



Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG Technical Committee

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: August 16, 2022

SUBJECT: Next Meeting – August 23, 2022

Please be advised that the business of the CMCOG Technical Committee will be conducted on **August 23rd at 9:30 a.m.** Enclosed, please find an agenda and support materials for your review.

Please note that this meeting will be held virtually using a Zoom platform. The zoom link can be found on the attached agenda.

The CMCOG would like to thank you for your continued service and participation. The Technical Committee serves as an integral part of our transportation planning process and is often the first step for review and approval of transportation projects which affect our region. Your continued dedication has been admirable and appreciated.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 803-744-5133 or by email at rsimmons@centralmidlands.org. I look forward to meeting with you on **August 23rd**, please don't forget to mark your calendars!

Enclosures

AGENDA

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

MEETING: TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2022

9:30 A.M. TO 10:30 A.M.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88428840621?pwd=WE5lQ010RXBrNIUyUjVwdnBvV0hLZz09>

Meeting ID: 884 2884 0621 ♦ Passcode: 416274 ♦ Dial-In Number (646) 558 8656

OVERALL AGENDA

1. **Welcome, Introductions, and Call to Order R. Simmons**

ACTION

→ 2. **Reimagine The COMET.....R. Simmons**

The COMET proposed the development of a Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP), origin, destination and demographic survey and a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) of The COMET's transit system in order to improve the efficiency of transit service provided within The COMET service area of Richland and Lexington Counties, address future anticipated land use development and transportation investments, and enhance connectivity to other bus services. Reimagine The COMET is the result of the planning effort and through a partnership with Central Midlands Council of Governments this analysis has now been completed. (Enclosure 1)

ACTION

→ 3. **2020 – 2027 TIP Amendment – SC PRT Grants.....R. Simmons**

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism (SCPRT) is pleased to announce that 11 projects from across the state were selected to receive grant funding through the federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP). RTP is a federal-aid assistance program designed to help states provide and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. SCPRT administers the RTP under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration. (Enclosure 2)

ACTION

→ 4. **2020 – 2027 TIP Amendment – Blythewood Road.....R. Simmons**

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests approval to amend the 2020 – 2027 Transportation Improvement Program to add \$300K for the Blythewood Road to US 21 to Langford Road Improvement Project. The Town of Blythewood has requested a feasibility analysis of the Blythewood Road to US 21 to Langford Road Improvement Project. This analysis will be conducted as part of the SCDOT Feasibility Report. (Enclosure 3)

ACTION

→ 5. **2020 – 2027 TIP Amendment – SC 6, US 76, and US 176R. Simmons**

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests approval to amend the 2020 – 2027 Transportation Improvement Program to add \$500K to conduct a feasibility analysis for the SC 6, US 76 and US 176 corridors. This analysis will be conducted as part of the SCDOT Feasibility Report. (Enclosure 4)

6. **Old/New Business..... R. Simmons**

7. **Public Comments Open**

8. **Adjourn..... R. Simmons**



Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG Technical Committee

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: August 16, 2022

SUBJECT: Reimagine The COMET

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments staff requests a recommendation of approval to adopt the Reimagine The COMET Study. The full document can be downloaded at <https://reimaginethecomet.org>.

BACKGROUND

The COMET proposed the development of a Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP), origin, destination and demographic survey and a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) of The COMET's transit system in order to improve the efficiency of transit service provided within The COMET service area of Richland and Lexington Counties, address future anticipated land use development and transportation investments, and enhance connectivity to other bus services. Reimagine The COMET is the result of the planning effort and through a partnership with Central Midlands Council of Governments this analysis has now been completed.

Reimagine The COMET is a project to review the existing bus network in the Central Midlands region and recommend short and long-term changes to the system based on the goals and priorities of the community. This project is funded by the Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) and overseen by Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority the region's transit provider, better known as The COMET.

A bus network redesign is a collaborative planning effort to decide where today's bus service should go, when it should run, and how frequently it should operate, starting from a clean slate. Redesigning The COMET's bus network was an opportunity to review existing and potential transit demand, and to design a network that meets those demands most efficiently. Redesign does not mean changing every bus route and stop. The key point is that thinking is not constrained by the existing network. Where the analysis suggests that existing service patterns make sense, those elements would be retained. Ultimately, the goal is a network designed for the city and region of today and tomorrow, not one based on the past.

ATTACHMENT

Reimage The COMET – Introduction and Summary

1 Introduction and Summary

A Redesigned Network Through Community Conversation

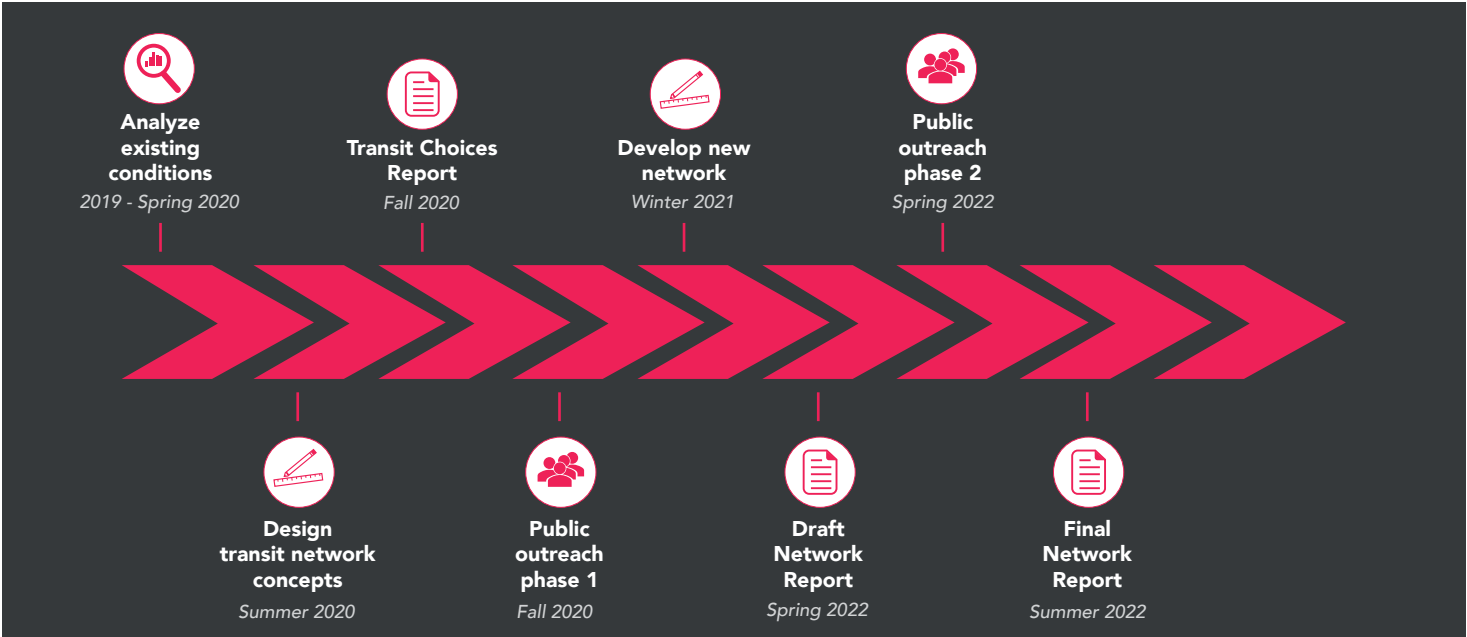
What is Reimagine The COMET

Reimagine The COMET is a project to review the existing bus network in the Central Midlands region and recommend short and long-term changes to the system based on the goals and priorities of the community. This project is funded by the Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) and overseen by Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority the region’s transit provider, better known as The COMET.

