the Delta Rides region struggles with driver shortages, limiting the transportation services that can be provided in the area.

When asked about improvements the respondents would like to see in public transportation, some responses were:

- Rideshare;
- Shuttle service to additional destinations;
- Infrastructure improvements, such as bus shelters and transfer stations; and
- Higher wages for transit agency staff.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

The Delta Rides region leverages partnerships and targeted initiatives to enhance service delivery while also targeting underserved populations. The following are a list of key partnerships in the region:

- Delta Rides coordinated a partnership with the MS Department of Rehabilitation to support disabled clients entering the workforce employed at Sephora with transportation initially subsidized for six months.
- North Delta Planning & Development District (NDPDD) manages:
 - Senior rider eligibility through its Area Agency on Aging program
 - US Department of Health and Human Services Title III B funding distribution
 - Client screening and scheduling via QRyde
 - Procurement of services
- Mississippi Valley State University supports Project Smart Start with the MS Department of Human Services and the EDGE Program with Mississippi Delta Community College to support low-income, elderly, and disabled residents in rural areas.
- DART and Bolivar County Council on Aging coordinate through the latter's Department of Medicaid and Department of Client Services on the purchase of services for 5310 grant recipients.

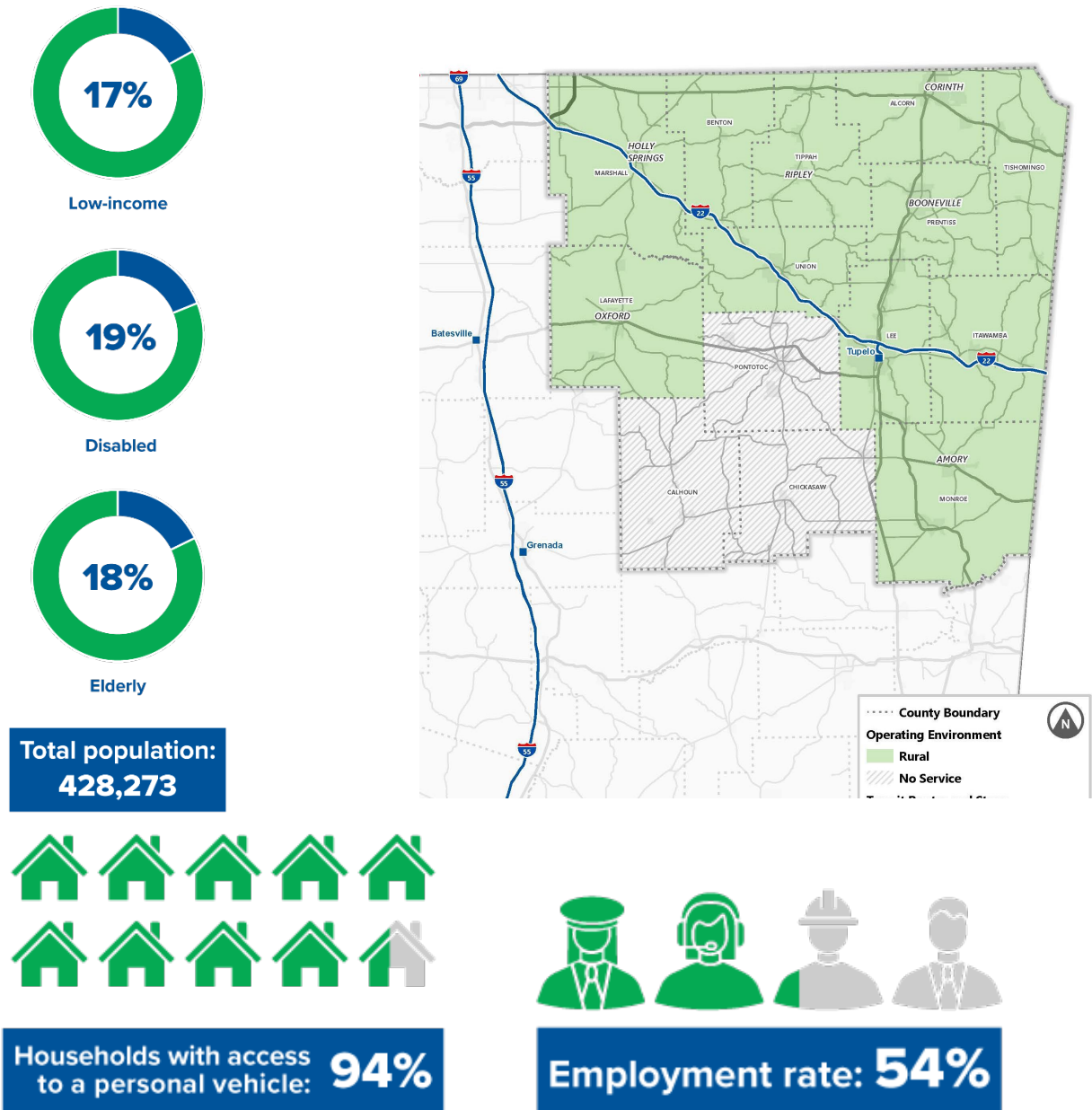


Aaron E. Henry Community Center (DARTS) in Clarksdale, Mississippi

5.4 NITA

Formerly known as Ride the Smile, the NITA serves fourteen (14) counties in northeastern Mississippi. NITA provides access to key destinations and supports regional mobility in eleven of these counties. The following three counties do not have transit services available – Calhoun, Chickasaw, and Pontotoc. A map and demographics of the NITA region is shown in **Figure 20**.

Figure 20. NITA Region



5.4.1 URBAN

There are no urban areas in the NITA region.

5.4.2 RURAL

Seven public transportation providers operate in the NITA region. Only two of these providers offer transportation services to the public, with the remaining providers offering transportation services to their own clients. Public transportation services are operated and administered by a variety of agencies serving public and specialized populations with unique mobility needs. The following is a list of rural transportation providers in the NITA region:

Climb-Up, Incorporated is a private, nonprofit organization based in Tupelo (Lee County) that provides demand response services for their own clients to access adult day center and other caregiving services. Clients must be eligible for Medicaid services and/or have an intellectual or developmental disability. These services are available in seven counties.

Lee County Multipurpose for the Elderly is a private, nonprofit organization based in Tupelo (Lee County) that serves as a subcontractor to Three Rivers Planning and Development District. Lee County provides demand response services to access their adult day center, social activities, and hot meals. These services are provided within the county.

Northeast Mississippi Community Services, Incorporated is based in Booneville (Prentiss County) and offers demand response services for the public with a focus on elderly, disabled, and low-income residents. These services connect residents to destinations across eight counties. NEMCS provides purchased transportation for 5310 recipient Timber Hills Mental Health clients and senior services for previous 5310 recipient Alcorn County Human Resource Agency. NEMCS also operates Tupelo Transit, a demand response service that operates solely within the city of Tupelo.



Tupelo Transit vans in Tupelo, Mississippi

City of Oxford/ Oxford University Transit Management is based in Oxford (Lafayette County) and offers fixed route and demand response services for the general public within city limits. They are used to help students navigate and access campus facilities at the University of Mississippi, while door-to-door demand response services serve the public, with a focus on elderly and disabled residents, to help them access medical appointments, shopping centers, pharmacy, and other destinations. **Appendix C – Rural Agency Profiles** provides more information on the Oxford University Transit Management system.

Region IV Timber Hills Mental Health Services is a private, nonprofit organization that provides demand response services for their own clients to help them access crisis centers, mental health therapy, and substance abuse treatment in five counties. Timber Hills Mental Health Services also purchase services from 5310 recipient NEMCS.

Three Rivers Planning and Development District (TRPDD) is a nonprofit organization governed by a Board of Directors that serves as a liaison between local government and the federal and state programs that fund community services. The planning district facilitates demand response services across eight counties for the Medicaid Waiver program in Mississippi, as well as for the Area on Aging for supporting elderly and low-income residents. TRPDD subcontracts with Lee County to provide senior services in Tupelo.

5.4.3 SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE NITA REGION

Though coverage is sparse in the NITA region, transportation providers offer several options in areas with transit service – fixed route, complementary paratransit, and demand response services. Public transit ridership in the NITA region is strong considering the lack of coverage – the region has the most rural transit ridership in the state. A profile of transit users in the NITA region is shown in **Figure 21** and trip purposes are shown in **Figure 22**.

Figure 21. Transit Users in the NITA Region

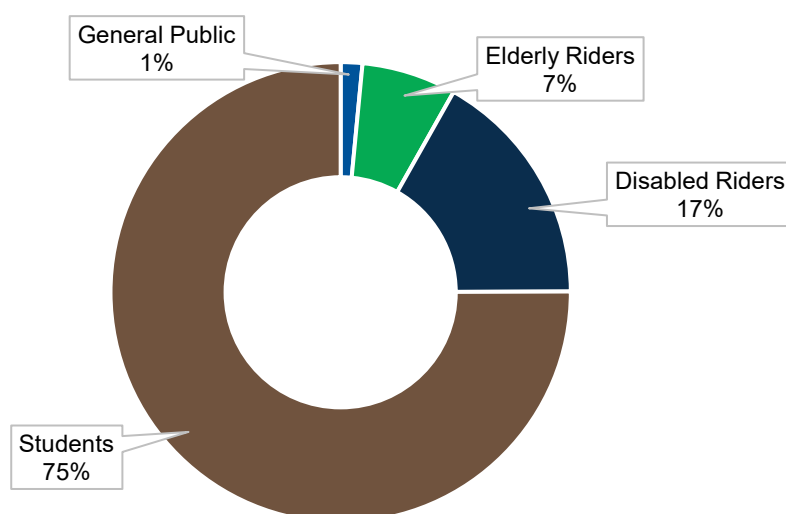
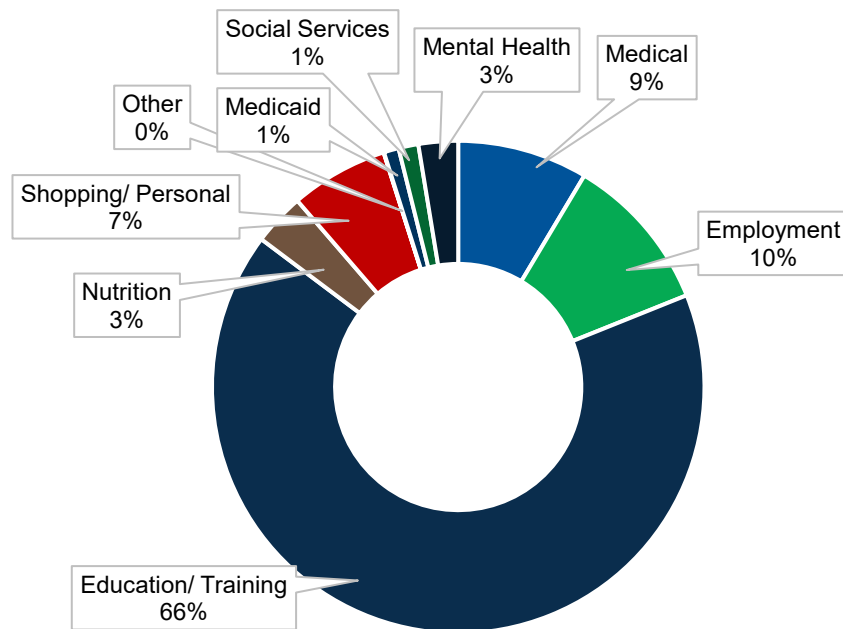


Figure 22. NITA Trip Purposes



Transportation services in this region are aimed at connecting students, workers, and individuals with healthcare needs to essential destinations. This alignment reflects regional demographics, considering the student population and those reliant on healthcare and social services. However, despite targeting these key destinations, public engagement reveals that significant barriers for residents remain.

The following are key destinations for transit agencies in the NITA region:

- University of Mississippi
- Hospitals and clinics
- Retail & grocery supercenters
- Employment

Those who do not use public transit in the NITA region implied there is not only a lack of service but also misunderstanding how to use transit as well as inaccessible information about transit services. The mobility management team in the NITA region faces similar challenges with the rural, isolated nature of the region. The lack of funding and resources in some towns and counties makes it difficult for some areas to provide local match for establishing transit service.

There is a notable amount of intercity travel in the NITA region, with most residents traveling between cities one or more times per week. Most intercity travel is for employment and school in personal vehicles. This shows a significant need for regional services as essential destinations are often located outside of a resident's home community.

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When asked about public transit improvements needed in the NITA region, residents stated they wanted to see expansions in transportation coverage and more intercity connections.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

Coordination with the University of Mississippi, North Mississippi Regional Center, and community organizations to provide accessible transportation services tailored to students, individuals with disabilities, and local workers.

- The North Mississippi Regional Center supports university field experiences while contributing to specialized transit efforts, and local employers help ensure that job-related transportation needs are met.
- Coordination with Councils on Aging has been pursued to enable client mobility, although many COAs struggle to obtain vehicles, limiting participation despite the demonstrated need.

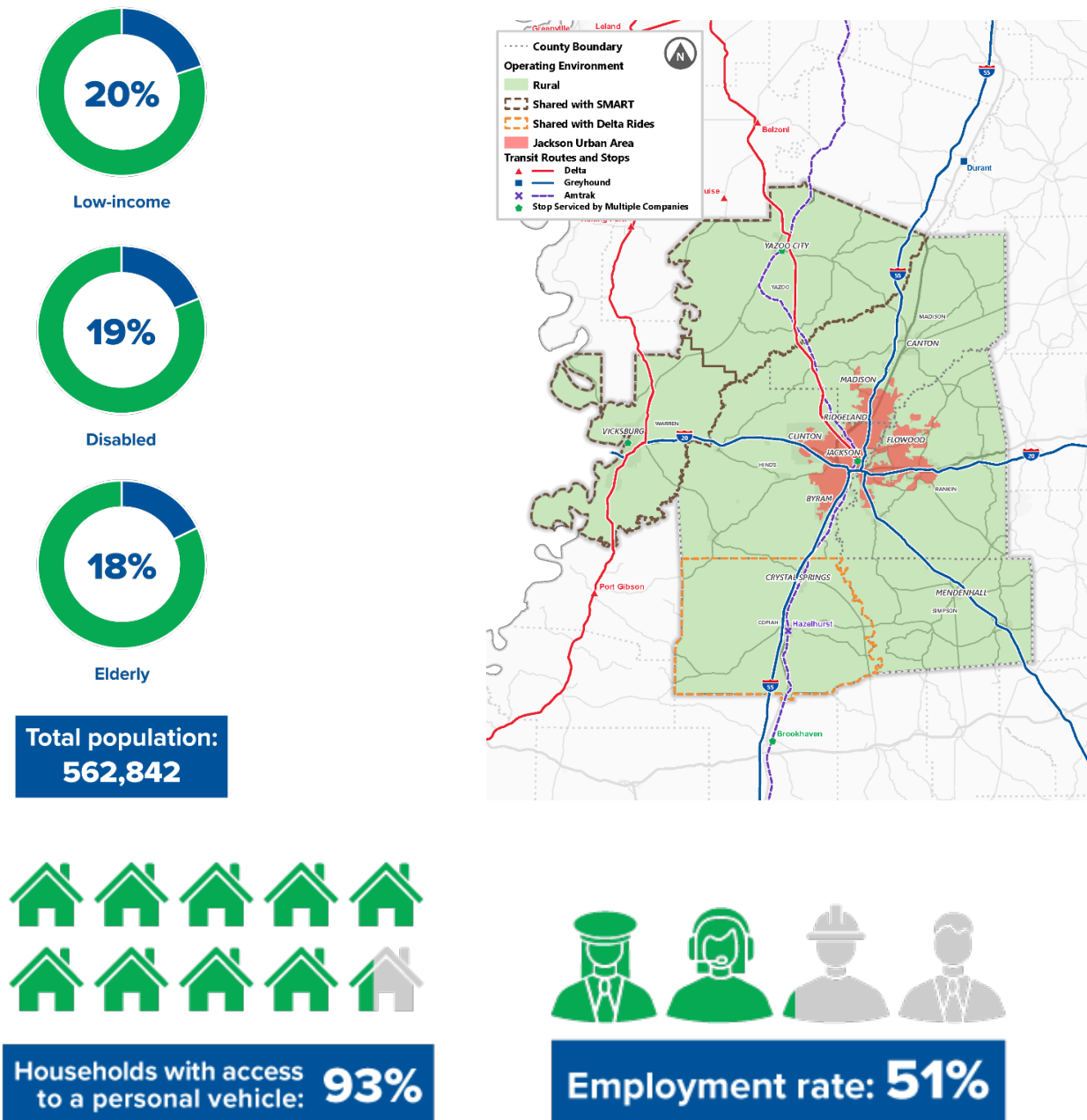


Oxford University Transit is the Mobility Manager for the NITA region

5.5 TRANS-CON

The Trans-Con region serves nine counties in central Mississippi. The region includes both urban and rural areas, anchored by Jackson, the state capital and largest metropolitan center in Mississippi. Intercity connectivity is also supported by Amtrak service in Jackson and regional bus carriers, further linking this region to statewide and out-of-state destinations. As one of the most populous and economically active areas in Mississippi, the Trans-Con Region plays a vital role in statewide transit coordination and planning. A map of the Trans-Con region is shown in **Figure 23**.

Figure 23. Trans-Con Region



5.5.1 URBAN

The Jackson Urban Area, with a population of 377,693, spans Hinds, Madison, and Rankin counties and is currently served by JTRAN. However, as a department of the City of Jackson, JTRAN's fixed route public transportation services are limited to areas within city limits. Additional details on the JTRAN system can be found in **Appendix B – Urban Agency Profiles**.

In March 2024, the JTRAN system underwent a comprehensive redesign as part of the *ConnectJXN: Transit Plan*. The goal of the redesign was to simplify service and offer more direct routes to key destinations. The initiative also included several system enhancements: a redesigned website, improved bus shelters, onboard stop announcements, real-time vehicle tracking, and trip planning tools. These improvements were designed to make the system more accessible, user-friendly, and efficient for riders and stakeholders alike.

Further investments (**Figure 25**) in JTRAN are outlined in the **2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)**, developed by the CMPDD. The plan proposes a more regional approach to public transportation, built on four key components:

- Redesign JTRAN System;
- Implement the ONELINE Project;
- Introduce Suburban Local and Express Routes; and
- Maintain and Improve On-Demand services

To achieve these goals, the CMPDD will collaborate with local governments throughout the region to identify strategies, form partnerships, and explore opportunities for establishing a regional public transportation network.

JTRAN requires the replacement of aging revenue vehicles to support continued growth and to maintain service quality. Currently, 30% of the fixed-route fleet and all demand-response vehicles have met or exceeded their Useful Life Benchmarks (ULBs), placing them out of compliance with SGR standards. Moreover, new and existing roadways within the service area should be designed to accommodate public transportation by ensuring safe multimodal connections, improving access, and meeting ADA standards. Collaborating with local departments, peer transit agencies, and other

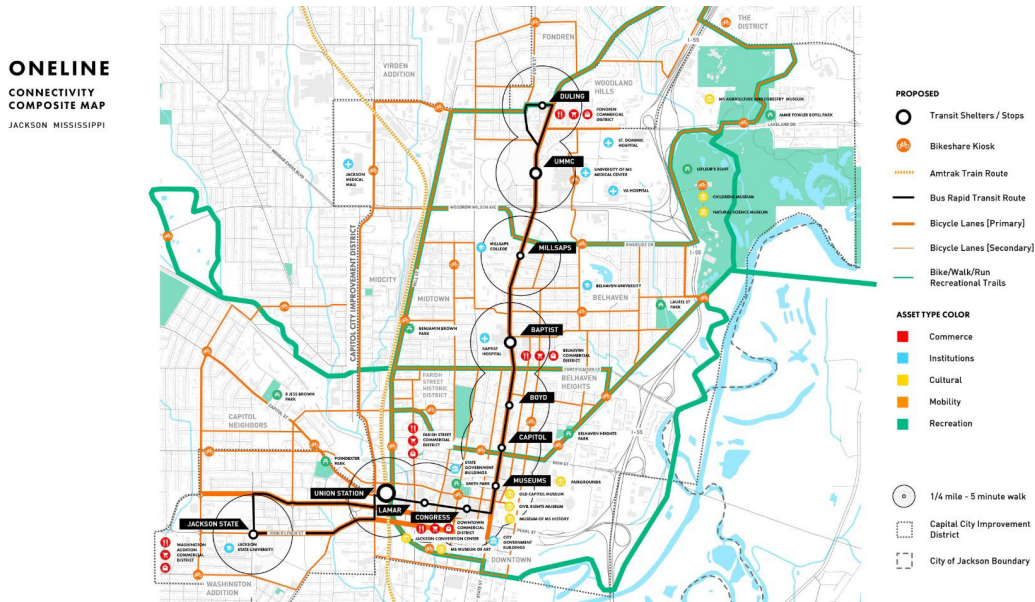
City of Jackson ONELINE Project

The City of Jackson is working on the ONELINE project—a 5-mile multi-modal corridor connecting neighborhoods, institutions, and economic hubs (**Figure 24**). At its core is a BRT system running from the Fondren area through Downtown to Jackson State University. The project will bring new infrastructure that supports walkable, transit-friendly development and meets growing demand for urban connectivity. It is expected to boost development and job opportunities in Jackson. In 2019, the city received a \$1 million grant from the FTA to plan for transit-oriented development along the corridor.

