

Gastonia Transit Expansion Study



GASTON URBAN AREA



Metropolitan Planning Organization

Final Report
September 2007

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Section 1: Introduction



1.1. PURPOSE OF STUDY

The Gastonia Transit Expansion Study was undertaken by the Gaston Urban Area MPO and funded locally by the City of Gastonia to determine opportunities for expanded public transit services in Gastonia and throughout Gaston County. Currently, transit services operated by Gastonia Transit (the local urban transit system) are limited to the area inside the city limits of Gastonia. Some general public transportation is provided by Gaston County ACCESS (the local community transit system), but it is limited in scale and scope. ACCESS primarily serves clients of human service agencies and other customers with special transportation needs.

Gaston County is experiencing growth pressures, and local leaders have expressed an interest in studying the potential need for expanded transit services. In recognition of the limited financial resources for transit, there is also a desire to explore opportunities to expand the reach of transit through increased coordination between Gastonia Transit and Gaston County ACCESS, as well as with systems in neighboring counties. This study was envisioned primarily to assess the feasibility of expanding current transit operations to better serve other municipalities outside of Gastonia in Gaston County; however, it is also taking a more comprehensive look at service needs in general, including the need for additional hours of operation, improvements to the frequency of service, development of expanded services to neighboring counties, and other enhancements.

In addition to improving the overall mobility of the residents of Gaston County, expanding the transit system may also help the region address its non-attainment status for ambient air quality and emissions, as well as issues related to limited or lack of funding for road improvements. One of the goals of the study is to identify transit system improvements that will encourage a mode shift from the automobile to transit, in an effort to address these issues.

The primary source of data for this study is input from local residents and stakeholders. A significant survey effort was conducted, as well as interviews with stakeholders from various jurisdictions in the county. These data were supplemented by other objective data including demographic analyses and an examination of existing transit services.

The product of this study effort is a series of recommendations for expanded transit service, including the cost of each alternative. The study is intended to be a short-range planning effort, with recommendations that could be implemented in the next three to five years (based on funding availability). To reach conclusions regarding near-term transit enhancements, the following tasks were conducted:

- *Task 1: Project Initiation*
This task includes project initiation activities such as the establishment of a “working group” to provide information and feedback during the planning process.
- *Task 2: Analysis of Existing Services*
This task is an objective and subjective examination of existing Gastonia Transit services, to determine strengths and opportunities for improvement.

- *Task 3: Needs Assessment*
This task utilizes a demographic analysis and the identification of unserved areas to help identify potential service expansion opportunities.
- *Task 4: Public and Stakeholder Input*
Along with other, more objective analyses conducted under Task 3, public input provides valuable information regarding transit needs and potential expansion opportunities. Several approaches were taken to solicit community input for these purposes.
- *Task 5: Development of Service Expansion Alternatives*
Based on the existing service evaluation and needs assessment, options for expanded transit services were developed for consideration.
- *Task 6: Investigation of Opportunities for Coordination / Consolidation*
The primary objective of this task is to develop strategies that could be used as a starting point for increased coordination between Gastonia Transit and Gaston County ACCESS, as well as coordination between Gastonia Transit and other systems in neighboring counties.
- *Task 7: Implementation Plan*
Recommendations for service expansion and coordination strategies are formulated and prioritized in this task.

1.2. STUDY AREA

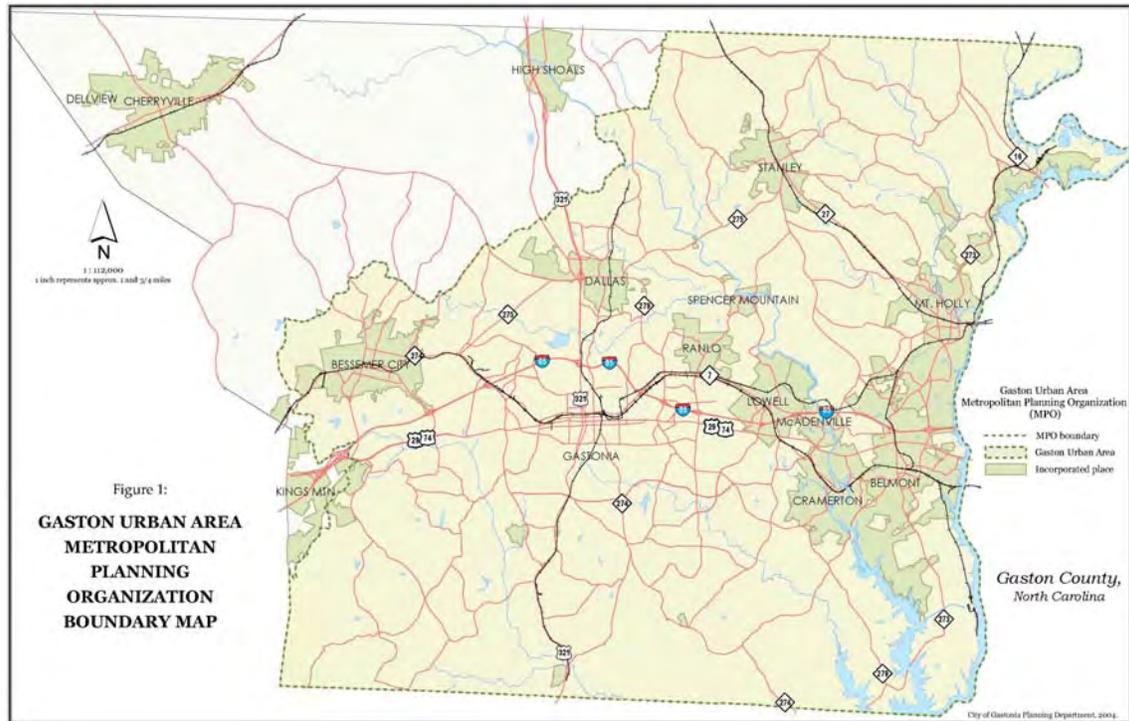
The study area for this project is Gaston County. Although the bulk of the focus was on the urbanized area within Gaston County, the remaining rural areas in the county were also considered. Likewise, connections to neighboring counties were also considered. Exhibit 1-1 illustrates the study area.

1.3. WORKING GROUP

A “working group”, comprised of Gaston Urban Area MPO staff and local stakeholders, was convened to discuss study progress and ideas regarding transit expansion and coordination options. This group met four times throughout the study process. The following municipalities and organizations were represented in the working group.

- City of Bessemer City
- Centralina Council of Governments
- Town of Cramerton
- Town of Dallas
- Gaston County ACCESS
- Gaston County Planning
- City of Gastonia (Gastonia Transit)
- City of Gastonia (Planning / MPO)
- Gastonia Police Department
- Town of McAdenville
- City of Mount Holly
- North Carolina Department of Transportation
- Private citizens

Exhibit 1-1: Transit Expansion Study Area



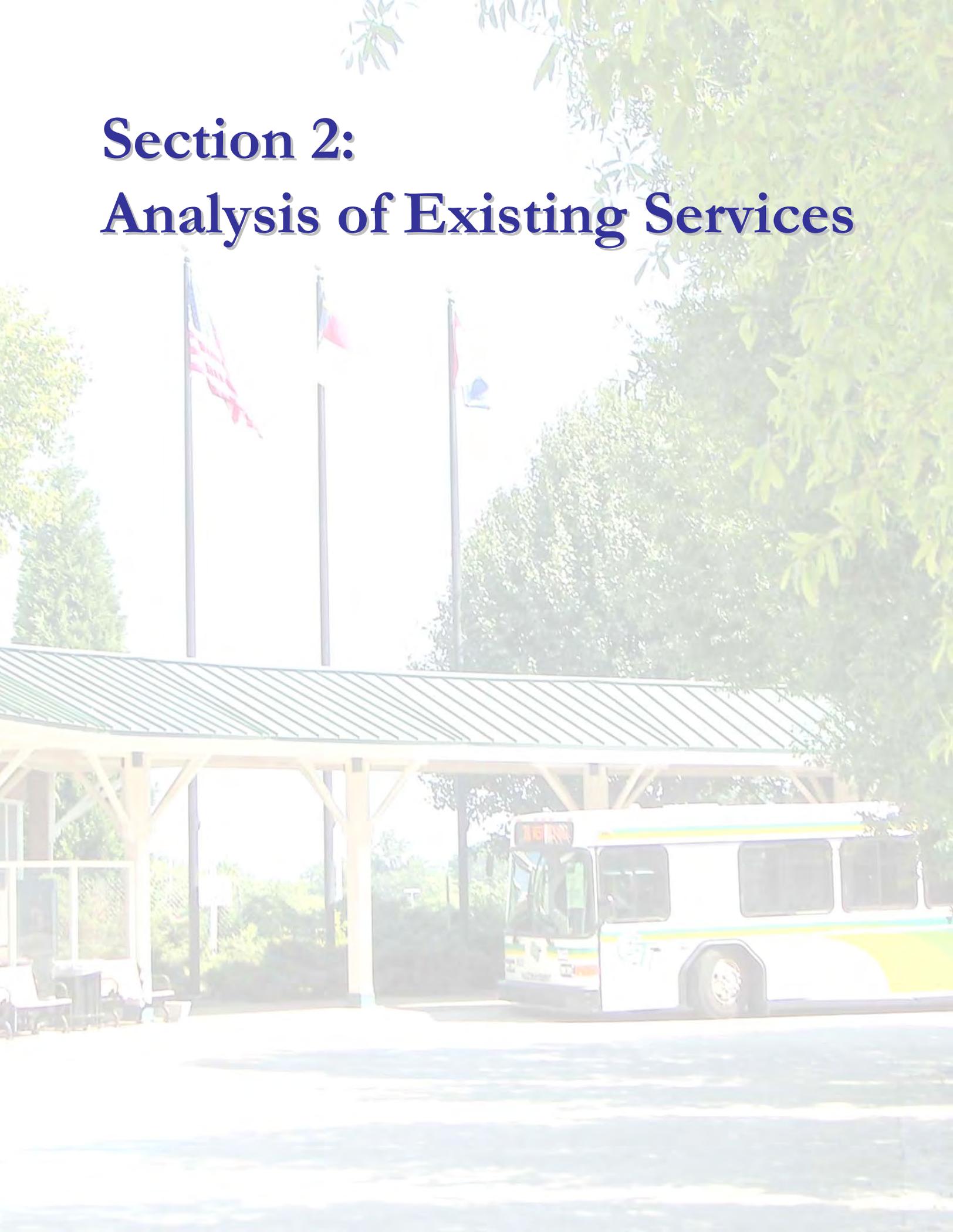
1.4. REPORT LAYOUT

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:

- Section 2 presents an analysis of current transit services that are available in Gaston County;
- Section 3 provides information collected as part of the transit needs assessment;
- Section 4 discusses scenarios for restructuring existing transit services;
- Section 5 illustrates various service expansion alternatives to be considered; and
- Section 6 describes the recommended implementation plan for improvements.

Appendices A-D provide supplementary data that support the discussions contained elsewhere in this document.

Section 2: Analysis of Existing Services



2.1. SUMMARY OF AVAILABLE SERVICES

Fixed-route service is currently available within the city limits of Gastonia; demand-response transportation is provided to the areas outside Gastonia; and an express route links commuters to Charlotte. However, these services are limited in terms of hours, frequency, and geographic coverage.

Gastonia Transit

Gastonia Transit operates nine fixed routes, using a fleet of six active buses (eight total buses are available, including seven 35-foot diesel buses and one 40-foot compressed natural gas bus). Service is provided generally between the hours of 5:00 AM and 6:30 PM on weekdays, and between 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM on Saturdays. No service is operated on Sundays or on most holidays. The regular fare for fixed-route service is \$1.00, and a reduced fare for elderly and disabled passengers is available for \$0.50. Transfers to connect between routes are free.

All routes operate according to a “pulse” schedule, in which buses meet at the downtown transfer center (Bradley Station) to enable passengers to transfer between routes. Most routes are completed in a 45-minute cycle, with the exception of the Westfield / Franklin Square route, which operates on a 60-minute cycle. Two buses operate on the Westfield / Franklin Square route, enabling service to be provided every 30 minutes. On the other routes, buses are interlined, meaning that a bus will serve one route on a 45-minute cycle (including layover time), then serve a different route for the next 45-minute cycle before returning to the original route. Therefore, even though the other routes are completed in 45 minutes, service is only available every 90 minutes. Exhibit 2-1 illustrates the operating characteristics of each route. The route map of current GT routes is shown in Appendix E.

Exhibit 2-1: Gastonia Transit Route Operating Characteristics

Route Number	Route Name	Hours of Operation	Cycle Time	Frequency of Service
1	Arlington	M-F: 6:45 AM – 5:50 PM	45 minutes	90 minutes
2	Myrtle	M-F: 5:15 AM – 6:33 PM	45 minutes	45 minutes
3	Highland	M-F: 5:15 AM – 5:43 PM Sat: 8:00 AM – 5:45 PM	M-F: 45 min. Sat: 60 min.	M-F: 90 min. Sat: 60 min.
3A	Highland	M-F: 6:00 AM – 6:33 PM	45 minutes	90 minutes
4	S. York / Linwood	M-F: 6:00 AM – 6:32 PM Sat: 8:00 AM – 4:42 PM	M-F: 45 min. Sat: 60 min.	M-F: 90 min. Sat: 120 min.
5	Hospital	M-F: 6:00 AM – 6:33 PM	45 minutes	90 minutes
7	Westfield / Franklin Square	M-F: 5:35 AM – 6:12 PM Sat: 8:00 AM – 5:48 PM	60 minutes	60 minutes
7A	Westfield / Franklin Square	M-F: 7:05 AM – 5:43 PM	60 minutes	60 minutes
8	Marietta	M-F: 5:15 AM – 5:50 PM Sat: 9:00 AM – 5:48 PM	M-F: 45 min. Sat: 60 min.	M-F: 90 min. Sat: 120 min.

Complementary paratransit service to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is provided within ¾-mile of any fixed route. Three paratransit vans

are used for these trips, and service is operated during the same days and hours as the fixed route service. Passengers must call at least one day in advance to schedule a ride. The cost for ADA service is \$2.00 per trip.

Gaston County ACCESS

Gaston County ACCESS is the designated community transportation provider in Gaston County, providing human service-related transportation services for anyone in the county, as well as general public transportation services for residents living outside of the area served by Gastonia Transit fixed routes. ACCESS operates “subscription” services, which pick up and drop off regularly-scheduled recurring passenger trips; demand-response services, which are scheduled according to specific trip requests; and one deviated fixed route (geared to general public transportation) operating between Bradley Station in downtown Gastonia and Gaston College in Dallas. The majority of ACCESS trips are demand-response trips operated under contract with various human service agencies in the county. General public transportation is also provided on a demand-response basis if space on the vehicles is available.

Service is provided Monday through Friday between 5:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Passengers must call at least 24 hours in advance to schedule transportation. Service is provided on a curb-to-curb basis, and for medical trips, is for non-emergency transportation only. ACCESS serves all of Gaston County, and makes numerous trips to major out-of-county destinations as well. Service to Charlotte is provided Monday through Friday, and service to Durham, Chapel Hill, and Winston-Salem (for medical appointments) is provided on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Other cities are also served with prior approval. General public fares vary based on location with Gaston County. The one-way fare between Gaston College and Bradley Station in Gastonia is \$1.00.

Other Systems

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) operates the Route 85X – Gastonia Express. This route transports passengers from Bradley Station in Gastonia and Abbey Plaza in Belmont to Uptown Charlotte. Park-and-ride facilities are available at both Gaston County stops. Four trips provide service between Gaston County and Charlotte during the morning commute period, and four return trips operate in the afternoon. The current one-way fare for service is \$2.40, although the fare will increase to \$2.60 in July 2007. Ten-ride and monthly passes are also available. Ridership has steadily increased since the service was initiated in 2003, and currently totals over 5,000 passenger trips per month. Funding for the route is shared between the City of Gastonia and the City of Charlotte. Belmont contributes to the Gastonia portion.

The Transportation Administration of Cleveland County (TACC) provides human service and general public transportation in Cleveland County similar to the services provided by ACCESS in Gaston County. TACC makes routine trips to Charlotte several times per week, passing through Gaston County en route. TACC and ACCESS sometimes coordinate trips when special circumstances occur, but TACC typically does not provide transportation for residents of Gaston County.

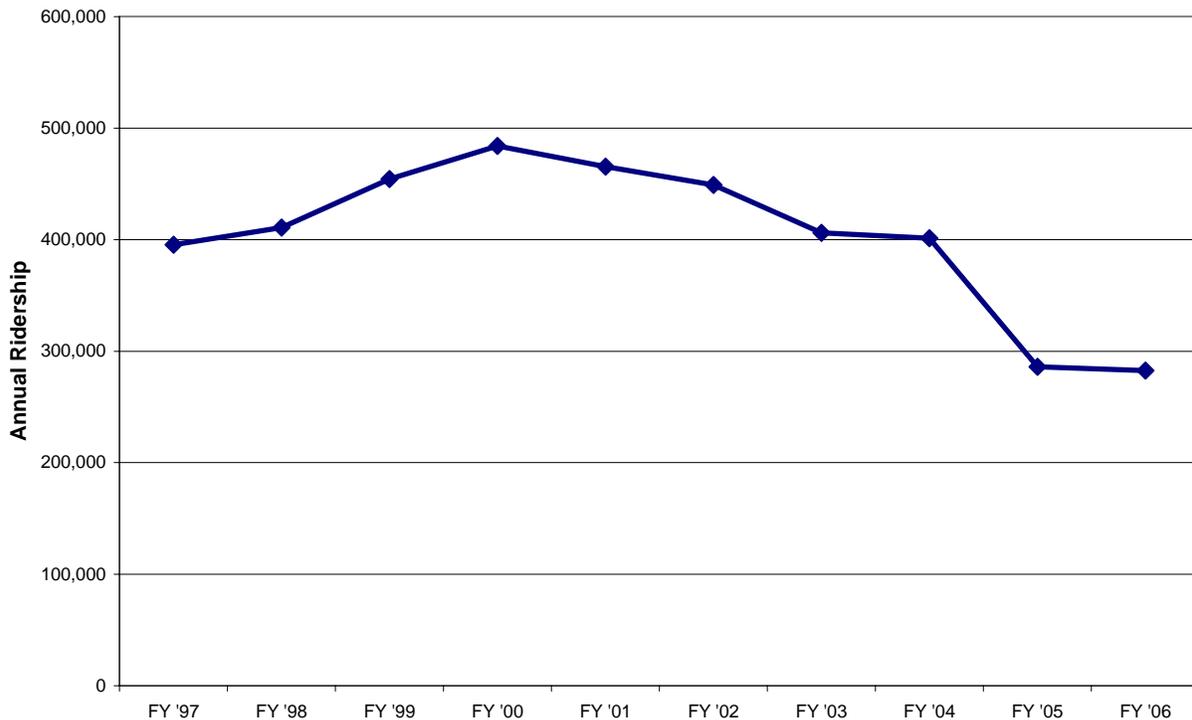
2.2. EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF EXISTING GT SERVICES

Before making suggestions for improvements, it is important to understand how efficiently GT services are operating now. Operating performance was evaluated for the system as a whole, as well as for individual routes.

System-level Analysis

In terms of ridership, GT has experienced a notable decline since the implementation of service frequency changes in 2004. These service changes resulted in a decrease in the frequency of service on most routes from 60 minutes to 90 minutes (interlined loop routes that previously operated with a 30-minute runtime and were modified to run on 45-minute schedules). These changes were implemented as a result of a growing problem related to schedule adherence. New traffic lights, growing traffic congestion, and an increasing number of wheelchair patrons were resulting in buses arriving late to Bradley Station at the conclusion of their runs. Since GT operates as a “pulse” system, with all buses meeting at Bradley Station to enable transfers, one late bus impacts the entire system. In addition, driver morale was a concern because the vehicle operators often did not have time for a break before beginning the next run.

Exhibit 2-2: Gastonia Transit Ridership Trends



At the same time as service frequency decreased, a fare increase of \$0.25 was instituted (from \$0.75 to \$1.00). Even though service remained available to all the areas that were served prior to the route changes (and in some cases, service to new locations was

added), ridership dropped significantly, as illustrated in Exhibit 2-2. Anecdotal evidence from passengers indicates that the fare increase generally was viewed as reasonable by most patrons, so the major decrease in ridership was likely due more to the increased travel times resulting from reduced frequencies, rather than the fare increase.

Ridership has stabilized since the ridership decrease immediately after the service change, but remains about 30% lower than 2004 levels. Exhibit 2-3 illustrates recent trends in additional operational statistics, including vehicle hours, vehicle miles, farebox revenue, and operational expenses. Although vehicle hours and miles have remained virtually constant, ridership has decreased as noted above. Likewise, the significant drop in ridership has offset any increases in fare revenue resulting from the \$0.25 fare increase, and net fare revenue has dropped by almost 6%. Operating expenses have also increased notably, due largely to rising fuel costs.

Exhibit 2-3: Trends in System Operating Data

	<i>FY 04</i>	<i>FY 05</i>	<i>FY 06</i>	<i>% Change</i>
<i>Ridership</i>	401,337	286,073	282,569	-29.6%
<i>Vehicle Hours</i>	20,808	20,777	21,147	1.6%
<i>Vehicle Miles</i>	296,121	289,677	300,871	1.6%
<i>Farebox Revenue</i>	\$172,764	\$148,256	\$162,958	-5.7%
<i>Operational Expenses</i>		\$1,189,261	\$1,448,893	21.8%

Exhibit 2-4 illustrates key system performance measures. Recognizing the ridership drop in combination with consistent vehicle hours and miles of service, the number of passengers per hour and per mile has declined by about 30% since 2004. The average fare paid, taking into account GT's various discounted fares and passes, has risen, but as stated above, these gains have been offset by the decrease in ridership. The operating cost per hour and per mile has also increased in recent years, due to the noted increase in operational costs.

Exhibit 2-4: Trends in System Performance Measures

	<i>FY 04</i>	<i>FY 05</i>	<i>FY 06</i>	<i>% Change</i>
<i>Passengers/Hour</i>	19.29	13.77	13.36	-30.7%
<i>Passengers/Mile</i>	1.36	0.99	0.94	-30.7%
<i>Average Fare Paid</i>	\$0.43	\$0.52	\$0.58	34.0%
<i>Farebox Recovery Ratio</i>		12%	11%	-9.8%
<i>Cost Per Hour</i>		\$57.24	\$68.52	19.7%
<i>Cost Per Mile</i>		\$4.11	\$4.82	17.3%

Route-level Analysis

Ridership trends on individual routes mirror the overall system decreases, with each route registering a significant decline in patronage. However, the decreases are more pronounced on some routes than on others, as shown in Exhibit 2-5. It should be noted that due to route interlining, data for most routes are grouped together. The South Marietta/South York – Linwood routes experienced a drop in ridership of nearly 50% from 2004 and 2005. Other routes had less severe (although still significant) reductions in patronage. Ridership on the Eastridge/Franklin Square route rebounded more in 2006 than ridership on other routes, but in all cases, ridership is well below earlier levels.

Exhibit 2-5: Ridership Trends by Route

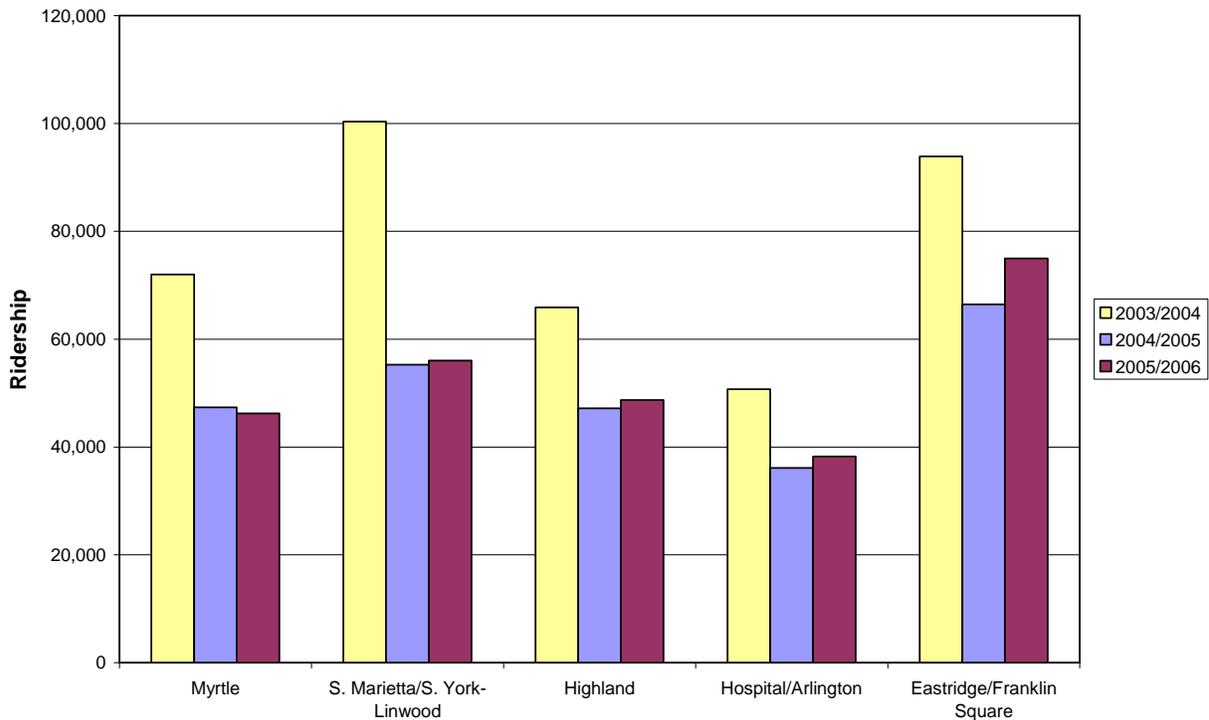


Exhibit 2-6 illustrates additional annual operating statistics by route, using 2006 data. A notable finding from these data is that there is little variation among the routes in terms of passengers per hour. In relation to the amount of service provided on each route, ridership is quite consistent. To some extent, this consistency is a function of operations under a “pulse” system, in which many passengers transfer between routes to complete their trips.

Exhibit 2-6: Key Annual Operating Statistics by Route (2006)

	Myrtle	S. Marietta / S. York-Linwood	Highland	Hospital / Arlington	Eastridge / Franklin Square	Unclassified	Total
Ridership	46,244	56,044	48,707	38,263	74,951	18,360	282,569
Vehicle Hours	3,443	3,953	3,953	3,188	6,503		21,147
Farebox Revenue	\$22,279	\$26,591	\$21,949	\$16,055	\$35,847	\$40,237	\$162,958
Passengers/Hour	13.43	14.18	12.32	12.00	11.53		13.36

Peer Group Analysis

Gastonia Transit system data were examined alongside other small urban transit systems in North Carolina to gain perspective on how GT's operations compare with others in the state. The cities chosen for comparison were based on the fact that all of the systems operate a similar number of vehicles as Gastonia. Hickory and Wilson operate four vehicles in peak service; Gastonia, Concord / Kannapolis, and Rocky Mount all operate six vehicles, and High Point operates eleven vehicles.

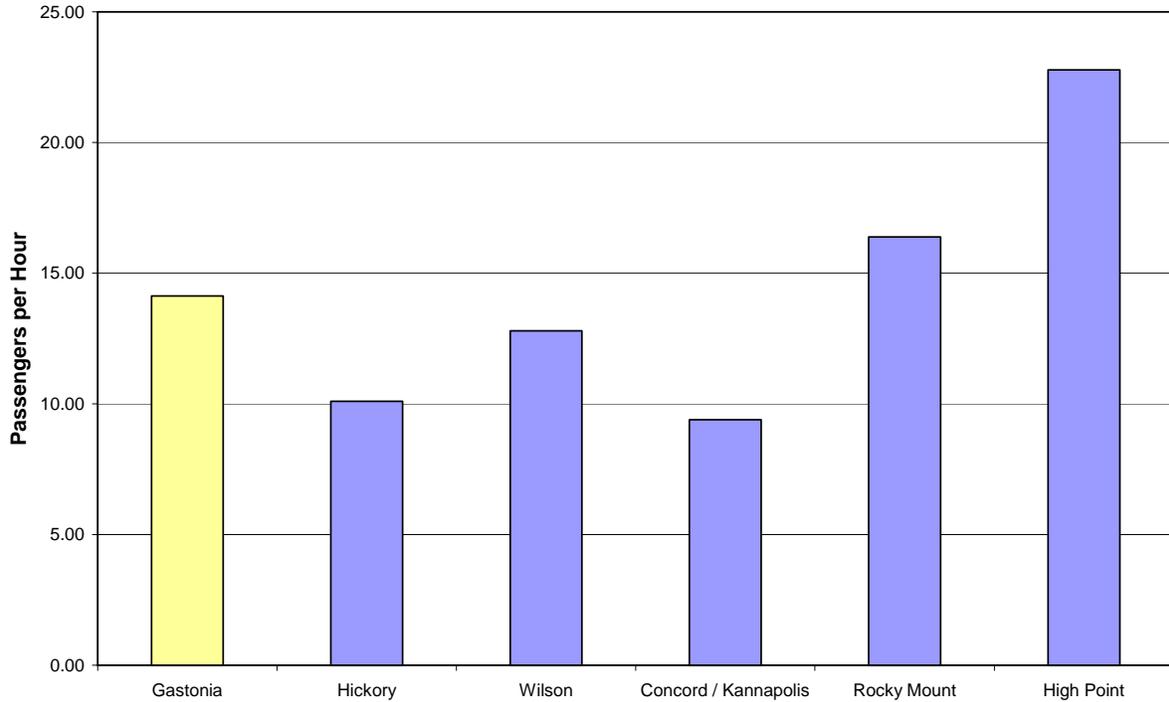
Exhibit 2-7 summarizes key operational characteristics of Gastonia Transit as compared to the peer systems, using 2005 data. As can be seen in the table, Gastonia compares favorably to the peer systems in many categories. An important point in this analysis is that Gastonia still is well within the range of the peer group even after experiencing a 30% decrease in ridership.

Exhibit 2-7: Peer Group Operating Data

	Gastonia	Hickory	Wilson	Concord / Kannapolis	Rocky Mount	High Point
Passengers	293,643	159,683	161,429	232,325	297,958	675,883
Revenue Bus Miles	291,555	189,193	190,471	434,293	302,431	407,772
Revenue Bus Hours	20,777	15,806	12,618	24,735	18,178	29,668
Total Expenses	\$1,303,347	\$926,684	\$672,596	\$1,711,300	\$720,981	\$1,756,152
Farebox Revenue	\$156,671	\$115,266	\$71,441	\$114,153	\$95,593	\$375,477
Passengers per Bus Hour	14.13	10.10	12.79	9.39	16.39	22.78
Farebox Recovery Ratio	12%	12%	18%	7%	20%	23%
Operating Cost per Hour	\$62.73	\$58.63	\$53.30	\$69.19	\$39.66	\$59.19

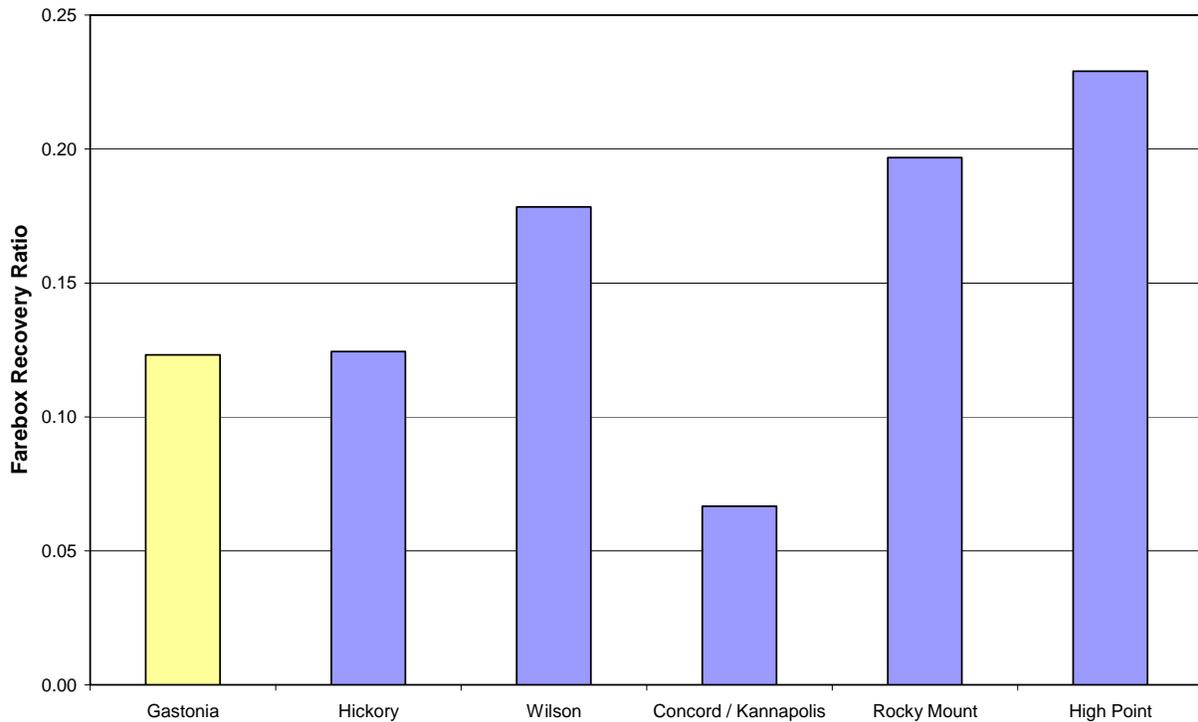
Exhibits 2-8 and 2-9 further illustrate two of these key data. In terms of passengers per hour, Gastonia's statistics are more favorable than those of Concord / Kannapolis, Hickory, and Wilson, and trails those of Rocky Mount and High Point. If ridership levels prior to the 2004 service cut had been maintained, Gastonia would trail only High Point in this group.

Exhibit 2-8: Comparison of Passengers per Hour Data (2005)



With regard to farebox recovery ratio, Gastonia trails High Point, Rocky Mount, and Wilson, and has the same percentage as Hickory. Gastonia's farebox recovery ratio is higher than that of Concord / Kannapolis.

Exhibit 2-9: Comparison of Farebox Recovery Ratio Data (2005)



2.3. CURRENT COORDINATION EFFORTS

Presently, transit coordination efforts in Gaston County are limited. Gastonia Transit and Gaston County ACCESS operate independently, although ACCESS does transport passengers to Gaston College from GT's Bradley Station. As part of this planning process, administrative staff members from both agencies have met to discuss possible coordination opportunities resulting from this plan, including a coordinated transfer agreement and coordinated scheduling of new routes. Although few coordination efforts have occurred up until this point, both GT and ACCESS are enthusiastic about working together in the future.

Section 3: Transit Needs Assessment



To determine transit needs, a variety of approaches can be employed. Unfortunately, there is no “black box” formula that clearly defines transit needs; rather, these needs are determined using a combination of both objective and subjective information. This planning process examined objective facts in the form of demographic data and performance characteristics of the existing transit network, as well as subjective data such as public and stakeholder input. Information from these sources was then compiled to enable a more complete understanding of transit needs.

3.1. DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

A demographic analysis of the Gastonia area was conducted to identify characteristics of the area with regard to overall population, elderly population, and household income. Areas with high population densities represent potential markets for transit services. Likewise, areas having high concentrations of elderly residents or areas in which the median household income is low indicates locations in which residents may be more dependent on transit for their mobility needs.

Data by block area and Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) were obtained from the U. S. Census regarding the overall population, number of low-income households, number of zero-vehicle households, and elderly population. These data were then divided by the size of each geographical unit (TAZ or block depending on the availability of data) to produce densities in each zone.

Overall Population Density

The population density by block area for Gaston County is shown in Exhibit 3-1. A smaller-area map focused on the Gastonia area is displayed in Exhibit 3-2. As shown in the exhibit, the highest concentrations of population are located in Gastonia proper, with smaller pockets of density in outlying communities. However, even the areas with the highest concentrations of housing are relatively low-density in nature. A number of apartment sites results in small areas of higher-density housing, but there are no large tracts of high-density housing.

Elderly Population Density

Areas of higher concentrations of population for residents age 65 and older are shown in Exhibits 3-3 (Gaston County) and 3-4 (Gastonia area). The concentrations of elderly residents generally mirror that of the overall population, with the highest numbers in and around Gastonia proper. The highest concentrations of elderly residents are located in small areas that consist of housing complexes geared toward older residents, such as Village Square in south Gastonia. Another notable area of concentration is the large senior housing complex off of Robinwood Road in southeast Gastonia.

