

Final Report

January 2017



Mississippi Statewide Public Transportation Study



Prepared by Gresham, Smith and Partners
for the Mississippi Department of Transportation





Photo credits:

Hernando sign, Mike Lee, 2010

Welcome to Mississippi, Mike Lee, 2009

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Statewide Public Transportation Study Final Report

1.0 Overview of Study

The purpose of the Statewide Public Transportation Study is to analyze existing and future transit system conditions in Mississippi, and based on those findings, recommend a set of transit improvements that can be implemented over the next three to five-year years. The study, led by the Mississippi Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Public Transit Division and stakeholders across the state, establishes a foundation for significantly enhancing transit in Mississippi by focusing on three core outcomes:

- Vision, goals, and objectives;
- Programmatic improvements; and
- Policy changes.

Before turning to the recommendations for the three core outcomes, the study briefly describes the study process and the current state of transit in Mississippi, an indispensable element of the overall transportation system in the state. Throughout the study and this final report, it is important to note that "transit" is used as an umbrella term that includes public, private, and human services transportation. Public transportation is further defined as a service open to any individual who requests service and is willing to pay the fare charged. Human services transportation may limit ridership to members of a specific group or to persons meeting defined criteria. Private transportation is service that is not available to the general public. Unlike most public

... recommend
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transportation, which may be subsidized, the entire cost of private transportation is paid for directly or indirectly by the user.

1.1 Previous Plans and Studies

Mississippi has a strong history of planning for transit at the statewide, regional, and local levels. Chief among these previous plans and studies are the statewide long range multimodal transportation plan, statewide coordination plan, regional coordination plans, and regional transportation plans. Key findings and recommendations from each of these planning efforts have informed this study and are summarized below.

MULTIPLAN 2040

The Mississippi Unified Long-Range Transportation Infrastructure Plan (MULTIPLAN) is the state's long-range transportation plan and sets the course of action to meet the transportation needs of the state over a 25-year period. The state's current long-range plan, MULTIPLAN 2040, emphasizes the state's role in promoting multimodal transportation options, including transit. MULTIPLAN 2040 transit opportunities include:

- Increasing ridership among rural and urban providers;
- Expanding coordination and collaboration between providers;
- Enhancing service and improving efficiency through technology;
- Changing attitudes toward transit; and
- Maintaining 75 percent of transit vehicles in a state of good repair.

Statewide Coordination Planning

Adopted in June 2007, the Mississippi Statewide Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan fulfills the federal requirements for transit funding under SAFETEA-LU, the federal surface transportation bill signed into law in 2005, and ties together the state's six Regional Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plans. The statewide plan incorporates the following shared goals of the regional coordination plans:

- Expand/increase service areas, hours, and days;



- Southwest Mississippi Accessible Regional Transportation (SMART);
- Southern Mississippi Transit (SMT); and
- Transportation Connections (TRANS-CON).

The RCTPGs (Figure 1-1) were formed to address federal regulations that require the development of regional plans for coordinated transit. The RCTPGs are made up of agencies with the common goal of providing transportation services to the general public, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals. Each RCTPG designates a lead transit agency, but the groups include regional public and private transit providers, public officials, human service organizations, planning and development districts, public and private non-profit, mental health organizations and other interested transportation stakeholders.

Some of the agencies and other stakeholders involved operate transit programs with the support from MDOT. In addition to the shared regional goals captured in the statewide coordination plan, each of the state's six RCTPGs has their own unique set of goals and objectives tailored to their specific markets and geographies (Table 1-1).

Regional Long Range Transportation Plans and Transportation Improvement Programs

Mississippi's four metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) provide transportation planning in urbanized areas with more than 50,000 people. Based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process, MPO long range transportation plans identify and prioritize transportation improvement projects for funding, including transit programs. The ten Mississippi Planning and Development Districts provide a similar function in rural areas. Table 1-2 summarizes the transit goals in the four MPO regional long range transportation plans. For the Memphis MPO, which includes all of DeSoto County and part of Marshall County, the goals in Table 1-2 come from the DeSoto Transit Feasibility Study completed in 2013.

- Increase accessibility, especially for underserved populations;
- Minimize jurisdictional boundaries;
- Improve public outreach through marketing and promotion;
- Improve routing and scheduling efficiencies;
- Establish single points of contact that reduce the complexity of arranging trips;
- Share resources for greater efficiencies;
- Establish formal coordination mechanisms for project development and selection;
- Establish a culture of local support among elected officials and policy makers; and
- Develop a base of sustainable support.

Regional coordination among transit providers is an ongoing process. Annually, MDOT holds a Statewide Transportation Coordination Summit that provides an opportunity for identifying and responding to a variety of opportunities and challenges.

Regional Coordination Plans

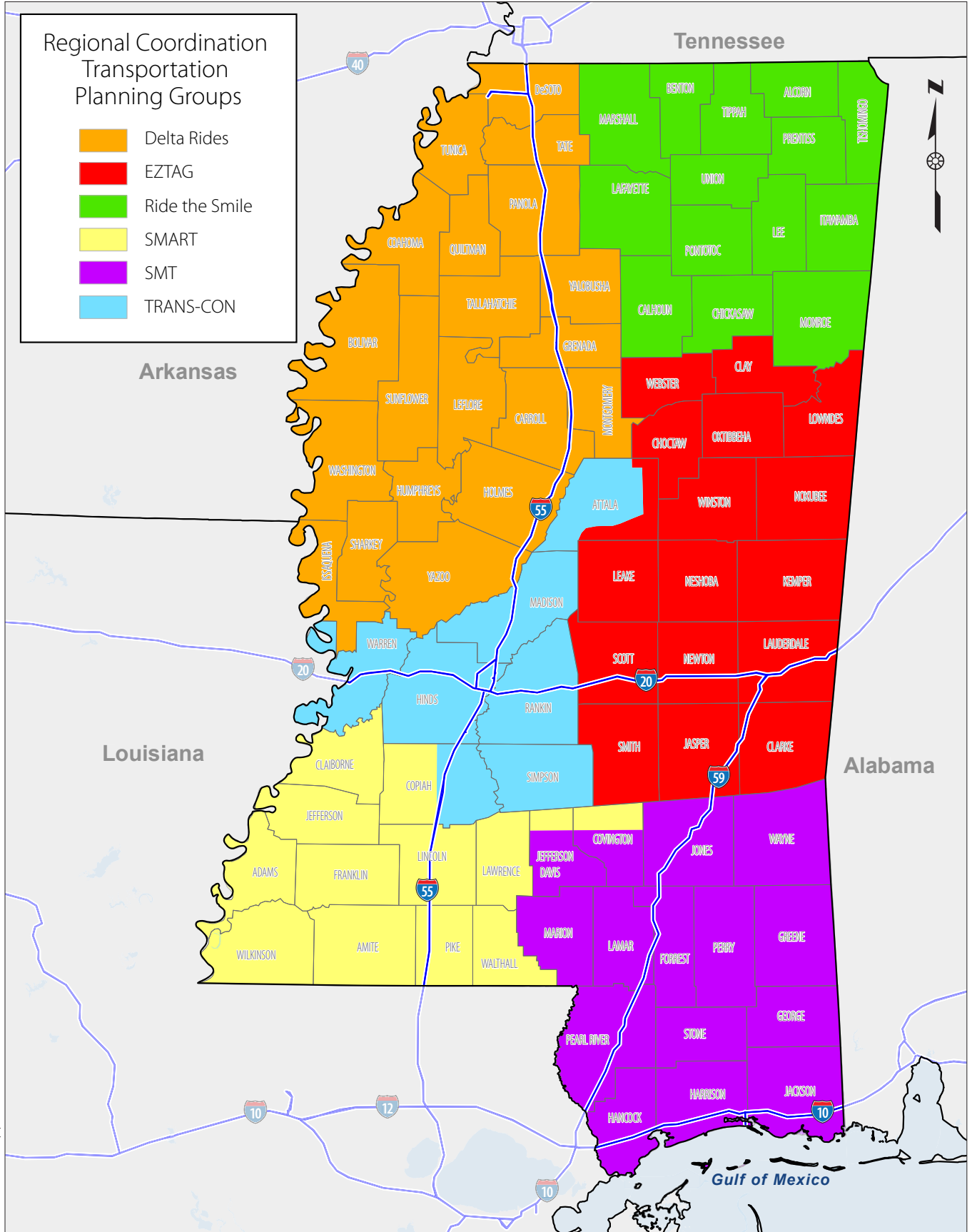
Transit providers in Mississippi are organized into six Regional Coordination Transportation Planning Groups (RCTPG):

- Delta Rides;
- East Central Transit Action Group (EZTAG);
- Northeast Mississippi: Ride the Smile;

1.2 Stakeholder Involvement

To guide the development of the Statewide Public Transportation Study, MDOT established a steering committee consisting of regional stakeholders from around the state. The steering committee met three times during the course of the year-long study to provide input on the vision, goals, and objectives and

Figure 1-1. Regional Coordination Transportation Planning Groups



Source: Mississippi DOT

Table 1-1. Regional Coordination Transportation Planning Groups: Goals and Objectives

Delta Rides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance transportation with the use of technology • Increase the number of regional participating stakeholders • Develop a uniform fee structure 	
EZTAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of participating stakeholders • Develop a mechanism for securing additional local match • Share of vehicles and resources • Create a promotion and marketing plan 	
Ride the Smile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the existing ridership base while attracting and coordinating new rides • Provide for the economic sustainability of the transit system • Provide high-quality customer-oriented service • Provide efficient, effective, and safe services • Promote existing and new services 	
SMART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 24-hour public transit services for employment and non-emergency medical needs • Expand transportation service funding streams • Provide transit services in all counties within the region • Secure more cooperation from stakeholders who are not transportation providers 	
SMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all regional transportation services stakeholders • Identify barriers to coordinated transportation services • Propose viable solutions to implementation barriers • Assist MDOT with information to aid in decisions regarding the allocation of transportation funding 	
TRANS-CON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve day-to-day coordination through an internet-based information system • Expand operations during weekdays and weekends by increasing the number of drivers • Increase vehicle inventory through MDOT funding and other sources • Minimize overlapping routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage support and participation by elected officials • Increase marketing efforts • Take advantage of existing funding streams • Incorporate multimodal services and programs • Continue consumer needs assessments

program and policy alternatives. In addition to the steering committee, two surveys, two rounds of regional coordination meetings, and stakeholder interviews were undertaken in support of the study.

Steering Committee

The steering committee, made up of representatives from transit agencies, social service agencies, and MDOT, met to give feedback at important milestones. The steering committee provided guidance, suggestions, and other ideas to help achieve a balanced plan that captured the purpose of the

existing statewide transit programs and identified strategies for improving transit services statewide.

Summit Survey

The statewide study was introduced at the 2015 Mobility Management Conference and Transportation Coordination Summit. A formal survey was distributed during the Transportation Coordination Summit to gather feedback on the needs and trends facing each region as well as priority improvements.

Regional Working Group Meetings

Two sets of regional working group meetings were held in each of the six RCTPG regions. The first set of meetings was held in the fall of 2015 and focused on establishing goals and objectives for transit in Mississippi and reviewing existing conditions and needs. The second set of meetings was held in the spring of 2016 and focused on the draft alternative program and policy recommendations. Both rounds of meetings included presentations and open discussion periods. The working group meetings were attended by the general public, transit providers, elected officials, and agency staff.

Survey and Interviews

At the outset of the study, an online survey instrument was developed using SurveyMonkey to better understand the type of transit services provided throughout Mississippi. Transit agencies were queried based on the type of service they offer and different sets of questions went to the different groups of transit providers. All providers were asked for the most popular destinations, their vehicle roster, hours of service, and populations served. Questions about current sources of operating and capital funding were also included as part of the survey. Rural flexible/demand response providers and human service agencies were asked additional questions regarding whether they provided or purchased services and questions specific to their agency's clients and mission. Of 48 agencies surveyed, 29 completed the

Table 1-2. Metropolitan Planning Organizations: Transit Goals and Objectives

2035 Jackson Urbanized Area Transportation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study the formation of a Regional Transit Authority • Develop Park-and-Ride sites • Develop a vanpool program • Add express bus service • Enhance the linkage between pedestrian, bicycle, and transit services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the image of JATRAM and services • Provide transit to shopping, jobs, and airport • Develop adequate transit funding • Develop public/private partnerships • Reconfigure routes and add services including new technologies
2035 Mississippi Gulf Coast Long Range Transportation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the frequency on key routes • Employ new bus technologies • Implement more inter-county transit • Plan for an aging population • Improve coordination with Human Services Transportation providers • Expand transit and land use connectivity • Update transit marketing 	
2035 Hattiesburg-Petal-Forrest-Lamar Metropolitan Transportation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships with local colleges and transit agencies • Address, monitor, and adjust duplicative service through restructuring of routes and alternative services • Avoid circuitous routes and make bus routes direct and as quick as possible • Provide training and facilities for future software installation, which will assist in reporting and monitoring of services • Promote existing and new services 	
Desoto Transit Feasibility Study (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Mobility Management Program and hire a Mobility Manager • Create a Flexible Voucher Program • Develop a Commuter Service to start offering fixed-route services • Operate Fixed-Route or Flex Route bus service along specific routes 	

survey, or approximately 60 percent. The respondents represented a range of service providers and were geographically distributed throughout the state. Also as part of the study, a series of stakeholder interviews was conducted to discuss alternative funding sources, interagency coordination at the state level, and mobility management improvements. Interviewees included representatives from transit agencies, planning, human services, and medical service organizations, and state agencies.

1.3 Population and Growth Trends

Demographic characteristics and trends play a critical role in understanding the need and demand for transit services. Overall, Mississippi is a largely rural state with 55 percent of the state's population living in small towns or rural areas. The state's four major urban areas account for the remaining 45 percent of the population. For people living in urban areas, a large percentage of that population resides in areas characterized by suburban housing densities (two to four dwelling units per acre). Predominately suburban and rural development patterns pose unique challenges to transit providers, often requiring creative and innovative strategies and services.

Mississippi is Growing and Becoming More Urbanized

In 2013, Mississippi's population consisted of approximately 2.9 million people, and it is projected to grow to just over 3.5 million people by the year 2040, representing a 19 percent increase. Population growth in Mississippi continues to be focused mostly within existing urbanized areas. Figure 1-2 displays the forecasted percentage change in population by county from 2010 to 2040. The state's metropolitan areas – Memphis/North Mississippi (DeSoto County), Jackson (Madison, Hinds, and Rankin counties), Gulfport/Biloxi (Harrison County), and Hattiesburg (Lamar County) will see a majority of this growth (52 percent). Meanwhile, nearly 30 percent of the state's 82 counties are anticipated to see a reduction in population by the year 2040. A few counties outside of metropolitan areas, such as Lauderdale County, Lafayette County, and Lee County, are also expected to gain significant population by 2040.



Employment is Becoming More Centralized

Mississippi employment is primarily concentrated in the state's largest urbanized areas surrounding Jackson, Hattiesburg, Memphis, and the Gulf Coast region (Figure 1-3), and many of the larger urban areas, including Tupelo and DeSoto County, depend on workers from other counties and states. In 2013, there were approximately 1.3 million jobs in Mississippi. MULTIPLAN 2040 projects employment to increase by 26 percent in 2040 to 1.7 million jobs. Of note, DeSoto County is anticipated to see an employment increase of 93 percent from 59,800 jobs to 115,400 jobs by 2040, while many rural counties are projected to lose jobs.

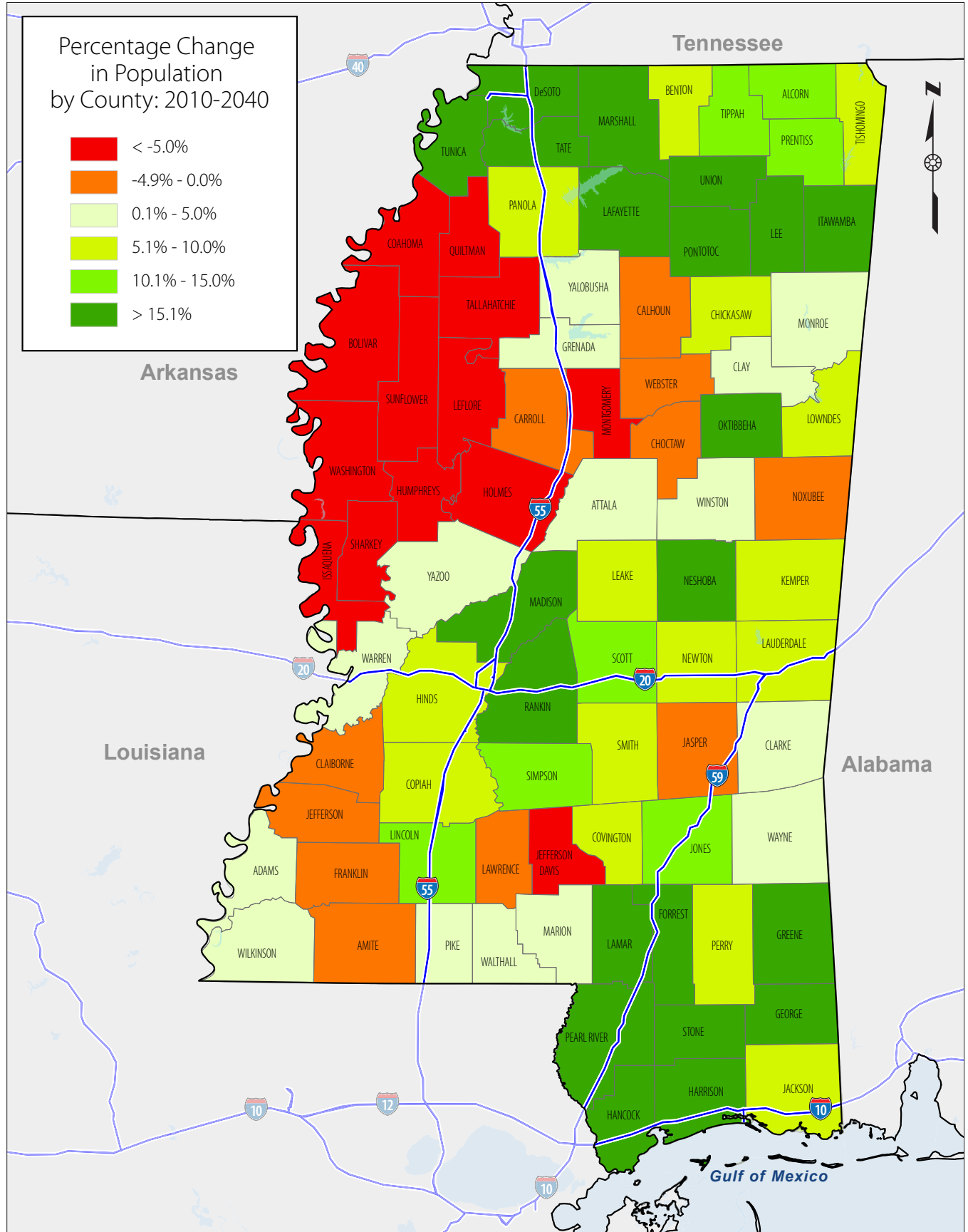
Mississippians are Getting Older

By 2025, it is projected that over 633,000 people in Mississippi, or one in five, will be aged 65 or older, up from approximately 392,500 people or 13 percent in 2013. According to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), many people aged 65 and older rely on transit services for essential trips, especially for non-emergency medical visits. The provision of transit allows these individuals to age in their own homes and communities as opposed to permanent care facilities.

Many Mississippians Struggle with Poverty

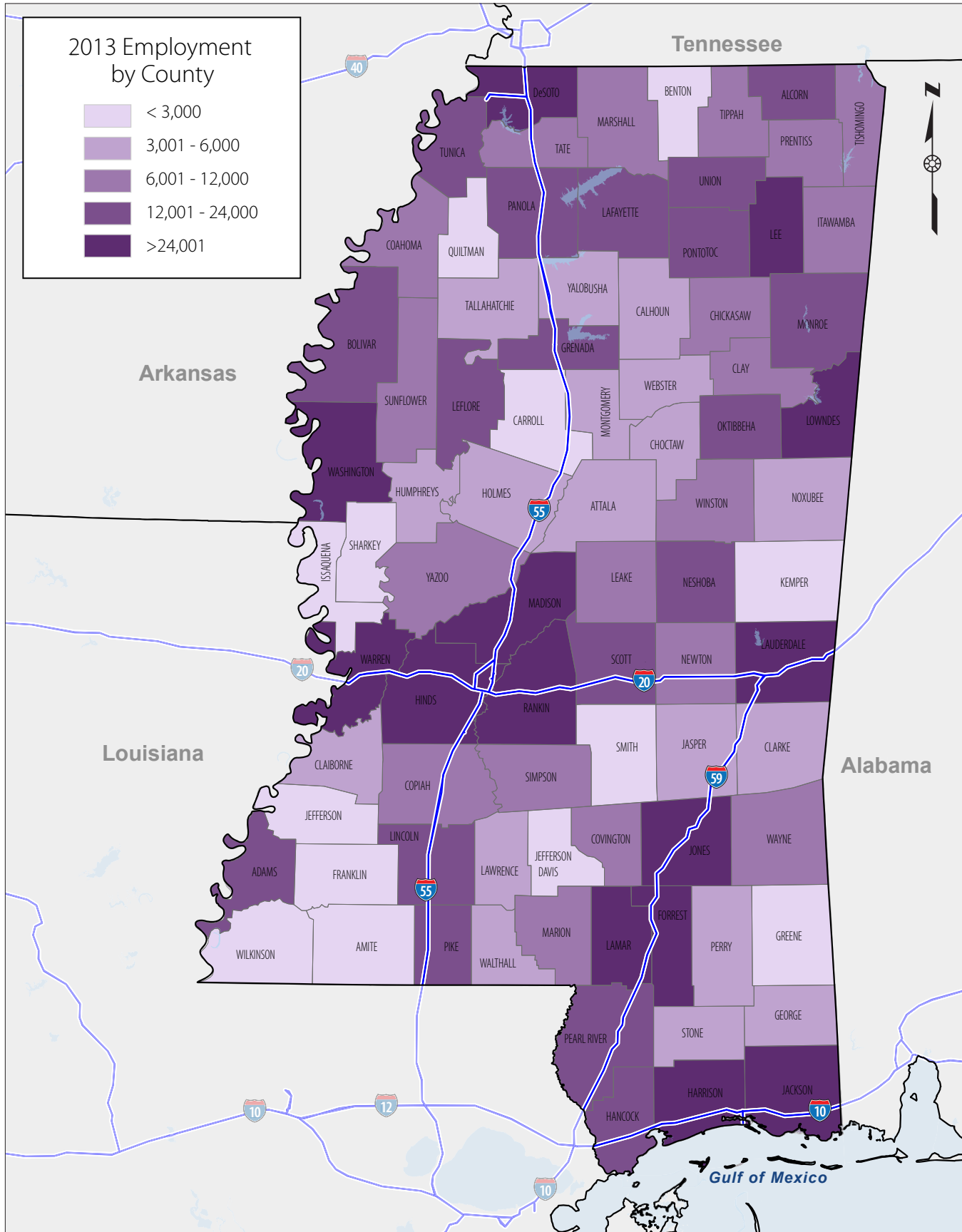
More than one in five households in Mississippi live below the poverty line, almost 50 percent greater than the national average. In 2013, the national poverty rate was 14.5 percent, and the Mississippi poverty rate stood at 22.6 percent. Transportation is the second

Figure 1-2. Percentage Change in Population by County: 2010-2040



Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 1-3. 2013 Employment by County



Source: Mississippi Statewide Travel Demand Model

... 44 percent
of the state's
population lives
within an area that
scored high or very
high on the Transit
Dependence
Index ...

largest household expense after housing. Figure 1-4 illustrates total population living in poverty by county in Mississippi. Poverty rates of 30 percent or more are experienced in the counties of Bolivar, Claiborne, Coahoma, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Jefferson, Kemper, Leflore, Montgomery, Oktibbeha, Noxubee, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, Washington, and Yazoo.

