



**REGIONAL
TRANSIT AUTHORITY**
OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, January 18, 2024

Wayne County Community College, 1001 W. Fort St. Detroit, MI 48226

[Zoom Virtual Public Participation](#)

1:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. **Approval of the December 2023 Board Meeting Summary**
5. Public Comment- Time Limitation for Public Comment - 3 minutes per speaker.
6. **Approval of Financial Reports for December 2023**
7. **Approval of Small Purchase Policy Amendment**
8. **Approval of Strategic Identity Refresh Notice of Award**
9. **Approval of 2024 Legislative Agenda**
10. Q-Line Update
11. Communications Report
12. Planning and Innovation Report (Draft Regional Transit Master Plan Discussion)
13. Program Development Report
14. New Business
15. Adjourn

The Board may, at its discretion, revise this agenda or take up any other issues as needed, and time allows.

Request for reasonable accommodation at RTA meetings requires advanced reservations. Individuals with disabilities requiring assistance should contact RTA Information Services at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Contact LaShauna Morris at 313-402-1020.

Documents and information are available in a variety of formats. Contact the RTA at info@rtamichigan.org or call 313-402-1020 to discuss your format needs.



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Proposed Meeting Summary

Board of Directors

Thursday, December 14, 2023

1:00 PM

1. Call to order at 1:04 PM

Board Members Present:

Dave Massaron; Don Morandini, Helaine Zack; Freman Hendrix;
Jeannette Bradshaw; Alma Smith; Ned Staebler; June Lee; Dr. Erica
Robertson; Jon Moore (virtual)

RTA Representatives Present:

Ben Stupka; Khalil Davis; Julia Roberts; Shauna Morris; Corri Wofford;
Kameron Bloye; Isaac Constans

Other Meeting Participants:

Morrow and Associates – RTA Consultant

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Alma Smith and supported by Jeanette Bradshaw. The
December 14, 2023, Agenda was approved.

3. Approval of the October 19, 2023, Board Meeting Summary

Moved by Alma Smith and supported by Ned Staebler. The October 19,
2023, Meeting Summary was unanimously approved.

4. Public Comment

Robert Pawlowski provided comments regarding the Detroit to Airport
Express Pilot (DAX) as it relates to accessibility within the McNamara
Terminal, as well as the accomplishments of the RTA.

5. Approval of the October and November 2023 Financial Reports

Ben Stupka advised that there were a few changes to some
administrative expense categories, but there were no major expenses.
Moved by Alma Smith and supported by Don Morandini, the October
2023 and November 2023 Financial Reports, as included in the meeting
packet, were unanimously approved.

6. **Proposed 2024 RTA Meeting Calendar**
Moved by Don Morandini and supported by Freman Hendrix, the 2024 Meeting Calendar was approved, as amended, to revise the CAC title to the 2nd Monday of the month.
7. **Approval of Executive Director Contract**
Moved by Alma Smith and supported by Dr. Erica Robertson, the approval of the contract to hire Ben Stupka as the RTA's Executive Director was unanimously approved.
8. **Detroit to Airport Express Pilot (DAX) Service Notice of Award**
Mr. Stupka presented a memorandum to the Board requesting approval to enter into a contract with Indian Trails (Michigan Flyer) to deliver bus service for the proposed DAX Pilot. Moved by Helaine Zack and supported by Ned Staebler, the contract was unanimously approved.
9. **Q-Line Discussion**
Ben Stupka announced that the RTA and Q-Line are in discussion regarding the possibility of bringing the Q-line under the umbrella of the RTA. Lisa Nuskowski provided a summary on the history and status of M1rail (Q-line). The full presentation is here: [Q-line RTA Presentation December 2023 \(1\).pdf](#). Mr. Stupka also provided a summary regarding the due diligence that will need to be undertaken for potential agreement and transfer. The full presentation is here: [Q-line RTA Presentation December 2023 \(1\).pdf](#).
10. **Communications Report**
Corri Wofford presented a video on the RTA's external communications efforts and successes for 2023. [2023 RTA Year End Presentation-1.mp4](#)
11. **Planning and Innovation Report – RTMP Strategies Overview**
Julia Roberts provided a detailed overview on Regional Transit Master Plan (RTMP) strategies, as included in the meeting packet. Ms. Roberts also provided additional information on the DAX Pilot Service, with a possible launch date in spring 2024.
12. **Program Development Report**
Melanie Piana presented the program development report, highlighting: the RTA's draft of legislative agenda priorities and timeline, financial audit activities, and operations updates. Ms. Piana also announced that an application is in process for a MI Healthy Climate Corp Member, sponsored by the Community Economic Development Association of Michigan. The Corp Member will help with the development of RTA's climate framework and messaging. Mr. Stupka provided an update on RTA's rebranding efforts, with a decision on the chosen proposal to be brought before the Board early 2024.
13. **New Business – No New Business**
14. **Meeting adjourned at 2:26PM**

Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan
Statement of Position
As of December 31, 2023

	Current Yr 12/31/2023	Prior Yr 12/31/2022
Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 181,370	\$ 38,217
Accounts Receivable	117,044	1,449,572
Prepays and Other Current Assets	-	50
Total Assets	<u>\$ 298,414</u>	<u>\$ 1,487,840</u>
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$ 180,188	\$ 1,367,473
Accrued Payroll and Related Liabilities	28,716	24,022
Refundable Advance	81,361	101,854
Total Liabilities	<u>\$ 290,265</u>	<u>\$ 1,493,348</u>
Net Assets		
Fund Balance	\$ 7,813	\$ 1,413
Net Revenue	336	(6,922)
Total Net Assets	<u>\$ 8,149</u>	<u>\$ (5,508)</u>
 Total Liabilities and Net Assets	 <u>\$ 298,414</u>	 <u>\$ 1,487,840</u>

Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan
Statement of Activity
Admin - FY2024 YTD Comparison to Budget
December-23

	Actual	Actual	Actual	Admin YTD	Budget YTD	Annual Budget
	ADMIN - ARPA	ADMIN -MDOT 2023/2024	Interest/Other Admin	Total		
Revenue						
Federal Grants	\$ 315,722	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 315,722	\$ 741,123	\$ 2,964,493
State Grants - Matching	-	-	-	-	-	-
State Grants	-	70,462	-	70,462	89,922	359,687
Local Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-
Project Match Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-
RTA Regional Planning Set-Aside	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	402	402	-	-
Total Revenue	\$ 315,722	\$ 70,462	\$ 402	\$ 386,586	\$ 831,045	\$ 3,324,180
Administrative Expenses						
Operating:						
Personnel	\$ 185,482	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 185,482	\$ 375,861	\$ 1,503,443
Conferences/Travel/Training	-	3,901	-	3,901	11,351	45,405
Memberships and Subscriptions	-	2,989	-	2,989	2,814	11,257
Board & Public Mtg Management	-	600	-	600	4,150	16,600
Finance, Legal, Government Relations	48,308	21,426	-	69,734	71,475	285,900
Insurance	-	14,950	-	-	3,713	14,850
Rent and Utilities	-	297	-	297	5,700	22,800
Telephone and Internet	-	1,303	-	-	2,058	8,230
Computer Equipment and IT Support	-	2,172	-	2,172	8,914	35,655
Supplies	-	254	66	320	625	2,500
Total Operating	233,790	47,892	66	281,748	486,660	1,946,640
Planning:						
Planning Services	81,932	0	-	81,932	95,363	381,450
Specialized Planning Services	-	-	-	-	128,750	515,000
CHSTP	-	-	-	-	37,500	150,000
Community Engagement	-	-	-	-	37,500	150,000
Total Planning	81,932	0	-	81,932	299,113	1,196,450
External Affairs:						
Branding	-	-	-	-	11,250	45,000
External Communications	-	20,250	-	20,250	21,000	84,000
Social Media Management	-	1,195	-	1,195	1,950	7,800
Website	-	-	-	-	7,560	30,240
Graphics/Photography	-	900	-	900	2,538	10,150
Promotional Items	-	-	-	-	475	1,900
Miscellaneous Items	-	225	-	225	500	2,000
Total External Affairs	-	22,570	-	22,570	45,273	181,090
Total Expenses	\$ 315,722	\$ 70,462	\$ 66	\$ 386,250	\$ 831,045	\$ 3,324,180
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Net Assets	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 336	\$ 336	\$ -	\$ -

This financial report is for internal use only. It has not been audited, and no assurance is provided.

Project Budget Tracker

Title **Detroit to Ann Arbor Express Bus (D2A2)**
Description Express bus connecting downtown Detroit to downtown Ann Arbor.
Schedule October 2021 - December 2025

Budget Tracker			
	Total	ITD	Balance
Cost	\$ 8,202,699	\$ 5,204,553	\$2,998,146
Grants			
MI-2021-036-01	\$4,311,592	\$3,462,126	\$849,466
2017-0119/P7/R2	\$1,635,893	\$1,044,117	\$591,776
Fares/Contrib	\$955,214	\$698,310	\$256,904
FY2023 CMAQ*	\$1,300,000		\$1,300,000
	\$8,202,699	\$5,204,553	\$2,998,146

*Funding is secured. Will be amended into the grant at a future date.

NOTE: FY2024 Q1 invoicing from AAATA has not been received yet

Title **Regional Mobility Management (MyRide2)**
Description Call center/website with information for seniors and persons with disabilities.
Schedule October 2017 - December 2023

Budget Tracker			
	Total	ITD	Balance
Cost	\$1,336,805	\$1,258,659	\$78,146
Grants			
MI-2017-031-02	\$1,069,445	\$1,006,927	\$62,518
2017-0119/P2/R4	\$267,361	\$251,732	\$15,629
	\$1,336,806	\$1,258,659	\$78,147

NOTE: FY2024 Q1 invoicing from AAA 1B has not been received yet

Title **Universal Basic Mobility Pilot**
Description Mobility wallet fare technology pilot focused on Detroit jobseekers.
Schedule June 2023 - December 2024

Budget Tracker			
	Cost	ITD	Balance
Cost	\$1,025,000	\$152,502	\$872,498
Grants			
2022-0126-P3	\$1,025,000	\$152,502	\$872,498
	\$1,025,000	\$152,502	\$872,498

Title **Access to Transit Program**
Description Grant program for safety and access improvements at bus stops.
Schedule January 2024 - December 2026

Budget Tracker			
	Cost	ITD	Balance
Cost	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$2,000,000
Grants			
FY2024 CMAQ*	\$1,600,000	\$0	\$1,600,000
State Grant*	\$400,000	\$0	\$400,000
	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$2,000,000

*Funding is secured. Will be amended into the grant at a future date.

Title **Downtown to Airport Express**
Description Express bus connecting downtown Metro Airport to Downtown Detroit.
Schedule January 2024 - December 2024

Budget Tracker			
	Cost	ITD	Balance
Cost	\$2,500,000	\$0	\$2,500,000
Grants			
FY2024 CMAQ*	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$2,000,000
State Grant*	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000
	\$2,500,000	\$0	\$2,500,000

*Funding is secured. Will be amended into the grant at a future date.

Title **Regional Technology Strategic Plan***
Description Inventory and assessment of providers technology and identification of goals.
Schedule January 2024 - December 2024

Budget Tracker			
	Cost	ITD	Balance
Cost	\$125,000	\$0	\$125,000
Grants			
2017-0119/P10	\$125,000	\$0	\$125,000

*May amend to a different scope.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMORANDUM

TO: RTA Board of Directors

FROM: Melanie Piana, Program Director

SUBJECT: Procurement Policy and Procedures Manual Amendment

DATE: January 16, 2024

REQUESTED ACTION: Requesting Board of Directors Approval

Approval Request:

Motion to amend the RTA’s Procurement Policy and Procedures Manual to increase Small Purchases from \$50,000 to \$250,000.

Background

On June 8, the RTA leadership team participated in six hours of an FTA Procurement System Review Training Workshop. The workshop’s purpose was to clarify the FTA’s procurement requirements, policies and procedures, and management of grant funds in compliance with FTA regulations and the recipient’s contractual agreement with the FTA.

The FTA’s training is a new way to address issues preemptively, so they don’t become issues when auditing (single, federal grant, financial). The FTA now provides questions upfront in the audit process to support organizations with all the requirements the reviewers will seek.

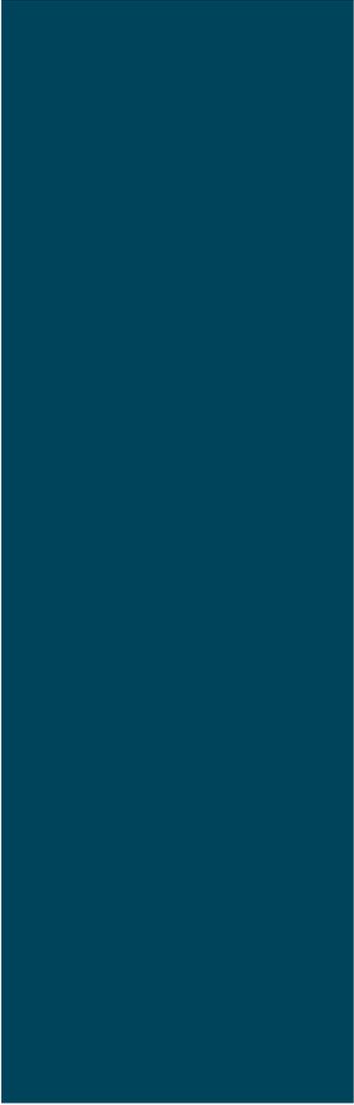
On July 7, 2023, the Board adopted the micro micro-purchases from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Introduction

The RTA’s Triannual Review Procurement findings recommended stronger policies and procedures for micro and small purchases. In the Training Workshop, the FTA trainers recommended increasing the RTA’s current small-purchase amounts that are most common for local and regional thresholds to match the federal threshold of under \$250,000.

The RTA now has a full-time Executive Director. The procurement policy will reflect the standard FTA small purchase recommended amount. In addition, the policy amends General Contractor to Executive Director throughout the policy document.

	RTA Purchase Policy Current	FTA Threshold Recommendations
Small Purchases	Purchases under \$50,000	Purchases under \$250,000



Procurement Policy and Procedures Manual

Amended JANUARY 2024



RTA

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OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN**

Information found in this document can be provided in an alternative format upon request. Please contact the Regional Transit Authority at 313-402-1020 to speak to a representative or e-mail info@rtamichigan.org. The RTA will do its best to provide the requested alternative format within a reasonable time.

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Background

This Procurement Policy and Procedures Manual (“Procurement Manual”, establishes the overarching policy and broad procurement framework for the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) as it advances the mission of the agency. Both the Policy and Procedures Manual have been developed in accordance with the latest Federal and State rules, regulations and requirements.

The purpose of the Policy and Procedures Manual is to provide direction for day-to-day procurement activities and contractual conduct in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, RTA policies, and sound business practices.

In order to do this, RTA will abide by the following provisions which are outlined in its enabling statute:

RTA Act Provisions (MCL 124.546(15))

- A. The RTA may enter into lease or installment purchases for periods not exceeding the useful life of the items purchased unless otherwise prohibited by law.
- B. In all purchases made by the RTA, if consistent with applicable federal and state law, and this Policy, preference shall be given first to products manufactured or services offered by firms based in the authority’s public transit region, including, but not limited to, the cities and counties in a public transit region, and second to firms based in this state.
- C. The RTA shall actively solicit lists of potential bidders for authority contracts from each RTA member jurisdiction.

PART A – POLICY

1. APPLICABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

The RTA Procurement Manual, approved by the RTA Board (“Board”), establishes the broad framework for the RTA to reference during its day-to-day procurement operations.

If the RTA applies for and receives State of Michigan or federal funds that require the RTA to comply with procurement or contracting requirements that are in conflict with the RTA Act or the RTA’s Procurement Manual, the state or federal requirements shall take precedence.

This Procurement Manual replaces the RTA’s 2016 Procurement Policy, Addendum, and Procedures and will only apply to contracts solicited after November 2018 (the “Effective Date”).

The Procurement Manual sets forth the standards for processing all contracts unless specifically designated otherwise. The Procurement Manual will ensure that goods (e.g., equipment, materials, supplies, etc.) and services are obtained or disposed using timely, efficient, and economical methods that adhere to the principles of good administrative practices and sound business judgement.

The Policy section (PART A) of this Procurement Manual may only be revised by official Board action.

2. CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

Authority and responsibility to enter into contracts for RTA is vested in the Executive Director, the Chairman of the Board, or their designees as appropriately determined. The responsibilities described herein remain with the enumerated RTA job functions regardless of department.

Any procurement authority delegated to persons or departments will also vest in the Executive Director, the Chairman of the Board, and the Board.

The following matrix specifies who may authorize and execute contracts.

2.1 Contract Approval Requirements

The following matrix specifies who may authorize and execute contracts:

Board Action Not Required for Items (A) – (E)		Summary of Amount/Type of Contract
A.	The Executive Director may authorize and execute contracts up to a maximum of \$10,000.	Up to \$10,000
B.	The Executive Director or designee, with the approval of the Board of Directors Chairman or designee, may authorize and execute contracts in response to an Emergency or Public Exigency up to \$250,000.	Contracts in response to an emergency or Public Exigency up to \$250,000
C.	The Executive Director or designee, with the approval of the Chairman or designee, and the concurrence of the Board Treasurer, may authorize and execute sole source contracts up to \$250,000; contracts competed under small purchase guidelines, and contracts competed by RFP up to \$250,000.	Sole Source Contracts up to \$250,000
		Contracts Competed by Small Purchase up to \$250,000
		Contracts Competed by RFP up to \$250,000
D.	The Executive Director or designee, with the approval of the Chairman or designee, following consultation with General Counsel, may authorize all non-disclosure agreements.	Non-Disclosure Agreements
E.	The Executive Director or designee, with the approval of the Chairman or designee, following consultation with General Counsel, may authorize and execute all contracts for professional consultant services donated to the RTA.	Donated Professional Services
Board Action Required for (F)		Summary of Amount/Type of Contract
F.	Following Board Approval, the Chairman or designee may execute all sole source contracts over \$250,000; contracts competed by RFP over \$250,000; and contracts competed and not otherwise addressed in (C) or (F) over \$250,000.	Sole Source Contracts over a \$250,000
		Contracts competed by RFP over \$250,000
		Contracts competed and not addressed in (C) or (F) over \$250,000

3. GENERAL PROCUREMENT STANDARDS

3.1 Contract Oversight

The RTA Executive Director will appoint a staff member to serve as the Procurement Administrator. The Procurement Administrator will have the authority for carrying out RTA's procurement activities.

The Procurement Administrator will provide each Board member with a copy of each Invitation for Bid ("IFB") and Request for Proposal and an opportunity to provide informal input prior to the terms of an invitation or request being finalized. Board members shall maintain the confidentiality of the proposed terms of an Invitation for Bid or a Request for Proposal, until said terms are made public and, unless known to the public, each Board member shall maintain the confidentiality of the existence of an Invitation for Bid or a Request for Proposal until such Invitation or Request is made public.

The Procurement Administrator will maintain a contract administration system that ensures that Vendors (i.e., those providing goods and services) perform in accordance with the terms, conditions and specifications of their contracts or purchase orders. Oversight includes conflict dispute resolution (see section B.3.4); monitoring the contractor's on-time delivery of goods or services as detailed in any contractual milestones; and analyzing the cause of cost overruns, scope changes, or slippages in delivery schedules. Thorough documentation is required of the Procurement Administrator to ensure full contractor compliance.

3.2 Written Standards of Conduct

Members of the Board and all RTA employees will comply with the RTA Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy, the Procurement Manual, and all statutory and regulatory requirements, including without limitation, the applicable U.S. Department of Transportation regulations and FTA Circulars. Violators are subject to the penalties prescribed in the RTA Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy.

Furthermore, the Board shall comply with code of conduct discussed in this policy governing the performance of employees, officers, agents, and Board members related to the solicitation, award, and administration of contracts, in compliance with all applicable Federal and State of Michigan laws, rules and regulations, including, but not limited to, Federal Transit laws contained in 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53, Federal Transit Authority ("FTA") regulations including FTA Circular 4220.1F, Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in Department of Transportation Programs (49 CFR Part 26), other Federal laws, rules and regulations that contain requirements applicable to FTA recipients and the FTA assisted procurements, the Michigan Regional Transit Authority Act ("RTA Act") (Act 387, Michigan Public Acts, 2012, MCL 124.541 et seq.), and other State of Michigan laws, rules and regulations applicable to RTA procurements, as amended from time to time.

RTA Board Members, employees, and agents must recognize that RTA's purchasing activities are of public interest and a matter of public record; therefore, their actions must be conducted in a manner so as to be fully substantiated and legally defended in accordance with the authority of RTA. At all times, RTA employees, officers, and agents must endeavor to keep from involvements that could result in a possible position of "Conflict of Interest."

When an actual or potential violation of any of these standards is discovered, the person involved shall promptly file a written statement concerning the matter with an appropriate supervisor or

Board Member. The person may also request written instructions and disposition of the matter. If an actual violation occurs or is not disclosed and remedied, the employee and/or Board Member involved may be reprimanded, suspended, or dismissed. The vendor or potential vendor may be barred from receiving future contracts and/or have an existing contract canceled.

3.3 Unnecessary or Duplicative Items

RTA procedures will avoid the acquisition of unnecessary property and services, including duplicative items and quantities or options it does not intend to use or whose use is unlikely. Consideration will be given to consolidating or breaking out procurements to obtain a more economical purchase. Where appropriate, an analysis will be made of lease versus purchase alternatives, and any other appropriate analysis to determine the most economical approach.

3.4 Contracting with Responsible Vendors

RTA shall make purchases from and award contracts only to responsible Vendors/Contractors, i.e., those possessing the ability, willingness, and integrity to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the contract. “Vendor” and/or “Contractor” means any individual or legal entity that (a) directly or indirectly (e.g., through an affiliate), submits offers for or is awarded, or reasonably may be expected to submit offers for or be awarded, an RTA contract, or a subcontract under an RTA contract or (b) conducts business, or reasonably may be expected to conduct business, with RTA as an agent or representative of another contractor.