Exhibit 3-1: Population Density (Gaston County)

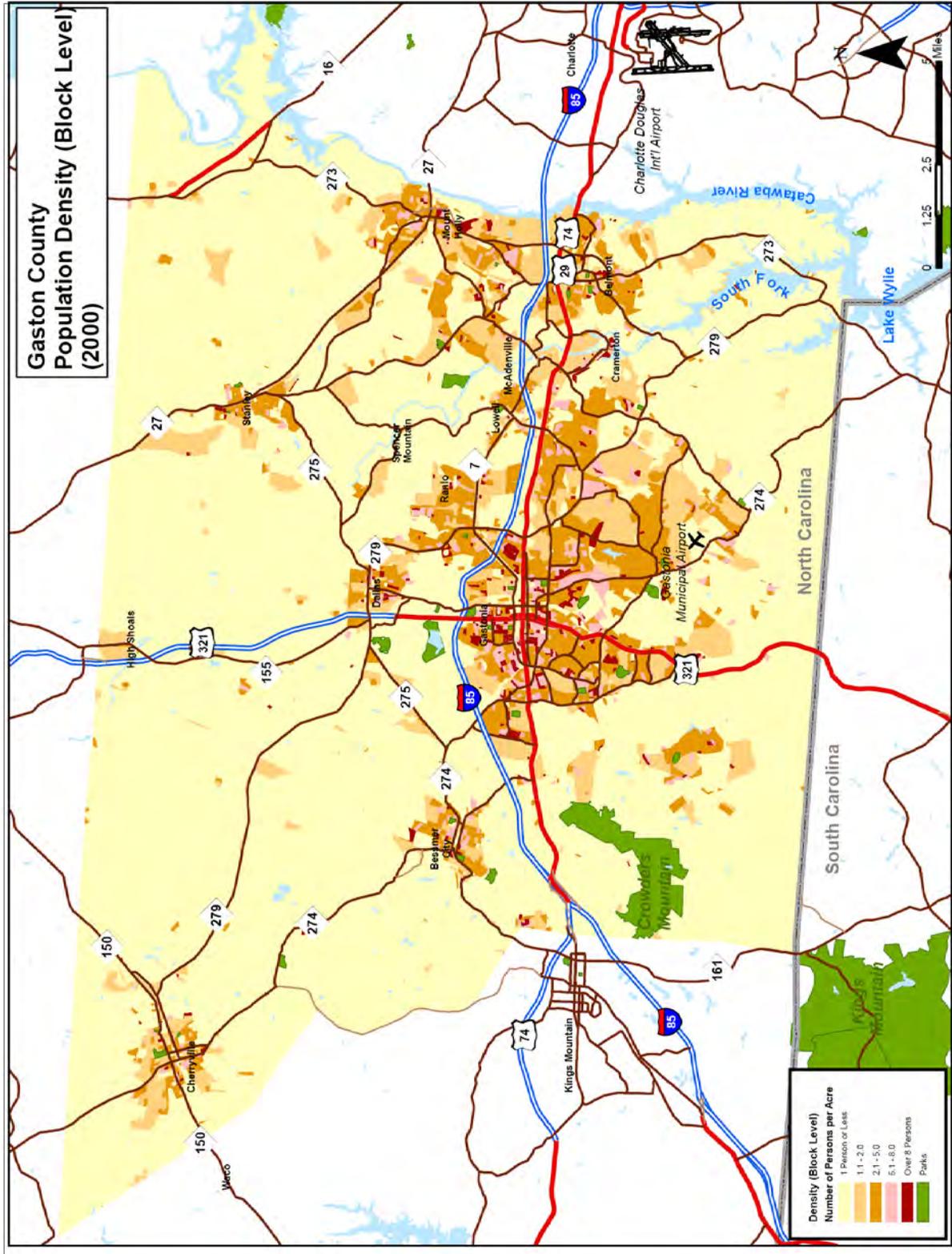


Exhibit 3-2: Population Density (Gastonia Area)

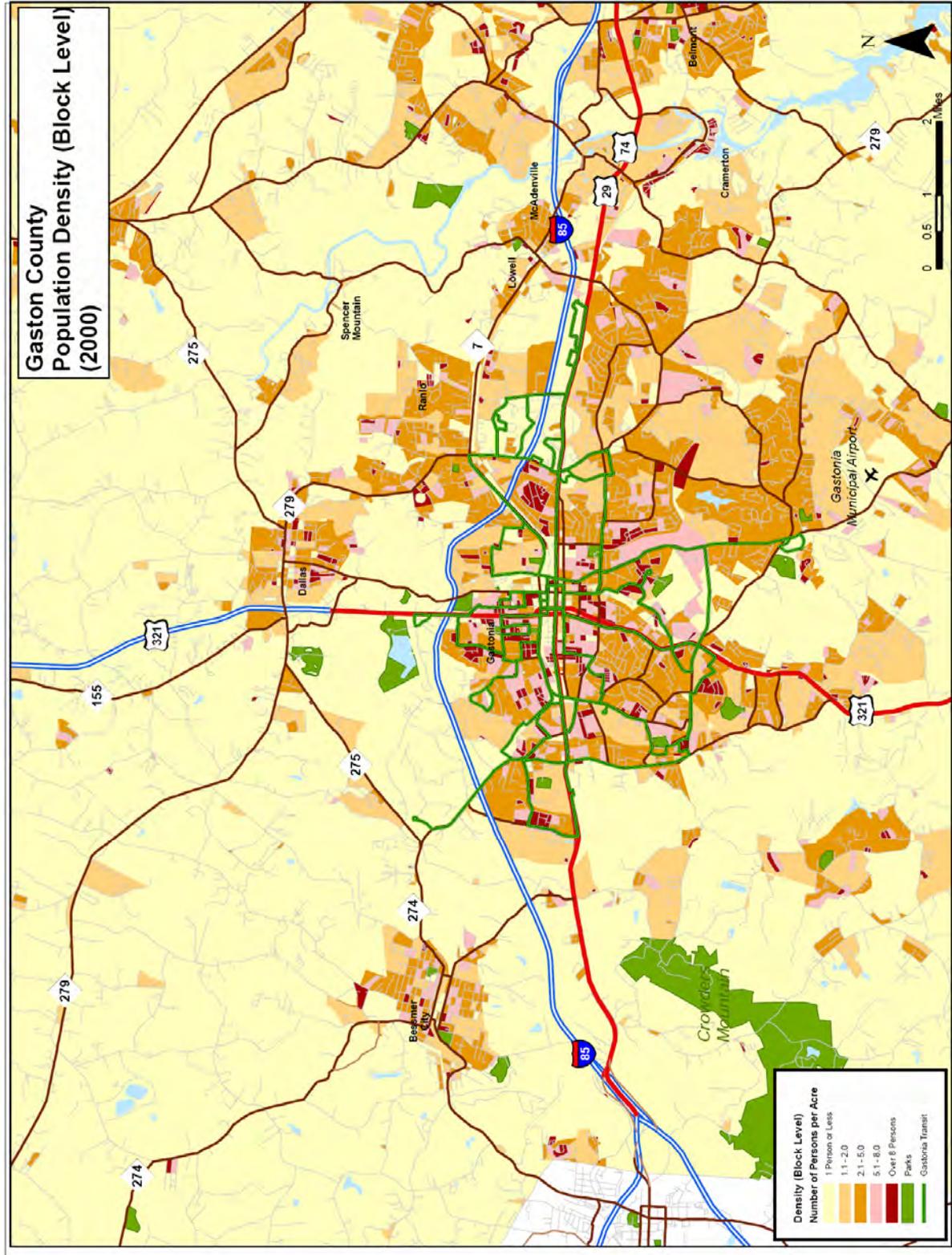


Exhibit 3-3: Elderly Population Density (Gaston County)

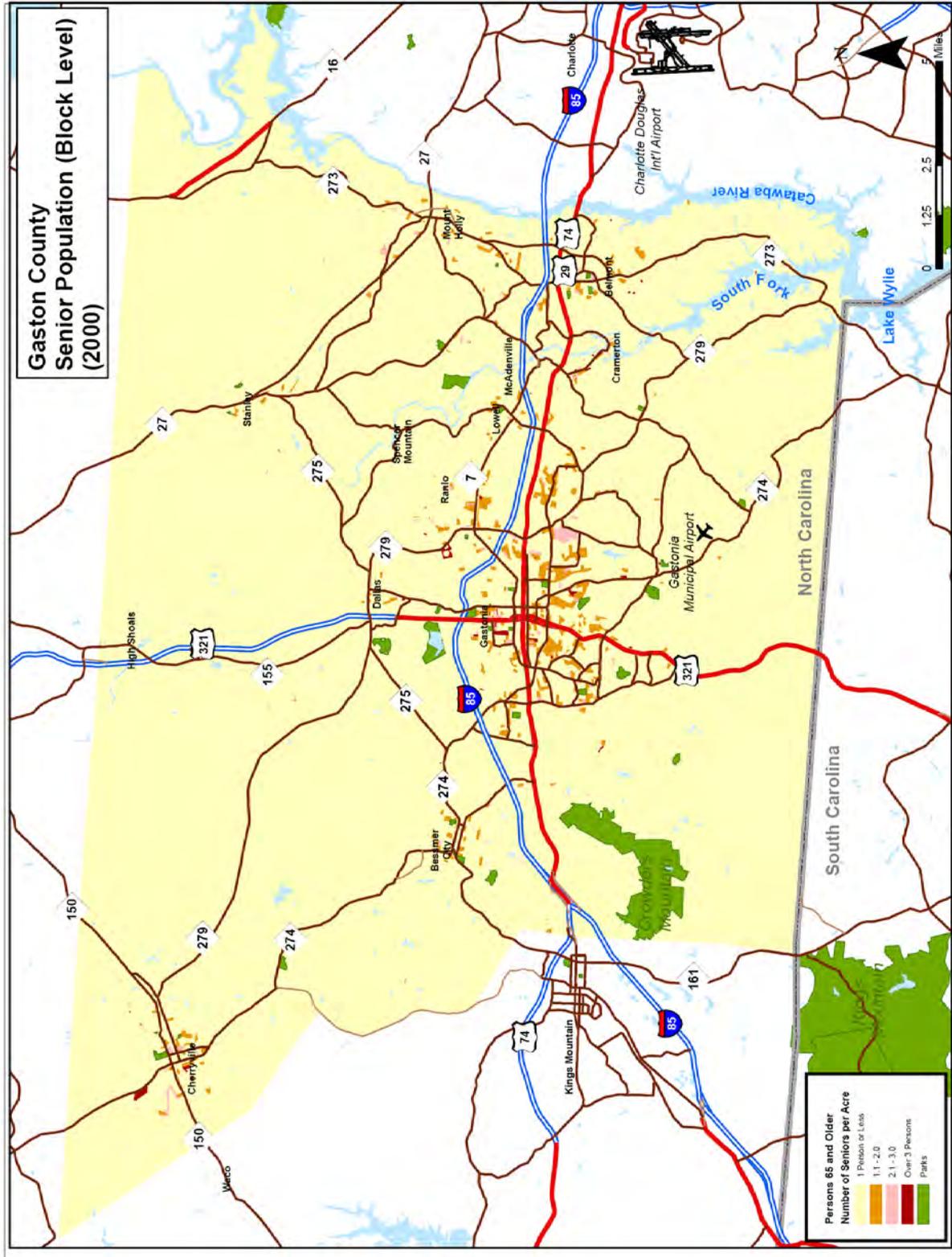
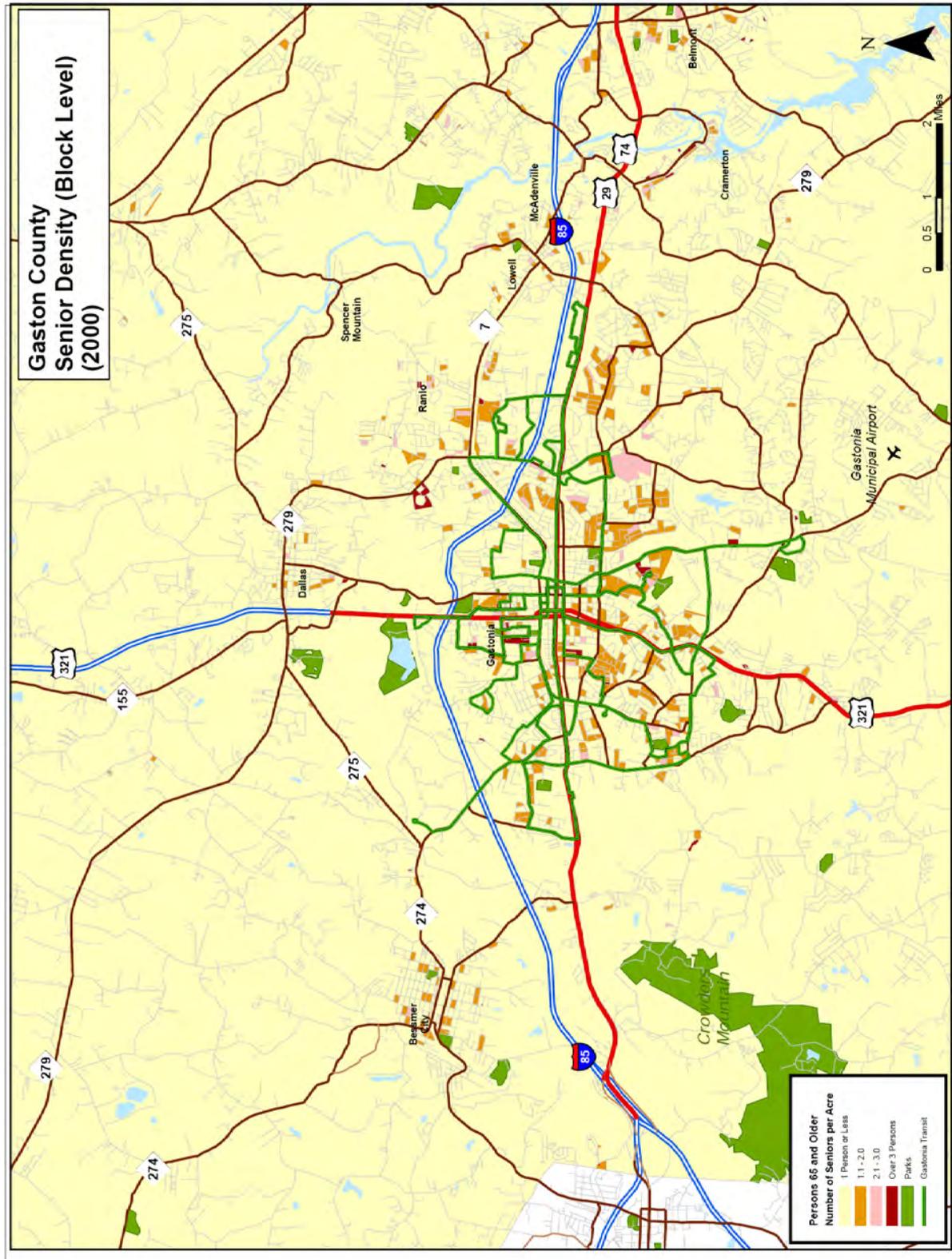


Exhibit 3-4: Elderly Population Density (Gaston County)



Low Income Households

Concentrations of low-income households are illustrated through the percentage of households in poverty in each TAZ. These areas of concentration are highlighted in Exhibit 3-5 (Gaston County) and Exhibit 3-6 (Gastonia area). The areas with the highest concentrations of households in poverty are clustered in central and west Gastonia, although there are additional pockets of higher poverty levels in east Gastonia, Dallas, and northern portions of the county. It should be noted that the high-poverty areas in Gastonia are served by several existing GT routes.

The same types of conclusions can be drawn from Exhibits 3-7 and 3-8, which illustrate the percentage of households with zero vehicles in each TAZ. High concentrations of zero-vehicle households are apparent in central and west Gastonia, along with Dallas, Lowell, and several other areas.

Exhibit 3-5: Low Income Households (Gaston County)

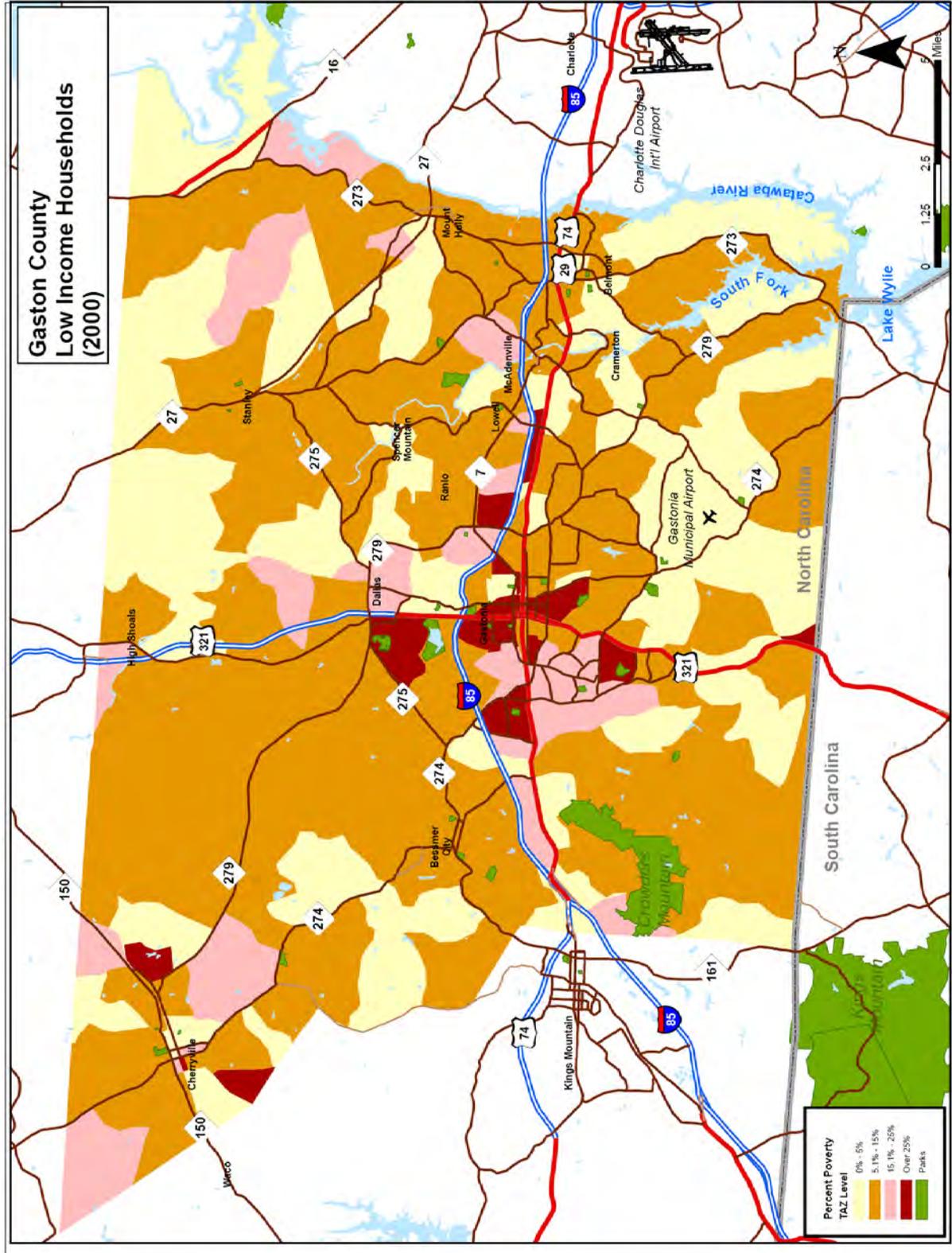


Exhibit 3-6: Low Income Households (Gastonia Area)

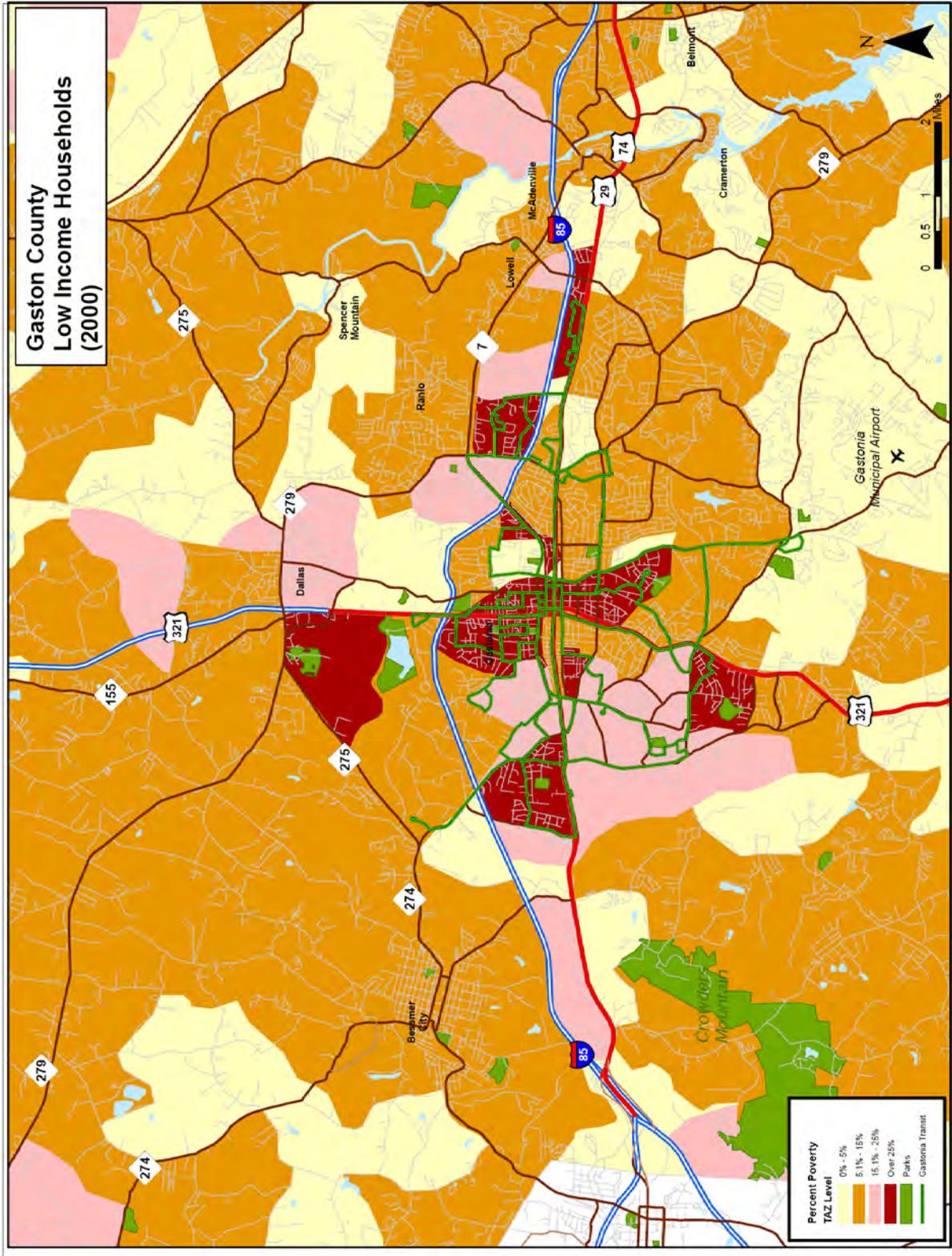


Exhibit 3-7: Zero-Vehicle Households (Gaston County)

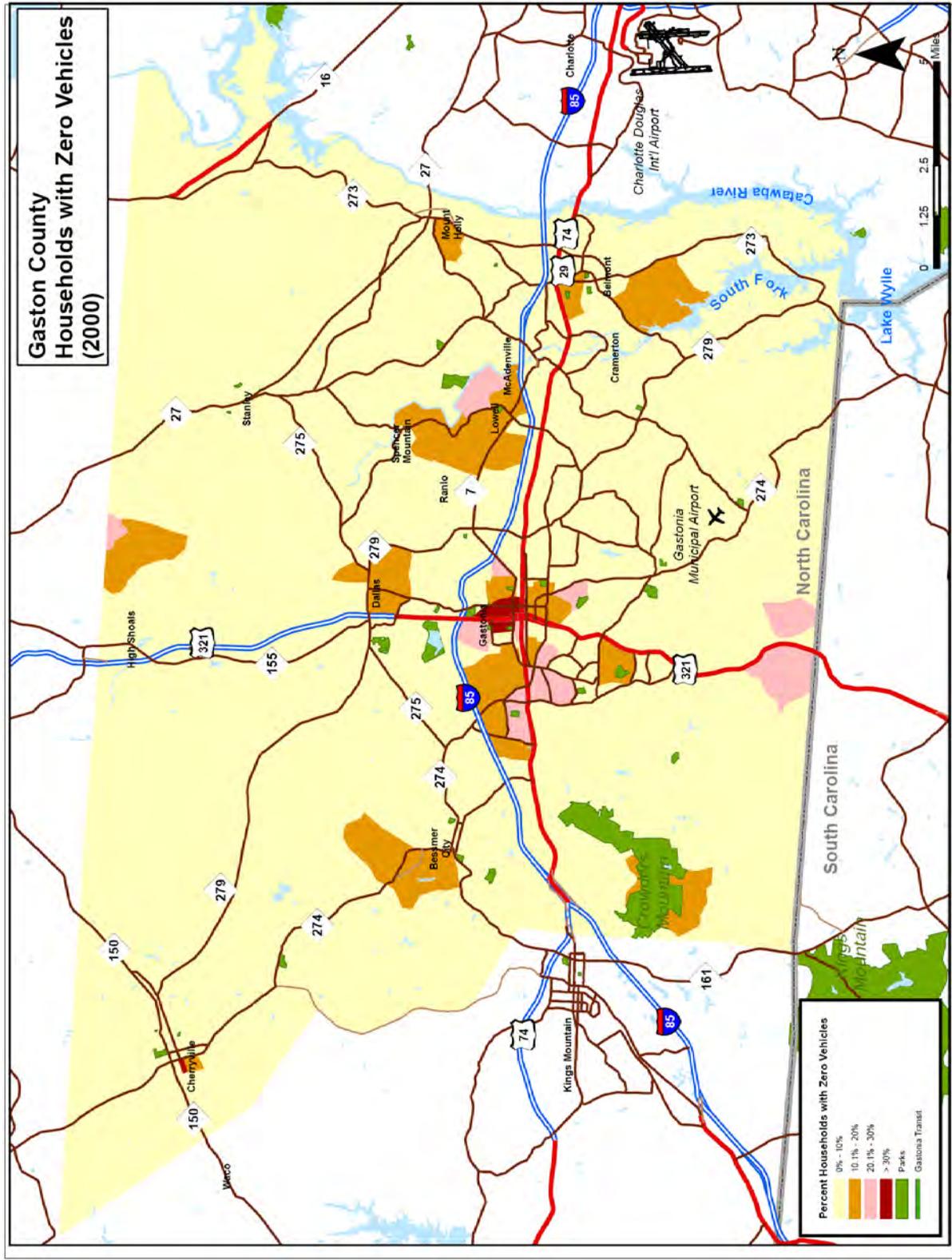
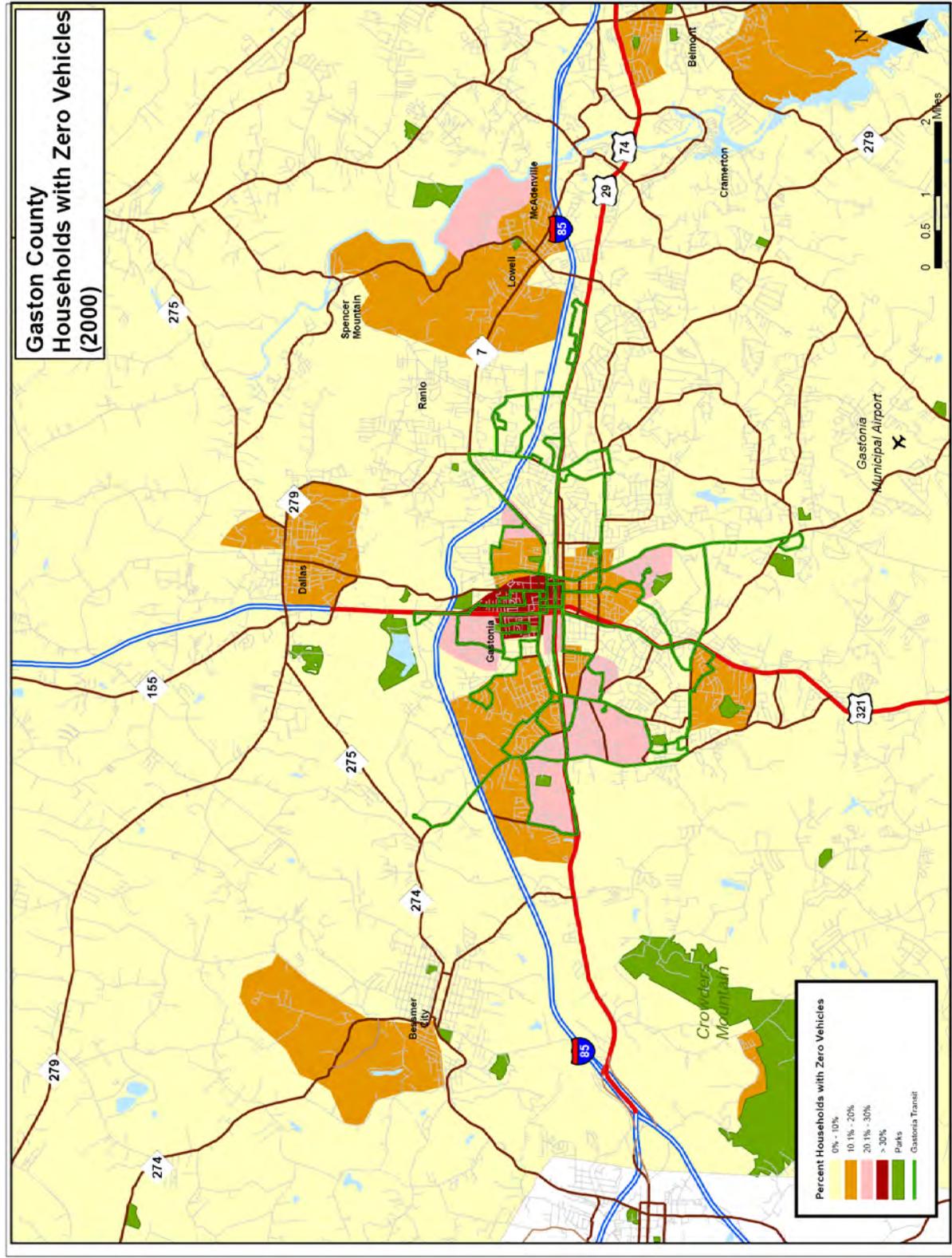


Exhibit 3-8: Zero-Vehicle Households (Gastonia Area)



3.2. PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Comments received from the public and local stakeholders figured prominently into the assessment of transit needs and development of strategies. To gain the perspective of local residents, an extensive public survey was conducted. In addition, two public forums were held, and a series of personal interviews with stakeholders was completed. The input received from these efforts is described in this section.

Public Survey

A public survey was developed to determine transit-related concerns from the viewpoints of current transit patrons as well as those who do not use transit. The survey was designed to be accessible throughout the community, and was available in both English and Spanish versions. The survey instrument was distributed as follows:

- A web-based survey (with English and Spanish versions) linked to the Gaston Urban Area MPO web site (other area jurisdictions also provided links to the survey from their respective web pages, and a news article referenced the survey web site).
- Surveys and drop boxes were provided at all ten Gaston County branch library locations.
- Surveys and a drop box were available at Bradley Station.
- Consultant staff spent two days interviewing GT passengers on board the buses, using the survey instrument.
- Additional surveys were received from Dallas through the efforts of a Working Group member.

The survey instruments are shown in Exhibits 3-9 (English version) and 3-10 (Spanish version). A total of 443 surveys were received, consisting of 279 surveys from current transit users and 164 from residents who do not use transit.

The survey was not intended to be a purely scientific, unbiased process. It is recognized that the sample of respondents was not purely random, because for the most part, only those residents who had some level of interest completed the survey. Therefore, the views expressed in the survey results are not necessarily indicative of the views of Gastonia / Gaston County residents at large. Rather, the survey was intended to get as much input as possible within the constraints of the project regarding needs, issues, and concerns about transit in the area. To this end, the survey served its purpose well, offering insight to the top concerns of transit riders and non-riders in the county.

Exhibit 3-9: Public Survey (English Version)

**Gastonia Transit Expansion Study
PUBLIC SURVEY**



1. Do you currently use Gastonia Transit, ACCESS, or private transportation services (e.g. taxi, van service)? (check all that apply)
 GASTONIA TRANSIT GASTON COUNTY ACCESS PRIVATE TRANSPORT I DO NOT USE TRANSIT
2. If you do not use transit, are you aware that transit services are available in Gastonia and Gaston County? (check one)
 YES NO
3. How often do you use transit? (check one)
 DAILY WEEKLY MONTHLY A FEW TIMES A YEAR NEVER
4. If you currently use transit, what types of trips do you take? (check all that apply)
 WORK MEDICAL RECREATION SHOPPING SCHOOL OTHER
5. Would you like to see additional / expanded transit services offered in Gastonia / Gaston County? (check one)
 YES NO MAYBE DON'T KNOW
6. What would you change (if anything) about transit services in Gastonia / Gaston County? (check all that apply)
 SERVICE TO MORE PLACES IN GASTONIA MORE SATURDAY SERVICE
 SERVICE TO MORE PLACES OUTSIDE OF GASTONIA BEGIN SUNDAY SERVICE
 MORE FREQUENT SERVICE OTHER (specify) _____
 LONGER HOURS OF OPERATION
7. Which ONE of the improvements listed above is most important to you? (check one)
 SERVICE TO MORE PLACES IN GASTONIA MORE SATURDAY SERVICE
 SERVICE TO MORE PLACES OUTSIDE OF GASTONIA BEGIN SUNDAY SERVICE
 MORE FREQUENT SERVICE OTHER (specify) _____
 LONGER HOURS OF OPERATION
8. Where would you go (if anywhere) if transit service were available? (check all that apply)
 BELMONT CRAMERTON LOWELL SPENCER MOUNTAIN
 BESSEMER CITY DALLAS MCADENVILLE STANLEY
 CHARLOTTE GASTONIA MOUNT HOLLY OTHER (specify) _____
 CHERRYVILLE KINGS MOUNTAIN RANLO
 CLOVER LINCOLNTON SHELBY
9. What specific destinations should be served by transit (e.g. Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole Plant, etc.)?

10. When would you be most likely to use new transit services? (check all that apply)
 6 AM – 10 AM 10 AM – 3 PM 3 PM – 6 PM 6 PM – 9 PM 9 PM – 12 AM
11. Which day(s) would you typically use new transit services? (check all that apply)
 MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY
12. Would you support use of local tax dollars to help fund new services? (check one)
 YES NO MAYBE
13. What is your home zip code? _____
14. Does your household own at least one automobile? (check one)
 YES NO
15. What is your age? (check one)
 16-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56-65 OVER 65
16. Please list any additional comments regarding current Gastonia Transit service (e.g. customer service, cleanliness, safety, etc.).

For more information, please plan to attend a public forum about the study on Monday, April 23, 2007 from 4:00 PM until 7:00 PM (presentation at 4:30 PM) at First United Methodist Church in downtown Gastonia (190 E. Franklin Blvd.). Thank you for your participation!

Exhibit 3-10: Public Survey (Spanish Version)

Estudio de ampliación de Transit de Gastonia
ENCUESTA PÚBLICA



1. ¿Utiliza actualmente los servicios de Gastonia Transit, ACCESS o servicios privados de transporte (como taxis o camionetas)? (Marque todas las que correspondan)
 GASTONIA TRANSIT ACCESS DEL CONDADO DE GASTON TRANSPORTE PRIVADO NO UTILIZO TRANSIT
2. Si no utiliza transporte público, ¿sabe que estos servicios están disponibles en Gastonia y en el condado de Gaston? (Marque una)
 SÍ NO
3. ¿Con qué frecuencia utiliza transporte público? (Marque una)
 A DIARIO SEMANALMENTE MENSUALMENTE ALGUNAS VECES AL AÑO NUNCA
4. Si actualmente utiliza transporte público, ¿qué tipo de viajes realiza? (Marque todas las que correspondan)
 AL TRABAJO AL DOCTOR RECREATIVOS COMPRAS A LA ESCUELA OTROS
5. ¿Le gustaría que hubiera servicios de tránsito adicionales o ampliados en Gastonia o en el condado de Gaston? (Marque una)
 SÍ NO TAL VEZ NO SE
6. ¿Qué cambiaría de los servicios transporte público en Gastonia o en el condado de Gaston? (Marque todas las que correspondan)
 SERVICIO A MÁS LUGARES EN GASTONIA MÁS SERVICIOS LOS SÁBADOS
 SERVICIO A MÁS LUGARES FUERA DE GASTONIA INICIAR UN SERVICIO LOS DOMINGOS
 SERVICIO MÁS FRECUENTE OTRO (especifique) _____
 HORARIO DE SERVICIO MÁS AMPLIO
7. ¿CUÁL de las mejoras listadas arriba es más importante para usted? (Marque una)
 SERVICIO A MÁS LUGARES EN GASTONIA MÁS SERVICIOS LOS SÁBADOS
 SERVICIO A MÁS LUGARES FUERA DE GASTONIA INICIAR UN SERVICIO LOS DOMINGOS
 SERVICIO MÁS FRECUENTE OTRO (especifique) _____
 HORARIO DE SERVICIO MÁS AMPLIO
8. ¿A dónde iría si el servicio transporte público estuviera disponible? (Marque todos los destinos que correspondan)
 BELMONT CRAMERTON LOWELL SPENCER MOUNTAIN
 BESSEMER CITY DALLAS MCADENVILLE STANLEY
 CHARLOTTE GASTONIA MOUNT HOLLY OTRO (especifique) _____
 CHERRYVILLE KINGS MOUNTAIN RANLO
 CLOVER LINCOLNTON SHELBY _____
9. ¿Con cuáles destinos específicos debería contar el servicio de transporte público (por ejemplo, Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole Plant, etc.)?

10. ¿Cuándo es más probable que utilice los nuevos servicios de transporte público? (Marque todas las que correspondan)
 6 AM – 10 AM 10 AM – 3 PM 3 PM – 6 PM 6 PM – 9 PM 9 PM – 12 AM
11. ¿Qué día(s) usaría generalmente el nuevo servicio de transporte público? (Marque todas las que correspondan)
 LUNES MARTES MIÉRCOLES JUEVES VIERNES SÁBADO DOMINGO
12. ¿Apoyaría el uso de los impuestos locales para ayudar a crear nuevos servicios? (Marque una)
 SÍ NO TAL VEZ
13. ¿Cuál es el código postal de su casa? _____
14. ¿En su familia tienen por lo menos un automóvil? (Marque una)
 SÍ NO
15. ¿Qué edad tiene? (Marque una)
 16-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56-65 MÁS DE 65
16. Haga una lista de cualquier comentario adicional concerniente al servicio actual de Gastonia Transit (como el servicio al cliente, la limpieza, la seguridad, etc.). _____

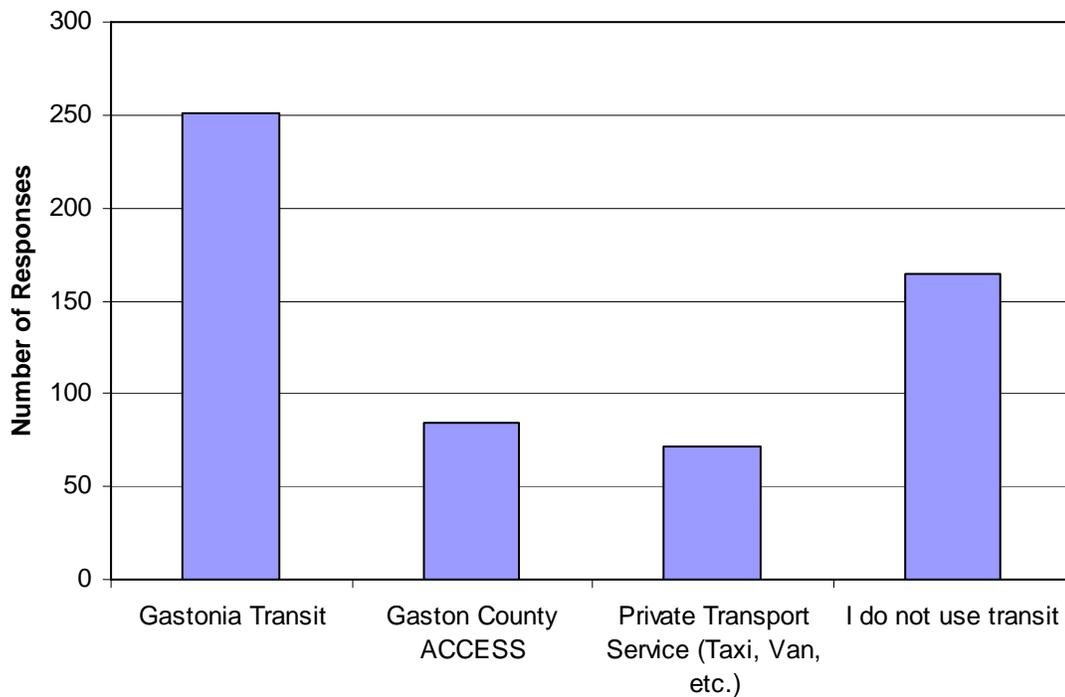
Para más información, favor de asistir a un foro público sobre el estudio que se llevará a cabo el lunes, 23 de abril de 2007, de las 4:00 a las 7:00 PM (presentación a las 4:30 PM) en la First United Methodist Church (190 East Franklin Blvd., Gastonia). ¡Gracias por participar!