1.4 Transit Need

Given the various demographic trends impacting Mississippi, "transit need" is a broad planning term that attempts to measure both the distribution and amount of transit dependent populations in an area. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) defines transit dependent individuals as persons who are disabled or mentally ill, elderly, poor, and/or have no access to personal transportation. To illustrate the geographic distribution of transit needs, a Transit Dependence Index (TDI) was created using a combination of four factors that have a strong relationship with dependence on transit: household automobile ownership, household income, disability, and age. Figure 1-5 shows the results of the TDI by US Census block. As shown, 44 percent of the state's population lives within an area that scored high or very high on

the Transit Dependence Index. Generally, suburban areas surrounding the metropolitan areas in DeSoto, Jackson, Hinds, Madison, and Rankin counties scored lower on the index.

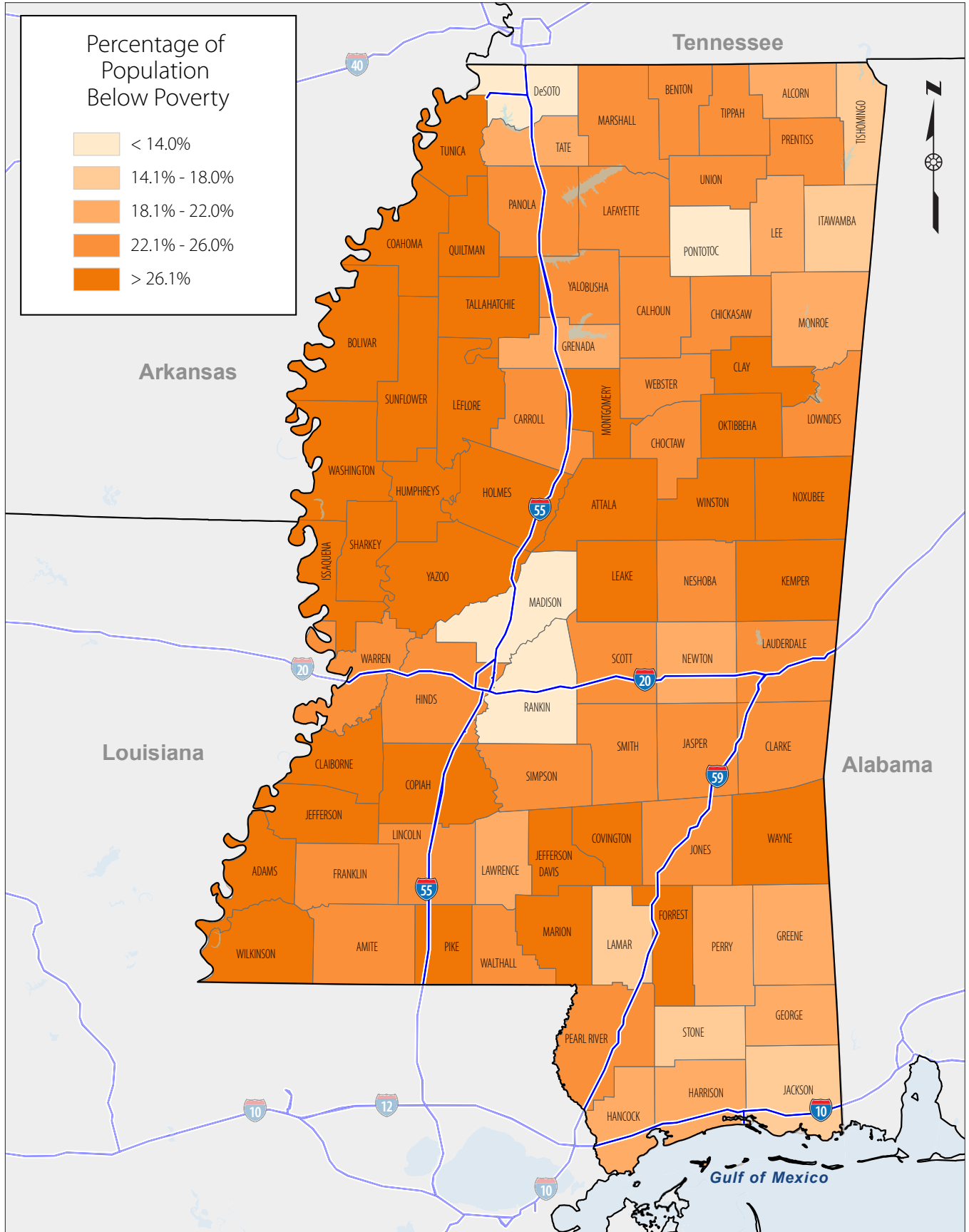
To measure the amount of need among transit dependent populations in the state, the total "mobility gap" was calculated. The mobility gap represents the difference in the number of household trips between households with vehicles and households without vehicles. Because households with vehicles travel more than households without vehicles, the difference in total trips between the two types of households is the mobility gap. This method operates under the assumption that households with no vehicles are foregoing the additional trips because of lack of transportation options.

The statewide mobility gap is anticipated to grow from 17.9 million annual trips in 2010 to 20.1 million annual trips by 2040, with the increasing need divided almost equally among rural and urban areas. Not surprisingly, the largest urban counties have the highest estimated mobility gaps. Hinds County currently has an estimated mobility gap of 1.3 million annual trips. Other counties with significant estimated mobility gaps include DeSoto, Jackson, Harrison, Lauderdale, and Washington.

The statewide rural mobility gap is anticipated to grow from 10.8 million annual trips in 2010 to 12 million annual trips in 2040. Jasper County, Lee County, Rankin County, Holmes County, and Marshall County are predominantly rural counties with estimated mobility gaps exceeding 250,000 trips annually (Figures 1-6 and 1-7). In nearly one-third of all counties, the mobility gap is anticipated to decrease due to a projected loss in population by 2040.

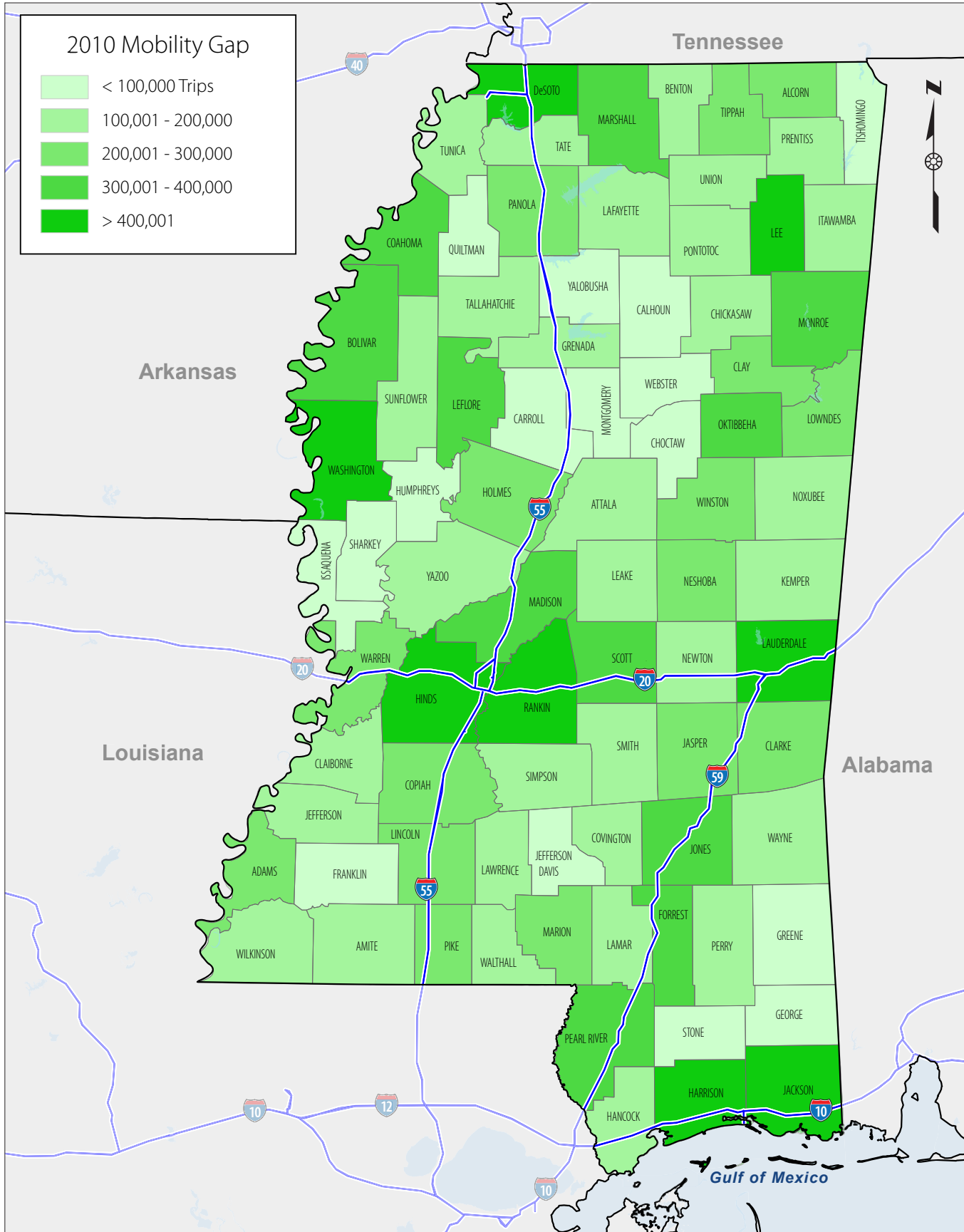
While the mobility gap describes the relative mobility limitations experienced by households that lack access to a personal vehicle, it is important to note that these estimates far exceed actual ridership levels observed by local transit systems or ridership that could be supported by existing services. Previous studies have suggested that in rural counties five percent or less of the mobility gap is typically met by transit services, and that even in the best cases, less than 20 percent of the gap is filled. In Mississippi, current rural ridership addresses just under 16 percent of the rural mobility gap.

Figure 1-4. Percentage of Population Below Poverty



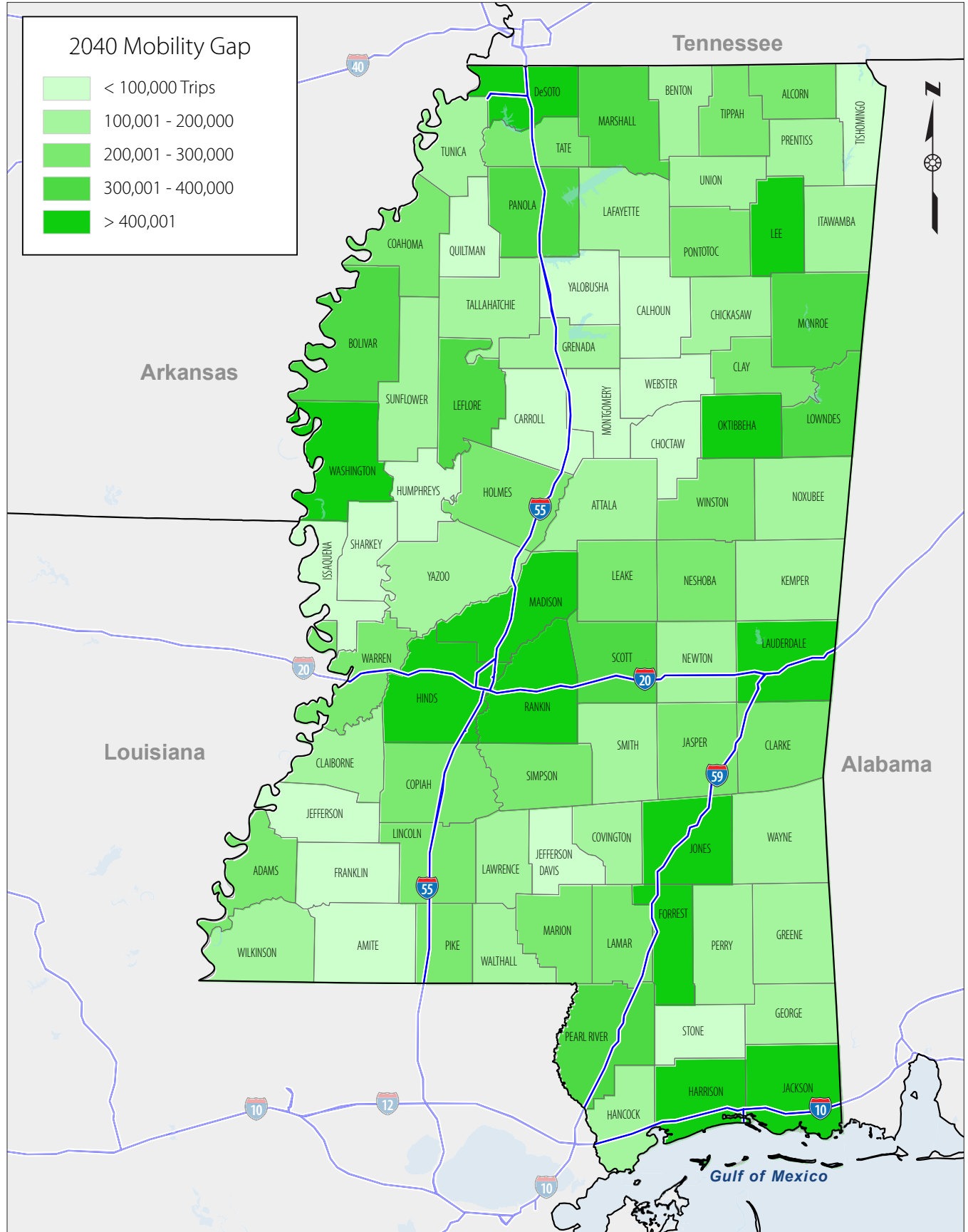
Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 1-6. 2010 Mobility Gap by County



Source: Gresham, Smith and Partners

Figure 1-7. 2040 Mobility Gap by County



Source: Gresham, Smith and Partners

2.0 Transit in Mississippi

Mississippi has 46 transit providers that offer a range of services categorized into four complementary systems:

- Specialized Transit – Funded in part by FTA’s Section 5310 grant program, specialized transit encompasses subscription trips for clients to a social service agency or demand response service only open to certain populations.
- Flexible/Demand Response Transit – Flexible/demand response transit consists of general public dial-a-ride trips requiring advanced reservations as well as flexible routes that can deviate a certain distance off the primary route upon request. It is funded in part by FTA’s Section 5311 grant program.
- Fixed Route/ADA Paratransit – Fixed route/ADA paratransit, funded in part by FTA’s Section 5307 grant program in urban areas and FTA’s Section 5311 program in nonurbanized areas, carries the majority of riders on routes that repeat their routing and schedules on a daily basis and make transfers with each other, producing a network of routes.
- Intercity Bus Transit – Intercity bus transit makes limited stops (typically one stop per community), has interlining agreements with other intercity carriers, and requires passengers to purchase a ticket to ride. Each state is required to set aside a small portion, 15 percent, of Section 5311 funds for intercity bus transit, unless needs are adequately met.

The types of providers vary between government agencies, non-profit organizations, human service and mental health agencies, faith-based organizations, and planning and development organizations. Of Mississippi’s transit providers, six provide fixed-route services (three urban fixed route and three non-urban fixed route), 25 provide specialized demand response services, and another 15 provide a combination of both flexible route and demand response services.

2.1 Public and Private Transit Providers

Table 2-1 provides a summary of each of the transit providers in the state along with the type of service they provide and their RCTPG. Specialized transit providers are typically human service organizations that provide transportation to clients and supplement local transit services. To qualify for transit services,

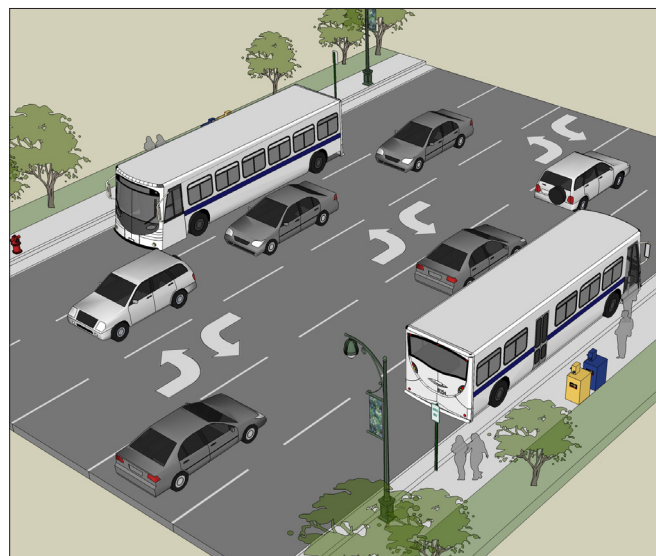











Table 2-1. Mississippi Transit Providers by Service Type

 Transit Provider	 Provider Type	 RCTPG	 Transit Provider	 Provider Type	 RCTPG	 Transit Provider	 Provider Type	 RCTPG
Alcorn County HRA	Specialized	Ride the Smile	Hub City Transit	Fixed	SMT	Quality Mental Health	Specialized	Delta Rides
Bolivar County Council on Aging	Flex/Demand	Delta Rides/ TRANSCON	Jackson County Civic Action	Specialized	SMT	Rankin County HRA	Specialized	TRANSCON
Choctaw Transit	Flex/Demand	EZTAG	JATRAN	Fixed	TRANSCON	Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)	Specialized	Ride the Smile
City of Jackson HCS	Specialized	TRANSCON	Madison County CSA	Flex/Demand	TRANSCON	SMART	Fixed	EZTAG
Claiborne County HRA	Flex/Demand	SMART	Mississippi Christian Family Services	Specialized	Delta Rides	South Central Community Action	Flex/Demand	TRANSCON
Climb Up	Specialized	Ride the Smile	Mt Zion	Specialized	SMART	Southwest MS Mental Health	Specialized	SMART
Coast Transit Authority (CTA)	Fixed-Specialized	SMT	MVSU Mass Transit	Flex/Demand	Delta Rides	Three Rivers PDD	Specialized	Ride the Smile
Community Development	Flex/Demand	SMT	Natchez Transit	Flex/Demand	SMART	Timber Hills Mental Health	Specialized	Ride the Smile
Copiah County HRA	Flex/Demand	TRANSCON/ SMART	North Central PDD	Specialized	Delta Rides	United Community Action	Flex/Demand	Ride the Smile
DARTS	Flex/Demand	Delta Rides	North Delta PDD	Specialized	Delta Rides	Warren County ARC	Specialized	TRANS-CON
Dial-a-Bus	Specialized	Ride the Smile/ EZTAG	Northeast MS Community Services	Flex/Demand	Ride the Smile	Warren-Washington-Isaquena-Sharkey Community Action	Specialized	Delta Rides
DJ Transit	Flex/Demand	SMART	Noxubee County HRA	Specialized	EZTAG	Warren-Yazoo Mental Health	Specialized	TRANSCON
East Central PDD	Specialized	EZTAG	NRoute	Fixed	TRANSCON	Weems Community Mental Health	Specialized	EZTAG
5 County	Specialized	SMART/SMT	Oxford University Transit (OUT)	Fixed	Ride the Smile	Willowood	Specialized	TRANSCON
HEGA	Flex/Demand	Delta Rides	Pine Belt Mental Health	Specialized	SMART/SMT	Yazoo County HRA	Specialized	TRANSCON
Hinds County HRA	Flex/Demand	TRANSCON						

... a range
of services
categorized into
four complementary
systems ...

clients must typically meet criteria that include over 65 years of age, veteran, low-income, or disabled. The location and service area of the 5310 providers are shown in Figure 2-1. In the map legend, “sole providers” indicates those counties where only one operator provides service. “Shared service areas” indicates that more than one service provider serves the county. Counties without a color or pattern have no specialized transit services for seniors and individuals with disabilities. While 11 counties do not offer any specialized transit service, 32 counties have two or more 5310 providers.