3.5 Maintenance of Written Procurement History

RTA shall maintain written records detailing the history of procurements in a manner consistent with the size, complexity, and cost of the Contract. At a minimum, these records shall include the following:

- A. The rationale for the method of procurement;
- B. The reason(s) for the selection of the contract type;
- C. The reason(s) for Contractor selection or rejection; and
- D. The basis for the contract price.

3.6 Time and Material Contracts

A Time and Material (T&M) Contract is one in which a clear scope cannot be defined, due to unknown conditions or circumstances affecting the work. Since such contracts provide no incentive for the Contractor to work efficiently or in a cost-effective manner, their use is restricted to situations in which no other type of contract is suitable.

Before entering into such a contract, the Procurement Administrator must prepare a written justification/documented determination that no other type of contract is feasible. Such contracts will specify a ceiling price (a limitation of funding) that the Contractor shall not exceed except at its own risk, to control cost liability. The official contract file must also include documented price negotiations, which is to formalize the negotiated price, by change order to the time and material award. Every effort should be made to limit the scope of a Time and Materials Contract or change order until another type of contract or change order can be established.

3.7 Protests and Contract Dispute Resolution

The RTA Board is responsible, in accordance with good administrative practice and sound business judgment, for the settlement of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurements. These issues include, but are not limited to, source evaluation, protests, disputes, and claims.

The RTA shall maintain written procedures that are consistent with all federal and State of Michigan laws to consider and resolve protests relating to solicitations and shall comply with FTA requirements regarding notice of protests and notification of a protestor's right to appeal to the FTA as set forth in C4220.1F. The RTA shall also maintain written procedures that are compliant with all federal and State of Michigan laws and FTA requirements for processing and resolving contract claims and disputes in a fair and equitable manner. RTA's Protests and Contract Dispute Resolution Procedures are set out in Part B, Section 1.2 of this Manual.

3.8 Severability and Legal Compliance

If any provision of the Procurement Manual is held unconstitutional or otherwise invalid, the remaining parts thereof will remain in full force and effect. If any provision of the Procurement Manual or subsequent procedures or application thereof conflicts with any State or Federal law, rule or regulation, said law, rule or regulation will control.

4. FULL AND OPEN COMPETITION

It is the policy of the Board that procurement transactions over \$5,000 be conducted in a manner intended to maximize full and open competition. RTA and Board executives will only make awards to responsive offers from responsible offerors. A responsive offer is one that complies with all material requirements of the solicitation. A responsible offeror is one possessing the technical, physical, financial, and ethical capacity to successfully perform a specific contract.

4.1 Restrictions on Competition

All procurement transactions will be conducted, to the greatest extent practicable, in a manner providing full and open competition, without providing an unfair competitive advantage to any potential vendor. Some of the situations considered to be restrictive of competition include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Placing unreasonable requirements on firms in order for them to qualify to do business;
- B. Requiring unnecessary experience and excessive bonding;
- C. Noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or between affiliated companies;
- D. Noncompetitive contracts to consultants that are on retainer contracts;
- E. Organizational conflicts of interest;
- F. Specifying only a "brand name" product instead of allowing "an equal" product to be offered and describing the performance or other relevant requirements of the procurement; and
- G. Any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

4.2 Geographic Preferences

Procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner that prohibits the use of in-state or local geographical preferences in the solicitation and evaluation of bids or proposals, except in those cases where applicable statutes or regulations expressly mandate or permit geographic preference. This does not preempt State or local licensing laws. However, geographic location may be a selection criterion in procurements for state or locally funded services where no federal dollars are proposed to be used, provided its application leaves an appropriate number of qualified firms, given the nature and size of the project, to compete for the Contract.

4.3 Standards of Conduct

Personal Conflicts of Interest

No employee, officer, agent, or Board member, or their immediate family member, partner, or organization that employs or is about to employ any of the foregoing individuals may participate

in the selection, award, or administration of a contract funded by FTA if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when any of those individuals previously listed has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for award.

Gifts

RTA's officers, employees, agents, or Board members may neither solicit nor accept gifts, gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from Contractors, potential Contractors, or parties to sub-agreements which would cause a reasonable person to question the individual's impartiality in the matter.

5. PROCUREMENT PRACTICES

5.1 Acceptable Non-Competitively Bid Procurements

Competitive bids are not required if any of the following apply.

- A. An emergency directly and immediately affecting service or public health, safety, or welfare requires the immediate procurement of supplies, materials, equipment, or services to mitigate an imminent threat to public health, safety, or welfare, as determined by the RTA.
- B. Procurement of goods or services is for emergency repair or construction caused by unforeseen circumstances when the repair or construction is necessary to protect life or property.
- C. Procurement of goods or services is in response to a declared state of emergency or state of disaster under the Michigan Emergency Management Act, 1976 PA 390, MCL 30.401 to 30.421.
- D. Procurement of goods or services is in response to a declared state of emergency under 1945 PA 302, MCL 10.31 to 10.33.
- E. Procurement of goods or services is in response to a declared state of energy emergency under 1982 PA 191, MCL 10.81 to 10.89.
- F. Procurement of goods or services is under a cooperative purchasing agreement with the federal government, the State of Michigan, or another public entity for the purchase of necessary goods and services at fair and reasonable prices using a competitive procurement method for RTA operations.
- G. Competitive bids are not required if the value of the procurement is less than \$50,000.00, and the Board has established procedures to ensure that goods or services with a value of less than \$50,000.00 are purchased at fair and reasonable prices, including a requirement that for purchases and sales of \$50,000.00 or less, but over \$10,000, written price quotations from at least three (3) qualified and responsible vendors shall be obtained or a memorandum shall be kept on file showing that fewer than three (3) qualified and responsible vendors exist in the market area within which it is practicable to obtain quotations. Procurement of goods or services with a value not exceeding \$10,000 may be negotiated with or without using competitive bid.
- H. Procurement of proprietary services, equipment, or information available from a single source, such as a software license agreement.

5.2 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (“DBE”) Policy

It is the policy of the RTA to actively encourage Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (“DBE”) to participate in RTA's procurement process, to create a level playing field in which DBE's can compete fairly for contracts and to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of contracts. In order to accomplish this, RTA has established a DBE Participation Goal and has an adopted DBE Program.

To encourage DBE Participation the RTA will hold pre-bid conferences on all proposed contracts over \$100,000. The RTA will invite DBEs certified by the Michigan Unified Certification Program (MUCP) to attend the pre-bid/proposal meetings where they can network with prime contractors, and request clarification on any questions that they may have concerning future RTA opportunities.

The RTA also attends the Michigan Department of Transportation's DBE conference and presents upcoming projects to DBE vendors, as well as networks with DBEs interested in bidding on RTA projects. RTA staff also attend Michigan Unified Certification Program (MUCP) quarterly meetings. The meetings are attended by DBE certifying agencies and other FTA covered entities in the State of Michigan. During these meetings any changes to the FTA's DBE program are discussed, along with any ongoing DBE program related issues entities are experiencing.

For more information on the RTA's DBE Program and DBE goal please visit www.rtamichigan.org/doingbusiness.

6. BONDING REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Construction

RTA shall specify a bonding policy in compliance with FTA requirements for construction or facility improvement contracts which adequately protects the Board and FTA interests and follows all federal and State of Michigan laws, rules and regulations.

6.2 Non-Construction

For non-construction contracts, bonding requirements are discouraged except where applicable law or regulations provides for such bonding or RTA determines that such a requirement is necessary as part of a risk management plan for a project.

7. CONTRACT PROVISIONS

7.1 Sound and Complete Agreement

All contracts shall include provisions to define a sound and complete agreement, appropriate to the type and complexity of the project. At a minimum, these include a well-defined statement of work or specification, a defined contract term, a clear statement of the price and payment terms, and all applicable clauses required by federal, state or local laws and regulations.

7.2 Remedies for Breach

All Contracts in excess of the small purchase limit as defined herein shall include contractual provisions that allow for administrative or legal remedies in instances where Contractors violate or breach contract terms.

7.3 Termination

Termination for cause and for convenience provisions shall be included in all contracts, including the manner by which termination will be affected and the basis on which a settlement will be accomplished.

7.4 Buy America

Buy America statute applies to:

- A. All purchases of steel, iron, and manufactured products greater than \$150,000, regardless of whether they involve capital, operating, or planning funds;
- B. Contractors and subcontractors if the contract or subcontract are more than \$150,000, including labor and options;

- C. Purchases made using an intergovernmental agreement and jointly purchased manufactured products; and
- D. Purchases of used items.

RTA must include Buy America provision in contracts exceeding \$150,000 that requires both parties to provide signed Buy America certifications.

7.5 Lobbying

Contractors who submit a bid or proposal for an award of \$100,000 or more shall file the certification required by 49 CFR Part 20, “New Restrictions on Lobbying.” This certification shall be included in the award documents. Contractor certifies that it will not and has not used federal appropriated funds to pay any person or organization for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with obtaining any federal Contract, grant, or any other award covered by 31 U.S.C. 1352.

PART B – PROCEDURES

The following procedures have been developed to guide RTA staff in the execution of and compliance with the Board of Director’s Procurement Policy outlined in Part A of this document.

1. GENERAL PROCUREMENT STANDARDS

1.1 Contracting with Responsible Vendors

RTA shall make purchases from and award contracts only to responsible Contractors, i.e., those possessing the ability, willingness, and integrity to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the contract. In the absence of information clearly indicating that the prospective Contractor is responsible, RTA shall make a determination of non-responsibility.

The Procurement Administrator shall consider the following factors when making a responsibility determination:

- A. Integrity and Ethics. Has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics, in compliance with 49 U.S.C. Section 5325(j)(2)(A);
- B. Debarment and Suspension. Is neither debarred nor suspended from federal programs under U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations, “Non-procurement Suspension and Debarment”;
- C. Affirmative Action and DBE. Is in compliance with the Common Grant Rule’s Affirmative Action and DOT’s Disadvantaged Business Enterprise requirements;
- D. Public Policy. Is in compliance with the public policies of the federal government, as required by 49 U.S.C. Section 5325(j)(2)(B);
- E. Administrative and Technical Capacity. Has the necessary organization, experience, accounting, and operational controls, and technical skills, or the ability to obtain them, in compliance with 49 U.S.C. Section 5325(j)(2)(D);
- F. Licensing and Taxes. Is in compliance with applicable licensing and tax laws and regulations;
- G. Financial Resources. Has, or can obtain, sufficient financial resources to perform the contract, as required by 49 U.S.C. Section 5325(j)(2)(D);
- H. Production Capability. Has, or can obtain, the necessary production, construction, and technical equipment and facilities;
- I. Timeliness. Is able to comply with the required delivery or performance schedule, taking into consideration all existing commercial and governmental business commitment; and
- J. Performance Record. Is able to provide a satisfactory current and past performance record.

The Procurement Administrator shall determine whether the price bid or offer by a prospective Contractor is so low as to appear unreasonable or unrealistic, and in such case, determine the prospective Contractor to be non-responsible.

The RTA shall not award a contract to a prospective Contractor if:

- A. The Contractor is debarred, suspended or deemed ineligible for contracting by RTA;
- B. For federally funded contracts, the Contractor is suspended, ineligible, excluded, or voluntarily excluded or debarred from participation in federal programs under DOT regulations, “Nonprocurement Suspension and Debarment,” 2 CFR Parts 180 and 1200, or under the FAR at 48 CFR Chapter 1 Part 9.4.

The Procurement Administrator shall ensure to the best of his/her knowledge and belief that none of a Contractor's principals (i.e., officer, director, owner, partner, principal investigator, or other person with management or supervisory responsibility related to a covered transaction), affiliates, third party contractors, and subcontractors is suspended, debarred, ineligible, excluded, or voluntarily excluded from participation in federally assisted transactions or procurements. The Procurement Administrator shall review SAM before entering into any third-party contract expected to equal or exceed \$25,000. The Procurement Administrator shall conduct a similar review process for its principals as it does for its Contractors and subrecipients regarding suspension and debarment.

The Procurement Administrator may require the prospective Contractor to promptly provide acceptable evidence of the prospective Contractor's ability to obtain resources. Acceptable evidence of the prospective Contractor's ability to obtain resources shall consist of a commitment or explicit arrangement that will be in existence prior to the time of contract award to rent, purchase, or otherwise acquire the needed facilities, equipment, personnel, or other resources.

The Procurement Administrator may presume a prospective Contractor that is or recently has been seriously deficient in contract performance to be nonresponsible. The Procurement Administrator may determine the Contractor to be responsible if the circumstances of the prior deficiency were properly beyond the Contractor's control or if the Contractor has taken appropriate corrective action.

The Procurement Administrator shall consider the past performance and integrity of a Contractor's affiliate(s) and when the affiliate(s) may adversely affect the prospective Contractor's responsibility.

If the determination of a prospective Subcontractor's responsibility may affect the determination of a prospective prime Contractor's responsibility:

- The Procurement Administrator should require the prospective Contractor to provide written evidence of a proposed Subcontractor's responsibility; and
- When deemed in the interests of the RTA, the Procurement Administrator may Independently determine a prospective Subcontractor's responsibility, using the standards and requirements for Contractor responsibility set forth in the RTA's Procurement Policy.

Obtaining Information for Determination of Responsibility.

- The Procurement Administrator shall obtain information regarding the responsibility of a prospective Contractor who is the apparent low Bidder or whose offer is in the competitive range.
- If the prospective contractor fails to supply the information requested in the time allotted, the Procurement Administrator shall make the determination of responsibility or nonresponsibility based upon available information. If the available information is insufficient to make a determination of responsibility, the Procurement Administrator shall determine the prospective Contractor to be nonresponsible.

- The Procurement Administrator shall place the Staff Procurement Summary Sheet (SS1), which includes a determination of contractor responsibility, in the file. Prior to contract award, the completed SS1 will constitute documentation of the determination of Contractor responsibility.
- RTA personnel who become aware of circumstances casting doubt on a Contractor's ability to perform a contract successfully shall promptly inform the Procurement Administrator and furnish the relevant information in writing.

In the event that the RTA becomes aware, after the award of the contract, that an excluded party is participating in a covered transaction, the Procurement Administrator will promptly inform FTA in writing of this information. RTA may continue any covered transaction in existence at the time a party was debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded or may consider termination. The RTA will not renew or extend the covered transaction (other than through a no-cost time extension) with the excluded party.

When an offer, with respect to which an award would otherwise be made is rejected because the prospective Contractor is found to be non-responsive, the Procurement Administrator shall make, sign, and place in the contract file a determination of non-responsiveness, which shall state the basis for the determination.

1.2 Protests and Contract Dispute Resolution

This Section addresses the process for Bid Protests ("Protest"). Any interested party ("Interested Party") shall have the right to file and have a Protest considered and resolved administratively by the RTA. An Interested Party, as used in this Section, means an actual bidder or proposer, or a potential bidder or proposer, whose direct economic interest would be affected by the award of a contract or by the failure to award a contract. The Bid Protest Procedures set forth herein apply to IFBs and RFPs. The filing of Bid Protests will not unnecessarily delay the procurement process.

Written Submission

An interested party wishing to protest a matter involving a proposed procurement or contract award shall file with the RTA's Procurement Administrator a written Protest. The Protest should include, at minimum, the following:

- The name and address of the Interested Party and its relationship to the procurement sufficient to establish that the protest is being filed by an Interested Party;
- Identity of the contact person for the protestor, including name, title, mailing address, telephone number, and fax and e-mail addresses. If the contact person is a third party representing the protestor, the same information must be provided, plus a statement defining the relationship between the protestor and the third party;
- Solicitation, proposal, or contract number, or other identifying number provided by RTA;
- Statement of the nature and grounds for the Protest, including the provision(s) of the solicitation and, if applicable, the Federal or State law or regulation or RTA's Procurement Manual upon which the Protest is based;
- Statement of the specific relief requested; and
- Any documents relevant to the Protest that the protesting party desires RTA to consider;
- A notarized affirmation by the protestor (if an individual) or by an owner or officer of the protestor (if not an individual) as to the truth and accuracy of the statements made in the protest submittal.

Deadline for Filing Protest

- Protests Regarding Solicitation. Any Protest regarding a solicitation by RTA must be filed no later than ten (10) business days before the opening of Bids. Any Protest filed after that date which raises issues regarding the solicitation will not be considered.
- Protests Regarding Bid Evaluation. Any Protest regarding the evaluation of Bids by RTA must be filed no later than ten (10) business days after the opening of Bids. Any Protest filed after that date which raises issues regarding the Bid evaluation will not be considered, unless the issue arose after the initial ten (10) business day period and before contract execution.
- Protests Regarding Award of Contract. Any Protest regarding the award of a contract must be filed no later than ten (10) business days after the date of the award. Any Protest regarding the award of the contract filed after that date will not be considered.

Procedures for Protests Regarding Solicitation

This type of Protest includes any claim that the Bid solicitation contained unduly restrictive, exclusionary, or discriminatory specifications, any challenge to the basis for making an award, or any claim that the solicitation documents or the solicitation process violated applicable Federal or State law or regulation, or that RTA failed to follow its Procurement Manual.

- A. Upon receipt of a timely filed protest regarding the solicitation, RTA will postpone the opening of Bids until resolution of the Protest, unless otherwise authorized to proceed under Section 1.2.6.E below. If Bid opening is postponed, no additional Bids will be accepted during the period of postponement.
- B. If the Protest involves a claim of unduly restrictive, exclusionary, or discriminatory specifications, RTA will, in evaluating the Protest, consider both the specific need for the feature or item challenged and any effects on competition of including the specification regarding that feature or item.

Procedures for Protests Regarding Bid Evaluation

This type of Protest includes any challenge to determinations by RTA of the responsiveness of a Bid or the responsibility of a Bidder, or any claim that the evaluation of Bids violated Federal or State law or regulation or RTA's Procurement Manual.

- A. Protests may only come from vendors who submitted a valid proposal.
- B. Upon receipt of a timely filed Protest regarding the evaluation of Bids, RTA will determine if the protestor has established that there is substantial evidence regarding the no-responsiveness of a Bid or the non-responsibility of a Bidder or doubt regarding RTA's compliance with Federal or State law or RTA's Procurement Manual.
- C. If the protestor submits sufficient evidence supporting its Protest to show that the Protest is not vexatious or frivolous, RTA will suspend its evaluation of all Bids submitted until resolution of the Protest, unless authorized to proceed under Section 1.2.6.E below.

Procedures for Protests After Award

This type of Protest will only be considered by RTA if the protestor is able to demonstrate that the Bidder who was awarded the contract fraudulently represented itself as a responsible Bidder or

that RTA violated Federal or State law or RTA's Procurement Manual in awarding the contract. Upon receipt of a timely filed Protest regarding the award of a contract, RTA will issue a stop work order, if it deems necessary, until the resolution of the Protest.

All Protests

- A. The RTA's Procurement Administrator will notify the protestor upon timely receipt of a Protest and may, where appropriate, request additional information from the protestor. RTA may, at its discretion, meet with the protestor to review the matters raised by the Protest.
- B. Notice of a Protest and the basis therefore will be given to all Bidders or proposers who have a reasonable prospect of receiving an award.
- C. Where a timely Protest has been filed prior to opening of Bids and unless the Protest is resolved by RTA prior thereto, the date for receipt of Bids will be extended to accommodate the time needed for resolving the Protest and instituting any necessary remedial measures, unless one of the circumstances set forth in Section 1.2.6.E below exists.
- D. When a Protest against the making of an award is received and the award will be withheld pending disposition of the Protest, the Bidders whose offers might be eligible for award should be informed of the Protest. If appropriate, those Bidders should be requested, before expiration of the time for acceptance their offer, to extend the time for acceptance.
- E. RTA may suspend the procurement process upon receipt of a bona fide Protest. However, RTA reserves the right, notwithstanding the pendency of a Protest, to proceed with the appropriate action in the procurement process or under the contract in the following circumstances:
 - i. Where the item to be procured is urgently required;
 - ii. Where RTA determines that the Protest is vexatious or frivolous; or
 - iii. Where delivery or performance will be unduly delayed, or other undue harm will occur by failure to make the award promptly.
- F. The RTA's Procurement Administrator shall, within ten (10) working days of receipt of a Protest, issue a written decision on the Protest based on the information provided by the protestor, the results of any meetings with the protestor, and RTA's own investigation; this time period may be extended if necessary to reach a decision. The RTA's Procurement Administrator's decision will respond to each substantive issue raised in the Protest. The Procurement Administrator's decision will be final unless it is timely appealed in writing to the RTA's Executive Director as provided for in Section 1.2.6.G below.
- G. A written appeal must be received by the RTA's Executive Director within five (5) working days after issuance of a decision by the RTA's Procurement Administrator. The appeal must set forth: (i) the factual basis of the appeal, including any new data or information which was not previously known; (ii) specifics regarding an allegation that the RTA failed to follow its Procurement Manual, including the Protests and Contract Dispute procedures, if applicable; (iii) specifics regarding an allegation that a violation of Federal or State law or regulation has occurred, if applicable; and (iv) any other information the protestor believes is relevant. The Executive Director will issue a written decision within ten (10) working days after receipt of the appeal. The Executive Director's decision will be final; this time period may be extended

if necessary to reach a decision. The decision of the Executive Director shall be final and conclusive, except for such remedies as state or federal law or regulations may provide.

- H. “Working days” for purposes of Section 1.2.2 and 6 are all days that RTA’s Administrative Office is open for business.
- I. If the RTA denies an appeal, it will inform the protestor in writing of its right to appeal the Executive Director’s decision to the FTA. Upon denying an appeal, RTA will lift any suspension imposed and will proceed with the procurement process of the contract.

Remedy

If a protest is upheld, in whole or in part, RTA will take appropriate action on a case-by-case basis, as it deems necessary, to correct the procurement process and protect the rights of the protestor, including re-solicitation of Bids, revised evaluation of Bids or RTA determinations, or termination of the contract.

1.3 Protests to FTA

Grounds for FTA review are those set forth in the FTA Circular 4220.1F in effect at the time an appeal to the FTA is filed. Under the most recent effective version of FTA Circular 4220.1F (“Circular”), the FTA will only review those Protests that claim: (1) RTA failed to have or follow protest procedures, (2) RTA failed to review a complaint or Protest, or (3) violations of Federal law or regulation have occurred.