Results of Public Survey

Key results from the survey effort are highlighted below. It should be noted that not all respondents answered every question, so the total number of responses to each question may not correspond to the total number of surveys received. A complete breakdown of responses to all questions, including those not highlighted below, is contained in **Appendix A**.

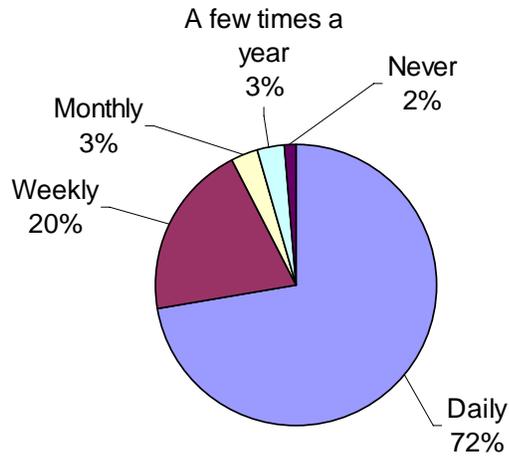
In response to the question “Do you currently use transit?”, most respondents who use transit noted that they use Gastonia Transit; however, a significant number of patrons also reported using Gaston County ACCESS and private transportation services. These responses are summarized in Exhibit 3-11.

Exhibit 3-11: Do You Currently Use Transit?



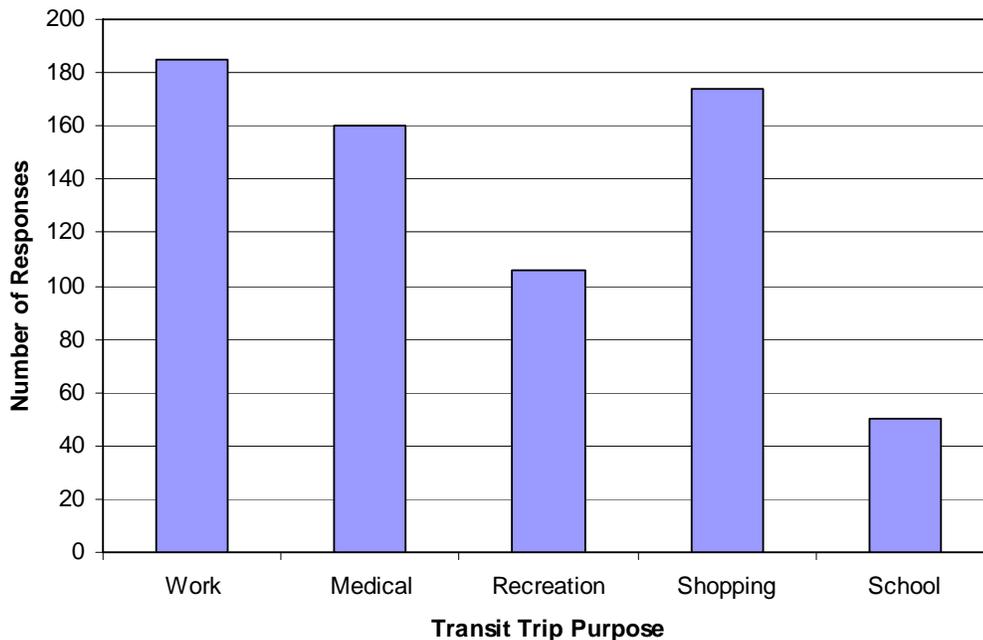
Current transit riders were asked “How often do you use transit?”. As illustrated in Exhibit 3-12, most respondents indicated that they are regular transit users (over 90% are daily or weekly transit users).

Exhibit 3-12: How Often Do You Use Transit?



Current transit riders were also queried regarding the types of trips for which they use transit. Respondents replied that they use transit for a variety of trip purposes, including “work”, “shopping”, and “medical”. These results, shown in Exhibit 3-13, illustrate that many people use transit for all of their daily travel needs.

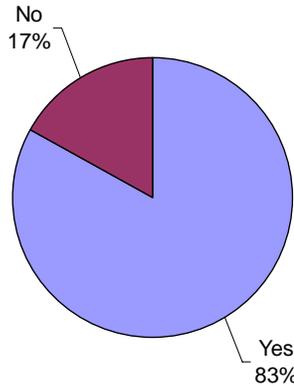
Exhibit 3-13: For What Types of Trips Do You Use Transit?



Non-riders were then asked “Are you aware of transit services in Gaston County?” As shown in Exhibit 3-14, most people noted that they were indeed aware of transit services. However, the level of awareness indicated by these responses is likely not reflective of the county as a whole, because most people who responded to this survey at least have some interest in transit, even if they do not use it now. Most likely, there is a higher percentage

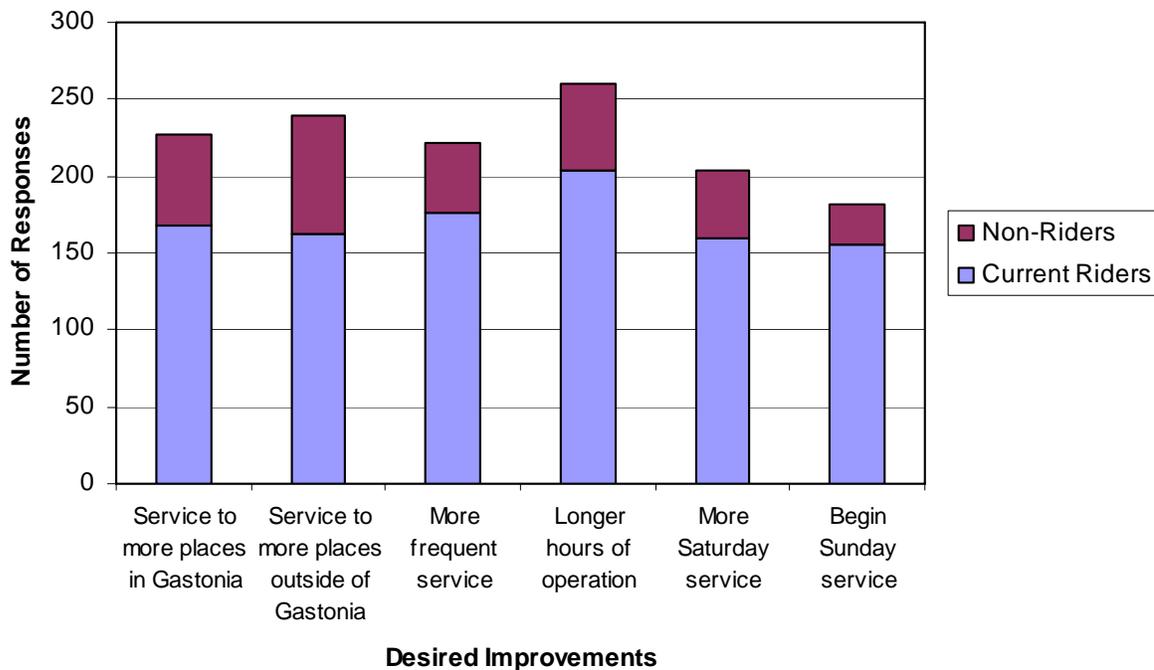
countywide of residents who are not aware of transit services than shown in these responses.

Exhibit 3-14: Are You Aware of Transit Services in Gaston County?



Respondents were asked to identify what they would change about current services. Riders and non-riders alike noted that improvements should be made in a variety of areas, with all available options garnering a significant number of votes. Riders were more consistent in noting a desire for “across-the-board” improvements, as shown in Exhibit 3-15.

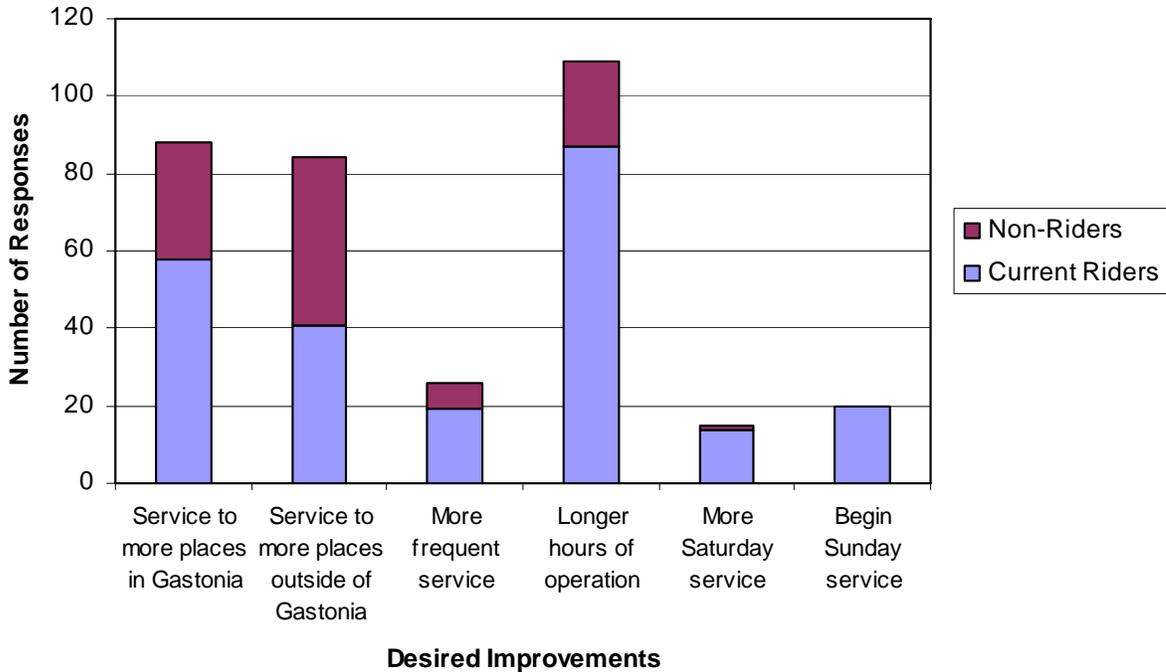
Exhibit 3-15: What Would You Change About Transit Services in Gastonia / Gaston County?



In response to the question “Which single improvement is most important to you?”, riders and non-riders offered differing opinions. Riders identified “longer hours of operation” as

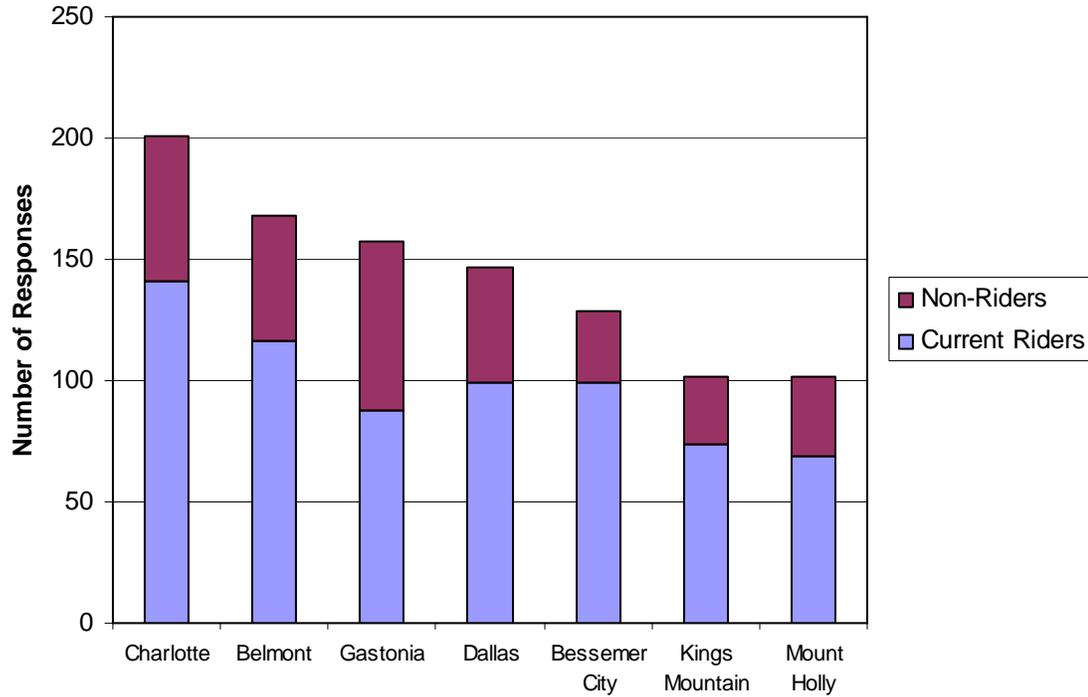
the top priority for improvement, whereas non-riders desired service to more places outside of Gastonia. As seen in Exhibit 3-16, the top three responses to this question – longer hours of operation, service to more places in Gastonia, and service to more places outside of Gastonia – received many more votes than the other primary expansion options. Cumulatively, “longer hours of operation” was selected as the most important improvement.

Exhibit 3-16: Which Single Improvement is Most Important to You?



Survey respondents were also asked “Where would you like to go if transit service were available?”. This question was intended to identify cities and towns in the region where people would like to travel using transit. The top seven responses were the same for both riders and non-riders, although the order differed somewhat. Riders responded that improved service to Charlotte was most desired, followed by service to Belmont. Non-riders noted a desire for more service in Gastonia, followed closely by more service to Charlotte. As shown in Exhibit 3-17, the top cumulative responses (in order) were Charlotte, Belmont, and Gastonia.

Exhibit 3-17: Where Would You Like to Go?



The survey also asked the question “Would you support use of local tax dollars to fund new transit service?”. Not surprisingly, riders overwhelmingly stated that they would support the use of tax dollars for new service, but support was more mixed among non-riders. Again, it is important to note that the results of this question should not be interpreted to be reflective of the community as a whole, since this is not an unbiased survey. Naturally, residents that have an interest in transit service (primarily those who completed the survey) will be more willing to utilize more tax revenues for that purpose than residents who have no interest in transit. Exhibit 3-18 summarizes the responses to this question from riders, and Exhibit 3-19 illustrates the responses from non-riders.

Exhibit 3-18: Would You Support Use of Local Tax Dollars to Fund New Transit Service? (Riders)

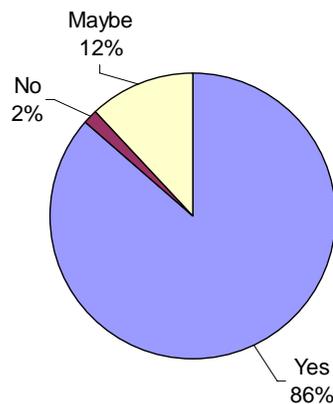
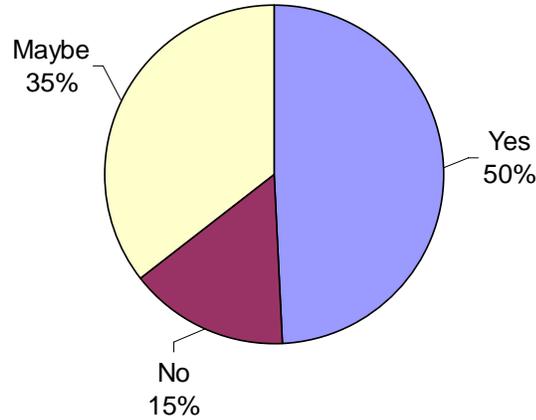


Exhibit 3-19: Would You Support Use of Local Tax Dollars to Fund New Transit Service? (Non-Riders)



It is important to note that current transit riders in general were extremely complimentary of Gastonia Transit bus operators and staff. Patrons understand that the system has limitations, and feel that the staff is doing a good job with the resources that are available. Numerous comments were received praising the operators, noting that they were extremely friendly and helpful.

Public Forums

Two public forums were held to obtain input regarding transit needs in Gastonia and Gaston County. The first forum focused on gaining input from the public on transit needs in the community, based on the current system's strengths and weaknesses. A very important part of the development of transit expansion strategies, the forum provided the opportunity for the public to provide their ideas about where transit service was needed and about improvements to the existing service. The proposed strategies were then highlighted at a second forum, where the focus shifted to seeking reaction from the public to the strategies that were presented.

The first public forum was held on Monday, April 23, 2007, and the second forum was held on Thursday, June 7, 2007. Both meetings were held from 4:00 PM until 7:00 PM at First United Methodist Church in downtown Gastonia. Approximately ten people attended each of the forums. At both forums, a presentation was given including background information on the study and proposed strategies, followed by a question-and-answer session. The "open house" format also enabled the consultant to talk with interested citizens on a one-on-one basis.

Comments from the first public forum related to a variety of desired service improvements, including longer hours of operation, more routes in and around Gastonia, and additional weekend service. The comments received at the public forum were consistent with the input received through the public survey effort. The comments received through forum discussion are summarized on the following page, and additional written comments received are documented in **Appendix B**.

- Need longer hours of service; can't work evenings because bus doesn't run late enough
- Takes too long to get across town; a 5-10 minute car trip takes 2 hours on the bus
- Routes are not extensive in Gastonia
- Need more trips to Charlotte, especially midday trips
- Gaston College will be an increasingly important destination
- Need service on S. New Hope Road
- Need more weekend service
- Vanpools should be explored in rural areas
- Would like service to the Charlotte airport
- Connection should be established to the CATS #5 route at Little Rock Road
- Need service to Belmont, especially to Wal-Mart
- Would like to see service to Food Lion at Edgewood Rd., and service to the Dole Plant
- Would like to see occasional service to Lincolnton
- Need more service on Sundays

The second public forum focused on the proposed Implementation Plan, as described in Section 6. The comments received about the proposed plan were generally positive, and attendees were excited about the possibilities. Some additional comments were received, including the desire for Sunday service and the desire for service further south on US 321 than the extent of the current service. Discussion also occurred related the potential need for the downtown trolley service, relative to the County's plans to begin charging for parking at the Court House. Written comments received at the second forum are also documented in **Appendix B**.

Stakeholder Interviews

Input was received from various stakeholders during the information-gathering phase of the project. The stakeholders that were targeted were representatives of various jurisdictions in Gaston County that may have an interest in transit issues. In addition to personal meetings with these stakeholders, two meetings were held with Gastonia Transit bus operators to listen to their feedback on current services and expansion needs.

Key points from the stakeholder interviews are summarized below. Additional stakeholders from several other municipalities were contacted but did not respond to invitations to discuss their communities' transit needs.

Gaston Urban Area MPO Staff

- Potential transit destinations:
 - New Dole plant in Bessemer City
 - Gaston College – ACCESS currently serves
 - Freightliner and National Gypsum on NC 273 in Mt. Holly
 - Downtown Belmont
 - New Wal-Mart in Belmont
 - Old golf course in being redeveloped in Cramerton
 - Bessemer City / Dallas / Mt. Holly have expressed interest
 - Cherryville is getting a new Wal-Mart

Gastonia Transit Administrative Staff

- Significant drop in ridership after fare increase and cycle time increase from 30 minutes to 45 minutes; it is now more time-consuming to get from one end of town to the other
- Construction on the Bessemer City Road widening project starts soon, which will impact service on that particular road
- ADA paratransit service is generally busy in the early and late portions of each month

Gastonia Transit Bus Operators

- People have reacted poorly to 45-minute routes; travel time has increased, and the routes are not as easy to understand
- Route frequencies need to be 30 minutes or 60 minutes to be easily understood
- Hours of operation need to be extended until 9:00 PM (will need part-time dispatcher after 5:00)
- Need more service down S. New Hope Rd.
- Crowders Mountain area / Captain's Cap Fish Camp area could use service
- Large new developments are going in on Union and New Hope
- Extend service further south on US 321
- Some requests for service to Lowell and McAdenville
- Have heard requests for midday service to Charlotte
- People walk from Court Drive into Ranlo for work
- Could combine the Highland routes into one 60-minute route
- Buses spend too much time sitting in Dixie Village
- Seeing more demand in Belmont and Mount Holly
- Need more coordination with CATS; some people transfer from GT to CATS Route 85X and sometimes it's tough to make the connection. The last GT run misses the connection from the CATS Route 85X bus
- Need to offer service to more destinations
- Marketing of the system needs to be improved; GT should go into the community and talk about the system at church meetings and other events
- Need communication between ACCESS and GT dispatchers for transfers to ACCESS' Gaston College route; sometimes the ACCESS vans leave before the GT buses arrive, and passengers miss the connection

Gaston County ACCESS Administrative Staff

- ACCESS is picking some people up from apartment complexes in the Modena area
- ACCESS is planning to provide service to the new Senior Center in Dallas
- There is currently no transfer agreement in place between ACCESS and GT for the Gaston College route
- ACCESS currently does not receive many requests from the general public for demand-response transportation
- Interest in serving Bessemer City
- Have had some requests for service to Lowe's Foods in southeast Gastonia
- Need to create marketing material in Spanish

- Some requests for service to Belmont, including the Gaston College branch and the YMCA, as well as connections to CATS Route 85X
- Need more service along Franklin Blvd. to retail establishments later in the evening
- ACCESS estimates at least 50% of all trips originate in Gastonia (mainly human service agency trips)
- Have received a few calls from Cherryville, Ranlo, Lowell, and Cramerton asking about service to shopping and doctors offices

Gaston County Planning

- Concerned about why people don't use transit; there is a stigma about transit for certain populations
- ACCESS service is not well-known
- Could potentially see the need for service in the northeast and southeast quadrants of the county, and along the US 321 corridor in Dallas
- The Mt. Holly / Stanley area is seeing significant residential growth
- Need connections to major employment sites such as Freightliner; could possibly use remote park-and-ride services
- Use air quality as an angle to promote transit
- Need to make sure the existing service is good, then look at expansion
- There may be a market for trips to and from Shelby; could also look at commute service from Lincoln County and Catawba County
- Could see a potential need for service to Bessemer City; Kings Mountain could be a destination for express service
- ACCESS may need to be rebranded; it has the stigma of the "handicapped bus"; need one cohesive brand name for transit in the county
- Image of Gastonia Transit also needs to be addressed; perceived by some as unsafe
- Large developments on Union-New Hope Road
- Dole plant and Freightliner may have needs
- Opportunities for choice riders are somewhat limited except for express service to Charlotte; Mt. Holly could use an express stop

City of Bessemer City

- Low-income areas that may benefit from transit are located on NC 161 west of downtown Bessemer City; subsidized housing is off of M.L. Kiser Rd.
- Need connections from Bessemer City to Gastonia for jobs and services
- Bessemer City's economic development efforts are focused on the Edgewood Road corridor; would like to see a transit connection to GT using the Edgewood corridor
- Grade crossings downtown are located at 8th, 12th, and 14th; there are several narrow underpasses downtown
- ACCESS has an image problem – people think that it is for handicapped folks only
- Bessemer City has some local interest in transit service

Town of Dallas

- Does not know much about ACCESS; perception is that it is for handicapped people only
- Primary need is for transit to and from Gastonia; elderly apartment complex has needs for medical trips, plus shopping, etc.
- The southeast and south central portions of Dallas have lower-income housing and could benefit from service
- Not many comments have been received from the public related to transit; some people have called inquiring about taxi service
- Some preconceived notions exist about the stigma of public transit; an educational campaign would be needed for any new service
- There is a notion that it takes too long to get anywhere using transit now
- Dallas has a significant Hispanic population that may benefit from transit service

3.3. SUMMARY OF NEEDS

A variety of transit needs have been expressed by the public and stakeholders. Patrons desire a variety of improvements, including service to new areas, longer hours of operation, more weekend service, more frequent service, and other enhancements. However, when asked to prioritize these enhancements, most people have identified the need for extended evening hours of operation and service to more areas (inside and outside of Gastonia) as the most needed improvements.

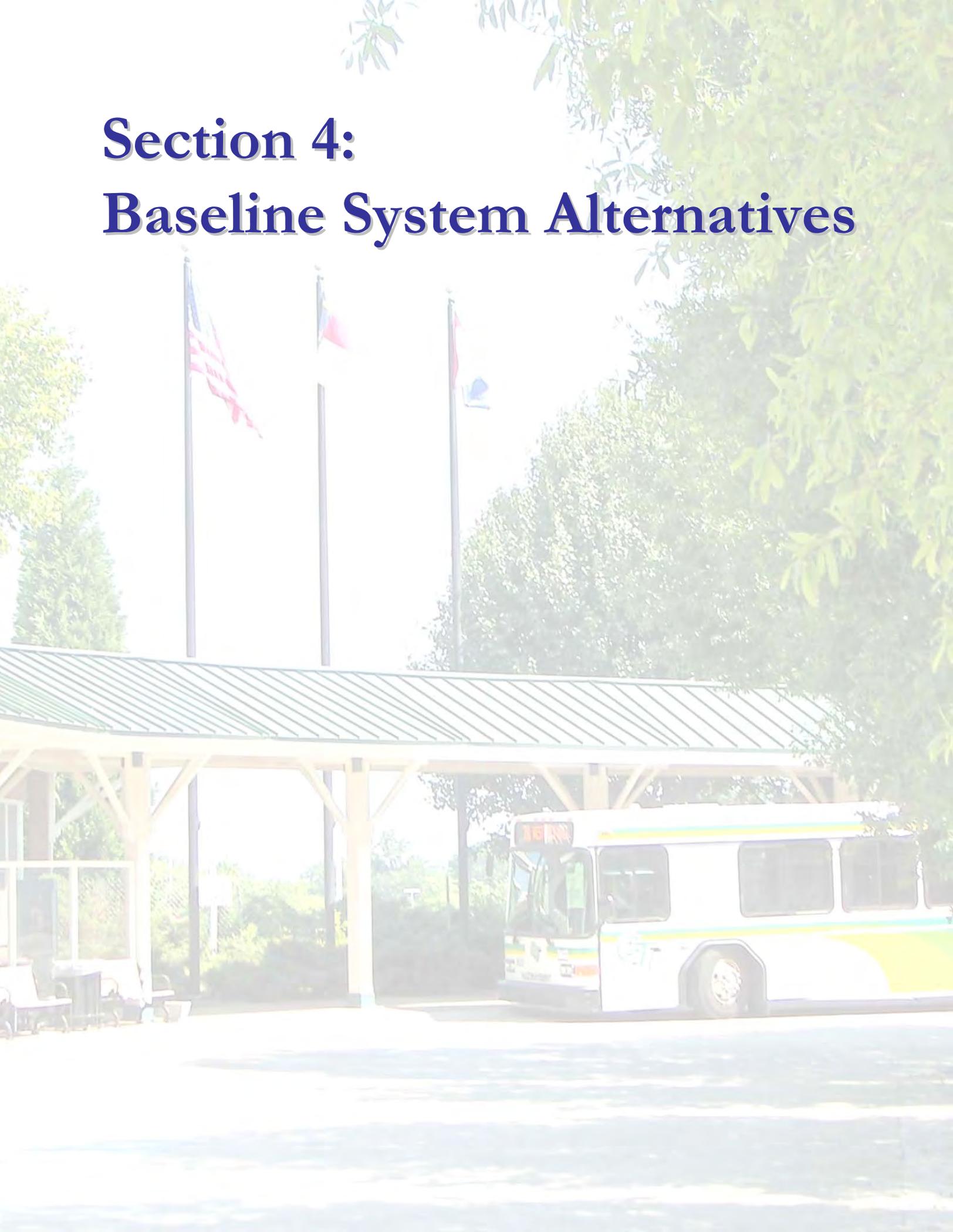
The challenge for providing service to additional areas is determining the most effective manner in which to do so. The demographic analysis indicates that the lower residential densities outside Gastonia likely would not support traditional fixed-route service; however, “flexible” transit service could be designed to serve these areas more efficiently.

It is clear that the service changes implemented in 2004 have adversely affected ridership, and travel times for patrons have increased. Those service changes were made with the attempt to maintain the previous routing structure to the extent possible, to avoid passenger confusion. However, there is a need to reexamine how the existing service is operated, even if a significant restructuring of service results from the process. The short-term need for re-educating riders about a new system would be worth the potential long-term gains in ridership.

There is also a need to change the image of transit, for both Gastonia Transit and Gaston County ACCESS. Transit improvements offer the opportunity to create a more coordinated transit network, and to re-brand and market transit as something that is accessible to everyone throughout the community.

The following sections discuss potential strategies to address these (and other) needs.

Section 4: Baseline System Alternatives



4.1. NEED FOR SYSTEM ADJUSTMENTS

As illustrated in Section 2, Gastonia Transit ridership has decreased significantly since the implementation of service changes in 2004. Service remains available to all the areas that were served prior to the route and schedule changes in 2004 (and in some cases, service to new locations was added), but the frequency of service was reduced to address problems related to schedule adherence for buses on most of the routes. This reduction in frequency appears to be the major contributor to the decrease in ridership.

Based on the survey results from this study, current passengers would like to see increased service frequencies, but it is not their top priority. However, it is important to remember that the people that were most affected by the decrease in frequency are no longer using the system, and thus were not targeted by the survey effort.

The decrease in ridership since 2004 is considerable, and before expanding service geographically or otherwise, GT's first task should be to ensure that the baseline system is operating in the most effective manner possible. Many people that were formerly served by the system have now found other travel options, and GT should seek to regain the patronage of these former customers. After efficiency issues in the baseline system have been addressed, GT can consider appropriate expansion options (described in Section 5).

This section offers two options for changes to the "baseline system". Baseline Alternative 1 describes a revised routing and scheduling structure using six buses on weekdays and three buses on Saturdays (the same as the current system). Under this scenario, the proposed changes could be made with no appreciable difference in net operating costs. The purpose of this scenario is to identify changes to increase the effectiveness of the current system within the current operating budget. Baseline Alternative 2 utilizes seven buses on weekdays and four buses on Saturdays, representing some improvement in the level of service as compared to the current system. This scenario would result in an increase in net operating costs.

Each of these two baseline service alternatives are described in the following pages.

4.2. BASELINE ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO CHANGE IN NUMBER OF BUSES)

Description

This service scenario utilizes the same number of buses during the same operating hours as the current structure, thus resulting in no appreciable change in operating costs. This scenario seeks to reduce the travel time of many transit trips by restructuring the system to decrease the use of "loop" routes that travel one-way and begin and end at Bradley Station. Instead, most routes would be modified to travel in both directions using the same streets, and routes would connect at multiple locations within the City, rather than a single transfer point at Bradley Station. Under this alternative, passengers would be able to transfer between routes not only at Bradley Station, but also at Dixie Village in west Gastonia and at Franklin Square in east Gastonia. The shift away from the current "loop" route structure will also enable more direct connections between origins and destinations

(for example, Highland-area residents could travel directly to the west Gastonia Wal-Mart without being forced to travel through downtown). These revisions would result in a reduced need to “backtrack” to Bradley Station before traveling to the ultimate destination.

From a scheduling standpoint, the routes under Baseline Alternative 1 would be timed on 30- or 60-minute cycles, rather than the current 45-minute loops that are used on most routes. Input from passengers and operators indicates that riders have been confused by the 45-minute cycle lengths, and a return to having all routes operate on 30- and 60-minute cycles would help passengers more easily remember the schedules of the buses.

Routes

Exhibit 4-1 illustrates the route network described by Baseline Alternative 1. The routes included in this scenario are as follows:

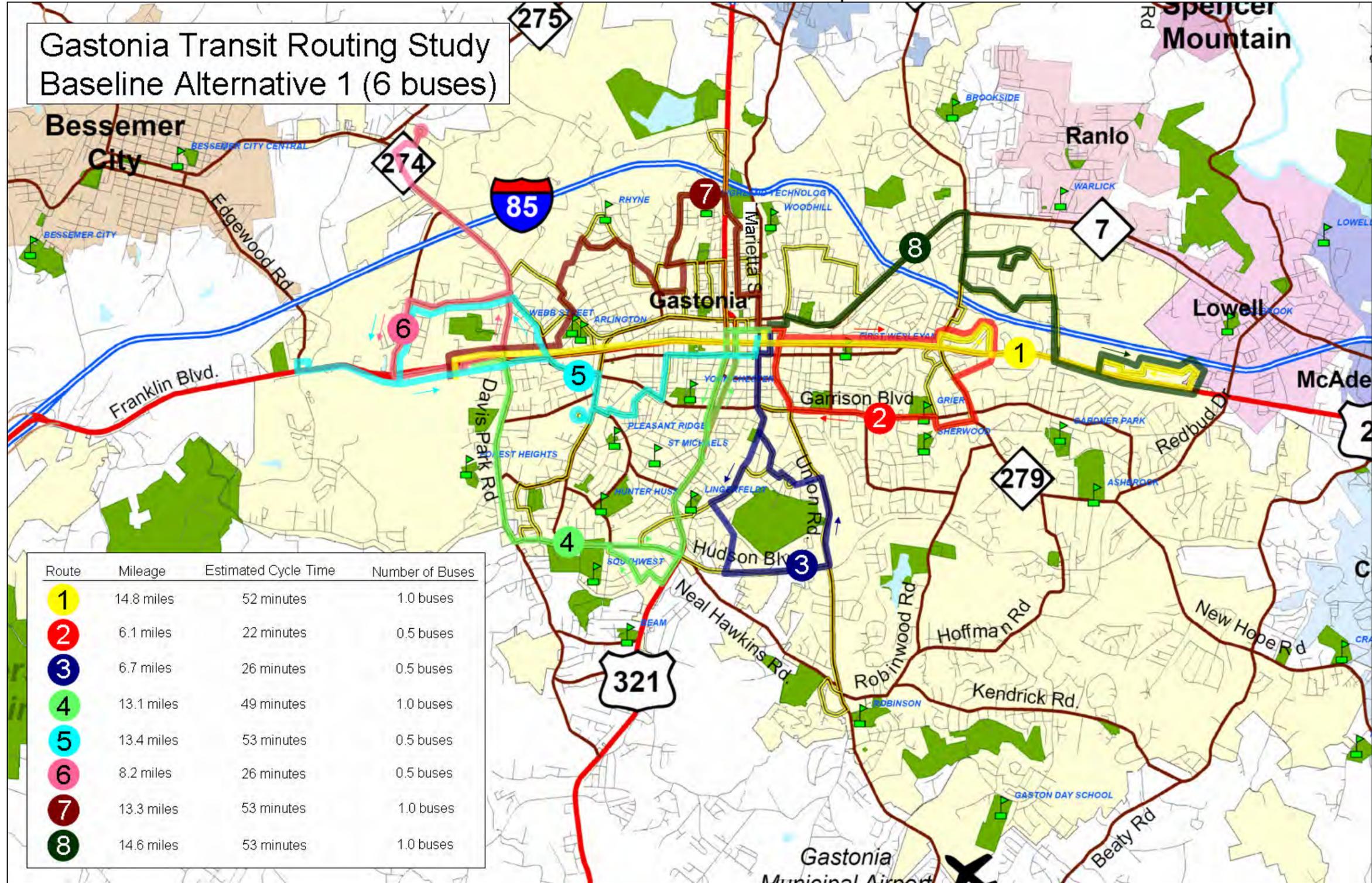
Route 1 (Franklin): Serves Franklin Blvd. from Dixie Village through Downtown Gastonia to Franklin Square. Major destinations include Dixie Village, Wal-Mart (West Gastonia), Downtown Gastonia, Bradley Station, Westfield Mall, and Franklin Square. Transfers to and from other routes can be made at Dixie Village, Bradley Station, and Franklin Square. One bus is assigned to this route, and a complete round trip is estimated to take 52 minutes (scheduled for 60 minutes, including eight minutes of layover / recovery time). Therefore, service is available in each direction every 60 minutes.

Route 2 (Garrison): Loop route serving Franklin Blvd. between Bradley Station and Westfield Mall, New Hope Road to Dixon Road, and Garrison Blvd. to Union Road. Major destinations include Bradley Station, Westfield Mall, Schiele Museum, Main Library, and Lineberger Park. Transfers to and from other routes can be made at Bradley Station and Eastridge Mall. The loop is estimated to take 22 minutes to complete (scheduled for 30 minutes, including eight minutes of layover / recovery time). One bus alternates between this route and Route 5 (Shannon Bradley); therefore, service on Route 2 is available every 90 minutes.

Route 3 (Marietta): Loop route serving Marietta St. and portions of Hudson Blvd. and Union Road. Major destinations include Village Square Apartments, the Food Lion at Garrison Blvd., and shopping / employment destinations at the Union Road / Hudson Blvd. intersection. Transfers to and from other routes can be made at Bradley Station. The loop is estimated to take 26 minutes to complete (scheduled for 30 minutes, including four minutes of layover / recovery time). Two buses alternate between this route, Route 6 (Bessemer City Road), and Route 7 (Highland). Service is available every 60 minutes.

Route 4 (South York): Serves S. York and Chester Streets, portions of Hudson Blvd., and Davis Park Road in each direction between Dixie Village and Bradley Station. Major destinations include Dixie Village, Linwood Park Apartments, Gaston County Health Department, and Bradley Station. Transfers to and from other routes can be made at Bradley Station and Dixie Village. One bus is assigned to this route, and a complete round trip is estimated to take 49 minutes (scheduled for 60 minutes, including 11 minutes of recovery time). Therefore, service is available in each direction every 60 minutes.

Exhibit 4-1: Baseline Alternative 1 Route Map



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Route 5 (Shannon Bradley): Serves portions of Linwood Road and surrounding neighborhoods, Bessemer City Road, Crescent Lane, Shannon Bradley Road, and Franklin Blvd. west to Edgewood Road. Major destinations include Linwood Terrace Apartments, Stoney Pointe Apartments, Food Lion shopping center at Edgewood Road, the Department of Motor Vehicles, Dixie Village, Wal-Mart in West Gastonia, and Bradley Station. Transfers to and from other routes can be made at Bradley Station and Dixie Village. One bus alternates between this route and Route 2 (Garrison), and one round trip is estimated to take 53 minutes (scheduled for 60 minutes, including seven minutes of layover / recovery time). Therefore, recognizing the interlining with Route 2, service is available every 90 minutes.