A bus network redesign is a collaborative planning effort to decide where today’s bus service should go, when it should run, and how frequently it should operate, starting from a clean slate.

Redesigning The COMET’s bus network is an opportunity to review existing and potential transit demand, and to design a network that meets those demands most efficiently. Redesign does not mean changing every bus route and stop. The key point is that thinking is not constrained by the existing network. Where the analysis suggests that existing service patterns make sense, those elements would be retained. Ultimately, the goal is a network designed for the city and region of today and tomorrow, not one based on the past.

Figure 1: The study process was a conversation between technical work and public input.



The COMET and consultant staff surveyed over 350 people in the first round of engagement for Reimagine The COMET.

Buses Are Essential for the Region

Why Redesign the Bus Network?

The Central Midlands region has been growing consistently for more than a decade, with Richland county adding about 4,000 people per year over the last decade and Lexington County adding about 3,300 per year. More more people and jobs means more activity, more traffic, and often increasing density. That makes public transit essential because there is simply not room for everyone's car.

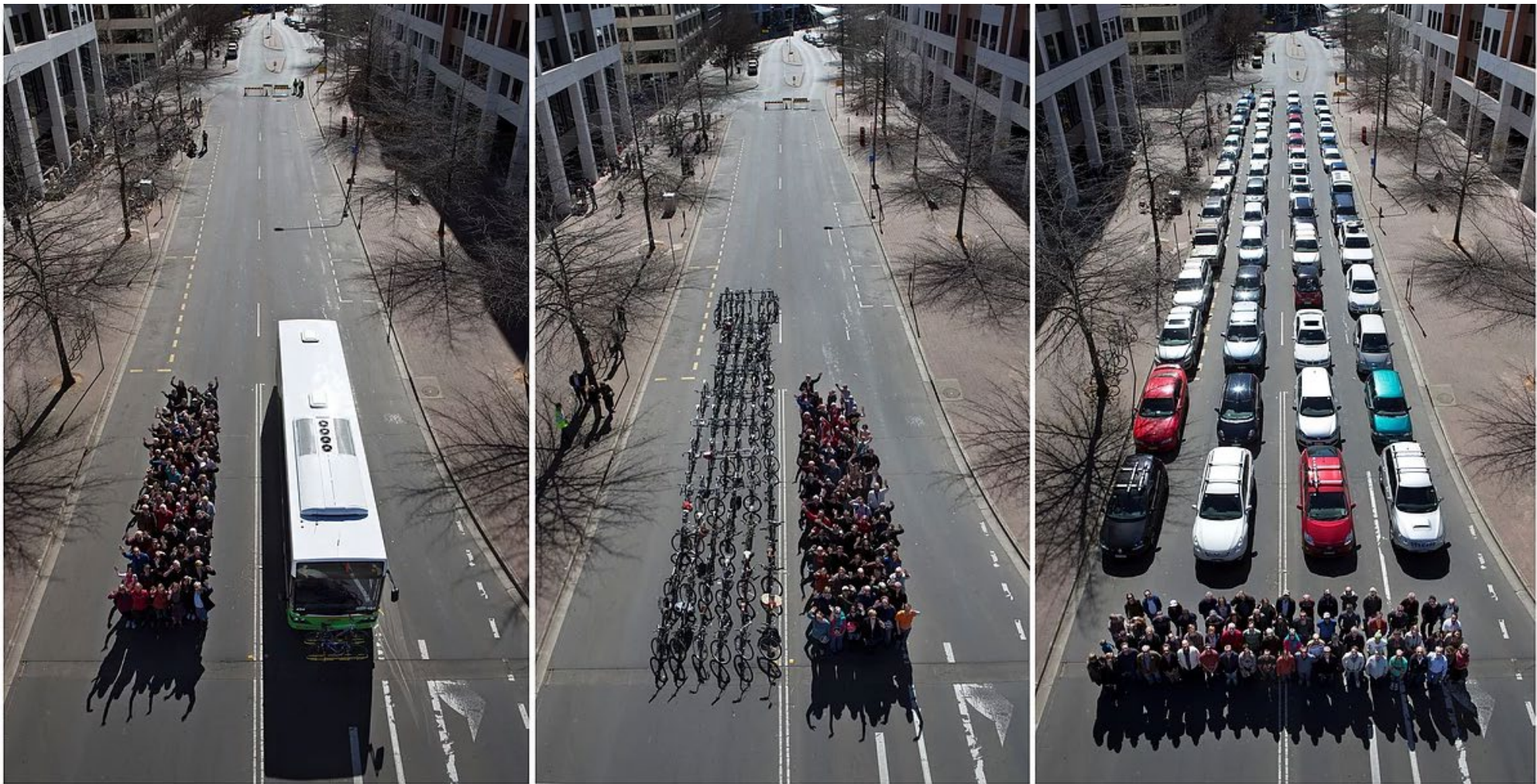
While not all of the Central Midlands region is dense, large parts of it are, and like all places with high density, inner parts of the region present features that make transit essential, and require that it be highly efficient:

- **Severe road space limitations.** Across many parts of Columbia, West Columbia, and inner parts of the region, the road width is fixed and will never be wider. Efforts at widening roads in built-up areas are extremely costly, frequently destructive, and actually counterproductive—research shows that widening roads does not reduce congestion, due to induced car demand. Curb space is also limited and cannot be readily expanded.
- **Intensification of land use.** In response to growing demands for housing and commercial space, both central and outlying areas are growing more dense. More and more people are living within the same limited area.

These two factors combined mean that more and more people are trying to use a fixed amount of road space. If they are all in cars, they simply will not fit in the space available. The result is congestion, which cuts people off from opportunity and strangles economic growth. Figure 2 shows how much space the same number of people take in cars, bikes, and buses. *In a growing city that is getting more dense, relying on bikes and transit as major modes of transportation is the only way to have room for everyone.*

The only alternative to congestion is for a larger share of the population to rely on public transit and other modes that carry many people in few vehicles, or that take far less space per person than cars (i.e. bicycles). This requires services that most efficiently respond to the city's changing needs, as well as corridor improvements to give buses a level of priority over cars that reflect the vastly larger numbers of people on each bus.

