

# The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for IMAGINE CENTRAL ARKANSAS



Freeways



Arterials



Transit



Regional Bikeways



**IMAGINE  
CENTRAL  
ARKANSAS**  
Plan Smart. Live Smart.



**METROPLAN**  
SMART PLANNING MAKES SMART PLACES.

## Imagine Central Arkansas Summary

***Imagine Central Arkansas is the fifth iteration of the vision established twenty years ago. Core themes have been broadened to include elements not traditionally examined as part of a long-range transportation plan. This plan looks beyond 2040 to provide building blocks for a region that the community has imagined — a central Arkansas where everyone can live and thrive.***

## Imagine Central Arkansas Vision Statement

***Imagine Central Arkansas is a community-driven guide to creating a sustainable, healthy and prosperous region that celebrates diversity, community cooperation, educational excellence, economic vibrancy, and quality choices in housing and transportation. Imagine...***



### GOAL 1: ECONOMIC GROWTH AND VITALITY

Maintain and grow the central Arkansas economy as a diverse, globally competitive market through responsible development practices to attract people and businesses that contribute to economic growth and vitality.



### GOAL 2: QUALITY CORRIDORS & TRANSPORTATION CHOICE

Build and enhance a regional network of quality transportation corridors with high design standards for efficiency in moving traffic, with provision for pedestrian, bicycle and transit options, and consideration of freight needs. Create a metropolitan system that allows all citizens of central Arkansas reasonable access to services and jobs without regard to age, income or disability by providing many transportation choices



### GOAL 3: ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

Protect and enhance the quality of the natural and built environments within central Arkansas.



### GOAL 4: LAND DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING

Protect and enhance the efficiency of the metropolitan transportation system by linking land development and the provision of transportation facilities. Proper land development is essential for creating conditions that foster sustainable housing and neighborhoods. Housing for central Arkansas should be safe, affordable, energy-efficient, geographically available and accessible.



### GOAL 5: HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES

Create and support the conditions that will enable central Arkansas to become known as the healthiest and safest community in America.



### GOAL 6: FUNDING ADEQUACY

Identify and provide funding sources adequate to build, maintain and operate metropolitan infrastructure systems, including both soft and hard infrastructure systems - transportation, utilities, schools, universities and housing - with the safety and protection services necessary to make them usable.

## The Metropolitan Transportation Plan Vision Statement

***The Metropolitan Transportation Plan will contribute to a more livable and efficient environment in central Arkansas. This plan should significantly change how we allow our transportation systems and our communities to develop, by defining an intermodal transportation system that:***

- ***Maximizes the mobility of people and goods;***
- ***Minimizes transportation related fuel consumption and air pollution; and***
- ***Establishes a strong link between transportation infrastructure and land use.***



## How It Began

It all began in 1995, with the adoption of Metro 2020, the first metropolitan transportation plan after the official completion of the interstate highway system. Guided by broad public outreach and a community based advisory council, the plan begins by saying:

Metro 2020 is intended to be the beginning of a new vision for Central Arkansas. That vision is of an economically vibrant region with a high quality of life that includes an efficient transportation system, environmentally sensitive development and reasonable mobility for all. To achieve those objectives with the limited dollars available, we need to be smarter about how we develop our land. Modest changes today can pay great dividends in improved mobility, quality of life and economic competitiveness tomorrow. Metro 2020 will not deliver a new future by itself. Hopefully, it charts a path into the future for central Arkansas and takes the first steps into the 21st century.

Since then, Metroplan has built on this seminal document's foundation with subsequent updates in 2000 — Metro 2025, in 2005 — Metro 2030 and in 2010 — Metro 2030.2.

## What's In the Plan?

This document provides a summary of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. For each of four major surface transportation systems — Freeways, Regional Arterials, Public Transit and Bikeways — you will find a vision statement, a report card on investments made since 1995, and a list of the top investment priorities from 2015–2025.

These four transportation systems should work together in balance with each other and in concert with the natural and built environment in each community. Taken as an integrated system, the transportation network helps to create and sustain economic prosperity and the quality of life in central Arkansas.



## What Do Central Arkansans Value?

- Natural and civic spaces.
- Places to connect and play.
- Choice in transportation (transit, walking, bicycling).
- Safe, family-friendly.
- Economy/affordability, quality of life.

*Based on responses collected through the Imagine Central Arkansas website, social media and face-to-face outreach.*



# Freeways



## *Freeway Vision*

The primary purpose of the regional freeway network is to connect the central Arkansas economy with the state, national and global economies. As such, freight movement and long-distance travel are their primary missions. An important secondary mission, is to provide intra-regional connections that enlarge market areas for businesses and consumers and to enlarge the potentially available workforce for central Arkansas businesses. Without a balanced metropolitan transportation system, these two missions can come into conflict with each other.

**The investment strategy** developed in 1995 was to complete the area's circumferential freeway system i.e. East Belt (440) and Northbelt Freeways and to widen all freeways in the metro area to six through lanes to more safely accommodate rapidly increasing truck freight and commuter demands. At that point freeway investments would focus on correcting choke points at interchanges, maintaining pavement quality and bridge structures on an aging system, and improving traffic flow by more actively managing the system through the use of advanced technology.

Additional lane capacity needs should be revisited after investments are made in robust regional arterial and transit systems necessary to provide a balanced metropolitan system and allow the freeway network to focus on its primary mission.



## History of Freeways in Central Arkansas

The new Benton Highway (now I-30) and Hwy 67-167 were the first freeways built within central Arkansas in the late 1950's. The passage of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 spurred additional freeway construction during the 1960s leading to the completion of I-40 and I-30 through the metro area. The 1970's brought I-430, I-630 and I-440 to I-40. In the 1990's, 440 was extended to US 67/167. Since the beginning of the freeway era, the region's mobility and development patterns have been heavily influenced by these roadways. With the first freeways now over 50 years old, it is not surprising that the greatest expenditure of federal transportation funding since the adoption of Metro 2020 has gone to reconstructing and widening freeways.

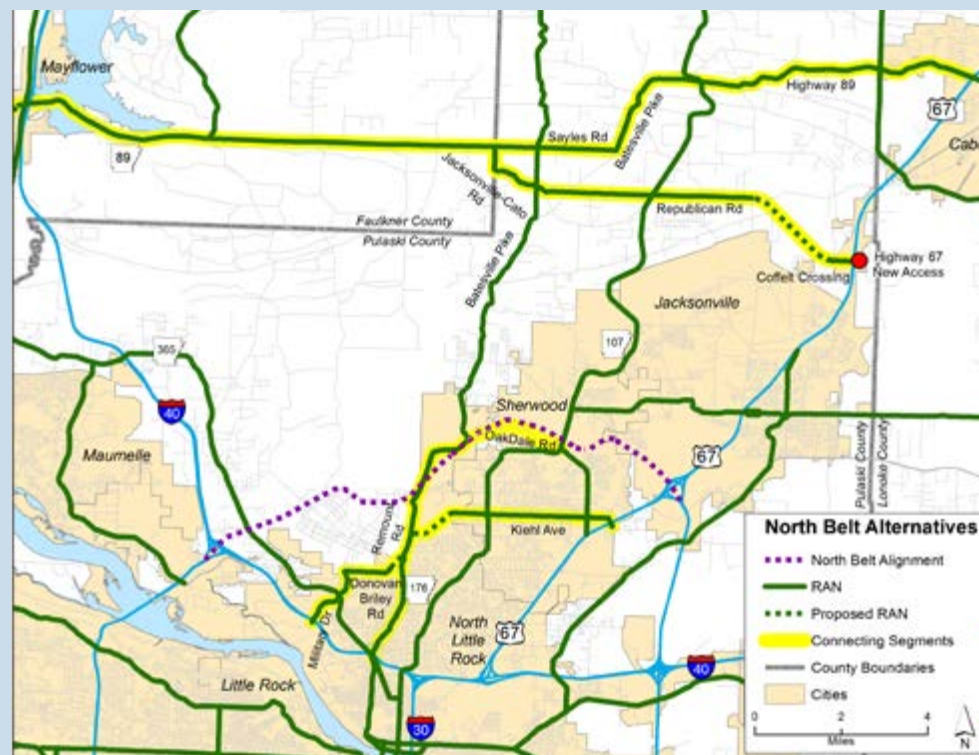
Metro 2020 in 1995 first recommended widening all of the freeways in the metropolitan area to six lanes. Since that time, I-30 to Benton, US 67/167 (I-40 to Jacksonville), and I-40 (I-30 to I-430) have been widened to six lanes and widenings are underway or planned for I-40 (Conway to I-430) and US 67/167 (through Jacksonville) and I-30 (Benton to US 70).