Route 6 (Bessemer City Road): Serves Bessemer City Road, Crescent Lane, Shannon Bradley Road, and portions of Franklin Blvd. Major destinations include the Employment Security Commission, the industrial area north of I-85, Stoney Pointe Apartments, the Department of Motor Vehicles, Dixie Village, and Wal-Mart in West Gastonia. Transfers to and from other routes can be made at Dixie Village. One round trip is estimated to take 26 minutes to complete (scheduled for 30 minutes, including four minutes of layover / recovery time). Two buses alternate between this route, Route 3 (Marietta), and Route 7 (Highland). Service is available every 60 minutes.

Route 7 (Highland): Serves the Highland community in the northwest quadrant of the city, using a two-way route between Dixie Village and Bradley Station, rather than the current loop route that begins and ends at Bradley Station. Major destinations include Radio Street Apartments, Wal-Mart in West Gastonia, and Dixie Village. Transfers to and from other routes can be made at Bradley Station and Dixie Village. One trip in each direction is estimated to take 27 minutes to complete (scheduled for 30 minutes, including three minutes of layover / recovery time). Two buses alternate between this route, Route 3 (Marietta), and Route 6 (Bessemer City Road). Service is available in each direction every 60 minutes.

Route 8 (Hospital): Serves Ozark Ave., portions of N. New Hope Road, the Hospital area, and the Franklin Square area in each direction between Bradley Station and Franklin Square. Major destinations include the Hospital and surrounding medical offices, Gaston Mall, and Franklin Square. Transfers to and from other routes can be made at Bradley Station and Franklin Square. One bus is assigned to this route, and a complete round trip is estimated to take 53 minutes (scheduled for 60 minutes, including seven minute of layover / recovery time). Therefore, service is available in each direction every 60 minutes.

Schedules

Baseline Alternative 1 provides for the full complement of routes to operate Monday through Friday, utilizing six buses. The six buses would be assigned to the routes as follows:

- **Bus A:** Route 1 (Franklin)
- **Bus B:** Route 4 (S. York)
- **Bus C:** Route 3 (Marietta) – Route 7 (Highland) – Route 6 (Bessemer City Road)
- **Bus D:** Route 3 (Marietta) – Route 7 (Highland) – Route 6 (Bessemer City Road)

- **Bus E:** Route 8 (Hospital)
- **Bus F:** Route 5 (Shannon Bradley) – Route 2 (Garrison)

Starting and ending times by route, along with frequencies, are shown in Exhibit 4-2 below. A complete set of draft schedules for this scenario is included as **Appendix C**.

Exhibit 4-2: Weekday Services – Baseline Alternative 1			
Route	Service Begins	Service Ends	Frequency
1 (Franklin)	5:30 AM	6:30 PM	60 minutes
2 (Garrison)	6:00 AM	6:30 PM	90 minutes
3 (Marietta)	5:30 AM	6:00 PM	60 minutes
4 (S. York)	6:00 AM	6:00 PM	60 minutes
5 (Shannon Bradley)	6:30 AM	6:00 PM	90 minutes
6 (Bessemer City Road)	6:30 AM	6:00 PM	60 minutes
7 (Highland)	5:30 AM	7:00 PM	60 minutes
8 (Hospital)	6:00 AM	6:00 PM	60 minutes

On Saturdays, a reduced schedule using three buses would be provided. All routes except Route 1 (Franklin) and Route 6 (Bessemer City Road) would operate on Saturdays (at reduced frequencies in most cases). The major destinations served by Route 1 (Franklin) are also served by other routes, which would enable continued service to these destinations on Saturdays. Three buses would be assigned to the routes as follows:

- **Bus A:** Route 8 (Hospital)
- **Bus B:** Route 2 (Garrison) – Route 3 (Marietta) – Route 7 (Highland)
- **Bus C:** Route 4 (S. York) – Route 5 (Shannon Bradley)

Starting times, ending times, and frequencies by route for Saturday service are shown in Exhibit 4-3 below. A complete set of draft schedules for this scenario is also included in **Appendix C**.

Exhibit 4-3: Saturday Services – Baseline Alternative 1			
Route	Service Begins	Service Ends	Frequency
2 (Garrison)	9:30 AM	6:00 PM	120 minutes
3 (Marietta)	9:00 AM	5:30 PM	120 minutes
4 (S. York)	8:00 AM	5:00 PM	120 minutes
5 (Shannon Bradley)	9:00 AM	6:00 PM	120 minutes
7 (Highland)	8:00 AM	5:00 PM	120 minutes
8 (Hospital)	8:00 AM	6:00 PM	60 minutes

Comparison to Current System

Most of the areas that are currently served by transit would maintain service under Baseline Alternative 1. The most significant changes are on the Highland route, which would utilize several different streets. However, many of the same streets are served, and in all cases, the new alignment is within two blocks of the existing alignment. Other significant changes are proposed in the Linwood Road area. The portion of Linwood Road south of Linwood Terrace Apartments would no longer be served; however, this area

typically has little ridership. Both Linwood Park and Linwood Terrace Apartments would continue to be served. Weekend service to Martha Rivers Park would also be discontinued. Several other areas would no longer have direct service, but service would continue to operate within several blocks of the current alignment.

On the other hand, several areas of new service would be added. Service would be extended west on Franklin Blvd. to Edgewood Road; Davis Park Road would gain service throughout the week (rather than Saturdays only); new areas in the western part of the Highland community would be served; and Efir St. (between Marietta St. and Hudson Blvd.) would receive new service. Furthermore, key destinations such as Franklin Square, Westfield Mall, and the West Gastonia Wal-Mart would be served by multiple routes, increasing the array of travel options.

Service frequency would increase to key destinations such as the Hospital, Franklin Square, Health Department, and major apartment complexes (in most cases, service would be provided every 60 minutes instead of every 90 minutes). Some portions of the Highland community would have service that arrives less frequently (60 minutes instead of 45 minutes), whereas other areas in the Highland community will benefit from an increased level of service. However, even those areas with a slight reduction in frequency will benefit from being able to make direct connections to west Gastonia and Downtown Gastonia, rather than being forced to travel through Downtown for all trips. In addition, the revised schedules are much more passenger-friendly, based on 30- or 60-minute cycles rather than the current 45- and 90-minute cycles.

Exhibits 4-4 and 4-5 provide a comparison of travel times between key origins and destinations for the current route network and the system that would be implemented under Baseline Alternative 1. The travel times shown were calculated based on the most favorable connections between routes. In nearly all cases, the Baseline Alternative 1 scheme provides for round trip travel times that are either the same or better than those experienced under the current system.

Exhibit 4-4: Comparison of Travel Times – Baseline Alternative 1 (Weekday Service)

	Current Network			Baseline Alternative 1		
	To	From	Round Trip	To	From	Round Trip
Radio St. Apts. - Downtown	11	17	28	11	11	22
Radio St. Apts. – Franklin Square	53	37	90	41 ⁽¹⁾	47 ⁽²⁾	88
Radio St. Apts. – Health Department	41	49	90	31 ⁽³⁾	29 ⁽⁴⁾	60
Radio St. Apts. – Hospital	38	52	90	57	29	86
Radio St. Apts. – W. Gastonia Wal-Mart	53	34	87	14	16	30
Village Square Apts. – Downtown	24	11	35	8	20	28
Village Square Apts. – Franklin Square	59	31	90	34 ⁽⁵⁾	43 ⁽⁶⁾	77
Village Square Apts. – Health Department	3 ⁽⁷⁾	43	46	23	68	91
Village Square Apts. – Hospital	44	46	90	23	68	91
Village Square Apts. – W. Gastonia Wal-Mart	45	31	76	35 ⁽⁸⁾	44 ⁽⁹⁾	79
Linwood Park Apts. – Downtown	16	16	32	16	16	32
Linwood Park Apts. – Franklin Square	40	50	90	42 ⁽¹⁰⁾	49 ⁽¹¹⁾	91
Linwood Park Apts. – Health Department	87	3	90	3	3	6

	Current Network			Baseline Alternative 1		
	To	From	Round Trip	To	From	Round Trip
Linwood Park Apts. – Hospital	84	96	180	33	33	66
Linwood Park Apts. – W. Gastonia Wal-Mart	54	36	90	8	8	16

Baseline Alternative 1 has a lower travel time

The current network has a lower travel time

No appreciable difference in travel time (less than five minutes difference)

- (1) via Franklin Blvd. route
- (2) via Hospital route
- (3) via Dixie Village
- (4) via Bradley Station
- (5) via Hospital route
- (6) via Franklin Blvd. route
- (7) current system does not directly access Health Dept. via Marietta
- (8) via Highland route (alt. is Franklin Blvd. route)
- (9) via Shannon Bradley route (alt. in Highland route)
- (10) via Hospital route
- (11) via Hospital route

Exhibit 4-5: Comparison of Travel Times – Baseline Alternative 1 (Saturday Service)

	Current Network			Baseline Alternative 1		
	To	From	Round Trip	To	From	Round Trip
Radio St. Apts. - Downtown	29	6	35	6	6	12
Radio St. Apts. – Franklin Square	87	33	120	32	42	74
Radio St. Apts. – Health Department	67	53	120	36 ⁽¹⁾	39 ⁽²⁾	75
Radio St. Apts. – Hospital	72	48	120	21	24	45
Radio St. Apts. – W. Gastonia Wal-Mart	30	30	60	20	20	40
Village Square Apts. – Downtown	37	11	48	8	20	28
Village Square Apts. – Franklin Square	82	38	120	64	56	120
Village Square Apts. – Health Department	7 ⁽³⁾	113 ⁽³⁾	120	53	38	91
Village Square Apts. – Hospital	67	53	120	53	38	91
Village Square Apts. – W. Gastonia Wal-Mart	85	35	120	63 ⁽⁴⁾	48 ⁽⁵⁾	111
Linwood Park Apts. – Downtown	26	16	42	16	16	32
Linwood Park Apts. – Franklin Square	77	43	120	45	52	97
Linwood Park Apts. – Health Department	117	3	120	3	3	6
Linwood Park Apts. – Hospital	62	58	120	34	34	68
Linwood Park Apts. – W. Gastonia Wal-Mart	8	112	120	8	8	16

Baseline Alternative 1 has a lower travel time

The current network has a lower travel time

No appreciable difference in travel time (less than five minutes difference)

- (1) via Dixie Village
- (2) via Dixie Village
- (3) via Clyde / Hudson
- (4) via S. York
- (5) via S. York

Estimated Impact on Annual Operating Costs

Baseline Alternative 1 is projected to have a negligible impact on operating costs, because the number of hours of service is virtually unchanged as compared to the current network. A total of 76.5 vehicle hours of service are currently provided on each weekday, and 30 vehicles hours of service are provided on Saturdays. Under Baseline Alternative 1, 76 vehicle hours of service would be provided on weekdays, and 30 vehicle hours of service

would be provided on Saturdays. For budgeting purposes, an escalation in cost of 5% over FY 2006 figures has been assumed for 2007 implementation.

4.3. BASELINE ALTERNATIVE 2 (ONE ADDITIONAL BUS IN OPERATION)

Description

Baseline Alternative 2 provides another option for a transit service plan that enhances the efficiency of current services while providing a framework for additional service expansion. This scenario requires the use of seven active vehicles on weekdays, rather than the six vehicles that are currently used. On weekends, four buses would provide service, as compared to the current Saturday fleet of three vehicles. GT has the ability to use an existing spare vehicle for the service, so there would be no additional major capital costs to provide this level of service. However, operating costs would be higher than those incurred under the current system.

This scenario shares many similarities with Baseline Alternative 1. The hours of service and the overall route and schedule structure are the same, with three notable exceptions:

- **Route 2 (Garrison)** is extended to provide additional service on S. New Hope Road to the Ashbrook High School area. The route then connects directly to Franklin Square, instead of the loop route that is proposed under Baseline Alternative 1. This route would be structured to provide a 60-minute round trip, and would enable passengers to access new commercial development as well as transfer to other routes at both Bradley Station and Franklin Square. The Ashbrook High School area, including residents of apartments in the Bradford Heights community, would benefit tremendously from this service. GT currently does not provide any transit service in this area. Service would be provided every 60 minutes, rather than every 90 minutes along a shortened route as shown under Baseline Alternative 1.
- **Route 5 (Shannon Bradley)** maintains the same route structure as proposed under Baseline Alternative 1, but service would be provided at a frequency of every 60 minutes, rather than every 90 minutes.
- On Saturdays, a fourth bus is added to serve Route 1 (Franklin). All routes would have some level of service on Saturdays except Route 6 (Bessemer City Road).

Schedules

Baseline Alternative 2 provides for the full complement of routes to operate Monday through Friday, utilizing seven buses. The seven buses would be assigned to the routes as follows:

- **Bus A:** Route 1 (Franklin)
- **Bus B:** Route 4 (S. York)
- **Bus C:** Route 3 (Marietta) – Route 7 (Highland) – Route 6 (Bessemer City Road)
- **Bus D:** Route 3 (Marietta) – Route 7 (Highland) – Route 6 (Bessemer City Road)
- **Bus E:** Route 8 (Hospital)
- **Bus F:** Route 5 (Shannon Bradley)
- **Bus G:** Route 2 (Garrison)

Starting and ending times by route, along with frequencies, are shown in Exhibit 4-6 below. A complete set of draft schedules for this scenario is included as **Appendix D**.

Route	Service Begins	Service Ends	Frequency
1 (Franklin)	5:30 AM	6:30 PM	60 minutes
2 (Garrison)	6:00 AM	6:00 PM	60 minutes
3 (Marietta)	5:30 AM	6:00 PM	60 minutes
4 (S. York)	6:00 AM	6:00 PM	60 minutes
5 (Shannon Bradley)	6:30 AM	6:30 PM	60 minutes
6 (Bessemer City Road)	6:30 AM	6:00 PM	60 minutes
7 (Highland)	6:00 AM	6:30 PM	60 minutes
8 (Hospital)	6:00 AM	6:00 PM	60 minutes

On Saturdays, a reduced schedule using four buses would be provided. All routes except Route 6 (Bessemer City Road) would operate on Saturdays (at reduced frequencies in most cases). Four buses would be assigned to the routes as follows:

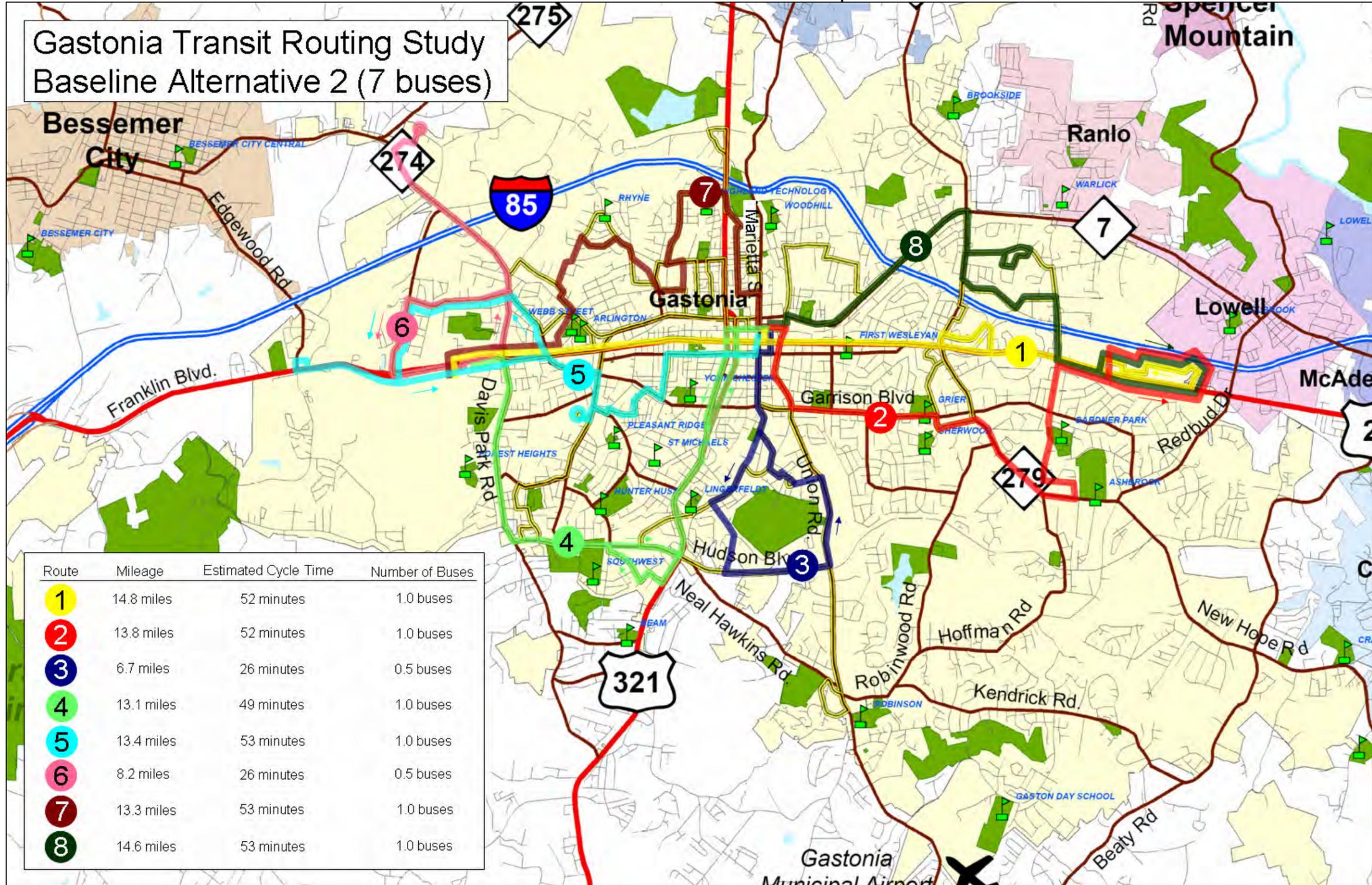
- **Bus A:** Route 1 (Franklin)
- **Bus B:** Route 3 (Marietta) – Route 4 (S. York)
- **Bus C:** Route 2 (Garrison) – Route 5 (Shannon Bradley)
- **Bus D:** Route 7 (Highland) – Route 8 (Hospital)

Starting times, ending times, and frequencies by route for Saturday service are shown in Exhibit 4-7 below. A complete set of draft schedules for this scenario is also included in **Appendix D**.

Route	Service Begins	Service Ends	Frequency
1 (Franklin)	7:30 AM	5:41 PM	60 minutes
2 (Garrison)	8:00 AM	5:00 PM	120 minutes
3 (Marietta)	9:00 AM	5:00 PM	90 minutes
4 (S. York)	8:00 AM	4:30 PM	90 minutes
5 (Shannon Bradley)	9:00 AM	4:00 PM	120 minutes
7 (Highland)	8:00 AM	5:00 PM	120 minutes
8 (Hospital)	9:00 AM	4:00 PM	120 minutes

A route map illustrating the routes proposed under Baseline Alternative 2 is shown in Exhibit 4-8.

Exhibit 4-8: Baseline Alternative 2 Route Map



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Estimated Impact on Annual Operating Costs

Because Baseline Alternative 2 involves additional hours of service in comparison to the current network, operating costs will increase. It is estimated that approximately 24,200 annual vehicle hours of service would be provided under this scenario (87.5 vehicle hours on weekdays and 37 vehicle hours on Saturdays). Using the FY 2006 annual operating cost of approximately \$1,448,900 for the current system as a basis for extrapolation, it is estimated that Baseline Alternative 2 would result in operating costs of approximately \$1,667,000, or a 15% increase from the current costs. These costs are subject to escalation based on rising unit costs, and would likely be higher at the time of implementation (the implementation plan in Section 6 assumes a figure of 5% higher than current costs for implementation in 2007). Regardless of when the improvements are scheduled to be initiated, for budgeting purposes, the cost of implementing this alternative would be approximately 15% higher than the figure budgeted for the current transit network.

Baseline Alternative 2 does present the opportunity for increased ridership given the increased level of service to Franklin Square, improved service on Saturdays and reverting back to the pre-2004 frequencies on some routes. The farebox recovery associated with these improvements will offset some of the costs of providing the service.

Section 5: Service Expansion Alternatives



5.1. EXPANSION ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

In addition to the Baseline Alternatives designed to address the current system issues, a variety of service expansion alternatives also were examined as part of this study process. The alternatives have been categorized as follows:

- New routes and services;
- Increased service frequency;
- Increased hours of service; and
- Opportunities for coordination.

These options were developed largely as the result of input received from the public surveys, as well as ideas from the members of the Working Group and the stakeholders that were interviewed for this process. Characteristics of each of the expansion strategies considered are summarized in the following pages, and recommendations and implementation action items based on these options are offered in Section 6.

5.2. NEW ROUTES AND SERVICES

Several options for new routes and services were studied, including traditional fixed routes similar to the fixed routes currently operated by Gastonia Transit, as well as “flexroutes”, which share characteristics of fixed-route and demand-response services. Whereas fixed routes are designed to serve urban areas with higher population and employment densities, “flexroutes” are intended to enable an increased service coverage area in more rural settings that may not have sufficient residential densities to support a traditional fixed route.

Fixed Routes

“Fixed route” describes the type of service currently provided by Gastonia Transit, using a bus traveling along a set alignment according to a fixed schedule. Most urban transit services operate in this manner, and traditional fixed route service is an effective way to serve areas of high transit usage in an efficient manner. Fixed routes are designed to serve areas of high residential concentrations, as well as major employment and shopping destinations, government centers, large medical facilities, and other major attractions, where many people are traveling to and from these locations.

Two specific opportunities for new fixed routes were identified in the Gastonia area, based on input received during the planning process, as well as consideration of existing demographic characteristics.

- Downtown trolley route
- South Union Road route

It should be noted that another new fixed route serving South New Hope Road to the Ashbrook High School area was also examined. This route was discussed as part of “Baseline Alternative 2” in Section 5.

Downtown Trolley Route

Several local stakeholders have expressed a desire for “trolley” service in downtown Gastonia. This desire stems from downtown planning efforts, and a trolley is envisioned as a connection between downtown businesses, offices and government buildings, using an attractive, “fun” vehicle. The trolley itself would operate on rubber tires, and is essentially a bus that is designed to look like a historic trolley vehicle.



The vehicles themselves generally range in size from 20' to 35', with seating capacities varying between 20 and 40 passengers. A variety of fuel options are available, including diesel, gasoline, compressed natural gas, propane, hybrid electric, and fully electric (battery).



Replica trolleys have a “novelty factor” that may be attractive to visitors and others who may not be attracted to traditional transit buses. Transit service using these vehicles can support redevelopment and new development efforts, but the vehicles themselves are not enough to encourage development. This type of service relies on substantial pedestrian activity at the destinations served to create ridership demand, but the trolley itself will not create the pedestrian activity.

Many downtown areas utilize replica trolley service as a transit circulator, with varying levels of success. This type of service is most effective in areas in which parking is difficult to find and / or expensive, so that the trolley offers an effective alternative to the car. The “Gold Rush” service in downtown Charlotte is successful for these reasons. It is easier in many cases to hop on a trolley than to drive from one point to another in downtown and deal with the hassle, time, and cost of parking.

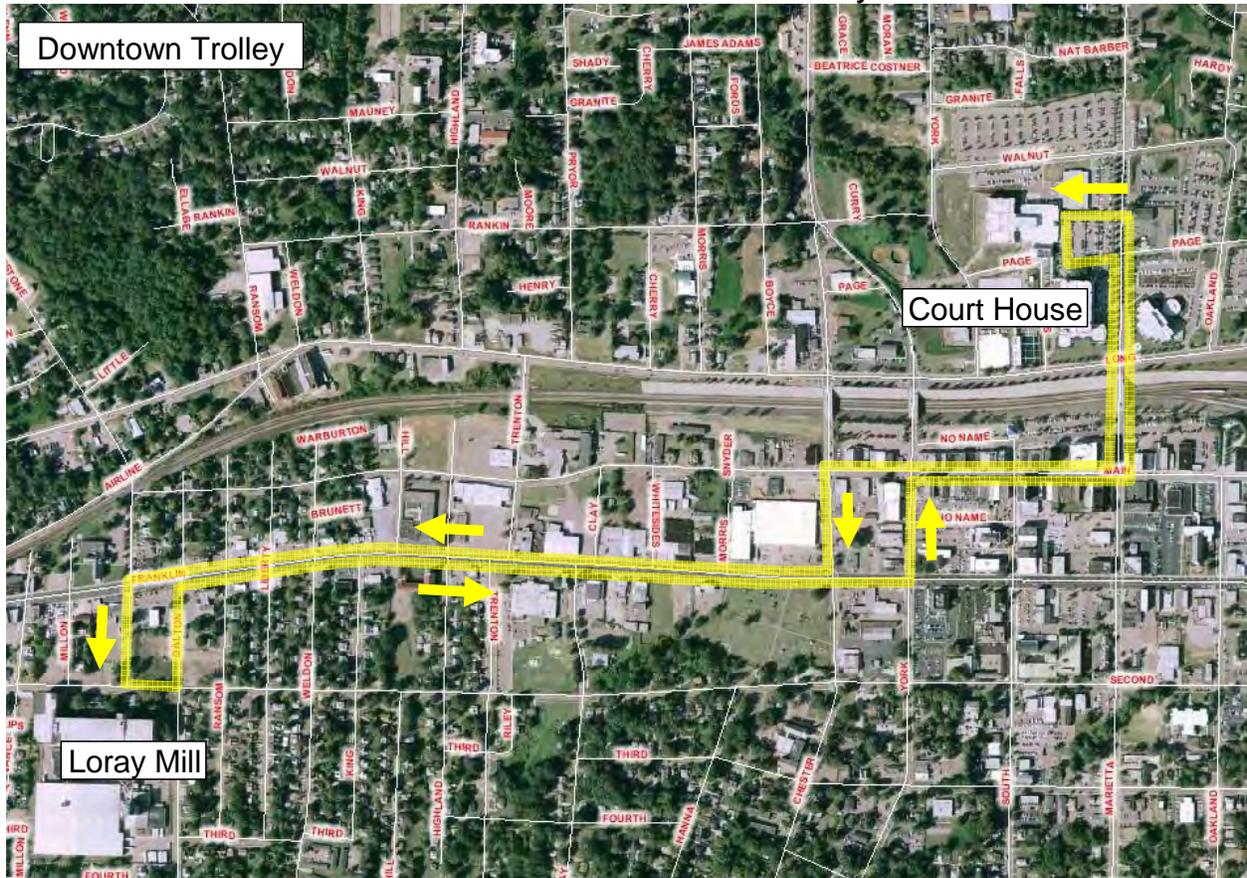
Trolleys are also successful in areas with a number of attractions downtown, and can help shuttle visitors who are unfamiliar with the area between key locations. Trolleys in downtown Charleston, SC are used not only by numerous tourists, but also by students at the College of Charleston as a connection between the main campus and an off-campus parking garage. To ensure success, a trolley service must provide a level of service that enables a travel time or cost savings over driving and parking, and the service must connect key origins and destinations.

In Gastonia, stakeholders have expressed an interest in trolley service to connect downtown with the proposed Loray Mill redevelopment project, as well as to connect downtown businesses with the Gaston County Court House and County offices. Potential parking changes around the Court House may make parking more difficult, and trolley service has been identified as a potential mitigating solution.

For purposes of analysis, a potential downtown trolley route was identified. This route would serve to connect the planned redevelopment of Loray Mill, the downtown business district, and the County offices and Court House on the north side of the railroad corridor.

A potential route alignment is shown in Exhibit 5-1. This route could provide service approximately every twenty minutes using one vehicle.

Exhibit 5-1: Potential Downtown Trolley Route



In terms of cost, the purchase cost of replica trolleys varies greatly based on the type of engine, durability of the vehicle, the quality of construction, type of suspension, and special features. New vehicles range in cost from \$150,000 to \$275,000 and up for custom models. Vehicles powered by alternative fuels are more expensive than diesel-powered vehicles. Used vehicles are sometimes available from transit systems at substantially lower costs than new vehicles. As another option, the City could elect to lease a trolley(s) for a year or two to operate the route on a trial basis. The actual cost of a lease will vary depending on length of the lease, whether it's a new or used vehicle and the willingness of a manufacturer to provide a lease for a single vehicle. The lease could cost \$75,000 to \$90,000 based on two year lease of a \$200,000 vehicle with some allowance for interest. If the service is successful, trolleys could then be purchased. This approach would allow the City to test the route with a much lower initial capital outlay. One vehicle could be utilized for active service; however, unless two vehicles are purchased or leased, a regular GT bus would have to be used when the trolley vehicle is unavailable due to maintenance.

On-going operating costs would also be incurred for the trolley service. If the route operates Monday through Friday, between the hours of 7 AM and 6 PM, a total of 2,805 annual vehicle hours of service would be provided. Using GT’s current unit cost of approximately \$69 per vehicle hour results in an estimated annual operating cost for the trolley route of \$194,000. An assumed escalation factor of 5% brings the estimated FY 2007 cost to **\$203,000**.

South Union Road Route

Currently, Gastonia Transit serves most of Union Road south to Martha Rivers Park on Saturdays only. Under both Baseline Alternatives (described in Section 4), the existing weekend service to this area would no longer be available. However, expanded service could provide a route serving all of Union Road between Downtown and Martha Rivers Park on weekdays (and Saturdays too, if desired).

This route, illustrated in Exhibit 5-3, is approximately 8.1 miles in length, and would be scheduled as a 30-minute round trip. The route likely would not need service every half hour, so the route could be interlined with another route (the bus would alternate between the routes) to provide additional service elsewhere as well. This route would provide service to several apartment complexes on Union Road, as well as shopping and employment opportunities. Service to Martha Rivers Park would also be provided.

Estimated annual operating costs (projected for 2007) for weekday and Saturday service are provided for several different scenarios for hours of operation in Exhibit 5-2 below.

Exhibit 5-2: Estimated Operating Cost for Potential South Union Road Route

	Weekday Service	Saturday Service
Current hours of operation	\$222,000	\$37,000
Extended service until 9 PM	\$277,000	\$48,000
Extended service until 11 PM	\$314,000	\$56,000

If an additional vehicle is needed to provide service along this route, a medium-duty (10-year life) bus would cost approximately \$300,000. A heavy-duty (12-year) bus would cost about \$350,000. As an alternative, a smaller “van cutaway” type vehicle with a capacity of 15-19 passengers could be purchased for around \$60,000. This lighter-duty vehicle has a shorter useful life (4-5 years of service) than the large buses, but it is much less expensive and less “intrusive” in areas where the level of ridership demand is likely to be lower. These light-duty vehicles are around 25’ in length, compared to traditional buses that are 30’ – 40’ in length.

Exhibit 5-3: Potential South Union Road Route



Flexroutes

Although many areas in Gaston County are growing rapidly, most areas outside of Gastonia proper lack the population and employment density needed to support fixed-route service. Areas that are not as heavily populated can still benefit from transit service, but the service must be designed to be reflective of the more rural environment in which it operates.

The concept of a “flexroute” mixes some of the concepts of fixed-route service with demand-response service, to provide transit service over a larger area than is served by a typical fixed route. In Gaston County, this concept could be applied to areas outside of the current (and proposed) fixed-route service area. “Flexroutes” would operate in a demand-response manner in designated zones on the fringes of the service area. Transportation would be provided to passengers between any two points within the designated zone, or transfers could be made to GT fixed routes at designated transfer points for continued travel to other parts of the region. This service concept can be used to demonstrate transit demand in lower-density areas. If ridership levels are sufficiently high using the demand-response concept, it may be feasible to design a fixed-route neighborhood circulator to serve the area.

How to Use “Flexroute” Service

- Service would be available to all members of the general public located in the designated zone.
- Passengers located within a designated service zone would make a reservation for a trip from home. Destinations for service can be any point within the designated zone, and transfers to fixed-route service can be made at a designated point for trips elsewhere in the service area.
- Trips would be scheduled to enable timed connections to fixed route service at the designated transfer point.
- For return trips, passengers could board the vehicle at the designated transfer point at the scheduled times, or could make reservations for pick-up by a vehicle serving their particular zone (if they do not transfer from fixed route service). Once on board the vehicle, passengers would inform the operator of their destination, which could be anywhere within the designated zone (curb-to-curb service).

Designated Flexroute Zones

A total of five potential flexroute service zones were identified based on public and stakeholder input, including the following:

- Belmont / Cramerton;
- Bessemer City;
- Dallas; and
- Mt. Holly / McAdenville / Lowell.

A fifth flexroute, the East Gaston Flexroute, uses a deviated fixed-route service to serve portions of the communities in east Gaston County, with continuing service to Little Rock Road in Charlotte, where a connection with CATS Route 5 can be made.

It is important to note that Gaston County ACCESS currently provides deviated fixed-route service to the Dallas area; however, the flexroute concept represents an expansion of the service already provided by ACCESS.

Exhibits 5-4 through 5-8 illustrate potential service area boundaries for each flexroute zone. These boundaries are subject to revision with more detailed planning. The locations indicated by stars on the maps indicate where transfers can be made between flexroute service and GT fixed-route service.