Figure 2: The road space required to move the same number of people using public transit, bicycles, and cars.
Photo copyright We Ride Australia



Transit and bikes are two of the most space-efficient modes and are essential in dense places, where there is very little road space per person.

Transit's Product Access to Opportunity

What is Access?

Based on public and stakeholder input, a core goal of the Draft New Network is to help more people get to more places, in the limited amount of time that they have. Figure 3 shows how we calculate this.

What Access Achieves

When we expand access for as many people as possible, we achieve many important things:

- We **make service more useful** for the trips people are already making and for many other trips that people might want to make by transit. When transit is more useful, more people use it.
- We **increase ridership potential**, as a result of service being more useful.
- We increase transit's potential to help with reducing **pollution** and **congestion**. Ridership is the key to how transit achieves these things, and improving access is the path to ridership.
- We **expand access to opportunity** (jobs, education, shopping, services) for people who need transit for that purpose.
- We **increase the economic attractiveness** of the urban area. Connecting people with opportunities is the whole point of cities, so improving those connections makes any city more effective.

The Draft New Network increases access to jobs and opportunities for most people and places in the Central Midlands region. It allows the average person to reach an additional 780 jobs within 45 minutes by walking and taking transit—**10% more jobs than are reachable with the Existing Network**.

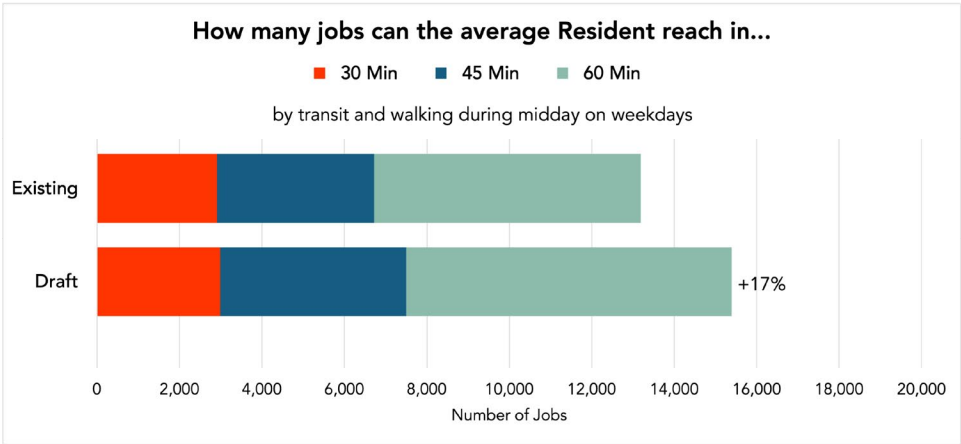
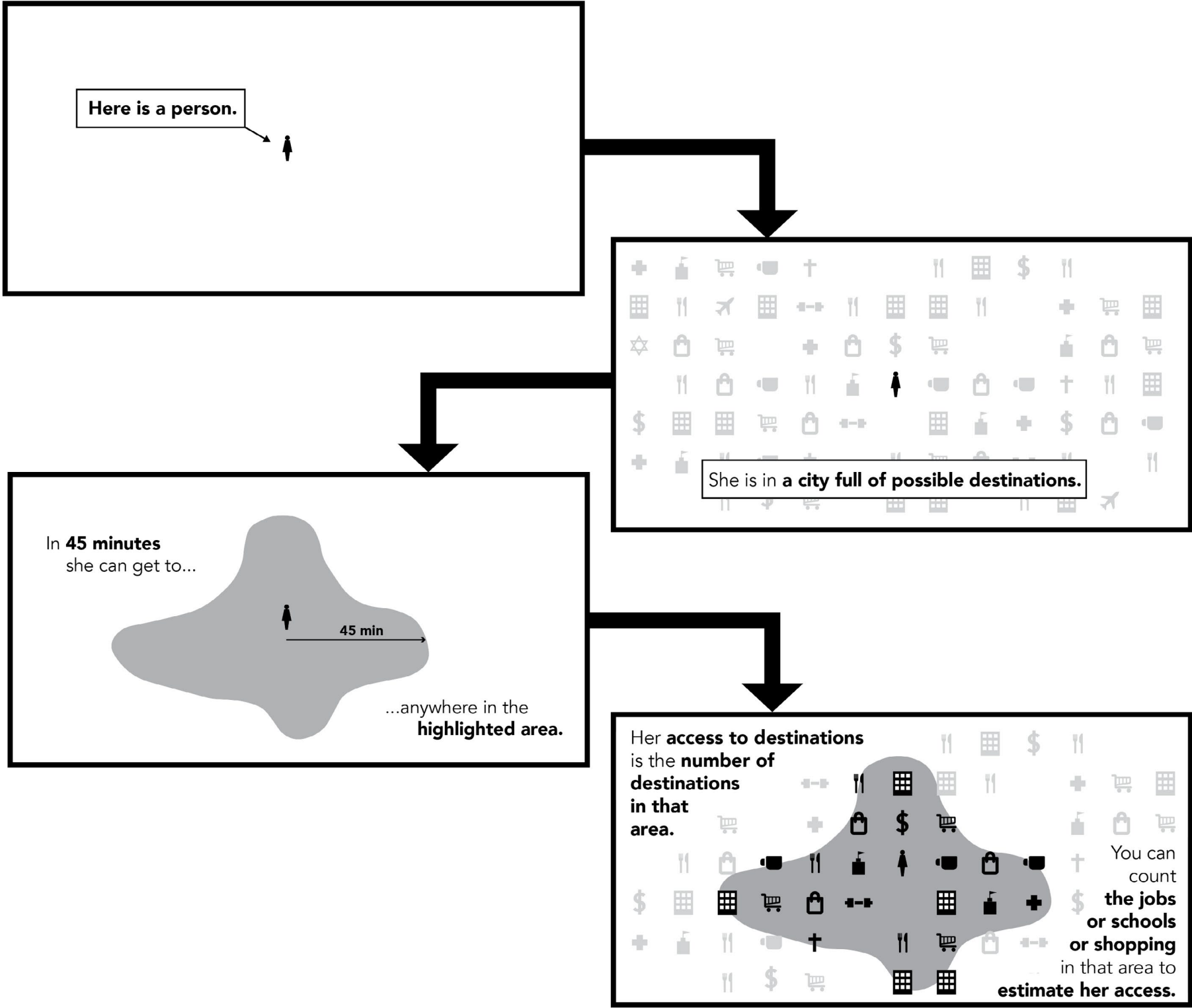


Figure 3: How transit service creates access to opportunity.

WHAT IS ACCESS?