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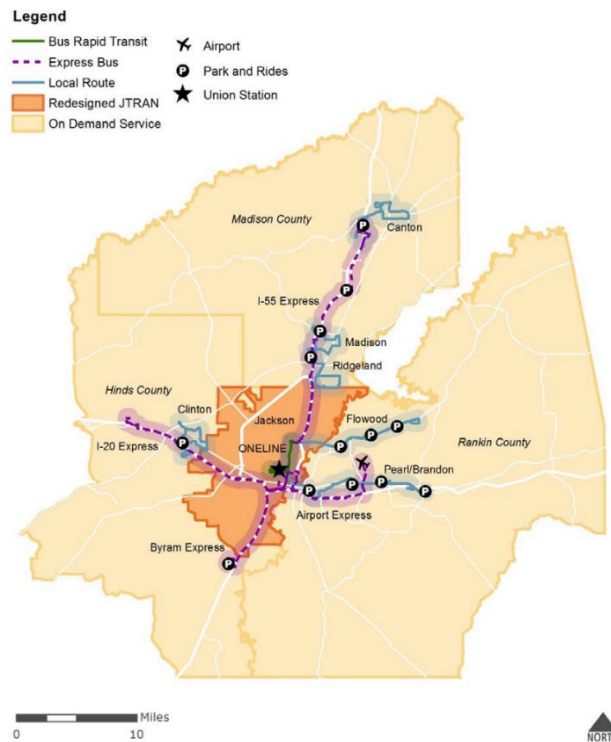
stakeholders is an approach to overcome these challenges and leverage economies of scale to potentially reduce procurement costs.

Figure 24. ONELINE Connectivity Map



JTRAN Main Terminal

Figure 25. Jackson Regional Transit Framework



Key Destinations in the Trans-Con region are:

- University of Mississippi Medical Center
- Baptist Hospital
- St. Dominic Hospital
- Jackson Heart Study
- Methodist Rehabilitation Center
- Jackson Medical Mall
- Fresenius Kidney Care
- Jackson Hinds Comprehensive Health
- Shopping Centers
- Senior and Community Centers
- MDOT

5.5.2 RURAL

The Trans-Con region features a blend of rural landscapes and small towns, where access to reliable transportation is vital for residents to reach essential services. Nine public transportation programs comprise the rural transportation network, with many providers providing trips to and from the Jackson metropolitan area.

Public transportation in these rural areas is primarily provided by a network of county-based human resource agencies and community action organizations. These agencies offer services tailored to the unique needs of rural populations, ensuring connectivity to medical facilities, educational institutions, employment centers, and other critical destinations.

The following is a list of the transportation providers in the Trans-Con region:

Copiah County Human Resource Agency is a private, nonprofit organization based in Hazlehurst that offers demand response services for the general public, with a focus on the elderly and individuals with disabilities, across three counties. Trips are provided to connect residents to medical facilities, shopping opportunities, daily meal provision, and homemaker assistance.

Harbor House of Jackson, Incorporated is a private, nonprofit organization based in Jackson that offers demand response services for their clients in Hinds County to connect them with substance abuse treatment and therapy.



Hinds County Human Resource Agency is a private, nonprofit organization based in Jackson and dedicated to eradicating poverty and empowering the residents of Hinds County. HCHRA provides demand response services to the general public, focusing on seniors and individuals with disabilities, to connect them with medical facilities and shopping centers.

Jackson Medical Mall Foundation is a private, nonprofit organization based in Jackson (Hinds County) that offers demand response services to their clients (primarily elderly and disabled clients in three counties) to access cancer and dialysis treatments. These services are provided through contractual arrangements with 5310/5311 and private transit providers in partnership with JMMF and the City of Jackson Planning Department.

Madison County Citizen Service Agency is a local government organization based in Canton that offers demand response services to the general public.

N-Route (also known as Vicksburg Area Transit System) is based in Vicksburg (Warren County) and offers demand response services in the City of Vicksburg. There are four routes that operate weekday service connecting seniors to their desired destinations. N-Route provides NEMT services and purchases services from 5310 recipient River Ridge Mental Health.

River Ridge Behavioral Health (formerly known as Warren-Yazoo Mental Health) is a private, nonprofit company based in Vicksburg that provides demand response services to their clients across six counties. The primary trip purpose is to access mental health services. River Ridge contracts with the following four agencies to provide purchased services – Bolivar County Council on Aging, Claiborne County Human Resource Agency, Natchez Transit, and N-Route.

South Central Community Action Agency is based in Jackson (Hinds County) and offers demand response services across seven counties to the general public to help them access medical appointments, employment centers in Simpson County, senior centers, shopping, and home delivered meals. South Central Community Action Agency provides NEMT services through contracts with Modivcare and MTM, Inc. South Central provides premium services in the City of Jackson for disabled individuals to have access to after-hours services including transportation to the airport. This service is significant because JTRAN does not provide service to the airport, and taxis/ rideshare companies are not accessible for disabled riders.

Willowood Developmental Center is a private, nonprofit organization based in Jackson (Hinds County) that offers demand response services for their clients with intellectual or developmental disabilities across three counties to provide them with transportation services for group homes, day centers, and training opportunities. Willowood Developmental Center also has contractual agreements for purchased services with other transportation providers.

5.5.3 SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE TRANS-CON REGION

Though the Trans-Con region is the most populous in the state, transit dependence remains low with less than a third of the population using these services on a routine basis to access primarily medical and shopping destinations. Most riders report transit trips taking 20 minutes or longer one way, with one reporting more than 80 minutes. This indicates that using transit in the region can be time-consuming, which may discourage frequent use of the transport system.

Figure 26 shows the composition of public transit users in the Trans-Con region, while

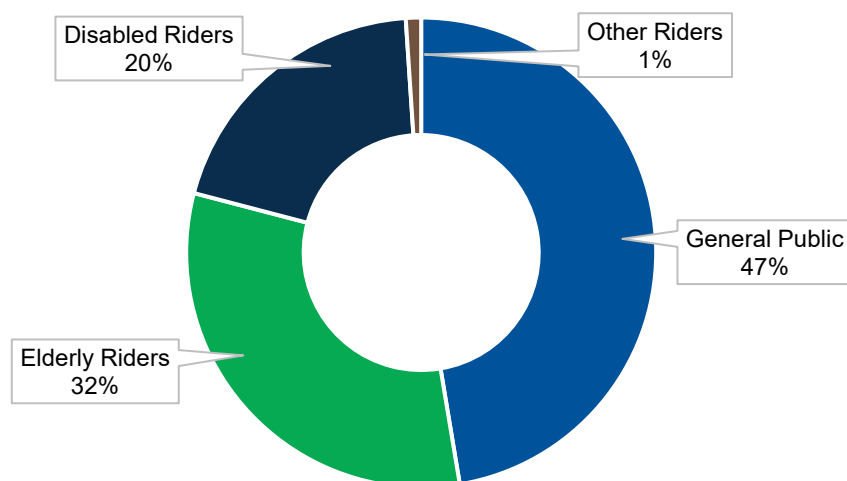


Figure 27 shows the various trip purposes for these riders. Those who use public transit services report daily trips for shopping, work, and medical purposes. Common destinations in the Trans-Con region are employment centers, medical centers, and shopping/recreation centers.

Figure 26. Transit Users in the Trans-Con Region

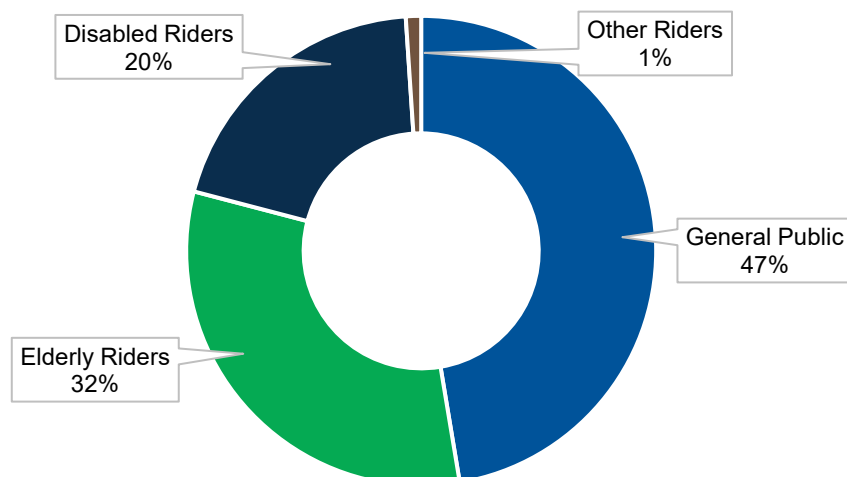
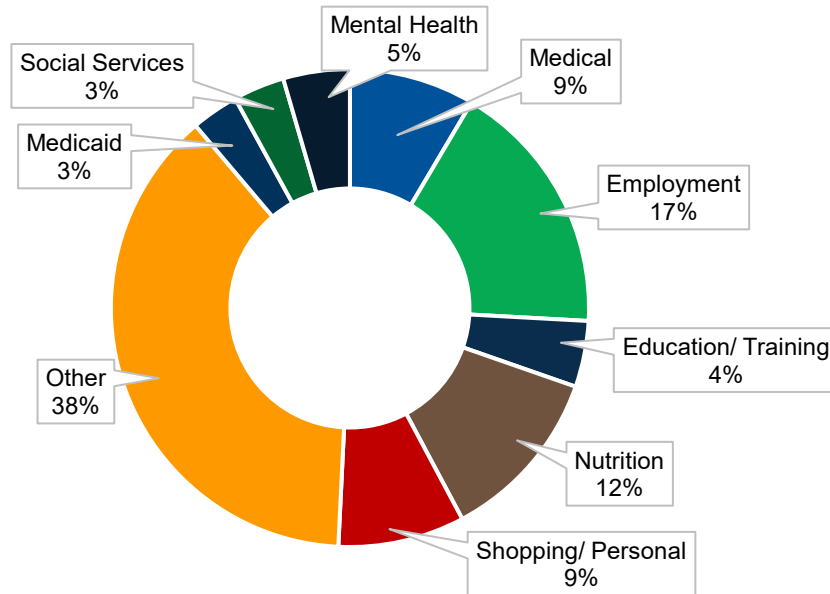
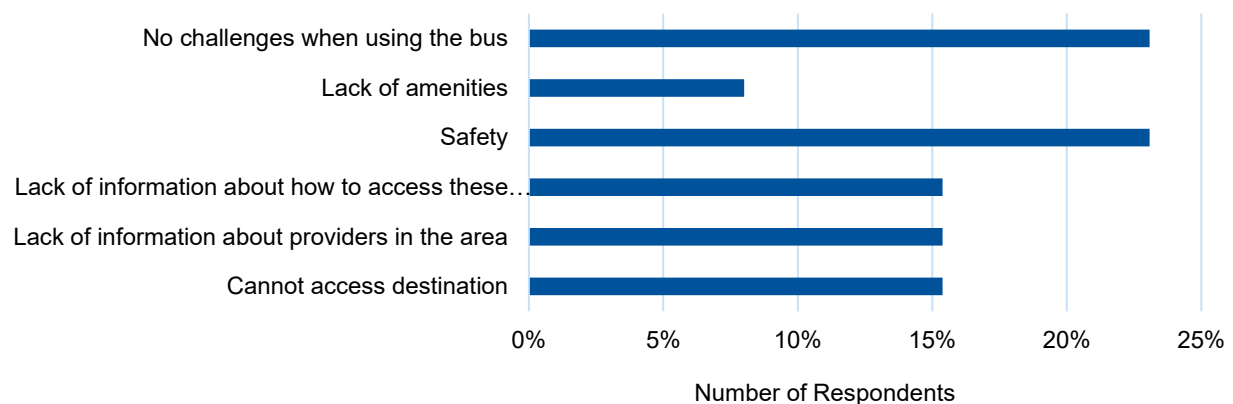


Figure 27. Trans-Con Trip Purpose



Safety is a primary concern for some public transportation users. Additional challenges faced by public transit users in the Trans-Con region are shown in **Figure 28**.

Figure 28. Transit Challenges in Trans-Con Region



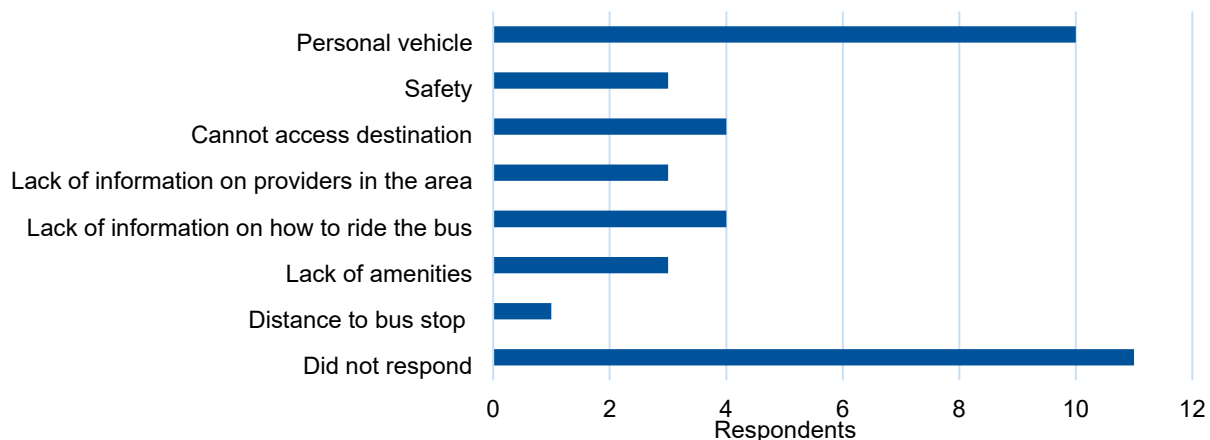
The Trans-Con region's mobility management team faces additional challenges with providing service in the region. Some examples include:

- Lack of information on other available providers and services in the area;
- Driver shortages;
- Political barriers when expanding transit coverage in neighboring towns and counties; and
- Lack of resources for assisting more vulnerable clients and route planning.

Intercity travel in the Trans-Con region is frequent, with more than half of commuters traveling between cities for work, shopping, and other social purposes one or more times each week. Most residents cite personal vehicle access as the reason they do not use public transit services. This supports the need for ongoing coordination with regional providers and improvements to intercity transit connections

Those who do not use public transportation services cite personal vehicle access as their primary reason. Other reasons include lack of information and lack of access to destinations. **Figure 29** shows additional reasons why public transportation usage is limited.

Figure 29. Reasons for Not Using Transit in Trans-Con Region



Trans-Con residents would like to see the following improvements made to public transit services:

- More transit options, like premium transit and rideshare;
- Improved safety;
- Increase fleet size;
- Additional routes and destinations;
- Well maintained buses and improved services; and
- Shorter wait times.

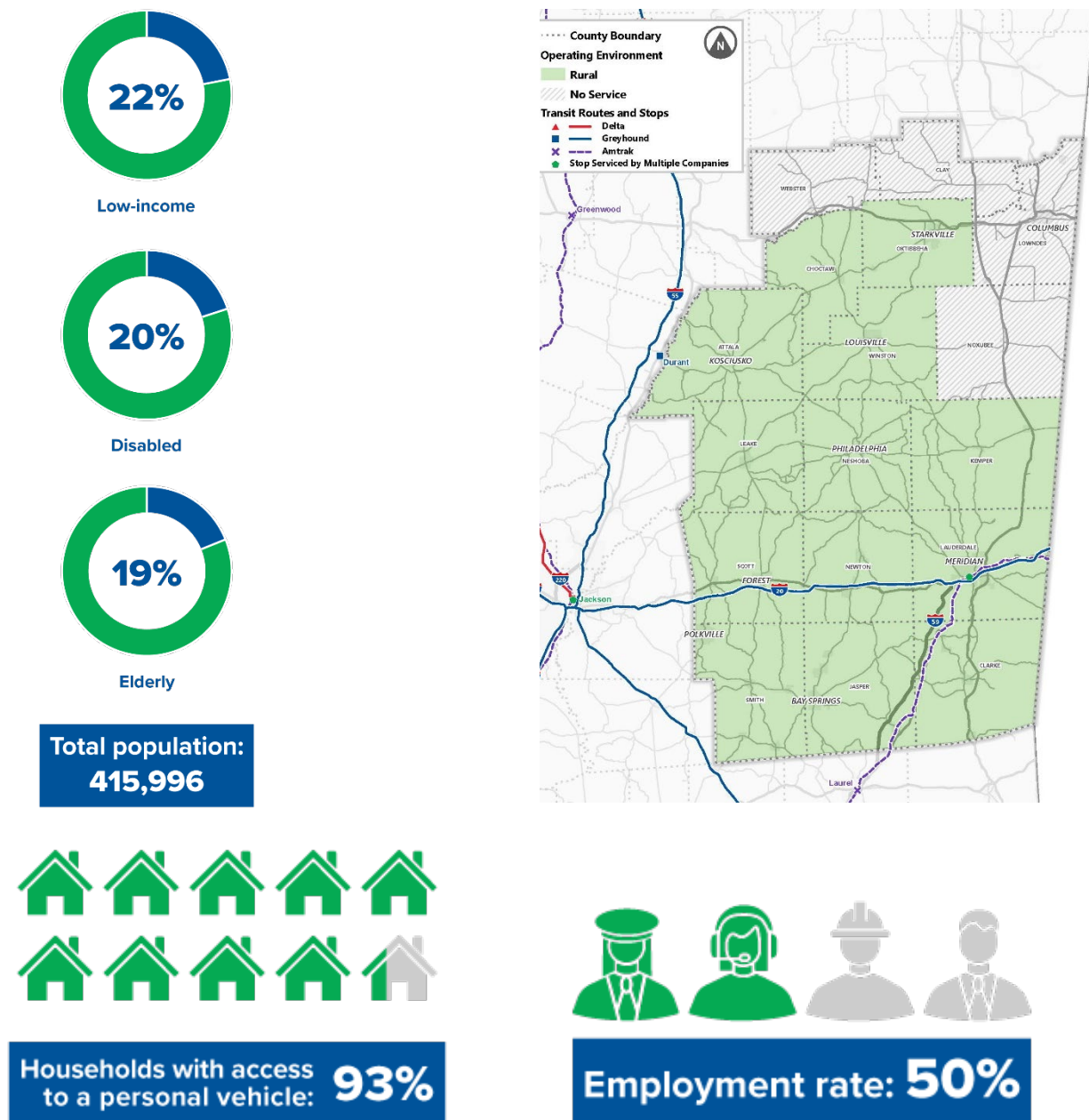


Downtown Jackson, Mississippi

5.6 EZTAG

The EZTAG region is comprised of sixteen (16) counties in central eastern Mississippi. EZTAG facilitates access to vital services and promotes regional mobility for residents in twelve of these counties. The following four counties do not have transportation services available – Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, and Webster. The program collaborates closely with local communities, as well as regional mental health and rehabilitation providers, to ensure comprehensive transportation solutions. EZTAG’s demographic information and a map of the region is shown in **Figure 30**.