## North Belt Freeway

The long planned North Belt Freeway was to have been the final piece of the circumferential freeway network surrounding Little Rock and North Little Rock. Included in the 1991 Highway Improvement Program of AHTD, the initial segment from I-40 East to Hwy 67 was completed in 2002. Alignment disputes and a lack of funding limited expenditures for the freeway segment from Hwy 67 to I-40 west. Recently, a toll study increased the estimated cost of the freeway segment to \$648 million and brought the ability of anyone to fund the project into question. Consequently, the North Belt Freeway has been removed from the vision and financially constrained transportation plan. It may be reconsidered in the future if new funding is identified. In the meantime, improvements to Highway 89, construction of the Coffelt Crossing interchange in Jacksonville and the extension of Kiel Avenue, Oakdale Road and Donovan Briley Road have been added to the plan or given higher priority in the Northbelt's absence.

### North Belt Freeway Alternatives



## Report Card on Progress

A total of \$895 million has been spent on freeways in central Arkansas since 1995. The following report card summarizes the progress made towards the Freeways vision.

2020/2025 Subject	Grade	Current Status
<b>Roadway Maintenance</b>	Substantial Progress	The Interstate Rehab Program has substantially improved the pavement quality of freeways within central Arkansas. Long-term funding for maintenance needs continued emphasis.
<b>Road Widening</b>	Substantial Progress	Segments of I-30, I-40 & US 67/167 progressed with additional widening planned through the Connect Arkansas Program.
<b>Interchanges</b>	Substantial Progress	Interchange improvements made, underway or scheduled at I-430 & I-30, I-430 & I-630, I-40 & I-430 and numerous arterial interchanges.
<b>Roadway Operations</b>	Minimal Progress	Freeway ITS Plan developed, modest variable message signs added to freeway network.

## Next Steps to Reaching Vision

Significant progress has been made in reaching the Freeway Vision first laid out in 1995. The following steps are needed to complete it.

### Additional Widening

- US 67/167 – Widen to six lanes from the end of the CAP project to the new North Cabot Interchange.
- I-40 – Widen to six lanes from US 67/167 to Lonoke
- I-30 – It is anticipated that additional funding will be necessary to complete the desired improvements on I-30 between the north and south terminal interchanges and on I-40 between 67/167 and I-30 that will be begun by the CAP program.

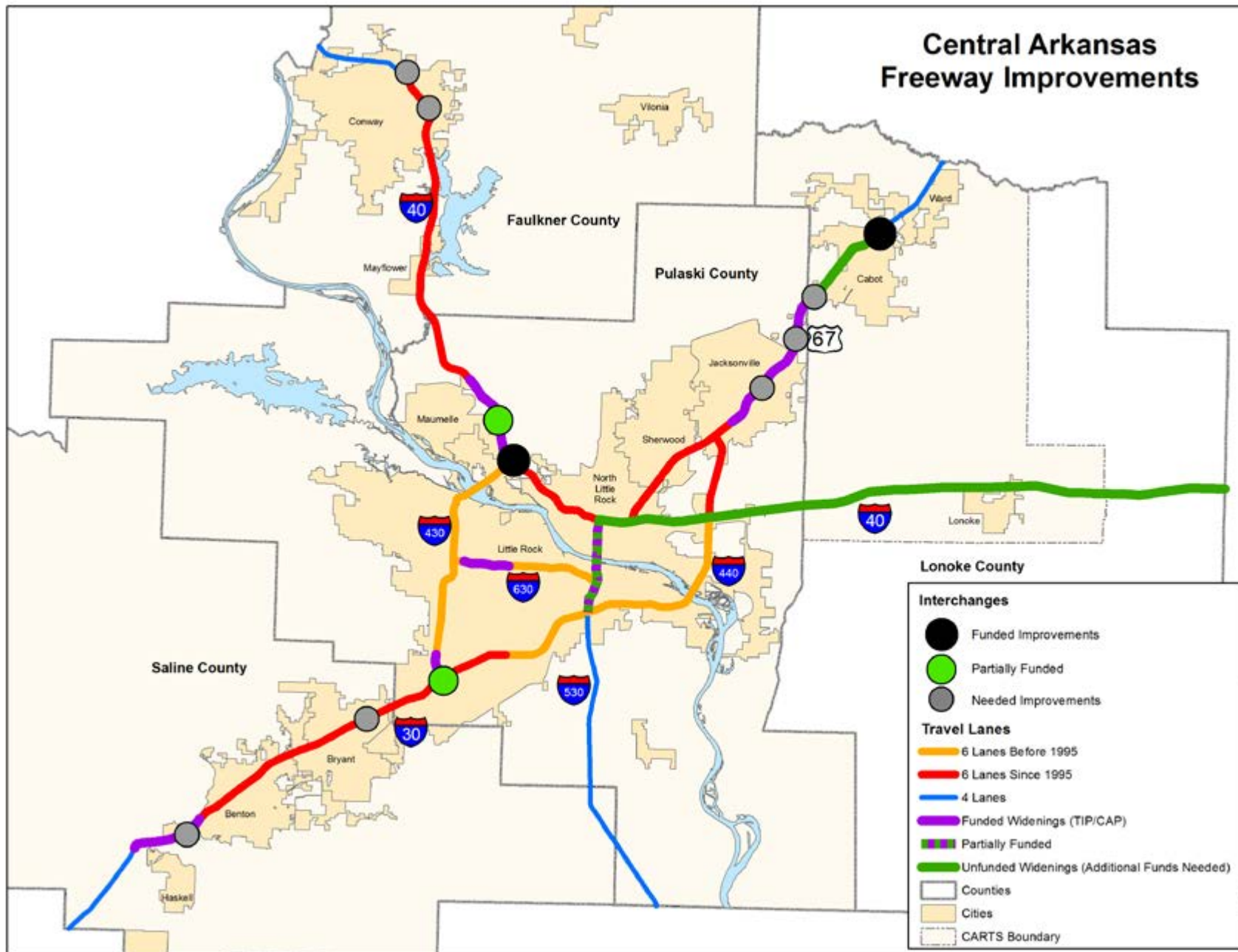
*Note: I-530 is being reconstructed but is not recommended for widening to six lanes at this time.*

### Freeway Strategies

- Build out the freeway system to six through lanes region-wide.
- Meet additional demand beyond six lanes with a robust arterial road network and public transit.



## Central Arkansas Freeway System





## Interstate Rehab Program

In 2011, Arkansans voted for the second time to allow the Arkansas Highway Commission to issue \$575 million in GARVEE bonds to fund repairs to existing interstates. Using existing and future federal and state funding, a broad program valued at \$1 billion, was developed. Central Arkansas expects to receive \$214 million for the reconstruction of:

- I-530 (I-30 to Jefferson County)
- I-40 (West of Hwy 65 and East of I-440)
- I-630 (Pine/Cedar to Battery)
- I-30 (Benton to Hot Springs County)
- I-440 (I-30 to I-40)



## Connect Arkansas Program (CAP)

In 2012, Arkansas voters approved a temporary half-cent sales tax to fund continued construction of a four-lane highway network. The Arkansas Highway Commission committed \$565 million for widening/reconstruction of the following freeways in central Arkansas:

- I-30/I-40 (I-530 to Hwy 67)
- I-30 (Hwy 70 to Sevier St/Benton)
- I-40 (Hwy 365 to I-40)
- I-630 (Baptist to University)
- Hwy 67/167 (Main Street/Jacksonville to Hwy 5)

The largest of the CAP projects is the I-30/I-40 project originally budgeted at \$340 million in CAP funds. It is widely anticipated that this project will require substantial additional funding for full completion.