The Ridership-Coverage Trade-off

Within a limited budget, The COMET must make difficult choices between competing goals that people care about. These kinds of decisions should not be the result of a consultant’s recommendation. Instead, our role has been to lay out the choices and encourage public discussion of them. Figure 4 illustrates the problem.

A network designed to a goal of **ridership** will maximize access to destinations for the average resident, as this maximizes the chance that transit will be useful for any particular trips. It does this by providing high frequency service in areas where there are many people and jobs to benefit from it. But it does not go everywhere or serve everyone. Some people who need transit will not be served, because they live in places that are too hard for efficient transit to reach. These problems are typically:

- Low Density. There are few people to benefit from each transit stop.
- Low Walkability. It’s too hard for many people to walk to the transit stop, which further limits who finds it useful.
- Poor Linearity. The street pattern doesn’t let the bus run in an efficient straight line.
- Poor Proximity. Service must cross a large, low-demand gap to reach a destination.

So should transit go to those places anyway even though they are providing access to few people, and low ridership will be the result?

If so, you want a **coverage** goal. A coverage goal starts with a commitment to going almost everywhere, so that almost everyone has a little service.

Some transit goals are served by focusing on high ridership. For example, the environmental benefits of transit only arise from many people riding the bus rather than driving. Subsidy per rider is lower when ridership is maximized. We call such goals “ridership goals” because they are achieved through high ridership.

Other goals are served by the mere presence of transit. A bus route may provide important lifeline service, even if few people ride it. A route may fulfill political or social obligations, for example by getting service close to every taxpayer or into every political district. We call these types of goals “coverage goals” because they are achieved by covering geographic areas with service, regardless of ridership.

How should we balance these competing goals? Which should be more important? That’s the most important question we asked in our extensive public conversation.

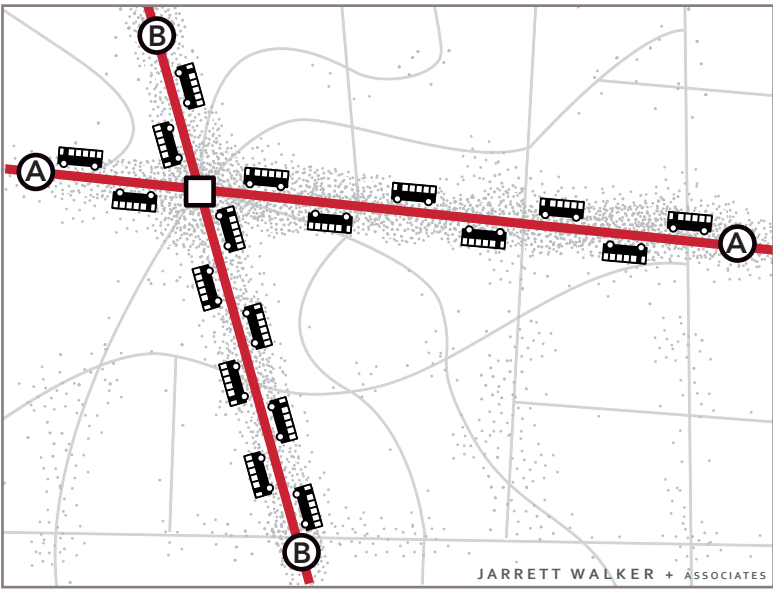
Figure 4: Ridership and coverage goals, both laudable, are in direct conflict within a fixed budget.

Imagine you are the transit planner for this fictional neighborhood.

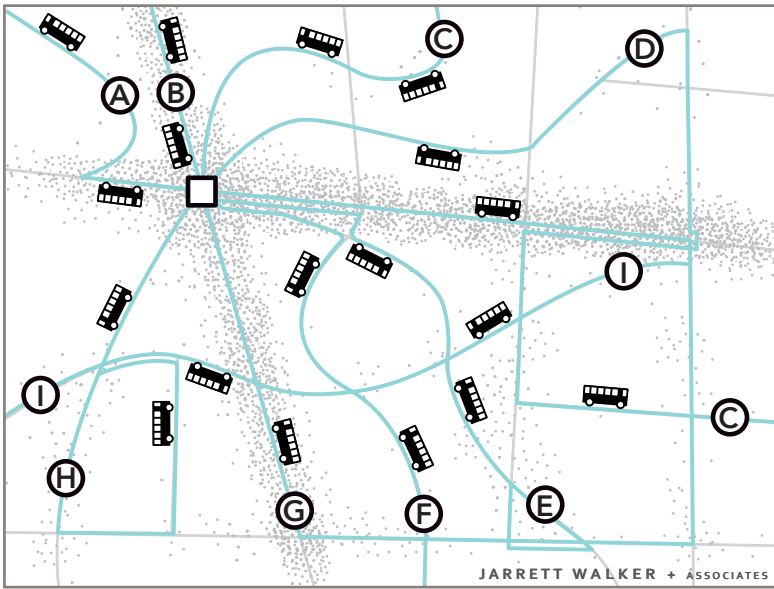
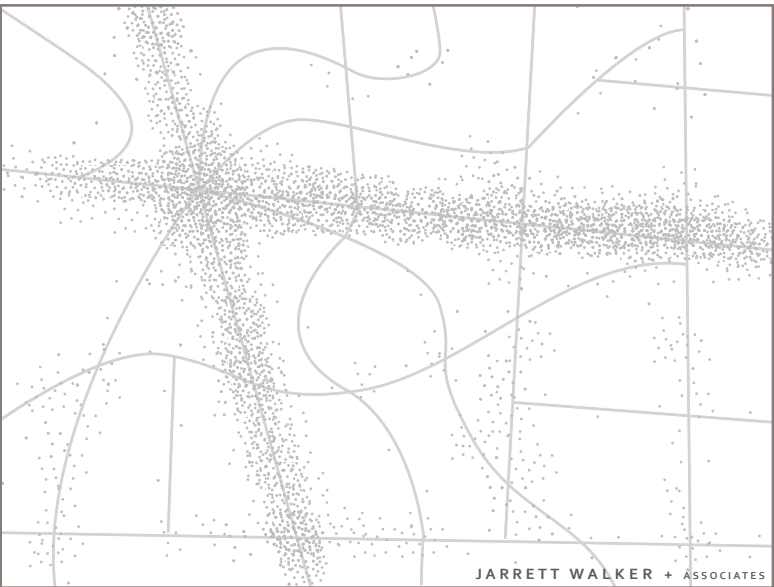
The dots scattered around the map are people and jobs.

The 18 buses are the resources the town has to run transit.

Before you can plan transit routes, you must first decide: What is the purpose of your transit system?



All 18 buses are focused on the busiest streets. Waits for service are short but walks to service are longer for people in less populated areas. Frequency and ridership are high but some places have no service.



The 18 buses are spread around so that there is a route on every street. Everyone lives near a stop but every route is infrequent, so waits for service are long. Only a few people can bear to wait so long, so ridership is low.