Rural transit services for the general public in Mississippi are typically provided using a combination of flexible route and demand response services. These flexible/demand response providers deliver services over large geographic areas and often travel long distances to meet passenger needs, including important medical appointments in urban areas. As shown in Figure 2-2, flexible/demand response service is provided in most of the state except the east central portion. Coahoma, Copiah, Desoto, Issaquena, Jefferson Davis, Jones, Madison, Sharkey, and Sunflower counties are served by two providers, and Washington County by three. Hinds County, when combined with the 5310 providers, has seven separate flexible/demand response service providers, as well as one fixed route system, operating within the county. Some flexible/demand response services, such as Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU), provide additional limited service on flexible routes between, rather than entirely within, communities. Four counties, Choctaw, Clay, Webster, and Winston, with a total population of

more than 58,000 residents do not have any transit services.

Figure 2-3 depicts the state’s six fixed route systems:

- Gulfport and Biloxi (Coast Transit Authority);
- Hattiesburg (Hub City Transit);
- Jackson (JATRAN);
- Vicksburg (NRoute);
- Oxford (OUT); and
- Starkville (SMART).

Coast Transit Authority, Hub City Transit, and JATRAN receive 5307 funding, while the latter three systems are in rural areas and are not recipients of 5307 funds.

Intercity bus service provides regularly scheduled long-distance travel connecting urban areas throughout the nation, generates funding through fares, carries luggage and sometimes packages, and connects with national intercity services. Intercity bus generally operates with limited frequency, often one trip per day in each direction, but usually operates every day. Intercity service is provided by three private, for-profit carriers in Mississippi, with MDOT providing financial assistance to support services provided by Delta Bus lines (Figure 2-4).

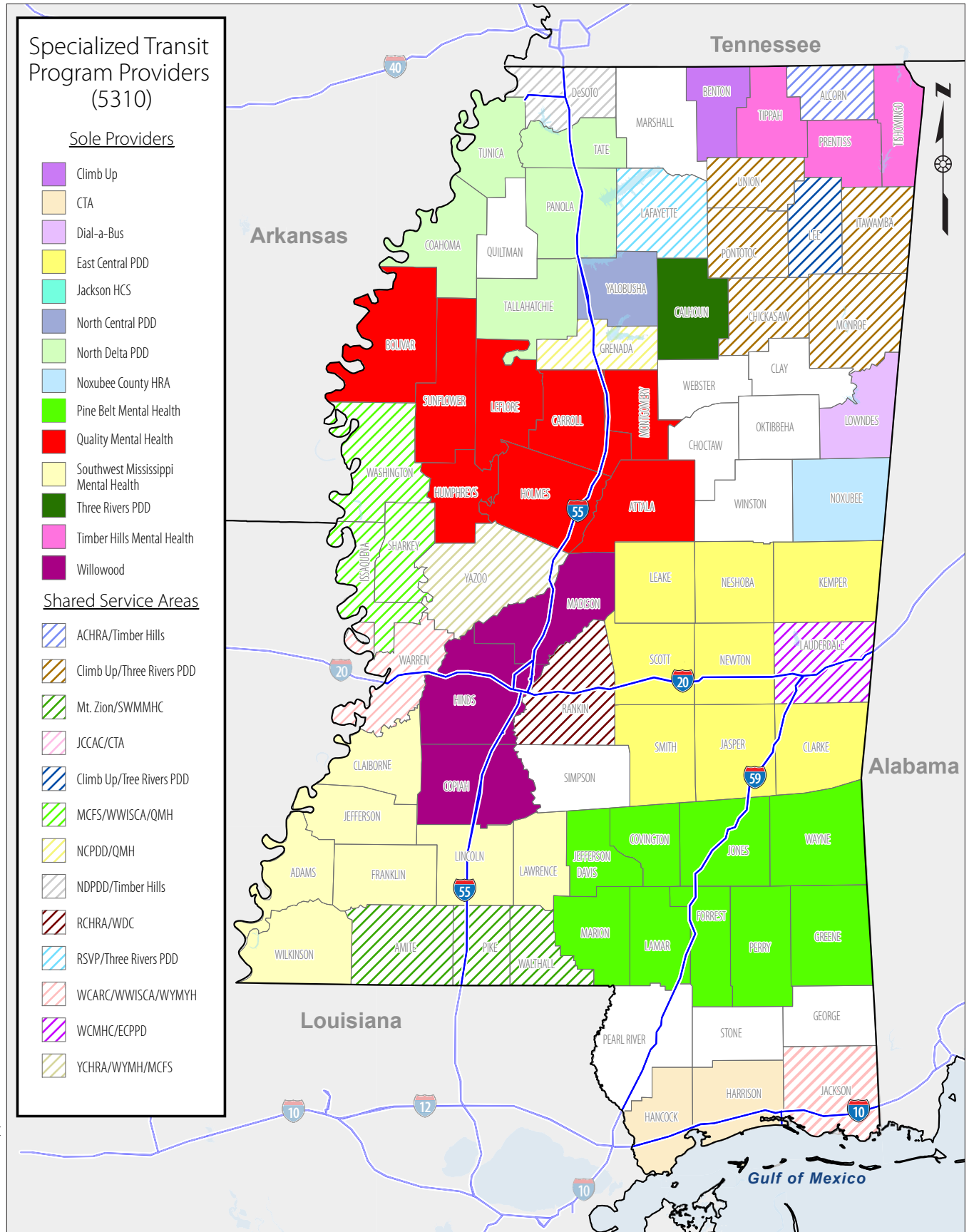
Greyhound Lines operates six routes in the state. All Greyhound routes, except the one serving Tupelo, are local routes and make several intermediate stops between their final destinations. Delta Bus Lines operates two routes in western Mississippi that serve smaller communities along the US 61 corridor. One route travels between Memphis and Jackson, while the other is a through route between Memphis and Baton Rouge. Interlining with Greyhound is Colonial Trailways, which has an agreement to carry passengers on most routes operating out of Biloxi through Greyhound. Finally, Trailways serves four communities: Biloxi, Gulfport, Hattiesburg, and Jackson

Privately operated transportation services are also available to the general public and include resort bus and shuttle operators, taxi services, and shuttle services. Private for profit or private nonprofit entities may operate these services. Intercity passenger rail service through Amtrak is also available in some parts of the state.

2.2 Transit Demand

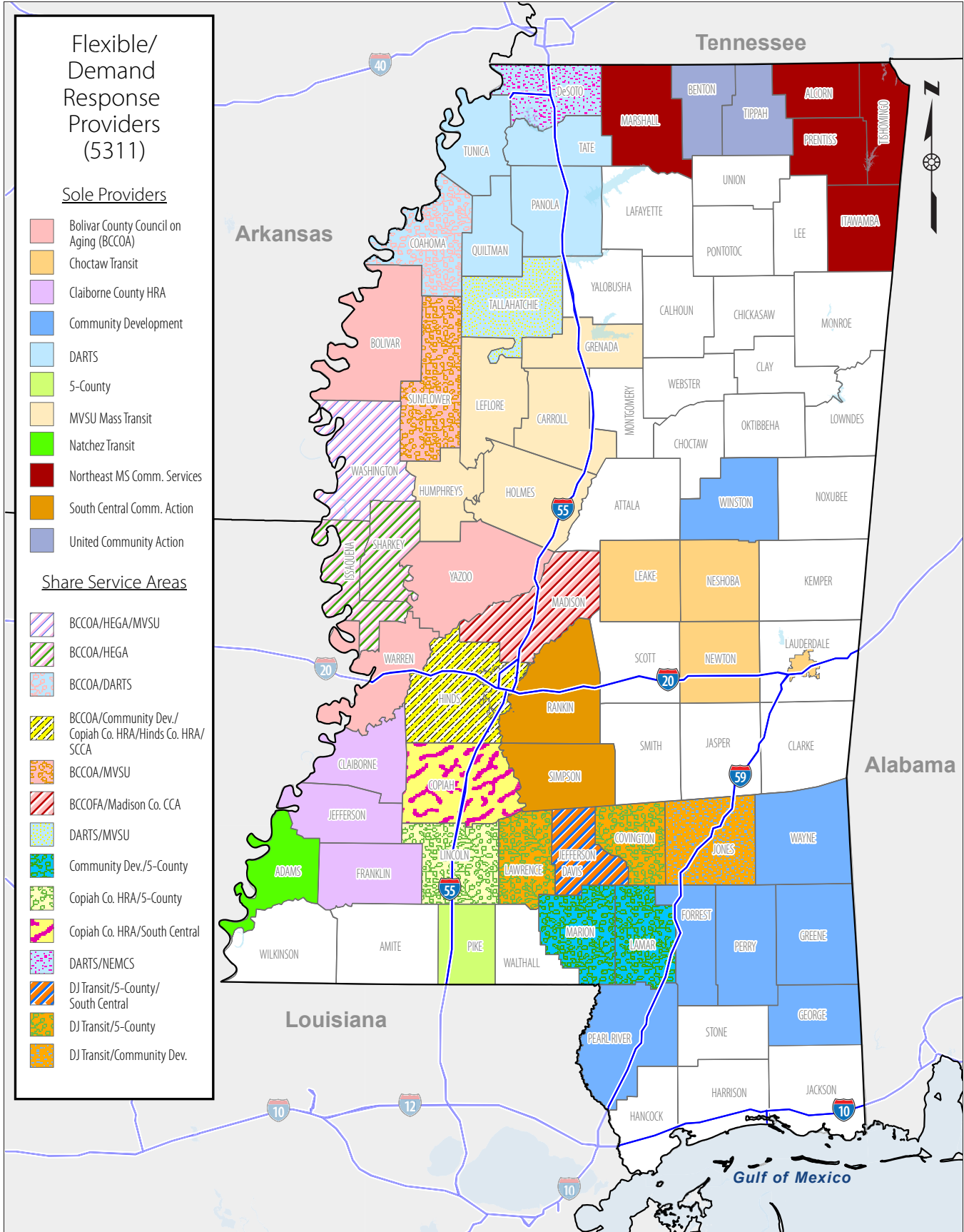
Unlike transit need, which was described in Section 1.0 and is a broad measure of potential trips based solely on demographics, transit demand estimates potential

Figure 2-1. Specialized Transit Program Providers (5310)



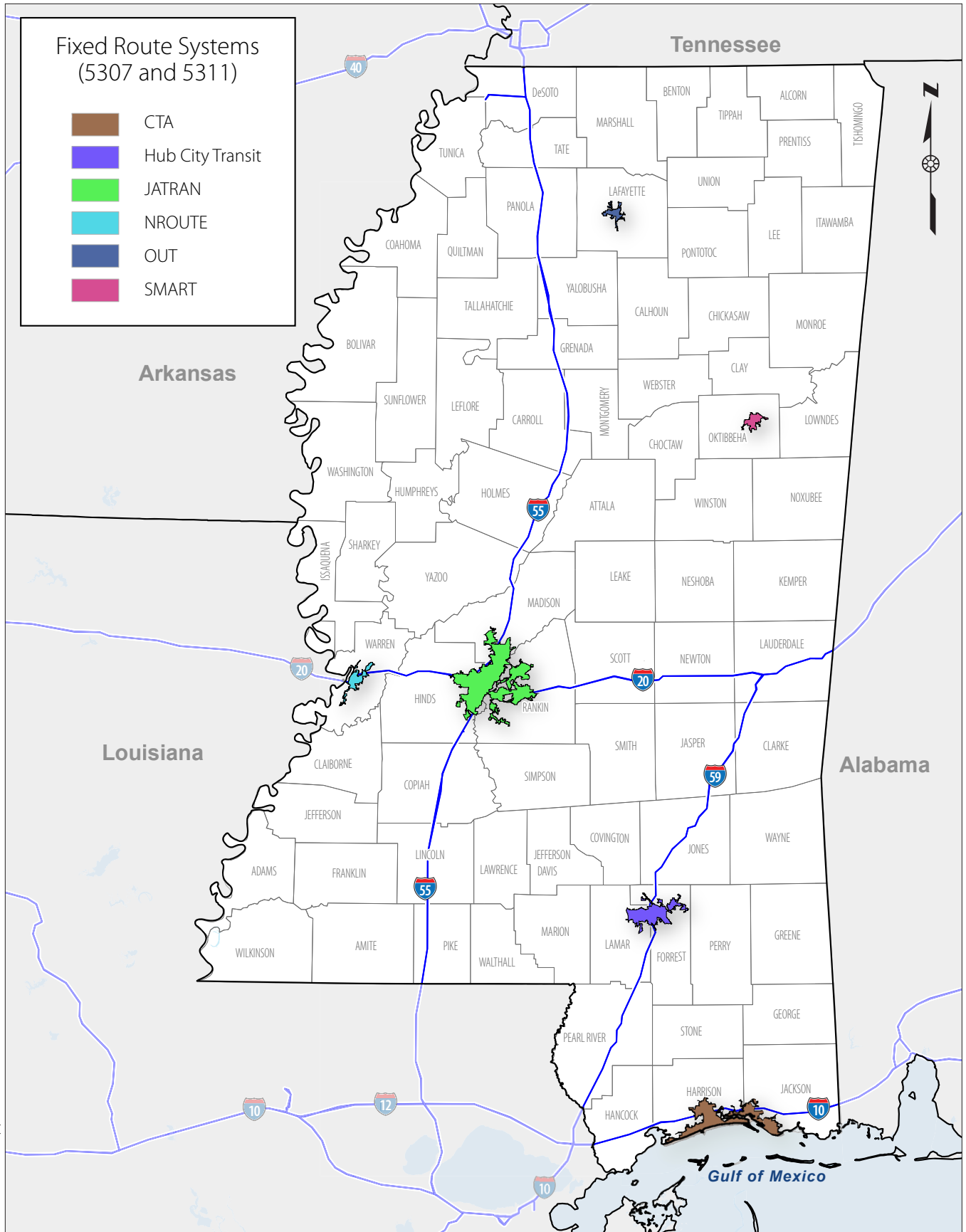
Source: Mississippi DOT

Figure 2-2. Flexible/Demand Response Program Providers (5311)



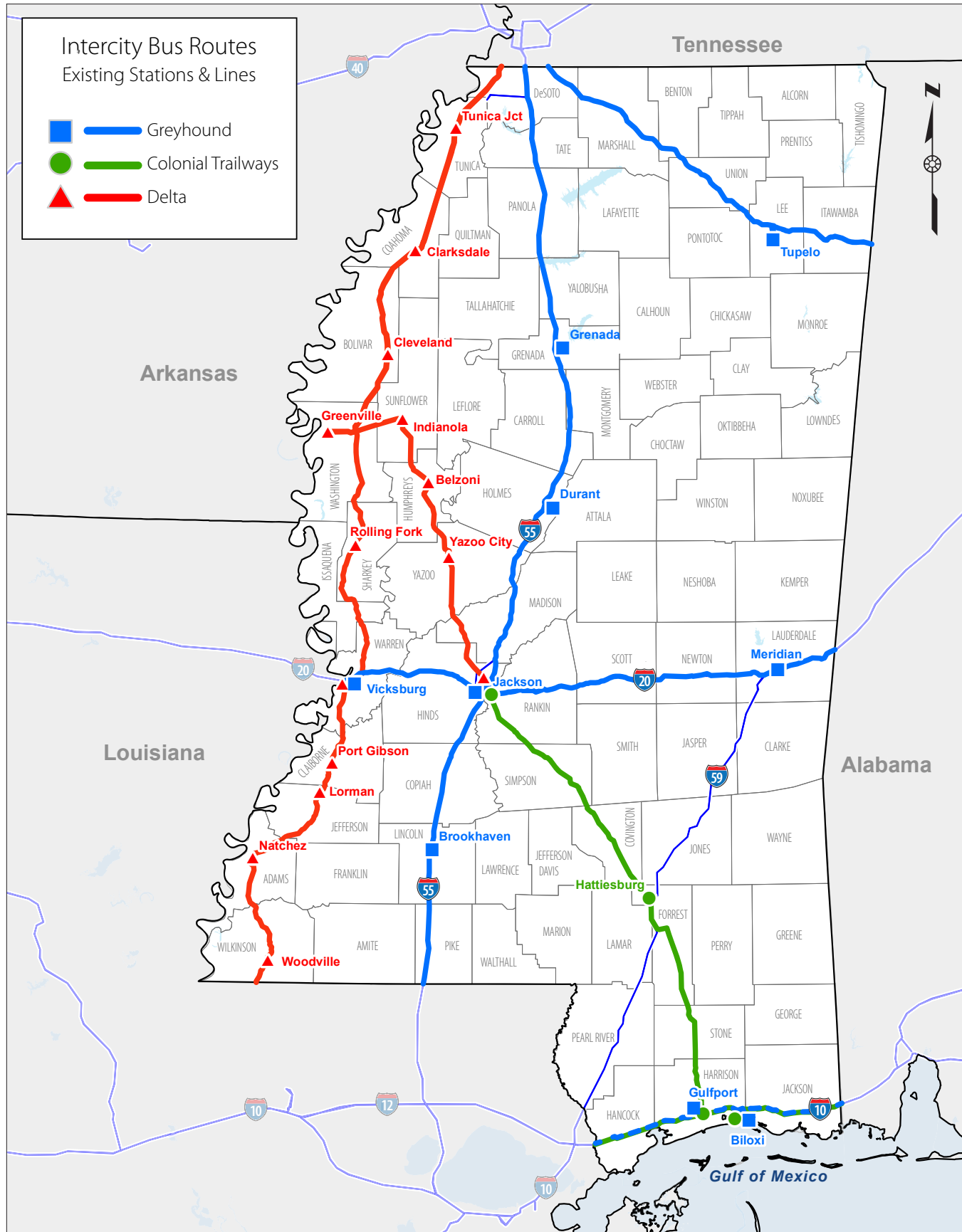
Source: Mississippi DOT

Figure 2-3. Fixed Route Systems (5307 and 5311)



Source: Mississippi DOT

Figure 2-4. Intercity Bus Routes




Source: Mississippi DOT

trips based on demographics and available service levels. In effect, transit demand answers the question, “If we provide a certain level of transit, what amount of demand can we expect?”

To estimate demand for transit services in Mississippi, fixed route providers in the state were compared to peer systems, generally from the southern United States, while specialized transit programs and flexible/demand response systems were evaluated using standard trip generation rates for key demographic groups. In conjunction with stakeholder input and earlier technical analysis, the following demand estimates help set the stage for the subsequent programmatic and policy recommendations.

Table 2-2. Fixed Route Demand by Community (Annual Trips)



City (Transit Agency)	2015 Estimated Demand	2025 Estimated Demand
Gulfport-Biloxi (Coast Transit Authority)	717,242	776,658
Jackson (JATLAN)	876,782	904,582
Hattiesburg (Hub City Transit)	121,125	147,010
Oxford (OUT)	707,398	737,362
Starkville (SMART)	578,189	576,759
Vicksburg (NRoute)	104,436	103,692


Fixed Route Transit Demand

Projected growth in urban centers will continue to generate new demands for transit and fixed route transit in particular. Table 2-2 summarizes fixed route demand estimates for the six existing providers in the state. Relative to current service and ridership levels, the demand estimates for Coast Transit Authority in Gulfport-Biloxi, OUT in Oxford, and SMART in Starkville are all in line with their peers. Demand estimates for JATLAN exceed current ridership levels, and the unmet demand is likely the result of limited fixed route service to the city limits, which eliminates the opportunity to tap into the greater metropolitan area market like peer systems. Only one fixed route system, NRoute, is currently meeting less than 50 percent of the estimated demand. In addition to the six existing fixed route providers, Table 2-3 details the existing population and demand estimates for Meridian, Southaven-Horn Lake, and Tupelo. All three of these municipalities have demand estimates greater than 55,000 annual trips and are candidates for introducing new fixed route service.

Human Service Transportation Demand

Human service transportation includes both specialized transit and flexible/demand response transit. Table 2-4 identifies the demand for human services transportation trips in the non-urbanized areas of each Regional Coordination Transportation Planning Group in Mississippi. For 2015, the total estimated demand for response services is nearly 4.1 million trips statewide. Table 2-5 compares the estimated demand with the most recent ridership figures ridership by RCTPG. A total of nearly 1.6 million trips were provided by specialized transit and flexible/demand response systems in 2013, or approximately 39 percent of

Table 2-3. Non-Program and Program Demand by Community (Annual Trips)



City	2015			2025		
	Estimated Non-Program Demand	Estimated Program Demand	Total Estimated Demand	Estimated Non-Program Demand	Estimated Program Demand	Total Estimated Demand
Meridian	34,637	29,630	64,267	43,255	38,822	82,076
Southaven-Horn Lake	52,069	33,219	85,289	86,725	55,425	142,150
Tupelo	31,848	23,596	55,444	42,388	32,405	74,793

Table 2-4. Human Service Transportation Demand by Region (Annual Trips)

RTCG	Non-Program Demand			Program Demand			Total Demand		
	2015	2025	Difference	2015	2025	Difference	2015	2025	Difference
Delta Rides	349,755	453,675	103,920	465,469	631,671	166,201	815,225	1,085,346	270,121
EZTAG	283,550	347,546	63,995	385,322	492,413	107,091	668,872	839,958	171,087
Ride the Smile	297,629	375,153	77,524	408,783	532,597	123,813	706,412	907,750	201,338
SMART	155,616	187,614	31,998	205,637	263,653	58,016	361,253	451,267	90,014
SMT	409,315	550,069	140,753	563,795	801,971	238,177	973,110	1,352,040	378,930
TRANS-CON	223,183	309,903	86,720	327,747	464,732	136,985	550,930	774,635	223,705
Total	1,719,049	2,223,959	504,910	2,356,753	3,187,037	830,284	4,075,802	5,410,996	1,335,194

estimated demand. By 2025, estimated demand is anticipated to increase to over 5.4 million trips. Assuming constant levels of service, the percentage of demand met will fall to 29 percent.