Figure 30. EZTAG Region



5.6.1 URBAN

There are no urban areas located in the EZTAG Region.

5.6.2 RURAL

Five public transportation providers serve the rural transportation network in the EZTAG region, with most providers operating in multiple counties through the following service types:

East Central Planning and Development District is a nonprofit organization governed by a Board of Directors that serves as a liaison between local government and the federal and state programs that fund community services. The planning district facilitates demand response services across nine counties for the Medicaid Waiver program in Mississippi, as well as the Area on Aging for elderly residents.

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians/Choctaw Transit offers demand response, commuter, and NEMT services to the general public, including the City of Meridian, and eight tribal communities in five counties. The agency also has offices in both Choctaw and Meridian Union State where passengers can connect to Greyhound and Amtrak.

Noxubee County Human Resource Agency provides demand response services in three counties for residents to access medical appointments, education services, and nutrition within the county. Noxubee County Human Resource Agency also offers NEMT services through contracts with Modivcare and MTM, Inc.

Philadelphia Transit offers demand response services for the general public in eight counties. These services help elderly and disabled residents' access medical services, employment services, and/or other needs-based services in the area. Philadelphia Transit also offers NEMT services through contracts with Modivcare and MTM, Inc.

Starkville-MSU Area Rapid Transit offers fixed route and demand response services for the Mississippi State University campus, as well as the city of Starkville. There are five fixed routes that serve Starkville year-round and four fixed routes that serve MSU between August and May. Demand response services are provided based on need for destinations outside of these fixed routes. **Appendix C – Rural Agency Profiles** provides more information on the Starkville-MSU system.

5.6.3 SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE EZTAG REGION

Transportation services are varied in the EZTAG region, with fixed route, complementary paratransit, and demand response services available for residents in the area. Transit usage is frequent in the region, with more than half of those surveyed reporting daily use for accessing school and work trips. Average one-way trip times in the EZTAG region are between 10-20 minutes, with many riders needing only 5-10 minutes to access their destination.

Figure 31 shows the composition of transit users in the EZTAG region, while **Figure 32** shows the various trip purposes for these riders.

Figure 31. Transit Users in the EZTAG Region

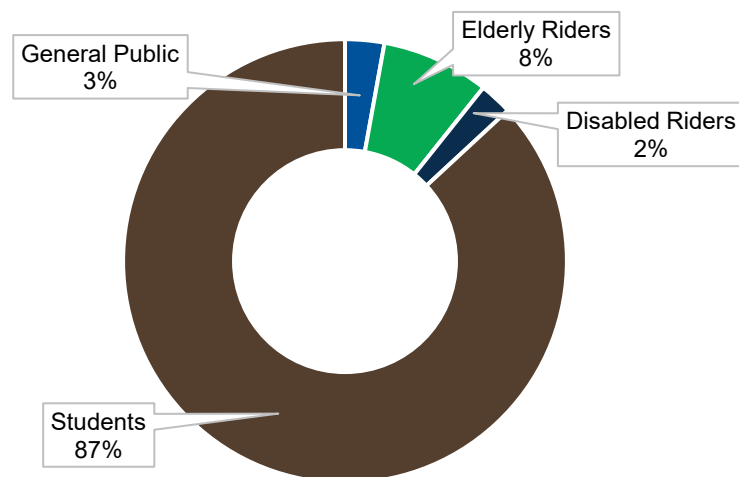
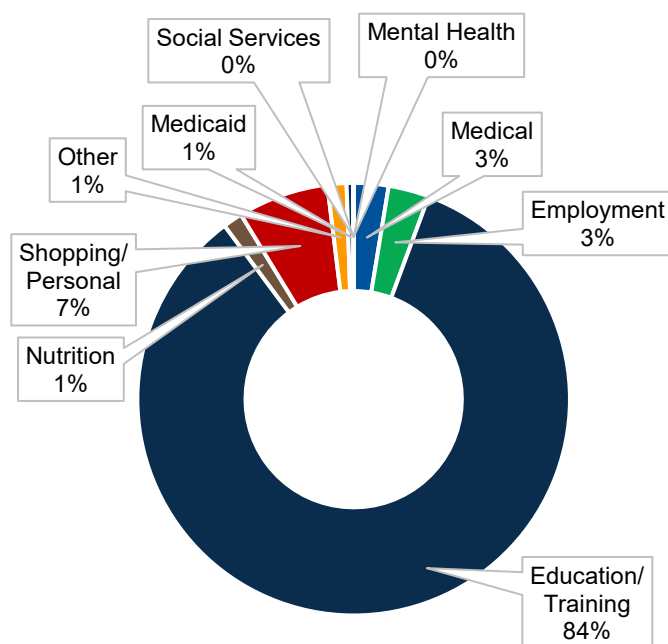


Figure 32. EZTAG Trip Purposes



Most riders reported no challenges with using public transportation services. The large majority of those who reported challenges stated that they could not access their desired destinations, followed by issues like the buses not following a consistent schedule, safety concerns, and lack of amenities. The EZTAG region's mobility management team faces additional challenges – like political barriers when expanding transit coverage and a lack of providers in the region who can accommodate disabled riders.

The most common destinations for transportation are school and work. This aligns with typical usage patterns and supports focusing on route design and service hours around these trip purposes.

EZTAG residents travel between cities on a weekly and monthly basis. Most intercity travel is for social or vacation purposes, followed by work and medical appointments. The variety of destinations points to a regional need for robust cross-community transit connections, particularly as jobs and medical facilities are concentrated in larger urban areas.

Those who do not use public transit cited personal vehicle access as the primary reason. Other reasons include limited access to destinations and lack of information about providers in the area.

Key Destinations in the EZTAG region are:

- Dialysis centers
- Regional medical facilities
- Specialty medical centers
- Shopping centers

EZTAG residents would like to see the following improvements to public transportation:

- Increase fleet size;
- New fleet vehicles;
- Improved route timing;
- Additional route stops and destinations;
- Advance technology; and
- Infrastructure improvements.

The following is a list of key partnerships and initiatives in the EZTAG region:

- EZTAG coordinates with local communities and rehabilitation providers to deliver accessible and specialized transit services, particularly for individuals with disabilities. It partners with East Mississippi Community College to support student transportation, especially for those enrolled in career-technical programs. These partnerships fill critical mobility gaps for both students and individuals with physical or cognitive limitations, enhancing access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities across the region.
- Starkville Mass Transit launched a successful pilot program with Beep in 2024 to explore autonomous shuttles. Though the pilot program has ended, Starkville Mass Transit hopes to be able to continue exploring innovative transportation services with Beep and other organizations that promote emerging technologies.

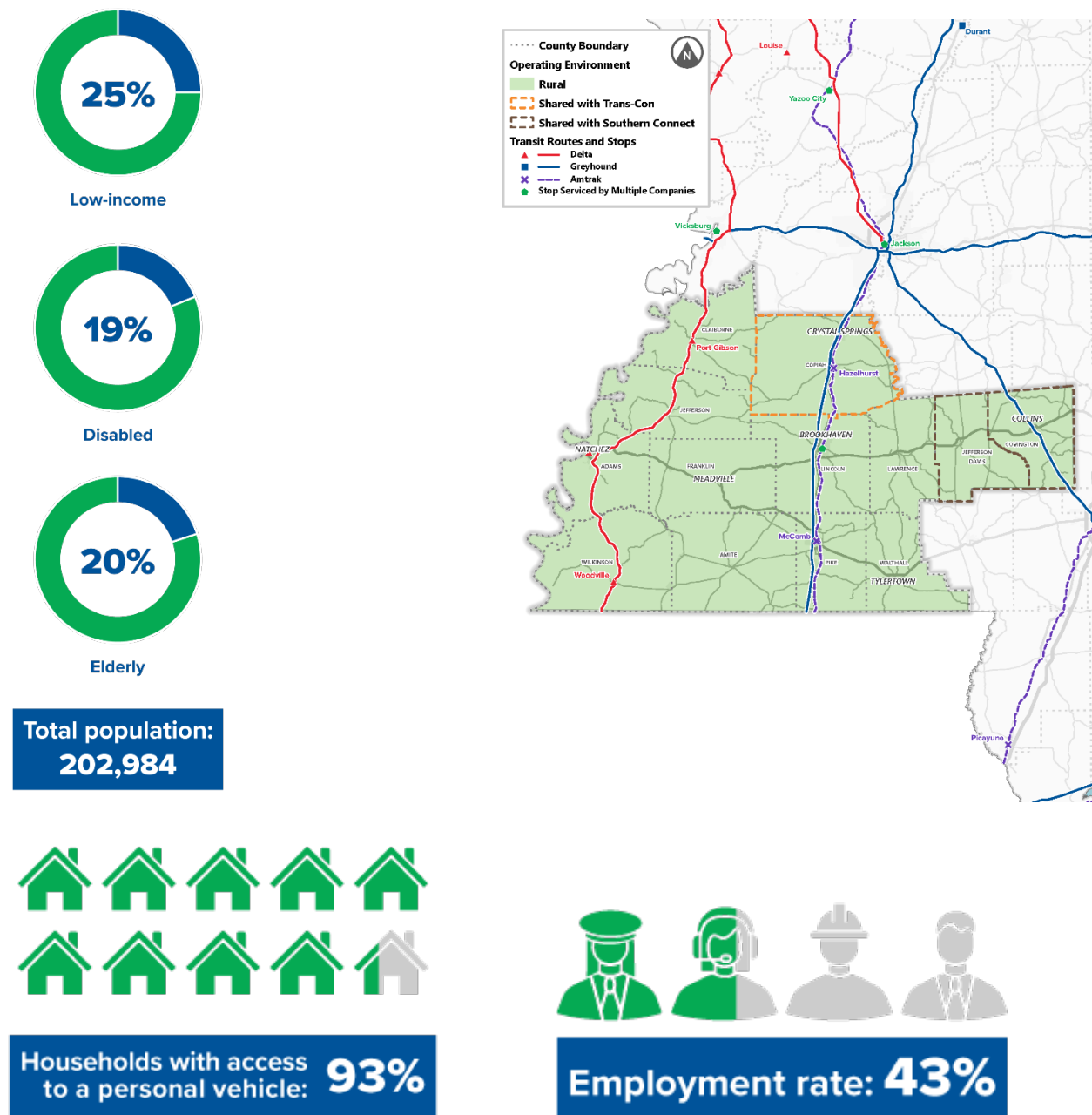


Starkville MSU Rapid Area Transit bus stop on Mississippi State University campus

5.7 SMART

The SMART region serves thirteen (13) counties in southwestern Mississippi. It connects people across southwest Mississippi by coordinating transportation services with local transit providers. Focused on their mission statement of improving access to jobs and services, the agency ensures efficient mobility, adapts to community needs, and provides accessible transportation options for all, including those with disabilities. Through collaboration and effective resource use, SMART aims to meet the region's mobility needs and enhance quality of life. A map and demographics of the SMART region is shown in **Figure 33**.

Figure 33. SMART Region



5.7.1 URBAN

There are no urban areas in the SMART Region.

5.7.2 RURAL

Five public transportation providers operate the rural network in the SMART region. Most of these providers offer transportation services to the public to bring riders to destinations across multiple counties. The following is a list of the rural transportation providers in the SMART region:

Claiborne County Human Resource Agency is based in Port Gibson (Claiborne County) and offers demand response services for the general public to connect riders with their destinations across three counties. The agency also offers NEMT services through contracts with Modivcare and MTM, Inc.

Copiah County Human Resource Agency is based in Hazlehurst (Copiah County) and offers demand response services for the general public with a focus on elderly and disabled residents. These services connect riders with meal services and delivery.

Mount Zion Economic Community Center is based in Summit (Pike County) and offers demand response services to the general public to connect riders in three counties with their adult day center and training services. Mount Zion Economic Community Center also offers NEMT services through contracts with Modivcare and MTM, Inc.

Natchez Senior Citizens Multipurpose Center is based in Natchez (Adams County) and provides demand response services for their own clients, focusing on elderly and disabled residents, to connect them with vital service points in Adams County and medical facilities in Jefferson, Warren, Hinds, and Rankin Counties. Natchez Senior Citizens Multipurpose Center has a purchased services agreement with Natchez Transit System, who provides demand response services for their clients.

Natchez Transit System is based in Natchez (Adams County) and provides demand response services that connect the general population in the county with vital destinations across seven counties. Natchez Transit System purchases services from Natchez Senior Citizens Multipurpose Center and also provides NEMT services through contracts with Modivcare and MTM, Inc.

5.7.3 SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE SMART REGION

The SMART region focuses on serving all residents, with four of the five transportation providers opening their services to the general public. With limited providers in the area, each transit agency has large, multi-county service areas to maximize coverage. Despite these efforts, SMART's ridership remains the lowest in the state. A profile of transit users is shown in **Figure 34** and trip purposes are provided in **Figure 35**.

Figure 34. Transit Users in the SMART Region

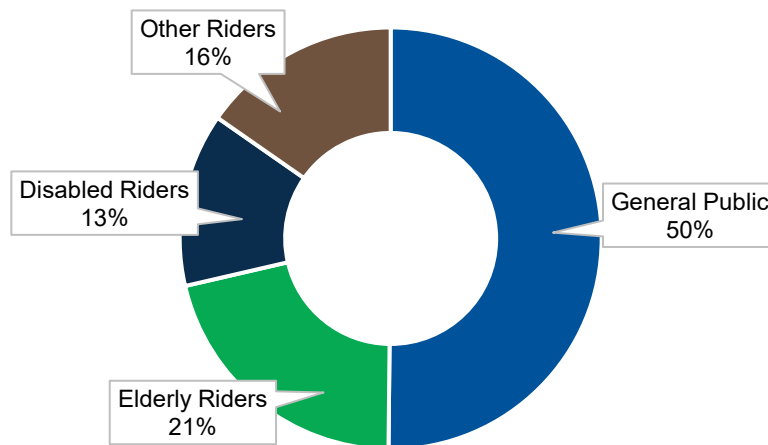
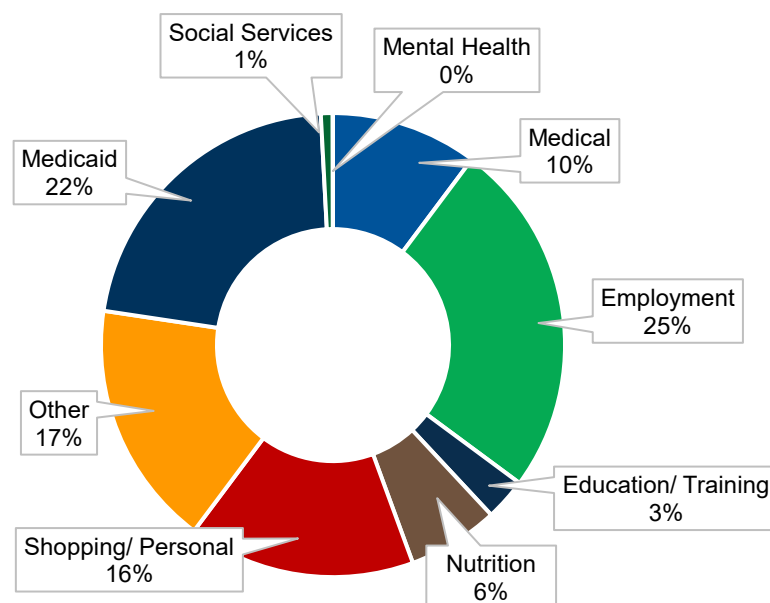


Figure 35. Trip Purposes in SMART Region



The most common destinations for transportation users are employment locations, medical services, shopping/personal travel. Public transit users claim to access these services with minimal challenge. Those who do not use public transportation services claim it is due to limited access to desired destinations. The SMART region is comprised of large areas with low-density development that results in long trips between destinations. The mobility management team in the SMART region faces challenges with rising fuel and labor costs when accessing these isolated rural areas.

Intercity travel varies in the region, with some residents traveling between cities one or more times a week, and others traveling sparingly. Personal vehicle usage in the SMART region is the lowest in the state, leaving some residents without transit options for traveling outside of their home community. Medical appointments are the most common reason for intercity travel, followed by nutrition and social/ vacation purposes. This indicates that intercity transportation in this region is needed to access healthcare and other necessities.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

- Natchez Transit System provides transportation for Signature Works (employment for the Blind), Southwest Mississippi Mental Health-Life Skills, Mississippi Department of Medicaid, Natchez Convention Center, Natchez Chamber of Commerce, Catholic Charities, and Natchez Housing Authority.

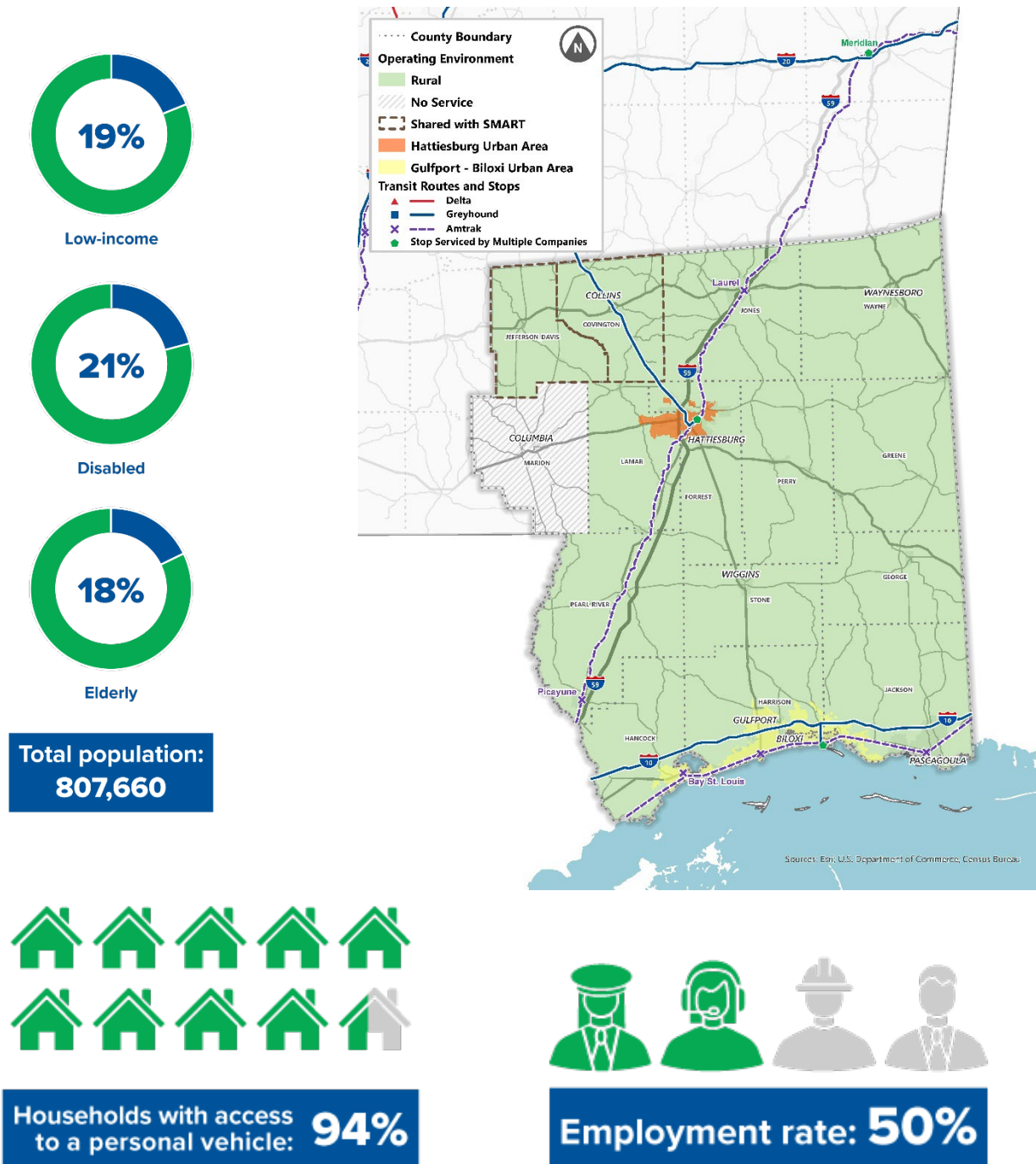


Downtown Natchez, Mississippi

5.8 SOUTHERN CONNECT

The Southern Connect Region serves fifteen (15) counties in southeastern Mississippi. It is the most populous region in the state with a mix of rural and urban landscapes and regional connectivity that is supported by a variety of local and regional transportation providers. Only one county (Marion) does not have transportation services available. A map and demographics of the Southern Connect region is shown in **Figure 36**.