When FTA funds are used in a project, FTA will be notified of all Protests. The Procurement Administrator will provide copies of bid protest letters and RTA’s responses to the FTA and will keep FTA informed about the status of the protest. The Procurement Administrator will notify FTA of all Protest denials.

A protestor must exhaust all administrative remedies with RTA before pursuing a protest with FTA. An appeal to FTA must be filed in accordance with the Circular and must be received by either FTA’s Region Five officer or Headquarters office within five (5) working days of the date the protestor learned or should have learned of the Executive Director’s decision or other basis of appeal to the FTA. “Working days” for purposes of appeal to the FTA are all days the FTA’s Region Five officer or Headquarters office are open for business.

2. FULL AND OPEN COMPETITION

2.1 Organizational Conflicts of Interest

An organizational conflict of interest exists where other activities, relationships, or contracts of a Contractor inhibit, affect or prevent the Contractor from rendering impartial assistance or advice to RTA; a Contractor's objectivity in performing the contract work is or might be otherwise impaired (e.g. a Contractor assisting with a design might have a financial interest in a product or system that could be utilized in implementing that design); or a Contractor has an unfair competitive advantage which might be gained through its involvement in writing, or reviewing the solicitation and contract documents, including the scope or specification except as part of a general industry review.

2.2 Prevention and/or Mitigation of Conflicts of Interest Disclosure

There are a variety of ways in which conflicts of interest can be prevented, or mitigated, one of the most important being disclosure. Contracts should include the organizational conflict of interest clause, to require that offerors disclose when they believe there may be a conflict. This gives RTA the opportunity to make the determination and take the necessary action to avoid the conflict. Additionally, conflicts of interest can be avoided by thoroughly researching potential vendors, employees, and Contractors. Any connections should be investigated so as to prevent conflict. RTA's conflict of interest policy requires that employees refrain from engaging in any activity, practice or act which conflicts with, or appears in conflict with the interest of HRT, its customers, or vendors. Compliance with this policy significantly reduces the chance of a conflict of interest.

Removal/Recusal/Absention of Employee; Use of Third-Party

Once a conflict of interest has already occurred, it is still possible to avoid the consequences related to it. Removal of the RTA employee from the position causing the conflict is a mitigating action. Also, a recusal may be obtained, allowing the employee facing the conflict to abstain from participating in the procurement action causing the conflict. If a recusal is not conducive to the circumstances, a third-party may become involved to regulate between the RTA employee and the company affected. This may be necessary when an offeror submits an offer that is in some way influenced by those making the award decision. In this situation, a third-party may be brought in to make the necessary decision impartially. By implementing these methods, the consequences associated with conflicts of interest may be mitigated.

3. PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

This section provides information on various procurement methods and references procedures that must be complied with to maintain a consistent, reliable, and transparent procurement process.

The Procurement Administrator is required to conduct procurements in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal requirements, and RTA's procurement policies and procedures, utilizing best business and purchasing and contracting practices in accordance with the highest standard of ethics.

A system of procurement checklists has been instituted to provide built-in quality control to substantiate and validate the quality of all procurement and contracting actions at RTA. This procedure is designed to validate each procurement and to ensure that each procurement file contains the appropriate documentation to portray the procurement history. The primary instruments of this procedure are the Procurement Package Checklists (PPC).

The PPPC establishes procurement and contracting process standards, ensures consistency of decisions and actions, and provides general direction to RTA staff to negotiate steps and complete activities of the procurement and contracting process consistent with RTA's requirements, as well as any applicable local, federal, and state procurement laws and regulations. Not all items of the PPPC are required in each procurement action, but the rules and procedures contained therein shall be observed.

The Procurement Administrator shall supervise the PPC activities through completion and approve the completed PPC. The PA signature indicates that all the contents of the procurement history and supporting procurement file documentation are accurate, compliant, and complete.

The PPC includes a checklist which, when utilized in preparation of a procurement solicitation, ensures consistency and completeness for compliance with the FTA requirements. This checklist

shall be completed by the Procurement Administrator for all FTA-funded procurements. The Executive Director or their designee shall ensure that the PPC's contents contain all applicable federal requirements.

3.1 Micro Purchases

Micro purchases are those purchases under \$10,000. Purchases below that threshold may be made without obtaining competitive quotations. Such purchases are exempt from Buy America requirements. There should be equitable distribution among qualified suppliers and no splitting of procurements to avoid competition. The Davis-Bacon Act applies to construction contracts in excess of \$2,000. Minimum documentation is required: A determination that the price is fair and reasonable and how this determination was derived. All required documentation must be saved in the appropriate procurement file.

3.2 Small Purchases

Small purchase procedures are those relatively simple and informal procurement methods for securing services, supplies, or other property that cost equal or greater than \$10,000 and cost less than \$250,000. Purchases equal or greater than \$250,000 shall be procured by the Invitation for Bid or Request for Proposal procedure. If small purchase procedures are used, price or rate quotations shall be obtained from a minimum of three qualified sources. All required documentation must be completed and documented in the appropriate procurement file.

3.3 Sole Source

Sole Source procurements are accomplished through solicitation of a proposal from only one source, or after solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate. Prior FTA approval must be obtained. A contract change that is not within the scope of the original contract is considered a sole source procurement that must comply with this subparagraph.

Procurement by noncompetitive proposals may be used only when the award of a contract is infeasible under small purchase procedures, sealed bids, or competitive proposals and at least one of the following circumstances applies:

The item is available only from a single source;

- The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation;
- FTA authorizes noncompetitive negotiations-e.g., if FTA provides a joint procurement grant or a research project grant with a particular firm or combination of firms, the grant agreement is the sole source approval;
- After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate; or
- The item is an associated capital maintenance item that is procured directly from the original manufacturer or supplier of the item to be replaced. The FTA must first certify in writing to FTA:
 - that such manufacturer or supplier is the only source for such item; and
 - that the price of such item is no higher than the price paid for such item by like customers
 - A cost analysis, i.e., verifying the proposed cost data, the projections of the data, and the evaluation of the specific elements of costs and profit, is required.

3.4 Change Orders

Change orders are written documents signed by an authorized RTA staff person that directs the Contractor to make a change pursuant to the changes clause. The Procurement Administrator is responsible for ensuring that appropriate change clauses are included in all third-party solicitations and contracts. Change orders that exceed \$50,000 must go through the Board Approval process.

A contract change which is outside the scope of the original contract, and thus not within the authority of the changes clause is a cardinal change. Such changes are “sole source procurements” and must be processed following the sole source guidelines.

3.5 Independent Cost Estimate

A cost or price analysis must be performed in connection with every procurement action in excess of the Simplified Acquisition Threshold, including contract modifications. The method and degree of analysis is dependent on the facts surrounding the particular procurement situation, but as a starting point, the RTA must make independent estimates before receiving bids or proposals.

As part of the advance procurement planning process, and in any event prior to the advertisement or the approval of a contract change order, the RTA shall ensure that there is an independent estimate of the expected price level or value of the goods or services to be purchased or to be changed. If the planning solicitation includes options, they should also be addressed in the estimate. The independent estimate is the RTA’s estimate of the price of a proposed procurement for use in performing a cost or price analysis.

The independent estimate must be prepared without input from prospective bidders and should include the name of the estimator and the date the estimate was prepared.

The estimate should be prepared in the same format and level of detail as bidders are to use in submitting their pricing schedules and is intended to serve as an effective tool in evaluating price and cost reasonableness.

The estimator should maintain the supporting documentation used in preparing the estimate for reference as a part of the evaluation process.

Should a solicitation amendment materially affect the anticipated price, the estimate should be revised to address the changed requirement(s).

A copy of the independent estimate (and any subsequent revised estimates) should be retained in the contract file.

Depending upon the nature of the contract requirement, estimates can range from a single amount to complex estimates based on inspection of the product itself and review of such items as drawings, specifications, and prior data (such as cost data from prior procurements).

The Procurement Administrator shall hold the estimate as confidential and not disclose its contents to potential Bidders prior to the receipt of Bid.

Type of Analysis

A cost analysis must be performed for: (1) procurements which require that offerors submit detailed elements of direct and indirect costs; (2) procurements where adequate price competition is lacking; and/or (3) sole-source procurements, unless price reasonableness can be established

based on market prices. Price analysis (i.e., using catalog or market prices) may be performed for all other procurements.

3.6 Contractor Profit

Profit values will be set individually for each RFP. Profit is to be negotiated as a separate element of the price for each Contract in which there is no price competition and, in all cases, where cost analysis is performed. To establish a fair and reasonable profit, consideration will be given to the complexity of the work to be performed, the risk borne by the Contractor, the Contractor's investment, the amount of subcontracting, the quality of its record of past performance, and industry profit rates in the surrounding geographical area for similar work.

3.7 Cost Plus Contracts

The cost plus a percentage of cost and percentage of construction cost methods of contracting shall not be used.

3.8 Pre-Qualification Requirements

RTA Pre-Qualification Requirements must ensure that all prequalified lists of persons, firms, or products which are used in acquiring goods and services are current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum full and open competition. Requirements must not preclude potential bidders from qualifying during the solicitation period.

Pre-qualification of bidders or products may be used when: (a) RTA wishes to procure complex services such as construction and at other instances when appropriate; or (b) RTA wishes to procure goods that require sophisticated manufacturing and/or goods with exacting performance requirements.

Only those Bidders or Proposers who are prequalified may supply the goods or services required.

The Procurement Administrator shall determine whether or not to pre-qualify bidders or products, and when doing so, the Procurement Administrator shall determine the pre-qualification standards that must be met.

3.9 Determination of Bid Method; Solicitation of Potential Bidders; Board Input;

The Procurement Administrator shall determine whether competitive bids are required or whether circumstances exist for a no-competitive bid procurement.

In the event it is determined that competitive bids are required, the Procurement Administrator shall determine the method to be used to solicit proposals (sealed bids [Invitation for Bids] or negotiated procurements [Request for Proposal]), and shall ensure that all requirements in the Procurement Manual are complied with.

The Procurement Administrator shall actively solicit lists of potential bidders for RTA contracts from each RTA member jurisdiction.

The Procurement Administrator will provide each Board member with a copy of each Invitation for Bid and/or Request for Proposal and an opportunity to provide informal input prior to the terms of an Invitation or Request being finalized. Board members shall maintain the confidentiality of the proposed terms of an Invitation for Bid or a Request for Proposal, until said terms are made public, and unless known to the public, maintain the confidentiality of the existence of an Invitation for Bid or a Request for Proposal until such Invitation or Request is made public.

3.10 Competitively Bid Procurements

RTA will conduct all procurement transactions consistent with the above-stated procurement standards through the use of those competitive procurement procedures best suited to the particular procurement, except as otherwise specifically justified.

Except as otherwise authorized or specifically justified, or required by federal or State of Michigan laws, rules or regulations, all Purchase Orders or contracts for the purchase of goods and services over \$250,000 by or on behalf of the RTA will be let by free and open Competitive Bidding.

The RTA may enter into a competitive purchasing agreement with the federal government, the State of Michigan, or other public entities for the purchase of necessary goods or services.

Sealed Bids (Invitation for Bids – “IFB”)

- A. A complete, adequate, precise, and realistic specification or purchase description is available;
- B. The award will be made on the basis of price and price-related factors;
- C. It will not be necessary to conduct discussions with the responding Vendors about their Bids;
- D. There is a reasonable expectation of receiving more than one sealed Bid; and
- E. The procurement generally lends itself to a firm fixed price contract.

RTA will ensure fair and unbiased evaluation of Bids. RTA’s procedures will guarantee that only the lowest, responsive (including DBE compliant) and responsible Bidder is recommended for award of a contract. At its discretion, the RTA may reject all bids and either rebid or cancel the bid in question.

RTA is a public body as defined by Michigan’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Upon public opening, all IFB responses become public records subject to disclosure under FOIA.

Negotiated Procurements (Requests for Proposals – “RFP”)

A RFP will be used if the nature of the procurement does not lend itself to sealed Bidding and RTA expects that more than one source will be willing and able to submit a proposal.

RFP’s will incorporate a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements and a comprehensive scope of work for the goods or services to be procured.

RFP’s will clearly state the evaluation factors, including: Cost or price, cost or price-related factors and non-cost or non-price related technical and business management factors that will be considered in making a Contractor selection/recommendation.

For all negotiated procurements, the following process will apply to ensure fair, unbiased and consistent evaluation of all proposals.

- A. RFP released with a date selected for a Pre-Bid meeting open to the public. Pre-Bid meetings will be held for any opportunity of anticipated value over \$250,000. The purpose of the Pre-Bid meeting is to clarify any concerns bidders may have with the solicitation documents, scope of work and other details of the requirement. RTA may provide and allow for participation in a Pre-Bid meeting by way of remote access.
- B. The list of vendors that were solicited for bid and/or that attended the Pre-Bid meeting will be posted to the RTA website along with questions and answers resulting from the meeting. The RTA will also post to the website other questions received and answers provided during the solicitation period related to the RFP.

- C. All non-cost information included in an RFP response shall be separated in the response from cost information.
- D. All RFP's, with the exception of RFP's relating to administrative, non-operations services (e.g., accounting, IT, legal, etc.) will be reviewed and ranked by a Selection Committee.
 - i. The Selection Committee will make a recommendation to the appropriate RTA committee for consideration and recommendation to the Board.
 - ii. The respective Board Committee and Board of Directors will act to approve or reject the recommendation.
 - iii. At its discretion, the RTA may reject all responses and either rebid or cancel the RFP in question.
- E. For administrative and/or non-operations services, written price quotations from at least three (3) qualified and responsible vendors shall be obtained or a memorandum shall be kept on file showing that fewer than three (3) qualified and responsible vendors exist in the market area within which it is practicable to obtain quotations. The procurement memorandum should describe the approach staff used to determine the procurement price is fair and reasonable, and describe how that determination was made. For administrative/non-operational procurements not exceeding \$5,000 in value services may be negotiated directly with the vendor and procured without using competitive bidding.
- F. RTA is a public body as defined by Michigan's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). All non-cost information will be subject to disclosure under FOIA as of the RFP return deadline date. All cost information included in the RFP response will be subject to disclosure under FOIA at the time and place of public opening, if a public opening notice is included in the RFP. Until the public opening, proposals will be held in confidence and will not be revealed to or discussed with competitors or the public.

3.11 Selection Committee

The Procurement Administrator shall have the discretion to appoint the Selection Committee. Input into the makeup of the Selection Committee can be provided by RTA staff, members of the Board, the DBE liaison officer, and other individuals who have knowledge and/or relevant experience on the subject as deemed necessary by the RTA.

External reviewers outside of RTA staff and Board members may be used on those procurements that involve scope of work elements with extensive public outreach or service expansion opportunities. A list of external reviewers will be developed from Citizen Advisory Committee membership, and other stakeholders who may wish to provide input into the RTA's procurement process. All external reviewers will be required to sign the RTA Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy to ensure no conflict of interest exists.

3.12 Selection Committee Member's Conflict of Interest

The Procurement Administrator must assure that no member(s) on the Committee has any appearance of a conflict of interest. Any member that has a conflict of interest shall be removed from the Selection Committee. If there is participation on the Selection Committee from non-RTA employees, contractors or Board members, they must complete and sign the RTA Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Form.

3.13 RTA Board of Director's Procurement Summary Package

For applicable selections (see Section 2.1), following the selection recommendation made by the Selection Committee, RTA staff shall assemble a selection recommendation memo for the appropriate RTA Board Chairman/his or her designee or Committee review depending on contract size. This memo shall contain the following information

- a summary of the Selection Committee scores,
- a summary of the performance of each bidder versus the requirements and
- a synopsis of how the decision was made.

3.14 Debriefing

Feedback may be provided by the Procurement Administrator following a selection at the request of the vendor. Feedback will be provided via phone, e-mail, or in person, as determined by the Procurement Administrator.

4. CONTRACT PROVISIONS

All contracts require approval in accordance with Part A, Section 2.1, Contract Approval Requirements. All contracts shall include provisions to define a sound and complete agreement, appropriate to the type and complexity of the project. At a minimum, these include a well-defined statement of work or specification, delivery schedule, a defined contract term, a clear statement of the price and payment terms, and all applicable clauses required by federal, state or local laws and regulations. For all contracts above the small purchase limit, such clauses shall include a disputes clause, and the right of the Board to terminate the contract for breach or default of the Contractor, and to terminate the contract for the convenience of the Board, without liability. Contracts shall not incorporate options, except to the extent that options for additional or alternative goods or services are incorporated in the contract award, and clauses stating the Board's right to exercise options for additional terms, including any pricing or other definitions of each such option. A federal clauses checklist should be completed for all federal procurements.

For all procurements involving federal dollars, the following provisions apply.

APPLICABILITY OF THIRD-PARTY CONTRACT PROVISIONS

(excluding micro-purchases, except Davis-Bacon requirements apply to contracts exceeding \$2,000)

PROVISION	Professional Services/A&E	Operations/Management	Rolling Stock Purchases	Construction	Materials & Supplies
No Federal Government Obligations to Third Parties (by Use of a Disclaimer)	All	All	All	All	All
False Statements or Claims Civil and Criminal Fraud	All	All	All	All	All
Access to Third Party Contract Records	All	All	All	All	All
Changes to Federal Requirements	All	All	All	All	All
Termination	>\$10,000 if 49 CFR Part 18 applies.	>\$10,000 if 49 CFR Part 18 applies.	>\$10,000 if 49 CFR Part 18 applies.	>\$10,000 if 49 CFR Part 18 applies.	>\$10,000 if 49 CFR Part 18 applies.
Civil Rights (Title VI, EEO, ADA)	>\$10,000	>\$10,000	>\$10,000	>\$10,000	>\$10,000
Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs)	All	All	All	All	All
Incorporation of FTA Terms	All	All	All	All	All
Debarment and Suspension	>\$25,000	>\$25,000	>\$25,000	>\$25,000	>\$25,000
Buy America			>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000
Resolution of Disputes, Breaches, or Other Litigation	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000
Lobbying	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000
Clean Air	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000
Clean Water	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000	>\$100,000
Cargo Preference			For property transported by ocean vessel.	For property transported by ocean vessel.	For property transported by ocean vessel.
Fly America	For foreign air transport or travel.	For foreign air transport or travel.	For foreign air transport or travel.	For foreign air transport or travel.	For foreign air transport or travel.
Davis-Bacon Act				>\$2,000 (including ferry vessels)	

Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act		>\$100,000 (except transportation services)	>\$100,000	>\$100,000 (including ferry vessels)	
PROVISION	Professional Services/A&E	Operations/Management	Rolling Stock Purchases	Construction	Materials & Supplies
Copeland Anti-Kickback Act Section 1 Section 2				All All exceeding \$2,000 (including ferry vessels)	
Bonding				\$100,000	
Seismic Safety	A&E for New Buildings & Additions			New Buildings	
Transit Employee Protective Arrangements		Transit Operations			
Charter Service Operations		All			
School Bus Operations		All			
Drug Use and Testing		Transit Operations			
Alcohol Misuse and Testing		Transit Operations			
Patent Rights	Research & Development				
Rights in Data and Copyright Requirements	Research & Development				
Energy Conservation	All	All	All	All	All
Recycled Products		Contracts for items designated by EPA, when procuring \$10,000 or more per year		Contracts for items designated by EPA, when procuring \$10,000 or more per year	Contracts for items designated by EPA, when procuring \$10,000 or more per year
Conformance with ITS National Architecture	ITS Projects	ITS Projects	ITS Projects	ITS Projects	ITS Projects
ADA Access	A&E	All	All	All	All
Notification of Federal Participation for States	Limited to States	Limited to States	Limited to States	Limited to States	Limited to States

APPENDIX A

FEDERAL CLAUSES CHECKLIST		
	Included	N/A
No Obligation to Third Parties		
Program Fraud and False or Fraudulent Statements		
Access to Records and Reports		
Federal Changes		
Termination		
Civil Rights Requirements		
DBE		
Incorporation of FTA Terms		
Government-Wide Debarment and Suspension		
Buy America		
Breaches and Dispute Resolution		
Lobbying		
Clean Air		
Clean Water		
Fly America		
Davis-Bacon and Copeland Anti-Kickback Acts		
Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act		
Bonding		
Seismic Safety		
Transit Employee Protective Arrangements		
Charter Service Operations		
School Bus Operations		
Drug and Alcohol Testing		
Energy Conservation		
Recycled Products		
ADA Access Requirements		
Conformance with National ITS Architecture		



Board of Directors Memorandum

TO: Board of Director Members

FROM: Melanie Piana, Program Director

SUBJECT: Strategic Identity Refresh Award Letter

DATE: January 12, 2024

REQUESTED ACTION: Requesting Board of Directors Approval

The RTA team requests board approval to enter a contract with Factory Detroit Inc. (FDI) for \$35,000 to deliver rebranding services, phase one of two (core messaging will be entered into a new contract after the completion of the RTA's new brand package).

The RTA received eighteen (18) proposals in response to RFP #2023-003(001) issued on September 19, 2023. The RTA selection committee comprised of RTA staff independently reviewed and scored each proposal. The selection committee narrowed the slate of 18 proposals to 5 vendors invited into interviews the week of December 4, 2023. On December 15, 2023, the RTA team discussed the final 5 vendor candidates based on top scores.

The selection committee is recommending entering into a contract with Factory Detroit based on the following consensus:

Team Qualifications: Factory Detroit's proposal highlighted their state and regional government rebranding experience, rebranding process, and team of creative professionals to support rebranding and core message development. In addition, agencies principles take transit locally.

Project Understanding: Factory Detroit's proposal highlighted their experience delivering impactful rebranding campaigns (Pure Michigan and MParks). Factory Detroit's proposal stood out offering a high-level brand analysis demonstrating an understanding of the RTA's position throughout the region and the outcomes for the agency on the rebranding.

Cost Proposal: Factory Detroit's proposal met our cost criteria.

Building a Well-Connected Regional Transit System

Improved regional transit plays a CRITICAL role in the prosperity of our state and region. A more equitable reliable and connected transit system in Southeast Michigan supports creating thriving, resilient communities, and vibrant places for employers and talent to locate **to grow the state's population.** The legislature created the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) to plan, fund, collaborate, and accelerate public transit.