Estimated demand for human service transportation in Mississippi continues, then, to outpace available services significantly. Driving the unmet demand figures are five interrelated issues:

- Counties without specialized transit;
- Counties without transit available to the general public;

- Counties with more than 80 percent unmet demand for flexible/demand response transit;
- Counties with limited flexible/demand response service spans and service areas; and
- Counties with limited or no intercounty transit service.

There are six counties without specialized transit – Choctaw, Clay, Oktibbeha (rural), Stone, Webster, and Winston, and Figure 2-5 identifies counties without transit services available to the general public. Meeting demand for human service transportation services will also depend on either service span improvements,

Table 2-5. Estimated Demand Met: Response Service by Regional Coordination Transportation Planning Groups

RTCG	Estimated 2013 Ridership	2015 Estimated Demand	Percentage of 2015 Estimated Demand Met	2025 Estimated Demand	Percentage of 2025 Estimated Demand Met
Delta Rides	451,275	815,225	55%	1,085,346	42%
EZTAG	133,866	668,872	20%	839,958	16%
Ride the Smile	270,356	706,412	38%	907,750	30%
SMART	228,657	361,253	63%	451,267	51%
SMT	212,180	973,110	22%	1,352,040	16%
TRANS-CON	279,956	550,930	51%	774,635	36%
Statewide	1,576,291	4,075,802	39%	5,410,996	29%



service area enhancements, and/or stronger coordination. In general, service spans for weekday flexible/demand response service should end no earlier than 5:00 PM, with a minimum four-hour span on Saturdays. Since specialized transit programs primarily serve agency clients, it is assumed that their service spans reflect client needs and the operating hours of workshops or medical facilities. Figure 2-6 identifies flexible/demand response service counties with limited span of service.

Finally, expanding population and employment growth in the metropolitan areas also means increased demand for cross-county commutes. There are a number of agencies that are currently limited in

Chief among the investments are ensuring that the rolling stock achieves a high state of good repair.

Table 2-6.
State of Good Repair by Provider Type



Provider Type	Percentage of Vehicles Meeting MDOT Standards
Urban Fixed Route	75%
Non-Urban Fixed Route	79%
Flexible/Demand Response	69%
Statewide	72%

their service areas due to jurisdictional boundaries. Furthermore, there is a lack of intercity bus service in the east central part of the state to capture demand for longer distance travel.

Capital Needs

To maintain existing services and address the estimated demand for transit throughout Mississippi, substantial capital investments will need to be made. Chief among the investments are ensuring that the rolling stock achieves a high state of good repair. Table 2-6 shows the State of Good Repair (SGR) for vehicles by type of provider. Statewide, approximately 72 percent of vehicles meet MDOT SGR standards.

Under recently passed federal transportation legislation, Mississippi will see a slight increase in federal funding. Even with the increased funding, an aging vehicle fleet across all systems will place enormous pressure on transit providers attempting to maintain services while simultaneously responding to new demands for services. Intermodal centers, including maintenance facilities, and investments in technology improvements will also need to be considered to deliver attractive, high quality transit services.

Figure 2-5. Counties without Transit Available to the General Public

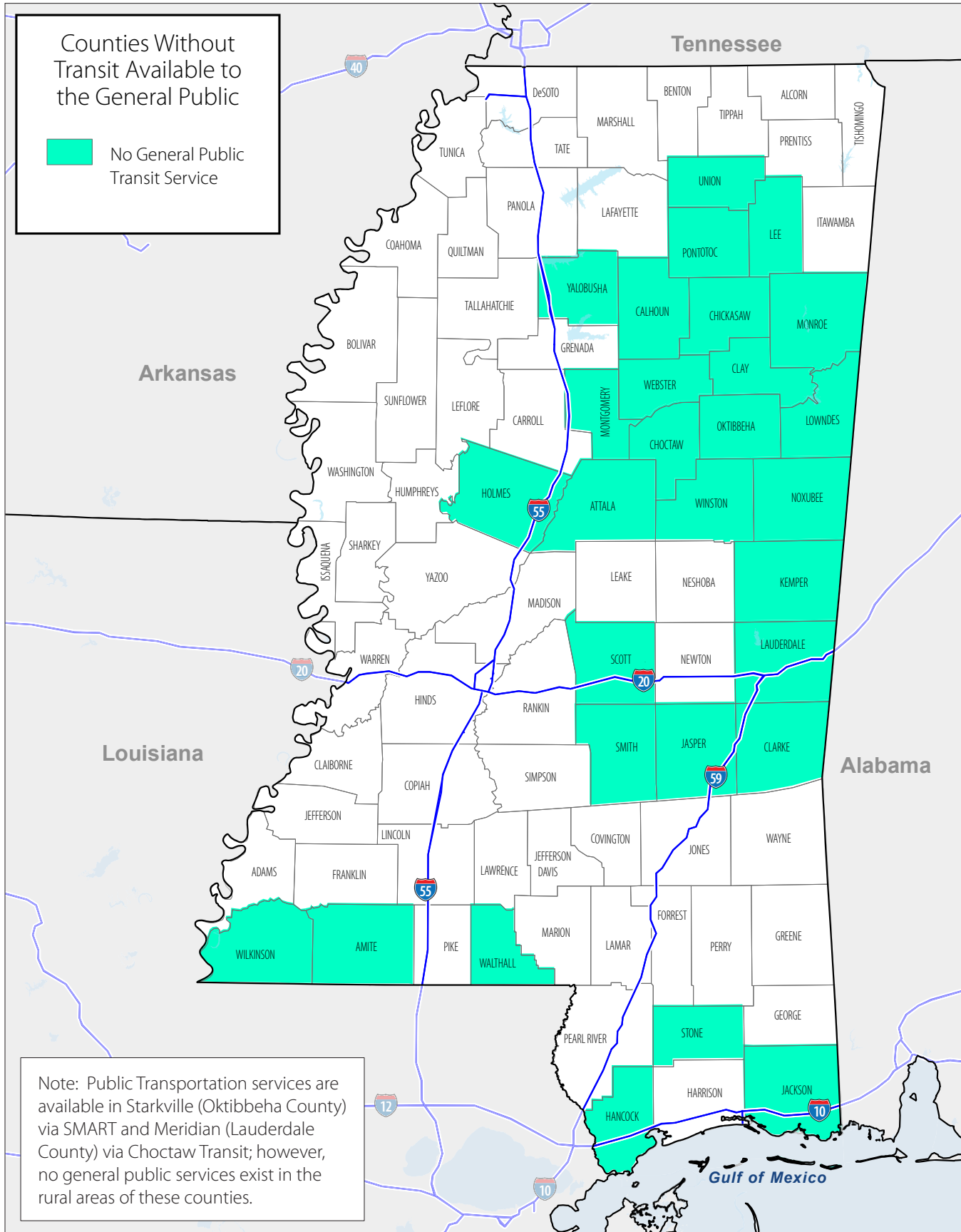
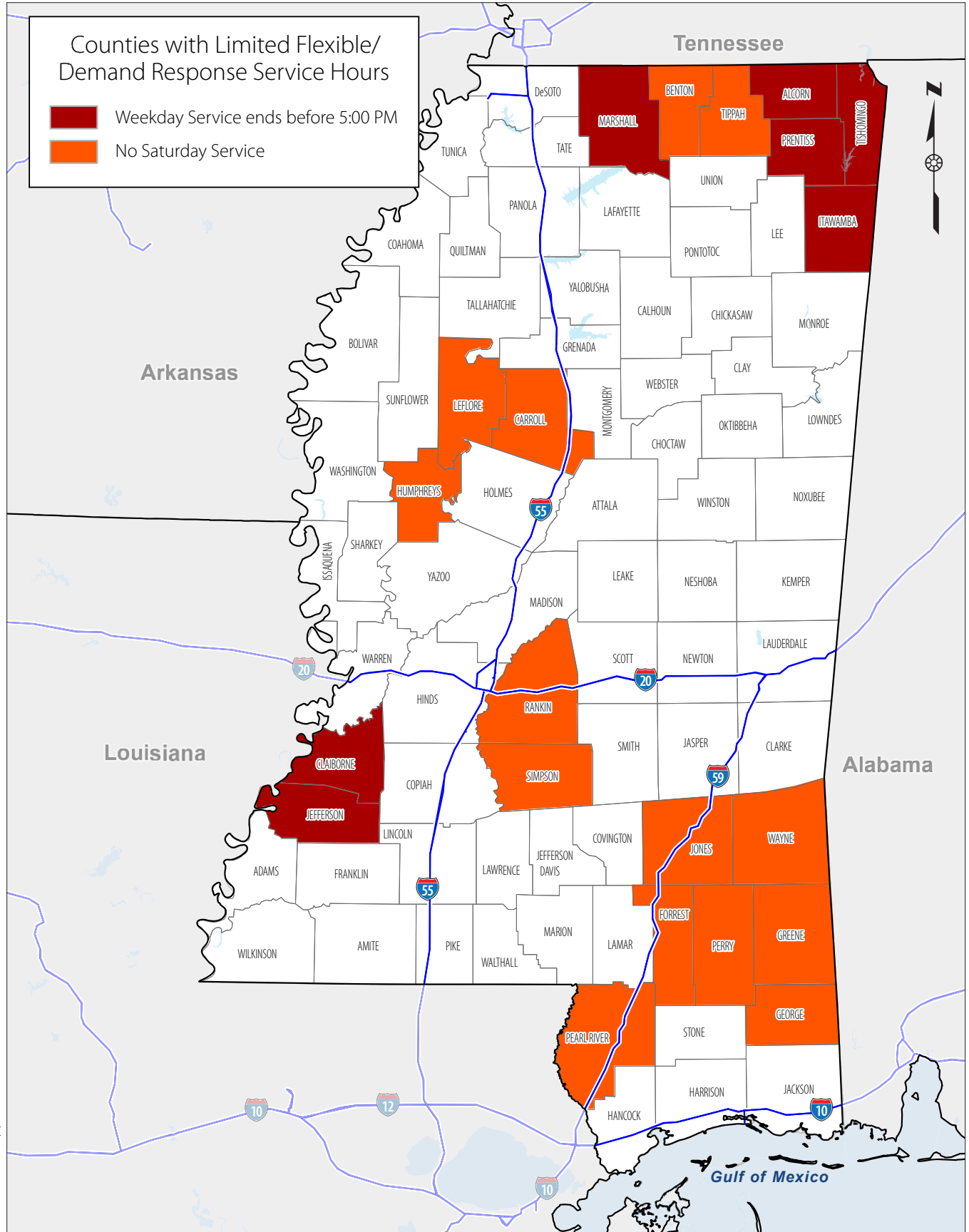


Figure 2-6. Counties with Limited Flexible/Demand Response Service Hours



Source: Mississippi DOT

3.0 Vision, Goals, and Objectives

The statewide vision establishes the overarching framework for future investments and improvements in transit. Building on steering committee guidance and stakeholder input, the following vision statement and supporting goals and objectives were developed for transit in Mississippi.






3.1 Vision Statement

Supporting economic development and the quality of life in Mississippi, transit will be accessible and affordable in every community across the state based on identified needs.

3.2 Goals and Objectives

To help implement the statewide vision for transit, the study's steering committee and stakeholders also drafted a set of goals and objectives. The goals and objectives (Table 3-1), in turn, form the basis for the programmatic and policy recommendations.

Table 3-1. Transit Goals and Objectives

	GOAL	OBJECTIVE
PARTNERSHIPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen coordination among all public and private transit providers and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand interagency coordination at the state level Improve mobility management at the regional level Implement new online technology: Share information across regions more easily
AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide easy to understand information about existing transit services and benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand regional call centers and marketing resources: Improve customer service Develop a transit toolkit: Provide a consistent message to stakeholders Conduct passenger satisfaction surveys: Report the results annually statewide
PERFORMANCE MEASURES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure system and agency performance on an annual basis and communicate the benefits of transit to all stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop statewide performance measures: Tied to goals and objectives Establish performance measure benchmarks: Allow for peer comparisons
POLICIES AND PLANS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve and expand the availability of transit services while maintaining affordability for all users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase existing service times/frequencies Expand service areas Preserve existing services and maintain vehicles and facilities
FUNDING 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase investment in transit by maximizing existing funding and attracting new revenue sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamline costs: Work with state, regional, and local stakeholders to identify strategies Develop dedicated funding: Work with elected officials to identify new sources Increase contract services with human service agencies, universities, and employers Expand funding technical assistance/training: Develop additional tools and strategies

4.0 Program Recommendations

Among the goals and objectives identified for improving transit in Mississippi, three program or service objectives were highlighted as priorities by participants in the regional working group meetings. These program priorities, in order, are:

- Preserve existing services and maintain vehicles and facilities;
- Expand service areas; and
- Increase existing service times/days.

Taking these priorities as the starting point for defining potential transit improvements, a series of investment packages was developed to begin addressing the needs and demand for transit across the state. The investment packages, representing a group of improvements by service type, were then organized into investment scenarios. After a brief overview of the investment scenarios, each proposed improvement is discussed in greater detail under the following four categories:

- State of good repair;
- Human service transportation services;
- Fixed route services; and
- Intercity bus services.

4.1 Investment Scenarios

Reflecting the program priorities above, Table 4-1 summarizes the three proposed investment scenarios – the trend scenario, strategic enhancements scenario, and targeted investments scenario. As presented, the scenarios build on one another beginning with the trend scenario and then add the strategic enhancements and targeted investments scenarios.



The annual funding amounts associated with each scenario are in addition to the total projected funding, FTA funds and local matches, anticipated in 2025. For investments occurring before 2025, some partial combination of the projected and new funding shown in Table 4-1 will need to be identified. It is important to note that the scenarios represent just one way to organize the recommended investment packages, and again, are based on the program priorities. Ultimately, the investment packages and their underlying improvements can be implemented according to needs and funding availability.

Trend Scenario

The trend package of improvements envisions cost savings from initially combining some operations through new partnerships. The estimated \$2.4 million in potential operations savings would be directed to capital funding to ensure that transit vehicles across the state are well maintained and meet the statewide goal of 75 percent of vehicles operating in a state of good repair.







Strategic Enhancements Scenario

The strategic enhancement improvements would support the expansion of transit to all counties in Mississippi, expand existing fixed route services in Hattiesburg, Jackson, and Vicksburg, and modify intercity bus services in Madison and Harrison counties. The strategic enhancements would require an additional \$10.5 million in funding - \$9.1 million in operating funding and \$1.4 million in capital funding.

Targeted Investments Scenario

Targeted investments emphasize service span improvements, i.e., hours and days of operation, as well as new fixed route service, new employment-based routes, and new intercity bus service. New service times and days are proposed for flexible/demand response services in 21 counties, while new flexible route and employment-based routes are recommended in an additional ten communities. Finally, new fixed route service is proposed in Meridian, Southaven/Horn Lake, and Tupelo, and improved intercity bus service in Golden Triangle-Meridian, Grenada-Tupelo, and Laurel-Picayune. The targeted investments cost an estimated additional \$5.2 million - \$4.3 million in operating funding and \$0.9 million in capital funding.

Table 4-1. Transit Investment Scenarios

 Existing Conditions	 Projected Funding FY 2025	 Trend	 Strategic Enhancements	 Targeted Investments	 Proposed Conditions
\$40.00 million (Annual Operating)	\$51.2 million	-\$2.4 million	+\$9.1 million	+\$4.3 million	\$62.3 million (Annual Operating)
\$10.1 million (Annual Capital)	\$12.9 million	+\$2.4 million	+\$1.4 million	+\$0.9 million	\$17.6 million (Annual Capital)
Existing Ridership – Statewide 4,875,833	---	Formalize and Strengthen Flexible/Demand Response Partnerships -\$2.4 million/ ridership unchanged	Provide Specialized Transit – All Counties \$2.1 million/ +243,000 ridership	Increase All Flexible/Demand Response Service Times to 5:00 pm Weekdays \$0.2 million/ +13,000 ridership	Ridership – Statewide 6,097,000 (+845,900)
State of Good Repair – Statewide 72.3%	---	Maintain State of Good Repair at Current Levels \$1.0 million	Provide Flexible/Demand Response – All Counties \$4.5 million/ +180,000 ridership	Increase All Flexible/Demand Response Service to Saturdays \$0.2 million/ +10,000 ridership	State of Good Repair – Statewide >75%
---	---	State of Good Repair Investment \$1.4 million	Expand Existing Fixed Route Service Areas \$3.0 million/ 225,000 ridership	Add New Flexible Route Services \$1.4 million/ +100,000 ridership	---
---	---	---	Modify Existing Intercity Bus Service \$0.9 million	Add New Fixed Route Services \$1.7 million/ +67,000 ridership	---
---	---	---	---	Add New “Access to Employment” Routes \$0.8 million/ +7,900 ridership	---
---	---	---	---	Add New Intercity Bus Service \$ 0.8 million	---

4.2 State of Good Repair

Underlying each of the investment scenarios are ongoing vehicle and facility maintenance needs. Insufficient funding has resulted in a transit state of good repair (SGR) backlog that continues to grow. In order to improve and expand transit services in Mississippi, it is important to have capital assets in a state of good repair. Well maintained and reliable vehicles are a critical component to attracting and retaining riders and allow transit systems to operate more efficiently. Although the state of good repair can be improved incrementally through timely and efficient asset management practices, additional capital funding is essential.

Rolling Stock

To maintain existing services and address the estimated demand for transit throughout Mississippi, substantial capital investments will need to be made. Using MDOT SGR standards, the statewide percentage of vehicles meeting a state of good repair, based on data reported to the National Transit Database, is 72 percent. Transit systems vary across Mississippi in their state of good repair performance, with urban fixed route systems currently achieving a 75 percent state of good repair while flexible/demand response systems have 69 percent of their vehicles in a state of good repair.

Intermodal Centers

In addition to rolling stock, there are also future needs to maintain and construct intermodal facilities and invest in technology. Mississippi is currently well served by intermodal centers. Its three largest fixed route systems each have an intermodal station where customers can transfer easily between services. Natchez Transit, for example, has recently built an

... Well maintained
and reliable vehicles
are a critical
component ...








intermodal center that houses both a Delta Bus Lines station and a demand response service office. However, there are communities where intermodal connections could be improved. Meridian has an intermodal facility at the train station that served the former Meridian fixed route service. This facility should be reused for the restoration of service. Tupelo needs an indoor waiting area to accommodate future fixed route service, if implemented.

Technology

All demand response systems that serve the general public should have computerized dispatching and ride scheduling. Currently, only a few of the larger systems use this technology. Computerized scheduling can help agencies better combine rides in order to maximize use of vehicles. These improvements also allow better coordination between agencies for rides across jurisdictional boundaries. Demand response agencies and customers would also benefit from a greater internet presence. At a minimum, all agencies should have hours of operation and contact information available on a website, as well as maps and service spans of any flexible routes.

Computer-based dispatching and scheduling programs can also aid fixed route systems in rolling out “next bus” arrival times to their riders. The two university based transit systems, SMART and OUT

Table 4-2. State of Good Repair Action Plan

				
Strategy	Lead Organization	Timeline	Partners	Resources/Funding
Improve State of Good Repair for Transit Agencies	Transit Agencies	Ongoing	MDOT	FTA Grants, MMTIP Funds, TIGER Grants, Operating Cost Savings from Consolidation

in Starkville and Oxford, respectively, have the most advanced and user friendly real time arrival information. Hub City Transit, JATLAN, NRoute, and CTA do not have real time bus tracking capability, and NRoute does not have routes or schedules posted on the internet. JATLAN is rolling out a trip planning function with the help of Google. This option could be explored by other fixed route systems in the state.

Action Plan

Each transit agency is responsible for ensuring that their vehicles are in a state of good repair (Table 4-2). MDOT can assist agencies by providing technical assistance and ensuring that they have the proper resources to plan for vehicle and facility servicing and replacement. To fund increased vehicle maintenance, a combination of federal grant funding and transit agency operational cost savings should be evaluated. An estimated \$2.4 million can be obtained in annual operations savings from consolidating existing demand response services and directing those resources to state of good repair funding. The Mississippi Multimodal Transportation Improvement Program could also be used as a tool to target transit agencies that fall below maintenance targets. Lastly, other states, such as Texas, have successfully obtained federal TIGER grant funds to replace transit assets in rural areas.

4.3 Human Service Transportation Services

For human service transportation, there are a variety of service improvements that would allow transit providers to narrow the gap between estimated demand and current service levels, including:

- Providing service to the six counties without specialized and flexible/demand response transit

services and to the 29 counties without flexible/demand response transit;

- Extending flexible/demand response service hours and days in the 21 counties with limited service;
- Establishing flexible routes in select communities; and
- Establishing commuter flex routes.

Strategic Enhancements




New and Enhanced Human Service Transportation Services

Given the high levels of unmet estimated demand, new specialized transit program services should be provided in counties where none exists today and where flexible/demand response service is not provided either, including:

- Choctaw;
- Clay;
- Oktibbeha (rural);
- Stone;
- Webster; and
- Winston.

Flexible/demand response services should also be expanded to all counties without existing service. For counties that currently have a high number of daily commute trips between them, a scheduled demand response service should be considered. These routes could accommodate subscription trips for jobs, medical appointments, and social visits. The routes would not have a specific route. Rather, they would spend a period of time picking up riders around the origin county, and then drop them off at a predetermined location in the largest community or urban area in an adjacent county. Table 4-3 shows the origin counties with potential for scheduled demand response service.