Exhibit 5-4: Potential Belmont / Cramerton Flexroute Zone

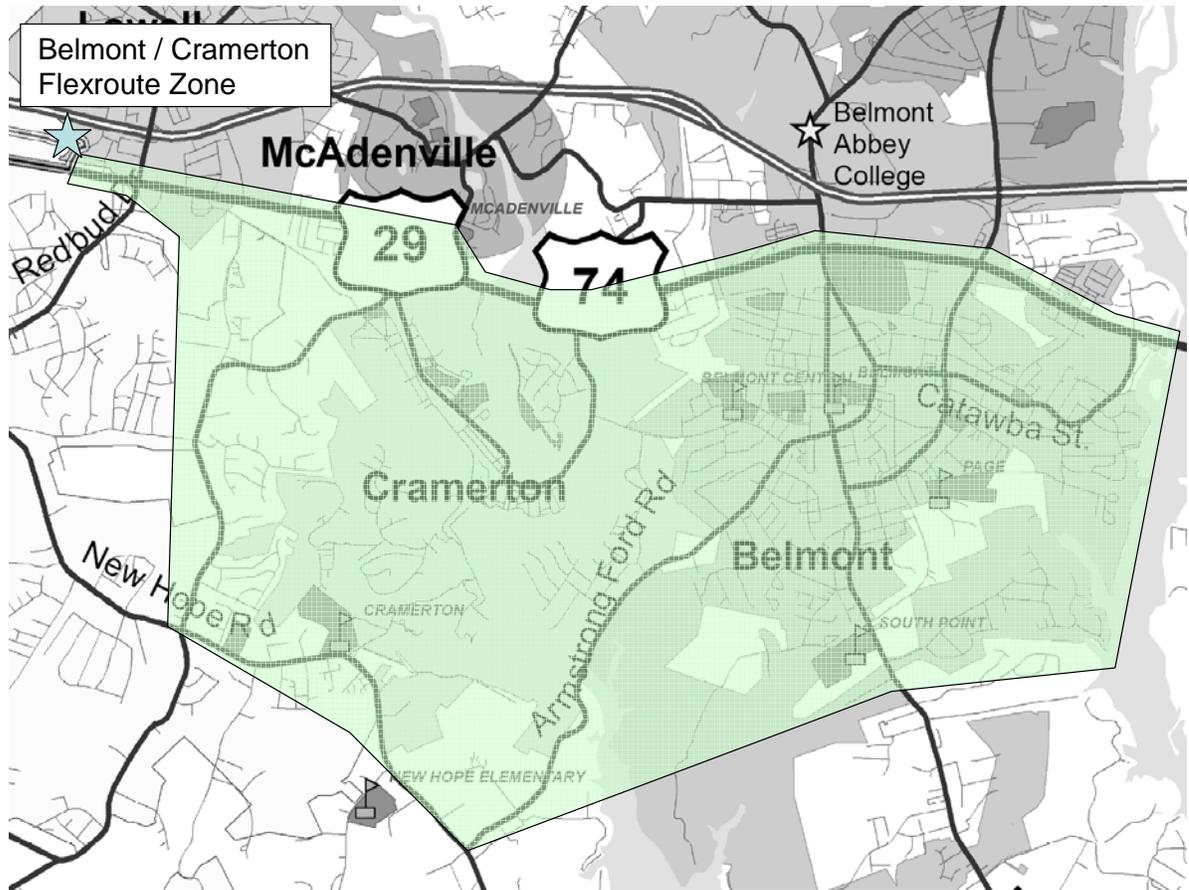


Exhibit 5-5: Potential Bessemer City Flexroute Zone

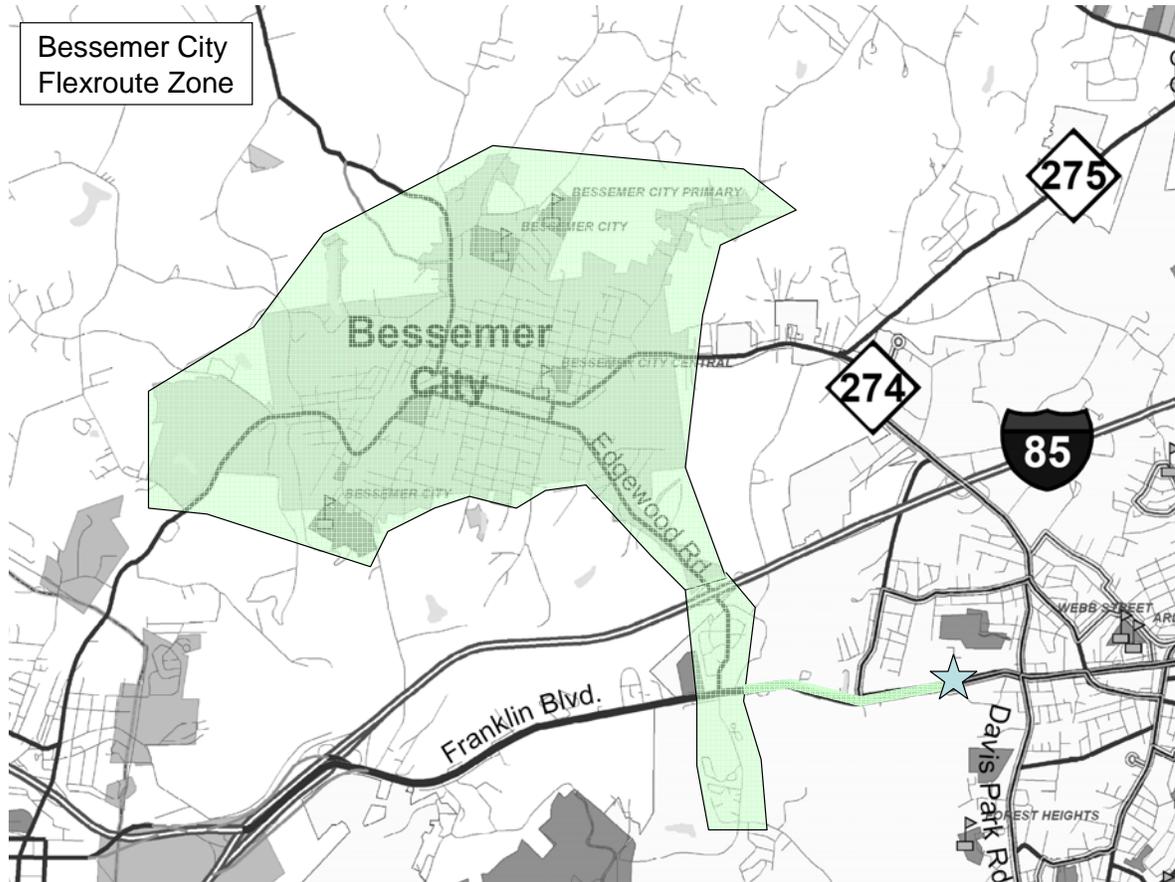


Exhibit 5-6: Potential Dallas Flexroute Zone

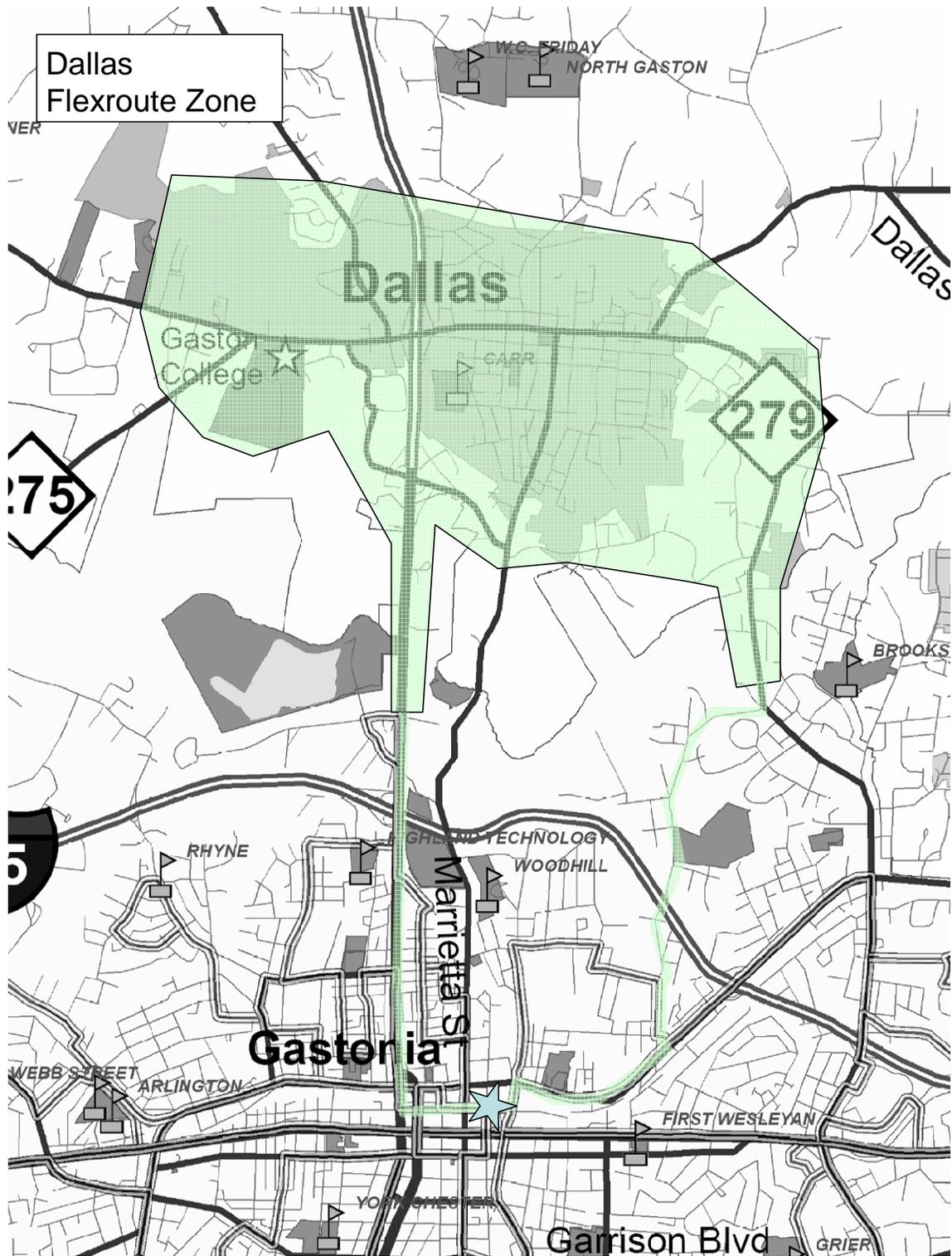
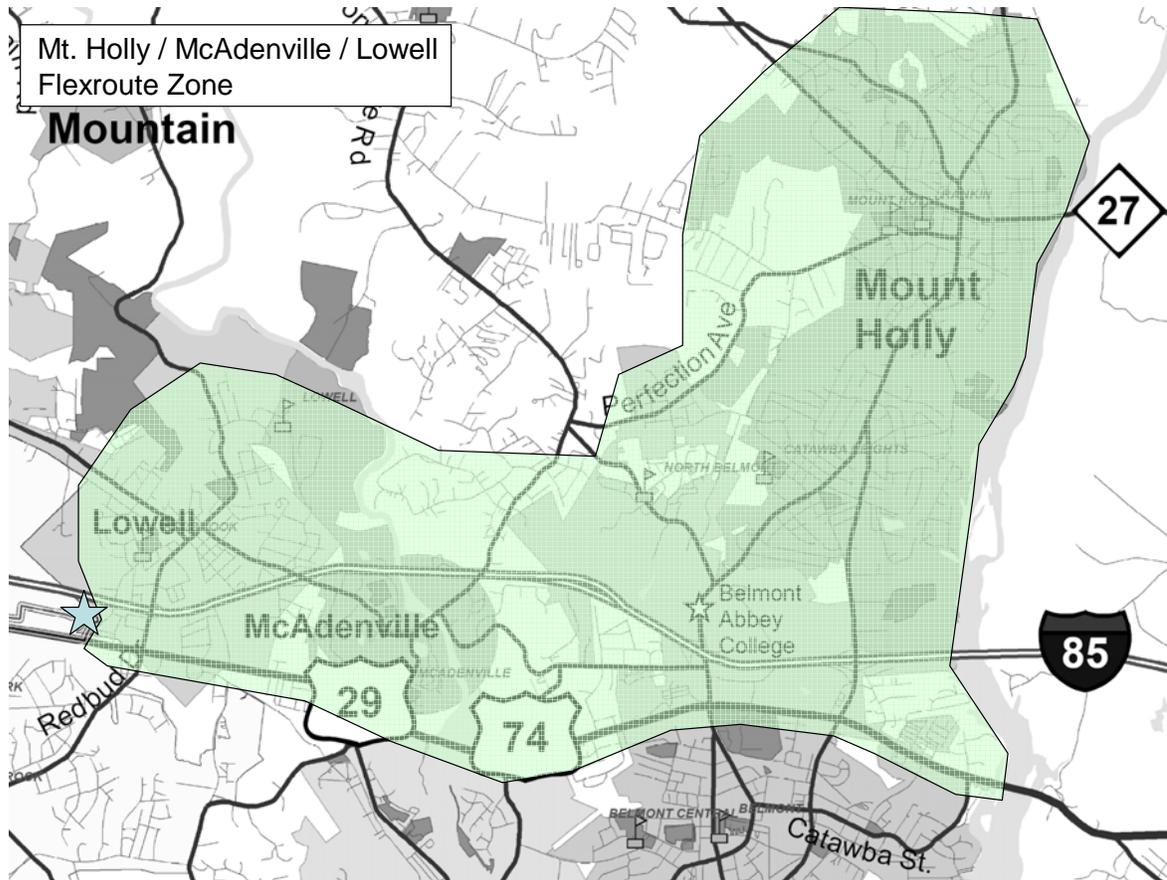


Exhibit 5-7: Potential Mt. Holly / McAdenville / Lowell Flexroute Zone

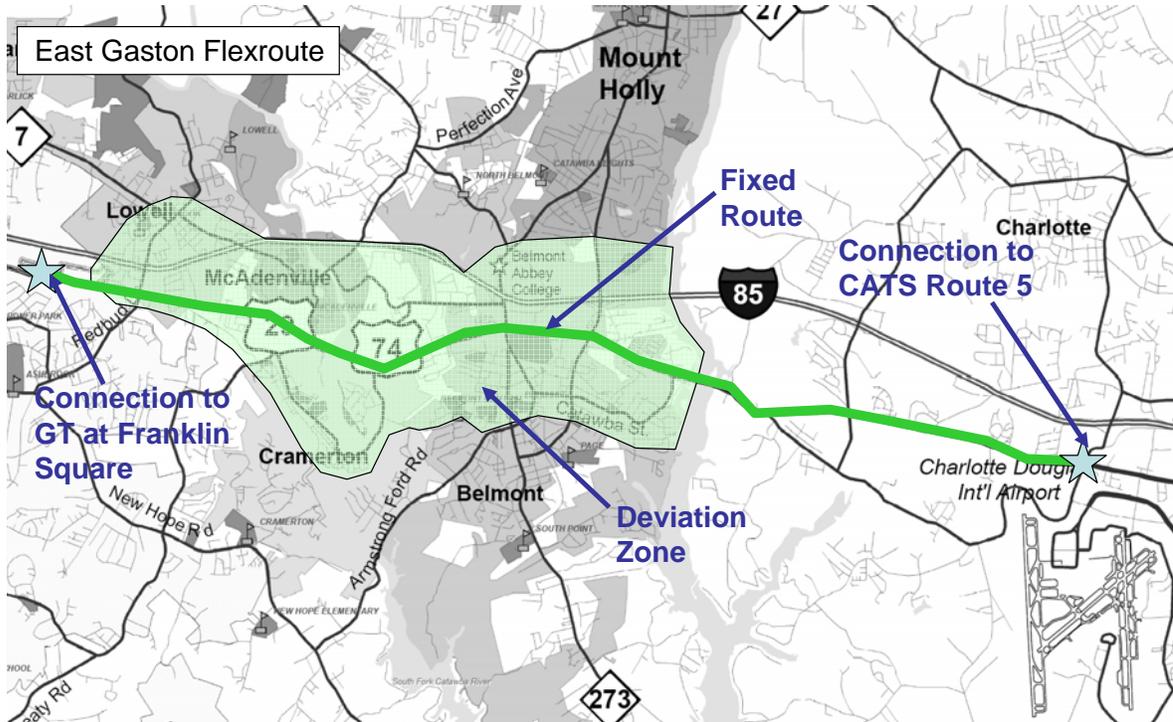


The East Gaston Flexroute differs slightly from the previous four options. Whereas the previous four options do not have any predetermined routes, and vehicles can travel anywhere within the designated service area at any time between the established meeting times at the transfer points, the East Gaston Flexroute travels along a fixed route from Franklin Square east along US 74 (Franklin Blvd. / Wilkinson Blvd.) to Little Rock Road in Charlotte. Vehicles can deviate off of this fixed route to serve destinations within approximately one mile of the route itself, but then return to the route to continue from the point at which the deviation occurred.

The route schedule would be created to allow time for deviations (up to a specified number in each run), while still maintaining a fixed schedule at key timepoints. Passengers could call and schedule a pickup from a point within the deviation area, or simply wait at a stop along the fixed portion of the route without a reservation (like a traditional fixed route).

The East Gaston Flexroute is designed to not only provide access to and from key destinations along US 74 in the eastern part of the county, but also to enable mid-day access to the CATS system through a connection to CATS Route 5 at Little Rock Road near the Charlotte / Douglas International Airport.

Exhibit 5-8: Potential East Gaston Flexroute



Flexroute Operations and Cost

This service would operate using smaller transit vehicles (e.g. ACCESS minibuses), and the most appropriate operator would be ACCESS. The hours of operation for this service would generally be the same as that of connecting fixed routes (i.e. 5:30 AM until 6:30 PM), although service could be extended slightly to enable transfers from the last fixed-route run to return to their ultimate destination. Initially, one vehicle would be assigned to each zone that is implemented, although additional vehicles could be added as dictated by demand.

The estimated cost for service in each flexroute zone was computed using the ACCESS unit cost per hour, rather than the GT unit cost (reflecting the likelihood of services being operated by ACCESS). Estimated annual operating costs (projected for 2007) for weekday and Saturday service are provided for several different scenarios for hours of operation in Exhibit 5-9 below. Because each zone would have one vehicle assigned to it, the annual operating cost would be consistent between each of the zones.

Exhibit 5-9: Estimated Operating Cost for Flexroute Service (Each Zone)

	Weekday Service	Saturday Service
Current hours of operation	\$68,000	\$12,000
Extended service until 9 PM	\$83,000	\$15,000
Extended service until 11 PM	\$94,000	\$17,000

Vanpools

Another option for transit services is the establishment of vanpool services targeted to specific locations or areas. This type of service may be an option for service to the county's industrial parks, where many workers are employed, but the levels of demand may not require full fixed-route service. The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) sponsors a number of vanpools in the region, in which CATS provides the van, fuel, insurance, and maintenance, and the driver and passengers pay a monthly fare to participate. At least three CATS vanpools currently originate in Gaston County (two in Gastonia and one in Dallas). Vanpools also operate in other areas (rural and urban) in North Carolina, in many cases organized by a private company. Vanpool service could be a feasible transit linkage to key employment centers, especially if the targeted companies participate financially in the service.

5.3. INCREASED SERVICE FREQUENCY

Both of the Baseline System Alternatives improve upon the service frequency as compared to the existing network. However, providing more frequent service beyond the improved baseline level may attract additional ridership to the system. Using Baseline Alternative 2 as a basis, all routes would have service every 60 minutes. The frequency could be increased on selected high-ridership routes, or across the system as a whole. To maintain the integrity of the timed connections, as well as schedules that can be easily understood by passengers, any frequency increases should occur in an increment of 30 minutes (i.e. routes with 60-minute service would be improved to have 30-minute service).

Depending on the extent to which service frequency is increased, this improvement could be quite expensive. For example, increasing the frequency of all routes to every 30 minutes would require a doubling of the active fleet (14 buses instead of 7 buses as recommended in Baseline Alternative 2). Not only would additional vehicles need to be purchased, but the annual operating costs of the system would double from current levels, to almost \$3 million per year. Increasing the frequency on one or two high-ridership routes would not be as expensive, but annual operating costs would increase at a level comparable to adding a new fixed route.

Recognizing that the proposed "baseline" improvements would improve the frequency of service, additional frequency enhancements are regarded as a relatively low-priority measure. It is important to get service back to a frequency of every 60 minutes (as compared to every 90 minutes), but system-wide frequency increases beyond this level would likely not result in a ridership increase sufficient to justify a doubling of the operating costs. Targeted frequency improvements on certain routes (such as the Highland or South York routes) would likely provide a higher "bang for the buck", and could be considered after other improvements have been made (expansion priorities are discussed in Section 6).

5.4. INCREASED HOURS OF SERVICE

Additional Evening Service

Survey respondents indicated a strong desire for extended evening service hours to enable employees to take transit home from work from retail / service jobs with shifts that end after current transit services end. Employees who work at these jobs currently may take transit to work, but must find another way home. In other cases, workers may not be able to take available retail / service jobs because of the lack of transit service when the shift is over.

The study evaluated the costs of extending service until 9 PM or 11 PM on weekdays, using the two Baseline Service Alternatives as a basis for comparison. These scenarios assume a continuation of the same level of service (frequencies and routes) offered under the two Baseline Service Alternatives with the additional extended service hours later into the evening. Capital costs would not be impacted, because no new vehicles would be required. However, annual operating costs would increase depending on the service scenario and the number of additional hours of service. Exhibit 5-10 summarizes the estimated annual operating cost (projected for 2007) for each of these scenarios.

Exhibit 5-10: Annual Operating Cost* with Increased Hours of Service (Weekdays Only)

	Baseline Alternative 1 (6 buses)	Baseline Alternative 2 (7 buses)
Current hours of operation (5:15 AM–6 PM)	\$1,402,000	\$1,614,000
Extended service until 9 PM	\$1,697,000	\$1,955,000
Extended service until 11 PM	\$1,918,000	\$2,213,000

* Cost of weekday operations only

Increased Saturday Service

Saturday service currently operates on a reduced schedule as compared to weekday service, with fewer hours of operation and a lower frequency of service (using only three buses). Survey respondents noted a desire to increase the level of service on Saturdays. Various options for increasing the level of Saturday service were explored, including increasing the level of service to correspond to weekday service, as well as extending the hours of operation.

The two Baseline Service Alternatives were used as a framework for this analysis (Baseline Alternative 1 utilizes three buses on Saturdays and Baseline Alternative 2 utilizes four buses). Scenarios were evaluated to determine the additional costs that would be incurred with extended operating hours under each of these baseline options. In addition, scenarios were also evaluated in which Saturday service would correspond to the full weekday service under each of the Baseline Alternatives (six buses under Baseline Alternative 1 and seven buses under Baseline Alternative 2). Exhibit 5-11 illustrates the estimated annual operating costs (projected for 2007) for each of these scenarios.

Exhibit 5-11: Annual Operating Cost* of Increased Saturday Service

	Baseline Alternative 1 (3 buses on Saturdays)	Baseline Alternative 2 (4 buses on Saturdays)	Baseline Alternative 1 (Full System on Saturdays - 6 buses)	Baseline Alternative 2 (Full System on Saturdays - 7 buses)
Current hours of operation (8 AM – 6 PM)	\$111,000	\$137,000	\$281,000	\$323,000
Extended service until 9 PM	\$144,000	\$196,000	\$340,000	\$391,000
Extended service until 11 PM	\$166,000	\$225,000	\$384,000	\$443,000

* Cost of Saturday operations only

Initiation of Sunday Service

Gastonia Transit currently does not operate any service on Sundays. However, there may be a future need for Sunday service. For evaluation purposes, the cost of potential Sunday service was estimated. Recognizing that the level of Sunday service would likely be less than the level of service typically operated on weekdays, a good basis of comparison with other strategies is the potential operation of Sunday service at the same level of service as Saturday service under Baseline Alternatives 1 and 2 (three and four buses in operation, respectively, from approximately 8 AM until 6 PM). These costs (projected to 2007) are summarized in Exhibit 5-12.

Exhibit 5-12: Annual Operating Cost* of New Sunday Service

	Baseline Alternative 1 (assume same as Saturday service - 3 buses on Sundays)	Baseline Alternative 2 (assume same as Saturday service - 4 buses on Sundays)
Current hours of operation (8 AM – 6 PM)	\$111,000	\$137,000

* Cost of Sunday operations only

5.5. OPPORTUNITIES FOR COORDINATION

Many of the potential transit enhancements described in this section relate only to Gastonia Transit. However, the flexroute concept relies on a high level of coordination between GT and Gaston County ACCESS. As stated earlier, the flexroute concept is intended to expand transit services into outlying communities in a cost-effective manner. Gaston County ACCESS would be the logical transit operator for these services, since ACCESS serves many of these areas now for specialized transportation services, and the demand-responsive nature of the flexroute service is similar to other services currently operated by the system.

Need for Coordination

Recognizing that many flexroute trips will ultimately transfer to GT fixed routes, effective and continuing coordination between ACCESS and Gastonia Transit is critical for the

flexroute concept to be successful. On-going communication between the systems is needed for several reasons:

- Timed connections must occur at the designated transfer points (Bradley Station, Dixie Village, and Franklin Square). Passengers should not be forced to wait for long periods of time at the transfer point to connect between the fixed route and flexroute services. The flexroute service should be timed to meet the fixed route buses when they arrive at the transfer locations.
- A transfer agreement must be in place. If passengers have to pay for a transfer between an ACCESS-operated flexroute and a GT-operated fixed route, it may discourage them from using the service. The two systems should collectively develop a coordinated transfer agreement that makes the transfer process seamless for passengers. A suggested methodology is to have the agency originating the trip to keep the full fare, and provide a free transfer to the customer. Recognizing that most trips would be round trips at some point, ACCESS would keep the fare for the trip from an outlying area to Gastonia (as the first system used for the trip), and GT would similarly keep the fare as the originating system for the return trip. A secondary benefit of this arrangement is that both systems would be able to count a passenger trip in each direction for “credit” on ridership statistics.
- Schedule adherence issues will need to be addressed as they occur. It is recognized that a variety of problems can occur that affect the schedules of both fixed route and flexroute vehicles. When these situations occur, communication between the two systems (via the system dispatchers) is needed to resolve any timing / transfer issues.

Marketing Opportunities

It is important that passengers have a seamless transition between the two systems. The above points begin to address this concern, but marketing strategies are also needed to support the establishment of a connected network. It is suggested that a unified “brand” be applied to both Gaston County ACCESS and Gastonia Transit, so that riders can see that the systems are connected. The unified “branding” could consist of a shared name, logo, and / or paint scheme that is applied to vehicles serving both systems.

Furthermore, because the proposed flexroute service is not as “visible” as traditional fixed-route service (using large buses and fixed stop locations), marketing is even more important. Direct marketing efforts should be targeted at residents and employers within the flexroute service areas.

Opportunities for Further Coordination / Consolidation

The unified branding would not require any changes in administrative staffing at either agency, but would enhance the visibility of transit as a whole in the region. The action of developing a unified brand could be seen as a first step toward additional coordination / consolidation options (including administrative and organizational considerations) that could be studied in more detail as part of a later effort. The implementation of these initial coordination action items will serve to establish strong lines of communication between the two transit agencies and will set the stage for further coordination efforts in the future.

5.6. SUMMARY OF COSTS OF EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES

Projected costs (in 2007 dollars) for each of the service expansion opportunities described in the previous pages are summarized below. Annual operating costs as well as one-time capital costs are identified. Not all of these projects are ultimately recommended in the Implementation Plan described in Section 6, but the tables below provide a point of comparison between each of the options that were considered.

Exhibit 5-13 documents the annual operating cost of each of the expansion options. The first two lines in the table summarize the baseline costs that will be incurred with Baseline Alternative 1 or Baseline Alternative 2 (it is assumed that one of these alternatives will ultimately be selected; the consultant’s recommendations are discussed in Section 6). The subsequent lines indicate the incremental cost of each of the various expansion options (the costs shown would be added to the appropriate “baseline” cost to produce a total annual operating cost for the system). In many cases, several variations on each expansion opportunity are available, based on the desired hours of operation.

Exhibit 5-13: Annual Operating Costs of Potential Expansion Options

	Weekday Service	Saturday Service	Sunday Service	TOTAL
Baseline Alternative 1	\$1,402,000	\$111,000	\$0	\$1,513,000
Baseline Alternative 2	\$1,614,000	\$137,000	\$0	\$1,751,000
Expansion Options				
<i>New Routes and Services</i>				
Downtown Trolley Mon-Fri; 7AM-6PM	\$203,000			
South Union Road Route Mon-Fri 6AM-6PM; Sat 8AM-6PM	\$222,000	\$37,000		
South Union Road Route Mon-Fri 6AM-9PM; Sat 8AM-9PM	\$277,000	\$48,000		
South Union Road Route Mon-Fri 6AM-11PM; Sat 8AM-11PM	\$314,000	\$56,000		
Flexroute (Costs apply to each zone) Mon-Fri 5:30 AM-6:30 PM; Sat 7:30 AM-6:30 PM	\$68,000	\$12,000		
Flexroute (Costs apply to each zone) Mon-Fri 5:30 AM-9:30 PM; Sat 7:30 AM-9:30 PM	\$83,000	\$15,000		
Flexroute (Costs apply to each zone) Mon-Fri 5:30 AM-11:30 PM; Sat 7:30 AM-11:30 PM	\$94,000	\$17,000		
Vanpools	TBD*			
Increased Service Frequency				
30-minute service frequency on all routes (using Baseline Alt. 2 routes; current hours of operation)	\$1,614,000			
30-minute service on Highland route Mon-Fri 6 AM-6PM	\$222,000			

	Weekday Service	Saturday Service	Sunday Service	TOTAL
30-minute service on S. York route Mon-Fri 6AM-6PM	\$222,000			
30-minute service on Franklin route; Mon-Fri 5:30 AM-6:30 PM	\$240,000			
Increased Hours of Service				
Extended service until 9 PM (using Baseline Alternative 1; maintain existing frequency and routes)	\$295,000	\$34,000		
Extended service until 9 PM (using Baseline Alternative 2; maintain existing frequency and routes)	\$341,000	\$60,000		
Extended service until 11 PM (using Baseline Alternative 1; maintain existing frequency and routes)	\$516,000	\$56,000		
Extended service until 11 PM (using Baseline Alternative 2; maintain existing frequency and routes)	\$599,000	\$89,000		
Full Saturday schedule (same as weekday routes using Baseline Alternative 1; 8AM-6PM)		\$170,000		
Full Saturday schedule (same as weekday routes using Baseline Alternative 2; 8AM-6PM)		\$187,000		
Full Saturday schedule (same as weekday routes using Baseline Alternative 1; 8AM-9PM)		\$229,000		
Full Saturday schedule (same as weekday routes using Baseline Alternative 2; 8AM-9PM)		\$255,000		
Full Saturday schedule (same as weekday routes using Baseline Alternative 1; 8AM-11PM)		\$273,000		
Full Saturday schedule (same as weekday routes using Baseline Alternative 2; 8AM-11PM)		\$307,000		
New Sunday Service (reduced schedule; same as Saturday routes using Baseline Alternative 1)			\$111,000	
New Sunday Service (reduced schedule; same as Saturday routes using Baseline Alternative 2)			\$137,000	

* Based on additional future study

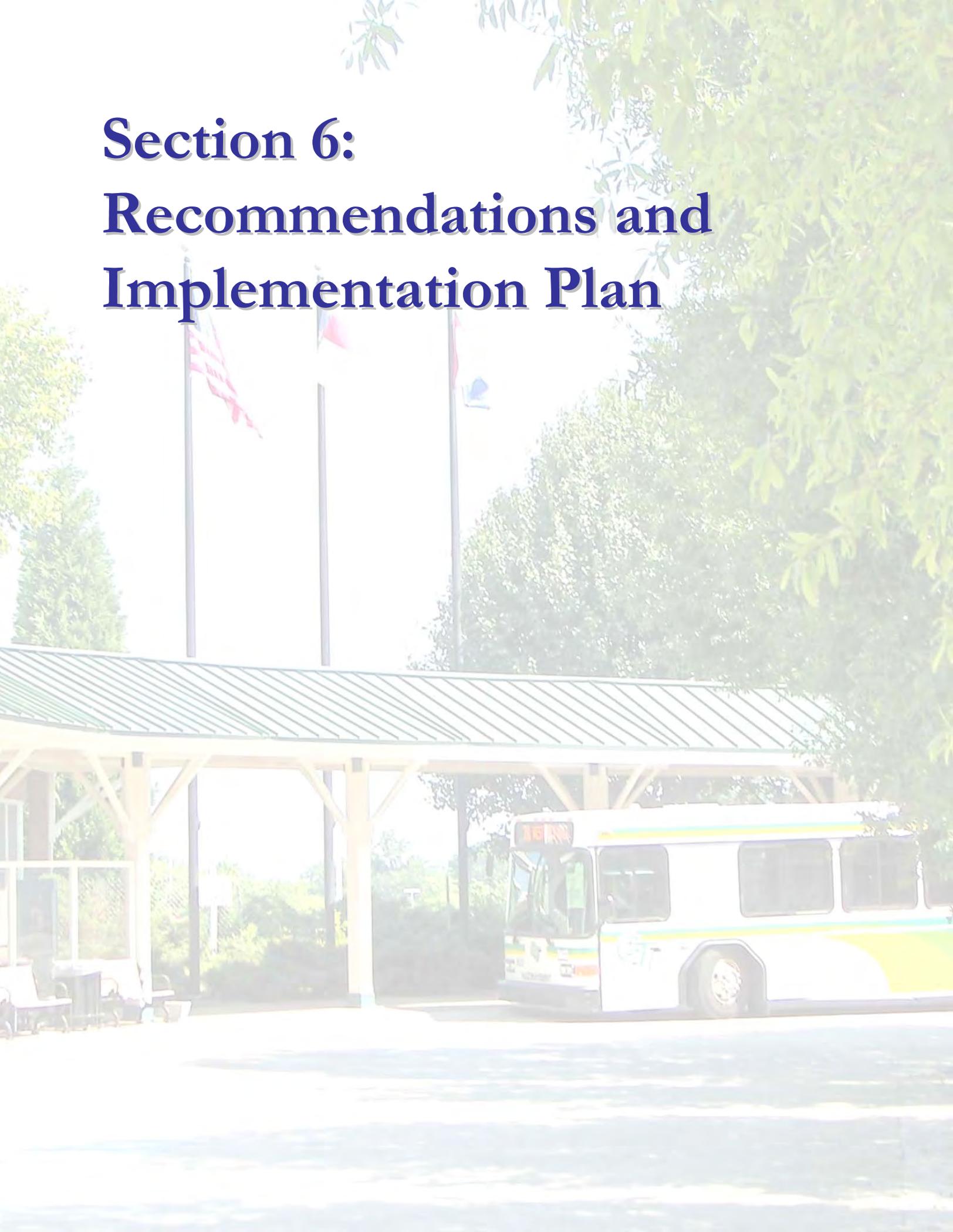
Note: Estimates are in 2007 dollars

Exhibit 5-14 summarizes the potential capital costs for each alternative for which there are new capital requirements (some options require only the existing fleet of vehicles; thus, no additional capital requirements are shown for these projects). It should be noted that in many cases, the need for a new vehicle is listed as being dependent on the fleet size after other improvements are considered. Improvements that require one additional vehicle could be made using one of Gastonia Transit's existing spare vehicles; however, if multiple improvements requiring additional vehicles are made, the purchase of a new vehicle(s) will be necessary to maintain the proper percentage of spare vehicles in the fleet. Planned vehicle needs are described in the Implementation Plan in Section 6.

Exhibit 5-14: Estimated Capital Costs of Potential Expansion Options

Expansion Option	Capital Items	Capital Cost
<i>New Routes and Services</i>		
Downtown Trolley	One replica trolley vehicle	Varies between \$75,000 and \$300,000 plus, depending on features and whether the vehicle is new or used
South Union Road Route	One new vehicle may be needed depending on fleet size after other improvements are considered	\$60,000 for “cutaway” vehicle; \$300,000-\$350,000 for full-size bus
Flexroute	One new vehicle for each flexroute implemented	\$60,000 for each cutaway vehicle
Vanpools	To be determined (based on future discussions with potential vanpool operators)	To be determined
30-minute service frequency on all routes	Eight new full-size buses (7 active and 1 spare)	\$2.4 - \$2.8 million
30-minute service on Highland route	One new vehicle may be needed depending on fleet size after other improvements are considered	\$300,000 - \$350,000
30-minute service on S. York route	One new vehicle may be needed depending on fleet size after other improvements are considered	\$300,000 - \$350,000
30-minute service on Franklin route	One new vehicle may be needed depending on fleet size after other improvements are considered	\$300,000 - \$350,000

Section 6: Recommendations and Implementation Plan



6.1. OVERVIEW OF PLAN

Based on the array of baseline system and expansion strategies discussed in Sections 4 and 5, a series of recommendations has been established. These recommendations address concerns regarding the efficiency of the current system, as well as opportunities for future expansion. Eight primary action items are defined based on public and stakeholder input, demographic analyses, and examinations of current services. These action items include a variety of improvements, including restructuring of existing services, initiation of new services, and extended hours of operation.

The implementation plan was designed to develop responsive strategies to transit needs, using public input to prioritize the recommended improvements. Additionally, the plan provides a realistic program that can be implemented in a phased approach, based on funding availability. A variety of funding sources could be tapped to implement the recommended projects, and each strategy is linked to the most appropriate funding sources. It is important to note that the projects contained in the implementation plan are presented in the recommended order of priority, but funding availability may dictate adjustments to the order of implementation. For example, if Bessemer City elects to fully fund the Bessemer City Flexroute (Priority #5) immediately, there is no reason to wait on other jurisdictions to participate in funding Priorities #2-4 first.

It is important to ensure that the existing system is operating as efficiently as possible, before taking on expansion projects. Based on the significant decrease in ridership since the last service changes in 2004, a top priority for Gastonia Transit is to restructure the current system to reduce the travel times for customers to the extent possible. After the system restructuring is complete, a series of expansion projects can further enhance mobility options for current and future customers. An overview of the prioritized implementation plan is shown in Exhibit 6-1, and each of the proposed projects is discussed in Section 6-2.

Exhibit 6-1: Implementation Plan

	Project	Annual Operating Costs	Capital Costs
1	Implement Baseline Alternative 1	\$1,513,000	\$0
2	Extend service until 9 PM (weekdays only)	\$295,000	\$0
3	Initiate East Gaston Flexroute (weekdays until 9:30 PM; Saturdays until 6:30 PM)	\$95,000	\$60,000
4	Modify fixed-route service to that of Baseline Alternative 2 (extended service on New Hope Road, more frequent service on Shannon Bradley route, more Saturday service)	\$284,000	\$0
5	Initiate Bessemer City Flexroute (weekdays until 9:30 PM; Saturdays until 6:30 PM)	\$95,000	\$60,000
6	Extend Saturday service until 9 PM (maintain existing frequency and routes)	\$66,000	\$0
7	Add South Union Road route	\$325,000	\$60,000
8	Add Downtown Trolley route	\$203,000	\$75,000 - \$300,000
TOTAL		\$2,876,000	\$255,000-\$480,000

It is anticipated that the proposed implementation plan may take several years to implement, based on funding availability. However, continuing to progress toward implementing the recommendations will result in a much improved transit system.

6.2. PROPOSED PROJECTS

#1: Implement Baseline Alternative #1

An action item under this plan for Gastonia Transit is to begin the process of restructuring the current system to operate according to the concept described as Baseline Alternative #1. This concept is described in detail in Section 4, but is focused on providing a more effective service design within the constraints of the existing operating budget (same hours of service and same number of vehicles in operation). Please refer to Section 4 for details regarding Baseline Alternative #1, including the proposed route network.

Estimated Costs:

- Annual operating costs: \$1,513,000
(estimated 2007 costs of existing operations)
- Capital costs: \$0
(no new equipment required)

Funding Sources:

- Existing funding sources (current operating budget)

Responsible Party:

- Gastonia Transit

Intermediate Action Items:

- Confirm details of proposed routing and scheduling
- Develop public education and marketing plan for service change
- Prepare new route maps and schedules
- Prepare to move “bus stop” signs as needed
- Obtain permission to enter private property where necessary (e.g. Food Lion shopping center at intersection of Franklin Blvd. and Edgewood Rd.)

#2: Extend Weekday Service to 9 PM

The most requested improvement by the public is for extended evening service. This project would extend weekday service on all routes to approximately 9 PM. No additional changes to the route structure or frequency of service would occur in association with this project. For more information, please see Section 5.4.

Estimated Costs:

- Annual operating costs: \$295,000
- Capital costs: \$0
(no new equipment required)

Funding Sources:

- Federal / state operating assistance, passenger fares, local funding from City of Gastonia

Responsible Party:

- Gastonia Transit

#3: Initiate East Gaston Flexroute

New service would be provided between Franklin Square in Gastonia and Little Rock Road in Charlotte via US 74, with demand-response deviations to serve portions of Belmont, Mount Holly, McAdenville, Cramerton, and Lowell. Connections to GT fixed routes would be provided at Franklin Square, and connections with CATS Route 5 would be enabled at Little Rock Road. Weekday service would be provided between 5:30 AM and 9:30 PM, and Saturday service would be provided between 7:30 AM and 6:30 PM. Gaston County ACCESS is the recommended operator of this route. For more information, please see Section 5.2.

Estimated Costs:

- Annual operating costs: \$95,000
(\$83,000 for weekday service until 9:30 PM, plus \$12,000 for Saturday service until 6:30 PM. Estimated costs are based on ACCESS' unit operating costs)
- Capital costs: \$60,000
(one new minibus / light transit vehicle)

Funding Sources:

- NCDOT Rural General Public funds, passenger fares, local funding from towns served and / or Gaston County

Responsible Party:

- Gaston County ACCESS (coordinated with Gastonia Transit and CATS)

Intermediate Action Items:

- Work closely with towns along the proposed route to develop appropriate boundaries for the "deviation zone"

#4: Expand Fixed Route Service to Baseline Alternative 2

This project would modify the service design from that of Baseline Alternative 1 to that of Baseline Alternative 2. One additional bus would be added on weekdays (total of seven buses in operation), and one additional bus would be added on Saturdays (total of four buses in operation). The majority of the route structure would remain the same as in Baseline Alternative 1, but Route 2 would be extended to serve the Ashbrook High School area, and more frequent service would be available on Route 5. For more details, please refer to Section 4.3.

Estimated Costs:

- Annual operating costs: \$284,000
(\$238,000 to modify route structure, plus \$46,000 in incremental costs for extended service until 9 PM)
- Capital costs: \$0
(one additional vehicle is required; use one of existing spare vehicles rather than purchasing new vehicle)

Funding Sources:

- Federal / state operating assistance, passenger fares, local funding from City of Gastonia

Responsible Party:

- Gastonia Transit

#5: Initiate Bessemer City Flexroute

Demand-response service would be provided within a designated zone in and around Bessemer City. Passengers could travel to destinations within the designated zone, or connections could be made to GT fixed routes at Dixie Village. Weekday service would be provided between 5:30 AM and 9:30 PM, and Saturday service would be provided between 7:30 AM and 6:30 PM. Gaston County ACCESS is the recommended operator of this service. For more information, please see Section 5.2.

Estimated Costs:

- Annual operating costs: \$95,000
(\$83,000 for weekday service until 9:30 PM, plus \$12,000 for Saturday service until 6:30 PM. Estimated costs are based on ACCESS' unit operating costs)
- Capital costs: \$60,000
(one new minibus / light transit vehicle)

Funding Sources:

- NCDOT Rural General Public funds, passenger fares, local funding from Bessemer City

Responsible Party:

- Gaston County ACCESS (coordinated with Gastonia Transit)

Intermediate Action Items:

- Work closely with Bessemer City to develop appropriate boundaries for the flexroute zone

#6: Extend Saturday Service to 9 PM

Building upon the earlier project to extend the hours of weekday service, this project would extend Saturday service on all Saturday routes (including newly-initiated flexroutes) to approximately 9 PM. No additional changes to the route structure or frequency of service would occur in association with this project. For more information, please see Section 5.4.