Strategic Partners Achieving a Shared Vision

The RTA envisions a region with sufficient and stable funding to support improved public transit options. The Regional Transit Master Plan (RTMP) supports the agency's long-term vision. The RTMP outlines specific goals and priority investments that we can make to improve transit immediately and into the future. These priorities can only be achieved through a strategic partnership with the State of Michigan.

A Complex Transit Ecosystem

The RTA is Southeast Michigan's umbrella organization that leads multi-level governance and stakeholder collaboration across **over 116 transit providers.** The RTA Board of Directors and team are subject matter experts who introduce and lead policy and funding solutions with our strategic partners across government, business, nonprofits, and philanthropy.

5 Large Transit Providers*
80+ Local Community Providers
30+ Nonprofit Providers
**DDOT | People Mover | QLINE | TheRide | SMART*

Policy Intersections: RTA Can Deliver on Statewide Vision & Goals

The RTA's legislative agenda is poised to advance a state vision and regional goals, aligning with:

- Growing Michigan Together Council
- Michigan Council on Future Mobility & Electrification
- MI Climate Healthy Plan
- SEMCOG Southeast Michigan Healthy Climate Plan
- Michigan Statewide Housing Plan
- Regional and Community Transit Master Plans

Our Board Leadership



Governance Structure

The RTA was created by Public Act No. 387 of 2012. Our 10-member board is appointed for three-year terms by the county executives of Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties, the chair of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners, the Mayor of Detroit, and the Governor of Michigan. The Governor's appointee serves as chair and without a vote.

MOVING FORWARD: SHARPENING POLICY & FUNDING TOOLS

Creating a more robust transit system requires collaborative policy and funding to enhance transit service, build bus-supportive infrastructure in communities, and technology integrations, all to improve riders' experiences and attract new riders.

1 Funding to Sustain the RTA's Public Agency Operations

Progress: The RTA is **the only RTA of the country's top 25 major metropolitan areas that lacks sustainable funding.** Our FY 2023-2024 budget relies on a combination of short-term revenue, one-time grants, and state appropriations, including American Rescue Plan funds that support the expanded team temporarily until 2025. RTA needs a dedicated funding stream to continue to grow and achieve its mission.

Key Actions:

- Establish an operating funding stream for RTA (ex: Amend Act 51, Labor Economic Opportunity, MEDC)



2 Increase Local Bus Operating Funds (LBO) (50% Urban, 60% Rural) 38

Progress: Fully funded LBO reimbursement supports increases in local funding and will provide additional surety to transit providers to make longer-term investments in service and infrastructure.

In 2023, the state legislature increased LBO by 29% from \$201M to \$261M, which includes the incremental increase and \$60 million in one-time funding. This amount covered 33% of operating expenses for urban operators and 38% for rural operators—not enough to cover operational costs or position services for expansion. Even with the increase, **LBO remains underfunded by \$143,694,400 to achieve its full annual legislative ceiling.**

Key Actions:

- Maintain LBO at the historic level that was set last year and work to increase to the statutory ceilings of 50% reimbursement level for urban areas and 60% for rural areas.

3 Increase State Match to Support Transit Infrastructure Investment

Progress: Last year, the legislature took a historic step in appropriating specific funding for transit investment. The RTA/MDOT/SEMCOG **leveraged \$13.8M from state funding for a \$128.2 Reconnecting Communities & Neighborhood USDOT grant** for capital investment on Woodward, Gratiot, Michigan, and Washtenaw Avenues. The RTA led regional collaboration and secured letters of support from over 70 partners including the Michigan Infrastructure Office and Michigan Department of Transportation.

Key Action:

- Appropriating \$250M in state match for larger federal programs (e.g. FTA's Capital Investment Grant program) to leverage over \$1B in federal funds.

4 Allocate Funding to Sustain D2A2 & Detroit to Airport Express Bus Services

Progress: In 2023, the RTA received state and federal grant awards to launch two new express pilot bus services. Launched in 2022, the [Detroit to Ann Arbor](#) (D2A2) serves a **peak of/around 7000+ monthly riders**. In early 2024, the RTA will launch Detroit to Airport express bus pilot, anticipated to launch in spring 2024 in time for the NCAA men's basketball tournament quarterfinals and/or NFL draft.

Key Actions:

- Appropriate \$4.5M annually to sustainably fund expanded and essential intercity bus transit services like D2A2 and the Detroit to Airport express bus services.
- Appropriate \$10M annually to support new express bus service connections to areas in Oakland, Macomb, and Wayne Counties.

5 Exploratory Conversations About RTA Governance Flexibility

New: Twelve years have passed since the inception of the RTA. During this time, massive transformation has occurred within the transit and mobility sector altering regional economic competitiveness. Federal policy and funding have shifted, necessitating more flexibility for the RTA and transit providers to strategically align with rapidly emerging opportunities. Most governance amendments are minor simplifications that clarify language to reflect current realities, while others offer more flexible tools for the RTA.

Key Actions:

- Amending RTA legislation can increase the agency's ability to secure additional funding. This includes flexibility in establishing taxing jurisdictions, the timing of ballot initiatives, and additional funding sources (e.g., local option sales taxes).

RTA Leadership

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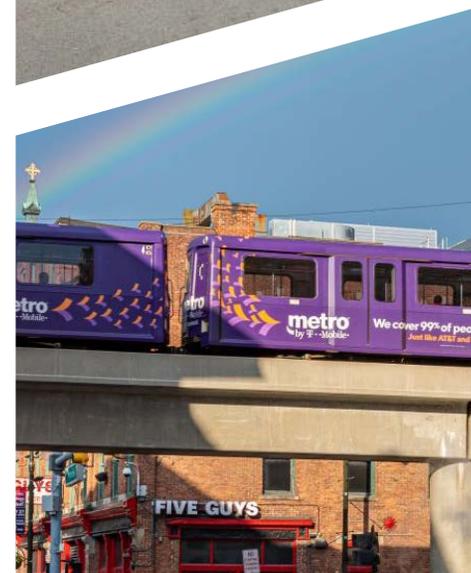
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2023 Regional Transit Master Plan Update

February 2024



RTA



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Executive Summary *[to be provided in final version]* ii

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**REGIONAL
TRANSIT AUTHORITY**
OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

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313-402-1020

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The Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) believes the people and communities of Southeast Michigan deserve a more equitable, reliable, and effective public transit system. An accessible transit system is critical public infrastructure that is necessary to foster a livable, climate-resilient, and thriving region. A champion for everyone, RTA envisions Southeast Michigan as a welcoming place where all people can enjoy access to opportunity, recreation, and community through connected transit.

RTA develops regional transit plans, coordinates a complex network of local service providers, accelerates pilot projects and programs, and distributes public transportation funds regionally.

RTA has a 10-member Board of Directors appointed by the Governor of Michigan, the Mayor of Detroit, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners Chair, and Executives of Macomb, Oakland, and Wayne Counties. Serving a unique role in the region, RTA pools resources and generates ideas to solve decades-long public transit challenges in Southeast Michigan and tackles difficult shared problems that riders have identified as deficiencies in the regional network.

By plugging these gaps, RTA advances transit as a more equitable, reliable, and inviting mode of transportation for all people in the region and paves the way for future shared mobility developments.

This document fulfills the requirements to annually update the regional transit plan as outlined in the Regional Transit Authority Act, Public Act 387 of 2012.

The preparation of this document was financed in part through: cooperation with the Department of Transportation; the Federal Transit Administration; and the participation of the Michigan State Transportation Commission. This document was prepared in February 2024 for the Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan.

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The Regional Transit Authority of Southeast Michigan (RTA) has spearheaded and led the regional transit planning effort for the past decade and is now striving to secure wrap-around funding opportunities to support a robust transit system for Southeast Michigan. In this update to the Regional Transit Master Plan (RTMP), RTA reviews recent progress made by transit agencies and mobility service providers, and considers national trends that transit agencies are responding to. The RTMP also outlines the consolidated list of 10 regional transit priorities, distilled from the previous 23 strategies, that are designed to lead the way into a future of high quality public transit. These priorities are informed by public engagement RTA conducted as part of the RTMP process, and are coordinated with the region's transit providers.

RTA's plans and projects set a path for critical public transit enhancements and prepare the region for rapid transit routes that connect Detroit and the four counties of Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne. A robust regional transit system is critical for growing both the region and the state's population and economy. Dedicated funding to operate services and build transit infrastructure will be required in order to fully implement such a system.

RTA's Role

RTA plans, funds, coordinates, and accelerates regional transit services, projects, and programs in Southeast Michigan, which comprises all of Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties, including the City of Detroit (see Figure 1). Within these roles, RTA is responsible for leading regional transit planning, developing and implementing new services, allocating federal and state funding to transit service operators, and securing new regional funding sources for public transit. Since it was established in 2012, RTA has led the development of several plans, studies, and discretionary grant applications, supported regional coordination initiatives, and developed and launched pilot services and technologies. Some of the projects RTA has led include the reFlx service pilot, which was the precursor of FAST, the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation's (SMART) limited stop bus service, the Michigan Ride Paratransit app, Detroit to Ann Arbor Express Bus Service ([D2A2](#)), the ongoing mobility wallet pilot



Figure 1: RTA's role in Southeast Michigan's regional transit system.

project, and with Detroit to Airport Express service, which will begin in spring 2024.

RTA is responsible for annually allocating transit funding provided by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to Southeast Michigan's transit agencies and community transportation services. In 2023, RTA allocated over **\$200 million** from these sources to support transit service in the region.

Subject to voter approval, RTA has the authority to levy a property tax and a motor vehicle registration fee to fund investments in transit service and infrastructure. Though RTA does not currently raise revenue through either of these mechanisms, additional funding is key to improving transit in Southeast Michigan.

RTA's vision is **a region with sufficient and stable funding to support improved public transit options that will advance equity by increasing accessibility; satisfy the integrated mobility needs of Southeast Michigan communities; and promote livable, healthy, and sustainable growth.** The RTMP guides RTA and its partners, such as transit agencies, community transit providers, nonprofit organizations, and government entities, toward achieving this vision.

The RTMP

RTA updates the RTMP annually to document Southeast Michigan's regional transit priorities, which guide projects and investments going forward. The 2023 update builds upon the 2022 RTMP update, incorporating new public and stakeholder feedback and condensing

RTA'S GOALS



FUND TRANSFORMATIVE MOBILITY

Position Southeast Michigan for economic success by increasing funding and aligning regional policy advocacy.



IMPROVE EXISTING SERVICES

Upgrade the frequency, reliability, comfort, safety, and speed of existing transit services, including fixed-route and demand-response services.

EXPAND TRANSIT COVERAGE

Connect more people to more destinations in Southeast Michigan through an expanded regional transit system with a focus on expanding access for equity populations.



INNOVATE RESILIENT PROJECTS

Implement expansion programs through active coordination and partnership with local transit providers and nonprofits.

SUSTAIN FUTURE PROGRAMS

Implement innovative programs and pilot projects to improve transit, increase flexibility, and encourage transit providers to adopt new technologies.

Figure 2: RTA's goals guide the regional priorities outlined in this RTMP.

23 strategies into 10 consolidated and focused investment priorities. It is also an opportunity to celebrate recent accomplishments, consider national and local trends in the transit industry, and realign goals, priorities, and next steps for the future of transit in the region.

Like the previous versions, the 2023 RTMP Annual Update is grounded by five goals that support RTA's vision: Fund, Improve, Expand, Innovate, and Sustain (see Figure 2). The RTMP newly identifies 10 regional investment priorities that support these goals and the vision; however, this is a strategic document and it is tied to a budget. **A critical next step in advancing regional transit is to identify sustainable regional funding sources and develop an expenditure plan that identifies specific projects to be funded over a long-term period.**

Southeast Michigan's Transit System

Southeast Michigan has a large transportation network that covers the majority of the region, though there are some gaps where transit service is not available, or is restricted to certain populations, such as seniors or people with disabilities. Available services range from fixed-route bus and rail, demand-response service (origin to destination services such as paratransit, dial-a-ride, on-demand, and microtransit), micromobility, and

RTA'S TRANSIT ECOSYSTEM

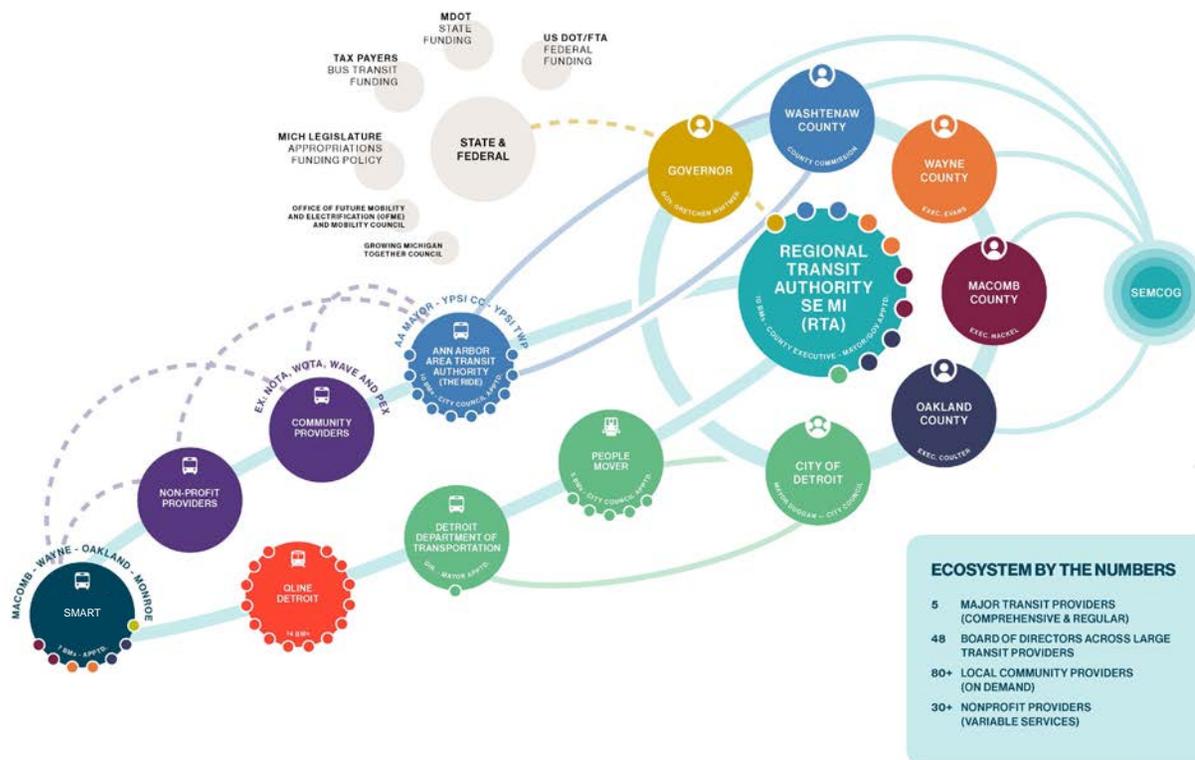


Figure 3: RTA operates within a complex transit ecosystem that comprises transit agencies, mobility service providers, and multiple levels of government.

carpool and vanpool services. These are offered through public transit agencies, community-sponsored transportation services, institutional- and employer-sponsored transportation, for-profit companies, and other providers. Some of these options are available to the general public, and others are geared toward specific populations, such as people aged 65 and over and people with disabilities, students, or veterans. A map of public transit service areas is shown in Figure 4.

RTA operates within a complex transit ecosystem that comprises transit agencies, mobility service providers, and multiple levels of government (see Figure 3). RTA partners with many of these entities to plan and coordinate services, fund improvements, and increase awareness of existing transportation options.

Public Transit Agencies

RTA is the umbrella organization that connects the five public transit agencies that operate fixed-route bus or rail service in the region: the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA, also known as TheRide), Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT), Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART), Detroit Transportation Corporation (DTC, operating as the Detroit People Mover [DPM]), and M-1 RAIL (operating as QLINE). RTA and M-1 RAIL are currently considering RTA acquiring QLINE and managing its operations.

PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES IN SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

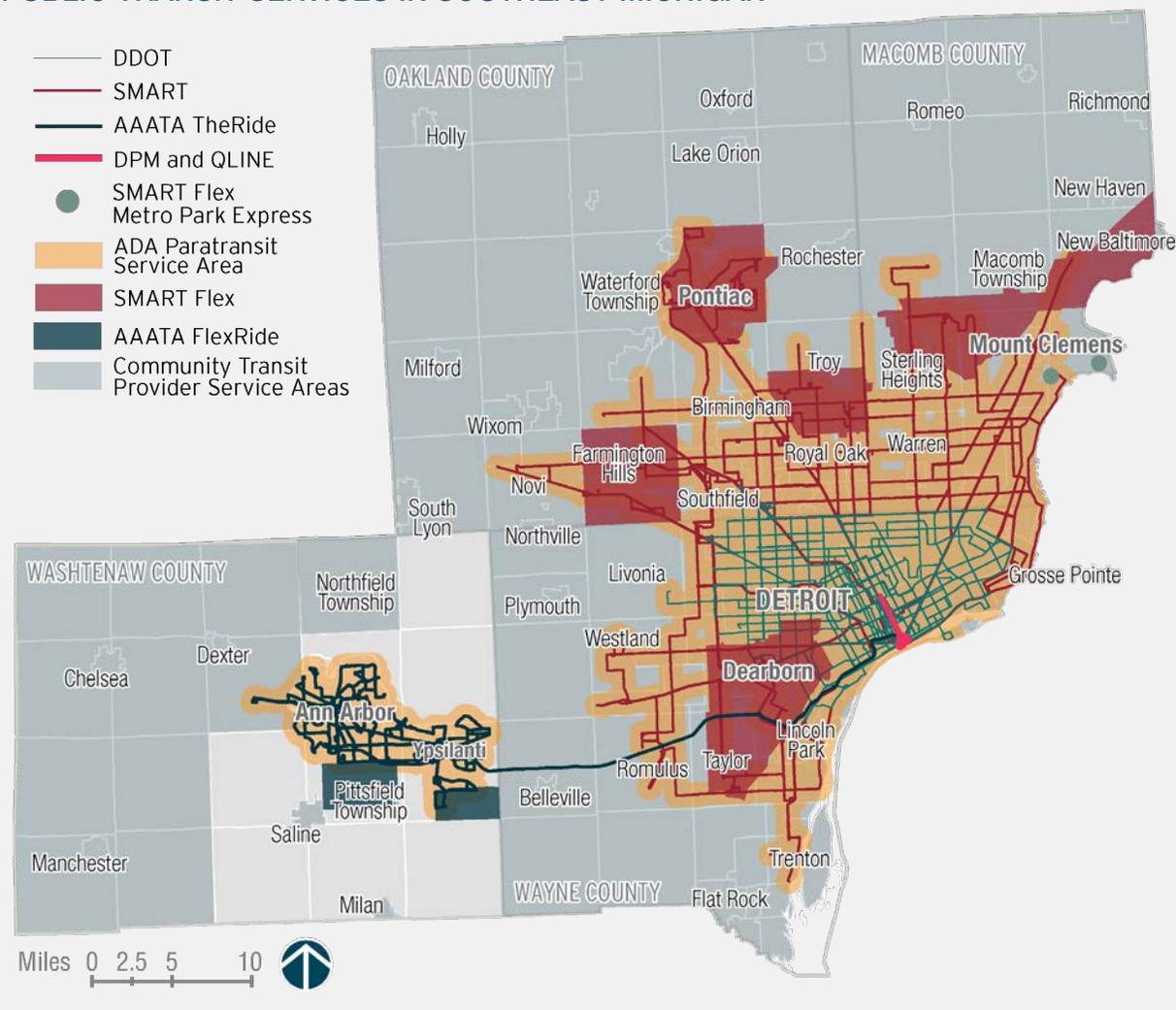


Figure 4: In Southeast Michigan's four-county region, public transit is available in most places through bus, rail, demand-response, microtransit, and other services. While some transit services are fully open to the public, others provide for the specific needs of certain populations, such as people aged 65 and over and people with disabilities.

DDOT, SMART, and TheRide also operate Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services for people with disabilities who are unable to ride bus or rail services. These are pre-scheduled trips that take a rider directly from their origin to their destination. SMART and the TheRide offer additional demand-response and other services with broader eligibilities. With \$2 million in funding from RTA, in 2024, DDOT will provide same-day paratransit service that goes beyond federal requirements, improving access to transit (see Figure 5 for a brief description of services and follow the links to agency websites for more information). D2A2, the Detroit to Ann Arbor Express Bus Service, is operated by RTA and was started in partnership with TheRide. DPM and QLINE both operate rail service in the City of Detroit.

Beyond Southeast Michigan, Amtrak, Flint's Mass Transit Authority (MTA), Port Huron's Blue Water Area Transit, Livingston County's Livingston Essential Transportation Service (LETS), Transit Windsor, various coach bus services, and other providers offer connections to other regions.

Mobility Navigation

Mobility management services offer people assistance with finding information on transportation options, planning and scheduling trips, and provide travel trainings to help them learn to use services. The Area Agency on Aging-1B's (AAA1-B) [myride2](#) program (which is funded through RTA), United Way for Southeastern Michigan's 2-1-1 helpline, and the [AARP Ride@50+ Washtenaw County](#) offer mobility management services for navigating transit options in Southeast Michigan.

Micromobility

Micromobility services, such as bikeshare and scootershare, are options for shorter trips and traveling to or from bus stops and train stations. [MoGo](#) is the Detroit area's bikeshare system, and currently has 83 stations in Detroit and southern Oakland County. In 2024, MoGo plans to add up to 20 new stations in Detroit. In 2023, people took almost 100,000 rides on MoGo. There are also private companies operating e-scooters in Detroit and e-scooters and e-bikes in Ann Arbor.

Community-Sponsored Transportation Services

In addition to the fixed-route agencies, there are over 80 community-sponsored transit providers serving areas across Southeast Michigan.



[DDOT](#) provides fixed-route bus service and ADA paratransit service throughout Detroit and in portions of neighboring communities, including Dearborn, Hamtramck, Highland Park, Livonia, and Southfield.