Figure 36. Southern Connect Region



5.8.1 URBAN

Policy and planning documents play a key role in shaping transit strategy in the region. The Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Demand Index highlights high-demand zones along the Mississippi Sound where multimodal transit could be most effective. The GRPC Mobility Plan identifies twenty-three roadway segments operating at Level of Service D or worse, emphasizing the need to stabilize congestion for better transit scheduling. The Mobility Corridors study proposes twelve priority corridors and five new roadways, integrating Complete Streets elements to support public transit expansion. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements are addressed in the Emphasis Area plans, which target network gaps, safety, and accessibility across three counties, while the Intersection Emphasis Area identifies sixty-nine high-risk intersections, suggesting countermeasures to reduce crash severity in coordination with MDOT.

The MS Gulf Coast MPO Complete Streets Policy offers further guidance on integrating bike and pedestrian paths into road projects. The MS Gulf Coast 2045 Transit Development Plan (TDP) includes proposals such as an East-West Multimodal Corridor between Gulfport and Biloxi, with stakeholder input calling for an increased CTA presence in Pascagoula and adoption of a fully integrated digital platform for transit operations. The MS Gulf Coast Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) supports funding for many of these priorities.

GULFPORT – BILOXI URBAN AREA

The Gulf Coast Urban Area, with an urbanized population of 236,344 and a transit service area population of 124,940, is primarily served by the CTA, a transit authority created under MS Code § 21-27-11 & 13 (2024). CTA delivers fixed route, demand-response, and vanpool services throughout the Mississippi Gulf Coast, with primary coverage in Gulfport, Biloxi, and adjacent areas. The full route profile and system characteristics are included in **Appendix B – Urban Agency Profiles**.

CTA's service environment is shaped by both geographic constraints and limited operational funding. While it delivers fixed-route transit within its core service cities, regional connectivity is hindered by low-density corridors between population centers—such as the stretch between Ocean Springs and Moss Point—where service demand is insufficient to justify continued operations without federal support. A FEMA-funded pilot route once connected these cities but was discontinued when funding ended, illustrating the volatility of service expansion under temporary grants.

In response to these challenges, CTA is focusing on targeted and adaptive solutions. The agency operates demand-response programs—particularly in coordination with hospitals—to address specialized transit needs. Additionally, it manages an Enterprise vanpool program, subsidized with up to \$500 per van per month through government agency partnerships. While most vanpools serve public-sector employees, CTA is exploring private-sector integration and incentive-based programs with casinos and hotels.

Technology and operational modernization are also central to CTA's strategy. With a recent \$1 million federal investment, the agency is overhauling its outdated transit software systems and

implementing new platforms such as Remix to streamline planning, scheduling, and route management. This marks the first significant software upgrade in over two decades.

CTA has also explored innovative approaches to workforce development and driver training, including potential partnerships with local colleges to access simulator equipment. Though agency size and cost concerns remain barriers, such partnerships could offer scalable, localized training models. Additionally, CTA is examining facility-based improvements, such as converting adjacent properties into driver training centers and resilient bus staging areas in the event of storms or flooding.

Gulfport Intermodal Center

CTA is developing an intermodal center (**Figure 37**) on the edge of Gulfport to facilitate expanded transit services to the western region. The project, planned as a major partnership between CTA, the City of Pascagoula, and the County, would also include an Intermodal Hospital Facility. Under a proposed arrangement, CTA would secure a 40-year, no-cost lease for the facility, with operating costs covered by the hospital, significantly reducing financial burdens on CTA. Although previous applications for RAISE grant funding were unsuccessful, CTA plans to continue pursuing funding opportunities in future grant cycles.

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Figure 37. CTA Intermodal Center



HATTIESBURG URBAN AREA

The Hattiesburg Urbanized Area, with a population of approximately 82,730, encompasses portions of Forrest and Lamar counties and is served by Hub City Transit. Consistent with the service area structure of JTRAN, Hub City Transit's fixed-route operations are primarily confined to the municipal boundaries of the City of Hattiesburg. Additional information about Hub City Transit is available in **Appendix B – Urban Agency Profiles**. The 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan identifies the need for a regional assessment of public transportation systems to enhance service performance and explore innovative service delivery models. However, no substantial changes to the existing transit network are anticipated within the next five to ten years. Emphasis is instead being placed on improving multimodal coordination and integration to facilitate rural-to-urban connectivity and support broader urban mobility objectives. Realizing these outcomes will require securing additional financial resources to fund capital and operational improvements.

Hub City Transit is currently experiencing operational and capital challenges, particularly in fleet renewal. The replacement of aging vehicles remains a critical need. Although the agency was awarded a Low or No Emission Vehicle Program (Lo-No) grant to initiate a transition to electric buses, the identification of local matching funds remains a barrier. Moreover, the procurement of zero-emission vehicles and associated charging infrastructure is expected to be a multi-year process. System-wide enhancements are also warranted, including the installation of passenger amenities (e.g., benches and shelters), the development of a new transfer facility, and the deployment of real-time vehicle location technology. Additionally, there is interest in evaluating micro transit solutions to improve service coverage in lower-density areas. Advancing these initiatives will require enhanced interagency coordination, stakeholder engagement, and the development of sustainable funding partnerships.

5.8.2 RURAL

Eleven public transportation providers operate in the Southern Connect region. Only three of these entities provide transportation services to the general public. Many transportation providers in the Southern Connect region serve their own clients, many who are elderly and/or disabled residents. There are also two providers that promote Head Start programs that help families access early education programs. The following are rural transportation providers in the Southern Connect region:

City of Long Beach is based in Long Beach (Harrison County) that provides demand response shuttle services (LB Circuit) to their own clients with a focus on elderly and disabled residents. The City of Long Beach also provides NEMT services through contracts with Modivcare and MTM, Inc.

City of Lucedale is a public organization that provides special transportation demand response services to their own clients in Lucedale (George County) with a focus on elderly and disabled residents.

City of Wiggins is a public organization based in Wiggins (Stone County) that provides special transportation demand response services to their own clients with a focus on elderly and disabled residents.

Community Action of South Mississippi is a private, nonprofit organization based in Moss Point (Jackson County) that provides demand response services to their own clients for access to senior services and head start programs for children.

Community Development Incorporated is based in Richton (Perry County) and provides demand response services to the public to connect riders with mental health, behavioral health, adult day services, in-home medical care, and access to community-based services across fourteen counties.

D.J. Transit, Incorporated. is based in Laurel (Jones County) and offers demand response services to the public to connect riders with medical, employment, education, and recreation across five counties. D.J. Transit, Inc. also offers NEMT services through contracts with Modivcare and MTM, Inc.

Five County Child Development Program, Incorporated. is in Prentiss (Jefferson Davis County) provides curb-to-curb demand response services to the public to connect riders with critical destinations across six counties. Services are focused on elderly riders and children and families accessing Head Start programs. Five County Child Development Program, Inc. also provides NEMT services through contracts with Modivcare and MTM, Inc.

Harrison County Senior Resource Agency is a private, nonprofit organization that provides demand response services to their own clients to help them access seven senior centers in the area, as well as medical appointments, groceries, community services, and recreation activities.

Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources is a private, nonprofit organization located in Hattiesburg (Forrest County) and provides demand response services for their own clients to connect them with mental health resources. Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources has a purchased services agreement with Community Development Inc. and D.J. Transit, Inc.

Singing River Health System is a private, nonprofit organization based in Gautier (Jackson County) that provides demand response services to their own clients to help them access medical facilities and specialty medical care services in the county.

5.8.3 SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE SOUTHERN CONNECT REGION

Transportation services in the Southern Connect region are numerous and well connected. Despite this effort, ridership remains significantly low in the Southern Connect region when compared to other regions. A profile of transit users is shown in **Figure 38** and their trip purposes are provided in **Figure 39**.

Figure 38. Transit Users in the Southern Connect Region

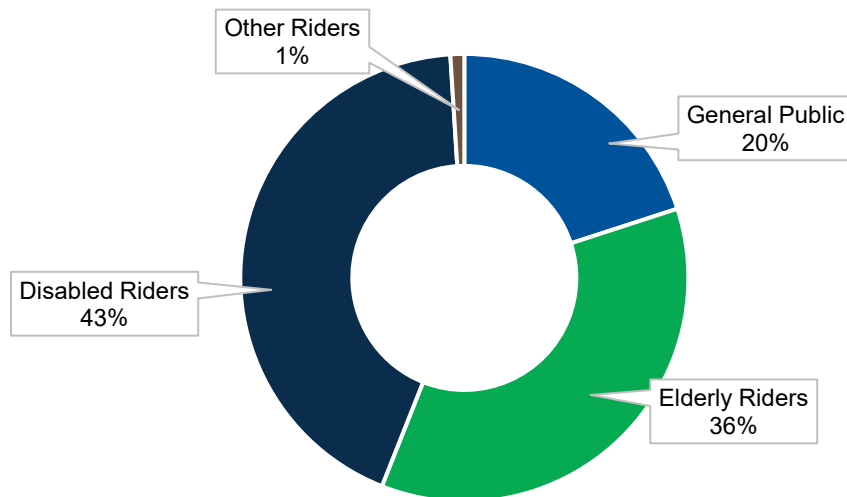
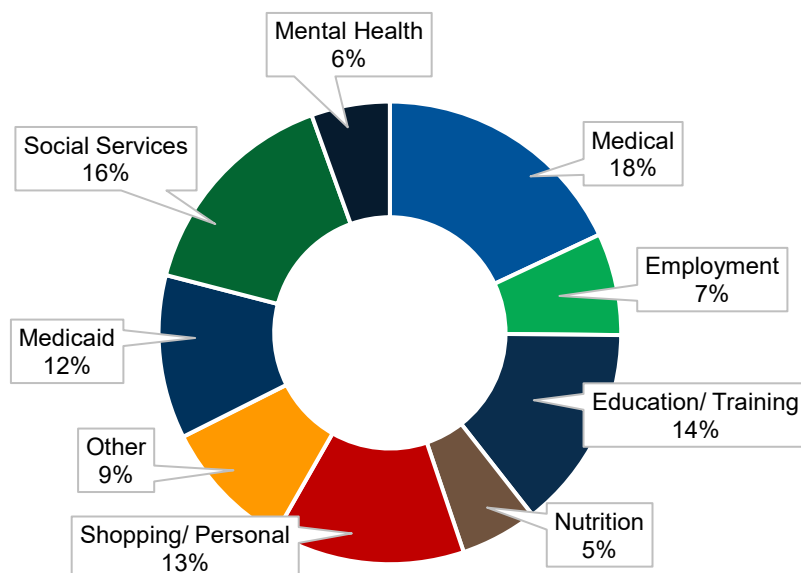


Figure 39. Southern Connect Trip Purposes



The most common destinations for transportation are medical facilities, education/training centers, and shopping centers. There is also a strong investment in human services in the Southern Connect region that allows residents to access human and social services.

While transit services are essential to many, public engagement in the area suggests that most residents do not use the system on a routine basis. Among those who do use transit services in the region, the frequency is high with most riders using services on a daily or weekly basis. These riders represent those without alternative transportation options, such as seniors, low-income workers, or people with disabilities. One-way trips for these riders are short, averaging 10-20

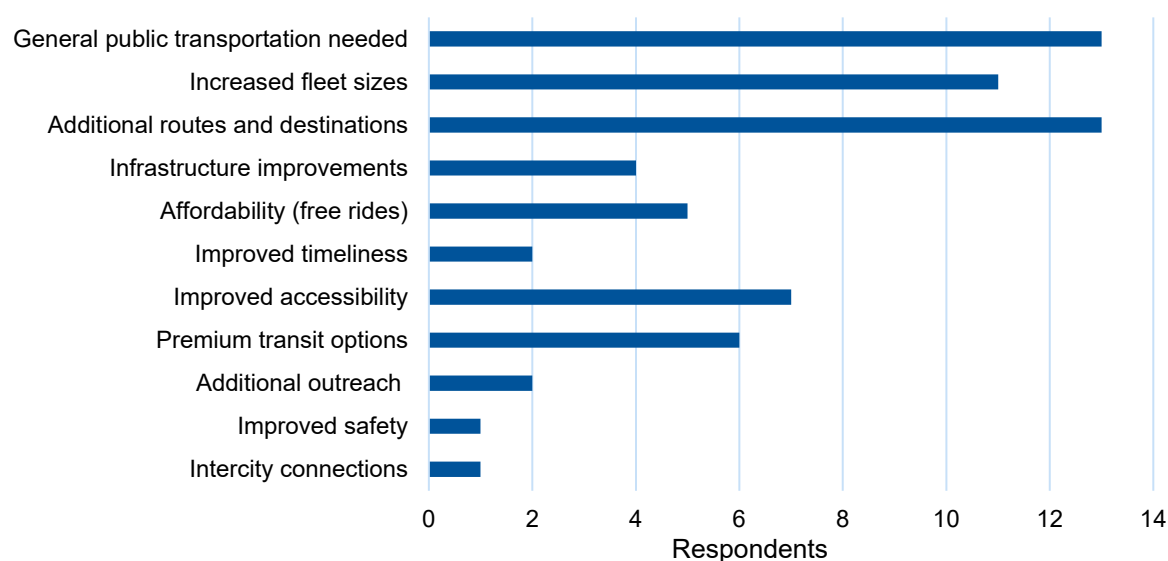
minutes and up to 40 minutes. Services are moderately efficient for many local trips in the region but may be less convenient for those living at the ends of the service area or to those who have complex travel needs.

Public transit users face several challenges when accessing these services, the primary challenge being limited access to destinations and a lack of amenities, followed by safety concerns and a lack of information on providers and service opportunities. Potential riders cite the same reasons for not utilizing the public transit system. Additionally, the mobility management team in the Southern Connect region is challenged with finding adequate resources to serve the general public in some areas.

Intercity travel remains significantly high with residents in the Southern Connect region with more than half of residents traveling between cities one or more times per week and another quarter of residents traveling on a monthly basis. Intercity travel is primarily for employment and medical purposes, followed closely by social and recreation purposes. Public engagement in the region suggests personal vehicles are preferred for this type of travel.

Public engagement in the Southern Connect regions stressed the need for more public transit services for the general public. Residents also claimed they want to see more vehicles, routes, and destinations provided by their existing providers, followed by more accessibility and affordability, with many requesting free rides. This highlights the fact that, despite the number of providers in the area, barriers remain for transit-reliant populations in the region with no other means of transportation. **Figure 40** provides feedback on transit improvements needed for the Southern Connect region.

Figure 40. Southern Connect Transit Improvements Needed



KEY PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

- Southern Connect, including services provided by Hub City Transit in Hattiesburg and surrounding counties, partners with the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) and is exploring collaboration with William Carey University to expand student transportation. The system is also aligned with regional employers and homeless shelters, many of which distribute bus passes to ensure client mobility, and contracts with Enterprise vanpool services to address workforce transit gaps where employer demand for skilled labor is unmet due to mobility barriers.
- A signal priority project in partnership with Gulfport and Biloxi aims to improve schedule reliability by giving buses priority when they are behind schedule, helping improve service efficiency along congested corridors such as Highway 90. Additional partnerships include Gulfport Hospital Campus, which maintains a direct agreement with Coastal Transit Authority (CTA), and informal connections to Civic Action agencies, although service availability for patients remains a challenge.



Singing River Health Systems vehicles in Pascagoula, Mississippi

6 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis serves as a critical component of the Study, offering a structured assessment of the internal and external factors that influence the effectiveness, accessibility, and sustainability of public transportation across the State of Mississippi. This analysis builds upon the comprehensive review of relevant policy frameworks, inventory of existing transportation services, stakeholder interviews, and public engagement efforts. Together, these inputs provide a **strategic lens to evaluate the current landscape and future potential** of Mississippi's public transportation systems.

This analysis lays the groundwork for the development of Tech Memo 2 by identifying key **strengths to leverage, weaknesses to address, opportunities to pursue, and threats to anticipate**. Insights derived from the SWOT will identify priority areas for further investigation, including geographic, demographic, and operational gaps in service delivery. This targeted approach grounds subsequent recommendations in a comprehensive understanding of the current system -- shaped by policy review, service inventory, and public input -- and aligned with the overarching goal to improve access and connect residents to essential quality-of-life activities across Mississippi.

The Current State Assessment of Mississippi's public transportation network – including urban, rural, and intercity services – reveals a level of **transportation insecurity** among current and prospective users. This is evidenced by:

- **Documented gaps in accessibility**, with several counties and key destinations lacking public transportation options;
- **Disconnected systems** that contribute to user confusion and extended trip times;
- **Aging infrastructure**, as established by annual TAM performance reports, which undermines reliability; and
- **Funding disruptions** that impair service continuity and expansion.

Ridership has yet to rebound to pre-COVID values with total ridership down approximately 33% from 2019 levels. Despite these challenges, **the system benefits from notable strengths**, including the availability of core services, a supportive policy environment, and innovative service delivery models. Additionally, there are **promising opportunities** in emerging technologies, strong leadership, latent demand for transit, and alternative funding mechanisms. These findings are explored in greater detail in the sections that follow.

6.1 STRENGTHS

Strengths are internal factors that provide Mississippi's public transportation system with a competitive advantage or serve as a foundation for achieving strategic goals. Tech Memo 1 identifies the following key strengths:



STRENGTHS

Widespread Availability
Robust Intercity Connectivity
Collaborative Provider Network
Adoption of Innovative Technologies

- **Widespread Availability:** Public transportation services are available in most counties across the state, offering Mississippians access to essential quality-of-life activities such as employment, education, healthcare, shopping, and recreation.
- **Robust Intercity Connectivity:** Intercity bus services connect residents to major destinations both within and beyond Mississippi—including Atlanta, Biloxi, Birmingham, Jackson, Memphis, and New Orleans. These routes, many of which originate in Jackson, are well-utilized and offer a cost-effective travel option. They also provide opportunities for passengers to transfer to other intercity routes, enabling broader national mobility.
- **Collaborative Provider Network:** Mississippi's public transportation providers – including urban, rural, and intercity operators – function within a supportive and collaborative framework. Stakeholder interviews highlighted strong inter-agency cooperation, ranging from shared vehicle maintenance to the development of niche services that address unmet needs. MDOT PT is recognized as a valuable partner, offering resources and facilitating coordination through the ConnectMS initiative which established six regional coordination areas. Each of these areas are supported by a Mobility Manager, regional goals/activities, partnerships, and initiatives tailored to each region.
- **Adoption of Innovative Technologies:** Agencies across the state are embracing innovative technologies and service models to enhance access and operational efficiency. Rural providers are implementing online reservation systems and exploring Mobility on Demand (MoD) services. Urban systems are transitioning to electric vehicles to reduce fuel costs and emissions. Intercity operators, such as Greyhound, are improving accessibility through integrated scheduling tools and combined fare systems.