## Maintaining, Operating and Tweaking the System

Over the next two and a half decades, an increasing share of highway funding will be required to maintain and rehabilitate the freeway system. Once the Freeway Vision is met, resources should be shifted to the Regional Arterial Network and regional transit. In the mean time, freeway operations can be improved by:

- a) implementing freeway management and incident management plans, including use of new technologies,
- b) Improving freeway/arterial Interchanges, including new interchanges at

- North Cabot
- Maumelle
- Raymar Road
- Coffelt Crossing

## I-40 Widening to Memphis

The need for widening I-40 between Little Rock and Memphis was consistently brought up during outreach conducted for *Imagine Central Arkansas*. While most of this route is located outside of central Arkansas, Metroplan encourages AHTD to seek funding alternatives, including tolling, for widening this critical freight corridor.





## Freeway Priorities for the Region

Construction projects on central Arkansas freeways will focus first on the maintenance of roads and bridges and include a new emphasis on system operations through the implementation of a regional intelligent transportation system. The following regional priorities have been established for freeway maintenance, interchanges, and mainline capacity improvements.

### A. Freeway Maintenance Project Priorities

Facility	From	To	Improvement
<b>I-630</b>	UPRR Viaduct		Bridge Replacement
<b>I-430</b>	I-30	I-40	Pavement Rehabilitation
<b>I-30</b>	65 <sup>th</sup>	I-530	Pavement Rehabilitation
<b>Hwy 67</b>	Hwy 38/North Cabot Interchange	White County	Pavement Rehabilitation

### C. Freeway Operational Improvements Project Priorities

Facility	From	To	Improvement
<b>I-30</b>	I-40	I-530/I-440	Supplemental
<b>I-40</b>	I-30	US 67/167	CAP Funding
<b>Hwy 67</b>	Hwy 5/CAP Job	North Cabot Interchange	Widening
<b>I-630</b>	University	I-30	Operational Improvements
<b>I-40</b>	I-440	Hwy 31/Lonoke	Widening
<b>I-40</b>	Hwy 67	I-440	Widening

### B. Freeway Interchanges Project Priorities

Facility	Cross Street	Improvement
<b>Hwy 67</b>	Hwy 5	Interchange Modification in conjunction with CAP Project
<b>Hwy 67</b>	Vandenberg	Interchange Modification in conjunction with CAP Project
<b>Hwy 67</b>	Coffelt Crossing	New Interchange in conjunction with CAP Project
<b>I-30</b>	Hwy 67/Hwy 229 (Haskell)	Interchange Modification in conjunction with CAP Project
<b>Hwy 67</b>	Hwy 38/North Cabot Interchange	New Road and Interchange
<b>I-40</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Maumelle Interchange/ Counts Massie Rd	New Road and Interchange
<b>I-40</b>	Hwy 65	Interchange Modification
<b>I-40</b>	Hwy 67	Interchange Modification in conjunction with improvements to Hwy 64
<b>I-30</b>	Raymar Road	New Interchange
<b>I-430</b>	I-30	Phase II Improvements

# Regional Arterial Network



## *Regional Arterial Network (RAN) Vision*

*The vision of the Regional Arterial Network (RAN) is to develop this network of highly functioning arterials that serve intra-regional travel and major traffic generators, thereby providing a viable alternative to the freeway network. Regional arterial roadways are designed to integrate pedestrian, transit and (if on a designated route) bicycle travel.*

*The strategy for RAN development, will require a significant investment of state resources since over 70% of RAN miles are state routes. Local governments or a regional mobility authority must expect to partner in RAN development with the state.*



## History of the RAN

Metroplan conceived the RAN in 1999 as a 682-mile network of regionally significant non-freeway roads that emphasized connectivity and mobility.



Working in concert with all other transportation modes, the RAN provides an alternative to freeway travel and connects people to important destinations within the region, such as colleges and universities, hospitals, and major employment centers. Improvements to the RAN emphasize operational improvements (intersections, roundabouts, signal upgrades). The RAN is critically important to the movement of people and goods throughout central Arkansas and essential to its economic well-being.



Construction on Hays Street, now South University, 1952.

## Railgrade Separations

During development of Metro 2020, residents in all parts of the region raised significant concern regarding at-grade railroad crossings. Their concerns included safety risk, noise impacts and delay for school buses, emergency vehicles and motorists due to the high frequency of trains per day. Metro 2020 targeted \$26 Million of future federal funds for up to eight rail grade separations.



In 1996, the Metroplan Board of Directors (MPO) directed the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) to review and prioritize regional rail grade

separations. Using quantifiable evaluation factors (delay, accessibility, connective, geographic distribution, and safety) and preliminary engineering studies, twelve rail grade separations were recommended to the Metroplan Board.

In 1997 the Metroplan Board committed to funding for the following 12 Rail Grade Separations by 2020 (requesting AHTD to fund 4 of the projects). **To date seven of the rail grade separations have been completed at a cost of \$42 million, with an additional 3 separations scheduled in the TIP at a cost of \$37 Million.**

Rail Grade	Location	Current Status
East Main Street	Jacksonville	Completed
Baseline Road (SH 338)	Little Rock	Completed
South Loop	Little Rock	Completed
Hwy 89 Extension	Mayflower	Scheduled for 2016
North Cabot Railroad Overpass (SH 38)	Cabot	Completed
Salem Road	Conway	Completed
Edison Avenue (SH 35/183)	Benton	Completed
McCain Blvd	North Little Rock	Scheduled for 2015
Maumelle Blvd (SH 100)	Maumelle	Completed
Geyer Springs	Little Rock	Scheduled for 2016
JP Wright Loop	Jacksonville	Considered for 2016-2019 TIP
Springer/Confederate Blvd (SH 365)*	Little Rock	Cancelled

\*During *Imagine Central Arkansas* AHTD and the City of Little Rock requested that the Springer /Confederate Blvd project be removed due to construction disruptions and changing train traffic patterns which reduced the need for the grade separation.

## Report Card on Progress

Considerable expenditures have gone into improving the RAN since its adoption in 1999. Since Metro 2020, the region has spent \$430 million on improvements to regional arterials. The following report card summarizes the progress made towards the RAN vision.

Recommendations	Progress	Current Status
<b>Create Plan</b>	Completed	RAN Planning Study (2002)
<b>Rail Grade Separations</b>	Substantial Progress	7 Completed, 3 Programmed, 1 Planned, 1 Cancelled
<b>Access Management</b>	Substantial Progress	Regional Access Management Standards Developed, Individual Access Management Plans for Hwy 5, Hwy 321, Dave Ward Drive, Military Rd., Alcoa Rd.
<b>Operational Improvements/ Enhanced Connectivity</b>	Some Progress	Roundabouts constructed in Conway, North Little Rock and Jacksonville (planned in Benton and Bryant); Multiple Signal System Upgrades; Interchange Improvements
<b>System Preservation</b>	Minimal Progress	Portion of system repaved (state and local funding), long-term regional funding for maintenance needed
<b>Safety Improvements</b>	Minimal Progress	Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Study Completed; regional design standards developed
<b>Roadway Widening</b>	Some Progress	Dave Ward Drive, University Ave., Graham Rd., Military Rd, Hwy 5, Hwy 64, and Brockington Rd. all widened