[SMART](#) provides fixed-route, ADA paratransit, demand-response, and microtransit services in all of Macomb County and portions of Oakland and Wayne Counties.



[TheRide](#) provides fixed-route, airport, ADA paratransit, demand-response, and microtransit services in the Greater Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. In partnership with RTA, TheRide offers D2A2 service.



The [Detroit People Mover](#) is a fully automated rail system that runs on an elevated single-track loop around Downtown Detroit.



[QLINE](#) is a 3.3-mile streetcar serving 12 locations along Woodward Avenue including Downtown Detroit, Midtown, and New Center.

Figure 5: Southeast Michigan's public transit agencies.

Community-sponsored transportation systems generally focus on providing local trips to seniors and people with disabilities, though some also provide rides for people with low incomes, and others are open to everyone. RTA awards annual funding from FTA's Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities grant program to support these community-sponsored transportation services. In 2023, RTA awarded over \$12 million to 29 service providers.

Community-sponsored transportation service providers range from independent systems, like North Oakland Transportation Authority (NOTA), Peoples' Express (PEX), the Rochester Older Persons' Commission (OPC), Western Oakland Transportation Authority (WOTA), and Western-Washtenaw Area Value Express (WAVE), to services funded through SMART's Community Partnership Program (CPP). CPP allows communities that opt into SMART's local funding to develop and deliver targeted local services. There are currently 76 communities participating in SMART's CPP, including Nankin Transit, Pointe Area Assisted Transportation (PAATS), Richmond-Lenox EMS, Senior Transportation with Advanced Reservations (STAR), Transportation of Southfield Seniors (TOSS), and many others.

Institutional and Employer Transportation

Some institutions and employers offer transit services to their students, staff, and visitors. The largest of these systems is the University of Michigan's bus service, which operates 13 bus routes and provided 4.3 million trips in 2022.¹

Nonprofit Agencies

A number of nonprofit organizations in the region provide a range of transportation to specific populations, or for specific types of trips. RTA provides funding to nonprofit agencies through its FTA Section 5310 Program. In 2023, RTA provided funding to Freedom Road Transportation Authority, Oakland Community Health Network, and PEAC, among others.

Carpool and Vanpool

MDOT and TheRide sponsor MichiVan and VanRide, respectively, which are commuter vanpool services. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments' (SEMCOG) [Southeast Michigan Commuter Connect](#) is a website where people can plan trips and match with carpools and vanpools.



Figure 6: People often think of public transit as buses and trains, but it also includes specialized services that take people directly to and from their jobs, medical appointments, schools, grocery stores, or other essential services. In lower density areas, these services are more effective at meeting local needs. Image Credit: SMART.

TRENDS, OPPORTUNITIES, & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

TRENDS, OPPORTUNITIES, & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In May of 2023, the US government ended the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, marking the end of the pandemic, which had an enormous impact on how people moved around in day-to-day life.³ As the world discovers what "normal" looks like coming out of the pandemic, the transit industry is considering how to equitably serve riders and communities, respond to labor shortages, and address funding deficits. Successful approaches to meet these challenges include embracing new technologies, focusing on travel needs beyond the nine-to-five commute, and investing in bus rapid transit (BRT) and transit-oriented development (TOD). Through the annual RTMP update, RTA considers how these industry trends as well as recent progress and accomplishments impact prioritization of resources going forward.

Major Trends in Public Transit

The Post Pandemic Transit Landscape

Nationally and locally, transit ridership has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, though it is beginning to recover. COVID-19 had a huge impact on transit service with ridership declining as people left their homes less often and many office workers began working from home. As of the end of 2023, national transit ridership was at 77 percent of pre-pandemic levels.⁴ In calendar year 2019, people in Southeast Michigan took over 42.1 million transit trips. In 2023, people rode transit over 22.8 million times, 54 percent of pre-pandemic ridership (see Figure 7).⁵ Ridership recovery has varied by mode and agency, and some US transit systems have even exceeded pre-pandemic ridership. Improving service reliability and on-time performance can help increase ridership, but can be challenging in the face of the national transit workforce shortage. Investments like bus lanes, signal priority, and high frequency services can also help boost reliability.

Work from home policies in some employment sectors became popular during the pandemic, resulting in lower transit ridership. Some expect this trend to reverse as many employers are asking workers to return to

TRANSIT RIDERSHIP, CALENDAR YEARS 2019-2023

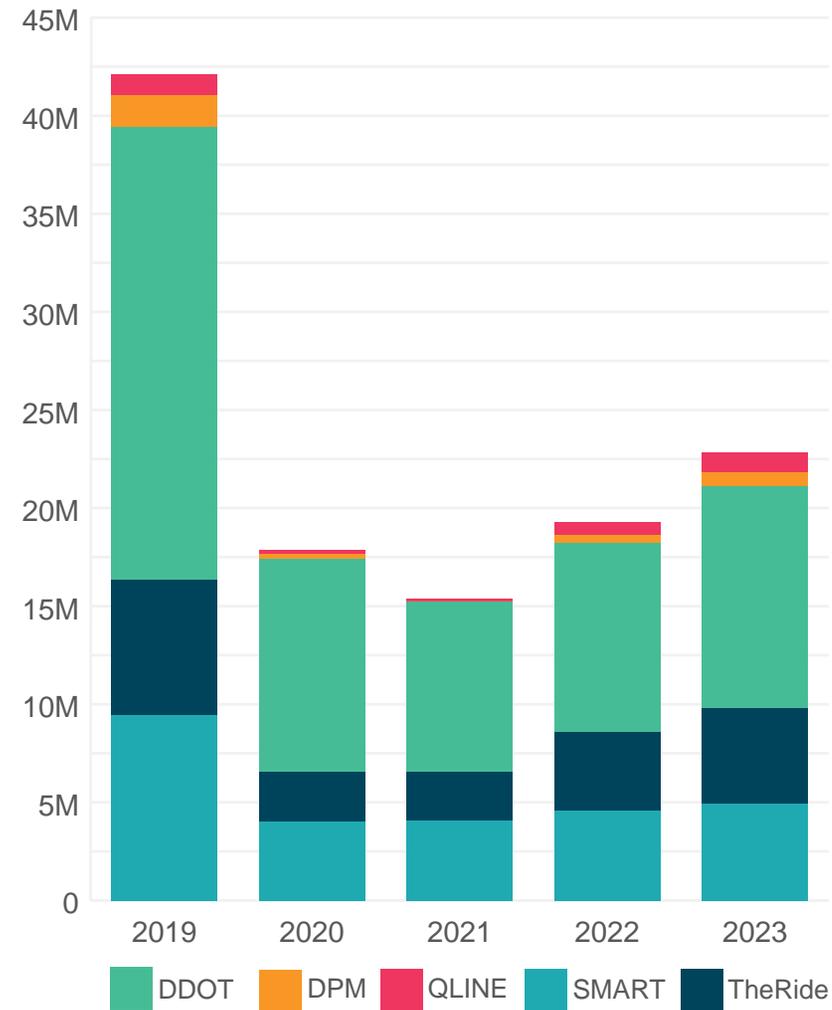


Figure 7: In 2019, people took over 42 million trips on public transit in Southeast Michigan. Ridership declined as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and changing worksite policies, but has been rising in the last two years. Source: National Transit Database.

the office and enforcing in-person work policies.⁶ As of October 2023, 24 percent of Michigan households had someone working from home at least once a week, compared to more than 36 percent in August 2021.⁷ In Downtown Detroit, 45 percent of daily workers have returned compared to 14 percent in April 2020.⁸

The pandemic also brought to focus those essential workers who are not able to work from home, and the role they play in keeping Southeast Michigan's economy going. Many of these workers do not have nine-to-five work schedules and do not work in downtowns. Public transit is an essential service for many essential workers, but transit has not always prioritized their travel patterns.

Additionally, most trips are not work-related and since the pandemic, trips have been more spread out throughout the day rather than during rush hours.⁹ According to the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) 2022 National Household Travel Survey, 21.9 percent of total trips and 34.5 percent of transit trips were to or from work or work related.¹⁰ According to SEMCOG's 2019 *On-Board Transit Survey* data, 53.2 percent of transit trips in the RTA region were work-related.¹¹ The higher proportion of work-related transit trips in Southeast Michigan may indicate that there is a greater need for transit services to better accommodate non-commute trips. One way to achieve this might be increasing service throughout the day, in the evenings, and on weekends. Helping people travel more easily to go shopping and run errands will support riders and the economy.

COVID-19's long-term impacts on cities, work policies, and travel patterns will take time to understand, but in Southeast Michigan, transit agencies are monitoring trends, listening to riders, and planning services that address transportation inequities and meet current and future needs.

Overcoming Workforce Challenges

Transit agencies in Southeast Michigan and across the country are facing hiring and retention challenges, further intensified by the pandemic. Labor shortages have made it harder to operate scheduled service and to implement planned service improvements. Challenges in workforce retention include the aging driver workforce, changing skills sets related to alternative power transitions, and lengthy application, training, and



Figure 8: Transit agencies in Southeast Michigan are hard at work to hire and train new employees. Bus operators go through a robust training and licensing course, and are celebrated at graduation. Image Credit: City of Detroit.



TRANSIT AGENCIES ARE HIRING!

Click the agency logos to apply for available positions.







licensing processes. In 2022, 43 percent of transit industry workers were over 55, compared with 24 percent in all industries. As a large number of transit workers get closer to retirement age, transit agencies will need to recruit new employees to continue operating services.¹² Nationally, the number of jobs available for transit and intercity bus drivers is expected to increase by 21 percent by 2030, which is a higher rate of job growth than most other occupations.¹³

Agencies across the US are implementing strategies to boost recruitment and retention, including rolling hiring processes, increased collaboration between human resources and operations departments, more recruiting staff, hiring incentives, improved marketing, simplified descriptions of jobs and benefits packages, career pathways programs, and programs to help workers manage stress and burnout.¹⁴

Transit agencies have the opportunity to foster long-term career opportunities for staff, including advancement from drivers and mechanics to management roles, through communications of these opportunities as well as incentives. Career fairs and increased marketing of open positions can help agencies reach job seekers, such as SMART's Drive a Bus with Us career fair in June of 2023, where potential candidates could try driving fixed-route and paratransit vehicles.¹⁵

Funding Public Transit Operations

For some transit agencies, fares represent a significant portion of operating revenues. Reduced ridership since the pandemic has led to decreased fare revenue. FTA provided transit agencies with COVID-19 relief funding to ensure transit services could continue to operate, keeping the economy going. As this funding runs out, transit agencies, cities, and advocates around the country are considering alternative revenue sources to maintain, improve, and expand public transit service, and to help them catch up on the backlog of projects that have been underfunded for decades. Investing in public transit supports the regional economy; In Southeast Michigan, every dollar invested in transit generates two dollars in economic returns, making transit a good investment in the regional economy.¹⁶ Increasing funding is critical to improving service, which will lead to increasing ridership: **when transit works for people, they take it.**

SPENDING AND RIDERSHIP IN THE TOP 25 UZAS, 2022

Urbanized Area	Population	Per Capita Operations Expenditures	Per Capita Ridership
New York-Jersey City-Newark, NY-NJ [‡]	19.4M	\$815	141
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	12.2M	\$244	29
Chicago, IL-IN [‡]	8.7M	\$308	33
Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL	6.1M	\$167	14
Houston, TX	5.9M	\$115	10
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	5.7M	\$122	8
Philadelphia, PA-NJ-DE-MD	5.7M	\$300	35
Washington-Arlington, DC-VA-MD [‡]	5.2M	\$562	37
Atlanta, GA	5.1M	\$119	11
Boston, MA-NH	4.4M	\$415	48
Southeast Michigan*	4.1M	\$70	5
Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	4.0M	\$96	9
Seattle-Tacoma, WA [‡]	3.5M	\$482	35
San Francisco-Oakland, CA [‡]	3.5M	\$655	50
San Diego, CA	3.1M	\$143	21
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	2.9M	\$199	16
Tampa-St. Petersburg, FL	2.8M	\$75	7
Denver-Aurora, CO	2.7M	\$232	21
Riverside-San Bernardino, CA	2.3M	\$68	3
Baltimore, MD [‡]	2.2M	\$340	23
Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV	2.2M	\$114	19
St. Louis, MO-IL	2.2M	\$136	9
Portland, OR-WA	2.1M	\$289	27
San Antonio, TX	2.0M	\$113	13
Sacramento, CA	1.9M	\$120	6
Average		\$252	25
Average Without Outliers**		\$151	15

Figure 9: Of the 25 most-populous urbanized areas (UZAs) in the US, Southeast Michigan spends the second lowest per capita on transit operations and has the second lowest per capita ridership. Source: National Transit Database.

*Southeast Michigan includes the Detroit and Ann Arbor UZAs.

**The average excludes outliers in terms of per capita spending, which are marked with a double dagger symbol "‡".

Compared to peer regions, Southeast Michigan spends less per capita operating public transit, which results in less service and lower ridership. Investing in transit service leads to more people using it and greater vitality for the region. Southeast Michigan comprises two urbanized areas (UZAs), Detroit and Ann Arbor. Combined, Southeast Michigan is the eleventh most-populous region in the US (Detroit is twelfth on its own). Of the 25 largest UZAs, Southeast Michigan spends the second least per capita on public transit, followed by Riverside-San Bernardino, California, and the least of the top 15 biggest UZAs (see Figure 9). It is not a coincidence that Southeast Michigan also provides the second lowest number of vehicle revenue miles (a measure of how service is provided) per capita and has the second lowest transit ridership per capita. In terms of total ridership, Southeast Michigan also trails behind its peers as third lowest.

On average, the top 25 largest UZAs spend \$252 per capita on transit operations. Removing transit intensive cities such as New York, Chicago, Washington DC, Boston, Seattle, San Francisco, and Baltimore, average peer per capita spending is \$151, more than double Southeast Michigan's.

Southeast Michigan also spends less compared to its Midwestern peers, and has the second lowest per capita spending and ridership (see Figure 10). The region also has the third-lowest per capita vehicle revenue miles. Additionally, Cincinnati is the only other Midwestern peer area that lacks regional rail or bus rapid transit (BRT).

FTA provides grants for capital projects, but does not typically provide operating funding, which is a local responsibility. In Southeast Michigan, local funding

PER CAPITA OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES AND RIDERSHIP, SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN AND PEER REGIONS, 2022

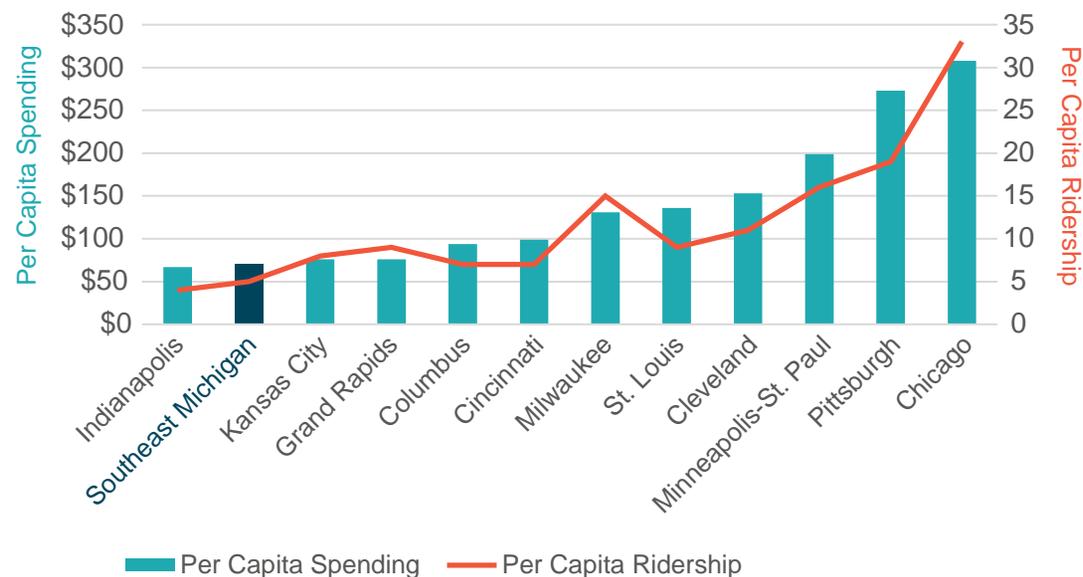


Figure 10: Southeast Michigan spends less per capita operating public transit than peer regions, and has per capita lower ridership. Source: National Transit Database.

sources vary by agency, but are typically provided through property taxes and municipal general funds. A portion of an agency's expenditures are supported by MDOT's Local Bus Operating (LBO) Assistance Program, which can legally provide up to 50 percent of an urban agency's operating expenses, but given funding levels, is typically closer to 30 percent.

Across the US, transit agencies use an array of revenue sources, but sales taxes are the most common source of local funding.¹⁷ In Michigan, local option sales taxes are not currently allowed by the state constitution and the state sales tax is capped at six percent.

In 2022, the greater Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area and Oakland County approved millages that will increase capital and operating funding for transit. **Despite these measures, additional long-term and sustainable funding will be required to complete transformational transit projects in the region.**

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Transit services support equitable community development through TOD, which prioritizes denser, mixed-use, walkable communities that allow people to get around their neighborhoods without needing a car. High-quality transit service, improved streetscapes, placemaking, easy access to other mobility services, and reduced parking requirements make development more feasible and facilitate the inclusion of affordable housing. TOD can create opportunities to generate revenue that supports transit service through tax increment financing (TIF) or joint developments where a transit agency and developer partner on the investment and the profits.

Community investments can sometimes lead to gentrification in the longer term. But when done sustainably, TOD can help support development while keeping communities in place and increasing access to opportunities. The Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (CapMetro) in Austin, Texas is currently leading an Equitable TOD (ETOD) study to ensure their planned rapid transit projects will "focus on equity, prioritize underrepresented voices, [and] align transit and housing strategies across multiple agencies."¹⁸ TOD requires strong partnerships with government entities that control zoning, land use, and housing policies. Transit agencies across the country are partnering with other levels of government and communities to create stronger and more equitable neighborhoods through



Figure 11: The East Liberty TOD along the Martin Luther King Jr. East Busway in Pittsburgh, a bus-only highway that operates BRT service. The TOD project improved bus stops, created 360 housing units and 361 jobs, and increased ridership at bus station by six percent.² Image Credit: Pittsburgh Regional Transit.

TOD. In 2020, RTA completed the [Mobility-Oriented Development \(MOD\) Study](#), which provides a framework for coordinating land use and mobility strategies to guide TOD along regional corridors.

Rapid transit services such as subways, light rail lines, and BRT support TOD. BRT is a bus-based service that mimics many of the features of rail, such as farther apart stops, stations with level-boarding platforms, transit signal priority, and dedicated lanes. Cities across the US are increasingly deploying BRT to provide frequent and reliable transit service and to support TOD. Fixed guideway transit services like BRT have been correlated with metropolitan area job and gross domestic product (GDP) growth.¹⁹ Local business leaders like Dan Gilbert of Rocket Companies support rapid transit services as a necessary strategy to attract talent to the region.²⁰

BRT may be an effective strategy to increase transit ridership and encourage community development in Southeast Michigan. RTA has been accelerating BRT projects by analyzing major corridors to gain an understanding of their competitiveness for grant funding through the FTA's Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program, which provides funding for rapid transit projects. Building on this analysis, in Fall 2023, RTA led a regional application called *Advancing Corridors for Transit: the Neighborhood-Oriented Way (ACT NOW)* to the US Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Grant Program. If awarded, the grant will fund the design and environmental review of BRT service on Woodward Avenue and the deployment transit enhancements for mobility hubs at major intersections on the Gratiot Avenue, Michigan Avenue, and Washtenaw Avenue corridors. Even if not awarded, this collaboration built consensus around future projects that RTA can seek other funding for.

Low- and No-Emission Vehicles

Transit agencies are considering alternative fuel technologies, such as electric batteries, hydrogen fuel cells, compressed natural gas, and propane, and are learning what infrastructure and resources are needed to transition to lower emission vehicles. The environmental benefits of reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips through public transit can be increased even more through the timely transition to lower emissions vehicles as current



Figure 12: DDOT and SMART each currently have four battery electric buses in their fleets. Image Credit: Trevor Logan, Jr.

vehicles need replacement. While the transition can ultimately provide environmental benefits, it can also present challenges that transit agencies have not met before. This could include investments in new technologies for charging and storing vehicles, training operations and maintenance staff on new systems, managing energy grid and battery endurance concerns, and navigating the emerging market of fleet manufacturers.

Regional efforts to deploy low- and no-emission vehicles will help the State of Michigan achieve its [MI Healthy Climate Plan](#) goal of increasing access to clean transportation options by 15 percent each year. In 2022, TheRide completed its *Alternative Bus Propulsion Study*, and is considering Battery Electric Buses (BEBs) and Hydrogen Fuel Cell-Electric Buses (FCEBs). TheRide plans to deploy an [FCEB pilot](#) starting in 2025, pending federal grant funding. DDOT and SMART each deployed four electric buses in 2022 to explore how the new propulsion technology will impact operations and facility needs.²¹ Both of the region's rail systems, QLINE and DPM, are fully electric.

Mobile Applications (Apps) for Riders

Smartphone apps have been changing the way people plan trips. Riders increasingly expect to have real-time arrival information and fare payment options available on their devices that can help them easily navigate the transit system. In Southeast Michigan, riders can use a number of apps to look up trip information, including DDOT's Bus Tracker app, Transit App, Google Maps, Moovit, and others. MDOT is currently exploring a statewide Mobility as a Service (MaaS) system, and RTA is on the steering committee to provide insight on the project with the potential for piloting a regional option over the next few years beginning as early as 2024. Additionally, DDOT, SMART, TheRide, and MoGo offer app-based fare payment options.