Estimated Costs:

- Annual operating costs: \$66,000
(\$60,000 for fixed-route service extensions, plus \$6,000 for flexroute service extensions)
- Capital costs: \$0

Funding Sources:

- Federal / state operating assistance, passenger fares, local funding from City of Gastonia, other towns served and / or Gaston County

Responsible Party:

- Gastonia Transit and Gaston County ACCESS (for flexroute service)

#7: Add South Union Road Route

This project would create a new fixed route on Union Road extending from Bradley Station south to the Robinwood Road area. The route would operate on weekdays and Saturdays until 9 PM (consistent with the other routes). It is recommended that a minibus be used for operations on this route, in recognition of the potential for lighter ridership loads in comparison to other fixed routes. For further details, please see Section 5.2.

Estimated Costs:

- Annual operating costs: \$325,000
(\$277,000 for weekday service until 9 PM, plus \$48,000 for Saturday service until 9 PM)
- Capital costs: \$60,000
(one new minibus / light transit vehicle)

Funding Sources:

- Federal / state operating assistance, passenger fares, local funding from City of Gastonia

Responsible Party:

- Gastonia Transit

#8: Add Downtown Trolley Route

A downtown circulator route would be provided using a replica trolley vehicle. The intent of this route is to connect downtown businesses and law offices with the County Court House and other facilities. It is noted that additional downtown development would need to occur to give such a route a higher potential for success. The service would operate on weekdays between 7 AM and 6 PM. For more information, please refer to Section 5.2.

Estimated Costs:

- Annual operating costs: \$203,000
(weekday service between 7 AM and 6 PM)
- Capital costs: \$75,000 - \$300,000
(range of costs for replica trolley vehicle, lease or purchase)

Funding Sources:

- Business community contributions, passenger fares

Responsible Party:

- Gastonia Transit

6.3. ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the eight major recommendations described above, two additional projects are suggested based on public and stakeholder input:

- Study the feasibility of vanpool service; and
- Add bike racks to GT buses.

Vanpool service is used in a number of different areas in North Carolina and around the country to connect workers to job sites in areas where there may not be sufficient demand for dedicated transit services, but commuting workers have common destinations. As discussed in Section 5, CATS has a well-developed vanpool program, including several vanpools that originate in Gaston County. It is recommended that the Gaston Urban Area MPO conduct a more detailed study of the potential need for vanpool service specifically targeting major employment sites in Gaston County. Such a study would include an in-depth analysis of commuting patterns to major industrial plants and other employment centers, and would gauge the interest of employers in supporting vanpool services. Presentations from companies that organize and operate vanpools could also be made.

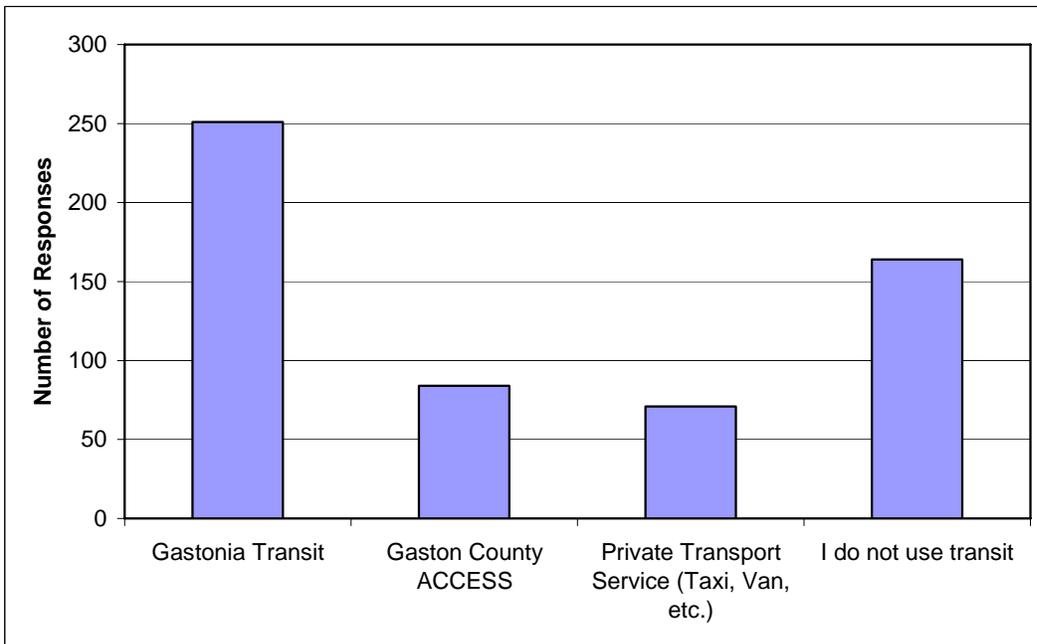
The addition of bicycle racks on buses is another low-cost enhancement that would enhance the area's network of bicycle infrastructure. Racks holding two or three bicycles can easily be added to the existing bus fleet, and would be beneficial for bicyclists looking to use transit for a portion of their trip. Direct access to the Greenway starting at Lineberger Park would be available through transit, as well as access to numerous other destinations.

Appendix A: Complete Survey Results



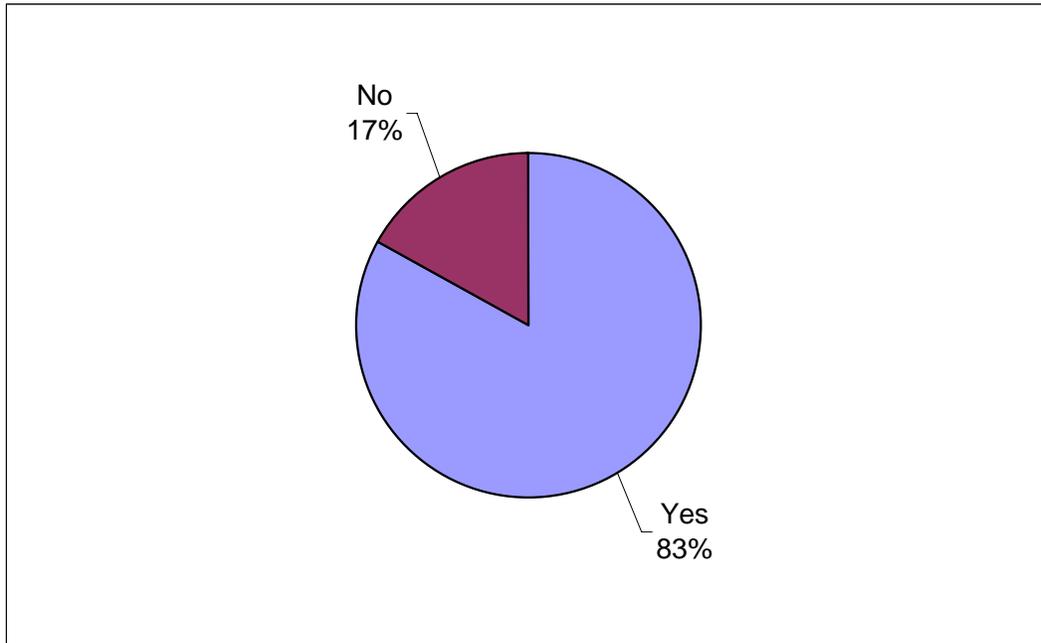
QUESTION 1

Do you currently use Gastonia Transit, ACCESS, or private transportation services (e.g. taxi, van service)? (check all that apply)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Gastonia Transit	56.66%	251
Gaston County ACCESS	18.96%	84
Private Transport Service (Taxi, Van, etc.)	16.03%	71
I do not use transit	37.02%	164
<i>answered question</i>		443
<i>skipped question</i>		0



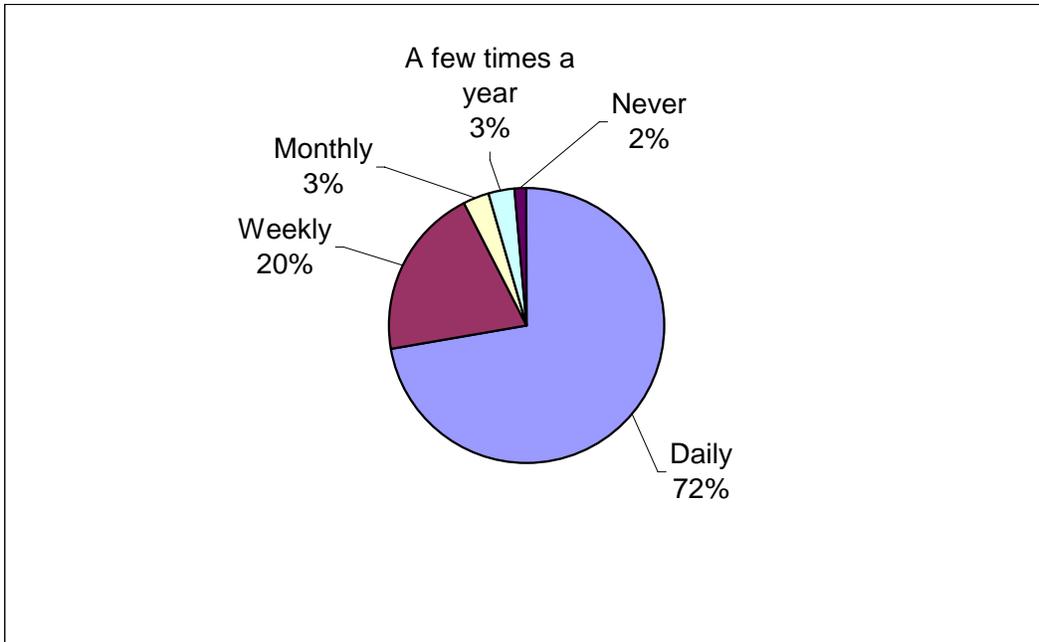
QUESTION 2

Are you aware that transit services are available in Gastonia and Gaston County? (check one)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	83.12%	128
No	16.88%	26
<i>answered question</i>		154
<i>skipped question</i>		289



QUESTION 3

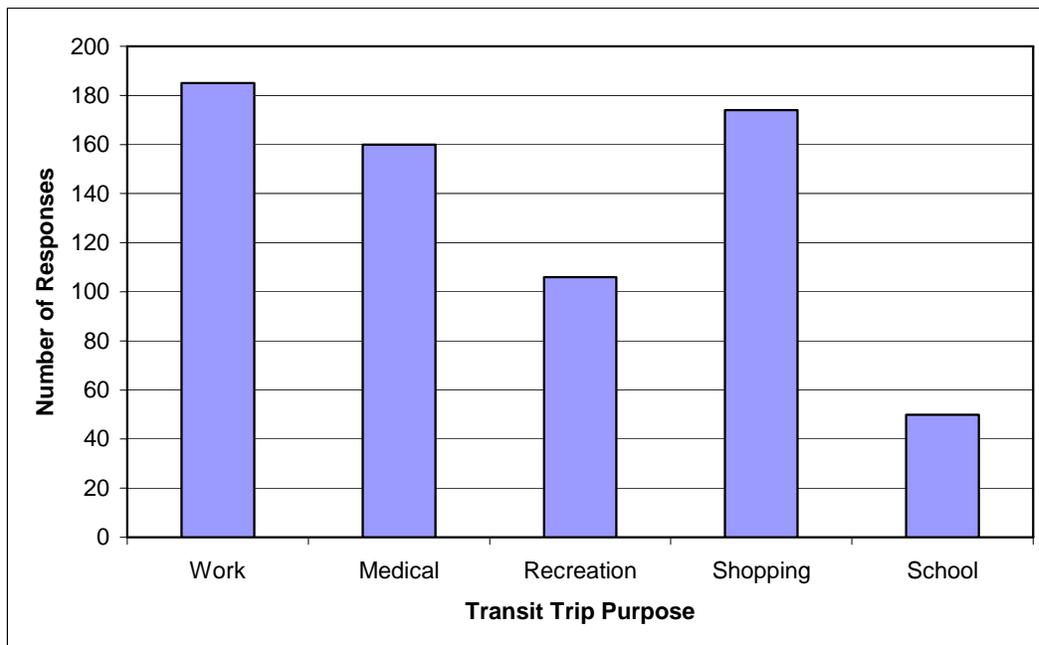
How often do you use transit? (check one)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Daily	72.35%	191
Weekly	20.08%	53
Monthly	3.03%	8
A few times a year	3.03%	8
Never	1.52%	4
<i>answered question</i>		264
<i>skipped question</i>		179



QUESTION 4

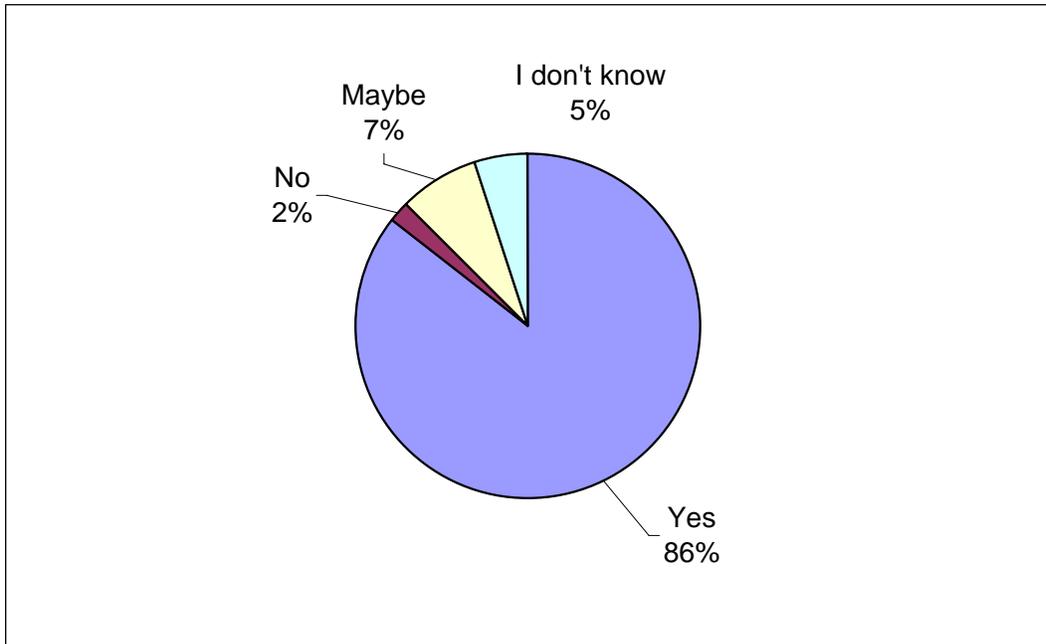
What types of trips do you take with transit? (check all that apply)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Work	70.08%	185
Medical	60.61%	160
Recreation	40.15%	106
Shopping	65.91%	174
School	18.94%	50
Other (please specify)	1.89%	5
<i>answered question</i>		264
<i>skipped question</i>		179

Other (please specify)
did not say
Church
job search
job searching
paying bills



QUESTION 5

Would you like to see additional / expanded transit services offered in Gastonia / Gaston County? (check one)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	85.48%	318
No	2.15%	8
Maybe	7.26%	27
I don't know	5.11%	19
<i>answered question</i>		372
<i>skipped question</i>		71



QUESTION 6

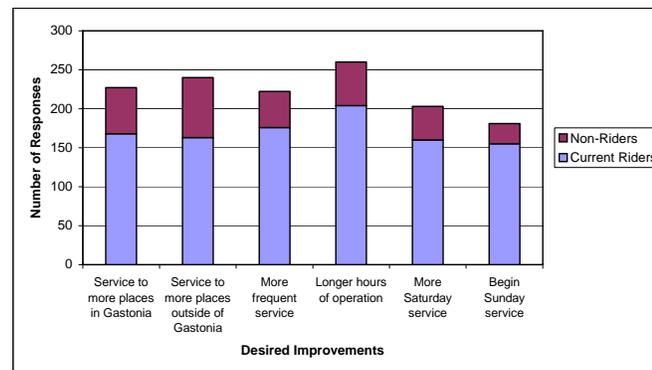
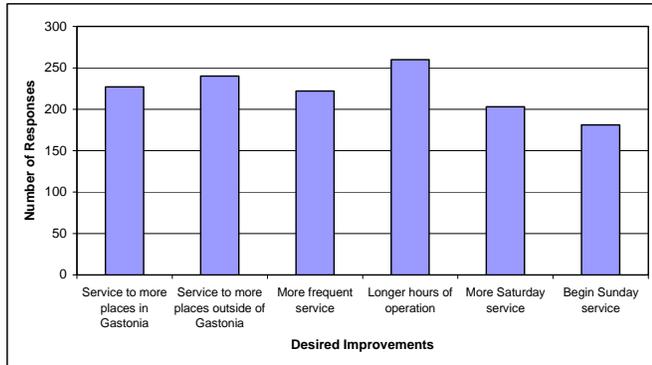
What would you change (if anything) about transit services in Gastonia / Gaston County? (check all that apply)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Service to more places in Gastonia	63.94%	227
Service to more places outside of Gastonia	67.61%	240
More frequent service	62.54%	222
Longer hours of operation	73.24%	260
More Saturday service	57.18%	203
Begin Sunday service	50.99%	181
Other (please specify)	6.76%	24
answered question		355
skipped question		88

Other (please specify)
Hospital Bus
Hadn't thought about other uses besides transportation to work.
hospital bus
Monthly transit swipe cards
2 shifts every day
2nd shift
2nd shifts every day
Others might want Sundays for church
Som e others might like Sunday
okay how it is
Don't know
que cada 10 o 20 minutos pase por las areas
Run fewer empty vehicles. It's bad for the budget and the environment.
Earlier and later hours
Belmont
Service to places outside Gaston County
Citizens Resource Center - Dallas
INCREASE PUBLIC AWAARAENESS
Image of public trasportation
Unemployment office
MORE SHELTERS NEEDED
Charlotte-Gastonia service
evening service
Handicapped Accessible, if this isn't in place already.

CURRENT RIDERS ONLY		
Service to more places in Gastonia		168
Service to more places outside of Gastonia		163
More frequent service		176
Longer hours of operation		204
More Saturday service		160
Begin Sunday service		155

NON-RIDERS ONLY		
Service to more places in Gastonia		59
Service to more places outside of Gastonia		77
More frequent service		46
Longer hours of operation		56
More Saturday service		43
Begin Sunday service		26

	Current Riders	Non-Riders	Total
Service to more places in Gastonia	168	59	227
Service to more places outside of Gastonia	163	77	240
More frequent service	176	46	222
Longer hours of operation	204	56	260
More Saturday service	160	43	203
Begin Sunday service	155	26	181



QUESTION 7

Which ONE of the improvements listed previously is most important to you? (check one)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Service to more places in Gastonia	24.86%	88
Service to more places outside of Gastonia	23.73%	84
More frequent service	7.34%	26
Longer hours of operation	30.79%	109
More Saturday service	4.24%	15
Begin Sunday service	5.65%	20
Other (please specify)	3.39%	12
<i>answered question</i>		354
<i>skipped question</i>		89

Other (please specify)
Same as above
Saturday service, hospital bus
All are important
Don't use transit
Offer other services at Bradley station
All
Don't know
Earlier hours
Citizens Resource Center - Dallas
EXPAND AREA & TIME OPEN
more open meetings
Charlotte-Gastonia service

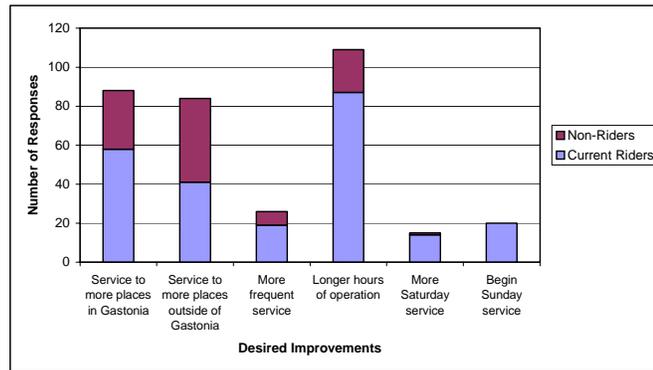
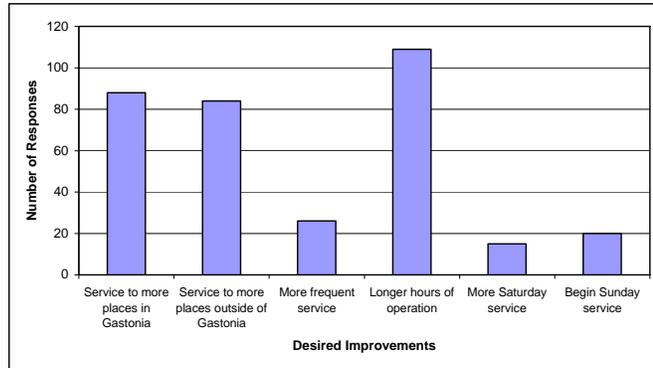
CURRENT RIDERS ONLY

Service to more places in Gastonia	58
Service to more places outside of Gastonia	41
More frequent service	19
Longer hours of operation	87
More Saturday service	14
Begin Sunday service	20

NON-RIDERS ONLY

Service to more places in Gastonia	30
Service to more places outside of Gastonia	43
More frequent service	7
Longer hours of operation	22
More Saturday service	1
Begin Sunday service	0

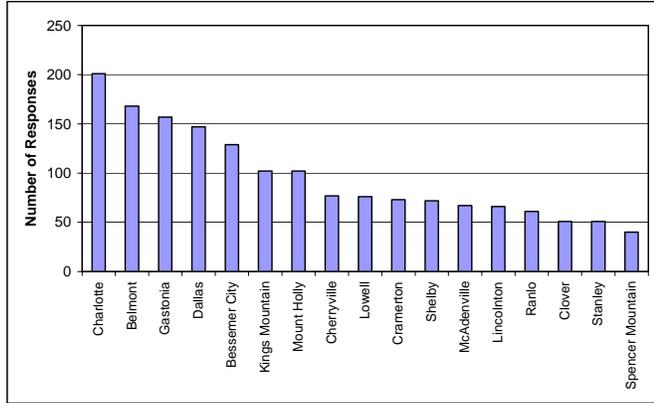
	Current Riders	Non-Riders	Total
Service to more places in Gastonia	58	30	88
Service to more places outside of Gastonia	41	43	84
More frequent service	19	7	26
Longer hours of operation	87	22	109
More Saturday service	14	1	15
Begin Sunday service	20	0	20



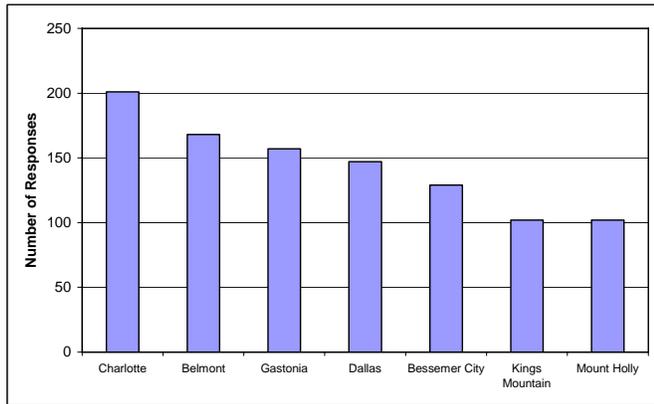
QUESTION 8

Where would you go by transit (if anywhere) if transit service were available?
(check all that apply)

answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Charlotte	58.60%	201
Belmont	48.98%	168
Gastonia	45.77%	157
Dallas	42.86%	147
Bessemer City	37.61%	129
Kings Mountain	29.74%	102
Mount Holly	29.74%	102
Cherryville	22.45%	77
Lowell	22.16%	76
Cramerton	21.28%	73
Shelby	20.99%	72
McAdenville	19.53%	67
Lincolnton	19.24%	66
Ranlo	17.78%	61
Clover	14.87%	51
Stanley	14.87%	51
Spencer Mountain	11.66%	40
Other (please specify)	4.96%	17
<i>answered question</i>		343
<i>skipped question</i>		100



Other (please specify)
Parts of Gastonia not in system-New Hope Road
Charlotte
NC 16 / NC 17 intersection
Downtown Charlotte and Mtn. Island Lake Charlotte
Citizens Resource Center - Dallas
South Union Road
Hickory
Rock Hill
York
Martha Rivers Park
Kings Mountain
Lake Wylie
All
Rock Hill
Don't know
Gaffney
Anywhere



QUESTION 8 (CONT.)

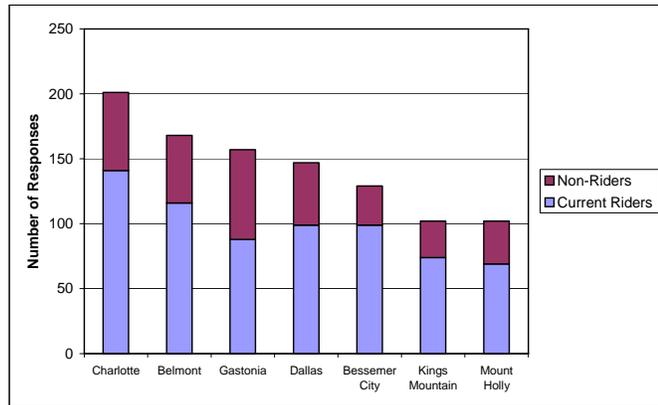
CURRENT RIDERS ONLY

Charlotte	141
Belmont	116
Dallas	99
Bessemer City	99
Gastonia	88
Kings Mountain	74
Mount Holly	69
Cherryville	58
Lowell	57
Shelby	56
Cramerton	53
McAdenville	48
Ranlo	48
Lincolnton	45
Clover	41
Stanley	37
Spencer Mountain	33

	Current Riders	Non-Riders	Total
Charlotte	141	60	201
Belmont	116	52	168
Gastonia	88	69	157
Dallas	99	48	147
Bessemer City	99	30	129
Kings Mountain	74	28	102
Mount Holly	69	33	102

NON-RIDERS ONLY

Gastonia	69
Charlotte	60
Belmont	52
Dallas	48
Mount Holly	33
Bessemer City	30
Kings Mountain	28
Lincolnton	21
Cramerton	20
Cherryville	19
Lowell	19
McAdenville	19
Shelby	16
Stanley	14
Ranlo	13
Clover	10
Spencer Mountain	7



QUESTION 9

What specific destinations do you think should be served by transit (e.g. Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole Plant, etc.)?	
answer options	Response Count
	225
<i>answered question</i>	225
<i>skipped question</i>	218

Respondents	
	Union Road, all the way to Fred's. Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole Plant, Kings Mountain-Sara Lee Plant
	Gastonia-mall area/doctor's offices/hospitals. Stanley-Main Street/market place. Charlotte-doctor's offices/malls. Lincolnton-Wal-Mart and uptown.
	Belmont Wal-Mart
	Downtown Charlotte/Belmont Wal-Mart
	Charlotte and surrounding areas.
	West Gastonia Wal-Mart, Medical Parks adjacent to Hospital, several grocery stores around county.
	All of the City of Gastonia. Earlier morning hours for 1st shift workers who must be at work by 6:00 AM
	Target, Wal-Mart, Library
	Mount Holly everywhere, Food Lion, banks, new housing developments.
	Bessemer City areas - Wal-Mart, Dole Plant
	Belmont, Mt. Holly
	Belmont Wal-Mart, Belmont Abbey College, Charlotte-Gastonia corridor
	Belmont Wal-Mart
	Downtown areas
	Belmont Wal-Mart
	Belmont - wherever
	Uptown Charlotte
	Libraries, churches, Gaston Memorial/CaroMont
	Dole Plant, Cherryville Wal-Mart
	Dole Plant, Cherryville Wal-Mart, Libraries outside Gastonia
	Places of employment, including 2nd or 3rd shift times
	Westfield Shopping town
	Dallas Museum of Art, Cherryville Skatepark/truck museum
	Belmont Wal-Mart
	273-downtown Mount Holly, downtown Belmont, Mount Holly - Gastonia
	Belmont downtown, Mount Holly downtown
	rail to Charlotte
	Belmont: South Point, Belmont Downtown, Walmart SuperCenter, Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, Belmont Abbey College, Holy Angels & others
	Need expanded service for employees in Gaston County to get to jobs at Dole Plant in Bessemer City, Wal-Mart in Belmont among others. Also need expanded hours to cover retail workers in the Franklin Square area, 2nd & 3rd shifts at Dole/Wal-Mart.
	Belmont Wal-Mart, Cherryville Wal-Mart, Dole and Hunter Douglas Plants in Bessemer City, National Gypsum and Freightliner Plants in North Mt. Holly, Gaston College, Downtown Dallas, Downtown Belmont, Downtown Mt. Holly.
	I FEEL THAT YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO TRAVEL BY TRANSIT TO ANY DESTINATION ANYWHERE WITHIN GASTON COUNTY. RIGHT NOW THE TRANSIT SYSTEM LIMITS EMPLOYMENT TO THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO A CAR OR A FRIEND WHO WILL TAKE THEM BACK AND FORTH.
	BELMONT WALMART, DOLE PLANT, ANYTHING IS BETTER THAN WHERE THEY GO NOW
	Belmont Wal-Mart

QUESTION 9 (CONT.)

	BELMONT WALMART.PHARR YARNS, MCADENVILLE,DOLE PLANT ETC
	Gaston County Citizens Resource Center / Senior Center in Dallas. Gaston College Ashebrook Highschool in Gastonia / New Hope Corridor.
	Belmont Walmart
	Dole Plant, Gaston Citizen's Resource Center
	Citizen's Resource Center / Senior Citizen Center in Dallas
	Eastridge Mall (Westfield) Franklin Square Gaston County Citizens Resource Center Gaston Memorial Hospital Gaston College
	Dole Plant Crowders Mountain State Park
	Downtowns of each city
	Citizens Resource Center/Senior Center/Biggerstaff Park in Dallas, Farmers Market/Recycling Center in Gastonia
	Citizens Resource Center in Dallas, West Gastonia Wal-Mart, Dole Plant, Catherine's House in Belmont
	THERE SHOULD BE TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE THROUGH-OUT GASTON COUNTY AND AVAILABLE FOR ALL SHIFTS OF WORK HRS. THIS IS A BIG REASON WHY PEOPLE CANT WORK, OR HAVE TO TURN DOWN JOBS!
	Walmart, malls, business employee large number of people
	Citizens Resource Center, Dallas
	old court square in dallas
	wal-mart belmont, dole plant, dallas's resturants
	ALL OF THE ABOVE PROVIDED THESE PRIVATE SECTOR COMPANIES SUBSIDIZED THE SERVICE TO THEIR LOCATIONS.
	HOSPITAL, LIBRARY, MUSEUMS, COURTHOUSE, DSS, TAX OFFICE, MALL, FRANKKLIN SQ., AKERS CENTER, DIXIE VILLAGE, W. SIDE WALMART, SIMS PARK, MARTHA RIVERS PARK, LINEBERGER PARK, DOWNTOWN BELMONT, MT. HOLLY, KINGS MOUNTAIN, DALLAS, LOWELL, CRAMERTON, RANLO, STANLEY
	Don't know which destinations you serve now.
	Service to more diverse residential areas would allow folks to choose public trasportation for commuting to work/home. Using public trasportation is not feasable for most people if they have to drive to get to it.
	Dole Plant
	I would like to use Gastonia transit to commute between my home in Charlotte to my job in Gastonia. I would also like to utilize the transit system to go to various places within Gastonia during the workday, such as Franklin Square,west-side WalMart, Target, Eastridge mall, etc. A BRT would be great!
	Employment Security Commission, Various manufacturing plants throughout county (first and second shifts)
	Dole Plant,ESC,
	As a service provider for low-income families, we see large numbers of people without transportation which hampers their ability to get and keep jobs. We would like to see transit service available throughout Gastonia for as many hours as possible. Extended coverage to include areas in the county would also be a goal.
	Downtown Mt. Holly Belmont-Wal-Mart
	Dole Plant, other locations that I will think about and
	all doctors offices, not just hospital area
	All college locations Walmarts Areas where there are job opportunities
	Bessemer City, and other major outlining areas of Gaston County
	Any major work site/plant or medical/retail area that is in all towns of our county. The Belmont Wal-Mart and Dole Plant would certainly be ideal locations.
	Bessemer City, Mt Holly, Lowell, Southwest Gastonia to SC border.
	BELMONT WAL-MART
	Downtown Charlotte
	Catherine's House- campus of the Sisters of Mercy Belmont Walmart Belmont BiLo
	South Gastonia
	Dole facility in Gastonia and National Gypsum in Mt. Holly.
	Belmont Roses, Belmont Wal-Mart, Dallas Windsor shopping center,
	Dole Plant; Gaston CC; Robinwood Road
	major employers, Walmarts, grocery stores, medical offices
	Walmart

QUESTION 9 (CONT.)

	manufacturing companies through county Major grocery stores Shopping areas (all) Recreational sites (all)
	Gaston College, Belmont Abbey College
	All of Gaston County and Mecklenburg should be covered with bus service.
	I can't answer that - I don't know where the destinations are now. Since there is no transit station near my house I never get to use it.
	walmart, and other residential areas in general where bus routes aren't available.
	Belmont and Mt Holly and Stanley area would be good areas for transit.
	MD offices in and around gastonia
	More stops closer to doctor's offices in the Gaston/Lincoln and surrounding areas. I hear that from patient's I work with daily. More neighborhood services even in more affluent neighborhoods in the area. I might consider riding the bus if it came into my neighborhood and was clean, punctual and got me to work or to an appointment. It would save on gas, mileage on my car, not as many cars on the road to help the environment, etc. I am reminded of how transit operates in other countries I have been in where you don't need a car because you can navigate around the areas by bus, train, etc.
	WEST GASTONIA WAL-MART
	I work with people with disabilities. More folks would be able to work, at least part time if affordable transportation was available. Some live with their families who work and would not be able to transport them. Some live on their own but not right in Gastonia so they do not have access to the buses. So it would be helpful to have more routes with longer scheduled hours and service on Saturday and Sundays would also be very helpful.
	Belmont Wal-Mart/Roses, Downtown Shelby, Stanley Food Lion/CVS/Bilo area, Bessemer City Wal-Mart & Big Lots area
	walmart in belmont, mall in shelby, anything is better than where they go now
	Everywhere
	From far western edge of City of Gastonia into downtown government buildings etc.
	ifferent company locations so people using the service could work further away from the city.
	Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole, Gaston College
	Northlake Mall, Gastonia MALLs, Gaston and Belmont college, white Water park. Mount Holly should have bus stop on 273 norht and south
	I would like to go to Walmart sometime if I need to go shopping.
	Both Walmart and Dole Plant.
	Walmart
	Dole Plant, Cris Craft Plan, Pharr yams, McAddenville, Belmont, more job sites they're important for \$.
	Freds in Gastonia, Lowes Foods
	Hauntingon Forrest and new Bilo off Dallas Highway and Cherryville.
	Clover, McAdenville, Shelby
	Any new large employers like the above. How about a bus out to the Charlotte-Douglas airport to connect with Charlotte routes during the day?
	shopping center, parks
	Kings Mountain because the I could visit my friend who lives there better.
	To get to major business locations we need the busses to come near our homes first but not enough people want to use service enough to make it economical.
	Wal-mart
	Belmont Wal-mart

QUESTION 9 (CONT.)

	Anytime we would oike to go to Walmart in Belmont-Look what do we need.
	Belmont Wal-mart
	both
	Dole plant, Bradford Heights, near Ashbrook high school.
	Dole Plant
	We don't go far enough south.
	Gaston College
	Shelby, Marth Rivers Park #1
	Fred's Discount Store, YMCA of Gastonia
	Bank of America, Wachovia, YMCA, Hunter Huss High School
	Gastonia
	All that can be offered
	Dole and other jobs in Bessemer City and Kings Mountain. Catherin's house Belmont
	Dole Plant
	WIX, Freightliner
	Dole Plant, Warehouses in other cities
	Services to more places outside of Gastonia. Services to more places in Gastonia.
	All
	Belmont-Wal-Mart
	Dole Plant and more job areas
	Both
	Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole Plant
	The transit system should run from Charlotte to as far as Gaffney.
	Dole Plant
	General Area
	Belmont Wal-Mart
	Wal-Mart
	Dole Plant. Graveyard on S. New Hope Road and Ashbrook High School
	Belmont Wal-Mart
	General main areas - Dixie Village and Wal-Mart on Myrtle School Road
	Dole Plant
	Gastonia area
	Dole Plant
	Flea Market, Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole Plant
	Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole Plant, and others
	Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole Plant and others
	Dole Plant
	To areas of Charlotte and Cherryville. Fred's
	Ashbrook School, Roses Store, Fred's (Union Road)
	Bessemer City Sara Lee
	Dole Plant
	Dole Plant
	Dole Plant
	Dole Plant. All companies.
	None in particular.
	Wal-Mart
	Go down S. New Hope
	Hudson Woods Apts., Shelby, Gastonia
	Up on New Hope just because Dixon Road further up.
	Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole Plant

QUESTION 9 (CONT.)