6.2 WEAKNESSES

While strengths highlight areas where Mississippi's public transportation system holds a competitive advantage, weaknesses represent organizational limitations or challenges that hinder progress toward achieving the system's long-term vision. Identifying these weaknesses is essential for guiding improvement efforts and developing strategies to mitigate associated risks. The weaknesses in the Mississippi public transportation systems are:



WEAKNESSES

Coverage Gaps
High Service Costs
Aging Infrastructure
Lack of Transit Support

- **Coverage Gaps:** There are eight counties, portions of urban areas (such as in Southaven), major activity centers, and other locations across Mississippi lack access to public transportation. These gaps in service restrict mobility for transit-reliant populations and place additional strain on the broader transportation network. Notably, coverage limitations are not confined to rural or urban areas. Intercity service is also sparse with existing routes mostly operating on the interstates (I-10, I-20, I-22, I-55, and I-59) and along the western border, leaving the rest of the state unserved. Public and stakeholder comments have identified different areas of the state where additional public transportation services are warranted.
- **High Service Costs:** Mississippi's rural character—with only four urban areas exceeding 50,000 residents—results in low population density and long distances between key destinations. These factors make it both challenging and expensive to provide a diverse range of transit services. The divergent and high cost of service delivery (**Table 8**) contributes to persistent service gaps and underscores the need for additional funding, innovative solutions, strategic coordination, and more efficient usage of available assets to expand access.
- **Aging Infrastructure:** As highlighted in TAM performance measures and stakeholder interviews, many transit vehicles and facilities have exceeded their useful life benchmarks or exhibit structural deficiencies. This aging infrastructure undermines system reliability and weakens the state's competitiveness for federal discretionary funding.
- **Lack of Transit Support:** A lack of consistent support from elected officials for public transportation across various regions of the state compounds existing challenges. This is evident in difficulties securing local matching funds, resistance to expanding intercity services, and reluctance to invest in new systems or routes. In some areas, public transportation carries a negative perception, making it difficult to promote the service and build the local support necessary for growth.

6.3 OPPORTUNITIES

An opportunity represents external factors or trends MDOT PT and public transportation providers could leverage to achieve the vision and improve transit support. The identified opportunities are:



OPPORTUNITIES

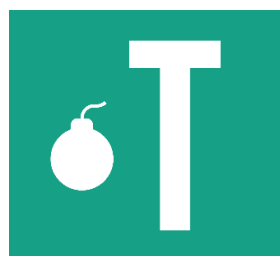
Growing Demand for Transit Services
Strategic Investments & Partnerships
Emerging Transit Technologies & Service Models
Transit-Supportive Planning Principles
Alternative Funding Sources
Emerging Leadership

- **Growing Demand for Transit Services:** Stakeholder interviews, public engagement efforts, policy reviews, and supporting data all points to a strong latent demand for expanded transit services. As service gaps are addressed and more destinations become accessible, public response is expected to be positive resulting in increased ridership and broader community support.
- **Strategic Investments and Partnerships:** Despite its rural character, Mississippi is experiencing growth through new industries and emerging activity centers. Additionally, Amtrak's planned extension of service from New Orleans to Mobile—offering same-day service in Biloxi, Gulfport, and Pascagoula—presents new partnership opportunities. These developments can support strategic investments such as the CTA's new intermodal center and planned upgrades at Union Station.
- **Emerging Transit Technologies and Service Models:** The transit industry is evolving beyond traditional fixed-route services to include MoD and micromobility options, such as e-scooters and e-bikes. These innovations offer more flexible, cost-effective service delivery models. Technologies like electric vehicles, integrated fare platforms, and multimodal trip reservation systems further reduce costs and enhance system integration. Training and technical assistance will be essential to help agencies adopt and implement these tools effectively.
- **Transit-Supportive Planning Principles:** Integrating transit-supportive design into new infrastructure and land use planning efforts enhance system connectivity, accessibility, and user experience. These principles promote safe, convenient, and equitable access to transit services while reducing physical and social barriers. Mississippi is already making strides in this area, as evidenced by the Gulf Regional Planning Commission's adoption of Complete Streets standards and the City of Jackson's State Street Corridor planning initiative. Additionally, encouraging compact, mixed-use development along major corridors through updated future land use categories helps reduce reliance on personal vehicles and supports increased transit ridership. JTRAN is actively advancing this approach through its TOD grant along the ONELINE corridor, reinforcing the connection between land use and transit investment.

- **Alternative Funding Sources:** While requiring a shift in mindset and institutional support, alternative funding mechanisms are available. Federal law permits the transfer of highway funds to public transportation projects to address local and state needs. Additionally, a variety of discretionary grants can support pilot programs, service planning, infrastructure improvements, and technology adoption aligned with the state's transit vision.
- **Emerging Leadership:** New leaders and staff will emerge within MDOT and among transit providers. With effective succession planning, these individuals can be identified and trained to assume leadership roles, bringing fresh perspectives and energy to support continued innovation and organizational growth. This infusion of new talent and ideas can lead to improved decision-making, enhanced adaptability, and a more resilient organizational culture.

6.4 THREATS

Threats are external challenges or conditions that could impede the MDOT PT Division and its partners from achieving the statewide vision and related goals. Recognizing these threats is essential for proactive planning and risk mitigation. The following threats have been identified:



THREATS

Unmet Transit Demand
Competition From Other Transportation Modes & Changing Travel Behavior
Reduced funding
Continued Low-Density Development

- **Unmet Transit Demand:** While latent demand for public transportation presents a significant opportunity, failure to meet this demand can quickly become a threat. If services are not expanded or improved to match public needs, the system risks becoming unsustainable, leading to declining ridership, reduced public confidence, and inefficient use of resources. This not only prevents the system from attracting new users but also undermines its ability to effectively serve existing customers, further weakening support and long-term viability.
- **Competition from Other Transportation Modes and Changing Travel Behavior:** The increasing availability and convenience of personal vehicles, ride-hailing services, and emerging mobility options—combined with shifts in travel behavior such as remote work—pose a threat to public transportation. These trends can reduce demand for traditional transit services, making it more difficult to maintain ridership levels and justify continued investment.
- **Reduced funding:** Mississippi's public transportation systems rely heavily on federal, state, and local funding to maintain and expand services. Any reduction in these funding streams—due to economic downturns, shifting political priorities, or changes in policy—could significantly impact operations, delay infrastructure improvements, and limit the

ability to pursue innovation or service expansion. Compounding this challenge are rising operating and capital costs, including increased expenses for drivers, fuel, vehicle procurement, maintenance, and facility upgrades. These escalating costs strain already limited budgets, making it more difficult for agencies to sustain current service levels, invest in modernization, or respond to growing demand.

- **Continued Low-Density Development:** Ongoing patterns of low-density, automobile-oriented development create structural barriers to effective transit service. Sprawling land use increases the cost and complexity of providing transit, reduces service efficiency, and limits the potential for high-ridership corridors. Without coordinated land use and transportation planning, these development trends will continue to challenge the sustainability of public transit systems.



Country Road in rural Mississippi

7 Next Steps

Tech Memo 1 serves as the foundational document for the Study. It establishes the case for public transportation in Mississippi, defines the institutional framework, outlines the study's goals and objectives, and provides a comprehensive inventory of existing transit services across the state. The memo also incorporates customer feedback on travel patterns and mobility needs, highlights key initiatives, and summarizes insights from stakeholder interviews that reveal the challenges agencies face in delivering high-quality transit services. This collective information informs the development of a SWOT analysis, which identifies the primary issue confronting the system: a persistent level of transportation insecurity. This insecurity—evident in limited access, inconsistent reliability, and limited system integration—acts as a significant barrier to the growth and effectiveness of public transportation in Mississippi. The issue of transportation insecurity is not unique to Mississippi, but it is an important issue that will shape the statewide strategy.

The findings from this tech memo directly inform the next phase of the Study: Gap & Needs Analysis. Building upon the internal and external benefits and challenges, the team will evaluate where public transportation services are not meeting current and projected demand. The analysis will focus on accessibility, integration, infrastructure, and institutional capacity to identify critical gaps and unmet needs. These results will guide the development of strategies and recommendations to enhance transit service through Mississippi.



State Capitol in Jackson, Mississippi

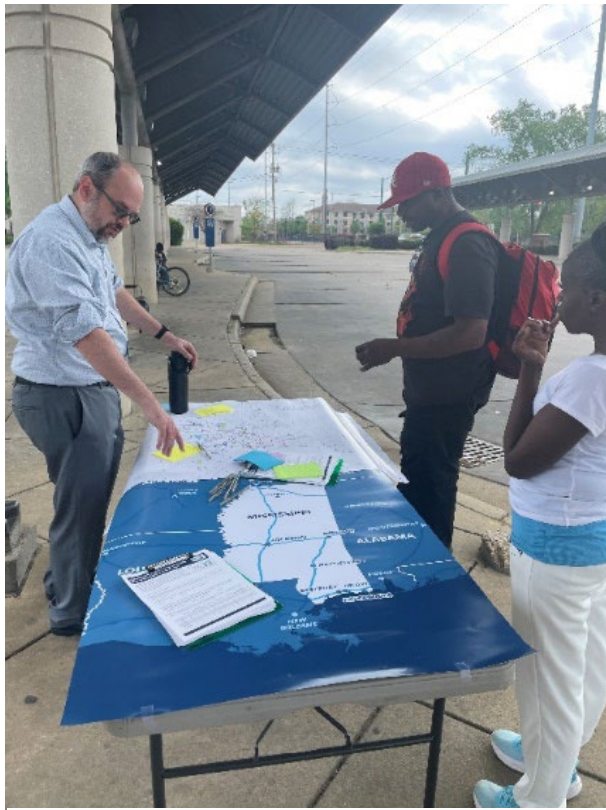
Appendix A – Public Engagement Summary

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Public Outreach Schedule (Existing Conditions)

The table below summarizes the timeline for public outreach efforts that took place as part of the Existing Conditions portion of the Statewide Transit & Intercity Bus Study.

Date	Provider	Outreach Activities
March 30-May 16, 2025	MDOT	Public Survey
April 1, 2025	Greyhound/Flixbus (Jackson)	Stakeholder Interview; Facility Tour
April 1, 2025	Hub City Transit (Hattiesburg)	Stakeholder Interview; Facility and Service Area Tour
April 2, 2025	JTRAN (Jackson)	Stakeholder Interview
April 2, 2025	Coast Transit Authority (Gulfport)	Stakeholder Interview; Facility and Service Area Tour
April 3, 2025	Delta Area Rural Transit System (DARTS) (Clarksdale)	Stakeholder Interview; Facility and Service Area Tour
April 3, 2025	Destiny Rides (Olive Branch)	Stakeholder Interview
April 3, 2025	Memphis Area Transit Authority (Memphis, TN)	Stakeholder Interview; Facility Tour
April 24, 2025	JTRAN (Jackson)	Facility Tour

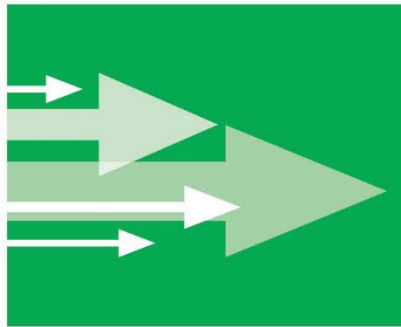


Public engagement workshop in Jackson, Mississippi



Public engagement workshop in Pascagoula, Mississippi

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Project

DRAFT Public Involvement Plan

February 2025



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Introduction

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) has undertaken a Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study to determine the State of Mississippi's public transportation needs. This Study will assess the existing conditions, identify opportunities and areas for improvement, and provide recommendations. Public engagement will be a key component of this process to ensure the study includes the perspectives of the community and stakeholders.

Purpose of the Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

The purpose of this plan to describe the public engagement approach for the Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study, in compliance with federal and state regulations, and guides the outreach process for the length of the project. This plan summarizes the public involvement strategies that will offer a platform for the public, transit riders, transit providers, and other stakeholders to identify requirements and opportunities for improvement. Each of the planned outreach strategies provide ways for the project team to share information with the community while receiving actionable input.

Project Advisory Committee (PAC)

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) will be comprised of key partners and stakeholders that will provide comprehensive representation in monitoring and providing input as the project progresses. The stakeholders were identified by MDOT Public Transit leadership and are shown in Table 1 below. To increase efficiency within the public participation process, the PAC meetings will be scheduled to coincide with project tasks, draft deliverable submissions, and/or other important milestones.

Table 1 | Project Advisory Committee Members

Name	Position	Organization/Grant Program	Email Address
Jeremiah Dumas	Vice President	MPTA (SMART) 5311 Rural Areas Program	jdumas@parkingtransit.msstate.edu
Stephanie Gonterman	Principal	Isaacs & Associates (Greyhound)	stephanie@isaacs-assoc.com
Chris Foret	Assistant Executive Director	Coast Transit Authority	cforet@coasttransit.com
LaShonda McKinney, CTTM	Executive Director	Bolivar County Council on Aging, Inc 5311 Rural Areas Program	lashondawilson@bcccoatransit.org

Name	Position	Organization/Grant Program	Email Address
Jacqueline Morgan	Assistant Executive Director	Bolivar County Council on Aging, Inc 5311 Rural Areas Program	jackimorgan@bcccoatransit.org
Carolyn Morrow	Operations Supervisor	Singing Rivers Health Services 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Senior Individuals with Disabilities	carolyn.morrow@mysrhs.com
Christine Welch	Deputy Director of Transportation	City of Jackson (JTRAN)	cwelch@city.jackson.ms.us

Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach Strategies

Transit Agency Engagement

The project team will be engaging urban, rural, and intercity agencies to collaborate on identifying areas of unmet need within the intercity bus system and strategize on improvement. Transit agency representation provides key insight into the existing transit conditions, current levels of service, existing transit providers and facilities, and intermodal connections. Special consideration will be undertaken to recognize and implement efficiencies across existing planning efforts. Meetings with these agencies will be held both in-person and virtually. A listing of agencies and providers of transit in Mississippi can be found in Table 2.

Table 2 | Transit Providers

Agency	Type	Point of Contact	E-Mail Address
City of Jackson (JTRAN)	Urban	Item 3	Item 4
Hub City Transit (HCT)	Urban	Item 3	Item 4
MS Coast Transit Agency	Urban	Item 3	Item 4
Delta Bus Lines	Intercity	Item 3	Item 4
Greyhound	Intercity	Item 3	Item 4
Mobility Manager(s) (Specific engagement to be determined based on study needs)	Rural	Item 3	Item 4

Outreach to Underserved Communities

This plan will include the input from underserved communities – communities that have limited access to resources and opportunities, including transportation. The project team will leverage the recommendations of the PAC and project stakeholders to select opportunities to engage residents in a meaningful way.

Please refer to Table 3 for locations and identified events.

Table 3 | Identified Community Outreach Events

Community Event	Location	Partner Organization	L RTP Event?
To be added with input from the PAC.			

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder outreach and engagement to support public participation will assist in identifying unmet transit needs.

Stakeholder interviews will be held to help inform the development of the project's vision, goals and objectives and during the development of an action plan. The purpose of these interviews is to gain insight into the current level of transit services offered, transit service demand, challenges and opportunities, and possibilities of service partnerships and integration. Interviews will be held both virtually and in-person, and the stakeholder identification process will include the criterion of a vested interest in transit network development. For a listing of stakeholders that will be interviewed, please see Table 4.

Table 4 | Identified Project Stakeholders

Name	Position	Organization	E-Mail
To be added with input from the PAC.			

Public Engagement Tools and Tactics

Public engagement tools will support our outreach strategies and will include both in-person and virtual techniques. These tactics will facilitate both the communication of project information to the community, as well as the input of community feedback.

Surveys

Surveys will be distributed through multiple channels including digitally through social media promotions and in-person at community outreach events and public meetings. These surveys will collect community input that will help identify gaps in transit coverage and develop the statewide transit vision. The project team will also coordinate with the regional transportation groups for additional surveying opportunities.

Social Media

The project team will create social media content and visuals for Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X (formerly known as Twitter). Content will include the purpose of the study, promotion of upcoming opportunities for engagement and input such as events and surveys, and announcements of key project milestones. The HDR Strategic Communications team will draft social media content for MDOT approval and publishing.

MDOT Social Media Channels include:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MississippiDOT>
- X (Formerly Twitter): <https://x.com/MississippiDOT>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/mississippidot/>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/mississippi-department-of-transportation/>

Community Events

Participation in existing community events will provide the project team the opportunity to meet residents who are currently underserved by transit in their own communities without requiring them to seek out project information or attend a meeting to provide their input. This is a tactic that the project team will aim to coordinate with the Long Range Transportation Plan outreach efforts.

Public Meetings

Public meetings will be held to provide a noticed opportunity for public feedback at the Existing Conditions and Plan Development stages of the project. For each set of public meetings, concurrent meetings will be held in geographically diverse areas of the state and a “meeting in a box” approach will be used to ensure the public receives the same information and is able to provide the same types of actionable input regardless of which meeting they attend.

Website

The ConnectMS website (<https://mdot.ms.gov/connectms/>) will contain timely project updates throughout the course of the study.

Other Communications

The project team will create content and graphics that may include industry articles with visuals, short, animated videos, presentations, general articles, and/or press releases.

Table 5 includes a listing of public engagement tactics that will take place during the project.

Table 5 | Public Engagement Tactics and Schedule

Activity	Target Audience	Timeframe	Description
Surveys	Existing Riders Potential Riders Mobility Managers	To be added.	Online surveys will be targeted to existing riders in partnership with transit providers and mobility managers; surveys to the public at-large will be disseminated through MDOT and partner social media channels.
Social media	Existing riders Potential riders Public at large	Ongoing	Social media will be used to promote upcoming project events and milestones and to provide engaging recaps.
Website	Partners and Stakeholders Interested Parties	Ongoing	Updated project information will be provided through the ConnectMS webpage.
Community Events	Underserved communities	March - November, 2025	The project team will leverage existing events to meet the community where they are and learn about their interest in transit. When possible, the team will partner with the ongoing LRTP update outreach efforts.
Public Meetings	Existing riders Potential riders Public at large	March 2025 November 2025	Meeting promotions will include Website, social media, On-Site Engagement, On-Site Signage; Promote Upcoming meetings and surveys at local businesses, City events, and public locations

PUBLIC SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

6. Are there other locations you or someone in your household frequently travel to? Please specify.

7. On average, how many minutes do you, someone in your household, and/or a person in your home spend traveling one-way for your most common public transportation trip? Under 5 minutes 5-10 minutes 10-20 minutes 20-40 minutes 40-80 minutes Over 80 minutes

☐☐☐☐☐☐

8. What are your main reasons for using public transportation?

Work Medical Recreation Education Social/Vacation Other (Please specify below)

☐☐☐☐☐

9. What challenges do you or someone in your household experience when using public transportation? **Please skip to question 11.**

☐

Safety

☐

Access to places I need to go

☐

Lack of amenities (i.e., bus stops or benches)

☐

Lack of information about bus or van options in my area

☐

Lack of information about how to ride local bus or van service

☐

I do not experience challenges when using a bus or van to get around

Other

10. If you do NOT use public transportation, what are your reasons? **Select all that apply.**

☐

Safety

☐

Access to places I need to go

☐

Lack of amenities (i.e., bus stops or benches) Lack of

☐

Information about bus or van options in my area Lack of

☐

Information about how to ride the bus

Other



11. How often do you or someone in your household travel between cities in or out of Mississippi?

1+ times a week ☐ 1+ times a month ☐ 1+ times a year ☐ Never ☐

12. What cities do you or someone in your household travel to most often?

13. What is the purpose for traveling between cities in or out of Mississippi for yourself or someone in your household?

Work Medical Recreation Education Social/Vacation Other (Please specify below)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

14. What public transportation services or improvements would you like to see added in your community?

15. Do you own or regularly have access to a personal vehicle?

Yes ☐ No ☐

16. What is your age range?

Under 18 18-25 26-35 36-50 51-75 Over 75

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

17. What is your gender?

Male ☐ Female ☐ Other ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

18. What race or ethnicity best describes you? **(Select all that apply)**

American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Black or African American Middle Eastern and North African Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander White

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

19. What is your annual household income?

Under \$10,000	\$10,000 - 25,000	\$25,001 - 40,000	\$40,001 - 60,000	\$60,001 - 80,000	\$80,001 - 100,000	More than \$100,000
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

20.What is your employment status?

Employed full time ☐ Employed part time ☐ Self-employed ☐ Unemployed ☐

21. Do you or anyone in your household have a disability or condition that makes using transportation difficult?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

22.Is there anything else you would like the project team to know?