MaaS is a concept that consolidates trip planning, real-time information, payment, and booking in one platform. Some transit agencies are developing their own trip planning apps, while others are making schedule data publicly accessible so that technology companies can offer solutions. In some cases, transit agencies are pursuing both options. Having multiple tools available allows riders to choose the one that works

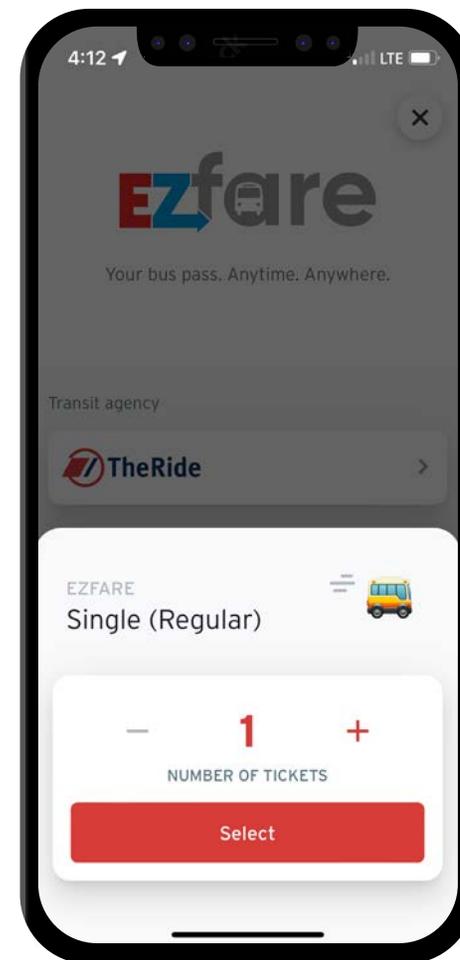


Figure 13: TheRide offers app-based fare payment and ticketing through EZfare, which can be accessed in the EZfare, Transit, Moovit, and Uber apps. In the Transit and Moovit apps, riders can also plan trips and see real-time arrival information. Image Credit: EZfare.

best for them. However, an environment with too many options, especially where they are not fully integrated with all services or modes, can be confusing for riders and can limit functionality.

A critical component of trip planning apps is the data that feeds them. Transit agencies need to have high-quality, standardized, up-to-date, and readily available data in order for the apps to be useful to travelers. The California Integrated Travel Project (Cal-ITP) is a statewide initiative that aims to streamline fare collection and the provision of real-time information. Cal-ITP can serve as a model for RTA to facilitate technology improvements that benefit riders and providers.

Recent Regional Transit Accomplishments

In the past year, RTA and its partners have achieved a number of accomplishments, including developing new and expanded services, undertaking planning initiatives, and proceeding with capital projects that will improve transit and help advance RTA's vision and goals. This section highlights some of the major achievements.

New, Improved, and Expanded Services

Additional Trips on D2A2

In response to demand for later service, RTA and TheRide added D2A2 trips at midnight and a mid-evening trip on weekends in the summer of 2023. A Frequent Rider Passbook is now available, which includes 50 one-way rides for \$100, a 60 percent savings. D2A2 ridership has consistently grown in 2023, and surpassed 7,000 monthly rides in November.

Detroit to Airport Express Pilot

Building on the success of the D2A2 pilot, RTA is planning to launch Detroit to Airport Express, a pilot bus service between Downtown Detroit and the Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW) in spring 2024. Detroit to Airport Express is supported by a \$2.5 million Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) grant through SEMCOG from USDOT and MDOT.



Figure 14: D2A2 takes riders between Grand Circus Park in Downtown Detroit and the Blake Transit Center in Downtown Ann Arbor.

Mobility Wallet Pilot

In partnership with DDOT, SMART, QLINE, DPM, MoGo, United Way for Southeastern Michigan, Detroit at Work, and the Downtown Detroit Partnership, RTA will pilot a mobility wallet in 2024 that can help connect job seekers with employment opportunities. Through this pilot, RTA seeks to gain a better understanding of the potential for a mobility wallet to make it easier for riders to pay for transit and other mobility services. MDOT and the Office of Future Mobility and Electrification (OFME) provided \$1 million to support the pilot through the [Mobility Wallet Challenge](#).

Oakland County Service Expansions

Resulting from Oakland Transit, the county-wide millage that passed in 2022, transportation services in Oakland County have expanded. In September, SMART expanded service on five routes to provide access to new areas. Routes 450-Woodward Local and 462-FAST Woodward now serve stops in Bloomfield Hills. Routes 305-Grand River and 740-Twelve Mile were extended to serve Novi and Wixom, and Route 805-Grand River Park and Ride was extended to serve Novi and additional stops in Farmington Hills. SMART is also planning new bus routes in Rochester, Rochester Hills, Waterford, and White Lake in 2024.

The Oakland County millage has also funded improvements to community-sponsored transportation services in Oakland County, and as a result, ridership at NOTA, OPC, WOTA, and People's Express increased more than 20 percent.²² NOTA expanded service to cover Brandon, Independence, and Springfield Townships and the Village of Clarkston. WOTA has expanded service to Groveland, Holly, and Rose Townships, the Village of Holly, Keego Harbor, Lake Angelus, Orchard Lake, and Sylvan Lake. WOTA has also increased its hours of service, and in some communities more people are now eligible for service. NOTA, OPC, and WOTA also standardized their fares to \$2.00 per ride. People's Express is contracted to provide services in South Lyon, Wixom, the villages of Milford and Wolverine Lake, and Commerce, Lyon, and Milford Townships. People's Express increased its service area, now providing trips between communities, and standardized its fares as well.



Figure 15: Voter approved funding in 2022 has allowed local transit providers like NOTA to expand their service hours. Image Credit: NOTA.



Figure 16: TheRide plans to enhance service on Washtenaw Avenue with a new limited-stop express service between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. Image Credit: TheRide.

Washtenaw Avenue Express Service

TheRide received \$2.1 million through SEMCOG's CRP grant award to operate an express bus service on Washtenaw Avenue starting in 2024. The limited-stop service will decrease travel times between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. The service was recommended in TheRide's plan, [TheRide2045](#), and might set a foundation for a future BRT service.

Zero-Fare Services

Zero-fare services are increasingly being considered across the US as a way to remove barriers to accessing transit and increasing mobility equity. QLINE has been operating fare-free since Fall 2021, when it reopened after COVID-19 shutdowns. Ridership has been steadily increasing and reflects the diverse population of the region. In 2024, DPM will pilot zero-fare service, with sponsorship support. As free services, QLINE and DPM will help increase access not only for residents and employees, but also for visitors during major events, such as the National Football League (NFL) draft in 2024.

MoGo System Expansion and Cash Payments

At the end of 2022, MoGo, in partnership with the City of Detroit was awarded \$676,672 through SEMCOG's CRP grant for another MoGo expansion, which will add up to 20 new station locations in Detroit.

As a result of the [Connect/D](#) study, MoGo is considering relocating some stations to better serve as a first/last mile option for bus riders. The study also led MoGo to accept cash payments at DivDat Kiosks, which are available at 59 locations in metropolitan Detroit.

Planning Initiatives

Transit Agency Planning Initiatives

DDOT, SMART, and TheRide all have ongoing or recently completed service planning initiatives. In 2022, TheRide adopted [TheRide2045](#), a long-range plan that provides a vision for the transit system and steps toward implementing it. Supported by a millage increase that passed in 2022, TheRide is focused on implementing the first phase of the plan, which proceeds through 2028. This phase includes increasing frequencies on all routes, increasing service hours, improving nighttime

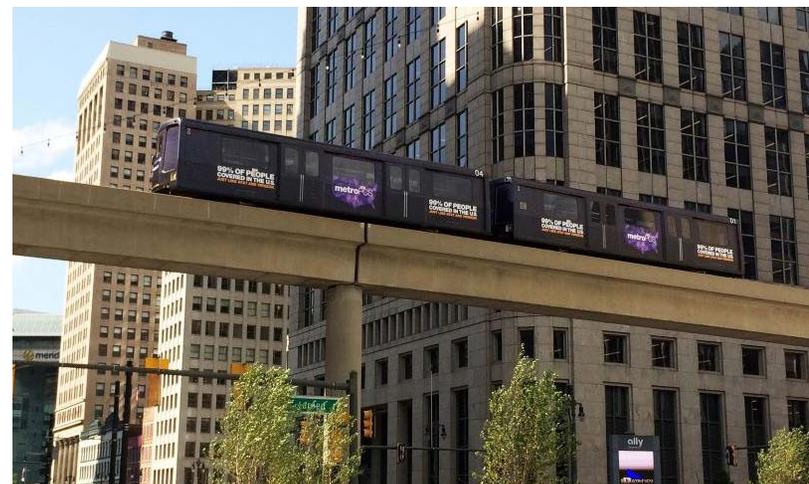


Figure 17: The Detroit People Mover will operate a zero-fare service pilot in 2024.



Figure 18: MoGo is currently planning a bikeshare expansion in partnership with the City of Detroit. Image Credit: MoGo.

on-demand service, piloting a limited-stop service on Washtenaw Avenue, a new bus garage, transit center improvements, transit signal priority or BRT on major corridors, and improving accessibility.

DDOT Reimagined is DDOT's ongoing process for redesigning its bus network and identifying service, capital, and operating improvements to better connect Detroiters to opportunities. A draft plan was released in April 2023 and a final plan is anticipated to be released in early 2024.

SMART's **SMARTer Mobility Program** is an effort to evaluate existing services in order to expand and integrate services, possibly create a user-friendly mobile app, and make SMART Flex a permanent service.

Corridor Studies

New transit services and infrastructure begin as planning processes that identify desired improvements, review feasibility, estimate costs, and consider funding sources. MDOT is studying two major corridors in the Southeast Michigan, and will begin on a third in 2024. The **Gratiot Avenue Planning and Environmental Linkages** (PEL) study is considering options that improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders, and the potential to include transit infrastructure on the Detroit portion of the road. The study will review previously completed plans, such as RTA's **Gratiot Avenue Transit Study**. MDOT's **Washtenaw Avenue** PEL study will create a multimodal vision for the corridor and expand on the **Reimagine Washtenaw Avenue** plan and the **Michigan Avenue Corridor Study**, which includes a Washtenaw Avenue BRT. The Woodward Avenue study aims to develop a corridor vision focused on safety, multimodal mobility, and improving infrastructure condition.

Intercity Passenger Rail Services

In December 2023, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced that four intercity passenger rail corridors in Michigan will receive grant funding to develop service plans through the Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program. These include the Wolverine Corridor, which operates between Chicago and Pontiac through Detroit, the Chicago to Grand Rapids Corridor, the Chicago to Port Huron Corridor, and the Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit Corridor, which is a potential new service that could stop at DTW.



Figure 19: DDOT transformed an old bus into a mobile outreach center to gather input for *DDOT Reimagined*. Image Credit: City of Detroit.



Figure 20: A rendering of the inside of DDOT's State Fair Transit Center. Image Credit: City of Detroit.

Major Capital Projects

DDOT's Coolidge Terminal and State Fair Transit Center

DDOT is currently undertaking two large capital projects: the Coolidge Terminal Replacement Project and the State Fair Transit Center. The new Coolidge Terminal replaces a facility that was damaged and decommissioned after a fire in 2011. Construction began in November 2023 and is anticipated to be completed in 2024. The facility will have capacity to maintain and operate 144 buses, and have the potential to be expanded in the future.

Construction on the State Fair Transit Center began in May 2023 and it is anticipated to open in Spring 2024. The transit center will include indoor waiting areas, retail and restaurant spaces, a ticketing office, and restrooms for the public and bus operators. The transit center will make it easier and more comfortable to transfer between routes and services.

TheRide's Ypsilanti Transit Center Expansion

TheRide is planning an expansion to the Ypsilanti Transit Center to update the facility and accommodate planned service increases. This project is supported by a \$7 million appropriation from the federal government. Planning and design are expected to continue through 2025, followed by construction in 2026 through 2027.

People's Express Maintenance Facility

MDOT was awarded \$10.5 million through FTA's 2023 Bus and Bus Facilities Program to build a new maintenance and operations facility for People's Express near Ann Arbor.

Detroit Mobility and Innovation Corridor

Construction of the Detroit Mobility and Innovation Corridor in Detroit's Downtown and Corktown neighborhoods is expected to begin in 2024. When completed, this project will add BRT-style bus stops, better cyclist and pedestrian access to bus stops, and dedicated transit and connected and autonomous vehicle (CAV) lanes to Michigan Avenue. This MDOT project was awarded \$25 million by USDOT in 2022. RTA supported the project by developing the benefit-cost analysis required for the application.



Figure 21: Congresswoman Debbie Dingell and TheRide's CEO Matt Carpenter at the announcement of a \$7 million federal appropriation for the new Ypsilanti Transit Center. Image Credit: TheRide.



Figure 22: The preliminary design of the Detroit Mobility and Innovation Corridor, which was awarded \$25 million by USDOT in 2022. Image Credit: City of Detroit.

Regional Challenges and Opportunities

Considering transit industry trends, as well as ongoing, planned, and completed projects in Southeast Michigan, Figure 23 outlines potential focus areas for regional transit.



Post-pandemic uncertainty and lower ridership pose challenges for implementing new services, but also provide opportunities to consider adapting services to meet both current and future needs.



Workforce recruitment and retention challenges impact current services and delay future services, but provide opportunities to build partnerships between agencies and with education institutions, and to market the benefits of transit jobs.



New funding in Oakland County and the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area provide opportunities to improve and expand services. However, there is still limited funding to provide a truly regional transit system.



Gaps in the transit network provide opportunities for new services that connect people to jobs, schools, medical centers, and amenities. Funding these services poses a challenge.



Regional pilot projects are opportunities to test new services and technologies and gather information on how to make them more successful when sustainable funding is identified.



New trip planning and fare payment technologies can help people more easily navigate the transit system, and remove barriers to using services. These technologies require agencies to publish and maintain high-quality service data.



FRA funding for improvements to intercity passenger rail service provides an opportunity to strengthen connections to other regions, and add regional rail services on infrastructure.



Transit agency-led planning initiatives provide a foundation for local and regional service, setting priorities for capital planning and funding pursuits.



New and improved transit centers and maintenance and operations facilities provide opportunities to expand services in the future and to create safer and more comfortable environments for riders and staff.



Rapid transit projects can improve comfort, reliability, and speed while supporting the TOD projects that will help Southeast Michigan attract talent and businesses and grow the regional economy.



Partnerships with road agencies and micromobility providers (e.g., MoGo) can help improve connections to and from transit services and can make transit more accessible.



Low- and no-emission vehicle propulsion technologies can help improve air quality but require training programs, facility and infrastructure upgrades, and may require service adjustments that consider refueling times and locations.

Figure 23: Challenges and opportunities for regional transit in Southeast Michigan.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

In 2023, RTA engagement efforts focused on hearing from residents and riders about the transit improvements that matter to them the most. RTA engaged with the public at popular community events, regional transit centers, and through an online survey. Public feedback helped shape the development of RTA's priorities.

Community Events and Rider Outreach

In August and September of 2023, RTA set up booths at 11 events across the four counties and spoke with riders at three regional transit centers. RTA conducted rider outreach at transit centers and major stops in 2021, but with 14 in-person engagements, this was RTA's largest outreach effort since the onset of the pandemic. Staff shared information about transit services and discussed rider experiences and priorities. Attendees were asked to place stickers on an interactive board to identify which of the goals and strategies from the 2022 RTMP update they felt were the highest priorities (see Figure 25). Over 370 people participated in the interactive board activity and many more had conversations with RTA staff. Additionally, RTA engaged with the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to hear their feedback on the goals and strategies (see Figure 24 for a full list of events).

Online Survey

Similar to in-person engagement, online survey participants were asked to rank the priority of RTA's goals and strategies, as well as give feedback on specific ongoing and potential projects. The survey was available from September through early November. RTA promoted the survey at in-person outreach events, on social media and RTA's website, and with fliers posted at several major bus stops across Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties. The greatest number of respondents indicated that they discovered the survey through social media. Both the survey and materials promoting it were available in English, Arabic, and Spanish. RTA received 238 survey responses. While the survey was not a representative sample of the region, RTA worked to reach other members of the public during in-person outreach, and strives to continually improve the engagement process.



DETROIT

- August 25 – Market Fridays at Cadillac Square
- August 27 – Wayne State University FestiFall
- September 19 – Rosa Parks Transit Center



MACOMB COUNTY

- September 8 – Mount Clemens Art & Craft Show
- September 30 – Shelby Farmers Market



OAKLAND COUNTY

- August 17 – Southfield Back to School Fair
- September 13 – Oakland County Farmers Market
- September 20 – Royal Oak Transit Center



WASHTENAW COUNTY

- September 13 – Washtenaw Community College Welcome Day
- September 19 – Ann Arbor Tech Trek
- September 26 – Ypsilanti Transit Center



WAYNE COUNTY

- September 22 – Dearborn Summer Market
- September 24 – Lincoln Park Farmers Market
- September 28 – Wyandotte Farmers Market



REGIONAL

- August 28 – RTA Citizens Advisory Committee

Figure 24: Public engagement events for the 2023 RTMP Update.

Key Findings

Based on over 370 interactive board responses, improving existing services is the highest priority goal to the public, followed by expanding transit to new places, building sustainable partnerships, developing innovative and adaptive services, and lastly, securing long-term dedicated transit revenue. RTA found a substantial difference between the importance of funding to transit agencies and to the public, which makes sense: riders are more focused on the services they need than on how to fund them. According to a 2021 survey conducted by RTA, 76 percent of the Southeast Michigan's residents believe that public transit is vitally important to the region. RTA can play a key role in educating the public on how long-term funding can make desired improvements possible, as well as help the public understand RTA's role in securing funding for these vital services.

Online survey respondents expressed that growing transit ridership in the region through continual improvement of services is important to them. Increasing ridership can elevate support for transit and may bolster RTA's efforts to secure long-term funding. When asked to rank RTA's goals in order of importance, respondents indicated that expanding and funding regional transit should be RTA's top priorities and that innovative and flexible services were least important to them (see Figure 27). Regarding priorities for improving access, they listed safety projects as a top priority, followed by bus stop accessibility improvements. Respondents indicated they were least interested in projects focusing on information about how to ride transit and creation of an app for seamless fares and trip booking (see Figure 27).

Over three quarters of survey respondents supported RTA's efforts to develop BRT, promote ridership, improve bus stops, and increase safety and security. Respondents also largely support D2A2 and the mobility wallet, but were less interested in a paratransit trip booking and payment app and workforce equity efforts. Zero emissions vehicles (ZEV) were respondent's lowest priority to continue working toward (see Figure 28).

Additionally, through in-person outreach, RTA staff identified a wide range of familiarity with existing transit services in the region, with some people very aware of transit options, and others having no knowledge of services in their area. While conducting outreach at transit centers, staff noticed that riders were more familiar with existing services but less aware of RTA and



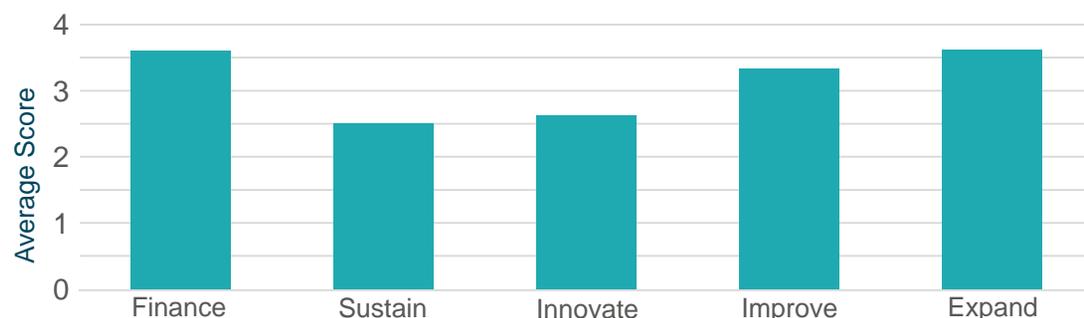
Figure 25: RTA staff asked regional residents and riders to place a sticker on the RTA goal that was most important to them.



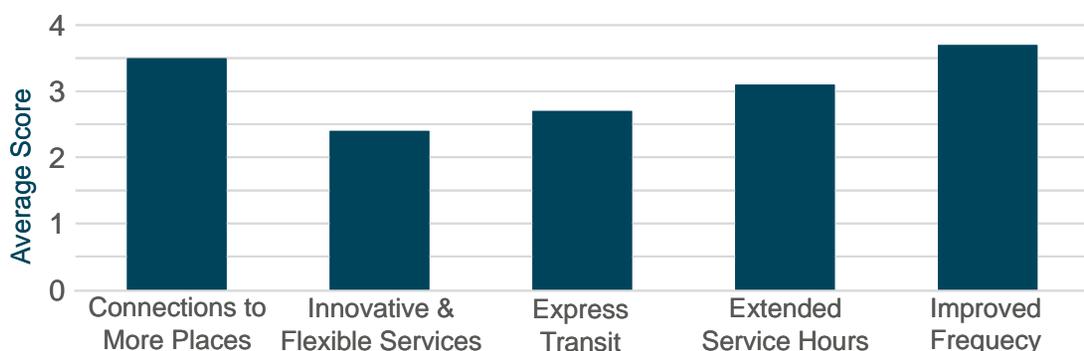
Figure 26: RTA staff engaged with the public at events booths to talk about their regional transit experiences and priorities.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

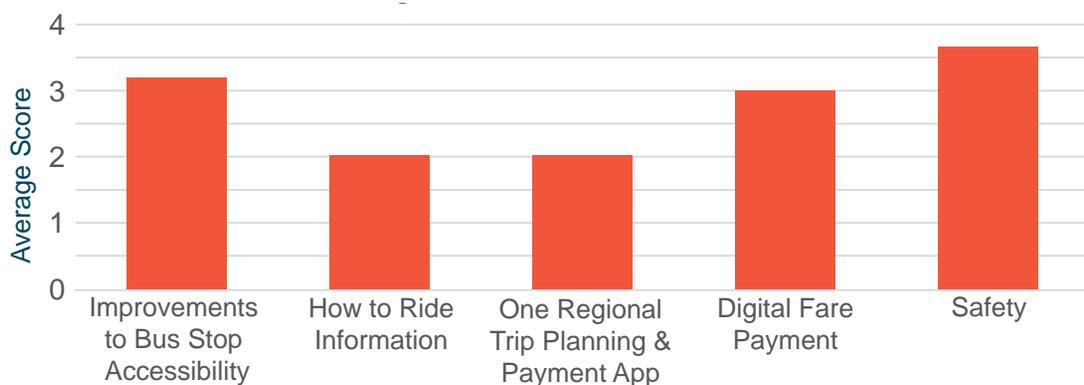
Priority Goals, Ranked 1 (Low) to 5 (High)



Service Priorities, Ranked 1 (Low) to 5 (High)



Priorities for Improving Access, Ranked 1 (Low) to 5 (High)



Survey Respondent Comments

“Look towards the cities that thrive and you will see robust transit, not an emphasis on cars and more roads!”