Table 4-3. Potential Scheduled Demand Response Service by County

		
County	Destination	Notes
Copiah	Jackson	---
Desoto	Tunica	May need unconventional hours to serve casinos
Hancock	Biloxi-Gulfport	---
Harrison (rural)	Biloxi-Gulfport	Origin trips begin in the Saucier area
Itawamba	Tupelo	---
Jackson	Biloxi-Gulfport	Origin trips begin in the Vancleave area
Jasper	Hattiesburg	---
Jones	Hattiesburg	---
Lamar	Hattiesburg	---
Marshall	Desoto County	Destination should be in Southaven or Olive Branch
Monroe	Tupelo	---
Pontotoc	Tupelo	---
Prentiss	Tupelo	---
Simpson	Jackson	---
Stone	Biloxi-Gulfport	---
Tate	Desoto County	Destination should be in Southaven or Olive Branch
Union	Tupelo	---
Warren	Jackson	---

Based on statewide costs for providing specialized and flexible/demand response transit services, the recommended improvements are estimated to cost \$6.6 million annually in combined capital and operating expenses. The expanded services would capture an estimated 423,000 additional passenger trips per year.

Targeted Investments

Service Span Improvements

Expanding human service transportation services will also depend on service span improvements, service area enhancements, and stronger coordination. Increasing all flexible/demand response service times to 5:00 pm on weekdays and all flexible/demand response service to Saturdays is estimated to cost \$0.4 million annually. The increased hours of service would be expected to generate an additional 23,000 passenger trips per year.

New Flexible Route Services

The following four cities in Mississippi are good candidates for introducing flexible route services based on their demand levels. These new flexible route services are estimated to cost \$1.4 million annually in operating and capital expenses and result in an additional 100,000 passenger trips per year, a 55 percent increase over current ridership levels. Much of the potential ridership growth would occur in Columbus.

- Columbus;
- Greenville;
- Laurel; and
- Natchez.

New Commuter Flexible Routes – “Access to Employment” Routes

A number of counties in Mississippi face high unemployment rates and need greater access to employment centers in adjacent counties. Rural commuter flexible routes with limited stops in small communities could help fill this gap, including:

- Waynesboro to Laurel;
- DeKalb to Meridian;
- Port Gibson to Vicksburg;
- Carthage to Canton and Madison;
- Columbus to West Point to Starkville; and
- Collins to Hattiesburg.

Bolivar, Humphreys, and Sunflower counties already have flexible route service to Greenville provided by MVSU Transit. At this time, it is recommended that this service be enhanced with more frequent service and longer service hours. These commuter flex routes to employment centers would cost an estimated \$0.8 million annually and provide service for an additional 7,900 passenger trips per year.






Action Plan

While individual transit agencies will be responsible for delivering services to expanded areas, MDOT should work with the RCTPGs and local providers to determine the most feasible expansion strategies (Table 4-4). Implementing the recommended service

expansions depends on the service area and agencies involved. Due to the high costs of establishing new transit agencies, it is recommended that existing transit providers expand their service areas to adjacent counties as funding becomes available.

MDOT should be the lead agency in identifying service expansion funding at the state level. Transit agencies and stakeholders will need to secure local support. Current human service transportation programs are funded by a combination of Section 5310, 5311, local, contract, and other sources.

Table 4-4. Human Service Transportation Services Action Plan

 Strategy	 Lead Organization	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding
New and Enhanced Human Service Transportation Services	Transit Agencies	3 - 5 years	MDOT, RCTPGs	Section 5310, 5311, local, contract, and other funding sources
Service Span Improvements	Transit Agencies	< 1 year	MDOT, RCTPGs	Section 5310, 5311, local, contract, and other funding sources
New Flexible Route Services				
Columbus	City of Columbus, Lowndes County	3 - 5 years	MDOT	Section 5310, 5311, local, contract, and other funding sources
Greenville	BCCOA/MVSU			
Laurel	DJ Transit/Community Development			
Natchez	Natchez Transit System			
New Commuter Flexible Routes – “Access to Employment” Routes				
Waynesboro to Laurel	DJ Transit/Community Development	3 - 5 years	MDOT, MDES	Section 5311, local, and other workforce development funding sources
De Kalb to Meridian	Choctaw Transit			
Port Gibson to Vicksburg	Claiborne County HRA			
Carthage to Canton and Madison	Choctaw Transit, Madison Co. CCA			
Columbus to West Point to Starkville	Counties of Clay, Lowndes, and Oktibbeha			
Collins to Hattiesburg	5-County			

... support significant increases in ridership and address unmet demand.

4.4 Fixed Route Services

While fixed route systems in Mississippi are meeting demand at higher levels than human service transportation providers, expanded and new fixed route services in the following cities would support significant increases in ridership and address unmet demand.

- Expanded fixed route services: JATRAN suburban service in Jackson, Hub City local service in Hattiesburg, and NRoute local service in Vicksburg; and
- New fixed route services: Meridian, Southaven-Horn Lake, and Tupelo.

Strategic Enhancements

Expand Existing Fixed Route Service Areas

JATRAN ridership demand estimates show that the system should be serving approximately 135,000 more trips per year. Extending JATRAN service to the suburban areas surrounding Jackson should be considered to fill this ridership gap. The Hub City transit system is currently meeting a similar percentage of demand as JATRAN. Compared to its peers, Hub City should carry about 23,000 more trips per year. These trips may be added by expanding service hours or route frequency. Finally, NRoute meets less than half of expected demand. Again, increased service hours could be provided by adding routes and/or expanding services.

New Commuter Fixed Routes


Commuter fixed routes are defined as buses running on fixed routes and schedules over a distance greater than ten miles with limited stops. Most of these trips would bring residents from suburban areas to the urban cores, but some could also serve demand in the opposite direction. Table 4-5 lists potential commuter fixed routes. Jackson is the only municipality that shows sufficient demand from its urban center to the surrounding suburban communities. Expanding fixed route services is anticipated to cost approximately \$3.0 million annually in operating and capital expenditures and result in an additional ridership of 225,000.

Targeted Investments

New Fixed Route Services






In addition to existing fixed route services, the demand analysis identified cities where it may be appropriate to introduce new fixed route service. Meridian, Southaven-Horn Lake, and Tupelo all should be considered for new fixed route systems. Meridian provided fixed route transit service as late as 2012 and demand estimates indicate that it remains a good candidate for fixed route transit. While Southaven-

Table 4-5. Potential Commuter Fixed Routes



Origin	Destination
Jackson	Brandon
Jackson	Clinton
Jackson	Flowood
Jackson	Madison
Jackson	Pearl
Jackson	Ridgeland
Gulfport	Pass Christian
Olive Branch	Memphis

Table 4-6. Fixed Route Services Action Plan

 Strategy	 Lead Organization	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding
Expand Existing Fixed Route Service Areas				
Hub City Transit	Hub City Transit	1 - 3 years	MDOT	Section 5307
JATRAN	JATRAN	3 - 5 years		
NRoute	NRoute	1 - 3 years		Section 5311
New Commuter Fixed Routes				
Gulfport to Pass Christain	CTA	1 - 3 years	MDOT	Section 5307
Jackson Area Routes	JATRAN	3 - 5 years		
Olive Branch to Memphis	MATA	1 - 3 years		
New Fixed Route Services				
Meridian	City of Meridian, Choctaw Transit	1 - 3 years	MDOT	Section 5311
Southaven-Horn Lake	Cities of Southaven and Horn Lake, MATA	3 - 5 years		Section 5307
Tupelo	City of Tupelo	3 - 5 years		Section 5311

Horn Lake has low residential densities, establishing limited service that connects to Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA) routes at Airpark and Airways Transit Center should be considered. Finally, Tupelo is a growing community with a nearby employment base at Toyota and the University of Mississippi, Tupelo campus. It is important to remember that complimentary ADA service within three-fourths of a mile of a fixed route needs to be provided if fixed route systems are introduced. Establishing new fixed route services in Meridian, Southaven-Horn Lake, and Tupelo is expected to cost approximately \$1.7 million annually and would accommodate an estimated 67,000 passenger trips.

Action Plan

Existing fixed route transit providers will be responsible for expanding services (Table 4-6). Each of the agencies will face unique challenges in order to provide the recommended expanded services.

- JATRAN will need to pursue legislation allowing it to expand service beyond the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Jackson.
- Meridian is currently working with Choctaw Transit on limited fixed route service and should continue to strengthen that partnership while pursuing local funding options.
- Southaven-Horn Lake should coordinate with MATA to examine service options.
- Tupelo has studied transit services in the past and should continue pursuing fixed route services in the community.

The timeframe for implementing the service improvements will depend on the specific situation for each transit agency. Section 5307 funds (CTA, JATRAN, Hub City) and Section 5311 (NRoute, OUT, SMART) will continue to be the major sources of funding for fixed route services.

... which also demonstrates a need for intercity bus access ...

4.5 Intercity Bus Services

Recommendations for additional intercity bus service were coordinated with the recently completed Intercity Bus Study. Figure 4-1 illustrates proposed and enhanced intercity bus services identified in the study.

Strategic Enhancements

Existing Local and Regional Services to Be Modified

There are a number of existing local services that should be modified to improve connections to intercity bus service, including:

- Bay St. Louis to Gulfport: Extend hours of the current Handy Ride Transportation service provided by Coast Transit Authority and make it available to the general public;
- Pascagoula to Biloxi: Extend hours of the current Handy Ride Transportation service provided by Coast Transit Authority and make it available to the general public;
- Canton to Jackson: Provide additional service during off-peak times and weekends by the Madison County Citizen Services Agency;
- Choctaw to Meridian: Provide additional trips to Meridian by Choctaw Transit; and
- Greenwood to Greenville: Provide additional through trips by Mississippi Valley State University transit with solitary stops at central locations in Greenwood (Amtrak station), Itta Bena (MVSU Campus), Moorehead (Mississippi Delta Community College), Indianola (Delta Bus Lines stop), Leland (City Hall), and Greenville (Delta Bus Lines stop).

The combined operating and capital costs for modifying the existing local services is approximately \$0.9 million annually.

Targeted Investments

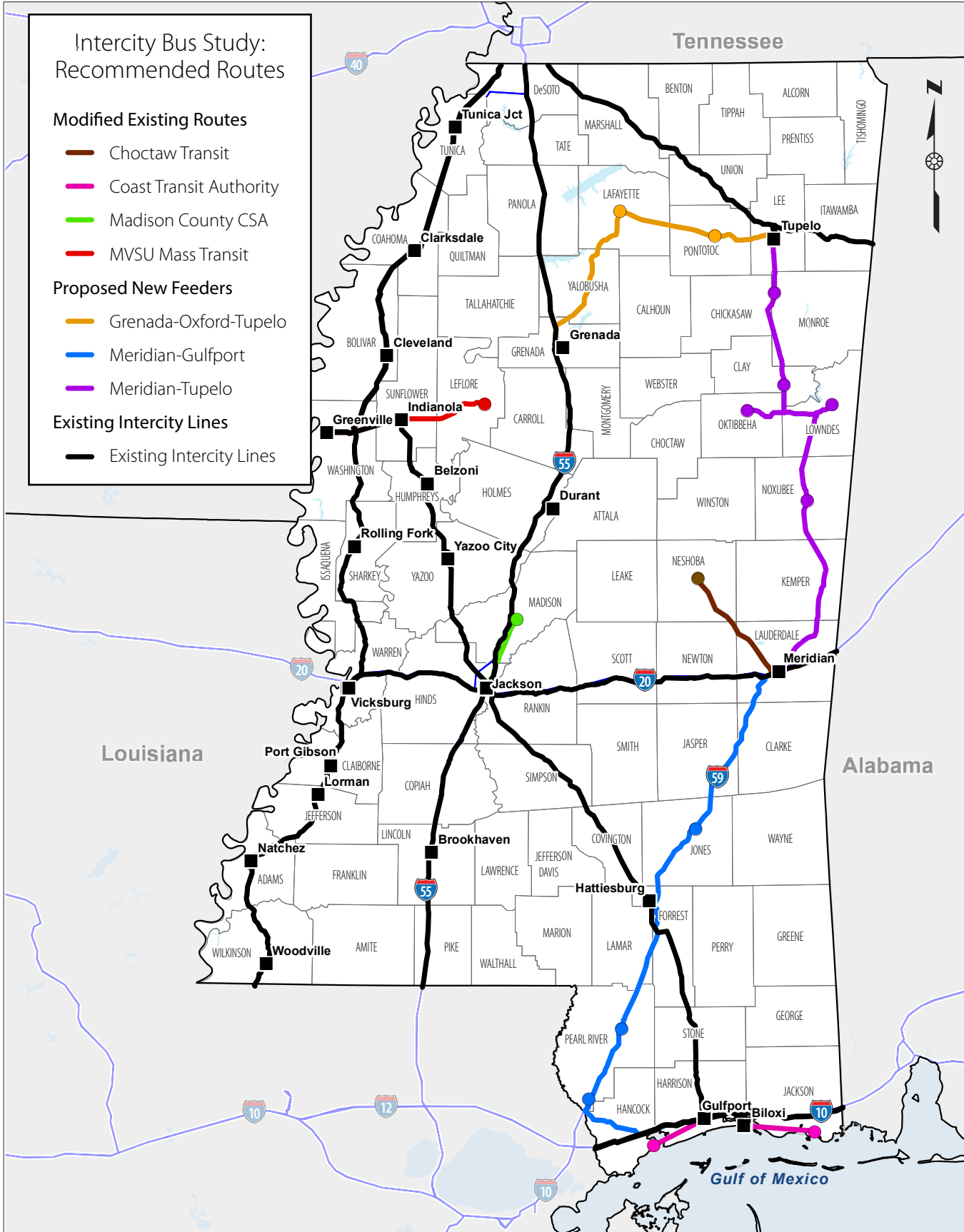
New Feeder Services

Greyhound currently serves the cities of Gulfport and Meridian. A proposed new feeder service operating between these two cities would provide a connection between the intercity bus stations and Laurel, Hattiesburg, Poplarville, and Picayune. The proposed feeder, which would be eligible for 5311(f) funding because it would operate in a rural area, will provide connections to the Greyhound station in both Meridian and Gulfport.

There is also a need for service between the Golden Triangle, Tupelo, and Meridian. This service could provide timed connections to the Greyhound intercity bus serving Tupelo and Meridian, as well as providing feeder service to the Golden Triangle, a region showing demand for intercity bus. A Grenada, Oxford, and Tupelo feeder would provide timed connections to the Greyhound intercity bus serving Tupelo and Grenada as well as providing feeder service to Oxford, which



Figure 4-1. Intercity Bus Study: Recommended Routes

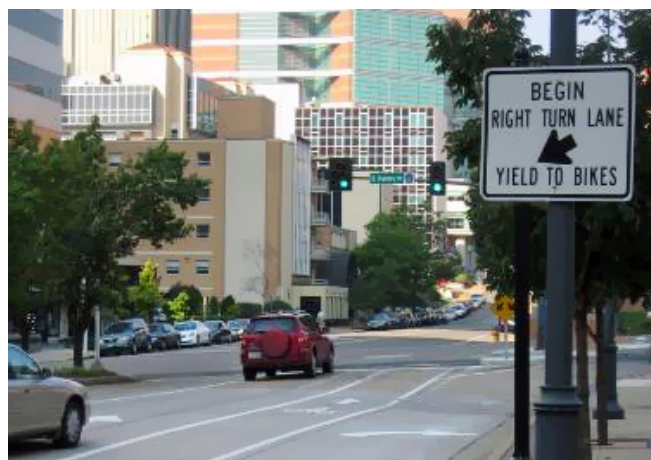


Source: Gresham, Smith and Partners

also demonstrates a need for intercity bus access. Total operating and capital costs for adding new intercity bus service is approximately \$0.8 million annually.






Action Plan

Choctaw Transit, Coast Transit Authority, Madison County CSA, MVSU Mass Transit, and Greyhound Lines would all play an integral role in implementing the intercity bus recommendations (Table 4-7). The strategic enhancements could be funded with a combination of Section 5311 and local funds. The target investment improvements could be funded through Section 5311(f) and local funding.



Source: pedbikeimages.org; Kevin Neill; 2010

Table 4-7. Intercity Bus Service Action Plan

 Strategy	 Lead Organization	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding
Existing Local and Regional Services to Be Modified				
Bay St. Louis to Gulfport	CTA	1 - 3 years	MDOT, Intercity Bus Providers	Section 5311
Pascagoula to Biloxi				
Canton to Jackson	Madison County CSA			
Choctaw to Meridian	Choctaw Transit			
Greenwood to Greenville	MVSU Mass Transit			
New Feeder Services				
Grenada - Oxford - Tupelo	Intercity Bus Provider	3 - 5 years	Local Transit Agencies	Section 5311(f)
Meridian - Gulfport				
Meridian - Tupelo				

... all play an integral role in implementing the intercity bus recommendations ...

5.0 Strategic Policy Recommendations

The successful implementation of the recommended goals, objectives, and program improvements hinges, in large part, on a series of policy actions. Building on the goals and objectives, in particular, five high priority and strategic policy recommendations were identified. The policy recommendations reflect issues raised by state and transit agency staff, analysis of transit agency operations, and national best practices. For each policy, the recommendations outline the opportunity, describe the current context, highlight strategies, and define implementation steps. The five key policy recommendations address:

- **State Agency Coordination:** Improve the coordination and delivery of services among state agencies that fund transit services;
- **Performance Measurements and Benchmarks:** Establish a performance measurement system to track strengths and weaknesses, demonstrate value, and expand support for investment in transit;
- **Mobility Management:** Improve coordination between transit and human services transportation providers to reduce costs and improve access;
- **Public Awareness:** Develop a public awareness toolkit to communicate the benefits of transit to the general public, government officials, and other stakeholders; and
- **Dedicated Transit Funding:** Identify a dedicated source or sources of funding for transit in Mississippi.

5.1 Policy Area: State Agency Coordination

Improved coordination between state agencies and between state agencies and local transit providers will result in better service outcomes. Improved coordination among state agencies, for example, can help align transportation goals across departments and target funding to priority services. Increased coordination between state agencies and local transit providers can deliver much needed technical assistance in support of performance measures.

... coordination between state agencies and local transit providers can deliver much needed technical assistance ...

Current Practice in Mississippi

The State of Mississippi has an Interagency Transportation Committee (ITC) that is charged with coordinating rural general public and specialized transit at the state level as well as working with local governments to promote coordination. State agencies participating on the ITC include:

- Mississippi Department of Health;
- Mississippi Department of Human Services;
- Mississippi Department of Mental Health;
- Mississippi Department of Transportation; and
- Mississippi Office of the Governor, Division of Medicaid.

Established through an interagency memorandum of agreement, the ITC is responsible for undertaking collaborative transportation planning, identifying opportunities to promote coordinated services, and reviewing grant applications for federal and state assistance. Although the ITC implements MDOT policy and provides a formal mechanism for coordination, it is not augmented by a statewide goal or statewide performance measures. Accordingly, a persistent challenge is the situation of multiple human service transportation providers operating in some Mississippi counties while other counties do not have any transit services. In the case of counties with multiple human service transportation providers, there are few instances of coordination between these transit agencies and also limited coordination between fixed

route and human services providers leading to service overlap.

Recommended Strategies

In order to enhance coordination and maximize federal, state, and local resources, the following strategies and tools should be implemented. The recommendations can be implemented separately or in tandem.

- A. **A New Interagency Transit Strategy Working Group:** Building on the ITC, an interagency working group should be established that is tasked with developing coordinated transit strategies, goals, and performance measures. In addition to the agencies in the ITC, the Mississippi Department of Employment Security and Mississippi Department of Vocational Services should participate in the working group.
- B. **Create Optimal Service Areas:** A minimum service area size should be considered for all flexible/demand response transit providers in order to take advantage of economies of scale when delivering services and making vehicle and technology purchases. A minimum service area of 4,500 square miles or population of 150,000 should be examined as applicable thresholds. Service areas of this size will reduce the need to make interagency transfers or to extend trips beyond current service areas to access health care, education, training, social services, and employment. Expanding flexible/demand response service areas will also increase the pool of potential service contracts available for local funding matches. Figure 5-1 illustrates one concept for realigning and establishing optimal service areas. Defining new and optimal service areas will depend on establishing new transit agency partnerships or reorganized agencies.
- C. **Encourage Fixed Route Agencies to Provide Flexible/Demand Response Services:** In addition to paratransit service, fixed route providers should consider adding general public flexible/demand response services systems. Having one agency operate both a fixed route system and flexible/demand response system in the rural area surrounding the core urban service area allows the agency to provide a compendium of transportation services within the entire urbanized area for riders.
- D. **Establish Regional Transfer Points:** Establishing a statewide system of set transfer points to facilitate

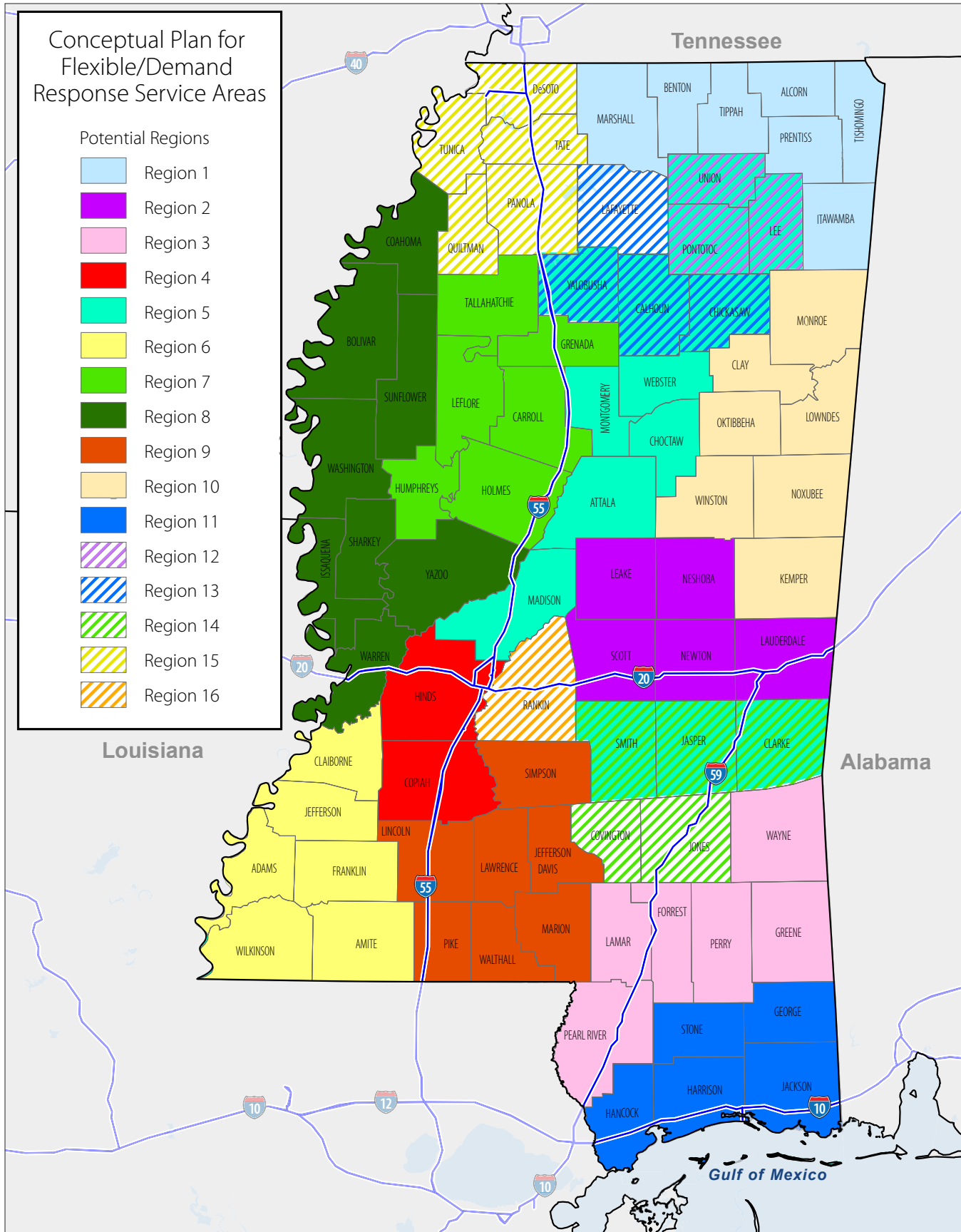
transit trips between different service areas can accomplish several goals. Transferring passengers increases the availability of shorter trips by reducing the time equipment is committed to trips outside a service area. Passengers transferring to another vehicle can also increase the availability of longer distance trips. It costs less for an agency to journey a long distance with many passengers, rather than with one passenger. Finally, adding more passengers to common destinations will result in lower vehicle maintenance costs per rider for transit agencies. Regional transfer points should have the following characteristics:

- Provide a sheltered waiting area, preferably climate controlled;
- Offer a well-lit, safe environment; and
- Locate as close to the boundary of a service area as possible.