For additional information about the project, please contact:

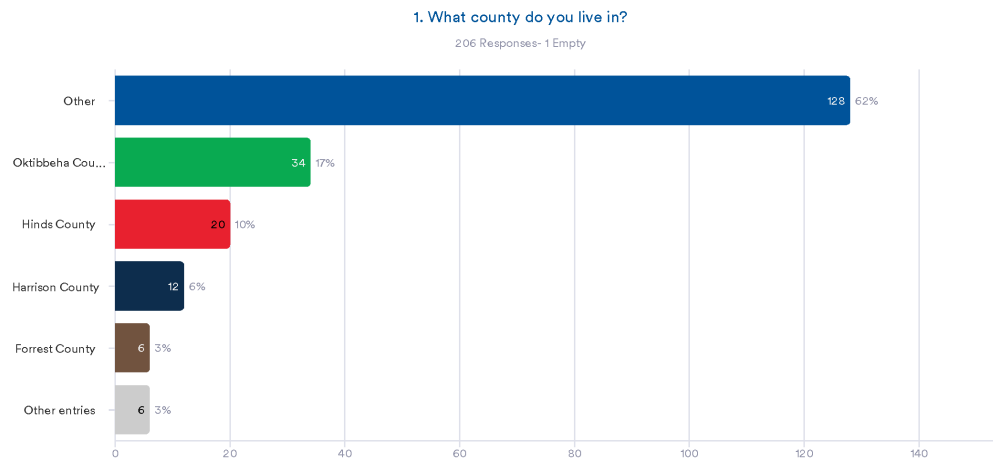
Shirley F. Wilson, Director of the Public Transit Division
P.O. Box 1850, Mail Code 61-01
Jackson, MS 39215

swilson@mdot.ms.gov
601-359-7800

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

If you selected other, please type your county below

128 Responses- 79 Empty

Data	Responses
Jackson	57
Rankin	6
United States	4
Jackson County	4
Clalborne	3
Jones	3
JONES	3
Neshoba	3
Other entries	45

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

2. List all public and/or private transportation services operating in your area (e.g., bus, shuttle, demand-response, rideshare, van services, intercity rail). If none or unsure, write N/A.

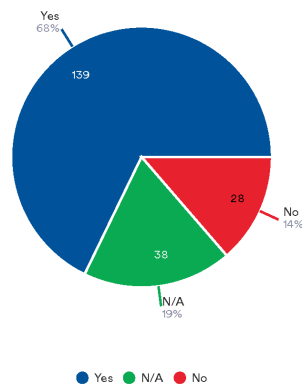
204 Responses- 3 Empty

Data	Responses
N/A	32
Bus	20
bus	12
n/a	5
On Demand	3
Jatran	3
Unsure	3
Na	3
Other entries	12

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

3. Do you know how to use the transportation services you listed above?

205 Responses- 2 Empty

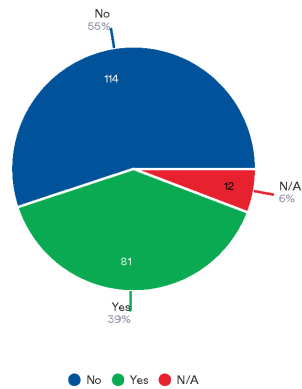


Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

4. Do you, someone in your household, and/or a person in your home use public transportation (e.g. bus, van, shuttle, intercity bus, rideshare) at least once a month?

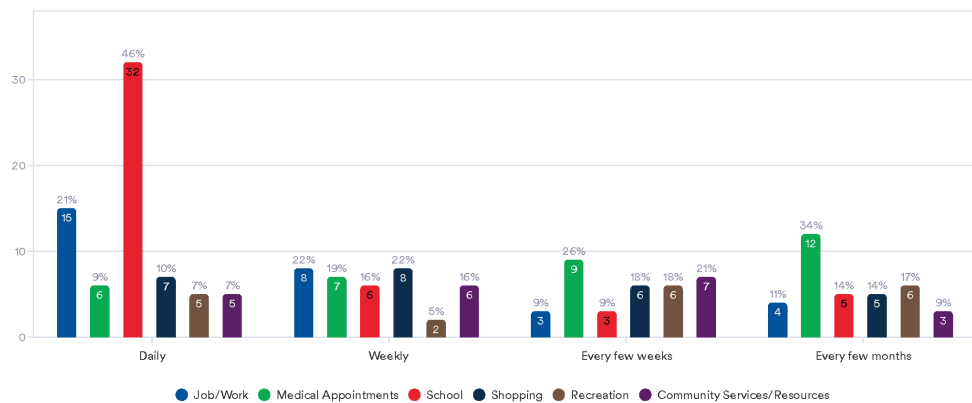
207 Responses



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

5. How often do you, someone in your household, and/or a person in your home travel using public transportation to the following destinations?

73 Responses- 126 Empty



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

6. Are there other locations you, someone in your household, and/or a person in your home frequently travel to? Please specify.

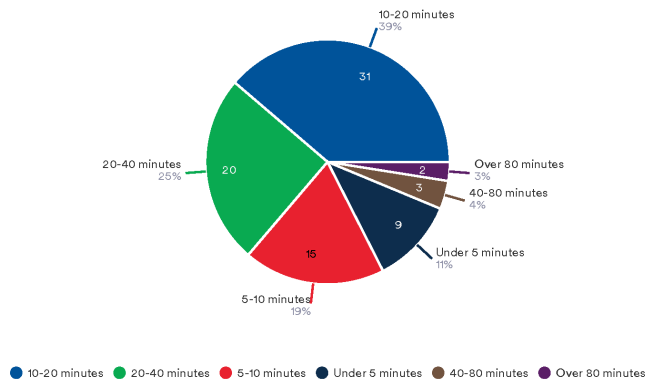
67 Responses- 140 Empty

Data	Responses
No	20
N/A	8
N/a	3
no	3
Jackson	3
Yes	2
Walmart	2
Bingo	1
Other entries	25

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

7. On average, how many minutes do you, someone in your household, and/or a person in your home spend traveling one-way for your most common trip using public transportation?

80 Responses- 127 Empty

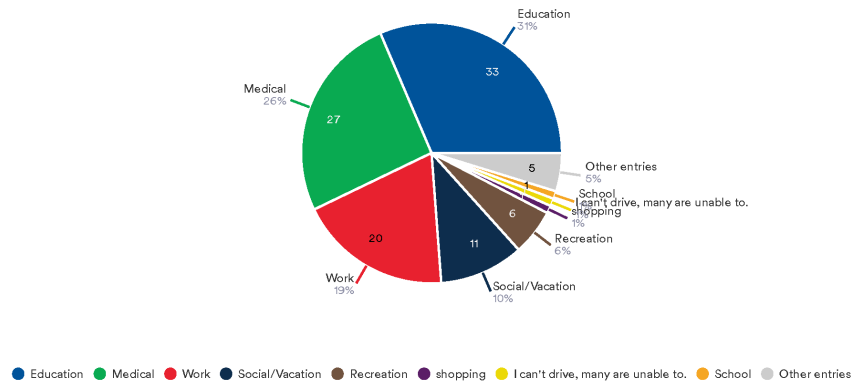


Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

8. What are your main reasons for using public transportation? Select all that apply.

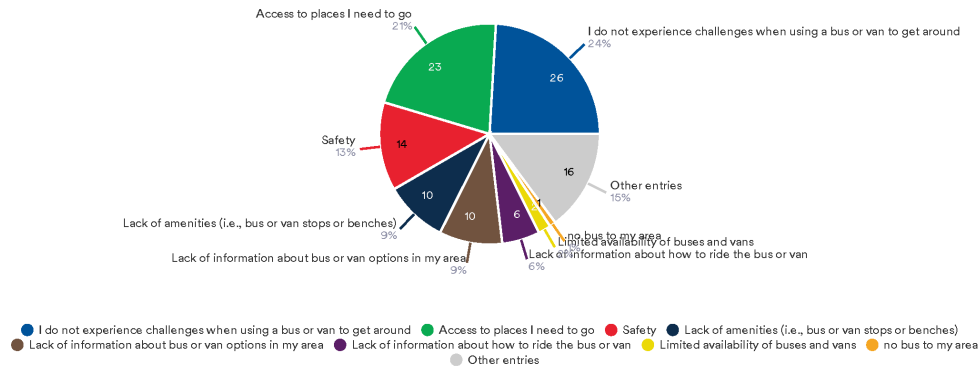
105 Responses- 127 Empty



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

9. What challenges do you, someone in your household, and/or a person in your home experience when using public transportation? Select all that apply.

108 Responses- 133 Empty

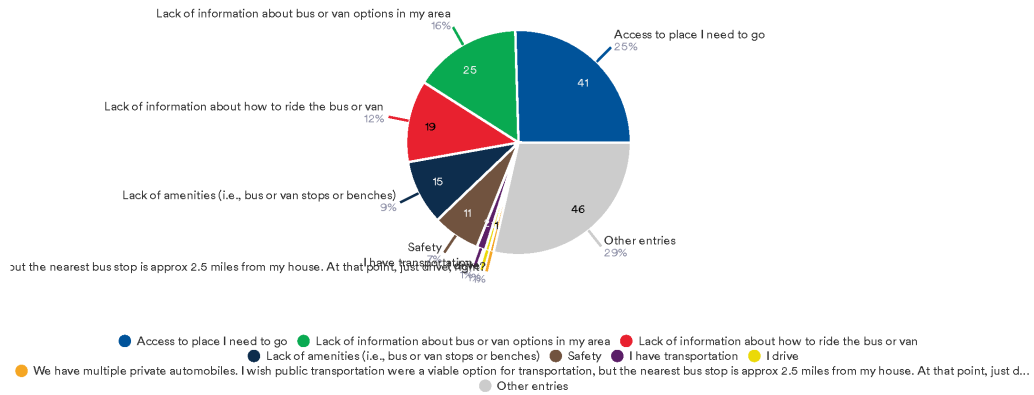


Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

10. If you do NOT use public transportation, what are your reasons? Select all that apply.

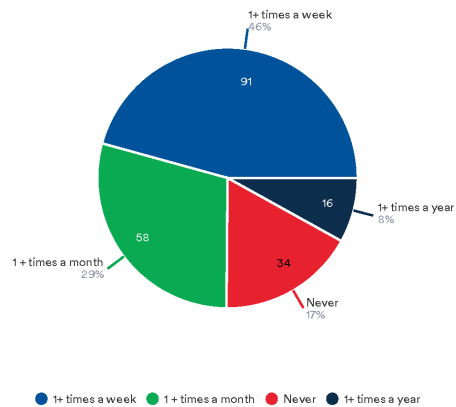
161 Responses- 100 Empty



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

11. How often do you, someone in your household, and/or a person in your home travel between cities in or out of Mississippi?

199 Responses- 8 Empty



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

12. What cities do you, someone in your household, and/or a person in your home travel to most often?

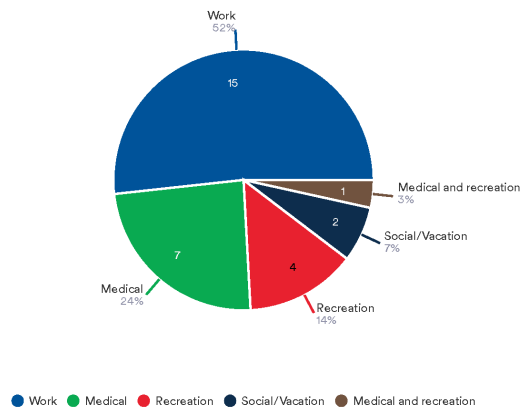
186 Responses- 21 Empty

Data	Responses
Pascagoula	8
Jackson	8
N/A	6
Gulfport	5
Mobile	4
None	4
Biloxi	3
Ocean Springs	3
Other entries	145

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

13. What is the purpose for traveling between cities in or out of Mississippi for yourself, someone in your household, and/or as a caregiver?

29 Responses- 178 Empty

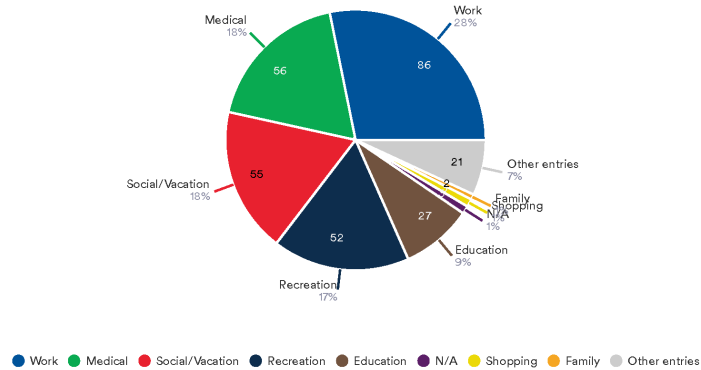


Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

13. What is the purpose for traveling between cities in or out of Mississippi for yourself, someone in your household, and/or as a caregiver?

305 Responses- 45 Empty



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

14. What public transportation services or improvements would you like to see added in your community?

172 Responses- 35 Empty

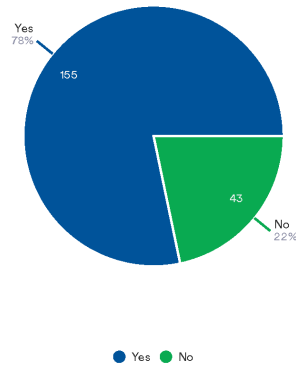
Data	Responses
N/A	14
N/a	5
None	4
Bus	3
n/a	3
More options	3
none	2
Public transportation	2
Other entries	136

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

15. Do you own or regularly have access to a personal vehicle?

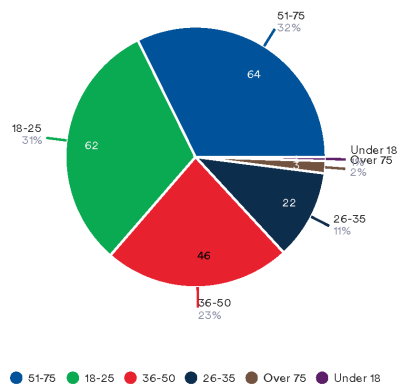
198 Responses- 9 Empty



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

16. What is your age range?

198 Responses- 9 Empty

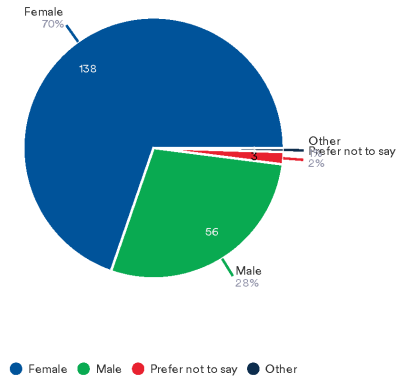


Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

17. What is your gender?

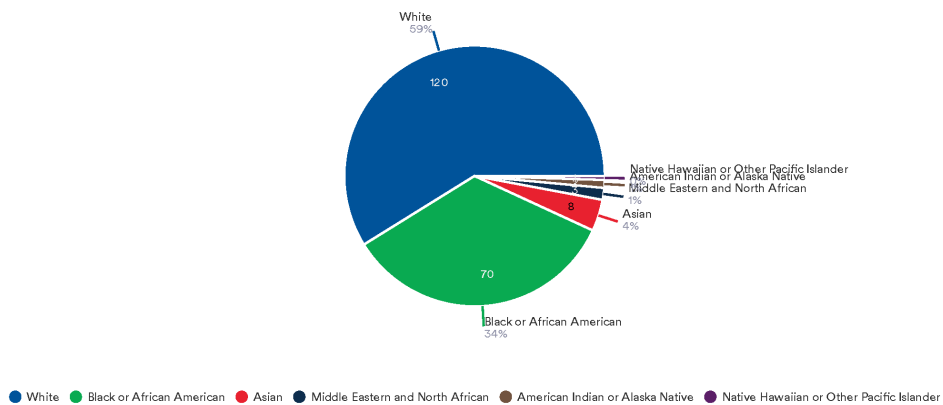
198 Responses- 9 Empty



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

18. What race or ethnicity best describes you? Select all that apply.

204 Responses- 10 Empty

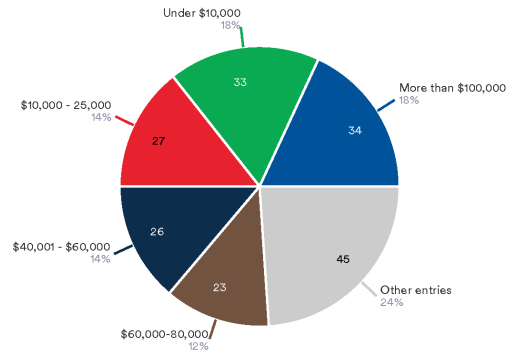


Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

19. What is your annual household income?

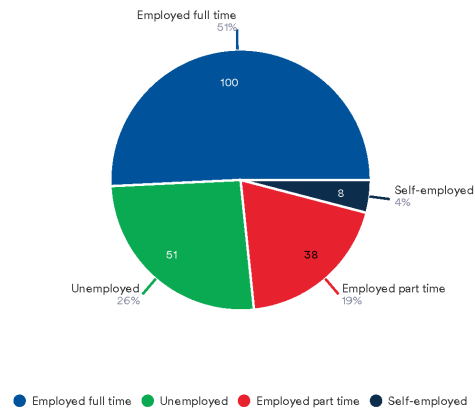
188 Responses - 19 Empty



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

20. What is your employment status?

197 Responses - 10 Empty

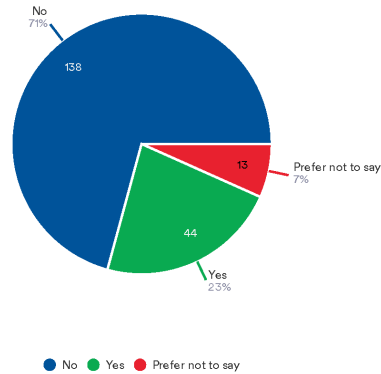


Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

21. Do you or anyone in your household have a disability or condition that makes using transportation difficult?

195 Responses- 12 Empty



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study Community Survey

22. Is there anything else you would like the project team to know?

137 Responses- 70 Empty

Data	Responses
No	27
N/A	16
n/a	3
N/a	3
none	2
I'm looking for a ride to the doctor for my dentist appointment being that I won't be able to drive myself	2
NA	2
Nothing else	2
Other entries	80

Appendix B – Urban Agency Profiles

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

COAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY



Coast Transit Authority

Governance: Transit Authority - MS Code § 21-27-11 & 13 (2024)

Website: <https://coasttransit.com/>

Operating Environment: Large Urban Provider

Urban Area Population: 236,344

Service Area Population: 124,940

Service Type(s): Fixed Route, Demand Response, & Vanpool

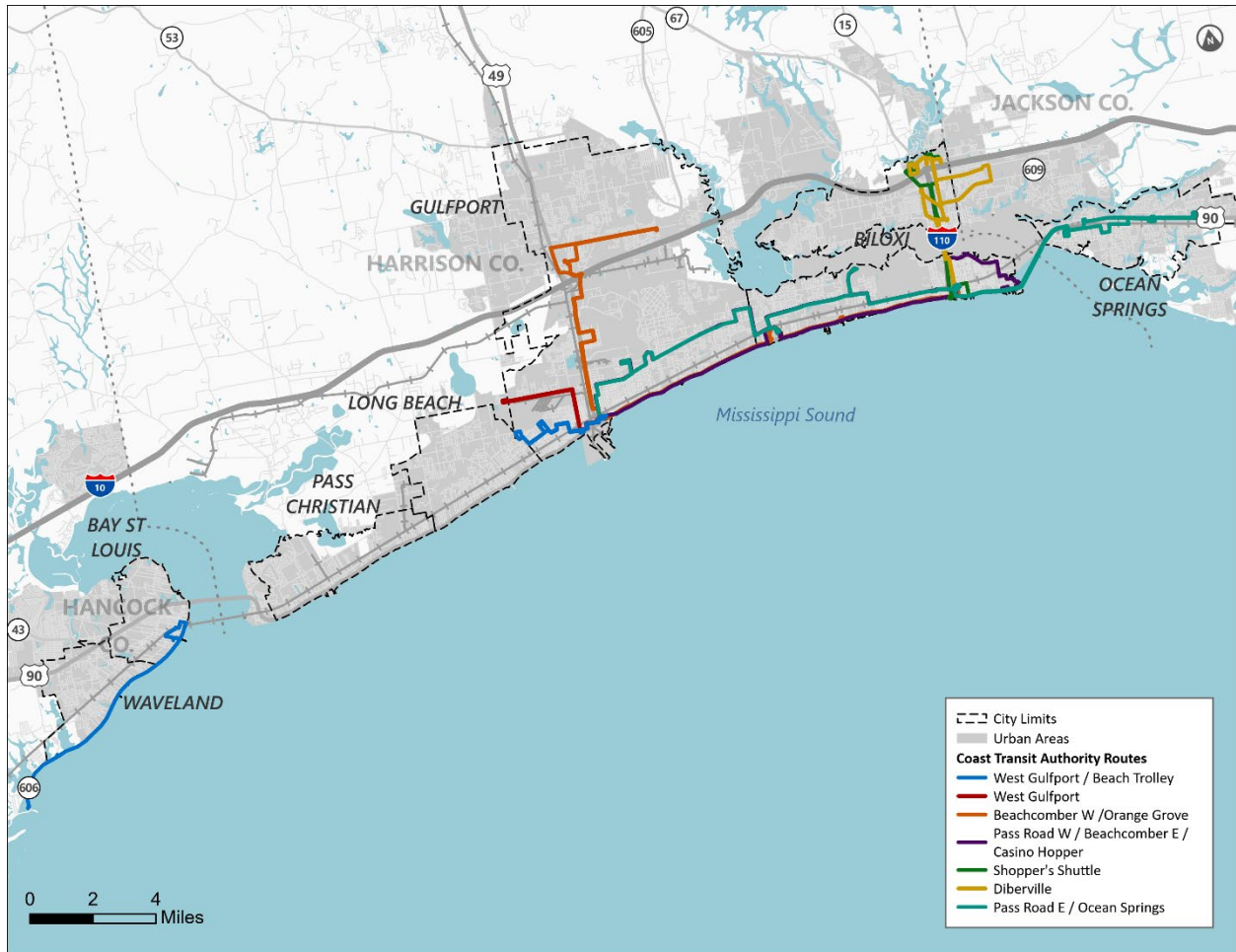
Facilities: Administration & Maintenance; Beach Stations, Transfer Centers (9); Surface Parking Lot; Parking Garage

System Attribute*	Fixed Route	Demand Response	Vanpool
Ridership	603,135	71,909	76,270
Revenue Hours	58,614	37,502	15,392
Revenue Miles	779,715	565,013	821,104
Operating Expenses	\$5,544,356	\$2,971,162	\$491,625
Revenue Vehicles	27	14	1
Percent Exceeding ULB	0%	7%	0%
Facility TERM Rating	0% are under 3 of 5 on TERM Scale		

*All values are for FY2023 with the TAM values from FY2025.