Pike Avenue roundabout

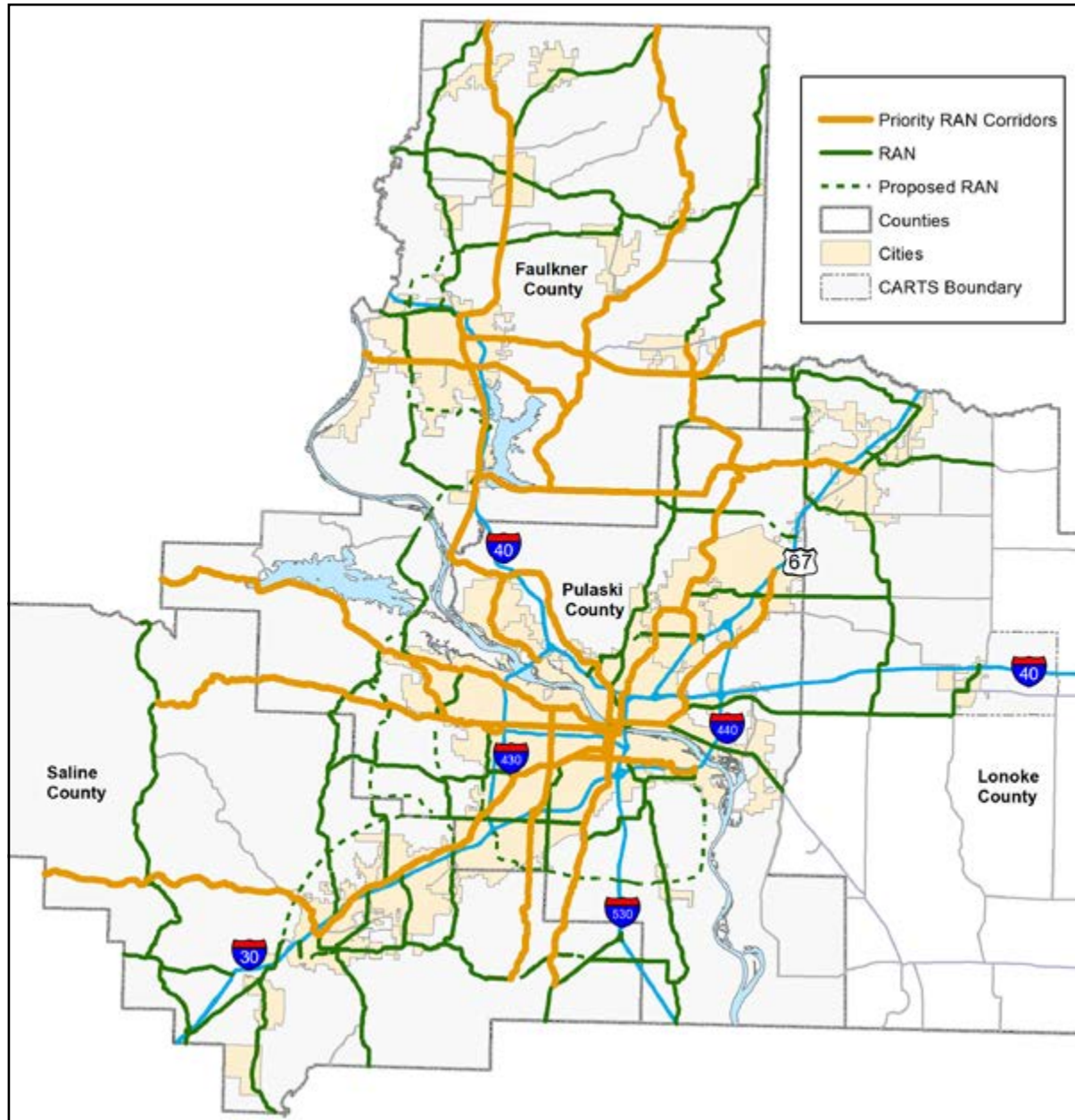
## RAN Phased Vision

The region can achieve more connectivity and efficiency by implementing the Regional Arterial Network, and eventually reach the desired level of service with small steps. The “Phased Vision” acts as a guide to incorporate a cohesive RAN through incremental investments throughout central Arkansas.

1. Identify a sub-set of Super Arterials for priority investment on high volume and long-distance corridors.
2. Upgrade selected roadways to RAN priority corridors for operational and safety improvements.
3. For other existing routes, expand traffic management and access management on RAN Corridors.
4. Secure new funding sources for RAN corridors, including value capture.
5. Make operational improvements to non-priority corridors (intersections and shoulders).
6. In developing areas, implement the RAN standards through developer contributions.



## Central Arkansas Regional Arterial Network



## Next Steps to Reaching Vision

Reaching the regional vision for arterials will require additional funding dedicated to completion of the network. Funding options could include the creation of a Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) and exploring the availability of additional federal and state dollars. RAN improvements will emphasize lower cost optimization projects on corridors before a major widening. Individual projects will be based upon recommendations from the Regional Arterial Network Study.



# Transit



## *Transit Vision Statement*

Central Arkansans envision a region where transportation options are rich and plentiful, **where a majority of our citizens live within walking distance of safe, affordable, and frequent transit services, and where major population centers within the region are connected with premium transit service (light-rail or bus rapid transit).**

The strategy for implementing the vision will require a dedicated revenue source for transit services that will allow enhanced bus service in the short to mid term, and the provision of premium transit services on a regional scale in the long-term. Improved transit services must be underpinned with strategic planning for appropriate development, parking facilities, implementing policies, and public awareness.



## History

Transit service has long been a critical transportation link for central Arkansas. In the early 20th century, trolleys and buses were the primary modes of transportation for central Arkansans. Development followed the trolley and bus lines that carried workers from residential neighborhoods surrounding downtown Little Rock, North Little Rock and adjacent cities to jobs within the central business district. The rise of personal automobile ownership combined with inexpensive energy costs in the middle of the 20th century contributed to many central Arkansans choosing to live in suburban areas of the region. The difficulty in serving this type of development pattern with transit led to a reduction in regional transit service.

Recently, renewed interest in transit and local economic development drove construction of the trolley in downtown Little Rock and North Little Rock and has led to increased ridership and downtown investment. Today, Central Arkansas Transit Authority (CATA) provides fixed route and para-transit bus service within Pulaski County; South Central Arkansas Transit (SCAT) provides a limited demand responsive transit service within Saline and Lonoke Counties.

*Did you know? The rule of thumb for rail-to-bus ratio is six buses for every mile of premium transit.*



The intersection of Capitol and Main was the heart of downtown and the commercial center of the state. Photo: The Library of Congress

## The Return of the Trolley

The last streetcar ran in Little Rock on Christmas Day 1947... until 2005 when the first replica streetcar of the new River Rail streetcar line was launched by Central Arkansas Transit Authority. The first two phases of the River Rail streetcar were planned to serve tourist destinations in the downtown areas.

As a tool to stimulate redevelopment downtown, River Rail is an outstanding success. For every \$1 of local tax dollar invested in River Rail, \$135 of new capital investment has occurred, and a total of nearly \$800 million of new capital investment along the route.



The River Rail trolley

## Report Card

In 1995, CATA had the oldest fleet of transit vehicles in the United States. Since then, a total of \$253 million has been invested to bring this system up to current standards and has set the groundwork for future expansion. The following report card summarizes the progress made towards the transit vision.

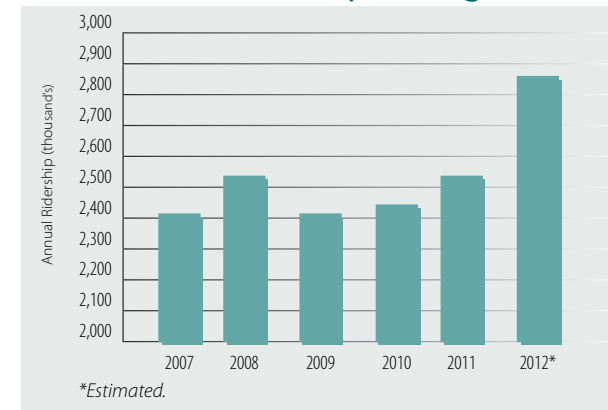
Recommendations	Progress	Current Status
<b>Modernized Fleet</b>	Completed	5.5 years average fleet age
<b>Transfer Center/Facilities</b>	Substantial Progress	River Cities Travel Center built; satellite hub in North Little Rock and west Little Rock needed
<b>Technology Investment</b>	Substantial Progress	Google Transit, Real Time Bus Information (Planned)
<b>Fixed Route/Premium Service</b>	Some Progress	River Rail Street Trolley phase 1 is built, I-630 Fixed Guideway Study, River Rail Phase II Study
<b>Bus Stops/Shelters</b>	Some Progress	Shelters and Benches provided at some stops
<b>Expanded Hours</b>	Some Progress	Service provided to 8 PM, limited Sunday service
<b>Transit Oriented Development</b>	Minimal Progress	Planning Agencies considering TOD, minimal implementation
<b>Commuter Service (express bus)</b>	Minimal Progress	Conway Express Bus Study Completed
<b>Suburban Service</b>	Minimal Progress	Conway Local Bus Study Completed



River Cities Travel Center in Little Rock is the hub of CATA bus service.