Buildings that can function as regular transfer points can include cooperating businesses, such as truck stops, discount department stores, and grocery stores. Public buildings, such as junior colleges, city halls, county buildings, libraries, courthouses, and community and senior centers are also good candidates for transfer points. Choctaw Transit has been a leader in pursuing interagency coordination through transfers, setting up a transfer point in a police substation to convey riders from East Central PDD into their service area and beyond into Jackson. A conceptual example of a transfer point at Copiah Junior College to connect the services of 5 County, DJ Transit, Claiborne County HRA, Community Development, and Natchez Transit into Jackson is illustrated in Figure 5-2.

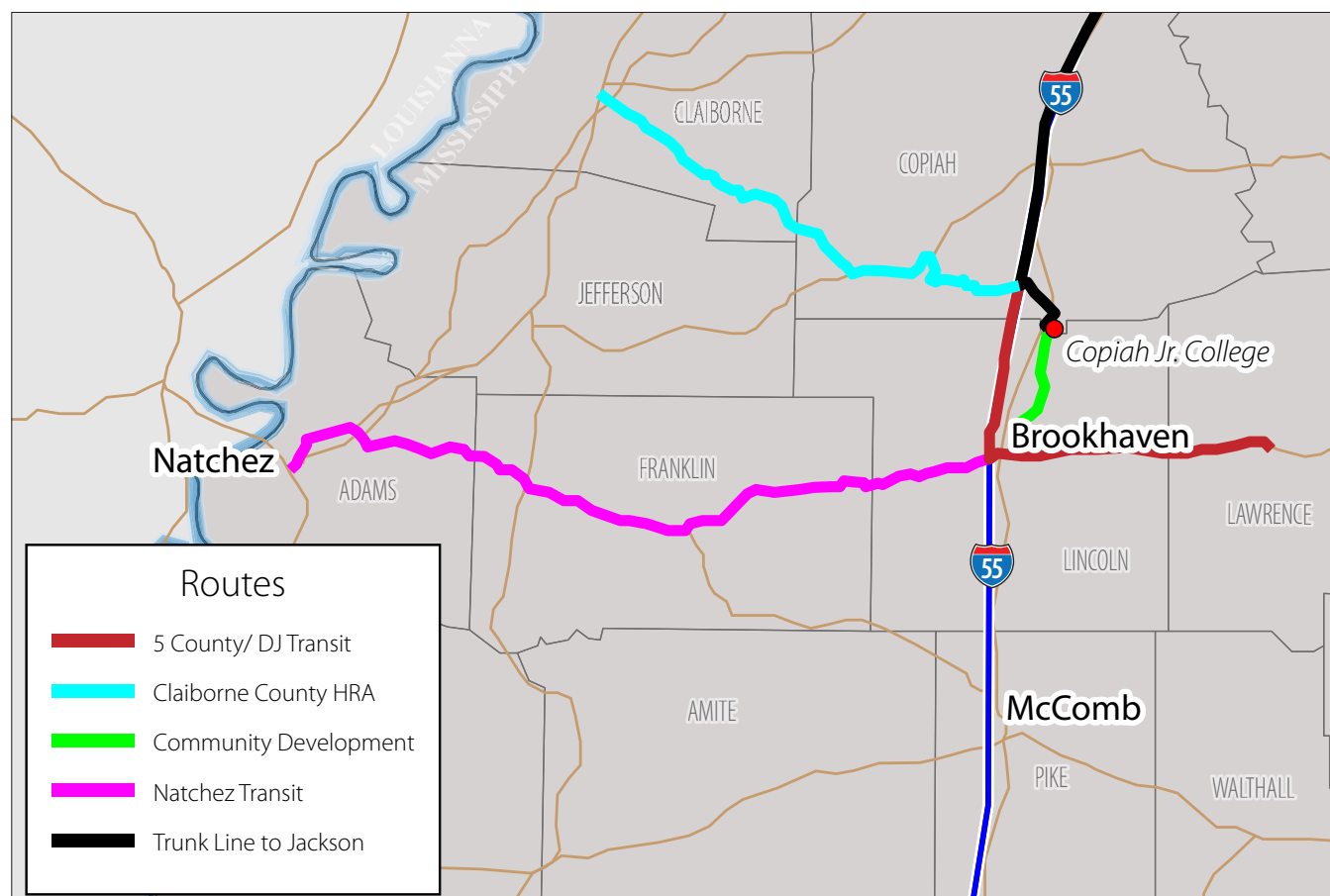
. . . enhance
coordination and
maximize federal,
state, and local
resources . . .

Figure 5-1. Conceptual Plan for Mississippi Flexible/Demand Response Service



Source: Gresham, Smith and Partners

Figure 5-2. Conceptual Plan for Transfer System to Jackson



Source: Gresham, Smith and Partners

Benefits and Costs

Greater interagency coordination among state agencies and between state agencies and local transit providers will generate transportation service improvements and service efficiencies. These improvements, in turn, will be fueled by supporting actions that, while less apparent, generate equally important benefits. More interagency coordination will amplify the importance of transit in Mississippi by bringing together stakeholders, including local elected officials and the public, who may not typically work on transit issues. Greater cooperation and coordination between state and local agencies will also provide outside expertise not normally available to the latter agencies, who often are consumed by day-to-day operations and challenges.

The costs associated with implementing increased coordination will mostly be a reallocation of staff time. There may need to be a director of interagency coordination position created to manage this program,






develop expertise, and ensure a commitment to coordination.

Action Plan

MDOT should serve as the lead agency for the interagency working group and for developing the optimal service areas (Table 5-1). Locally, fixed route service operators and mobility managers at the RCTPGs should take the lead in expanding flexible/demand response service in large urban areas and introducing new rural transfer points, respectively.

Increased coordination between state agencies should begin immediately after the completion of this study. The feasibility of transfer points should be established strategically on a case-by-case basis, but should be established within the first year. Developing optimal service areas will require, perhaps, the greatest amount of time, as new partnerships or reorganized agencies are established. However, since new partnerships and reorganized agencies can result in cost savings and support new or expanded services, the

Table 5-1. State Agency Coordination Action Plan

 Strategy	 Lead Agency	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/ Funding
Interagency Transit Strategy Working Group	MDOT	1-3 months	Department of Human Services (DHS)- Division of Aging, Medicaid, Department of Employment Security (DES), Department of Vocational Services (DVS), and the Department of Mental Health (DMH)	---
Create Optimal Service Areas	RCTPGs	< 1 year	Transit Agencies, MDOT	Section 5310 Funding
Fixed Route Agencies to Provide Demand Response Service beyond Paratransit Service	Fixed Route Providers	< 1 year	Rural Transit Agencies, MDOT	Section 5307 Funding
Establish Transfer Points	RCTPGs	3 - 5 years	Transit Agencies, MDOT	Section 5310 Funding

recommendation should be pursued aggressively over the initial three-year period.

Section 5310 funds can be used for any expenses related to coordinating planning among agencies. Limited new administrative expenses, such as any new hiring or contracting, could be funded through state government.

5.2 Policy Area: Performance Measures

Performance measurement systems provide quantitative assessments of transit system conditions, including the identification of successes, challenges, and opportunities. They also provide agencies with the ability to compare performance over time and identify trends. Performance measures can be used to help manage financial resources more effectively, focus on key priorities, and provide greater accountability to the public. Federal transportation legislation, such as MAP-21 and the FAST Act, includes provisions requiring performance measurement systems at the national level. The legislation also directs states and transit agencies to institute performance measures,

specifically for safety and state of good repair, in statewide and metropolitan transportation planning. States must also establish transit performance measures for non-urban areas as part of a long range transportation planning process.

Current Practice in Mississippi

The 2040 MULTIPLAN provides performance measures and targets for different transportation modes in Mississippi. For transit, MULTIPLAN sets a target of 75 percent of all transit vehicles in Mississippi meeting state of good repair standards. According to MULTIPLAN, the current statewide average for state of good repair among transit vehicles is 56 percent.

Recommended Strategies

The National Transit Database (NTD) has established data collection and reporting as part of the operations of federally funded transit agencies. Most of the measures reported in NTD are focused on service delivery levels along with internal cost and efficiency measures. Many state DOTs already have or are beginning to expand on the data collected through

Performance measurement systems provide quantitative assessments of transit system conditions . . .

the NTD for use as performance measures linked to state or regional transportation goals. For example, according to National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Research Results Digest 361, over two-thirds of all state DOT transit divisions indicated that they have performance measures in place. Building on the approach used in Ohio, recommended strategies for establishing a comprehensive performance measurement system in Mississippi follow.

- A. **Classify Transit Services:** Services in Mississippi can be classified into four categories. There are two types of fixed route systems in Mississippi. Urban fixed route systems receive 5307 funding, while non-urban fixed route systems operate with 5311 funding. Similarly, there are two groups of demand response services: Flexible/Demand Response and Specialized Transit. Table 5-2 provides a list of transit agencies by service type.
- B. **Select Performance Measures:** The statewide vision for transit was used as the basis for establishing goals, objectives, and performance measures. The four identified standard transit industry measures (Figure 5-3) will help Mississippi further improve transit performance in the state. The measures use data already collected by transit agencies and reported to MDOT. Generally, a vehicle or facility is considered in a state of good

Table 5-2. Mississippi Transit Agencies by Service Category

 Transit Agencies	Fixed Route Category	Demand Response Category
Alcorn County HRA	-	Specialized Transit
Bolivar County Council on Aging, Inc	-	Flexible/Demand Response
Choctaw Transit	-	Flexible/Demand Response
City of Jackson HCS	-	Specialized Transit
Claiborne County Human Resource Agency	-	Flexible/Demand Response
Climb Up	-	Specialized Transit
Community Development, Inc.	-	Flexible/Demand Response
Copiah County Human Resource Agency	-	Flexible/Demand Response
CTA	Urban	Urban
DARTS	-	Flexible/Demand Response
Dial-a-Bus	-	Specialized Transit
East Central PDD	-	Specialized Transit
Five County Community Transportation Program	-	Flexible/Demand Response
HEGA	-	Flexible/Demand Response
Hinds County Human Resource Agency	-	Flexible/Demand Response
Hub City	Urban	Urban
Jackson County Civic Action	-	Specialized Transit
JATRAN	Urban	Urban
Lee County Multi-Purpose	-	Specialized Transit

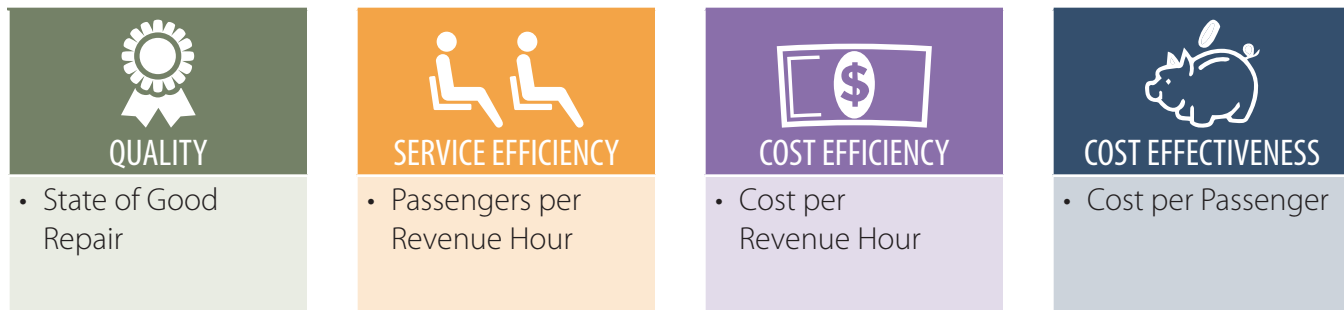
Table 5-2. Mississippi Transit Agencies by Service Category (*continued*)

 Transit Agencies	Fixed Route Category	Demand Response Category	 Transit Agencies	Fixed Route Category	Demand Response Category
Madison County Citizen Service Agency	-	Flexible/Demand Response	Timber Hills Mental Health	-	Specialized Transit
Mississippi Christian Family Services	-	Specialized Transit	United Community Action Committee, Inc.	-	Flexible/Demand Response
Mt Zion	-	Specialized Transit	Warren County ARC	-	Specialized Transit
MVSU Mass Transit	-	Flexible/Demand Response	Warren-Washington-Issaquena-Sharkey Community Action	-	Specialized Transit
Natchez Transit System	-	Flexible/Demand Response	Warren-Yazoo Mental Health	-	Specialized Transit
North Central PDD	-	Specialized Transit	Weems Community Mental Health	-	Specialized Transit
North Delta PDD	-	Specialized Transit	Willowood	-	Specialized Transit
Northeast Mississippi Community Services, Inc.	-	Flexible/Demand Response	Yazoo County HRA	-	Specialized Transit
Noxubee County HRA	-	Specialized Transit			
NRoute	Non-Urban	-			
OUT	Non-Urban	-			
Pine Belt Mental Health	-	Specialized Transit			
Quality Mental Health	-	Specialized Transit			
Rankin County HRA	-	Specialized Transit			
Retired Senior Volunteer Program, City of Oxford	-	Specialized Transit			
SMART	Non-Urban	-			
South Central Community Action Agency	-	Flexible/Demand Response			
Southern Mississippi PDD	-	Specialized Transit			
Southwest Mississippi Mental Health	-	Specialized Transit			
Three Rivers PDD	-	Specialized Transit			

repair (SGR) when it is safe, reliable, and keeps passengers satisfied. Therefore, the average number of vehicles meeting SGR standards is an indirect measure of potential problems. MDOT has established useful life standards for transit vehicles. Passenger trips per revenue hour is a ratio of the total number of passenger trips divided by the total revenue hours provided during a given period. Similarly, cost per revenue hour is the ratio of total operating costs divided by revenue hours. Improving service and cost efficiency means that more passenger trips can be made in the same number of revenue hours at the same cost. Cost per passenger trip is a ratio of the total operating cost divided by the number of passenger trips. It should be noted that cost per passenger is traditionally much higher for demand responsive service than it is for fixed route service. No performance measures are recommended for specialized transit systems since these systems typically serve populations with specific needs. An additional measure should be considered once the FTA releases final guidance on safety measures.

- C. **Set Performance Benchmarks:** Three performance levels are proposed for each measure (Figure 5-4).

Figure 5-3. Proposed Performance Measures



The “high performing” standard is 80 percent of the group average and above. These agencies are performing very efficiently and may be able to share best practices with other agencies. The “satisfactory” standard is between 60 and 80 percent, or 120 and 140 percent, of the average depending on the measure. These agencies are performing adequately, but should be examined to find efficiencies. The “monitor” standard is 60 percent below the average. These agencies are exhibiting performance problems and may need assistance to determine where service can be improved. Under the proposed threshold levels, approximately 62 percent of the agencies meet the high performing standard, 25 percent meet the satisfactory standard, and 13 percent fall into the monitor category.

- D. **Report Annually:** The performance measurement system can be designed with a set of simple and easy to read summary tables and a brief overview memo. This report can be distributed to stakeholders, including MDOT leadership and the Mississippi Legislature. Experience in other states suggests that an annual performance measurement report provides critical transit information to stakeholders and increases awareness of transit more generally.
- E. **Provide Technical Assistance:** The performance measurement system is designed to help Mississippi track agency performance and encourage agencies to review and evaluate services to ensure their current operating structure is appropriate and effective. Transit agencies that are high performing can be recognized for their achievements and examined for best practices.

Figure 5-4. Performance Benchmark



... succinctly
and clearly
communicate ...

Transit services that do not meet the acceptable standards can work with MDOT to discuss challenges facing the service in question and develop strategies to improve it.

Future Benefits and Costs

First and foremost, widely accepted and used performance measures will result in improved management, and create new opportunities for service improvements and expansions. The transit sector in Mississippi also continues, however, to search for new and reliable funding sources. As a means to succinctly and clearly communicate performance at the statewide, regional, and local levels, performance measures can help tell the story of transit. Since agencies are already reporting the necessary data to MDOT and the NTD, the amount of additional costs

and time required to implement the recommendations for transit agencies is limited. However, MDOT will need to dedicate time and staff to develop and distribute the report.

Action Plan

MDOT should be the lead agency for development of the recommended performance measurement system (Table 5-3). Locally, transit agencies would need to provide accurate and timely information. For the recommended annual reporting, MDOT should work with transit providers to define the service classifications, performance measures, and benchmarks, and then develop the initial report. The start-up process can be finalized within six to nine months based on the work already completed. Figures 5-5 through 5-8, for example, provide summary performance measures for flexible/demand response providers.