“Improving safety and frequency are the two most-important things to tackle to increase ridership.”

“It would be nice to have at least more bus shelters and bike racks.”

“Please encourage multimodal transit! Being able to take a bike on a bus really expands your network's reach! Please help get safe biking infrastructure throughout your network!”

“Focus on building BRT & dedicated transit lanes.”

“As a disabled person with a small income, I know all too well that regional transit is so important to building a more equitable society. Access to public transit directly effects my ability to survive financially. Our dependence on individual car ownership is a huge detriment to the environment and to our society.”

Figure 27: Key findings and sample comments from RTA's public engagement in the fall of 2023.

its role than people attending community events. Through engagement, RTA learned that it can do more to educate the public on transit services and its own role in sustaining them.

Transit Agency Feedback

RTA engaged with the region's public transit agencies and MoGo to ensure the RTMP is aligned with their goals and initiatives. Public awareness of services was a key theme among all agencies, indicating the importance of marketing services and conducting educational outreach. Providers indicated that securing long-term funding was a top priority for the region, and would help them to achieve RTA's goals. Additionally, providers expressed a desire to continue strengthening partnerships, whether it be with local municipalities or other mobility services, to enhance their existing services and the connections between them. DDOT and SMART hope to see a focus on workforce development strategies through a regional effort.

Agency Conducted Public Engagement

DDOT, SEMCOG, and TheRide each conducted public engagement in 2023, and RTA reviewed key findings to understand what partner agencies are hearing. SMART is in the process of gathering public feedback and is committed to sharing responses with RTA for future consideration. Common themes included:

- A strong desire for BRT and light rail transit (LRT) along major corridors.
- Increasing the frequency and reliability of existing routes.
- Providing more amenities and information at bus stops.
- Operating more frequent and affordable services to the airport.
- More service on weekends and at night.
- Adding integrated first and last mile services.
- Improving accessibility to public transit.
- Addressing safety and cleanliness concerns on vehicles and at stops.

If you are reading this, it's not too late!

If you have not yet engaged with RTA or have additional thoughts to share on regional transit, it is not too late to make your voice heard. RTA continually welcomes the public to reach out through email, social media, or participation in RTA's public meetings. Contact information can be found on the last page of this document and on [RTA's website](#).

PUBLIC PROJECT PRIORITIES

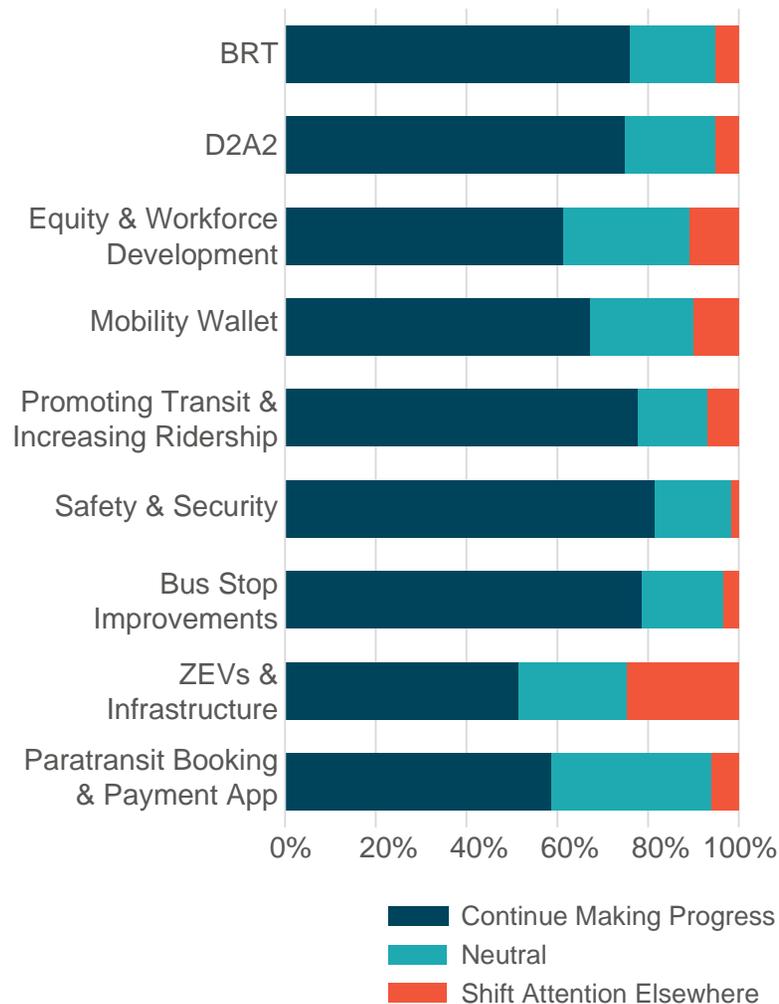


Figure 28: Survey respondents were asked whether or not they felt RTA should continue to focus on certain projects. Safety and bus stop improvements were respondent's highest priorities, while zero emission vehicles were their lowest.

REGIONAL TRANSIT PRIORITIES

REGIONAL TRANSIT PRIORITIES

Funding Regional Priorities

Central to delivering RTA's mission and achieving its vision and goals is maintaining and increasing funding for public transit in Southeast Michigan. **Fund Transformative Mobility** is an overarching goal that will allow RTA and its partners to invest in the 10 regional transit priorities discussed in this chapter. RTA works to increase transit funding through grant opportunities and by building regional partnerships.

In Southeast Michigan, public transit is currently funded through multiple federal, state, and local sources. The federal government provides formula funding on an annual basis to the region that can be used to support capital projects. There are also annual opportunities to apply to discretionary grants for specific projects. MDOT provides the match funding required to use federal grants and also provides a portion of agencies' operating funds through the Local Bus Operating (LBO) Assistance Program. This program can legally provide up to 50 percent of an urban agency's operating expenses, but given funding levels, is typically closer to 30 percent. The state also provides five million dollars annually for QLINE's operations through the Convention Center Development Fund, which is funded through taxes on liquor and hotel accommodations. Local funding is provided through property taxes and municipal general funds.

RTA has three strategies toward its goal to Fund Transformative Mobility in Southeast Michigan that are organized around current funding, one-time funding, and new long-term funding (see Figure 29). Actions that RTA and regional partners can complete are grouped by these funding categories to highlight what can be accomplished with different levels of funding.

RTA'S FUNDING STRATEGIES AND OPPORTUNITIES



FUND TRANSFORMATIVE MOBILITY

Position Southeast Michigan for economic success by increasing funding and aligning regional policy advocacy.

Funding Categories	Strategies	Opportunities
No New Funding	Execute a multi-year budget and business plan to align with advocacy for advancing regional policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizing existing federal, state, and local funding sources.
One-Time Funding	Collaborate on regional grant applications and support provider funding initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal, state, and SEMCOG discretionary grant Programs. Federal earmarks. Nonprofit partnerships. Corporate sponsorships. Public-private partnerships.
Sustainable Funding	Elevate per capita transit spending for greater services in Southeast Michigan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property tax millage. Vehicle registration tax. Additional opportunities to be determined.

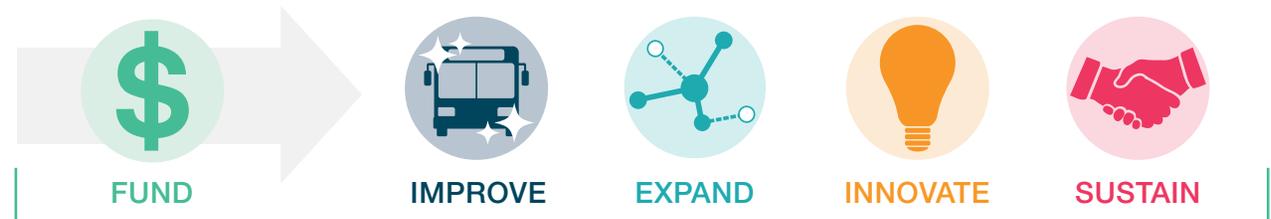
Figure 29: RTA's strategies to increase funding Southeast Michigan to support regional transit priorities.

Regional Transit Priorities

For this RTMP annual update, RTA reviewed the strategies and actions in previous versions and consolidated them into 10 regional transit priorities based on public input, transit industry trends, recent accomplishments, and ongoing projects in Southeast Michigan.

RTA's goals are to fund transformative mobility, improve existing services, expand transit coverage, innovate resilient projects, and sustain future programs (see Figure 2). These goals guided the development of the regional transit priorities. Each priority supports aspects of RTA's goals and serves as a crucial step toward achieving them.

RTA sets out to lead, guide, and support the accomplishment of these 10 regional priorities through activities that plan, fund, coordinate, and accelerate them in the region. Figure 30 outlines RTA's regional transit priorities, and this chapter provides more information on each priority, including actions RTA and its partners can carry out with no new funding, with one-time funding, and with a new, long-term regional funding source.



REGIONAL TRANSIT PRIORITIES

				Invest in and Implement a Rapid Transit Network
				Increase Frequency, Reliability, and Hours on Fixed-Route Services
				Build On and Coordinate Demand-Response Services
				Grow Mobility Access to Local Communities and Regional Destinations
				Regionalize Trip Planning and Fare Payment Systems
				Enhance Ride Quality and Promote On-Board Safety
				Upgrade Multimodal Connections To and Between Services
				Advance Accessibility, Comfort, and Well-Being at Transit Stops
				Recruit, Develop, and Retain a Thriving Workforce
				Modernize and Maintain Infrastructure in a State of Good Repair

Figure 30: RTA's 10 regional priorities aim to achieve RTA's goals. Sustainable regional transit funding will be required to support these priorities.

Invest In and Implement a Rapid Transit Network

Plan, design, fund, and implement rapid transit services along regionally significant corridors that support TOD, and work with local communities to develop TOD plans that encourage equitable economic growth.

Why it Matters

Rapid transit networks, such as subways, light rail, and BRT, improve access to jobs, essential services, and other opportunities. BRT routes provide communities with the benefits of rail, such as frequency and speed, while costing less to implement and offering greater flexibility for adjustment to travel and development patterns. BRT provides frequent, all-day bus service, using dedicated lanes, stations with level boarding platforms, prepaid fares, and real-time arrival information, all of which makes the rider experience more comfortable and convenient.

TOD provides opportunities for economic development, market-rate and affordable housing, and placemaking. Capital investments in transit are proven to catalyze business growth and housing development near transit stops. Together these strategies encourage lively, walkable neighborhoods with thriving businesses, further improving mobility options for all.

Public Feedback

Rapid regional transit has been a consistent priority during public outreach that RTA has conducted since its inception. Recent engagement conducted by RTA and other regional entities has reinforced that a rapid transit network is still a strong priority for people in our region.



Figure 31: The IndyGo Red Line, a 13 mile BRT system in Indianapolis, Indiana. Image Credit: IndyGo.

Implementation Activities

With No New Funding

- Prioritize regional corridors for capital investment and develop a funding strategy for capital improvements and operations.

With One-Time Funding

- Conduct or update corridor studies to determine which rapid transit modes best support local and regional needs.
- Partner with municipalities to develop policies that support transit-oriented communities.
- Complete the project development and environmental review required to fund rapid transit corridor projects.

With Sustainable Funding

- Build and operate a network of regional rapid transit corridors.

Supported Goals



Rapid transit and TOD will expand access to opportunity and can improve upon existing transit services while leveraging partnerships between transit agencies, mobility service providers, multiple levels of government, and developers.

Recent Progress and Accomplishments

- There are planned and ongoing studies on Gratiot, Washtenaw, and Woodward Avenues that will identify preferred transit projects.
- RTA adopted BRT locally preferred alternatives (LPAs) on Gratiot, Michigan, Washtenaw, and Woodward Avenues.
- Dedicated transit and connected and autonomous vehicles lanes will be installed on Michigan Avenue.
- SMART's FAST service, which was based on RTA's reflex pilot, and TheRide's planned Washtenaw Avenue Express lay the foundation for future BRT services.
- RTA has conducted a preliminary analysis of major corridors for FTA CIG program funding.
- In 2023, RTA submitted a \$138 million RCN grant application to potentially fund rapid transit corridor project development on Woodward Avenue and to construct improvements to other corridors.

POTENTIAL RAPID TRANSIT CORRIDORS



Figure 32: RTA and its partners have identified 13 potential rapid transit corridors in Southeast Michigan, including: Ann Arbor-Detroit Commuter Rail, East Jefferson, Fort/Eureka, Grand River, Gratiot, Michigan, State/Plymouth, Van Dyke, Warren, Washtenaw, Woodward, 8 Mile Road, and 12 Mile Road. Previous planning process have identified locally preferred alternatives on five of these corridors: Ann Arbor-Detroit Commuter Rail, Gratiot, Michigan, Washtenaw, Woodward.

Increase Frequency, Reliability, and Hours on Fixed-Route Services

Develop a core network of transit routes with frequencies of at least every 15 or 30 minutes for 18 hours every day of the week, and increase the number of 24-hour bus and rail routes. Implement improvements that increase reliability and on-time performance, such as dedicated lanes, queue jumps, streamlined boarding, and transit signal priority (TSP).

Why it Matters

Frequent service that is available throughout the day provides reliable transit for those who work a nine-to-five schedule and those who do not. Since 46 percent of transit trips are not work related, providing all-day access to groceries, health services, education, and other places is critical to ensuring riders can rely on transit to get to all of their destinations. High frequency all day services enables people to ride with confidence that they will arrive on time and always make the last bus back home. Improving frequency and reliability have been shown to increase transit ridership.²³

Public Feedback

Improved frequency and hours of service are consistently among the highest priorities in engagement RTA has conducted. In the 2023 survey, respondents ranked increasing frequency as their top priority.

Recent Progress and Accomplishments

- DDOT, SMART, and TheRide have all identified service improvements to routes through their planning processes.
- In 2021, QLINE deployed the region's first dedicated transit lane on a 0.3 mile segment of its route and TSP at 26 intersections along Woodward Avenue.
- DDOT plans to increase frequency on the 9–Jefferson route to every 10 minutes on weekdays and every 15 minutes on weekends in 2024.

Supported Goals



Increasing frequency, reliability, and service hours are the cornerstones of improving existing services for current riders and attracting and future riders.



Figure 33: The dedicated transit lane on Woodward Avenue allows QLINE, DDOT, and SMART to avoid congestion near Little Cesar's Arena. Image Credit: M-1 RAIL.

Implementation Activities

With No New Funding

- Identify and implement tactical pilot projects that increase reliability (e.g., temporary dedicated lanes).

With One-Time Funding

- Pilot frequency and service hours improvements on priority routes identified in agency plans.
- Deploy small-scale capital projects that improve reliability at key locations, such as in-lane stops.

With Sustainable Funding

- Increase frequencies and service hours on routes across the region.
- Implement corridor-wide capital projects that increase reliability, such as TSP and dedicated lanes.

Build On and Coordinate Demand-Response Services

Improve mobility for people who rely on demand-response transit services by offering same-day services, increasing hours of operation, expanding eligibility to more people, and streamlining transfers between services.

Why it Matters

Fixed-route bus and rail services are not efficient in all parts on the region, particularly in lower-density suburban communities and rural areas. There are over 80 government and nonprofit agencies providing demand-response transit service in Southeast Michigan, each with its own hours and days of operation, service areas, eligibility criteria, trip scheduling processes, and costs. This can make it challenging for people to understand what options are available and how to use them. In some areas, there may not be services available if a rider does not fit the eligibility criteria.

Additionally, Michigan's population is aging, with 2.7 million seniors projected to live in the state by 2030.²⁴ Many demand-response services in the region provide rides to this growing population and will need to expand capacity to meet demand.

Public Feedback

At RTA engagement events, some attendees indicated they were unaware of existing services in their area, and if they are eligible. Booking trips that cross service areas have been identified as a common pain point for both riders and agency staff.

Recent Progress and Accomplishments

- With new funding, NOTA, OPC, and WOTA have standardized their fares. NOTA, People's Express, and WOTA increased their service areas, and NOTA increased its hours of operation.
- In 2024, DDOT will offer same-day paratransit rides with funding provided by RTA.
- In 2020, RTA completed a regional Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP) and began a consolidated Section 5310 call for projects process.

Supported Goals



This priority focuses on expanding and improving demand-response services across the region, requiring strong partnerships between providers to coordinate and promote services, and implementing technologies that make it easier to book and operate services.



Figure 34: WAVE provides fixed-route and demand-response service in parts of Washtenaw County. Image Credit: WAVE.

Implementation Activities

With No New Funding

- Promote existing services in the region through an educational campaign.
- Create a task force dedicated to streamlining transfers between services and developing a regional eligibility and registration process.
- Update the CHSTP.

With One-Time Funding

- Identify funding and develop a Rides to Wellness pilot.

With Sustainable Funding

- Build on myride2 to create a regional paratransit call center and booking system.
- Broaden eligibility for demand-response services.
- Expand hours of operation for demand-response services and provide same-day service options.
- Implement a sustainable Rides to Wellness program.

Grow Mobility Access to Local Communities & Regional Destinations

Ensure transit service that is tailored to local needs is available in every community in Southeast Michigan. This can include demand-response and microtransit services in lower density areas, new or extended fixed-route service in higher density areas, and express services that serve major regional destinations and provide access to other regions.

Why it Matters

Public transit is an essential service for those who depend on it, including the 12.5 percent of households in the region that are transit dependent.²⁵ Nationally, people can save over \$13,000 a year by riding transit instead of owning a car, a huge sum for many of the region's residents that can be invested back into local communities.²⁶

With new millage funding in Oakland County, network gaps have been filled in many areas that previously lacked transit service. However, some communities in Washtenaw County and western Wayne County lack transit service and connections to major destinations. As an example, according to an analysis using Remix, a seven mile long route extension in Livonia would connect people to over 16,000 additional jobs, as well as a hospital, college, and nursing home.

Public Feedback

On average, respondents to the survey said expanding service to new areas was their highest priority. People are especially interested in new airport services and increasing the Michigan Flyer service hours. Some respondents also desire connections to Livingston County, outside of the RTA region.

Recent Progress and Accomplishments

- RTA's Detroit to Airport Express is anticipated to begin service in spring 2024.
- New funding in Oakland County has allowed SMART, NOTA, People's Express, and WOTA to expand their services to more areas.
- The D2A2 pilot began operating in 2021 and provided 7,000 rides in October 2023.

Supported Goals



Regional partnerships and innovative service pilots will be required to expand services to parts of the region that lack transit service, or that warrant higher levels of service.



Figure 35: SMART's Connector provides demand-response service to communities across metropolitan Detroit. Image Credit: SMART.

Implementation Activities

With No New Funding

- Launch the Detroit to Airport Express pilot and evaluate the service for long-term potential.
- Partner with intercity bus and rail service providers to foster connections to other regions.

With One-Time Funding

- Pilot additional airport services and other regional express routes.

With Sustainable Funding

- Sustain D2A2 and Detroit to Airport Express as permanent services.
- Expand services in communities across the region and, in particular, in areas of Washtenaw and Wayne counties that are not currently served.
- Adding airport express service connections to Macomb and Oakland Counties.

Regionalize Trip Planning and Fare Payment Services

Implement a regional multimodal fare collection system that simplifies payment and transfers between services and modes, and streamlines fare policies across providers, creating a seamless navigation experience. Deploy a trip planning platform that helps riders plan and schedule trips, and that is integrated with the regional fare system.

Why it Matters

Navigating the transit and mobility network can be challenging, especially without a centralized source of information on all services available in Southeast Michigan, or one easy way to pay for them. Cities across the United States are working to integrate transportation options into a unified app or fare card. Streamlined, regional fare payments and trip planning tools can help riders easily plan and pay for trips, providing greater freedom of movement.

Public Feedback

Recent engagement with transit riders revealed that fare systems in the region need improved connection, both between agencies and modes to ensure riders are getting the best fares.

Recent Progress and Accomplishments

- RTA is currently developing a mobility wallet pilot to test the feasibility of a solution and determine what would be needed for a broader implementation.
- myride2 offers web-based information and call centers to help people identify and use available mobility services in the region.
- QLINE provides zero-fare service, and DPM is piloting zero-fare service in 2024, removing a barrier to service and making it easier to connect to other modes.
- RTA's MI Ride Paratransit App Pilot resulted in lessons learned for a future solution.
- DDOT, SMART, and TheRide offer app-based payment options.

Supported Goals



Innovative payment and trip planning technologies will improve current services by removing barriers to accessing them. This priority requires utilizing new payment technologies, and building partnerships between transit agencies and other mobility providers.



Figure 36: Tapping fare cards, credit cards, and mobile wallets has become a faster and easier way to pay fares. Image Credit: TheRapid.

Implementation Activities

With No New Funding

- Continue to develop and implement the mobility wallet pilot project.
- Continue to collaborate with MDOT on their statewide MaaS system.

With One-Time Funding

- Deploy an account-based regional fare system that can be integrated with existing trip planning tools.
- Develop regional technology standards to ensure interoperability between technology systems.
- Create standardized data specifications and a publicly available GTFS data repository to support trip planning tools.
- Integrate myride2 with trip booking systems.

With Sustainable Funding

- Develop a regional MaaS platform that includes paratransit trip-booking.

Enhance Ride Quality and Promote On-Board Safety

Enhance the rider experience by addressing real and perceived safety and cleanliness concerns through marketing campaigns, staff training, upgraded onboard technologies, and a transit ambassadors program that is focused on customer service, community outreach, rider support, and a sense of security.

Why it Matters

Flying is the safest way to travel, but that does not stop people from clinging to the armrest during takeoff.²⁷ Commonly held perceptions of safety and cleanliness concerns on public transit cause some people to avoid it if they can. Though data indicate that public transit is safer than driving from a safety and security perspective, perceptions of a lack of safety are a barrier to transit use.²⁸ Addressing actual and perceived safety and cleanliness concerns will improve the rider experience and help increase ridership.