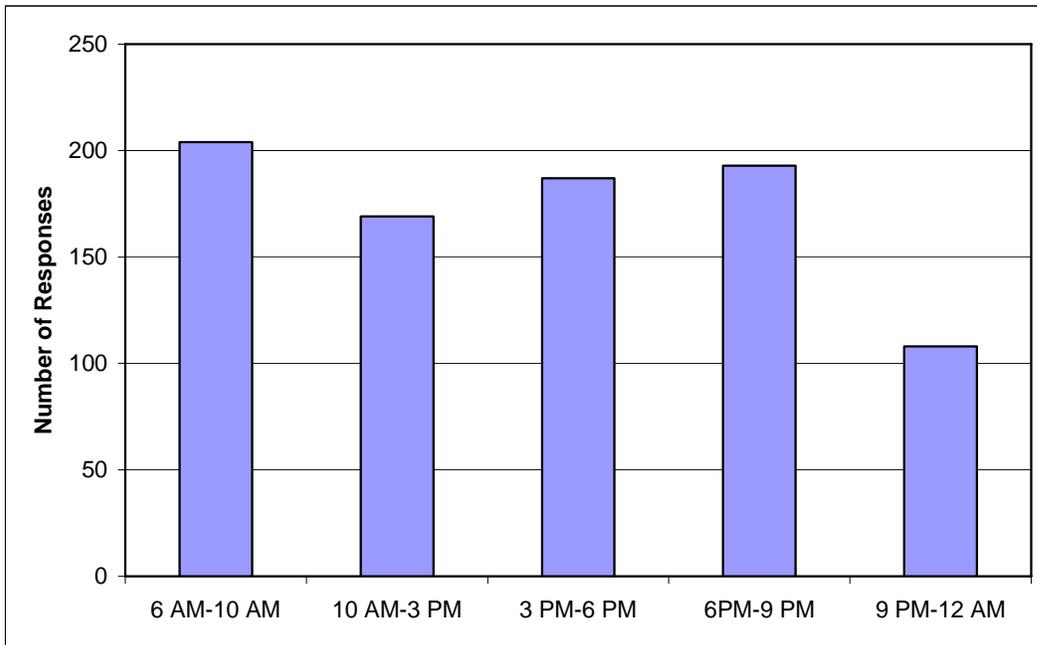
	Dole Plant, Wal-Mart-Belmont, Wal-Mart Distribution-Shelby
	Dole Plant. Wal-Mart-Belmont, Wal-Mart Distribution-Shelby
	1648 Windermere Road Mt. Holly NC 28120
	Low income apts. in Mt. Holly. Wal-Mart.
	Low income apartments
	Red Bud Drive & New Hope, BiLo
	Dr. office - mall
	Wal-Mart-Franklin Square, Belmont on Wilkerson-K-Mart
	Hospital area
	Arts Smiths Road
	Beach!
	Theatres
	Doctor
	Red Bud Drive - Bi-Lo, Harris Teeter - Harkins - Food Lion
	Bradford Height
	Hospital area needs improvement.
	Wal-Mart
	Grocery store on (cannot read) Road - Harris Teeter
	Grocery store - Food Lion off 72
	Parks in area
	Webb Street
	Bessemer City - Dole Plant
	Park Street area. & Chestnut, Green
	Union Road - 321 South - Airport
	Bessemer City
	Bessemer City
	Hospital Route #7 - not on Saturday
	VA Hospital
	Ashbrook
	Ashbrook
	Ashbrook
	Other store locations and area (could not read rest of comments)
	Different store locations
	Close to area transit
	Other area locations
	Other area locations
	Other area shopping centers
	Area shopping centers
	Other area locations
	Other locations
	Other times of riding and locations
	Other times and places are needed
	Other times are needed
	Charlotte location, Gaffney
	Other shopping areas
	Outside of Gastonia
	Dole, Belmont
	Dole, Fred's, Wal-Mart-Belmont, River? area
	Other locations outside of Gastonia
	Area Wal-Mart in Belmont, Walgreens, Roses

QUESTION 9 (CONT.)

	Don't use it
	One end of Gastonia to other end
	Belmont Abbey
	Gaston College, Bi-Lo, Red Bud Drive, Hospital
	Grocery, church, school
	Gaston College, Wal-Mart
	Fred's, Area Malls, More
	Dole Plant, Fred's, Harris Teeter-Union Road
	Asheboro
	(Could not read destination) by Ashboro
	Wal-Mart
	Asheborough
	Asheburg
	Edgewood Road
	Chapel Grove - (something ?) and schools there.
	Gym
	Kings Mountain
	Bradford Heights
	Belmont Wal-Mart, Dole Plant
	Citizens resource center y otros lugares o oragnizaciones que prestan servicios y dan asistencia a las personas de mas bajos recursos
	wal-mart, la 321, todo el condado de gastonia
	Wal-Mart, K-Mart

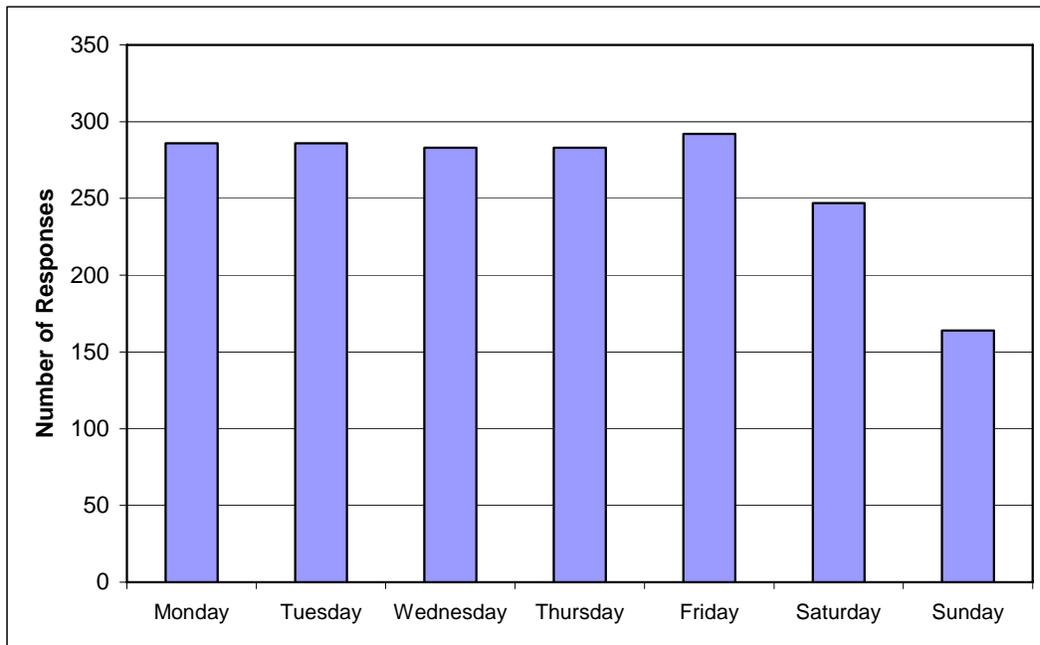
QUESTION 10

When would you be most likely to use new transit services? (check all that apply)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
6 AM-10 AM	56.67%	204
10 AM-3 PM	46.94%	169
3 PM-6 PM	51.94%	187
6PM-9 PM	53.61%	193
9 PM-12 AM	30.00%	108
<i>answered question</i>		360
<i>skipped question</i>		83



QUESTION 11

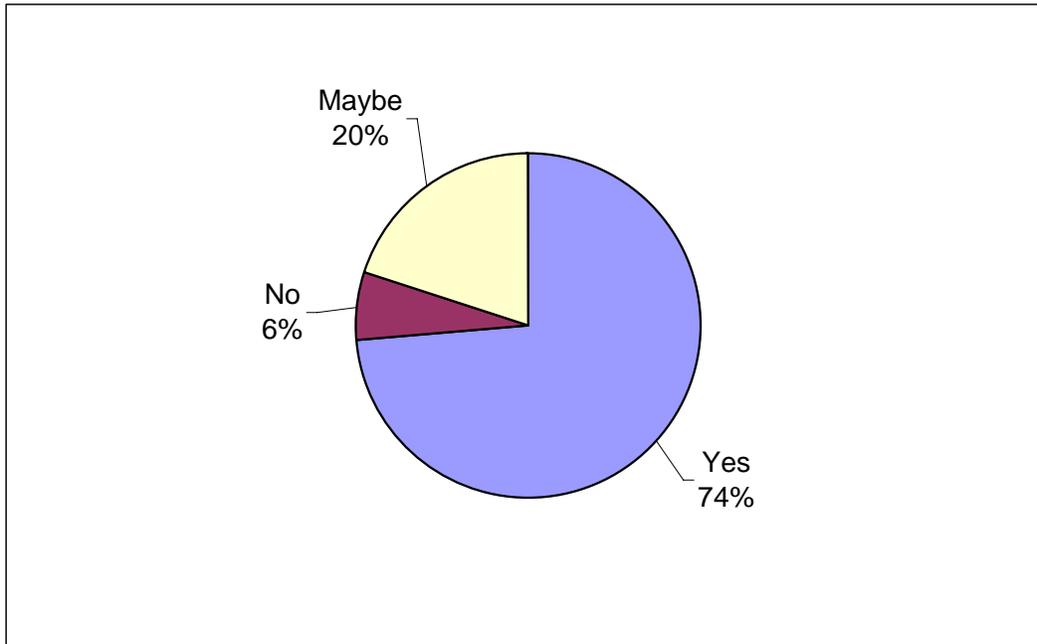
Which day(s) might you use new transit services?(check all that apply)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Monday	81.25%	286
Tuesday	81.25%	286
Wednesday	80.40%	283
Thursday	80.40%	283
Friday	82.95%	292
Saturday	70.17%	247
Sunday	46.59%	164
<i>answered question</i>		352
<i>skipped question</i>		91



QUESTION 12

Would you support use of local tax dollars to help fund new services? (check one)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	73.70%	269
No	6.30%	23
Maybe	20.00%	73
<i>answered question</i>		365
<i>skipped question</i>		78

ALL RESPONDENTS



CURRENT RIDERS ONLY

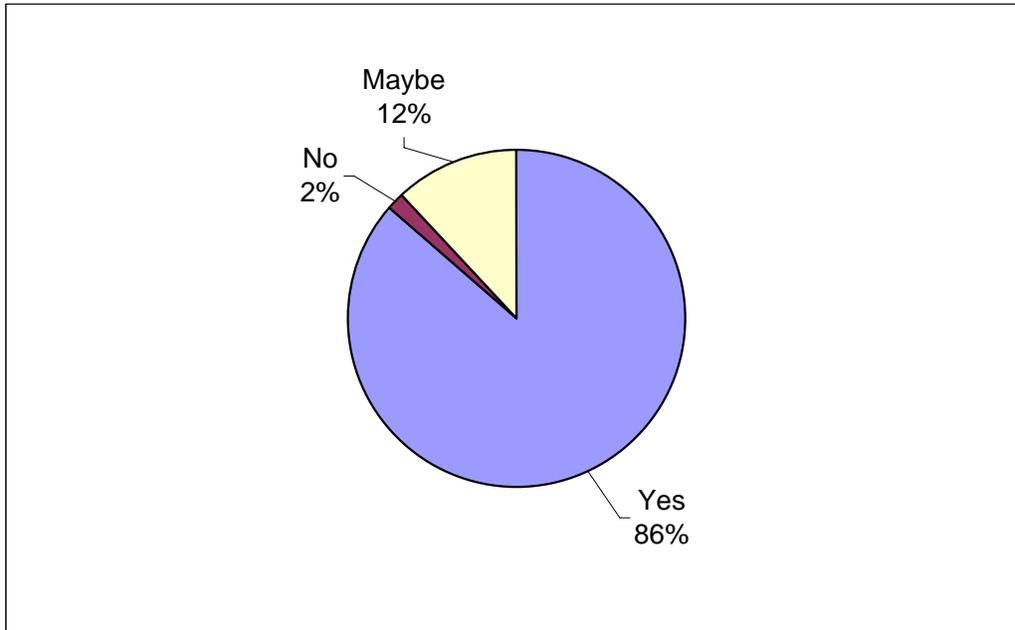
Yes	208
No	4
Maybe	29

NON-RIDERS ONLY

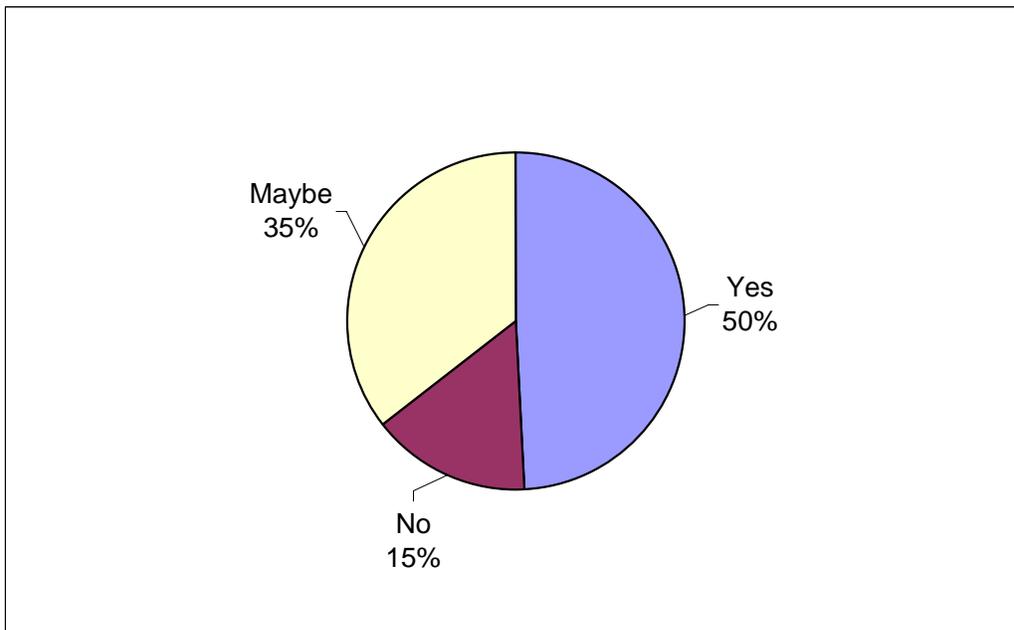
Yes	61
No	19
Maybe	44

QUESTION 12 (CONT.)

CURRENT RIDERS ONLY



NON-RIDERS ONLY



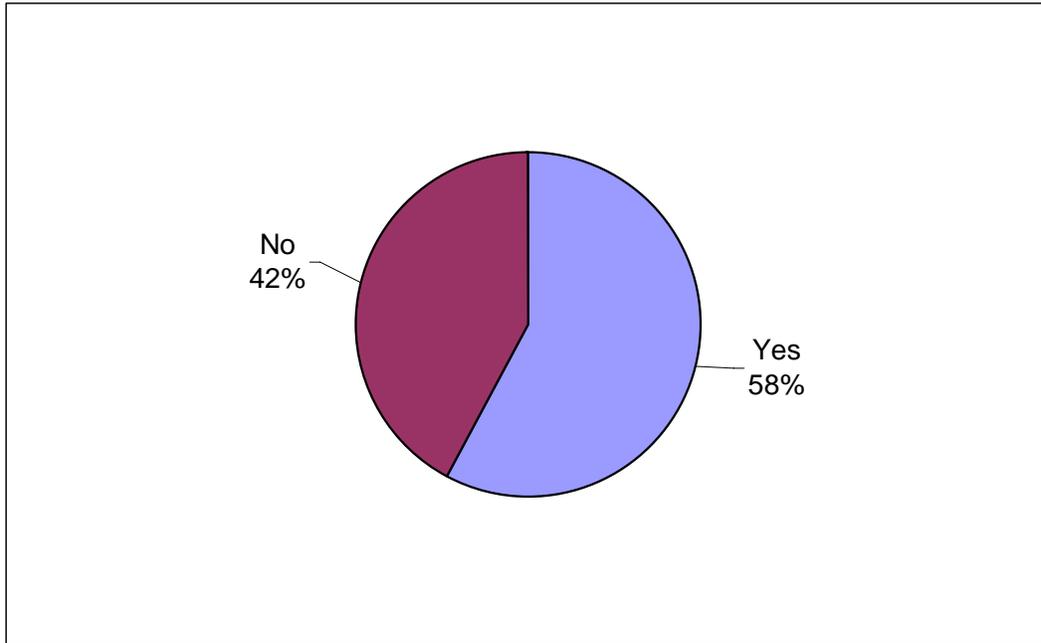
QUESTION 13

What is your home zip code?	
answer options	Response Count
	364
<i>answered question</i>	364
<i>skipped question</i>	79

Respondents	
28012 Count	16
28016 Count	12
28021 Count	4
28032 Count	2
28034 Count	11
28050 Count	1
28051 Count	1
28052 Count	153
28053 Count	2
28054 Count	95
28055 Count	1
28056 Count	18
28057 Count	1
28072 Count	1
28078 Count	1
28080 Count	1
28083 Count	1
28086 Count	5
28092 Count	4
28098 Count	3
28120 Count	11
28164 Count	4
28205 Count	1
28208 Count	1
28209 Count	1
28210 Count	1
28226 Count	1
28502 Count	5
28601 Count	1
28602 Count	1
29710 Count	1
29745 Count	2
32012 Count	1

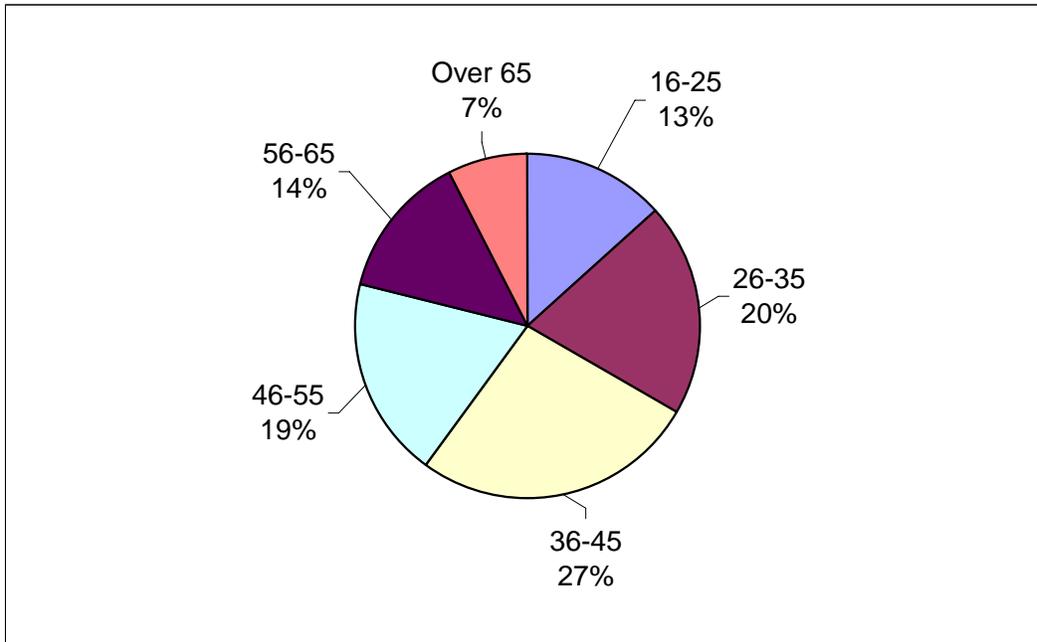
QUESTION 14

Does your household own at least one automobile? (check one)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	57.81%	211
No	42.19%	154
<i>answered question</i>		365
<i>skipped question</i>		78



QUESTION 15

What is your age? (check one)		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
16-25	13.42%	49
26-35	20.00%	73
36-45	26.58%	97
46-55	18.90%	69
56-65	13.70%	50
Over 65	7.40%	27
<i>answered question</i>		365
<i>skipped question</i>		78



QUESTION 16

Please list any additional comments regarding current Gastonia Transit service (e.g. customer service, cleanliness, safety, etc.).

answer options	Response Count
	132
<i>answered question</i>	132
<i>skipped question</i>	311

Respondents	
	I would like to clean but not threw anything on Gastonia Transit service but not spill from drink.
	Drivers should not speed/drivers use cell phones during driving bus its unsafe.
	Transit service needs to serve areas around Dr's offices more frequently than every 1 1/2 hr.
	All the drivers do a pretty good job with these.
	Bus Drivers should not be allowed to sue cell phones while driving the but--at all.
	The bus should run longer hrs and have a Sat & Sun service.
	Good service for its size. Need ngith buses most of all!
	Cannot go to public forum 5/23/07. No transit service after 6:00 PM. No way back.
	Number & frequency of routes, as well as area covered, woefully inadequate; street people loitering at terminal causes numerous problems-ongoing problem.
	Some driver drive too fast for safety sometimes. I really wnat expanded weekend service. How can I attend the meetign when there is no bus service to it?
	Customer service is good just need bus on Sundays to work. I would like to attend the public forum but I wouldn't have a way home. Thank you.
	Because we have a car I will still use the bus services because I like the bus services.
	The driver (Charity) is always so pleasant. She makes the riders feel welcome and family of rider assured that their child is safe. She treats riders with respect and speaks
	Must to clean up and don't mess up and must be careful.
	none
	I have nothing negative I can say about Gaston Transit.
	Gaston Transit is a wonderful service the people are the best, their timing is always reliable, and I have never felt...(continued on back)
	Some busses cleaner than other "give a little" to disabilities concerning stops!
	The drivers are the most courteous that I have encountered yet.
	Put more bus stops closer to longer areas around the city and county and work places.
	It's to long of a wait between trips
	Gaston Transit service needs some better drivers. And some improvements.
	The drivers are really nice. Good bus services. The bus station is very clean.

QUESTION 16 (CONT.)

	Use of transfers along routes so destination changes wouldn't have to include Bradley Station
	More stops and friendly people to drive
	Stop too far apart
	Drivers being a little more considerate when it comes to new riders. They should ask them if they need a transfer instead of having an (part of comments not visible)station.
	All of this (customer service, cleanliness, safety) is all ok right now.
	All of this ok right now
	Gastonia Transit is a great bus service
	The customer service and bus drivers are very friendly and accommodating.
	Buses should run on Sunday and they should run later than 6:00. Much later.
	They need seat belts for kids.
	Customer service is great, driver always willing to help get you where you need to go.
	Always will to get you there on time.
	Great job. Nice bus drivers. Good service all around.
	The bus drivers are very pleasant and try to accommodate whenever possible. Buses could be cleaner at times. Over all, I am pleased with (comments not visible).
	Our buses need to go back to their every 30 minute routine. We also need more buses.
	Change time back to there 30 min. every minute route. Need more buses.
	Hope come to Mt. Holly. Please.
	Hope you come to Mt. Holly. Please.
	Hope you can run the bus to Mt. Holly
	Nice bus drivers make a difference.
	Sat. Monthly pass would be good - transfers need changes - hard to use currently.
	Good bus drivers
	Bus serves my needs well.
	More bus service
	Shelter needed at Wal-Mart South Weldon/Franklyn Square. Bus drivers are nice. Too hard to get home at that time (comment re: public forum).
	30 minute schedule is better. Not tracking it, understand that drivers need breaks.
	Thank you for your cooperation.
	Good buses. I like them.
	Bus stops need to be more visible to drivers.
	Good, nice bus drivers
	Very clean!
	Reasonable fare price.
	Like the bus driver
	Love all the bus drivers
	Appreciate the bus service that we have! People are very nice, bus company goes out of its way to be nice. Would like for buses to pull up closer to door to store.
	More freedom to go where you want when you want by bus.
	'till 2 AM. Good for working hours. Good bus driver - Bessemer City Route - Al
	Get closer to doorways. All good.
	Keep routes reliable. If the bus is supposed to be at a stop/come back - it should.
	Going great

QUESTION 16 (CONT.)

	Great job. Need more hours!
	Good service. Good drivers.
	Need some better drivers. Thank you, it is time for some improvement on service.
	Nice and clean - especially mall buses
	Doing a good job!
	Run more frequently
	Weekends to Charlotte. Late night service. Every 30 minutes.
	Hospital Route needs to get closer to homes - Saturday Hospital Route is too limited - Excellent bus drive. A+
	Later on weekdays, Sat. & Sun.
	Turned down a job once because of no transit in early AM
	All good - more hours! Get off of work at 8 PM. I would rather give \$ to City than to cabs - the City takes care of you.
	Enjoy the bus, when not driving
	Like the service as it is now - but maybe have it run at least once an hour.
	Good service, would like longer hours.
	Bus system is needed by a lot of people around Gastonia
	Be more friendly
	Later will make more people want to ride the buses
	Transit needs rates for Lincolnton & Belmont
	1-hour service is better than 1-1/2 hour service. Have to call a cab. Bus drivers are great!. Willing a fare increase for improved service.
	Car broke down - using it today until it is fixed.
	Love the drivers!
	Until 2 AM
	Very nice drivers - fun!
	Sunday! and later times for work.
	que sea mas amplio, seguridad , que pueda ser frecuente en horarios y dias los 7 dias ala semana.
	Given low usage, increasing service in this era of budget crunches is unthinkable and certainly not justified.
	More earlier hours of operation, more buses, run every 30 to 45 minutes instead of every hour.
	I have never used it but friends say it beats paying high cost of gasoline; if we had it in Stanley and Mt. Holly it would be used.
	Safety
	I think getting new transit services with longer hours would be good.
	I enjoy riding the buses in Gastonia. The drivers are all very helpful and friendly.
	I have utilized CATS, but am interested in Gaston Transit as well.
	I live in Belmont - I definitely would support local transit!!
	Public transit is an idea whose time has come!
	Please expand bus service!

QUESTION 16 (CONT.)

	Advertise day trips in the What's Happening section of the paper with parking free and group rates to attractions.
	You guys are doing a great job but wish it could be a bit better. Like on Sundays
	I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE TRANSIT SYSTEM OPEN UP TO THOSE WHO ARE NOT ON A BUS ROUTE. JOB OPPORTUNITES ARE THERE BUT IF YOU HAVE NO WAY TO GET THERE THE DOOR IS CLOSED.
	START OFF NEW FROM THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM WITH HIRING PEOPLE, AT LEAST RUN THE BUS ALONG WITH THE CHARLOTTE BUSS, THE LAST CHARLOTTE BUS GETS TO GASTONIA AT 7:00 AND PEOPLE HAVE TO WALK MILES IN ORDER FOR THEM TO GET HOME. MORE SECURITY BECAUSE YOU HAVE A LOT OF HOMELESS PEOPLE HANGING AROUND DOING WHAT THEY WANT. It is easier to catch the chalotte bus because of the timing. The city complains about money but when you stop running at 6:00 you lose money because you have to pay 5 or 10 dollars for a taxi cab. It would be nice for the buses to run to aleast 12:00 am in order for people to come home or go to work. Your limited to what you can do because of how the buses run and limited to where the buses go. This means a lot to me because i catch the often and if i had to pay 20 cent more for longer runs i dont care. The City of Gastonia Transit makes you want to get A car so you do nt have to deal with the buses. In order for Gastonia to improve alot of things are going to have to get done. For one longer routes, better services, running on sundays.
	If the transit system could be expanded to a level that would be appealing to commuters, then yearly or monthly discounted ticket purchases could get attract a critical number of riders to commit to using the system.
	Better service if it goes thur... Can have a way to and from work
	One of the greatest concerns I have with regard to Gastonia's public transportation system is the overall lack of pedestrian-friendly and bicycle-friendly streets in Gastonia. This lack of sidewalks (i.e. Union Rd. south of Garrison to Hudson) and narrow roadways with no bike lanes (i.e. Union Rd., again) surely hinders users from better utilizing the transit system. Would a greater number of people better utilize our transit (bus) system, if users felt comfortable riding a bike a half-mile to make a connection? I thank you all for considering the concerns of Transit users. While not a transit user myself, I do appreciate this much-needed service provided by Gastonia Transit and hope your efforts toward improvement benefit those you serve.
	NA
	I am glad that Propane is used in buses
	WE SHOULD HAVE TRANSIT THROUGH-OUT GASTON COUNTY, NC, ETC. WELFARE PROGRAMS WOULD'NT BE USED AS MUCH' I KNOW BECAUSE I WORK FOR SOCIAL SERVICES. OUR BIGGEST PROBLEM IS PEOPLE NOT HAVING TRANSPORTATION TO GET TO WORK IF ITS NOT ON THE BUS LINE, OR IFITS AFTER 6PM!
	question why m p o meetings are always in conflict w/ county commisioners one of your members who you claim to represent
	The busses are not full at any time. Too often I see them with NO ONE riding. You need to do a much better job of public awareness of this services. Do you charge enough now?
	Expanded service would be beneficial to older people who do not have someone to take them places. You should probably include Market Street or Jackson's as one of your stops. My grandmother loves to go there to eat, but doesn't always have someone to take her. She and her friends could go then.

QUESTION 16 (CONT.)

	I think there is a stigma about both cleanliness and safety. I would like to see Gastonia promote public transportation as an "environmentally friendly" option. I would consider using public transportation on occasion if it was accessible to both my home and work.
	I just think it would be nice if the buses went a little further out to help people get to more jobs.
	what we have is good for the people on it right then
	My concern re: transit service pertains to the participants of the non-profit organization that I direct, and also to our county's homeless population. I strongly encourage extended hours for those who are employed on a 2nd or 3rd shift job. Current customer service, cleanliness and safety are good.
	All transit service should have equipment for tracking, drivers trained for CPR, all special needs available and in working conditions.
	They are great, clean, nice, professional, dependable,
	need for extended hours of operations to cover shift changes
	I think it is shameful that Gaston County's transit service is so poor. We should be able to get on a bus and go wherever we want to go at least from 6am to 10pm at night. My father use to ride to bus to Burlington mill during these hours all the time. As we have grown and have businesses spread out all over the county, our bus services should have kept up with our growth. I think more of our citizens would be able to accept employment in different places if they could depend on bus service.
	I have never used it so I really can't comment.
	If the transit service does not reach all areas of the city and run on appropriate days and times then ridership will not increase and it will not/does not serve its purpose. With the thousands of new homes being built and increasing traffic and gas prices, I would use transit if it were available in my area.
	I feel in my agency we work with the Hispanic population we see the need for them to use the transit services but they would need the bus route/schedule to be in spanish.
	transit routes that are easy to understand how to navigate around the area, buses with clean windows, seats, no trash. Some way to scan passengers as they enter for hidden weapons, etc., Yearly/monthly/weekly bus passes with ID picture for scanning when boarding a bus. Passengers monitored and good security. Operational upkeep of vehicles to ensure safety of passengers during travel time.
	NEED AT LEAST THE SAME SCHEDULE ON SATURDAY AS WELL AS MONDAY THRU FRIDAY
	Like I said before I am completing the survey for folks that I service in Gaston County. As far as I have heard the service is clean and safe but just not really accessible(times needed, location) But what really needs to improve is the ACCESS transportation service. This service is unreliable, untrained to work with the populations they serve and if you do want to discuss problems with someone they are hard to reach, unreceptive and nothing ever changes. I am glad that they now have a little competition. If this service is run by the county something needs to be done.

QUESTION 16 (CONT.)

	It would also be nice if the number of times the Gastonia Express bus ran could be increased.
	the most important thing is run later hours. The last charlotte bus gets to gastonia around 7:00 and people have to walk miles to get home. Not everyone can afford to pay a taxi cab to take them home. The buses need to run more often. Take a look at Charlotte Transit and get some ideas from their. This questionnaire we are filling out is bias because not everyone has access to a computer. Not everyone goes to the library. I think once you get input and see the response. I think you should print out 1000 copies and have someone who can ride the bus for a week and hand them out. Charlotte does that and they offer and incentive like free chick fila sandwich or free bus ticket. Rome wasnt built in a day. this will be a long process but one small step will help.
	Monday - Friday 5:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Saturday 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. what can you really do between this hours especially if you work? Change the way the buses operate. The schedules are confusing to people you have to wait 45 minutes. The buses are too small if you have 2 wheelchairs and elderly you have no where else to sit. You can't even stand up because you will end up getting hit a ran over by a wheelchair. The first week of the month the buses are packed with people. The buses are not big enough to accomodate the people. I think the buses should have bike racks because people have to leave their bikes at the transit center unattended. The station is to small, the bathrooms are nasty. A lot of changes need to be done. I think you might have to make some serious changes in order for Gastonia to catch up with other cities. I think once Gastonia make Downtown beautiful then the transit center will have to make a transition also. ANOTHER SUGGESTION WALMART NEEDS A SHUTTLE BUS FROM PHASE ONE TO PAHSE 4 counting Ashley Funiture as Phase 4 because they are building other stores. More Security.
	It seems to be a great service , we just need more of it!
	I would like to know about the service.
	Had not used because there is not service on Mount Holly.

QUESTION 17

Where did you hear about this survey?		
answer options	Response Percent	Response Count
Web site	16.16%	16
E-mail	41.41%	41
News article	12.12%	12
Television / radio	1.01%	1
Personal contact	15.15%	15
Other (please specify)	14.14%	14
<i>answered question</i>		99
<i>skipped question</i>		34

** Asked only on website surveys

Appendix B: Comments from Forums



Mark S Horton
203 Oxford Ave
Gastonia, NC 28054

H: 704.865.5751
C: 704.577.4601
email: mhortonpls@gmail.com

Recommendations-Expansion of GT Service

Minor Changes

Post Route and Schedule info at all bus stops.

- CATS has the bus routes which service each stop clearly marked on the sign for the stop.
- Each stop has a weatherproof box which encloses a partial schedule for each route, showing what time the bus departed the last "landmark" stop on the route.

Add bike racks to all buses.

- This low-cost measure will increase ridership, improve the flexibility of the system, and provide greater access to recreational areas.

Major Changes-if system stays citywide only

Add 2 new buses to existing routes.

- Adding a bus to Route 1/Route 5 and to Route 4/Route 8 will eliminate the necessity of "alternating" these routes, and reduce the 1-1/2 hour interval between buses on these routes.

Add a new route within Gastonia Corporate Limits.

- A current map of GT routes reveals a large area within the City of Gastonia almost wholly without bus service: the southeast. A new route could service the New Hope Road, East Hudson, Ashbrook and Bradford Heights areas, where much multifamily housing is located.

Introduce late afternoon/evening service.

- The current 12-hour schedule on most routes ends at 5:15 or 6:00 PM, meaning many people cannot use the bus for errands or shopping after getting off from work, or use the bus to get home from work stop on the route.
- A 16-hour schedule would enable employees at the malls, Franklin Square, the Wal-marts, and Dixie Village, as well as shoppers and riders of the CATS 85x Express Bus, the opportunity to use GT buses to go out in the afternoon and get home at night.

Improve weekend service.

- A Saturday schedule more similar to the regular weekday schedule, in terms of available routes and frequency of service, would increase the utility of GT and lead to an increase in ridership.
- A limited Sunday schedule would fill an enormous gap in the “mobility issues” of persons with disabilities, the elderly, and those whose weekday work schedules do not permit them to access shopping and dining via GT.

Major Changes-if system goes regional

Bus service to Dallas, Bessemer City, East to (through?) Belmont.

- *If other municipalities within Gaston County could be brought on board:*
- The current Gaston County ACCESS route serving Gaston College and Dallas could, with the purchase of a new bus, be turned into a regularly scheduled GT bus route.
- Bus service could be extended to Bessemer City, either by an expansion of the existing Route 1 or by a newly introduced route.
- A new bus route to the east, along Highway 7/Wilkinson Blvd could provide access to transit service to Lowell, McAdenville/Cramerton, and Belmont, including the new Wal-mart with its many employees, and:

Provide a connection to CATS Route 5 near Charlotte-Douglas Municipal Airport.

- Currently there is no way, save a very expensive Greyhound ride, to get back and forth to Charlotte in the middle of the day. A route connecting with CATS Route 5 would provide access to the employers and amenities of Charlotte to many who currently lack such access, and provide access to and from the Charlotte airport to business and recreational travelers.



COMMENT CARD

Please let us know your comments about transit needs in Gastonia and Gaston County:

more service and longer hours

For more information, please contact Bernie Yacobucci, Gaston Urban Area MPO at (704) 854-6604.

Before Presentation



COMMENT CARD

Please let us know your comments about transit needs in Gastonia and Gaston County:

- 1. Frequency + Hours of buses don't run well enough to support workers
- 2. Out of town - Kings Mtn.
- 3. Routes don't go to Charlotte enough.
- * More ACCESS routes
 - ± New Hope Rd
 - * Weekend
 - * Multiple Transfer Points
- * Are workplaces interested in contributing to the buses?
- ± Rural Vanpools for big plants.

For more information, please contact Bernie Yacobucci, Gaston Urban Area MPO at (704) 854-6604.

Late comer comments



Gastonia Transit Expansion Study

COMMENT CARD

Please let us know your comments about transit needs in Gastonia and Gaston County:

* hours are not late enough,
----- or frequent.
* mt Holly would be good.
to Belmont to catch
85x

For more information, please contact Bernie Yacobucci, Gaston Urban Area MPO at (704) 854-6604.

Comments addressed:



Gastonia Transit Expansion Study

COMMENT CARD

Please let us know your comments about transit needs in Gastonia and Gaston County:

* Price increase fears? will \$↑ ↓ ridership?

* will there be more funding available when it expands to other cities? Fed funds?

* Why did service ↓ in 2004.

* Did other cities have a chance to give input?

* what is the timeline?

* Were there groups of people who took part in surveys?

* How many are city/county employees?

* How about an airport route? ^{CLT}

* Any interest in Charlotte for regional transit?

* Are towns interested?

For more information, please contact Bernie Yacobucci, Gaston Urban Area MPO at (704) 854-6604.

BOB WILSON
319 Sherry Painter Street
Gastonia, N.C. 28056

1. In the early years (when Homelite was still in operation) the city had bus service down 321 to Little Mountain Road. This service was used by many residents (both city and county) until it was restructured omitting part of the route.

SUGGESTION: Consider extending present route down 321 South to Davidson Street

This change would accomodate many, many seniors who do not have transportation not to mention those who work and must find ways to and from their jobs, grocery store and also those individuals would be given the opportunity of shopping at the malls and visiting downtown (downtown needs these people to help in survive and become alive as it was when I WAS GROWING UP.

2. If the hours of operation were so that service included Sundays and holidays, you would be surprised at the increase in ridership.

SUGGESTION: Consider extending the evening hours to 10:00PM and add Sunday service as well as holiday service.

Give this change a trial period of one (1) year to track the records. The price of gas and other factors, there should be sufficient ridership to indicate this service should be continued.

Bob Wilson
(704) 864-7463

Graham, Hank

From: Brian Borne [borneb@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Tuesday, August 14, 2007 8:01 AM
To: Graham, Hank
Subject: Yesterdays Presentation Comments

Hank:

Just wanted to make a few comments regarding yesterday's presentation.

Franklin Corridor:

The parking requirements for Downtown have already been relaxed, none in the CB. You might want to check with Jason on the exact zoning requirements.

The residential market in Downtown has begun with rental apartments, currently we lack a condo product that people can purchase. Condos are being discussed for some of the development in the works.