Engagement on Concepts

Concepts to Clarify Trade-offs

To clarify the trade-off between Ridership goals and Coverage goals in the Central Midlands Region, two conceptual transit networks were developed. The maps of each network are shown below in Figure 5.

These networks were used to explain the tradeoffs between ridership and coverage goals and ask the public which one they prefer. The results of the outreach are in the following page.

The Coverage Network is similar to today’s existing network, and prioritizes keeping service to everyone who has it today, but does reduce the overall coverage slightly.

The Ridership Concept on the right significantly improves frequency of service on major corridors, and expands the jobs reachable for the average resident. It does so, however, by reducing the coverage of service, so that some people would lose access to transit.

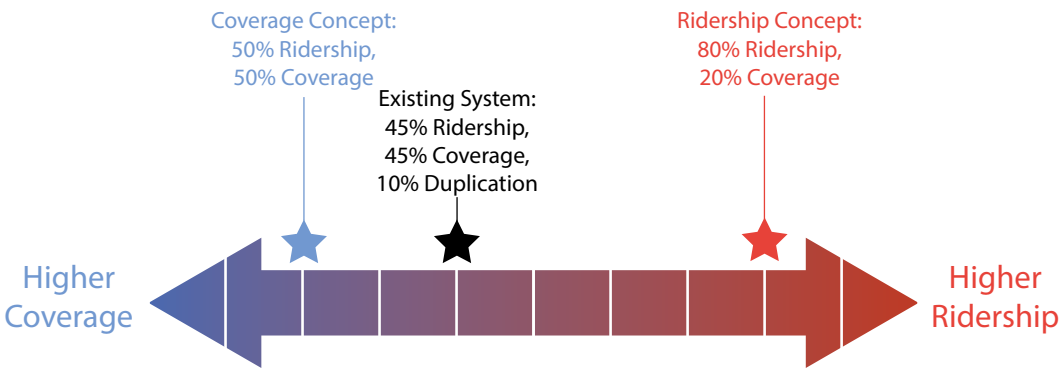
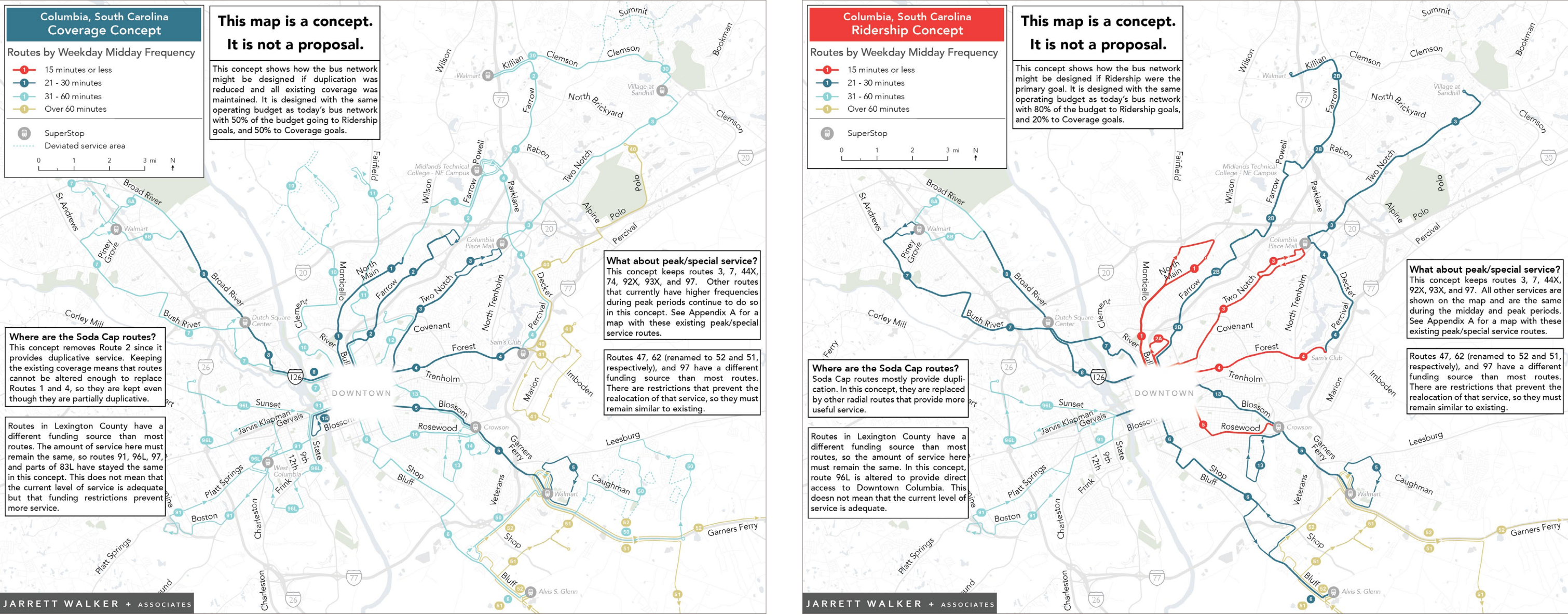


Figure 5: The Coverage and Ridership Conceptual Networks show different ways to use the same dollars to provide transit service in the region.



A Slight Shift Towards Ridership

The first round of engagement was focused on getting riders and the public to respond to a survey about the two transit concepts described on the previous page. Through the online and paper surveying efforts, 352 total survey responses were collected. Paper surveying was done by project staff at COMET Central and other transit centers.

Two virtual public meeting were held to discuss the concepts along with 7 tabling events. The COMET and consultant also staff did interviews with local media to spread the word about the concepts and the project and ask people to take the online survey. Media coverage included