*About one in four central Arkansas residents currently lives within walking distance of fixed route transit.*

## CATA Ridership Change



Source: National Transit Database, CATA

### *All aboard.*

CATA has seen a recent surge in ridership thanks in part to increases in the price of gasoline and system improvements.



## Next Steps to Reaching Vision

The regional transit vision depends upon securing steady and adequate revenue sources. Of the four legs of the regions balanced transportation system, the full transit vision will take the longest time to fully implement, dependent as it is on the region hitting critical population thresholds as mid-century approaches.

**Ultimately, transit must be supported by strategic planning for appropriate land development. This includes policies that encourage transit-oriented development (TOD), promote citizen awareness of transit benefits, and facilitate population growth and density. Provisions for pedestrian access and amenities along with reduced parking requirements should be included for all proposed developments along transit lines. Transit—bus or rail - does not operate in isolation from other travel modes and the community at large; rather, it contributes to the overall synergy of the built environment.**

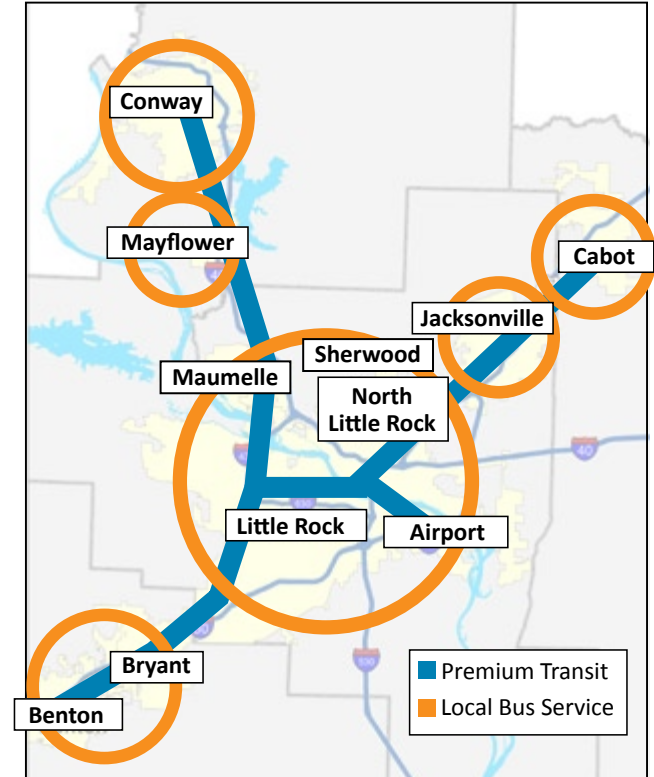


### Transit Phased Vision

The Central Arkansas Transit Authority is engaged in a new strategic planning process as this regional plan is being developed. It is anticipated that it will be amended into this document upon completion, providing more detail. A more robust transit service will need to take the following steps.

1. Secure a dedicated transit funding source.
2. Utilize technology to improve existing customer experience by making real time bus location and arrival times available on the web and by providing on board wi-fi services.
3. Expand local bus service frequency and coverage and add express bus service and capacity.
4. Establish premium bus service using branded high-frequency routes and or bus rapid transit in the urban core.

### Transit Vision





5. Expand River Rail routes to near-in residential neighborhoods.
6. Develop satellite transfer centers in west Little Rock and North Little Rock and expand suburban transit operations.
7. Deploy local bus services in Conway and other communities.
8. Phase-in regional premium rail service.

## Priorities

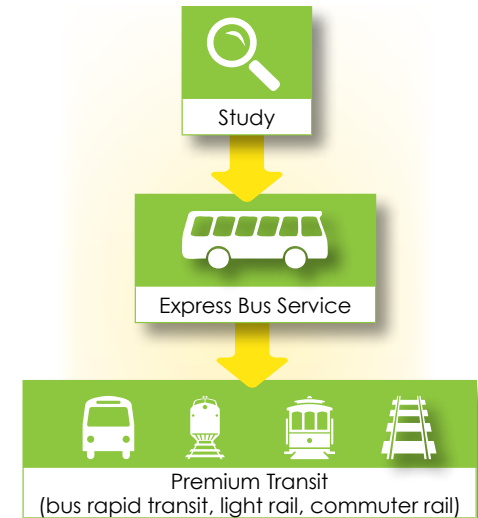
The following project priorities are slated for future transit developments throughout central Arkansas. Implementation relies on the establishment of dedicated funding. Projects include both enhancements to existing service and future expansion throughout the region.

### Regional Transit Vision – Top Projects (cost in millions of dollars)

Service Area	Project	Cost (2014)
Conway to Little Rock (RAN Corridor 8/I-40)	Express bus service/fixed guideway study. New local service. (Completed) 	\$4.9
West Little Rock to Little Rock (RAN Corridor 9/I-630)	Express bus service and transit hub. 	\$2.2
Benton to Little Rock (RAN Corridor 6/I-30)	Express bus service/fixed guideway study.	\$4.9
Cabot to Little Rock (RAN Corridor 7/US 67/167)	Express bus service/fixed guideway study.	\$4.9
West Little Rock to Little Rock/ Airport (I-630 corridor)	Light Rail Transit	\$622.0

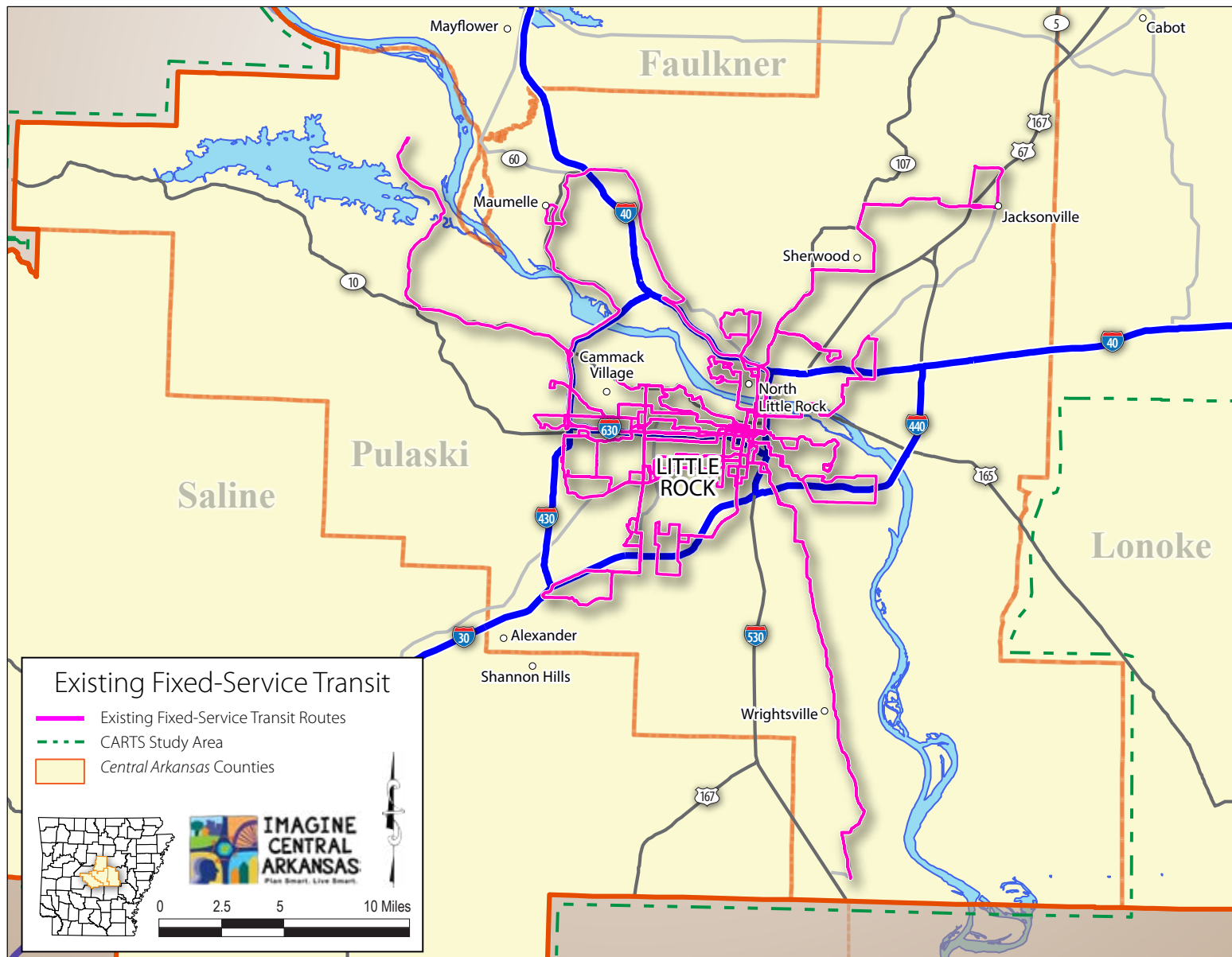
\*To be updated following CATA Strategic Plan