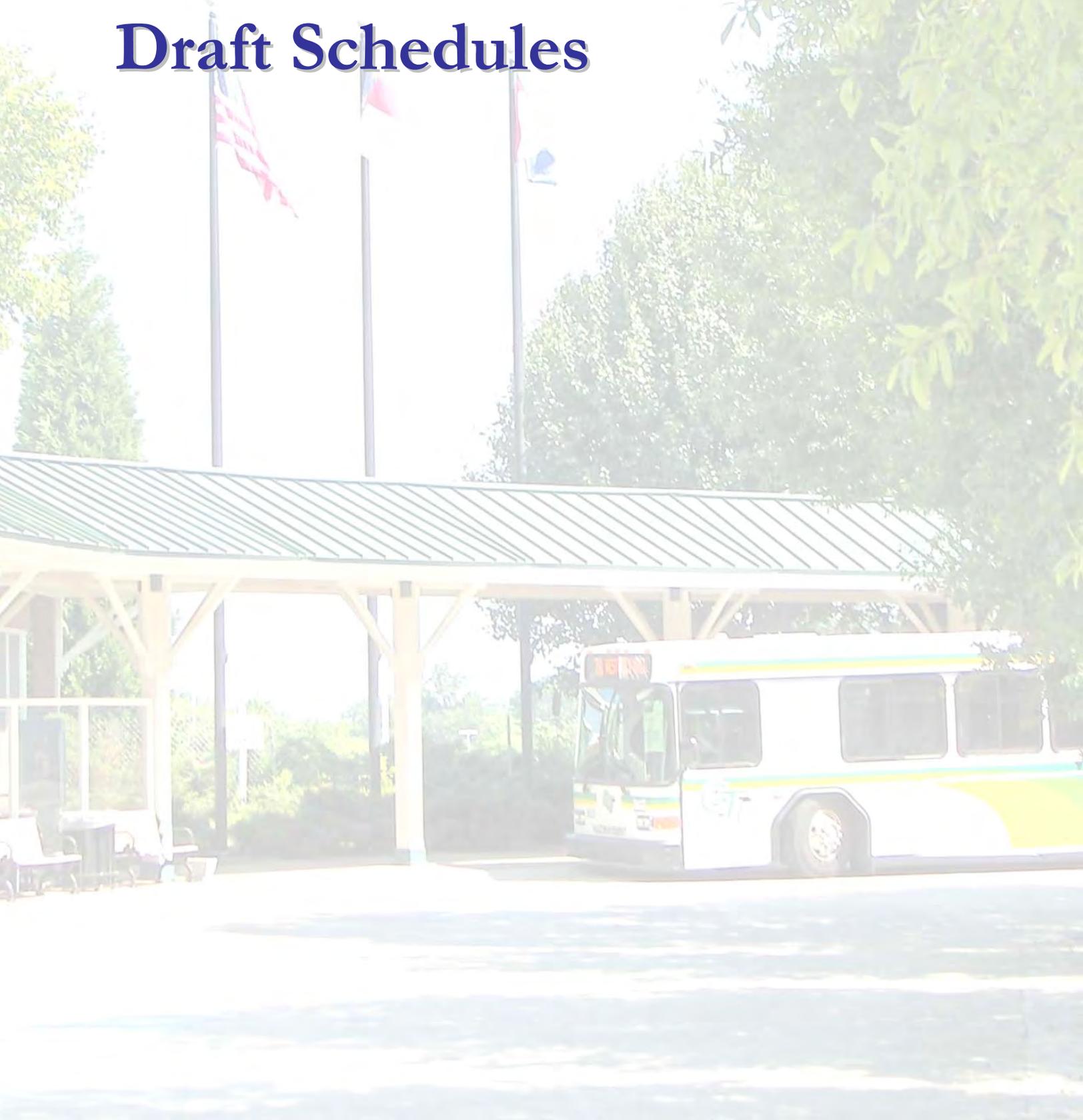
I like the idea of the N-S nodes connecting the Downtown to the residential across Franklin, the link to the residential neighborhoods surrounding Downtown is critical. Also, linking Downtown with the Greenway is also excellent. Franklin needs these nodes at Broad, Oakland, Marietta, South and 321.

Much can be said about slowing traffic down and softening Franklin. Slowing traffic in all of Downtown is critical. It can be done, with success.

Thanks much,

Brian J. Borne, CMSM
Executive Director
Gastonia Downtown Development Corporation
162 S. South Street, Suite 102
P.O. Box 2396
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704.865.5044
704.865.5033 (fax)
borneb@bellsouth.net
www.GastoniaDowntown.org
Building the Future. . . by Renovating the Past!

Appendix C: Baseline Alternative 1 Draft Schedules



WEEKDAY SCHEDULES – BASELINE ALTERNATIVE 1

Route 1 (Franklin Blvd.)

Bus A

1 Franklin Blvd								
Intervals	Dixie Village	ARR Bradley Station	LEA Bradley Station	Eastridge Mall	Franklin Square (Wal-Mart)	Bradley Station	Dixie Village	
	0	11	5	8	13	12	11	
	5:30	5:41	5:46	5:54	6:07	6:19	6:30	
	6:30	6:41	6:46	6:54	7:07	7:19	7:30	
	7:30	7:41	7:46	7:54	8:07	8:19	8:30	
	8:30	8:41	8:46	8:54	9:07	9:19	9:30	
	9:30	9:41	9:46	9:54	10:07	10:19	10:30	
	10:30	10:41	10:46	10:54	11:07	11:19	11:30	
	11:30	11:41	11:46	11:54	12:07	12:19	12:30	
	12:30	12:41	12:46	12:54	13:07	13:19	13:30	
	13:30	13:41	13:46	13:54	14:07	14:19	14:30	
	14:30	14:41	14:46	14:54	15:07	15:19	15:30	
	15:30	15:41	15:46	15:54	16:07	16:19	16:30	
	16:30	16:41	16:46	16:54	17:07	17:19	17:30	
	17:30	17:41	17:46	17:54	18:07	18:19	18:30	
	18:30	18:41 to garage						

Route 2 (Garrison)

Bus F

2 Garrison			
Intervals	Bradley Station	Eastridge Mall	Bradley Station
	0	8	15
	6:00	6:08	6:23
	7:30	7:38	7:53
	9:00	9:08	9:23
	10:30	10:38	10:53
	12:00	12:08	12:23
	13:30	13:38	13:53
	15:00	15:08	15:23
	16:30	16:38	16:53
	18:00	18:08	18:23

Route 3 (Marietta)

Bus C

Bus D

3 Marietta				
	Bradley Station	Hudson / Union	Village Square	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	15	5	8
	5:30	5:45	5:50	5:58
	6:30	6:45	6:50	6:58
	7:30	7:45	7:50	7:58
	8:30	8:45	8:50	8:58
	9:30	9:45	9:50	9:58
	10:30	10:45	10:50	10:58
	11:30	11:45	11:50	11:58
	12:30	12:45	12:50	12:58
	13:30	13:45	13:50	13:58
	14:30	14:45	14:50	14:58
	15:30	15:45	15:50	15:58
	16:30	16:45	16:50	16:58
	17:30	17:45	17:50	17:58 to garage

Route 4 (S. York)

Bus B

4 S. York						
	Bradley Station	Health Department	ARR Dixie Village	LEA Dixie Village	Health Department	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	13	12	5	12	13
	6:00	6:13	6:25	6:30	6:42	6:55
	7:00	7:13	7:25	7:30	7:42	7:55
	8:00	8:13	8:25	8:30	8:42	8:55
	9:00	9:13	9:25	9:30	9:42	9:55
	10:00	10:13	10:25	10:30	10:42	10:55
	11:00	11:13	11:25	11:30	11:42	11:55
	12:00	12:13	12:25	12:30	12:42	12:55
	13:00	13:13	13:25	13:30	13:42	13:55
	14:00	14:13	14:25	14:30	14:42	14:55
	15:00	15:13	15:25	15:30	15:42	15:55
	16:00	16:13	16:25	16:30	16:42	16:55
	17:00	17:13	17:25	17:30	17:42	17:55

Route 5 (Shannon Bradley)

Bus F

5 Shannon Bradley						
	Bradley Station	Linwood Terrace	Dixie Village (via Food Lion @ Edgewood)	Linwood Terrace	Bradley Station	
Intervals	0	11	25	7	11	
	6:30	6:41	7:06	7:13	7:24	
	8:00	8:11	8:36	8:43	8:54	
	9:30	9:41	10:06	10:13	10:24	
	11:00	11:11	11:36	11:43	11:54	
	12:30	12:41	13:06	13:13	13:24	
	14:00	14:11	14:36	14:43	14:54	
	15:30	15:41	16:06	16:13	16:24	
	17:00	17:11	17:36	17:43	17:54	

Route 6 (Bessemer City Road)

Bus C

Bus D

6 Bessemer City				
	Dixie Village	Isley Rd. Turnaround	Crescent / Shannon Bradley	Dixie Village
Intervals	0	11	11	5
	6:30	6:41	6:52	6:57
	7:30	7:41	7:52	7:57
	8:30	8:41	8:52	8:57
	9:30	9:41	9:52	9:57
	10:30	10:41	10:52	10:57
	11:30	11:41	11:52	11:57
	12:30	12:41	12:52	12:57
	13:30	13:41	13:52	13:57
	14:30	14:41	14:52	14:57
	15:30	15:41	15:52	15:57
	16:30	16:41	16:52	16:57
	17:30	17:41	17:52	17:57

Route 7 (Highland)

Bus C
 Bus D

7 Highland (WB)			
	Bradley Station	Highland / Mauney	ARR Dixie Village
Intervals	0	13	14
	5:30	5:43	5:57
	6:00	6:13	6:27
	7:00	7:13	7:27
	8:00	8:13	8:27
	9:00	9:13	9:27
	10:00	10:13	10:27
	11:00	11:13	11:27
	12:00	12:13	12:27
	13:00	13:13	13:27
	14:00	14:13	14:27
	15:00	15:13	15:27
	16:00	16:13	16:27
	17:00	17:13	17:27
	18:00	18:13	18:27
 7 Highland (EB)			
	Dixie Village	Highland / Mauney	Bradley Station
	0	14	13
	6:00	6:14	6:27
	7:00	7:14	7:27
	8:00	8:14	8:27
	9:00	9:14	9:27
	10:00	10:14	10:27
	11:00	11:14	11:27
	12:00	12:14	12:27
	13:00	13:14	13:27
	14:00	14:14	14:27
	15:00	15:14	15:27
	16:00	16:14	16:27
	17:00	17:14	17:27
	18:00	18:14	18:27 to garage
	18:30	18:44	18:57 to garage

Route 8 (Hospital)

Bus E

8 Hospital						
	Bradley Station	Hospital	Franklin Square (Wal-Mart)	Hospital (via rest of Franklin Sq)	Bradley Station	
Intervals	0	13	11	18	13	
	6:00	6:13	6:24	6:42	6:55	
	7:00	7:13	7:24	7:42	7:55	
	8:00	8:13	8:24	8:42	8:55	
	9:00	9:13	9:24	9:42	9:55	
	10:00	10:13	10:24	10:42	10:55	
	11:00	11:13	11:24	11:42	11:55	
	12:00	12:13	12:24	12:42	12:55	
	13:00	13:13	13:24	13:42	13:55	
	14:00	14:13	14:24	14:42	14:55	
	15:00	15:13	15:24	15:42	15:55	
	16:00	16:13	16:24	16:42	16:55	
	17:00	17:13	17:24	17:42	17:55	

SATURDAY SCHEDULES – BASELINE ALTERNATIVE 1

Route 1 (Franklin Blvd.)

Does not operate

Route 2 (Garrison)

Bus B

2 Garrison

	Bradley Station	Eastridge Mall	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	8	15
	9:30	9:38	9:53
	11:30	11:38	11:53
	13:30	13:38	13:53
	15:30	15:38	15:53
	17:30	17:38	17:53 to garage

Route 3 (Marietta)

Bus B

3 Marietta

	Bradley Station	Hudson / Union	Village Square	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	15	5	8
	9:00	9:15	9:20	9:28
	11:00	11:15	11:20	11:28
	13:00	13:15	13:20	13:28
	15:00	15:15	15:20	15:28
	17:00	17:15	17:20	17:28

Route 4 (S. York)

Bus C

4 S. York

	Bradley Station	Health Department	ARR Dixie Village	LEA Dixie Village	Health Department	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	13	12	5	12	13
	8:00	8:13	8:25	8:30	8:42	8:55
	10:00	10:13	10:25	10:30	10:42	10:55
	12:00	12:13	12:25	12:30	12:42	12:55
	14:00	14:13	14:25	14:30	14:42	14:55
	16:00	16:13	16:25	16:30	16:42	16:55

Route 5 (Shannon Bradley)

Bus C

5 Shannon Bradley					
	Bradley Station	Linwood Terrace	Dixie Village (via Food Lion @ Edgewood)	Linwood Terrace	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	11	25	7	11
	9:00	9:11	9:36	9:43	9:54
	11:00	11:11	11:36	11:43	11:54
	13:00	13:11	13:36	13:43	13:54
	15:00	15:11	15:36	15:43	15:54
	17:00	17:11	17:36	17:43	17:54

Route 6 (Bessemer City Road)

Does not operate

Route 7 (Highland)

Bus B

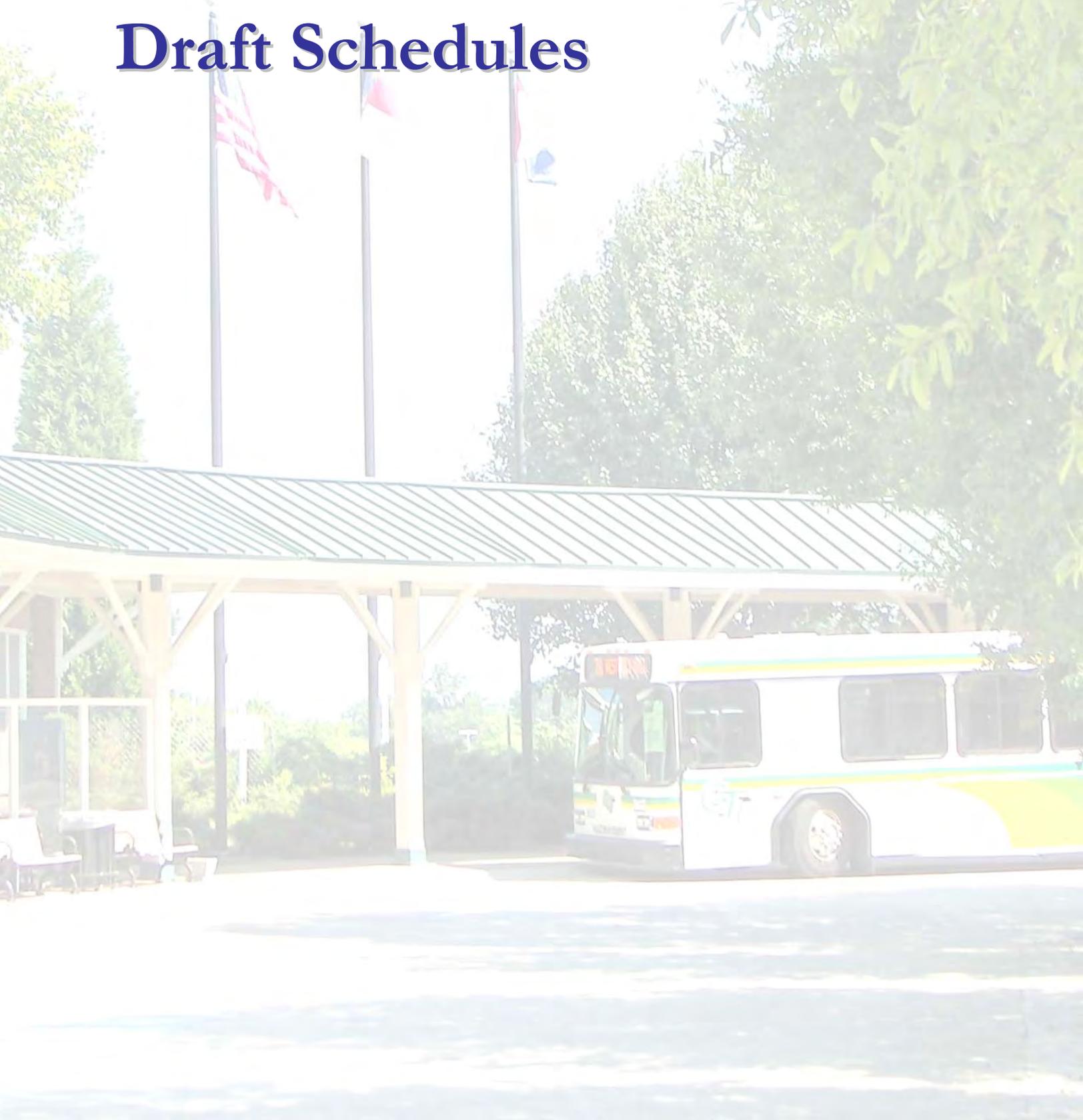
7 Highland						
	Bradley Station	Highland / Mauney	ARR Dixie Village	LEA Dixie Village	Highland / Mauney	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	13	14	4	14	13
	8:00	8:13	8:27	8:31	8:45	8:58
	10:00	10:13	10:27	10:31	10:45	10:58
	12:00	12:13	12:27	12:31	12:45	12:58
	14:00	14:13	14:27	14:31	14:45	14:58
	16:00	16:13	16:27	16:31	16:45	16:58

Route 8 (Hospital)

Bus A

8 Hospital					
	Bradley Station	Hospital	klin Square (Wal-	Hospital (via rest of Franklin Sq)	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	13	11	18	13
	8:00	8:13	8:24	8:42	8:55
	9:00	9:13	9:24	9:42	9:55
	10:00	10:13	10:24	10:42	10:55
	11:00	11:13	11:24	11:42	11:55
	12:00	12:13	12:24	12:42	12:55
	13:00	13:13	13:24	13:42	13:55
	14:00	14:13	14:24	14:42	14:55
	15:00	15:13	15:24	15:42	15:55
	16:00	16:13	16:24	16:42	16:55
	17:00	17:13	17:24	17:42	17:55

Appendix D: Baseline Alternative 2 Draft Schedules



WEEKDAY SCHEDULES – BASELINE ALTERNATIVE 2

Route 1 (Franklin Blvd.)

Bus A

1 Franklin Blvd								
	Dixie Village	ARR Bradley Station	LEA Bradley Station	Eastridge Mall	Franklin Square (Wal-Mart)	Bradley Station	Dixie Village	
Intervals	0	11	5	8	13	12	11	
	5:30	5:41	5:46	5:54	6:07	6:19	6:30	
	6:30	6:41	6:46	6:54	7:07	7:19	7:30	
	7:30	7:41	7:46	7:54	8:07	8:19	8:30	
	8:30	8:41	8:46	8:54	9:07	9:19	9:30	
	9:30	9:41	9:46	9:54	10:07	10:19	10:30	
	10:30	10:41	10:46	10:54	11:07	11:19	11:30	
	11:30	11:41	11:46	11:54	12:07	12:19	12:30	
	12:30	12:41	12:46	12:54	13:07	13:19	13:30	
	13:30	13:41	13:46	13:54	14:07	14:19	14:30	
	14:30	14:41	14:46	14:54	15:07	15:19	15:30	
	15:30	15:41	15:46	15:54	16:07	16:19	16:30	
	16:30	16:41	16:46	16:54	17:07	17:19	17:30	
	17:30	17:41	17:46	17:54	18:07	18:19	18:30	
	18:30	18:41 to garage						

Route 2 (Garrison)

Bus G

2 Garrison								
	Bradley Station	Dixon / New Hope	New Hope / Huntsmoor	ARR Franklin Square (Wal-Mart)	LEA Franklin Square (Wal-Mart)	New Hope / Huntsmoor	Dixon / New Hope	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	10	5	14	4	8	5	10
	6:00	6:10	6:15	6:29	6:33	6:41	6:46	6:56
	7:00	7:10	7:15	7:29	7:33	7:41	7:46	7:56
	8:00	8:10	8:15	8:29	8:33	8:41	8:46	8:56
	9:00	9:10	9:15	9:29	9:33	9:41	9:46	9:56
	10:00	10:10	10:15	10:29	10:33	10:41	10:46	10:56
	11:00	11:10	11:15	11:29	11:33	11:41	11:46	11:56
	12:00	12:10	12:15	12:29	12:33	12:41	12:46	12:56
	13:00	13:10	13:15	13:29	13:33	13:41	13:46	13:56
	14:00	14:10	14:15	14:29	14:33	14:41	14:46	14:56
	15:00	15:10	15:15	15:29	15:33	15:41	15:46	15:56
	16:00	16:10	16:15	16:29	16:33	16:41	16:46	16:56
	17:00	17:10	17:15	17:29	17:33	17:41	17:46	17:56

Route 3 (Marietta)

Bus C

Bus D

3 Marietta				
Intervals	Bradley Station	Hudson / Union	Village Square	Bradley Station
	0	15	5	8
	5:30	5:45	5:50	5:58
	6:30	6:45	6:50	6:58
	7:30	7:45	7:50	7:58
	8:30	8:45	8:50	8:58
	9:30	9:45	9:50	9:58
	10:30	10:45	10:50	10:58
	11:30	11:45	11:50	11:58
	12:30	12:45	12:50	12:58
	13:30	13:45	13:50	13:58
	14:30	14:45	14:50	14:58
	15:30	15:45	15:50	15:58
	16:30	16:45	16:50	16:58
	17:30	17:45	17:50	17:58 to garage

Route 4 (S. York)

Bus B

4 S. York						
Intervals	Bradley Station	Health Department	ARR Dixie Village	LEA Dixie Village	Health Department	Bradley Station
	0	13	12	5	12	13
	6:00	6:13	6:25	6:30	6:42	6:55
	7:00	7:13	7:25	7:30	7:42	7:55
	8:00	8:13	8:25	8:30	8:42	8:55
	9:00	9:13	9:25	9:30	9:42	9:55
	10:00	10:13	10:25	10:30	10:42	10:55
	11:00	11:13	11:25	11:30	11:42	11:55
	12:00	12:13	12:25	12:30	12:42	12:55
	13:00	13:13	13:25	13:30	13:42	13:55
	14:00	14:13	14:25	14:30	14:42	14:55
	15:00	15:13	15:25	15:30	15:42	15:55
	16:00	16:13	16:25	16:30	16:42	16:55
	17:00	17:13	17:25	17:30	17:42	17:55

Route 5 (Shannon Bradley)

Bus F

5 Shannon Bradley

	Bradley Station	Linwood Terrace	Dixie Village (via Food Lion @ Edgewood)	Linwood Terrace	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	11	25	7	11
	6:30	6:41	7:06	7:13	7:24
	7:30	7:41	8:06	8:13	8:24
	8:30	8:41	9:06	9:13	9:24
	9:30	9:41	10:06	10:13	10:24
	10:30	10:41	11:06	11:13	11:24
	11:30	11:41	12:06	12:13	12:24
	12:30	12:41	13:06	13:13	13:24
	13:30	13:41	14:06	14:13	14:24
	14:30	14:41	15:06	15:13	15:24
	15:30	15:41	16:06	16:13	16:24
	16:30	16:41	17:06	17:13	17:24
	17:30	17:41	18:06	18:13	18:24

Route 6 (Bessemer City Road)

Bus C

Bus D

6 Bessemer City

	Dixie Village	Isley Rd. Turnaround	Crescent / Shannon Bradley	Dixie Village
Intervals	0	11	11	5
	6:30	6:41	6:52	6:57
	7:30	7:41	7:52	7:57
	8:30	8:41	8:52	8:57
	9:30	9:41	9:52	9:57
	10:30	10:41	10:52	10:57
	11:30	11:41	11:52	11:57
	12:30	12:41	12:52	12:57
	13:30	13:41	13:52	13:57
	14:30	14:41	14:52	14:57
	15:30	15:41	15:52	15:57
	16:30	16:41	16:52	16:57
	17:30	17:41	17:52	17:57

Route 7 (Highland)

Bus C

Bus D

7 Highland (WB)

Intervals	Bradley Station	Highland / Mauney	ARR Dixie Village
	0	13	14
	6:00	6:13	6:27
	7:00	7:13	7:27
	8:00	8:13	8:27
	9:00	9:13	9:27
	10:00	10:13	10:27
	11:00	11:13	11:27
	12:00	12:13	12:27
	13:00	13:13	13:27
	14:00	14:13	14:27
	15:00	15:13	15:27
	16:00	16:13	16:27
	17:00	17:13	17:27

7 Highland (EB)

	Dixie Village	Highland / Mauney	Bradley Station
	0	14	13
	7:00	7:14	7:27
	8:00	8:14	8:27
	9:00	9:14	9:27
	10:00	10:14	10:27
	11:00	11:14	11:27
	12:00	12:14	12:27
	13:00	13:14	13:27
	14:00	14:14	14:27
	15:00	15:14	15:27
	16:00	16:14	16:27
	17:00	17:14	17:27
	18:00	18:14	18:27

Route 8 (Hospital)

Bus E

8 Hospital						
	Bradley Station	Hospital	Franklin Square (Wal-Mart)	Hospital (via rest of Franklin Sq)	Bradley Station	
Intervals	0	13	11	18	13	
	6:00	6:13	6:24	6:42	6:55	
	7:00	7:13	7:24	7:42	7:55	
	8:00	8:13	8:24	8:42	8:55	
	9:00	9:13	9:24	9:42	9:55	
	10:00	10:13	10:24	10:42	10:55	
	11:00	11:13	11:24	11:42	11:55	
	12:00	12:13	12:24	12:42	12:55	
	13:00	13:13	13:24	13:42	13:55	
	14:00	14:13	14:24	14:42	14:55	
	15:00	15:13	15:24	15:42	15:55	
	16:00	16:13	16:24	16:42	16:55	
	17:00	17:13	17:24	17:42	17:55	

SATURDAY SCHEDULES – BASELINE ALTERNATIVE 2

Route 1 (Franklin Blvd.)

Bus A

1 Franklin Blvd								
	Dixie Village	ARR Bradley Station	LEA Bradley Station	Westfield Mall	Franklin Square (Wal-Mart)	Bradley Station	Dixie Village	
Intervals	0	11	5	8	13	12	11	
	7:30	7:41	7:46	7:54	8:07	8:19	8:30	
	8:30	8:41	8:46	8:54	9:07	9:19	9:30	
	9:30	9:41	9:46	9:54	10:07	10:19	10:30	
	10:30	10:41	10:46	10:54	11:07	11:19	11:30	
	11:30	11:41	11:46	11:54	12:07	12:19	12:30	
	12:30	12:41	12:46	12:54	13:07	13:19	13:30	
	13:30	13:41	13:46	13:54	14:07	14:19	14:30	
	14:30	14:41	14:46	14:54	15:07	15:19	15:30	
	15:30	15:41	15:46	15:54	16:07	16:19	16:30	
	16:30	16:41	16:46	16:54	17:07	17:19	17:30	
	17:30	17:41 to garage						

Route 2 (Garrison)

Bus C

2 Garrison								
	Bradley Station	Dixon / New Hope	New Hope / Huntsmoor	ARR Franklin Square (Wal-Mart)	LEA Franklin Square (Wal-Mart)	New Hope / Huntsmoor	Dixon / New Hope	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	10	5	14	4	8	5	10
	8:00	8:10	8:15	8:29	8:33	8:41	8:46	8:56
	10:00	10:10	10:15	10:29	10:33	10:41	10:46	10:56
	12:00	12:10	12:15	12:29	12:33	12:41	12:46	12:56
	14:00	14:10	14:15	14:29	14:33	14:41	14:46	14:56
	16:00	16:10	16:15	16:29	16:33	16:41	16:46	16:56

Route 3 (Marietta)

Bus B

3 Marietta				
	Bradley Station	Hudson / Union	Village Square	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	15	5	8
	9:00	9:15	9:20	9:28
	10:30	10:45	10:50	10:58
	12:00	12:15	12:20	12:28
	13:30	13:45	13:50	13:58
	15:00	15:15	15:20	15:28
	16:30	16:45	16:50	16:58

Route 4 (S. York)

Bus B

4 S. York

	Bradley Station	Health Department	ARR Dixie Village	LEA Dixie Village	Health Department	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	13	12	5	12	13
	8:00	8:13	8:25	8:30	8:42	8:55
	9:30	9:43	9:55	10:00	10:12	10:25
	11:00	11:13	11:25	11:30	11:42	11:55
	12:30	12:43	12:55	13:00	13:12	13:25
	14:00	14:13	14:25	14:30	14:42	14:55
	15:30	15:43	15:55	16:00	16:12	16:25

Route 5 (Shannon Bradley)

Bus C

5 Shannon Bradley

	Bradley Station	Linwood Terrace	Dixie Village (via Food Lion @ Edgewood)	Linwood Terrace	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	11	25	7	11
	9:00	9:11	9:36	9:43	9:54
	11:00	11:11	11:36	11:43	11:54
	13:00	13:11	13:36	13:43	13:54
	15:00	15:11	15:36	15:43	15:54

Route 6 (Bessemer City Road)

Does not operate

Route 7 (Highland)

Bus D

7 Highland

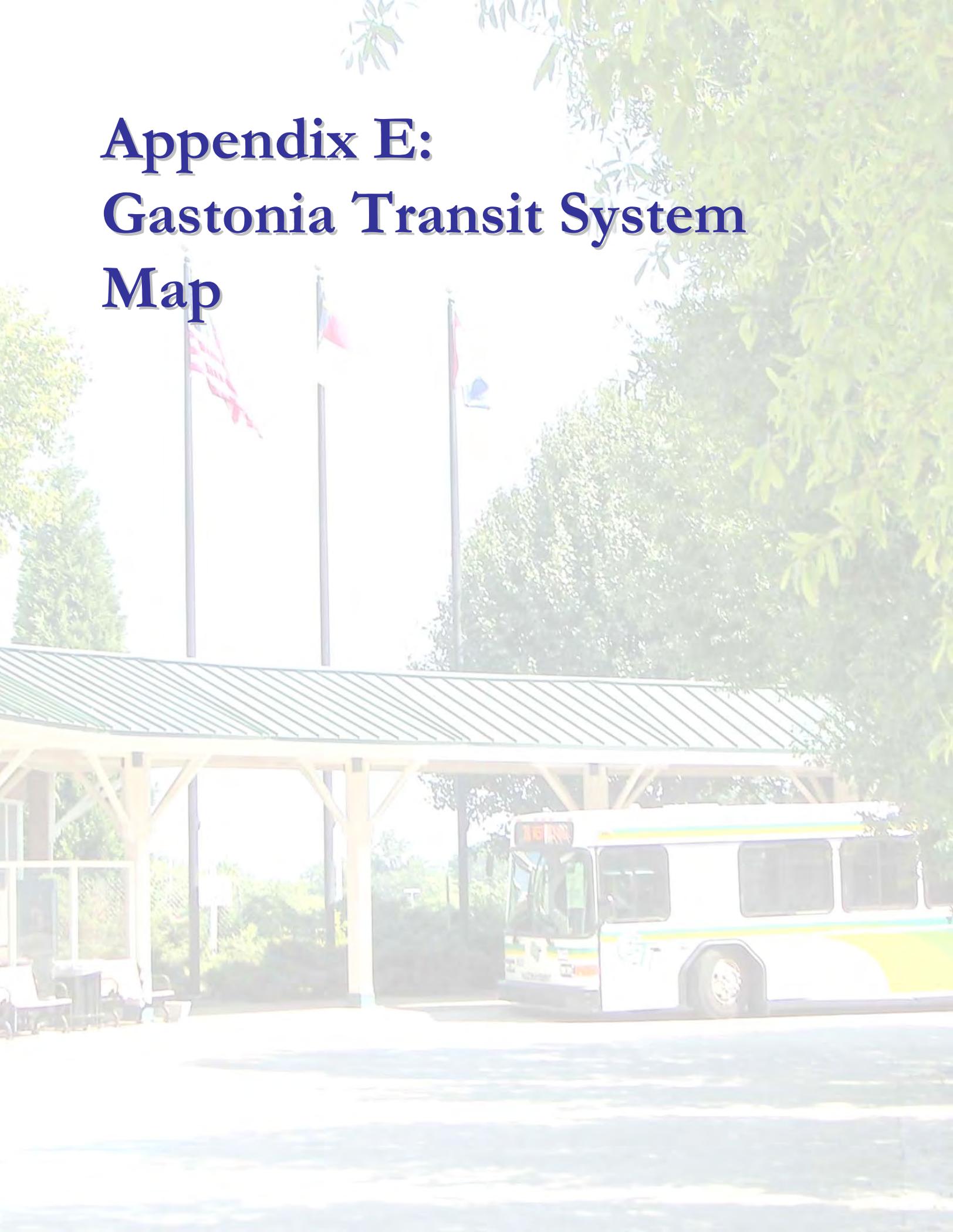
	Bradley Station	Highland / Mauney	ARR Dixie Village	LEA Dixie Village	Highland / Mauney	Bradley Station
Intervals	0	13	14	4	14	13
	8:00	8:13	8:27	8:31	8:45	8:58
	10:00	10:13	10:27	10:31	10:45	10:58
	12:00	12:13	12:27	12:31	12:45	12:58
	14:00	14:13	14:27	14:31	14:45	14:58
	16:00	16:13	16:27	16:31	16:45	16:58

Route 8 (Hospital)

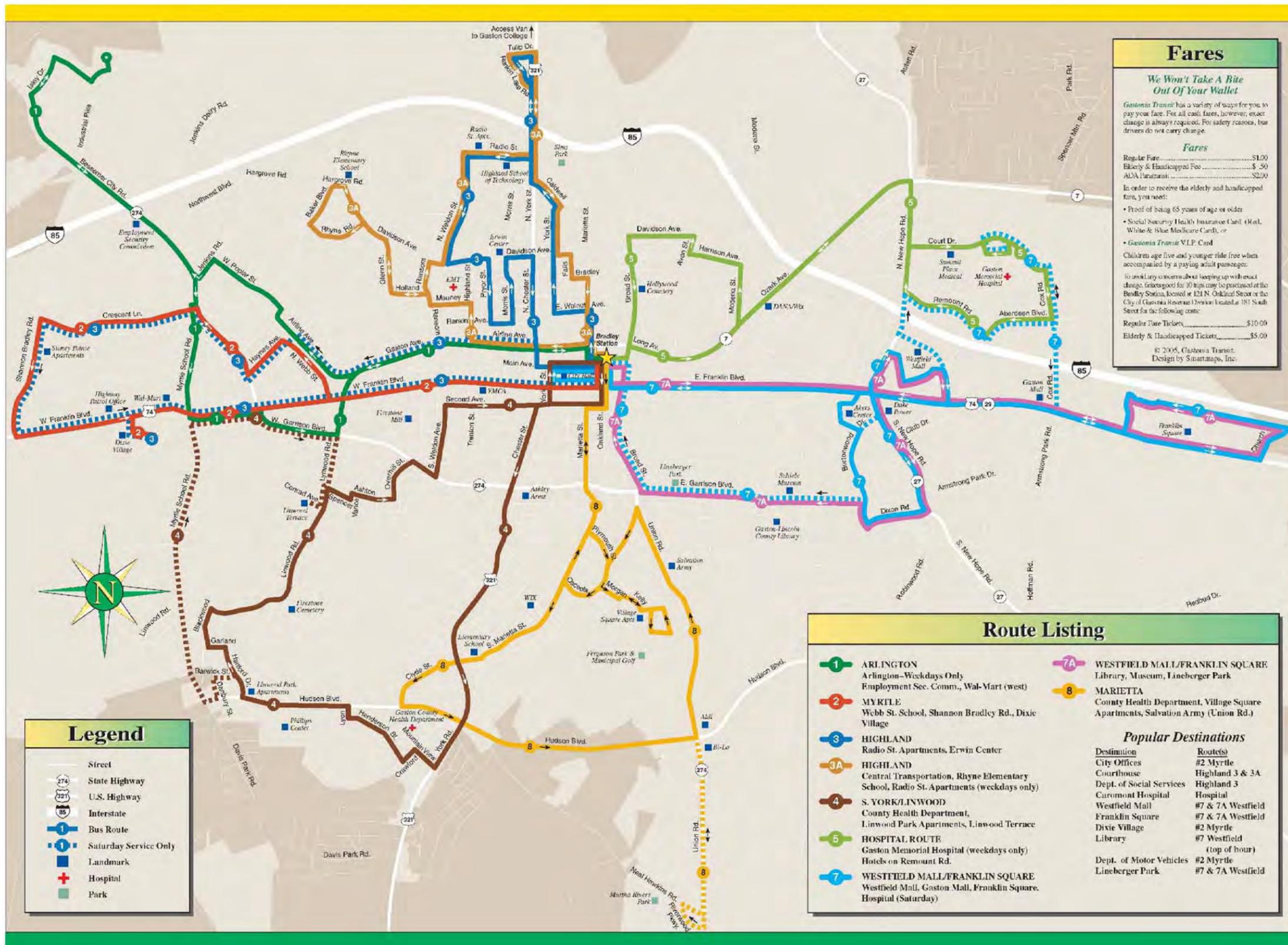
Bus D

8 Hospital						
	Bradley Station	Hospital	Franklin Square (Wal-Mart)	Hospital (via rest of Franklin Sq)		Bradley Station
Intervals	0	13	11	18		13
	9:00	9:13	9:24	9:42		9:55
	11:00	11:13	11:24	11:42		11:55
	13:00	13:13	13:24	13:42		13:55
	15:00	15:13	15:24	15:42		15:55

Appendix E: Gastonia Transit System Map



Gastonia Transit System Map



Fares

We Won't Take A Bite Out Of Your Wallet

Gastonia Transit has a variety of ways for you to pay your fare. For all cash fares, however, exact change is always required. For safety reasons, bus drivers do not carry change.

Fares

Regular Fare	\$1.00
Elderly & Handicapped Fee	\$.50
ADA Paratransit	\$2.00

In order to receive the elderly and handicapped fare, you need:

- Proof of being 65 years of age or older
- Social Security Health Insurance Card (Med. White & Blue Medicare Card), or
- Gastonia Transit VLP Card

Children age five and younger ride free when accompanied by a paying adult passenger.

To avoid any concerns about keeping up with exact change, tokens good for 10 trips may be purchased at the Bradley Station, located at 121 N. Oakleaf Street or the City of Gastonia Revenue Division located at 181 South Street for the following costs:

Regular Fare Tokens	\$10.00
Elderly & Handicapped Tokens	\$5.00

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Route Listing

- 1 ARLINGTON**
Arlington-Weekdays Only
Employment Sec. Comm., Wal-Mart (west)
- 2 MYRTLE**
Webb St. School, Shannon Bradley Rd., Dixie Village
- 3 HIGHLAND**
Radio St. Apartments, Erwin Center
- 3A HIGHLAND**
Central Transportation, Rhyme Elementary School, Radio St. Apartments (weekdays only)
- 4 S. YORK/LINWOOD**
County Health Department, Linwood Park Apartments, Linwood Terrace
- 5 HOSPITAL ROUTE**
Gaston Memorial Hospital (weekdays only)
Hotels on Remount Rd.
- 7 WESTFIELD MALL/FRANKLIN SQUARE**
Westfield Mall, Gaston Mall, Franklin Square, Hospital (Saturday)
- 7A WESTFIELD MALL/FRANKLIN SQUARE**
Library, Museum, Lineberger Park
- 8 MARIETTA**
County Health Department, Village Square Apartments, Salvation Army (Union Rd.)

Popular Destinations

Destination	Route(s)
City Offices	#2 Myrtle
Courthouse	Highland 3 & 3A
Dept. of Social Services	Highland 3
Carumont Hospital	Hospital
Westfield Mall	#7 & 7A Westfield
Franklin Square	#7 & 7A Westfield
Dixie Village	#2 Myrtle
Library	#7 Westfield (top of hour)
Dept. of Motor Vehicles	#2 Myrtle
Lineberger Park	#7 & 7A Westfield

Legend

- Street
- State Highway
- U.S. Highway
- Interstate
- Bus Route
- Saturday Service Only
- Landmark
- Hospital
- Park



URS

6135 Park South Drive
Suite 300
Charlotte, NC 28210