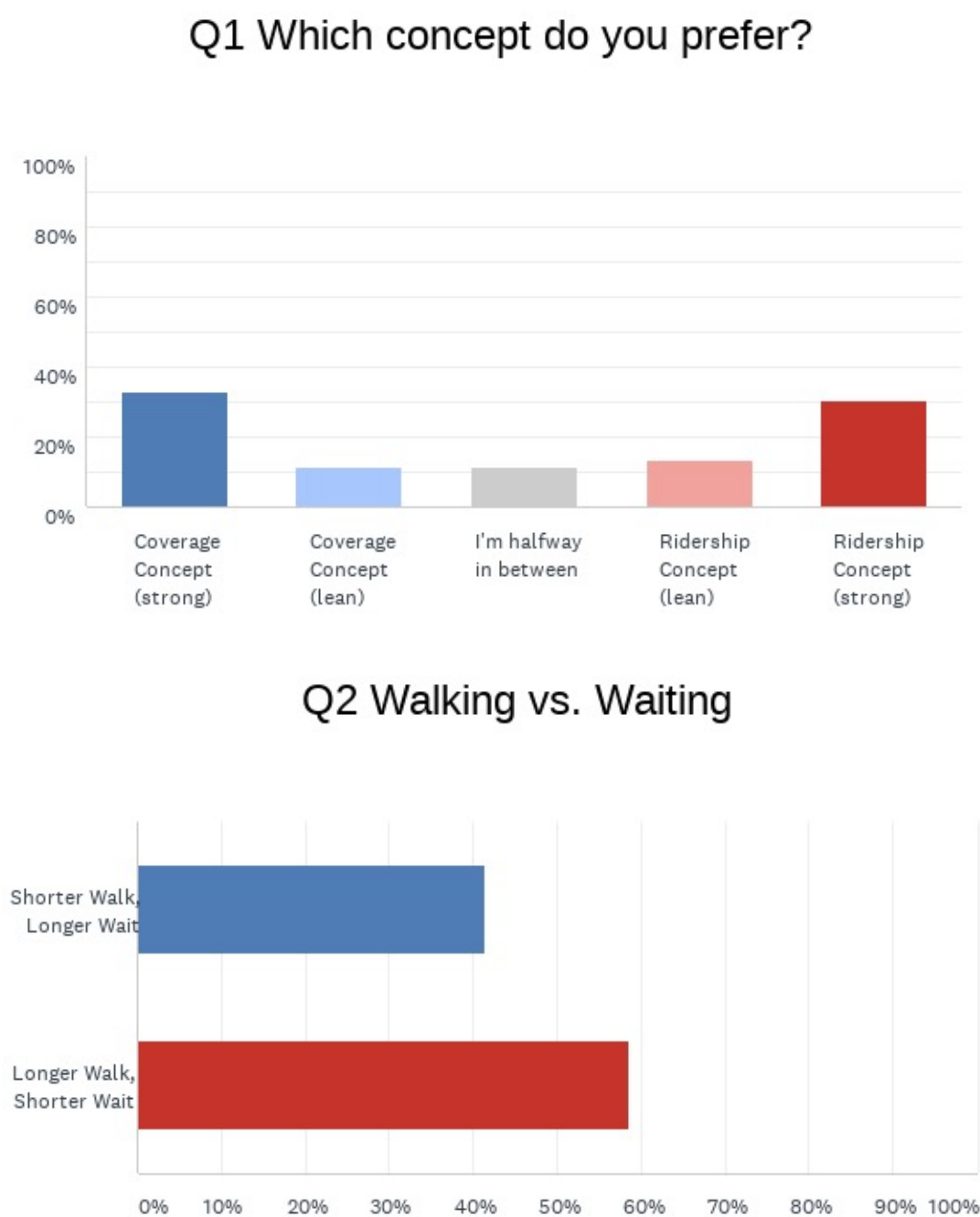
- Cola Today Online Publication,
- SCETV Public Radio,
- Onpoint! with Cynthia Hardy,
- WOLO,
- WIS News 10 Sunrise, and
- WLTX.

Response to Concepts

Respondents were asked to indicate their preference for the Ridership or Coverage Concepts. The respondents were split between the Ridership and Coverage Concepts. Since the Existing Network is closer to the Coverage Concept, this suggest that the public wants a slight shift towards Ridership.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their preference between walking or waiting. Over 55% of respondents said that they prefer having to walk longer to wait shorter for a bus. This also suggests that respondents want a slight shift towards Ridership.

Figure 6: Survey respondents were split between the two concepts. This suggests a slight shift towards ridership from the Existing Network



Existing Network

The map on the right (Figure 7) shows The COMET’s existing bus network. The map on the following page shows the Draft New Network.

In both maps, every route is color-coded based on its frequency during the midday on a weekday. In the network maps, colors make all the difference:

- Dark blue lines every 30 minutes;
- Light blue lines every 60 minutes; and
- Light Tan lines every more than 60 minutes.

Every bus route in The COMET’s network operates every 30 minutes or more at midday.

Most main corridors in Columbia have blue lines, which run every 30 minutes, but most of the network has light blue lines, which run every 60.

The Existing Network uses 45% of resources towards service that can achieve high ridership, 45% is spent on coverage goals, and about 10% of the network provides duplicative service.

Policy Direction

The public survey responses on page 9 were presented to The COMET Board to help them make a decision on how resource should be allocated between ridership and coverage. On September 22, 2021, the Board passed a resolution on the balance between ridership and coverage. They decided that the Draft New Network was to be designed to follow these guidelines:

- 60% of resources are devoted to service that is expected to get higher ridership relative to cost.
- The other 40% of resources are going to service that is not likely to get high ridership, but will provide service in areas where it is needed the most.