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

CTA SERVICE AREA



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

HUB CITY TRANSIT

Governance:	City of Hattiesburg
Website:	https://hubcitytransit.com/
Operating Environment:	Small Urban Provider
Urban Area Population:	82,730
Service Area Population:	51,084
Service Type(s):	Fixed Route & Demand Response
Facilities:	Administration & Maintenance; Transfer Center

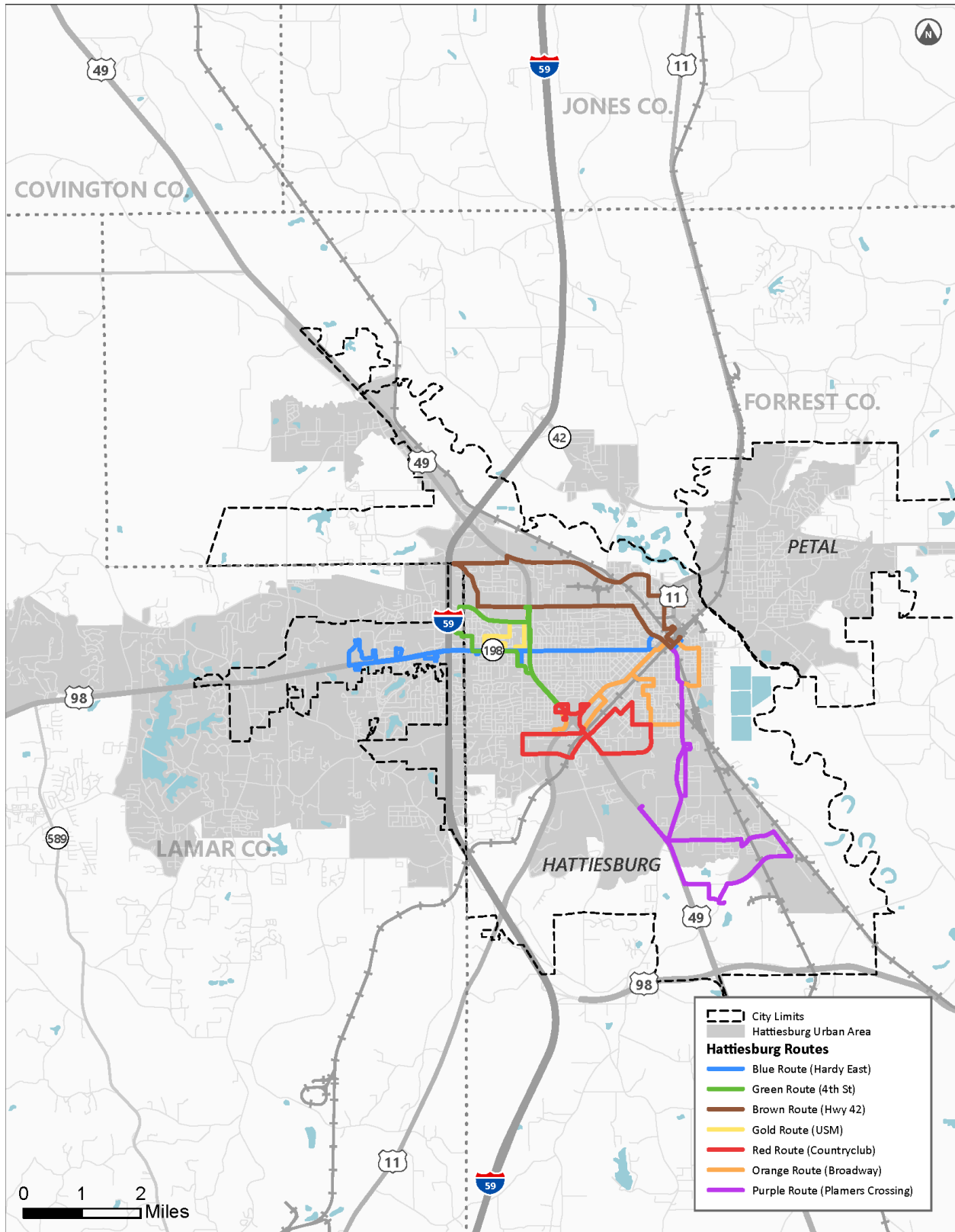


System Attribute*	Fixed Route	Demand Response
Ridership	47,023	2,746
Revenue Hours	12,945	3,083
Revenue Miles	296,669	12,940
Operating Expenses	\$1,869,229	\$109,276
Revenue Vehicles	7	3
Percent Exceeding ULB	Not Separately Reported – Part of Group Plan	
Facility TERM Rating	Not Separately Reported – Part of Group Plan	

*All values are for FY2023

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

HUB CITY SERVICE AREA



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

JTRAN

Governance:	City of Jackson
Website:	www.ridejtran.com
Operating Environment:	Large Urban Provider
Urban Area Population:	377,693
Service Area Population:	160,628
Service Type(s):	Fixed Route & Demand Response
Facilities:	Administration/Maintenance/Service; Passenger Facilities; Training Lot; & Transfer Center

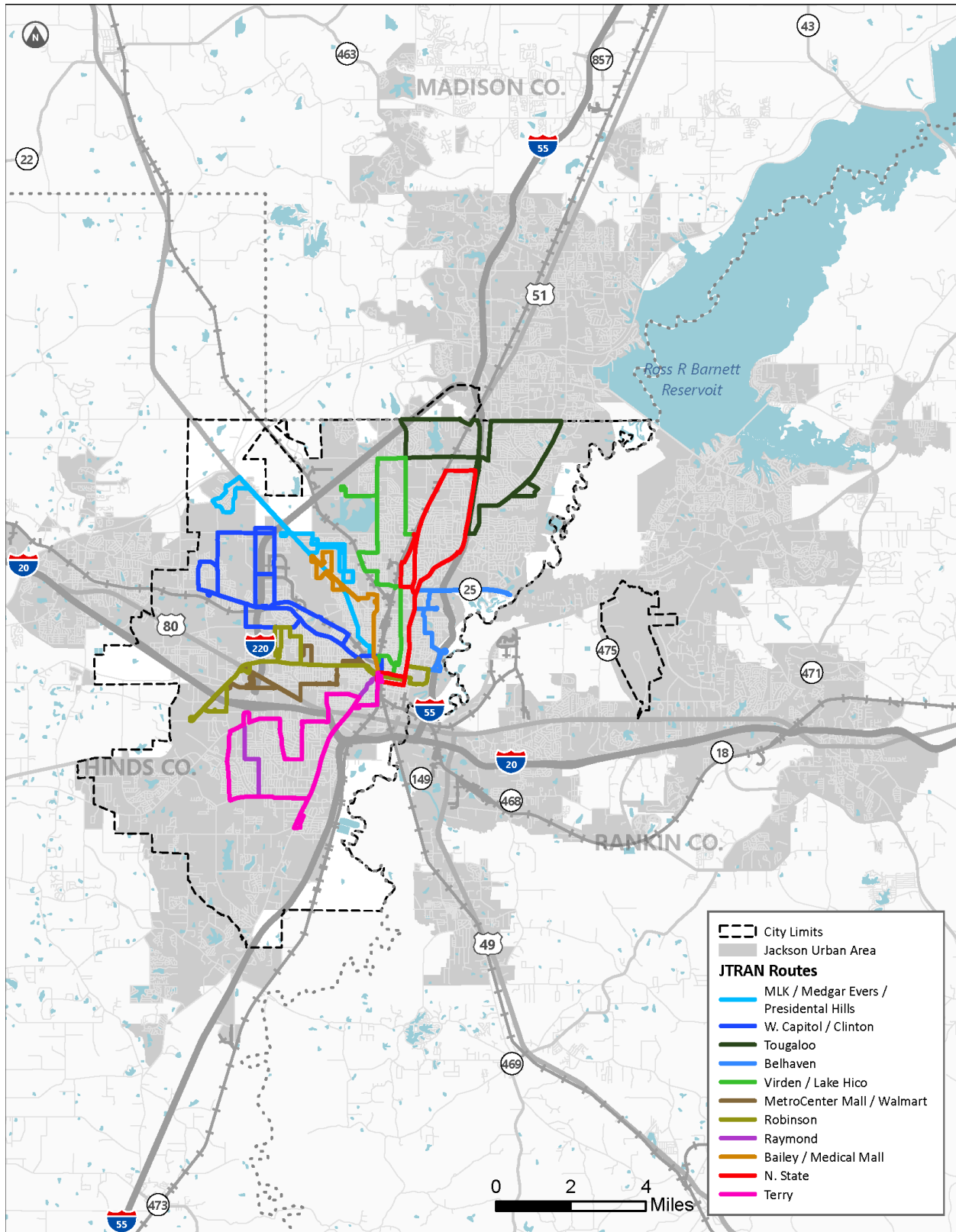


System Attribute*	Fixed Route	Demand Response
Ridership	389,213	59,916
Revenue Hours	675,196	24,295
Revenue Miles	42,940	328,004
Operating Expenses	\$5,690,018	\$4,897,143
Revenue Vehicles	25	21 (17 cutaway buses, 4 minivans)
Percent Exceeding ULB	56%	38%
Facility TERM Rating	88% of facilities are less than 3 on TERM Scale	

*All values are for FY2023

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

JTRAN SERVICE AREA



Appendix C – Rural Agency Profiles

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

DELTA RIDES REGION – DEMOGRAPHICS

County	Population	Employment	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Elderly (65+)	Individuals with Disabilities
Bolivar	30,163	46.2%	33.7%	10.6%	16.7%	18.6%
Carroll	9,828	43.0%	22.4%	3.8%	24.5%	19.8%
Coahoma	20,808	47.5%	36.3%	14.7%	16.1%	14.9%
Desoto	193,247	66.3%	9.2%	2.7%	13.6%	13.2%
Grenada	21,342	53.2%	22.3%	8.0%	18.5%	20.8%
Holmes	16,491	40.7%	38.0%	16.0%	16.2%	33.3%
Humphreys	7,570	43.9%	26.4%	12.4%	18.4%	27.1%
Issaquena	1,095	17.1%	17.2%	17.8%	19.5%	36.9%
Leflore	27,432	48.7%	31.9%	11.0%	15.1%	16.1%
Montgomery	9,708	48.8%	25.6%	7.7%	22.4%	16.9%
Panola	32,965	46.9%	24.1%	5.8%	17.1%	17.4%
Quitman	5,908	45.5%	33.5%	11.4%	18.2%	18.6%
Sharkey	3,848	49.9%	31.8%	8.6%	18.8%	15.4%
Sunflower	25,328	43.0%	29.9%	8.7%	14.8%	15.1%
Tallahatchie	12,363	46.8%	26.5%	10.5%	17.1%	16.6%
Tate	28,135	53.4%	16.8%	4.8%	16.5%	15.3%
Tunica	9,586	52.9%	33.8%	10.2%	13.9%	10.7%
Warren	21,812	27.0%	10.2%	3.4%	9.1%	10.0%
Washington	43,674	47.6%	28.8%	11.6%	17.6%	24.7%
Yalobusha	12,439	47.8%	22.7%	6.7%	21.4%	20.9%
Yazoo	13,419	19.7%	15.7%	7.6%	7.0%	10.5%
Total	547,160					
Average	-	44.6%	25.6%	9.2%	16.8%	18.7%

Sources: 2023 American Community Survey, US Census

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

DELTA RIDES REGION - KEY PERFORMANCE DATA (2023)

Provider	Operating Environment	Service Types	Operating Areas (by county)	Annual Passenger Trips	Annual Operating Expenses	Cost per Trip	Cost per Mile	Cost per Hour
Aaron E. Henry Health Services, Inc (DART)	Rural	Demand Response	Coahoma Desoto Panola Quitman Tallahatchie Tate Tunica	61,367	\$1,732,849	\$28.24	\$2.89	\$76.78
Bolivar County Council on Aging	Rural	Demand Response	Bolivar Coahoma Humphreys Issaquena Madison Sharkey Sunflower Warren Washington Yazoo	129,598	\$2,080,081	\$16.05	\$1.32	\$30.91
Central Mississippi, Inc	Rural	Demand Response	Attala Carroll Grenada Holmes Leflore Montgomery Yalobusha	5,218	\$481,679	\$92.31	\$1.76	\$72.79
Mississippi Valley State University Mass Transit	Rural	Demand Response	Carroll Grenada Holmes Humphreys Leflore Sunflower Tallahatchie Washington	37,687	\$619,938	\$16.37	\$3.91	\$87.85
Sunflower Humphreys Counties Progress, Inc.	Rural	Demand Response	Holmes Humphreys Sunflower	30,773	\$733,980	\$23.85	\$1.46	\$30.71
Region Total				264,643	\$5,645,527			
Region Average						\$21.33	\$1.81	\$44.31

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

DELTA RIDES REGION - FINANCIALS

Provider	Federal	State	Local	Directly Generated	Total Funding	% Funds allocated to Operations	% Funds allocated to Capital
Aaron E. Henry Health Services, Inc. (DART)	\$1,285,312	\$102,442	\$372,129	\$333,584	\$2,093,467	83%	17%
BCCOA	\$2,027,533	\$224,044	\$24,972	\$489,852	\$2,766,401	75%	25%
Central Mississippi, Inc	\$330,953	\$0	\$0	\$179,611	\$510,564	94%	6%
Mississippi Valley State University Mass Transit	\$544,562	\$36,690	\$164,128	\$55,007	\$800,387	77%	23%
Sunflower Humphreys Counties Progress, Inc.	\$601,957	\$51,534	\$0	\$338,159	\$991,650	74%	26%
Region Total	\$4,790,317	\$414,710	\$561,229	\$1,396,213	\$7,162,469		
Region Average						81%	19%

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

NITA REGION COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

County	Population	Employment	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Elderly (65+)	Individuals with Disabilities
Alcorn	34,500	51.8%	17.4%	9.8%	18.8%	22.4%
Benton	7,592	51.2%	17.6%	7.3%	21.3%	23.3%
Calhoun	13,029	52.0%	18.7%	7.1%	20.2%	22.4%
Chickasaw	16,994	51.0%	24.1%	10.4%	18.4%	16.2%
Itawamba	23,942	57.0%	10.8%	3.2%	17.7%	13.9%
Lafayette	56,920	54.0%	18.7%	6.2%	13.3%	17.7%
Lee	82,799	59.6%	12.5%	6.2%	15.8%	13.1%
Marshall	33,899	49.7%	22.8%	4.6%	18.6%	22.7%
Monroe	33,928	51.4%	16.7%	6.3%	19.9%	13.7%
Pontotoc	31,312	57.5%	14.9%	2.6%	15.2%	18.6%
Prentiss	24,999	53.8%	13.5%	6.1%	17.4%	17.5%
Tippah	21,612	55.2%	18.9%	3.0%	17.0%	20.0%
Tishomingo	18,738	51.1%	19.9%	5.8%	20.9%	20.9%
Union	28,009	54.8%	14.3%	4.6%	16.5%	19.5%
Total	428,273					
Average	-	53.6%	17.2%	5.9%	17.9%	18.7%

Sources: 2023 American Community Survey, US Census;

NITA REGION - PROVIDERS KEY PERFORMANCE DATA (2023)

Provider	Operating Environment	Service Types	Operating Areas (by county)	Annual Passenger Trips	Annual Operating Expenses	Cost per Trip	Cost per Mile	Cost per Hour
Northeast Mississippi Community Services	Rural	Demand Response	Alcorn Benton DeSoto Itawamba Marshall Prentiss Tippah Tishomingo	154,049	\$2,461,210	\$15.9	\$2.28	\$36.40
Region Total				154,049	\$2,461,210			
Region Avg per Provider						\$15.98	\$2.28	\$36.40

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

NITA REGION - PROVIDER FINANCIALS

Provider	Federal	State	Local	Directly Generated	Total Funding	% Funds allocated to Operations	% Funds allocated to Capital
Northeast Mississippi Community Services	\$1,342,011	\$84,098	\$479,756	\$596,464	\$2,502,329	98%	2%
Region Total	\$1,342,011	\$84,098	\$479,756	\$596,464	\$2,502,329		
Region Average						98%	2%