5.3 Policy Area: Mobility Management

Mobility management is defined by the Federal Transit Administration as, “an approach to service development and management that focuses on individualized customer markets and involves establishing a variety of services tailored to meet the needs of the market.” Simply put, mobility management is about determining the most

Table 5-3. Performance Measure Action Plan






 Strategy	 Lead Agency	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding
Classify Transit Services	MDOT	1-3 months	Transit Agencies, RCTPGs	Staff time
Select Performance Measures	MDOT	1-3 months	Transit Agencies, RCTPGs	Staff time
Set Performance Benchmarks	MDOT	1-3 months	Transit Agencies, RCTPGs	Staff time
Implementation				
• Report Annually	MDOT	Annually	Transit Agencies, RCTPGs	Staff time
• Provide Assistance	MDOT	On-going	Transit Agencies, RCTPGs	Staff time

Figure 5-5. Flexible/Demand Response Systems: State of Good Repair

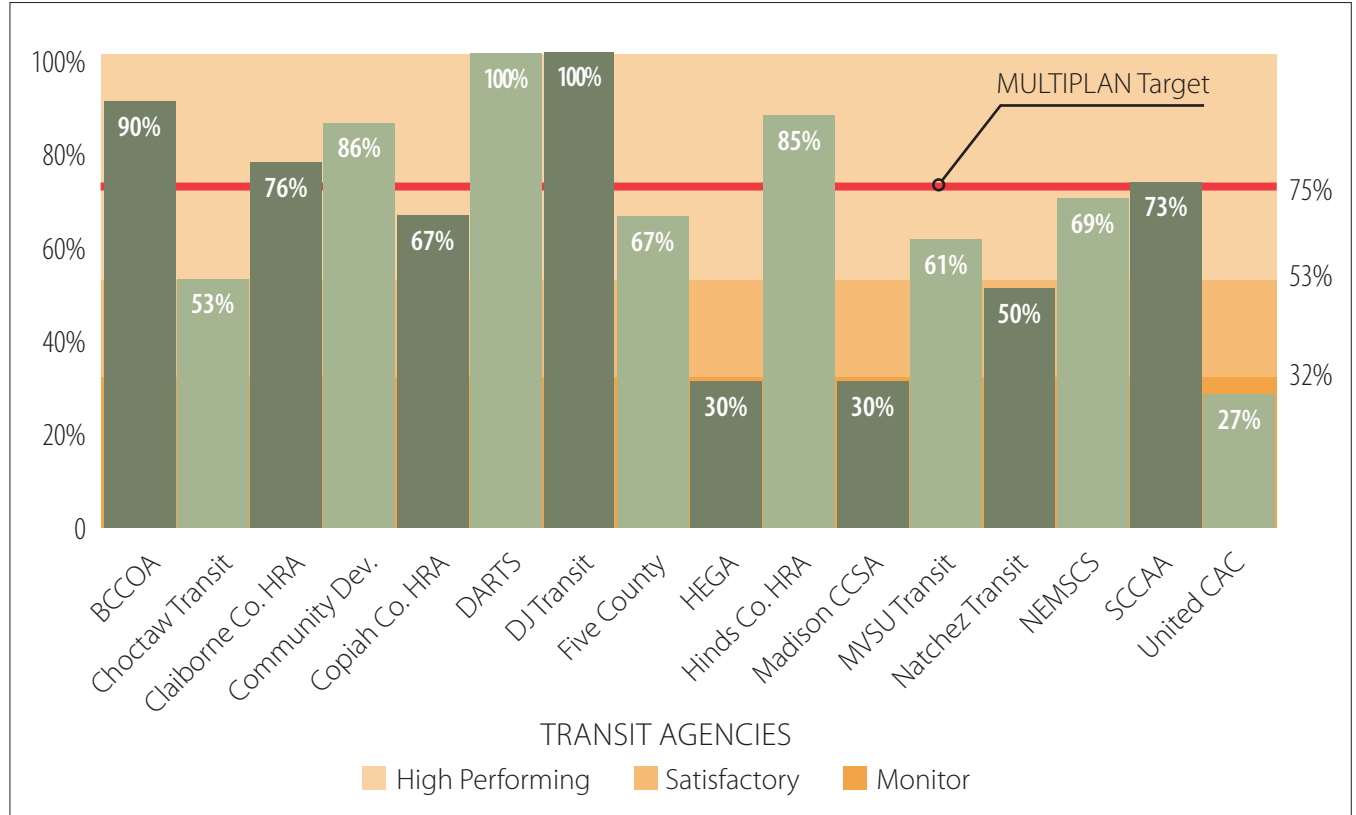


Figure 5-6. Flexible/Demand Response Systems: Passenger Trips per Vehicle Hour

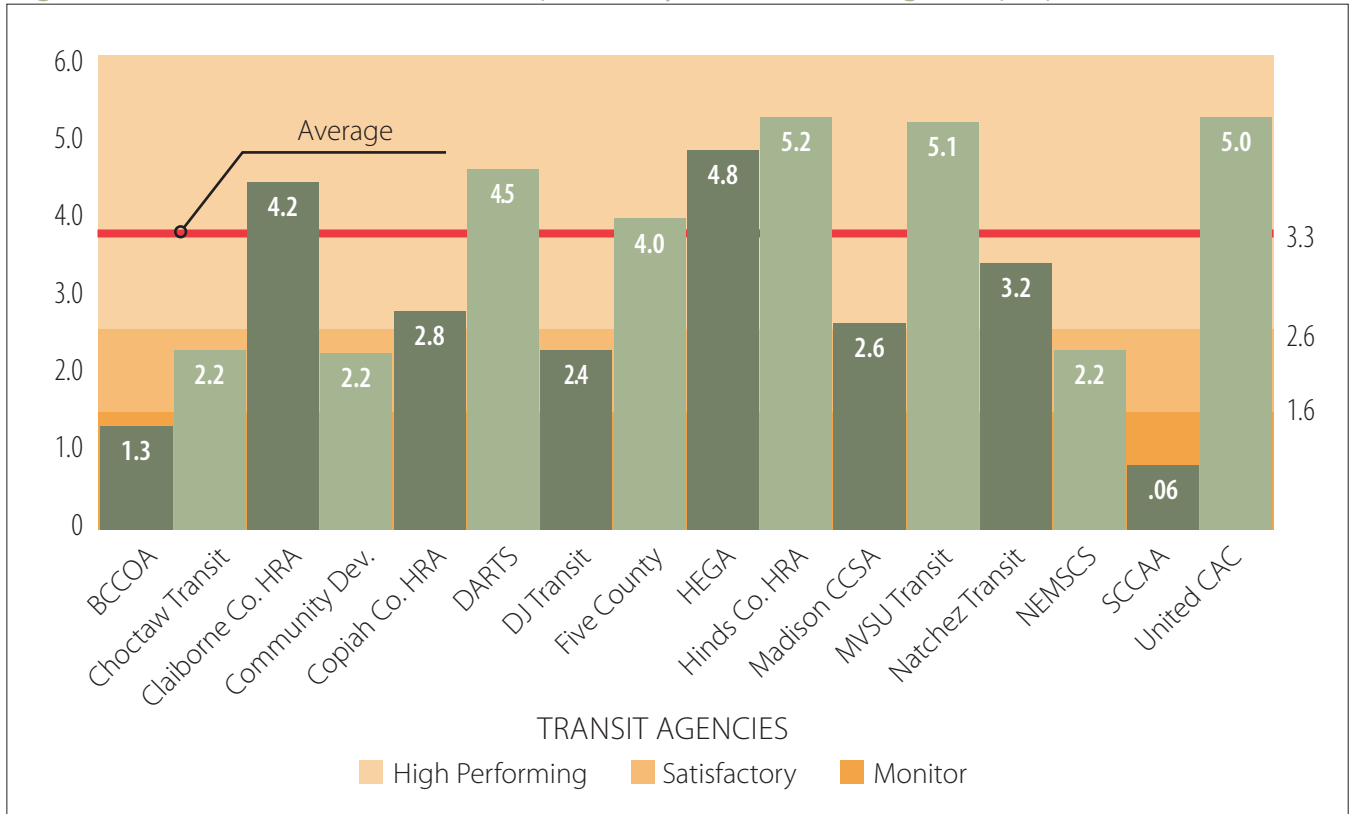


Figure 5-7. Flexible/Demand Response Systems: Operating Cost per Passenger

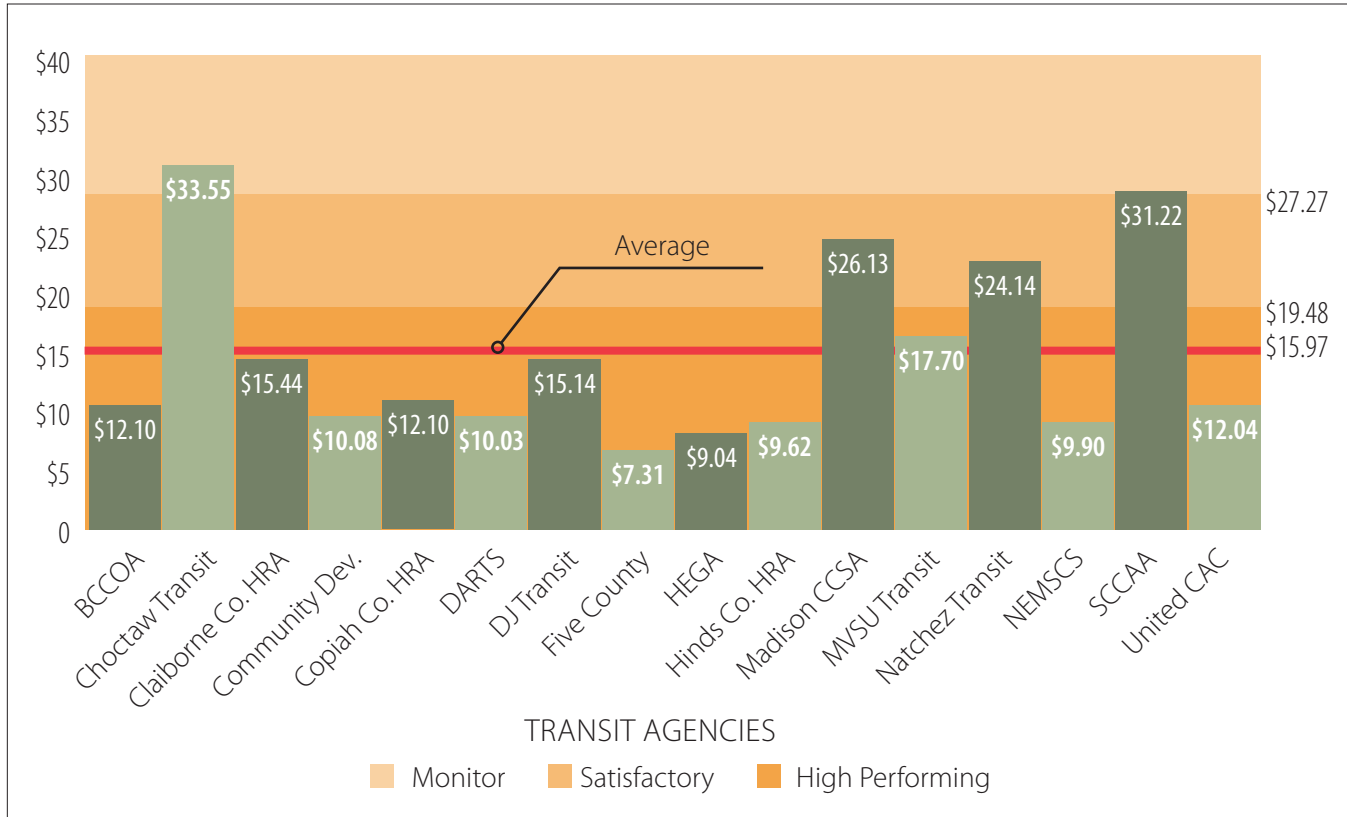
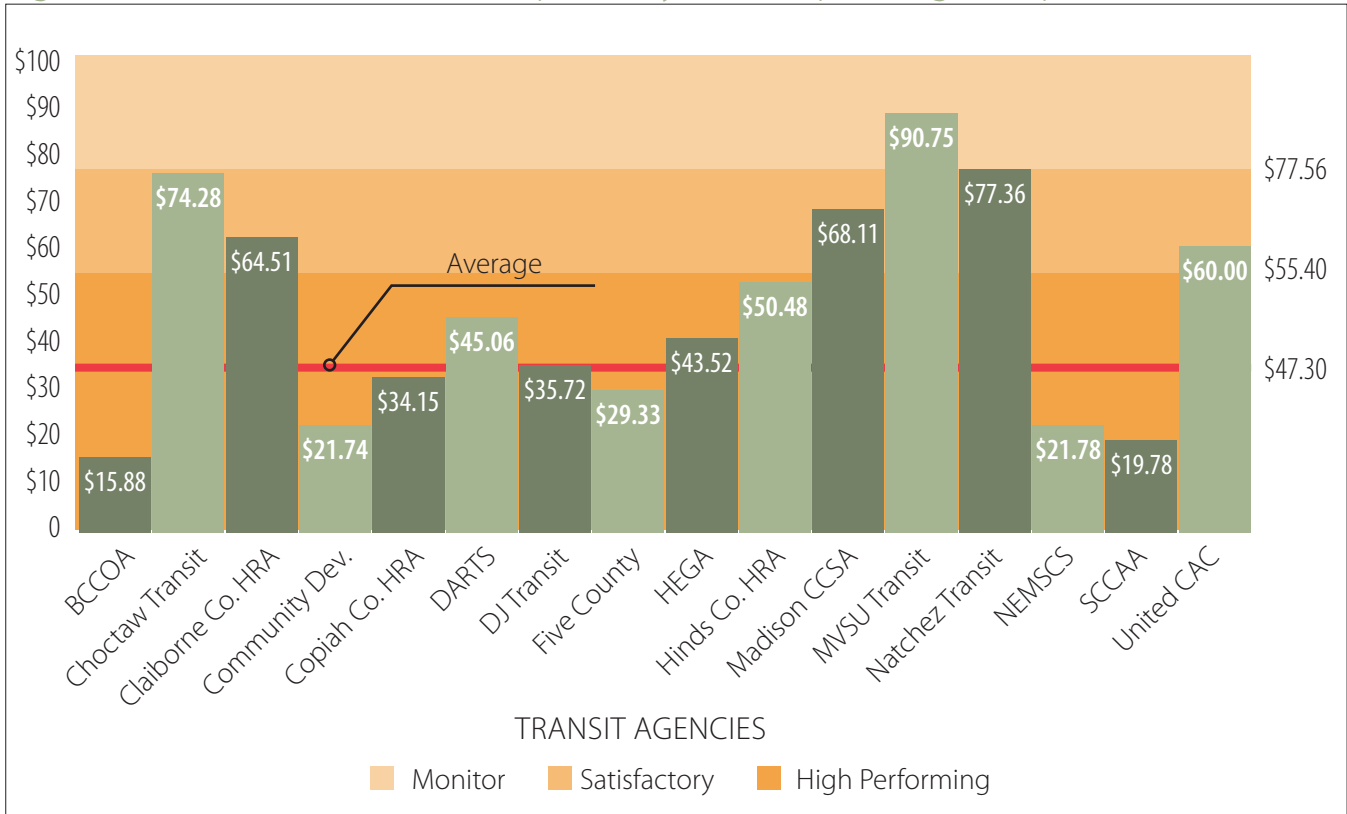


Figure 5-8. Flexible/Demand Response Systems: Operating Cost per Vehicle Hour



appropriate means for transportation to a destination based on certain criteria. According to a US Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on transportation for disadvantaged populations, 80 federally funded programs are authorized to fund transportation services for their respective program participants, and transportation is not the primary mission of most programs the GAO identified.

The mobility manager will ask questions to understand the caller's trip needs and subsidy qualification status. If the caller does not qualify for a subsidy, the mobility manager can still be of assistance by providing information on bus stop locations, stop times, and connecting routes and services within the local transit provider's system and on neighboring county transportation provider routes. In addition to keeping information up to date on the inventory of transportation providers, their respective services, and transportation passenger subsidies, mobility managers should be vigilant to document trip requests that cannot be fulfilled due to lack of available service or subsidy. This can help the mobility manager inform decision makers on service gaps which can lead to future efforts to expand transportation service in the area.

Current Practice in Mississippi

Mississippi's six Regional Coordination Transportation Planning Groups are tasked with inventorying available transportation services and subsidies, identifying gaps in service, and planning and implementing improvements to close gaps. A lead transportation provider and mobility manager within each RCTPG facilitates the activities of their respective region. Additionally, there are regularly scheduled statewide coordinating summits, which bring stakeholders from all six RCTPGs together to learn from one another and from transportation industry experts.

Mobility management activities can be housed within a transit provider or a human service agency. Examples of transit providers that have mobility managers on staff are Coast Transit Authority (CTA), an urban public transit system based in the Gulfport-Biloxi area, and Choctaw Transit, a rural transit provider based in Choctaw. The CTA mobility manager coordinates individual passenger trips within its service area and among its own modes of transportation (e.g., paratransit to fixed route). Among many other responsibilities, the Choctaw mobility manager provides information on transportation services available to callers.

Mobility managers can also be housed at human services agencies, such as at the Claiborne County



Human Resource Agency (HRA), a rural transit provider based out of Port Gibson, and Bolivar County Council on Aging (BCCOA), a rural transit provider with operations based in Cleveland and Jackson. Claiborne County HRA has a dedicated mobility manager that will direct callers to the transit service that best suits their needs or will call other transportation providers in the area to coordinate trips on behalf of any passenger that they cannot serve. BCCOA has two mobility managers on staff in two different office locations to help coordinate trips for passengers. Although other transit providers and human services agencies in the state may not have a mobility manager on staff, most will typically refer callers to other area providers if they cannot provide transportation to the caller themselves.

In the Delta Rides RCTPG, a regional call center has been established in Cleveland to direct callers to transportation services on a regional scale. Many of the transportation providers in the area have joined to create a regional brand so that all of the different providers' vehicles have the regional logo even though they still maintain their separate services and individual organizational structures. This was an effort to increase visibility of the various transportation services in the region and to lay the groundwork for further coordination efforts.

Recommended Strategies

- A. **Add New Regional Call Centers/One Call One Click Centers:** By establishing the RCTPGs, Mississippi is positioned to make great strides in regional transportation coordination. The example of the Delta Rides Regional Call Center is a local success story that could be replicated in the other RCTPGs throughout the state. Where new service partnerships are not feasible in the short-term, a regional call center should be considered. This arrangement would be ideally performed by a regional government agency such as a council of government (COG), rural planning organization (RPO), or metropolitan planning organization (MPO). In this case, the agency may or may not also be a transportation provider, but because its service area is regional in nature, it would have the appropriate partnerships and knowledge base to perform the mobility management functions.
- B. **Expand Purchase of Service:** In years past, the Section 5310 grant was used primarily as a source for capital expenditures to fund the purchase of

. positioned
to make great
strides in regional
transportation
coordination.

vehicles and pay for maintenance costs related to the vehicles. With the enactment of MAP-21 in 2012, mobility management activities and the purchase of service are also now eligible expenses. Purchase of service refers to contracting transportation service with a public and/or private transportation provider. Using Section 5310 grant funds for purchase of service may be most appropriate for nonprofit organizations whose target client groups are seniors and/or persons with disabilities, but whose primary mission is not transportation. Using the Section 5310 purchase of service option provides a supplemental funding stream to provide transportation for the intended target group while encouraging existing transportation providers to provide the service. According to MDOT's 2014–2015 Approved Section 5310 projects, 71 percent of its Section 5310 recipients are using their Section 5310 funds for purchase of service. MDOT should move towards distributing all Section 5310 funds as purchase of service, including capital funds. An interim goal could be to encourage those nonprofit agencies who are not utilizing their funds for purchase of service to utilize more funds for mobility management.

Future Benefits and Costs

The key benefits to mobility management include the following:

- Increased customer access to transportation due to tailored transportation information and options;

... can then focus its attention on its primary mission ...

- More cost effective transportation services provided through more individuals being referred to previously unknown transportation services;
- More visible transportation services for consumers and less confusion about how to access services; and
- More trips shifted from demand response, which is typically more expensive, to fixed route service.

Initially, mobility management may be more expensive in terms of staff time, hiring new employees, training on area transportation services, and acquiring technologies such as website hosting fees. However, long-term savings from more cost efficient service delivery should recoup some, if not all, of these related costs.

For purchase of service agreements, the cost of transportation services will vary depending on whether a dedicated contract route will be needed or there are other transportation services in the area. Purchasing transportation on a one-way, per passenger rate may be more appropriate for some social service agencies. Assuming two hours each for two vehicles to take riders to and from a senior center, for example, at the average operating cost per revenue hour in Mississippi of \$58.02, the purchase of service contract rate would be \$232 per day. An average month with 20 weekdays would cost the senior center \$4,640 per month. Where there are public transit routes in an area, an agency can purchase trips from the transportation provider on a per passenger trip basis. In 2014, Hub City's operating cost per passenger trip was \$10.04. If the senior center needed to transport 20 senior center participants to its center using Hub City Transit, it would be \$402 per day, or \$8,032 a month for an average month with 20 weekdays.

Although the cost of purchasing service may be higher than if the human services agency provided the service themselves, purchasing transportation from existing

providers removes other costs such as purchasing vehicles, hiring drivers, vehicle maintenance, and administrative costs. The agency can then focus its attention on its primary mission rather than having to also concern itself with transportation logistics.






Action Plan

The RCTPGs established in Mississippi already have designated lead agencies to facilitate planning, and these agencies should continue in that role (Table 5-4). If the lead agency does not feel they have the capacity to carry out all of the RCTPG objectives, other stakeholders may want to assist or a regional governmental agency, such as a planning and development district or regional planning organization, could be approached.

The time frame to accomplish the development of more regional call centers and purchase of service contracts will depend on which of the two strategies will be executed. Setting up a regional call center can begin in a short time frame (e.g., months) if all the stakeholders in a RCTPG decide that they want to refer callers to the RCTPG lead agency. A regional call center does not need to be technology oriented. It could simply entail adding a few more phone lines to the



Table 5-4. Mobility Management Action Plan

 Strategy	 Lead Agency	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding
Regional Call Centers/ One Call One Click Centers	RCTPG Lead Agencies	3 - 6 months to > 1 year	MDOT, Transit Agencies, MPOs, PDDs	FTA Grants, Administration on Aging Title III-B, and Department of Labor Welfare to Work grants
Purchase of Service	5310 Providers	1-3 months	MDOT, Transit Agencies	FTA Grants, Other Human Services Transportation Funding

lead RCTPG agency hosting the regional call center so that more staff can answer phone calls from customers simultaneously.

If a more coordinated effort of having several transportation providers purchase and utilize the same transportation scheduling and location software is desired, more time to identify the technology, apply for grants, and develop specifications can take a minimum of one year to seven years. The time and effort should not be a deterrent to pursuing the goal of increasing mobility management activities because there are multiple stakeholders in each RCTPG that have staff and volunteers who can assist.

Section 5310 grants for the transportation of seniors and persons with disabilities is a long standing funding source many agencies around the country have used to pursue various mobility management efforts. Section 5311 (Rural Formula Grant) and Section 5307 (Urban Formula Grant) can also be used for mobility management activities, particularly as they relate to providing access to jobs. Section 5309 is a capital investments grant that can also be pursued for mobility management. Human services agencies that have funds available to assist with transportation of their clients can be used as a local match for these grants (e.g., Administration on Aging Title III-B and Department of Labor Welfare to Work grants). Local governments and businesses can also provide funding for mobility management activities. Finally, there are various demonstration grants that FTA solicits periodically such as the Veterans Transportation and Community Living grant and the Rides to Wellness grant. There are also many private foundations, such as community wellness foundations, that offer grants to help residents access daily necessities.