### Regional Transit Corridor Development





## Existing Fixed-Service Transit Routes



Central Arkansas Transit Authority is conducting a Comprehensive Strategic Plan during 2014 and 2015. In addition to looking at long-term goals of the organization, the plan will consider rebranding of transit service, modifications to existing service, and new funding strategies. Following completion of this plan, findings will be incorporated into this document.

# Regional Bikeways



## *Bikeways Vision*

**The Regional Bikeways Vision for central Arkansas includes a network of multi-use paths and on-road bike facilities that enable cyclists to access centers of employment, shopping, other services, and homes throughout central Arkansas. The signature piece of the network is a regionally connected system of off-roadway trails (such as the Arkansas River Trail) that serves both transportation and recreational purposes. On-road bike facilities will be used to connect major cities within our region and to serve local bicycle needs.**



## History

Planning for bicycle infrastructure within central Arkansas was accelerated in Metro 2025 with the construction of the Big Dam Bridge. As a result of the Big Dam Bridge and Arkansas River Trail, interest in cycling grew and led to the development of a regional plan that includes bicycle routes connecting major cities within the metro area, policies directing the construction of bicycle facilities, and encouragement of cities and counties to adopt individual bicycle plans. The most noticeable progress toward the vision has been on the Arkansas River Trail with the construction/conversion of three bridges across the Arkansas River — one bridge over the Little Maumelle River (Two-Rivers Park Bridge), and multiple upgrades to the existing trail sections. Recently, cities have expanded their bicycle facilities to include bike lanes and shared lane bicycle markers (sharrows).



## Report Card on Progress

Since 1995, the region has spent \$36 million on bicycle facilities, and both Conway and North Little Rock have been recognized as Bike Friendly Communities by the League of American Bicyclists. However, central Arkansas still lacks the infrastructure to make cycling a viable transportation option. The following report card summarizes the progress made toward the Regional Bikeways vision.

Recommendations	Progress	Current Status
<b>Create Plans</b>	Completed	Regional Bikeway Plan, Arkansas River Trail, Southwest Trail, City Plans
<b>Change Policy</b>	Substantial Progress	Complete Streets LR/NLR/Conway, Bike Racks required at new developments in Conway, Design Standards Completed
<b>Arkansas River Trail</b>	Substantial Progress	Arkansas River Trail Memorandum of Understanding, Big Dam Bridge, Two Rivers Park Bridge, Clinton Presidential Park Bridge, Junction Bridge, Maumelle Blvd Section
<b>Regional Connectors</b>	Some Progress	Hwy 5 connection partially completed, Southwest Trail route planned
<b>City Routes/Connectivity</b>	Some Progress	Bike Racks added to CATA Buses, Levy Trail partially completed, sharrows usage on city streets, bike routes identified and signed

### Arkansas River Trail

The Arkansas River Trail System, the central piece of the Regional Bikeway Network, is an 88.5-mile loop in central Arkansas. The trail connects 5 cities, 38 parks, 6 museums, and 5,000+ acres of federal, state, and local parkland, and is distinguished by the Big Dam Bridge, Junction Bridge, Clinton Presidential Park Bridge, and Two Rivers Park Bridge.

### Regional Bikeway Connectors

On-road regional bikeway connectors unite local networks to allow travel between cities. Marked with appropriate signage and pavement, connectors typically consist of bike lanes or shoulders of existing streets.

*Did you know? At 4226 feet, the Big Dam Bridge is the longest pedestrian and bike bridge in North America built specifically for pedestrians and bicycles.*

## Next Steps to Reaching Vision

Cycling is becoming a popular mode of transportation in central Arkansas. In order to achieve the vision, our bike network must expand into all areas of the region. Bike lanes can be added to existing streets simply by restriping. As funding becomes available, bike paths can also be built separate from roadways. The vision will be fully realized when all bike facilities are interconnected and allow for ease of travel within the region.



Imagine Central Arkansas focuses on making regional connections between cities. Individual communities meet the needs of their residents by developing local bike plans, which are then folded into the regional network.

## Bikeways Phased Vision






The region can enhance its regional bikeway connectivity and eventually reach the desired level of service with small steps. The “Phased Vision” acts as a guide to increase bikeway infrastructure and favorable policy adoption throughout central Arkansas.

1. Complete the Arkansas River Trail Loop in Little Rock/North Little Rock.
2. Review trail standards and context sensitive design.
3. Upgrade the Arkansas River Trail Grand Loop — including connecting the Big Dam Bridge to Maumelle, Maumelle to Conway, and adding shoulders to state highways on the loop.

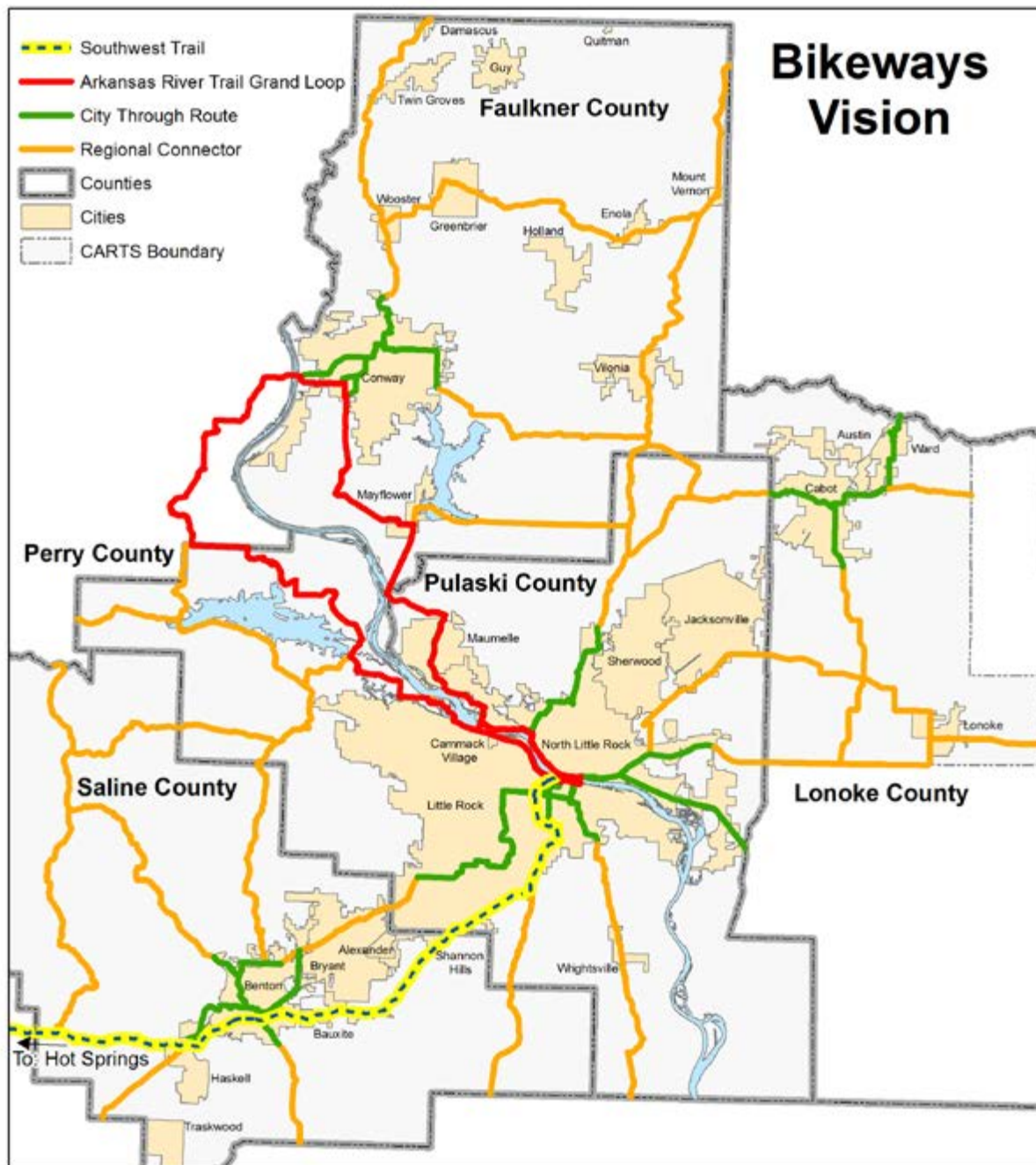
4. Begin construction of the Southwest Trail.
5. Complete regional connectors to Saline County (Benton) and Lonoke County (Cabot).



### Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities in Central Arkansas

Location	Street Centerline Miles 	Sidewalk Miles 	% of Streets with Sidewalks 	Miles of Bike Lanes, Routes and Shoulders 	Miles of Off-Road Trails 
<b>Faulkner County</b>	2,054	139	7%	69.3	3.8
<b>Lonoke County</b>	1,903	50	3%	0	1.7
<b>Pulaski County</b>	3,837	1,107	29%	78.1	77.3
<b>Saline County</b>	2,470	116	5%	4.6	5.1
<b>Four-County Region Totals</b>	10,264	1412	14%	152	87.9





## Southwest Trail

In 2013, plans were announced to connect Little Rock and Hot Springs with a bike trail using abandoned railroad rights-of-way. The 57-mile Southwest Trail will connect Little Rock, Shannon Hills, Bauxite, Benton, Haskell, and Hot Springs.



There are 86.71 miles of paved off-road bicycle trails in the region. There are also designated on-road bicycle routes, but these cover less than two percent of central Arkansas roads.

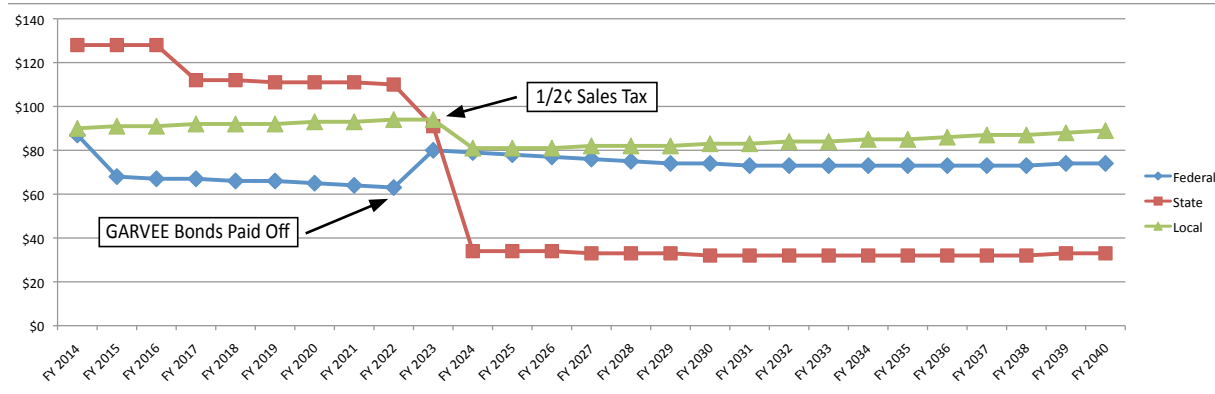
# Financially Constrained Plan

A central piece of the Long-Range Metropolitan Transportation plan is the financially constrained plan which matches projects with expected revenue. This section presents a forecast of transportation revenue expected through 2040 by considering conventional federal, state and local sources, and long-term trends impacting that revenue. Projects are then matched with this revenue during the TIP development process. As required by federal law, year of expenditure calculations are done for proposed projects.

## Revenue Projections

Revenue projections were developed using funding marks provided by AHTD. Future year forecast was then estimated after accounting for 1) increased fleet fuel efficiency on fuel sales, 2) elimination of general fund transfer to federal transportation revenue and 3) expiration of the state half-cent sales tax after 10 years. The following chart shows the projected revenue of federal, state and local transportation funding through 2040.

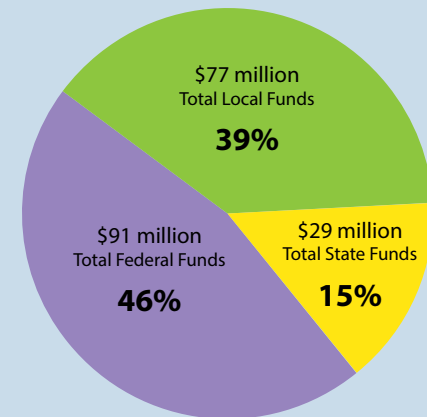
Projection of Existing Revenue 2014 to 2040 (in millions)



## Historic Transportation Funding

Building, maintaining and operating our roads, providing a first-rate public transportation system, expanding cycling options and other basic mobility needs require significant financial resources. Public sector spending on transportation in central Arkansas averages \$200 million annually. The bulk of this money (about 91%) is spent on roads (maintenance and construction), with the remaining spent on transit and stand-alone bicycle facilities (<1%). The following chart shows the revenue amount of federal, state and local sources.