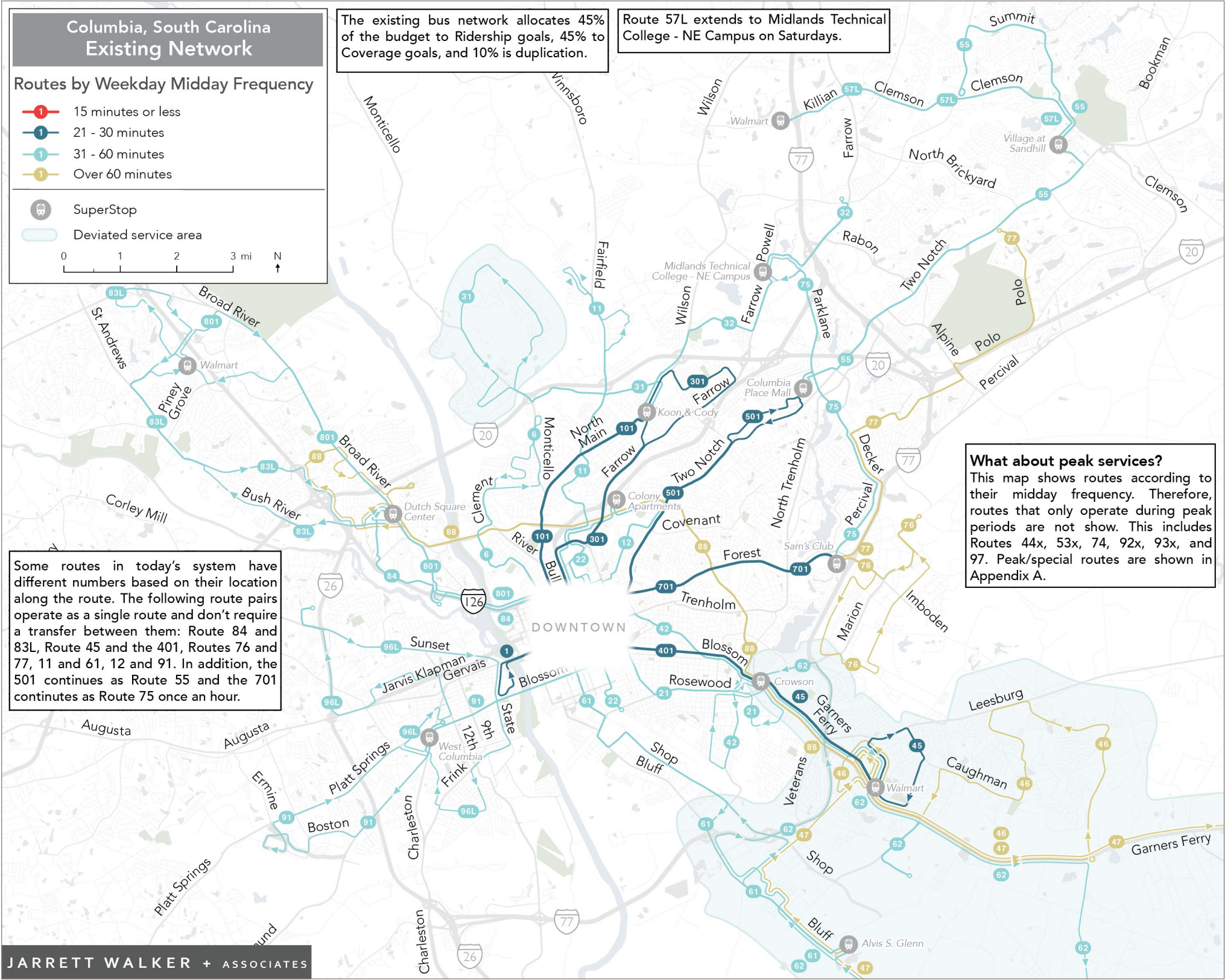


Figure 7: The COMET’s Existing Network with Colored by Frequency

Draft Network

The Draft New Network assigns 60% of resources to goals that can achieve high ridership and 40% to provide service in areas where transit is important but is unlikely to yield many riders. This is done by consolidating duplicative resources and moving some resources from coverage service to ridership (or higher frequency) service. These changes are described in more detail on page 15.

For most people and places, the Draft New Network improves access to jobs, people, and opportunities by transit. It does this by providing more frequent service along the busiest and densest corridors.

Change in Job Access

The Draft New Network allows the average person to reach 7,500 jobs within 45 minutes by walking and taking transit, **11% more jobs than are reachable within the existing network.**

For the average person in poverty, the number of jobs accessible by transit within 45 minutes would increase by 12%. For the average resident of color, jobs accessible would increase by 10%.

This analysis measures jobs, but it reflects a wide range of opportunities that a person can reach. This mean a person can get to more shopping, education, recreational areas, social events, places of worship, and any other opportunities that the region can offer.

Proximity to 30-Minute Service

The Draft New Network provides 30-minute service near (within 1/4 mile of) 12,900 more residents and 8,700 more jobs. This is a significant increase from today, by 42% more residents and 16% more jobs.

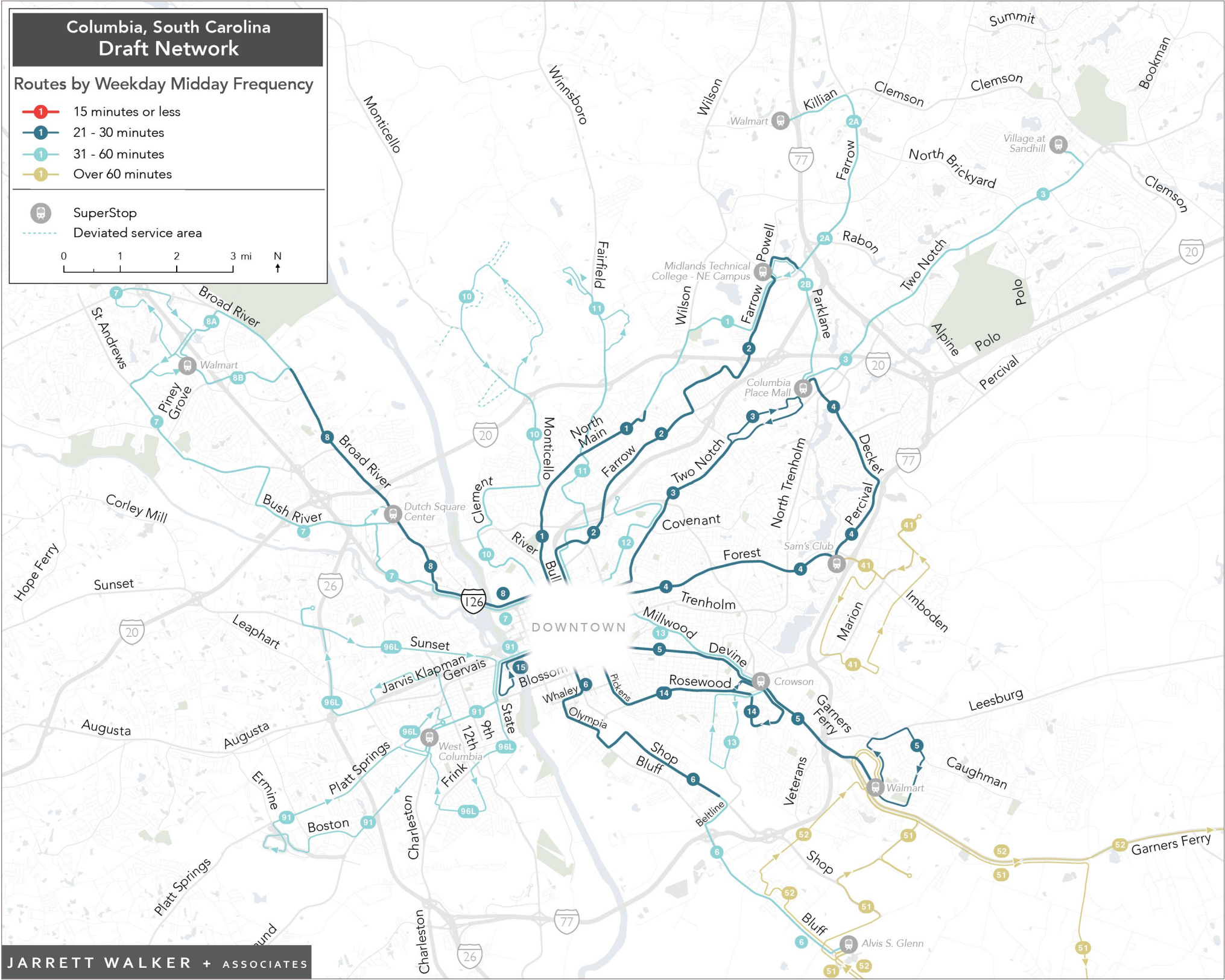


Figure 8: The COMET's Existing Network with Colored by Frequency

Draft New Network Increases Job Access

Freedom, Access, Usefulness

Wherever you are, there is a limited number of places you could reach in a given amount of time. These places can be viewed on a map as a blob around your location. Figure 9 shows an example of this type of visualization of transit access for Downtown comparing the Draft New Network to the Existing Network.