5.4 Policy Area: Public Awareness Toolkit

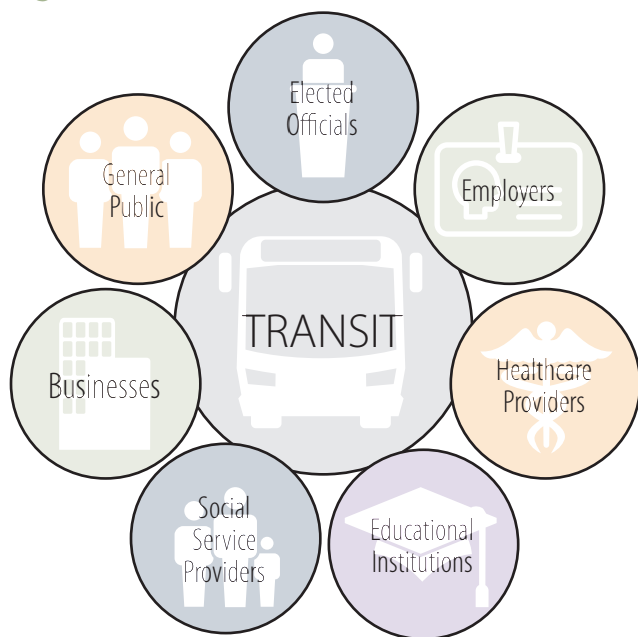
Transit plays a vital role in many communities. Transit services make a wide variety of destinations – including employment, education, health care, and shopping – accessible to people of all ages and abilities. Similarly, for businesses, improved transit and access expands regional labor pools, resulting in better employer/employee matching and employee education and training opportunities. Transit also increases the trade area for local retail and service oriented businesses. Importantly, transit also significantly reduces household transportation costs, allowing those dollars to remain in local communities and support local businesses. Figure 5-9 illustrates many of transit's stakeholders.

Conveying the daily benefits of transit to public officials, business leaders, and the general public, however, continues to be a challenge. Nationally, five percent of commuting trips and less than three percent of total trips rely on transit, and as a consequence, many people are unaware of how transit can benefit them or do not think that transit can benefit them. Increasing awareness and support of transit, then, is a twofold challenge centered on retaining and attracting riders and communicating benefits to various stakeholders.

Current Practice in Mississippi

Mississippi has undertaken a number of efforts recently to highlight the benefits of transit throughout the state. For example, the MDOT Public Transit Division published an Annual Statistical Report on Community Transportation in 2013. The report provides information on the performance levels, output trends,

Figure 5-9. Transit Stakeholders



and projected economic impacts statewide and for each of the six regional coordination planning areas.

The annual Statewide Coordination Summit is also a key component of the Public Transit Division's efforts to increase awareness and understanding of transit's benefits. The summit attracts a wide audience, including policy makers, local public officials, public and private transportation providers, human service organizations, universities and colleges, consumers, and other stakeholders. The goal of the 2015 Coordination Summit was to retool regional efforts through the development of an educational and awareness campaign targeted to local public and private organizations and consumers.

At the local and regional levels, individual agencies and the RCTPGs have spearheaded efforts to brand, market, and coordinate services, and more generally, make transit information available to the public. Despite traditional marketing tools and mobility manager outreach, there remains, as recent Coordination Summits have underscored, a strong desire among stakeholders, partners, and policy makers for more focused, consistent, and sustained public information initiatives.

Recommended Strategies

One strategy for increasing ridership and improving stakeholder support is to develop a standard public

awareness toolkit that summarizes and highlights what transit means for quality of life and economic development in Mississippi. Public awareness toolkits and marketing packages for transit come in various forms, depending on the audiences they are trying to reach and the questions they are trying to answer. Some state DOTs, for example, California (Caltrans), have focused on how to attract new "choice" riders, while others, like Pennsylvania, have more broadly developed toolkits describing the many marketing tools available to transit providers. With more than 150 transit providers in the state, Michigan DOT sponsored an economic impact model to measure the benefits of transit investments at the local, regional, and state levels. Finally, North Carolina DOT created a series of infographics for each transit agency and the state itself, similar to flyers and pamphlets from industry-related organizations such as the National Rural Transit Assistance Program, the American Transit Association, and the Community Transportation Association of America.

The key takeaway from the different approaches to improving public awareness of transit is, as Caltrans concluded, "no one answer, and no one-time answer." Accordingly, Mississippi should utilize the best practices and lessons learned from other state efforts, and develop a public awareness toolkit that meets its specific needs. Some of these specific needs, best practices, and lessons learned include:

- A. **Focus on Ridership and Stakeholder Support:** Transit ridership and stakeholder support fuel one another. Existing riders and providers play a pivotal in raising awareness among stakeholders, and together, they represent the critical voices necessary to explain the need for long-term, dedicated funding. The awareness toolkit needs to keep existing and potential riders and stakeholders at the forefront of all efforts.
- B. **Establish a Flexible Framework:** Transit needs, demand, and benefits vary widely across Mississippi and over time, and while it is important to develop an overarching framework and consistent message, it is also critical that regional and local opportunities, challenges, and changes are captured and communicated.
- C. **Build on Available Information and Data:** The statewide study has generated an enormous amount of information and data that can form the basis of an initial public awareness toolkit.

The vision statement, policy recommendations, needs, regional demand estimates, program recommendations, and performance measures can all be quickly adapted to outreach efforts. Moreover, other state, regional, and local transit, social service, planning, economic development, and related organizations can provide more detailed information on supporting topics such as economic and social impacts.

- D. **Develop Complementary Factors:** As Figure 5-10 illustrates, ridership and stakeholder support are clearly interconnected with other key factors such as policies, service levels, and funding. Many public outreach efforts have concluded that marketing is not a substitute for high quality service, and high quality service, in turn, depends on strong policies and funding. Focusing on ridership and stakeholder support means also developing complementary factors and creating the conditions for public awareness initiatives to succeed.
- E. **Make a Long-Term Commitment:** Focused, consistent, and sustained public awareness and education initiatives require dedicated staff and budgets. Importantly, dedicated staff eliminates the challenges associated with informal and volunteer committee approaches, and ensures that outcomes are measured.

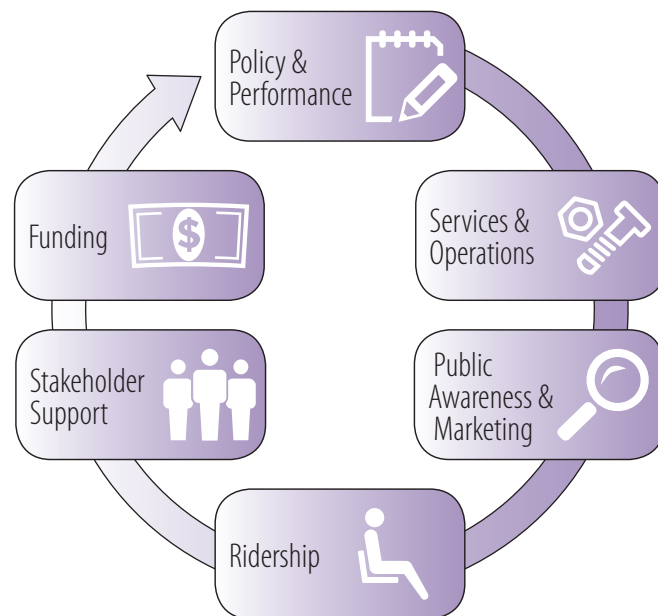
Future Benefits and Costs

A multifaceted public awareness toolkit is the most direct means for Mississippi to communicate the benefits of transit and help build ridership and stakeholder support. Such a toolkit would allow MDOT and the transit industry to convey where transit is trying to go, what the current challenges for the system are, and how transit agencies are performing under current funding levels. To control costs, the toolkit could be developed in conjunction with other ongoing state, regional, and/or local marketing campaigns, including the public awareness videos currently being created. Again, dedicated staff can help ensure the successful development, implementation, and management of the toolkit.

Action Plan

It is recommended that MDOT serve as the lead agency for the public awareness toolkit with substantial assistance and commitment from the RCTPGs. In

Figure 5-10.
Transit Ridership & Stakeholder Support








coordination with MDOT staff, the RCTPGs and transit agencies should take the lead in presenting and distributing the material to riders, stakeholders, and the general public locally and regionally. Utilizing available information and data should allow the initial toolkit to be developed within a six-month timeframe. (Table 5-5)

5.5 Policy Area: Dedicated Transit Funding

Because of the inherent connection between transit and motor fuel taxes, both from a consumption and transportation system benefits perspective, gas taxes continue to be an important and logical source of transit funding. Beyond the motor fuel tax, there are many other options and opportunities to augment state transit funding. The options include increasing vehicle license and registration fees, adding a transit component to the motor vehicle sales tax, dedicating a portion of casino and hotel occupancy taxes to transit, issuing state backed bonds for local capital purchases, introducing a real estate transfer tax on real estate sales, and increasing the corporate franchise fee. Additional operating funds from a state's general transportation budget could be issued on a formula or per capita basis much like Mississippi's Multi-Modal Transportation Improvement Program (MMTIP) for capital funding.

Table 5-5. Public Awareness Toolkit Action Plan

	 Strategy	 Lead Agency	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding
Develop Public Awareness Toolkit		MDOT	6-9 months	Transit Agencies, RCTPGs	Staff Time
Distribute and Present Public Awareness Toolkit		Transit Agencies, RCTPGs	Ongoing	MDOT	Staff Time

Locally, many fixed route systems around the country use a dedicated sales tax, generally a fraction of a penny, to fund transit service. Another common source of local funding is levying a tax on gas within a community or region to fund transit operations. For flexible/demand response services in largely rural areas, a property tax millage can be used to broaden the funding base. Passing state enabling legislation and/or establishing regional transportation authorities may be needed prior to initiating these new revenue sources.

Current Practice in Mississippi

Mississippi currently relies heavily on local governments to fund transit. While federal transit funding for Mississippi will amount to approximately \$28.6 million in fiscal year 2016, communities throughout the state will provide approximately \$22.1 million to deliver transit services. In many parts of Mississippi, however, where the need for transit is greatest – high poverty, aging population, and a high

number of people with a disability, the local tax base is not large enough to support the necessary transit services, and the funding shortfalls have resulted in approximately 30 percent of total transit demand going unmet.

While operating funding depends exclusively on federal and local sources, the State of Mississippi does assist in capital funding through the Multi-Modal Transportation Improvement Program. This is a competitive grant program to fund capital projects designed to improve public transit service in the state. Of the \$10 million annual appropriation from the MMTIP, \$1.6 million is available for transit projects.

Importantly, other state funding comes from the State Department of Human Services (DHS) and Medicaid for Non-Emergency Medical Transportation. DHS funding flows to regional Planning and Development Districts (PDDs) and local demand response services to provide transportation for those 60 and older. While some PDDs directly serve seniors, most contract with local providers generally by paying a set price per every senior trip provided. Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) is another major source of social service money provided through Medicaid. This funding, however, is also often passed through the local agency to a transportation broker that specializes in this sort of transportation. In fiscal year 2014, Medicaid expenditures on NEMT totaled more than \$32 million, with approximately \$23.8 million in federal funding and \$8.8 million in state funding.

Recommended Practices

The statewide public transportation study establishes the need for dedicated transit funding at both the state and local levels. In addition to new local matches to secure projected increases

... use a dedicated sales tax, generally a fraction of a penny, to fund transit service ...

in federal funding, improvements identified in the study will require an additional \$15.7 million in annual funding - \$11.1 million for operating expenses and \$4.6 million for capital expenses (Table 5-6). The following strategies are recommended for pursuing dedicated transit funding at the state and local levels.

- A. **Implement a Public Awareness Toolkit:** Public awareness and education tools help build a broader understanding of transit’s many benefits, and they also allow transit providers to learn more about rider and stakeholder priorities. Implementing strategic public outreach efforts as soon as possible will lay the foundation for future discussions on dedicated transit funding.
- B. **Establish a Committee on the Future of Transit Funding:** Establishing a statewide committee on the future of transit funding in Mississippi will create the necessary forum for advancing discussions on dedicated transit funding. The committee should be broad and diverse and include both public and private sector entities.
- C. **Ensure Plans Reflect Local and Regional Needs:** While the statewide public transportation study serves as an important starting point for explaining the need for additional and dedicated funding, proposed service improvements should carefully reflect local needs. Approval of dedicated funding does not require a list of projects, but it should be based on well-conceived, comprehensive, and coordinated plans.

- D. **Work with the State Legislature:** Whether the goal is dedicated transit funding at the state or local levels or both, state legislatures play a key role in determining how transportation funding can be increased and if it can be increased, including enabling legislation. The state legislature can also consider policies, where applicable, for greater coordination or funding from state agencies with transportation as part of its scope of services. Participating in and contributing to committees or commissions studying transportation funding are generally important steps in the process.
- E. **Develop an Investment Plan:** Identifying potential funding sources and explaining how the additional funding will be invested, managed, and measured establishes the overall framework for dedicated transit funding. Again, the statewide public transportation study provides much of the data and information necessary to build the investment plan.

Future Benefits and Costs

Diversifying and strengthening the funding base for transit in Mississippi will allow transit providers to plan and deliver services with more predictability and stability. Predictability and stability, in turn, should translate into what riders often value most in transit services – reliability, convenience, and flexibility. Beyond the important benefits to riders, providers, and stakeholders, dedicated funding can also leverage additional funding from federal and private sector sources.

Table 5-6. Mississippi: Projected and Proposed Transit Funding









Expenses	Existing Funding FY 2016 (millions)	Projected Funding FY 2025 (millions)	Proposed Funding (millions)	Proposed v. Projected Funding (millions)
 Operating	\$40.0	\$51.2	\$62.3	\$11.1
 Capital	\$10.1	\$12.9	\$17.5	\$4.6
 TOTAL	\$50.1	\$64.1	\$79.8	\$15.7

Table 5-7. Funding Action Plan

 Strategy	 Lead Organization	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding
Implement Public Awareness Toolkit	MDOT	1 year	Transit Agencies, RCTPGs	Staff Time
Establish Transit Funding Committee	Transit Agencies, Stakeholders	1 - 2 years	MDOT, RCTPGs, Stakeholders	Staff Time
Work with State Legislature	MDOT	Ongoing	Transit Agencies, RCTPGs, Stakeholders	Staff Time
Develop Investment Plan	MDOT, Transit Agencies, RCTPGs	2 - 3 years	Stakeholders	Staff Time

Diversifying and strengthening the funding base for transit in Mississippi will allow transit providers to plan and deliver services with more predictability and stability . . .

New revenues, of course, entail new costs, yet research has shown that the benefit-cost ratio for transit in Mississippi is estimated to be 1.25 for combined urban fixed route bus and demand response services and 1.60 for rural transit services. Excluding broader economic impacts, the benefit-cost ratios illustrate a positive return on new transit investments statewide.

Action Plan

While MDOT can lead the development of the public awareness toolkit, other transit stakeholders and advocates should organize the proposed statewide committee on future transit funding and lead ongoing efforts to find solutions at the state and local levels. Depending on the jurisdiction, securing dedicated transit funding could take between two and three years.

6.0 Action Plan Summary

Taken together, the program and strategic policy recommendations provide a consistent guide for improving transit in Mississippi over the next three to five years. Each recommendation and strategy aligns with the vision, goals, and objectives developed through the statewide study process, and importantly, can be pursued either simultaneously or sequentially by multiple transit stakeholders across the state.

Of course, there are many variables that will influence the timing and success of each strategy, especially as demographic, economic, and funding conditions change. Consequently, the summary tables are intended to provide a broad framework for all transit stakeholders to use as a guide, while also supporting flexibility in scope, partnering, and phasing. For example, even though maintaining and improving the state of good repair is an ongoing and immediate strategy, it certainly does not preclude longer-term strategies, such as adding new commuter routes, from moving ahead immediately as well. Indeed, many of the strategies shown in the three and five-year time frames will require early action in order to achieve them within the identified time period.















Transit is a
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and quality of life,
and Mississippi is
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strong and dynamic
transit system.

Table 6-1 summarizes the program recommendations, which are organized by state of good repair and service type. The program recommendations represent how to improve transit in Mississippi over the next five years in order to address the most pressing needs. It is abundantly clear, however, that a number of policy changes must accompany and even precede the program improvements. Chief among these are additional state and regional coordination, performance measures, public awareness, and funding. The policy recommendations are summarized in Table 6-2.

Transit is a powerful tool for strengthening local economies and quality of life, and Mississippi is fortunate to have a strong and dynamic transit system. The transportation services provided by the many transit agencies and organizations are, in a very real and direct sense, life altering – with access to work, education, health care, shopping, and many other activities all shaped by transit services. The goal of the Statewide Public Transportation Study recommendations is to expand those opportunities for more people in more communities across Mississippi.

Table 6-1. Summary of Program Recommendations

 Strategy	 Service	 Lead Organization	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding	
State of Good Repair Strategies	Improve State of Good Repair for Transit Agencies	Transit Agencies	Ongoing	MDOT	FTA Grants, MMTIP Funds, TIGER Grants, Operating Cost Savings from Consolidation	
 Strategy	 Service	 Lead Organization	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding	
Human Service Transportation Strategies	New and Enhanced Human Service Transportation Services	Transit Agencies	3 - 5 years	MDOT, RTCPGs	Section 5310, 5311, local, contract, and other funding sources	
	Service Span Improvements	Transit Agencies	< 1 year	MDOT, RTCPGs	Section 5310, 5311, local, contract, and other funding sources	
	New Flexible Route Services					
	Columbus	City of Columbus, Lowndes County	3 - 5 years	MDOT	Section 5310, 5311, local, contract, and other funding sources	
	Greenville	BCCOA/MVSU				
	Laurel	DJ Transit/Community Development				
	Natchez	Natchez Transit System				
	New Commuter Flexible Routes – “Access to Employment” Routes					
	Waynesboro to Laurel	DJ Transit/Community Development	3 - 5 years	MDOT, MDES	Section 5311, local, and other workforce development funding sources	
	De Kalb to Meridian	Choctaw Transit				
Port Gibson to Vicksburg	Claiborne County HRA					
Carthage to Canton and Madison	Choctaw Transit, Madison Co. CCA					
Columbus to West Point to Starkville	Counties of Clay, Lowndes, and Oktibbeha					
Collins to Hattiesburg	5-County					



























 Strategy	 Service	 Lead Organization	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding
Fixed Route Services Strategies					
Expand Existing Fixed Route Service Areas					
	Hub City Transit	Hub City Transit	1 - 3 years	MDOT	Section 5307
	JATLAN	JATLAN	3 - 5 years		Section 5311
	NRoute	NRoute	1 - 3 years		Section 5311
	New Commuter Fixed Routes				
	Gulfport to Pass Christain	CTA	1 - 3 years	MDOT	Section 5307
	Jackson Area Routes	JATLAN	3 - 5 years		
	Olive Branch to Memphis	MATA	1 - 3 years		
	New Fixed Route Services				
	Meridian	City of Meridian, Choctaw Transit	1 - 3 years	MDOT	Section 5311
	Southaven-Horn Lake	Cities of Southaven and Horn Lake, MATA	3 - 5 years		Section 5307
	Tupelo	City of Tupelo	3 - 5 years		Section 5311
Intercity Bus Services Strategies					
Existing Local and Regional Services to Be Modified					
	Bay St. Louis to Gulfport Feeder	CTA	1 - 3 years	MDOT, Intercity Bus Providers	Section 5311
	Pascagoula to Biloxi Feeder				
	Canton to Jackson Feeder	Madison County CSA			
	Choctaw to Meridian Feeder	Choctaw Transit			
	Greenwood to Greenville Feeder	MVSU Mass Transit			
	New Feeder Services				
	Grenada - Oxford - Tupelo Route	Intercity Bus Provider	3 - 5 years	Local Transit Agencies	Section 5311(f)
	Meridian - Gulfport Route				
	Meridian - Tupelo Route				



Table 6-2. Summary of Policy Recommendations

 Strategy	 Service	 Lead Organization	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding	
State Agency Coordination Strategies	Expand Interagency Transit Strategy Working Group	MDOT	1-3 months	State Departments of Human Services, Employment Security, Vocational Services, and Mental Health	Staff Time	
	Create Optimal Service Areas	RTCPGs	< 1 year	Transit Agencies, MDOT	Section 5310 Funding	
	Encourage Fixed Route/ Demand Response Services	Fixed Route Providers	< 1 year	Rural Transit Agencies, MDOT	Section 5307 Funding	
	Establish Transfer Points	RTCPGs	3 - 5 years	Transit Agencies, MDOT	Section 5310 Funding	
 Strategy	 Service	 Lead Organization	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding	
Performance Measures Strategies	Classify Transit Services	MDOT	1-3 months	Transit Agencies, RTCPGs	Staff time	
	Select Performance Measures	MDOT	1-3 months	Transit Agencies, RTCPGs	Staff time	
	Set Performance Benchmarks	MDOT	1-3 months	Transit Agencies, RTCPGs	Staff time	
	Implementation					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report Annually 	MDOT	Annually	Transit Agencies, RTCPGs	Staff time	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Assistance 	MDOT	On-going	Transit Agencies, RTCPGs	Staff time	
 Strategy	 Service	 Lead Organization	 Timeline	 Partners	 Resources/Funding	
Mobility Management Strategies	Add New Regional Call Centers / One Call One Click Centers	RCTPG Lead Agencies	3 - 6 months to > 1 year	MDOT, Transit Agencies, MPOs, PDDs	FTA Grants, Administration on Aging Title III-B, and State Department of Labor Welfare to Work grants	
	Expand Purchase of Service	5310 Providers	1-3 months	MDOT, Transit Agencies	FTA Grants, Other Human Services Transportation Funding	

Strategy	Service	Lead Organization	Timeline	Partners	Resources/Funding
Public Awareness Toolkit Strategies	Develop Public Awareness Toolkit	MDOT	6-9 months	Transit Agencies, RTCPGs	Staff Time
	Distribute and Present Public Awareness Toolkit	Transit Agencies, RTCPGs	Ongoing	MDOT	Staff Time
Dedicated Transit Funding Strategies	Implement Public Awareness Toolkit	MDOT	1 year	Transit Agencies, RTCPGs	Staff Time
	Establish Transit Funding Committee	Transit Agencies, Stakeholders	1 - 2 years	MDOT, RTCPGs, Stakeholders	Staff Time
	Work with State Legislature	MDOT	Ongoing	Transit Agencies, RTCPGs, Stakeholders	Staff Time
	Develop Investment Plan	MDOT, Transit Agencies, RTCPGs	2 - 3 years	Stakeholders	Staff Time