Historic Funding (FY 2006-2011) for Transportation in Central Arkansas



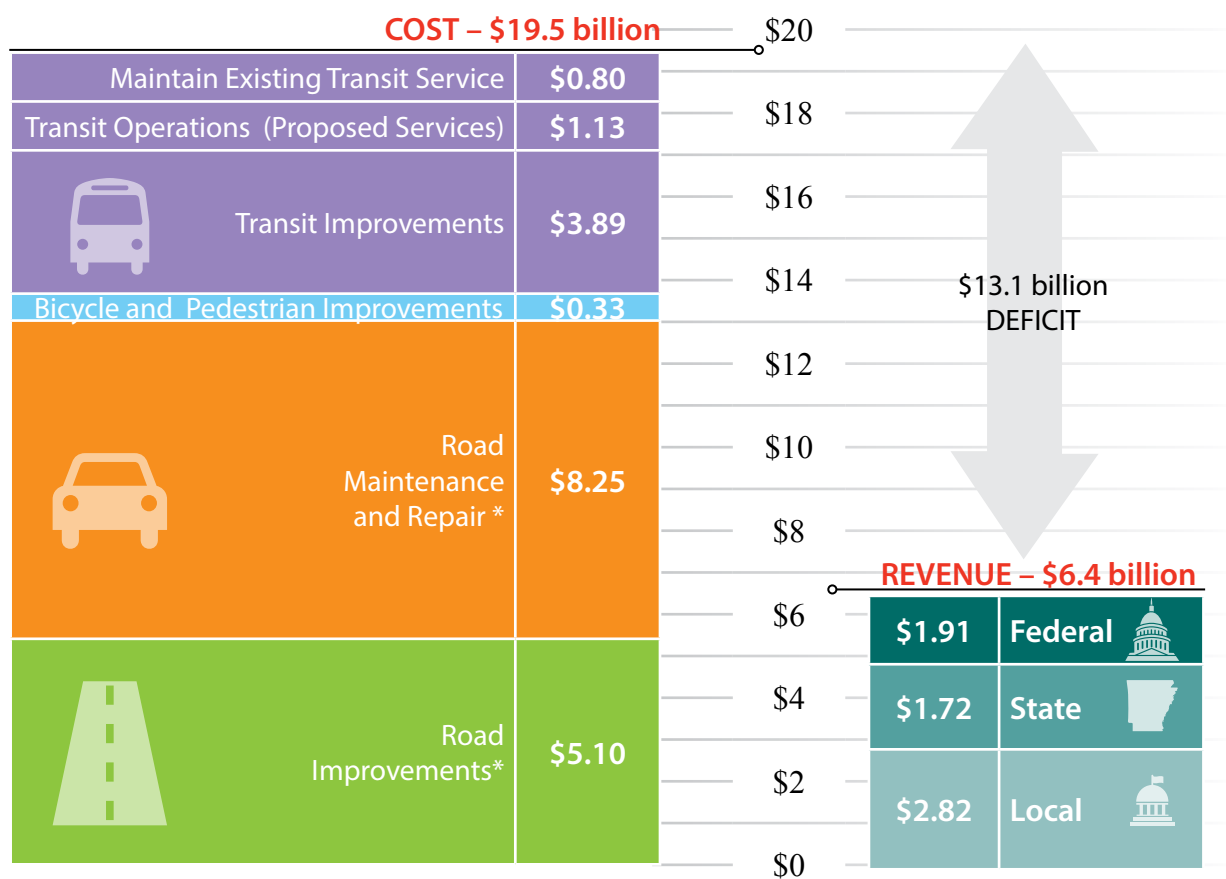


## Funding Deficit

After estimating the cost of the vision plan elements and comparing with forecast revenue, a gap of \$13 billion remains. The largest portion of this gap is in the maintenance and operations of

the existing roadway network, while the second largest portion is for transit improvements. The figure below shows a comparison of the forecast revenue and vision plan cost through 2040.

Cost versus Revenue 2014 to 2040 (billions)

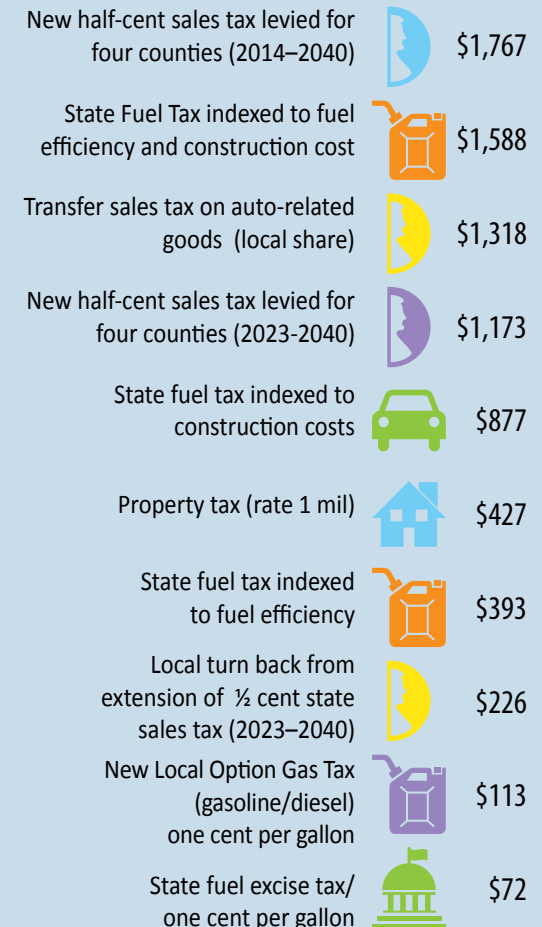


\*Bike/Ped improvements included

## Raising New Revenue

The plan looks at a number of revenue sources to fill the funding gap; no one source is sufficient to cover the full gap. The following chart shows the potential revenue gain to central Arkansas from new funding sources.

2014–2040 Revenue Potential of Various Sources (millions)



State taxes assume current rate of return to central Arkansas.

## Rising Cost of Transportation Construction

Today it costs \$10 million dollars to widen one mile of road. In part due to increased energy cost and global competition for construction material, 2040 costs are expected to rise to \$23.4 million — a 134% increase. While not directly affecting revenue, this expected increase in construction cost will impact the region's purchasing power, reducing its ability to maintain and improve the transportation network.



## Projects

### 10-Year Project List

(Project limits subject to change based on final construction cost)

The following projects have been committed by their inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program, Connect Arkansas Program, and Interstate Rehabilitation Program and constitute the financially constrained plan for Imagine Central Arkansas. Additional projects will be added upon agreement of Metroplan and AHTD and availability of funds.





## About Metroplan

**M**etroplan is a voluntary association of local governments that has operated by interlocal agreement since 1955. Originally formed as the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission of Pulaski County, Metroplan now has members in five counties of the six-county metro area (see below). Metroplan is the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) under Title 23 of the United States Code.

Metroplan serves as the regional voice on issues affecting Central Arkansas, develops transportation plans required by federal law, convenes stakeholders to deal with common environmental issues, and provides information and staff resources to our member local governments, the business community and the public. As part of that mission, Metroplan publishes *Metrotrends* twice yearly. The spring edition is the Demographic Review and Outlook; the fall edition is the Economic Review and Outlook.

## About CARTS

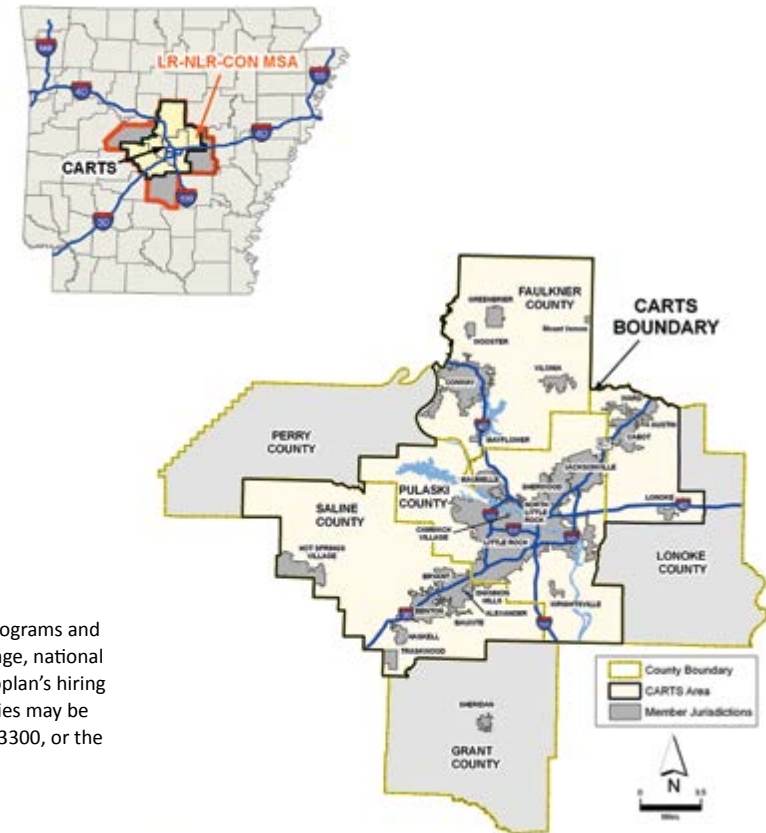
The Central Arkansas Regional Transportation Study, or CARTS, is the cooperative effort by the participating communities, transportation providers and many other interested parties to develop a long-range transportation plan for the metropolitan area.

## Notice of Nondiscrimination

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This notice is available from the ADA/504/Title VI Coordinator in large print, on audiotape and in Braille.

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# A Balanced Approach to Mobility