Public Feedback

Survey respondents expressed that safety was a high priority among initiatives that would remove barriers to using transit. In DDOT's [2023 Title VI Non-Rider Survey Report](#), 75 percent of respondents cited safety concerns on the bus as a reason why they do not ride transit. The second highest reason was cleanliness, which 44 percent of respondents labeled as a barrier to ridership. Though public transit is safe to ride and vehicles and stations are cleaned regularly, public and media perceptions need to be addressed to make the transit system more attractive.

Recent Progress and Accomplishments

- The Transit Police regularly monitor DDOT, DPM, and QLINE services and buses and the QLINE have on-board cameras.
- DPM is updating the security equipment at all stations including cameras and public address (PA) systems.
- TheRide posts security guards at transit centers to promote pedestrian and passenger security.

Supported Goals



Perception and stigma are closely tied to public opinions of safety and cleanliness that discourage some people from using public transit. Partnerships between RTA, transit providers, Transit Police, and social service agencies and organizations will help RTA improve the rider experience and help riders in need of additional support.



Figure 37: TriMet's Transit Safety Officers focus on customer service, community outreach, helping riders in need, and addressing safety concerns. Image Credit: TriMet.

Implementation Activities

With No New Funding

- Develop a public information campaign that promotes how safe public transit is and on vehicle cleaning protocols.

With One-Time Funding

- Develop de-escalation and rider support training programs for transit operators.
- Upgrade onboard safety and security equipment.

With Sustainable Funding

- Staff a transit ambassador program that provides riders with information, responds to cleanliness incidents, gathers feedback, addresses safety concerns, and assists riders in need of additional support services.

Upgrade Multimodal Connections To and Between Services

Increase access to and from public transit by improving pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure at and near transit stops, promoting complete streets designs, enhancing park-and-ride services, and increasing the availability of microtransit and micromobility options.

Why it Matters

Trips using multiple modes, services, or routes can extend the mobility range of riders and increase the number of destinations they can reach. In 2019, 44 percent of riders in Southeast Michigan made one or more transfers during their transit trips, while others connected to bikeshare, demand-response services, and other first and last mile solutions.²⁹ Multimodal trips can be made easier by locating major transit services near one another and forming essential partnerships between providers. Mobility hubs provide an opportunity to co-locate services such as transit stops, micromobility, secure bike parking, microtransit drop-off zones, and park-and-rides.

Public Feedback

Over half of Connect/D survey respondents reported riding a bicycle and a bus in the same trip. Additionally, many DDOT survey respondents indicated a desire for route connection and timing improvements.

Recent Progress and Accomplishments

- MoGo is planning an expansion that will add 20 new bikeshare stations that facilitate transit access in Detroit.
- In 2023, the City of Detroit was awarded \$24.8 million through the Safe Streets for All Program to improve safety and bus stop accessibility at 56 high-crash intersections to support safer transfers.
- TheRide is planning improvements to the Blake and Ypsilanti Transit Centers, and DDOT is constructing the State Fair Transit Center.

Supported Goals



Upgrading first and last mile solutions will improve access to the existing transit system and will leverage innovative modes like microtransit and micromobility. It will require forming partnerships between agencies, mobility service providers, and government entities that own roadways.



Figure 38: SMART Flex service operates in multiple zones and can be used to travel to and from bus stops. Image Credit: City of Dearborn.

Implementation Activities

With No New Funding

- Partner with local municipalities to improve pedestrian and bicycle access to transit stops through complete streets policies and guidelines.
- Prioritize key locations for mobility hubs, building on locations identified by *TheRide2045* and DDOT.
- Partner with MDOT to improve bus access to park-and-ride lots.

With One-Time Funding

- Partner with MoGo to further expand bikeshare service that supports connecting to and from transit.

With Sustainable Funding

- Build mobility hubs at major stops and transfer points.
- Expand microtransit services to facilitate access to transit stops.

Advance Accessibility, Comfort, and Well-being at Transit Stops

Ensure transit stops meet ADA standards and have amenities and security features to help all riders feel comfortable waiting for their vehicle. This can include improving sidewalks and curb ramps, and providing seating, shelters, lighting, real-time signage, and greenscaping.

Why it Matters

Transit stop amenities help riders feel safer, healthier, and comfortable and shield them from inclement weather. Research has shown that people waiting at bus stops with shelters perceive their wait times to be shorter than at bus stops without them.³⁰ Another recent study found that improved stops had increased use compared to unimproved stops, increasing ridership on those routes.³¹ Making sidewalk networks more accessible can also shift ridership from paratransit to fixed-route service by removing barriers to access.³²

Public Feedback

Bus stop amenities and safety features, like shelters, seating, and lighting, are some of the most commonly requested improvements in the region, but can be challenging for agencies to implement due to limited funding, lengthy environmental review and permitting processes, and a lack of control over sidewalks and streets. Recent surveys conducted by DDOT for its network redesign reiterated this desire.

Recent Progress and Accomplishments

- SMART is ensuring ADA compliant bus stops are installed prior to launching new and extended bus routes, and will begin a bus stop condition assessment in 2024.
- DPM plans to update all stations with new security technology and informational kiosks in 2024.

Supported Goals



Safer, healthier, and more comfortable stops will improve riders' experiences on existing services and will increase accessibility for people who use mobility devices or strollers. Partnerships with municipalities and MDOT will be required to upgrade transit stops and ensure ADA compliance.



Figure 39: Shelters, lighting, seating, bike racks, and greenscaping are important components of transit stops that promote well-being. Image Credit: Reimagine Washtenaw.

Implementation Activities

With No New Funding

- Conduct a regional bus stop and rail station inventory to assess current conditions and ADA accessibility, and to prioritize improvements.
- Work with road agencies to streamline permitting processes for transit stop improvements.

With One-Time Funding

- Issue an Access to Transit Program Call for Projects to fund transit stop priority projects.
- Partner with road agencies to create regional design and safety standards for bus stops.

With Sustainable Funding

- Using regional design standards, upgrade stops across the region.

Recruit, Develop, and Retain a Thriving Workforce

Recruit, develop, and retain a diverse and talented workforce to continue reliable operations of current service and the ability to expand services in the future. Ensuring competitive compensation and benefits packages, providing training on new technologies and career advancement, and updating recruitment practices will attract new employees while helping current employees grow and thrive.

Why it Matters

Transit agencies across the nation have struggled to hire and retain the employees needed to operate and maintain transit systems. Without a stable workforce, agencies cannot implement new services, increase frequencies of existing routes, or even maintain current levels of service. According to a survey conducted by the American Public Transit Association (APTA) in February 2022, 92 percent of public transit agencies are struggling to hire new employees, and 66 percent are having difficulty retaining them. Bus operators and bus maintenance staff were ranked as the two most difficult positions to fill. Labor shortages have impacted transit service, with 71 percent of agencies having either cut service or postponed deploying service increases.

Public Feedback

Some survey respondents felt that staffing shortfalls need to be addressed in order to deliver current services before expansions can be successfully implemented.

Recent Progress and Accomplishments

- DDOT and SMART are offering bonuses and incentives to attract new bus operators and to encourage high attendance.
- SMART has hosted hiring events such as the Drive a Bus with Us career fair, where potential candidates could try driving fixed-route and paratransit vehicles.

Supported Goals



Investing in the transit workforce is critical to expanding and enhancing services. RTA and transit agencies need to partner with schools and workforce training centers to develop innovative solutions to this challenge.



Figure 40: Vehicle operators, mechanics, and service attendants are the front-line staff that make Southeast Michigan move. Image Credit: TheRide.

Implementation Activities

With No New Funding

- Develop a regional task force to investigate recruitment and retention challenges and develop recommendations to address them together.
- Elevate marketing campaigns on the benefits of working in public transit.

With One-Time Funding

- Partner with agencies to formalize training and coaching programs that promote career pathways and help employees advance in their jobs.

With Sustainable Funding

- Build joint training centers for new and seasoned employees.
- Create pay and benefits packages that are competitive with other transportation industries.
- Run joint recruitment campaigns.

Modernize and Maintain Infrastructure in a State of Good Repair

Maintain transit infrastructure, including buses and trains, passenger and maintenance facilities, and service vehicles, in a state of good repair to ensure continuous and safe operations. When replacing infrastructure, integrate innovative technologies and best practices that improve operational efficiencies and environmental impacts.

Why it Matters

Maintaining existing assets is critical to continuing to operate transit services and the foundation for service expansions. Preventive maintenance routines can ensure agencies can provide quality service for years to come. As agencies seek to replace infrastructure, they need to be forward-thinking and incorporate best practices and new technologies. For example, agencies can replace vehicles with low- and no-emission vehicles over time, allowing them to incorporate charging and refueling infrastructure into facilities and to train staff to use and maintain new technology.

Public Feedback

Public feedback tends to focus more on improvements to the system, rather than ensuring that current service can be sustained. Maintaining a state of good repair is critical to accomplishing both. Some respondents to the 2023 survey felt that funding should support service enhancements before adopting new technologies such as low- and no-emission vehicles.

Recent Progress and Accomplishments

- DDOT is constructing the new Coolidge Terminal and Maintenance Facility.
- In order to increase capacity and accommodate low- and no-emission vehicles, TheRide plans to construct a new garage and renovate the Ypsilanti Transit Center.
- DPM is working to acquire replacement trains from the Toronto Transit Commission.
- In 2023, RTA distributed \$3 million in Section 5310 funding for agencies to replace and purchase new vehicles.

Supported Goals



Maintaining transit assets will allow service providers to operate and improve core services. Innovative technologies and collaborative approaches will be considered as assets are rehabilitated or replaced.



Figure 41: In November 2023, Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan spoke at the groundbreaking of DDOT's Coolidge Terminal and Maintenance Facility, which replaces a closed and obsolete facility. Image Credit: City of Detroit.

Implementation Activities

With No New Funding

- Develop a regional strategy for discretionary grant applications.
- Develop a capital-needs based approach to annual federal funding allocations.
- Develop a capital plan for 5310-eligible agencies to understand their long-term needs.

With One-Time Funding

- Replace vehicles at the end of their useful lives with low- and no-emission vehicles.

With Sustainable Funding

- Continuously maintain and modernize transit infrastructure and address project backlogs.

Regional Transit Priorities and Actions Matrix

This table includes all of the regional transit priorities along with their actions for each funding category: No New Funding, One-Time Funding, and Sustainable Funding.

Figure 42: Regional Transit Priorities and Actions Matrix

Regional Transit Investment Priority	Funding Category	Implementation Activity
Invest in and Implement a Rapid Transit Network	No New Funding	Prioritize regional corridors for capital investment and develop a funding strategy for capital improvements and operations.
Invest in and Implement a Rapid Transit Network	One Time Funding	Conduct or update corridor studies to determine which rapid transit modes best support local and regional needs.
Invest in and Implement a Rapid Transit Network	One Time Funding	Partner with municipalities to develop policies that support transit-oriented communities.
Invest in and Implement a Rapid Transit Network	One Time Funding	Complete the project development and environmental review required to fund rapid transit corridor projects.
Invest in and Implement a Rapid Transit Network	Sustainable Funding	Build and operate a network of regional rapid transit corridors.
Increase Frequency, Reliability, and Hours on Fixed-Route Services	No New Funding	Identify and implement tactical pilot projects that increase reliability (e.g., temporary dedicated lanes).
Increase Frequency, Reliability, and Hours on Fixed-Route Services	One Time Funding	Pilot frequency and service hours improvements on priority routes identified in agency plans.
Increase Frequency, Reliability, and Hours on Fixed-Route Services	One Time Funding	Deploy small-scale capital projects that improve reliability at key locations, such as in-lane stops.
Increase Frequency, Reliability, and Hours on Fixed-Route Services	Sustainable Funding	Increase frequencies and service hours on routes across the region.
Increase Frequency, Reliability, and Hours on Fixed-Route Services	Sustainable Funding	Implement corridor-wide capital projects that increase reliability, such as TSP and dedicated lanes.
Build On and Coordinate Demand-Response Services	No New Funding	Promote existing services in the region through an educational campaign.
Build On and Coordinate Demand-Response Services	No New Funding	Create a task force dedicated to streamlining transfers between services and developing a regional eligibility and registration process.
Build On and Coordinate Demand-Response Services	No New Funding	Update the CHSTP.

Regional Transit Investment Priority	Funding Category	Implementation Activity
Build On and Coordinate Demand-Response Services	One Time Funding	Identify funding and develop a Rides to Wellness pilot.
Build On and Coordinate Demand-Response Services	Sustainable Funding	Build on myride2 to create a regional paratransit call center and booking system.
Build On and Coordinate Demand-Response Services	Sustainable Funding	Broaden eligibility for demand-response services.
Build On and Coordinate Demand-Response Services	Sustainable Funding	Expand hours of operation for demand-response services and provide same-day service options.
Grow Mobility Access to Local Communities & Regional Destinations	No New Funding	Launch the Detroit to Airport Express pilot and evaluate the service for long-term potential.
Grow Mobility Access to Local Communities & Regional Destinations	No New Funding	Partner with intercity bus and rail service providers to foster connections to other regions.
Grow Mobility Access to Local Communities & Regional Destinations	One Time Funding	Pilot additional airport services and other regional express routes.
Grow Mobility Access to Local Communities & Regional Destinations	Sustainable Funding	Sustain D2A2 and Detroit to Airport Express as permanent services.
Grow Mobility Access to Local Communities & Regional Destinations	Sustainable Funding	Expand services in communities across the region and, in particular, in areas of Washtenaw and Wayne counties that are not currently served.
Grow Mobility Access to Local Communities & Regional Destinations	Sustainable Funding	Add airport express service connections to Macomb and Oakland Counties.
Regionalize Trip Planning and Fare Payment Services	No New Funding	Continue to develop and implement the mobility wallet pilot project.
Regionalize Trip Planning and Fare Payment Services	No New Funding	Continue to collaborate with MDOT on their statewide MaaS system.
Regionalize Trip Planning and Fare Payment Services	One Time Funding	Deploy an account-based regional fare system that can be integrated with existing trip planning tools.
Regionalize Trip Planning and Fare Payment Services	One Time Funding	Develop regional technology standards to ensure interoperability between technology systems.
Regionalize Trip Planning and Fare Payment Services	One Time Funding	Create standardized data specifications and a publicly available GTFS data repository to support trip planning tools.
Regionalize Trip Planning and Fare Payment Services	One Time Funding	Integrate myride2 with trip booking systems.

Regional Transit Investment Priority	Funding Category	Implementation Activity
Regionalize Trip Planning and Fare Payment Services	Sustainable Funding	Develop a regional MaaS platform that includes paratransit trip-booking.
Enhance Ride Quality and Promote On-board Safety	No New Funding	Develop a public information campaign that promotes how safe public transit is and on vehicle cleaning protocols.
Enhance Ride Quality and Promote On-board Safety	One Time Funding	Develop de-escalation and rider support training programs for transit operators.
Enhance Ride Quality and Promote On-board Safety	One Time Funding	Upgrade onboard safety and security equipment.
Enhance Ride Quality and Promote On-board Safety	Sustainable Funding	Staff a transit ambassador program that provides riders with information, responds to cleanliness incidents, gathers feedback, addresses safety concerns, and assists riders in need of additional support services.
Upgrade Multimodal Connections To and Between Services	No New Funding	Partner with local municipalities to improve pedestrian and bicycle access to transit stops through complete streets policies and guidelines.
Upgrade Multimodal Connections To and Between Services	No New Funding	Prioritize key locations for mobility hubs, building on locations identified by <i>TheRide2045</i> and DDOT.
Upgrade Multimodal Connections To and Between Services	No New Funding	Partner with MDOT to improve bus access to park-and-ride lots.
Upgrade Multimodal Connections To and Between Services	One Time Funding	Partner with MoGo to further expand bikeshare service that supports connecting to and from transit.
Upgrade Multimodal Connections To and Between Services	Sustainable Funding	Build mobility hubs at major stops and transfer points.
Upgrade Multimodal Connections To and Between Services	Sustainable Funding	Expand microtransit services to facilitate access to transit stops.
Advance Accessibility, Comfort, and Safety at Transit Stops	No New Funding	Conduct a regional bus stop and rail station inventory to assess current conditions and ADA accessibility, and to prioritize improvements.
Advance Accessibility, Comfort, and Safety at Transit Stops	No New Funding	Work with road agencies to streamline permitting processes for transit stop improvements.
Advance Accessibility, Comfort, and Safety at Transit Stops	One Time Funding	Issue an Access to Transit Program Call for Projects to fund transit stop priority projects.
Advance Accessibility, Comfort, and Safety at Transit Stops	One Time Funding	Partner with road agencies to create regional design and safety standards for bus stops.
Advance Accessibility, Comfort, and Safety at Transit Stops	Sustainable Funding	Using regional design standards, upgrade stops across the region.

Regional Transit Investment Priority	Funding Category	Implementation Activity
Recruit, Develop, and Retain a Thriving Workforce	No New Funding	Develop a regional task force to investigate recruitment and retention challenges and develop recommendations to address them together.
Recruit, Develop, and Retain a Thriving Workforce	No New Funding	Elevate marketing campaigns on the benefits of working in public transit.
Recruit, Develop, and Retain a Thriving Workforce	One Time Funding	Partner with agencies to formalize training and coaching programs that promote career pathways and help employees advance in their jobs.
Recruit, Develop, and Retain a Thriving Workforce	Sustainable Funding	Build joint training centers for new and seasoned employees.
Recruit, Develop, and Retain a Thriving Workforce	Sustainable Funding	Create pay and benefits packages that are competitive with other transportation industries.
Recruit, Develop, and Retain a Thriving Workforce	Sustainable Funding	Run joint recruitment campaigns.
Modernize and Maintain Infrastructure in a State of Good Repair	No New Funding	Develop a regional strategy for discretionary grant applications.
Modernize and Maintain Infrastructure in a State of Good Repair	No New Funding	Develop a capital-needs based approach to annual federal funding allocations.
Modernize and Maintain Infrastructure in a State of Good Repair	No New Funding	Develop a capital plan for 5310-eligible agencies to understand their long-term needs.
Modernize and Maintain Infrastructure in a State of Good Repair	One Time Funding	Replace vehicles at the end of their useful lives with low- and no-emission vehicles.
Modernize and Maintain Infrastructure in a State of Good Repair	Sustainable Funding	Continuously maintain and modernize transit infrastructure and address project backlogs.

THE PATH FORWARD

THE PATH FORWARD

Together, RTA and its partners can carry out some of the implementation activities outlined in this plan to improve, expand, innovate, and sustain transit services in Southeast Michigan. However, RTA needs a stable regional funding source to invest in the projects, services, and programs that will transform mobility and support a vibrant region.

Next Steps

Without a stable regional funding source, RTA will work with transit agencies and other partners to plan, fund, coordinate, and accelerate transit improvements. RTA develops a business plan on an annual basis to align its budget and staffing to carry out priority projects. The RTMP will be used to develop the business plan and put resources toward projects that require minimal funding and toward grant applications that will provide one-time funding for specific projects. For example, the ongoing mobility wallet pilot, D2A2, and Detroit to Airport Express are funded through grants that will allow RTA to test new services while seeking permanent funding solutions.

The RTMP will be updated annually to capture changes to regional priorities based on future progress and input from riders, partners and the general public.

The Path to Regional Transit Funding

Public transit is infrastructure, and regions across the US are investing in it to support economic growth. Funding sources for transit vary from region to region, but common sources are sales, property, income, payroll, and fuel taxes, vehicle registration fees, and tolls, among other sources. In Southeast Michigan, RTA is authorized to collect a property tax millage and a vehicle registration tax within its service area, subject to voter approval. Based on recent estimates, in 2023, a one mill property tax could have generated approximately \$160 million, and a \$1.25 vehicle registration fee could have generated \$114 million. Though it would require changes to the state constitution, and potentially to RTA's enabling legislation, as a comparison, a one cent local sales tax could have generated an estimated \$850 million in 2023.

A 1.0 mill property tax would equal

\$112 per year



for the average home in Southeast Michigan

A \$1.00 vehicle registration tax would equal

\$37 per year



for the average vehicle in Southeast Michigan

Figure 43: Subject to voter approval, RTA is authorized to collect a property tax and a vehicle registration fee.

Expenditure Plan and Ballot Process

Once a funding source (or sources) has been identified, RTA will develop an expenditure plan that proposes a multi-year program of projects that can be carried out with projected revenues. This process will involve considering different project scenarios (for example, which routes to increase frequency on or where to construct rapid transit corridors). RTA will engage with the public to determine which scenario to adopt. The expenditure plan will also identify metrics to measure successes and help identify future improvements.

RTA can then ask voters to approve a property tax and/or a vehicle registration tax to support this plan. A ballot initiative has to occur during a regular general election, so the next opportunities are November 2024 and 2026. To get on the ballot, the measure would need approval by seven of the nine voting RTA board members, including at least one from each county and the City of Detroit.

Stay Engaged!

RTA cannot achieve its vision alone. The priorities outlined in this plan will require engagement, coordination, support, leadership, and action from RTA's regional partners, including transit agencies and providers, municipalities, counties, the state, businesses, nonprofits, elected officials, community leaders, advocates, and riders. You can support RTA and its vision by signing up for [newsletters](#), following RTA on social media, attending public meetings, and most importantly, by taking public transit and talking to your friends, families, and colleagues about how important it is to you and to the region.

It is never too late to provide input. Reach out to RTA, whether by email, social media, or in person to let us know how public transit can better service your needs. RTA's Board of Directors meets on the third Thursday of every month, the Providers Advisory Committee (PAC) meets quarterly, and the CAC meets monthly. Meeting calendars are available on [RTA's website](#). You can also [apply to join RTA's CAC](#).

In 2024, RTA will be updating the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (CHSTP). The current plan, [OnHand: Expanding Transportation Access Across Southeast Michigan](#), was completed in 2020. Stay engaged with RTA for updates on the plan and to find out about opportunities to provide input.



Figure 44: Stay involved with RTA through RTA's website, social media, and public meetings. Image Credit: TheRide.

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