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

OXFORD – UNIVERSITY TRANSIT

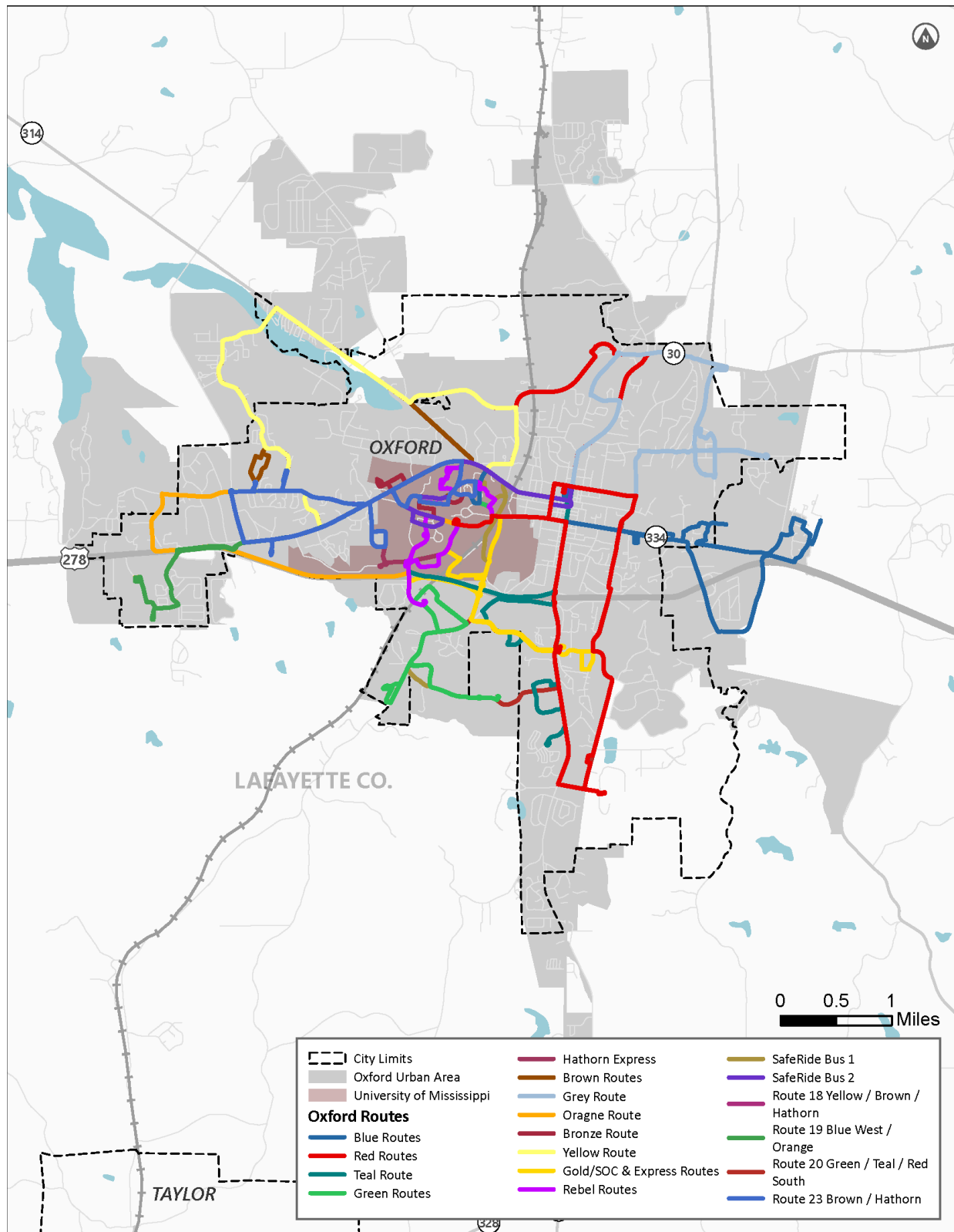
Governance: City of Oxford & Oxford University
Website: <https://www.outransit.com/>
Operating Environment: Rural Provider
Urban Area Population: 35,064
Service Type(s): Fixed Route & Demand Response
Facilities: Administration/Maintenance Building



System Attribute*	Fixed Route	Demand Response
Ridership	468,102	9.553
Revenue Hours	51,150	5,683
Revenue Miles	589,556	37,631
Operating Expenses	\$4,045,277	\$82,557
Revenue Vehicles	28	1
Percent Exceeding ULB	Not Separately Reported – Part of Group Plan	
Facility TERM Rating	Not Separately Reported – Part of Group Plan	

*All values are for FY2023

OXFORD – UNIVERSITY TRANSIT SERVICE AREA



Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

TRANS-CON REGION COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

County	Population	Employment	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Elderly (65+)	Individuals with Disabilities
Copiah	13,997	23.6%	11.5%	4.6%	9.3%	7.7%
Hinds	214,870	57.9%	20.4%	7.9%	16.9%	15.5%
Madison	112,511	63.5%	8.4%	5.0%	15.7%	11.8%
Rankin	160,417	59.2%	9.3%	3.5%	17.4%	15.3%
Simpson	25,817	49.8%	19.4%	4.1%	18.7%	21.1%
Warren	21,812	27.0%	10.2%	3.4%	9.1%	10.0%
Yazoo	13,419	19.7%	15.7%	7.6%	7.0%	10.5%
Total	562,842					
Average	-	43.0%	13.6%	5.2%	13.4%	13.1%

Sources: 2023 American Community Survey, US Census

TRANS-CON REGION - PROVIDERS KEY PERFORMANCE DATA (2023)

Provider	Operating Environment	Service Types	Operating Areas (by county)	Annual Passenger Trips	Annual Operating Expenses	Cost per Trip	Cost per Mile	Cost per Hour
Hinds County Human Resource Agency	Rural	Demand Response	Hinds	30,761	\$1,732,849	\$25.9	\$2.17	\$145.19
Copiah Human Resource Agency	Rural	Demand Response	Copiah Hinds Lincoln	9,664	\$2,080,081	\$12.80	\$1.66	\$27.62
N-Route (Vicksburg Area Transit System)	Rural	Demand Response	Warren	102,815	\$943,074	\$33.48	\$3.84	\$71.12
Madison County Citizens Services Agency	Rural	Demand Response	Madison	17,878	\$619,938	\$46.94	\$6.97	\$91.81
South Central Community	Rural	Demand Response	Hinds Copiah Covington Jefferson Davis Rankin Smith Simpson	25,019	\$733,980	\$33.72	\$1.84	\$42.05
Region Total				186,137	\$6,922,091			
Region Average						\$49.55	\$5.30	\$109.93

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

TRANS-CON REGION - PROVIDER FINANCIALS

Provider	Federal	State	Local	Directly Generated	Total Funding	% Funds allocated to Operations	% Funds allocated to Capital
Hinds County Human Resource Agency	\$476,873	\$0	\$25,001	\$296,538	\$798,412	100%	0%
Copiah Human Resource Agency	\$279,467	\$0	\$214,888	\$405	\$494,760	100%	0%
N-Route (Vicksburg Area Transit System)	\$848,374	\$74,169	\$299,998	\$16,871	\$1,239,412	76%	24%
Madison County Citizens Services Agency	\$679,224	\$46,229	\$261,161	\$146,832	\$1,133,446	78%	22%
South Central Community	\$688,185	\$0	\$33,114	\$361,468	\$1,082,797	78%	22%
Region Total	\$2,972,123	\$120,398	\$834,162	\$822,144	\$4,748,827		
Region Average						89%	11%

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

EZTAG REGION COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

County	Population	Employment	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Elderly (65+)	Individuals with Disabilities
Attala	17,685	53.5%	20.7%	6.9%	19.4%	17.4%
Choctaw	8,172	46.1%	15.9%	5.2%	22.9%	23.3%
Clarke	15,424	47.3%	19.2%	7.8%	21.7%	24.3%
Clay	18,462	47.8%	24.8%	7.6%	19.4%	11.4%
Jasper	16,211	47.8%	18.9%	9.3%	21.3%	22.2%
Kemper	8,855	45.0%	24.6%	4.8%	21.4%	23.5%
Lauderdale	70,527	53.4%	25.6%	8.1%	19.1%	21.1%
Leake	21,288	48.9%	19.9%	7.8%	18.0%	19.5%
Lowndes	58,187	51.6%	16.9%	6.2%	16.9%	12.5%
Neshoba	28,927	52.1%	25.1%	7.7%	16.7%	17.6%
Newton	21,151	48.8%	22.0%	5.1%	17.2%	21.5%
Noxubee	10,136	47.1%	25.6%	7.8%	17.6%	25.3%
Oktibbeha	51,473	51.4%	28.6%	4.5%	11.9%	21.1%
Scott	27,754	52.4%	20.7%	6.4%	15.8%	18.0%
Smith	14,193	44.8%	19.3%	6.1%	20.7%	20.0%
Webster	9,942	54.7%	15.1%	6.0%	18.7%	22.4%
Winston	17,609	46.8%	30.4%	8.8%	21.1%	23.9%
Total	415,996					
Average	-	49.4%	22.0%	6.8%	18.8%	20.3%

Sources: 2023 American Community Survey, US Census

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

EZTAG REGION - PROVIDERS KEY PERFORMANCE DATA (2023)

Provider	Operating Environment	Service Types	Operating Areas (by county)	Annual Passenger Trips	Annual Operating Expenses	Cost per Trip	Cost per Mile	Cost per Hour
Noxubee County Human Resource Agency	Rural	Demand Response	Noxubee Kemper Winston	3,428	\$251,748	\$73.4	\$2.05	\$47.30
Philadelphia Transit	Rural	Demand Response	Neshoba Kemper Lauderdale Newton Scott Winston	16,372	\$454,374	\$27.75	\$2.58	\$51.04
Region Total				19,800	\$706,122			
Region Average						\$50.60	\$2.32	\$49.17

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

EZTAG REGION - PROVIDER FINANCIALS

Provider	Federal	State	Local	Directly Generated	Total Funding	% Funds allocated to Operations	% Funds allocated to Capital
Noxubee County Human Resource Agency	\$169,000	\$0	\$60,098	\$22,650	\$251,748	100%	0%
Philadelphia Transit	\$430,321	\$46,936	\$6,743	\$178,773	\$662,773	69%	31%
Region Total	\$599,321	46,936	\$66,841	\$201,423	\$914,521		
Region Average						85%	15%

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

STARKVILLE - MSU AREA RAPID TRANSIT

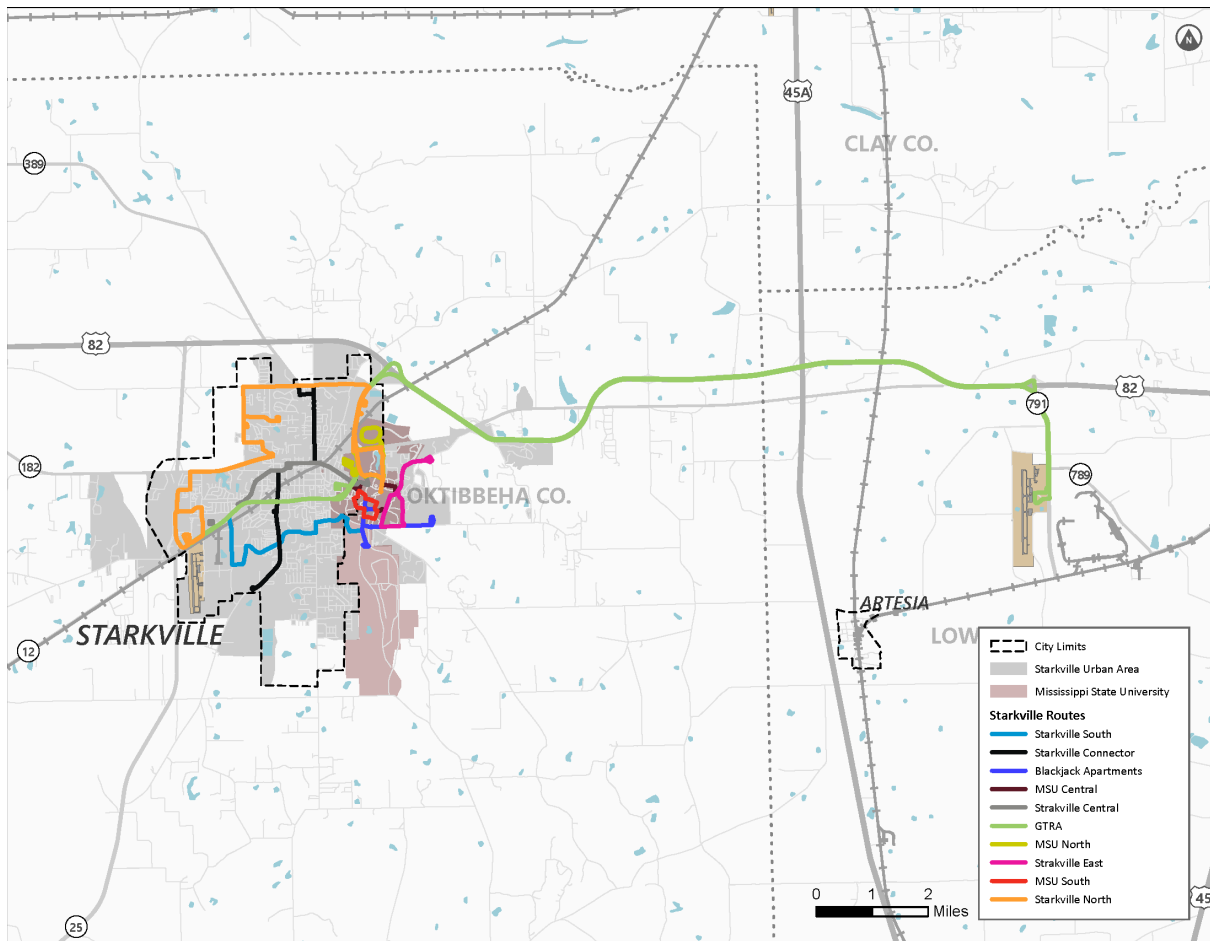
Governance: Mississippi State University
Website: <https://www.smart.msstate.edu/>
Operating Environment: Rural Provider
Urban Area Population: 33,309
Service Type(s): Fixed Route & Demand Response
Facilities: Vehicle Washing



System Attribute*	Fixed Route	Demand Response
Ridership	389,213	59,916
Revenue Hours	675,196	24,295
Revenue Miles	42,940	328,004
Operating Expenses	\$3,143,528	\$186,481
Revenue Vehicles	36	4
Percent Exceeding ULB	Not Separately Reported – Part of Group Plan	
Facility TERM Rating	Not Separately Reported – Part of Group Plan	

*All values are for FY2023

STARKVILLE – MSU AREA RAPID TRANSIT SERVICE AREA



SMART REGION COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

County	Population	Employment	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Elderly (65+)	Individuals with Disabilities
Adams	29,098	41.8%	28.2%	8.0%	21.6%	15.4%
Amite	12,611	37.4%	27.0%	7.1%	25.4%	27.3%
Claiborne	8,908	34.4%	27.2%	10.8%	18.9%	11.6%
Copiah	13,997	23.6%	11.5%	4.6%	9.3%	7.7%
Covington	9,113	26.8%	8.9%	3.7%	8.8%	8.5%
Franklin	7,655	43.3%	23.3%	3.9%	21.1%	22.5%
Jefferson	7,127	38.2%	28.5%	4.1%	19.3%	14.8%
Jefferson-Davis	5,592	23.8%	12.5%	3.3%	12.0%	11.7%
Lawrence	11,883	43.5%	23.8%	6.1%	18.1%	28.2%
Lincoln	34,830	50.8%	21.3%	4.9%	17.3%	15.2%
Pike	39,930	49.2%	27.5%	7.0%	17.5%	18.5%

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

County	Population	Employment	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Elderly (65+)	Individuals with Disabilities
Walthall	13,864	46.2%	18.1%	6.6%	20.3%	21.1%
Wilkinson	8,376	34.6%	28.2%	8.0%	18.9%	20.5%
Total	202,984					
Average	-	38.0%	22.0%	6.0%	17.6%	17.2%

Sources: 2023 American Community Survey, US Census

SMART REGION - PROVIDERS KEY PERFORMANCE DATA (2023)

Provider	Operating Environment	Service Types	Operating Areas (by county)	Annual Passenger Trips	Annual Operating Expenses	Cost per Trip	Cost per Mile	Cost per Hour
Claiborne County Human Resource Agency	Rural	Demand Response	Claiborne Jefferson Franklin	69,686	\$1,857,219	\$26.60	\$2.91	\$87.35
Copiah County Human Resource Agency	Rural	Demand Response	Copiah Hinds Lincoln	9,663	\$247,380	\$12.80	\$1.65	\$27.62
City of Natchez	Rural	Demand Response		38,639	\$1,438,299	\$37.22	\$4.06	\$77.88
Mount Zion Economic Community Center	Rural	Demand Response		18,479	\$644,203	\$34.86	\$1.04	\$32.40
Region Total				136,467	\$4,187,101			
Region Average						\$29.77	\$2.40	\$63.41

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

SMART REGION - PROVIDER FINANCIALS

Provider	Federal	State	Local	Directly Generated	Total Funding	% Funds allocated to Operations	% Funds allocated to Capital
Claiborne County Human Resource Agency	\$1,366,818	\$92,215	\$83,323	\$704,893	\$2,247,249	83%	17%
Copiah County Human Resource Agency	\$139,734	\$0	\$107,444	\$203	\$247,380	100%	0%
City of Natchez	\$1,339,476	\$33,399	\$257,311	\$79,175	\$1,709,361	84%	16%
Mount Zion Economic Community Center	\$504,441	\$0	\$286,642	\$27,105	\$818,188	79%	21%
Region Total	\$3,350,469	\$125,614	\$734,720	\$811,376	\$5,022,178		
Region Average						87%	13%

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

SOUTHERN CONNECT REGION COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

County	Population	Employment	Low Income	Zero Car Households	Elderly (65+)	Individuals with Disabilities
Covington	9,113	26.8%	8.9%	3.7%	8.8%	8.5%
Forrest	78,208	65.4%	17.3%	6.0%	13.8%	20.7%
George	24,870	45.2%	18.7%	5.9%	15.2%	20.8%
Greene	13,595	28.8%	20.5%	6.7%	14.5%	25.3%
Hancock	46,057	55.5%	13.3%	3.4%	21.9%	18.8%
Harrison	220,612	54.6%	15.6%	7.9%	17.1%	19.8%
Jackson	146,389	58.5%	12.4%	3.7%	17.5%	18.4%
Jefferson-Davis	5,592	23.8%	12.5%	3.3%	12.0%	11.7%
Jones	66,250	54.5%	19.1%	4.4%	18.2%	20.9%
Lamar	66,217	58.2%	14.7%	4.3%	15.8%	18.0%
Marion	24,303	49.1%	20.4%	4.5%	18.8%	21.5%
Pearl River	56,781	51.8%	16.4%	3.2%	19.3%	20.7%
Perry	11,459	44.1%	18.1%	5.0%	19.0%	29.1%
Stone	18,515	47.1%	17.9%	7.3%	17.4%	21.2%
Wayne	19,699	49.1%	22.9%	5.0%	17.7%	19.0%
Total	807,660					
Average	-	47.5%	16.6%	5.0%	17.3%	19.6%

Sources: 2023 American Community Survey, US Census

SOUTHERN CONNECT REGION - PROVIDERS KEY PERFORMANCE DATA (2023)

Provider	Operating Environment	Service Types	Operating Areas (by county)	Annual Passenger Trips	Annual Operating Expenses	Cost per Trip	Cost per Mile	Cost per Hour
Community Development Inc.	Rural	Demand Response	Covington Forrest George Greene Hancock Jefferson Davis Jones Lamar Marion Pearl River Perry Stone Wayne Rankin	64,748	\$1,653,014	\$25.5	\$1.78	\$35.91
DJ Transit	Rural	Demand Response	Covington Jasper Jefferson Davis Jones Lawrence	81,276	\$1,038,459	\$12.78	\$1.99	\$27.01
Five County Child Development Program	Rural	Demand Response	Covington Jefferson Davis Lawrence Lincoln Marion Pike	17,514	\$632,196	\$36.10	\$2.99	\$42.77

Statewide Transit Plan and Intercity Bus Study

Provider	Operating Environment	Service Types	Operating Areas (by county)	Annual Passenger Trips	Annual Operating Expenses	Cost per Trip	Cost per Mile	Cost per Hour
Region Total				163,538	\$3,323,669			
Region Average						\$24.80	\$2.25	\$35.23

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023

SOUTHERN CONNECT REGION - PROVIDER FINANCIALS

Provider	Federal	State	Local	Directly Generated	Total Funding	% Funds allocated to Operations	% Funds allocated to Capital
Community Development Inc.	\$1,298,707	\$64,974	\$0	\$727,540	\$2,091,221	79%	21%
DJ Transit	\$670,916	\$42,069	\$80,099	\$368,269	\$1,161,353	89%	11%
Five County Child Development Program	\$578,269	\$0	\$0	\$296,207	\$874,476	72%	28%
Region Total	\$2,547,892	\$107,043	\$80,099	\$1,392,016	\$4,127,050		
Region Average						80%	20%

Source: NTD Database, MDOT 2023



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