Think of this blob as “the wall around your life.” Beyond this limit are jobs you can not hold, places you can not shop, and a whole range of things you can not do because it simply takes too long to get there. The technical term for this is accessibility, but it’s also fair to call it freedom, in the physical sense of that word. The extent of this blob determines what your options are in life: for employment, school, shopping, or whatever places you want to reach. If you have a bigger blob, you have more choices, so in an important sense you are more free.

The real measure of usefulness is not just how much geographic area we can reach, but how many useful destinations are in that area. **For the area around Downtown, residents can reach 3.5% more jobs in the Draft New Network.**

Change in Job Access

By calculating this kind of access blob for the many points in the region, it is possible to estimate how access changes for everyone in Richland and Lexington Counties. The Draft New Network allows the average person to reach 15,300 jobs within 60 minutes by walking and taking transit—**17% more jobs than are reachable with the existing network.**

For the average person in poverty, the number of jobs accessible by transit within 60 minutes would increase by 19%. For the average resident of color, jobs accessible would increase by 19%.

This analysis measures jobs, but it reflects a wide range of opportunities that a person can reach. Access to more jobs means a person can get to more shopping, education, recreational areas, social events, places of worship, and any other opportunities that the region can offer.

With the Draft New Network, residents near Downtown can reach 2,800 more jobs in 45 minutes.

Figure 9: Example of change in places reachable in 45 minutes from Downtown in the Draft New Network, compared to the Existing Network

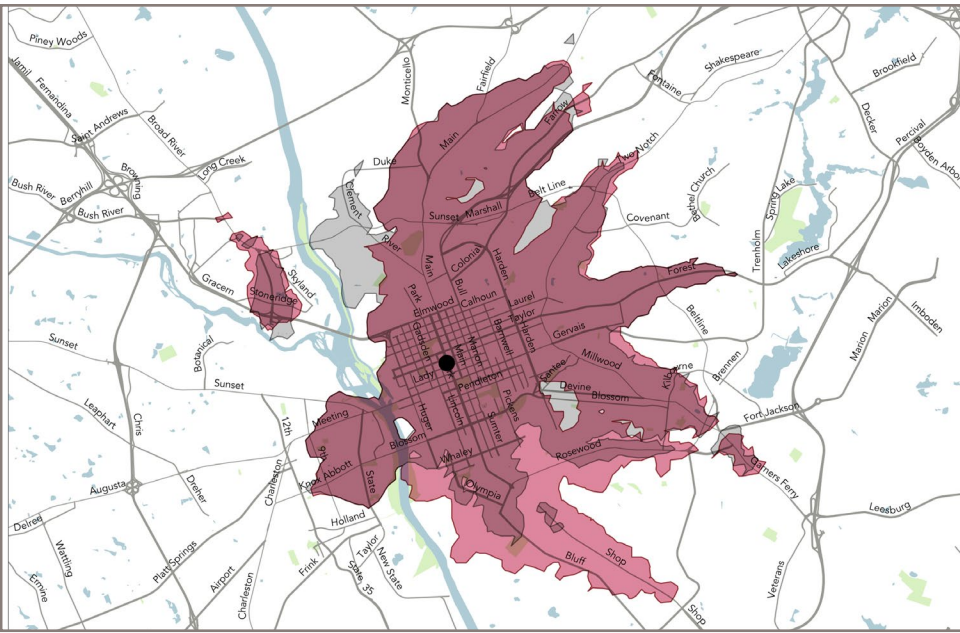
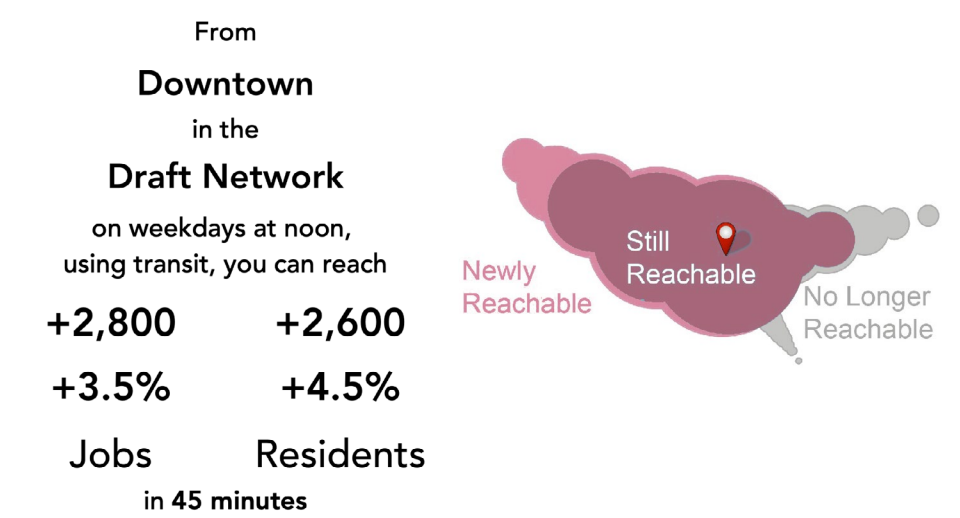
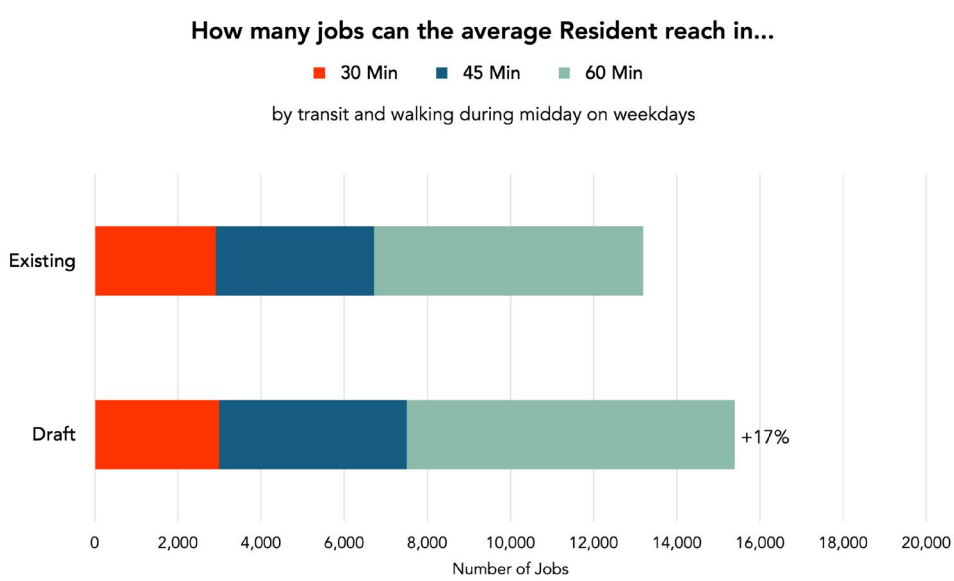
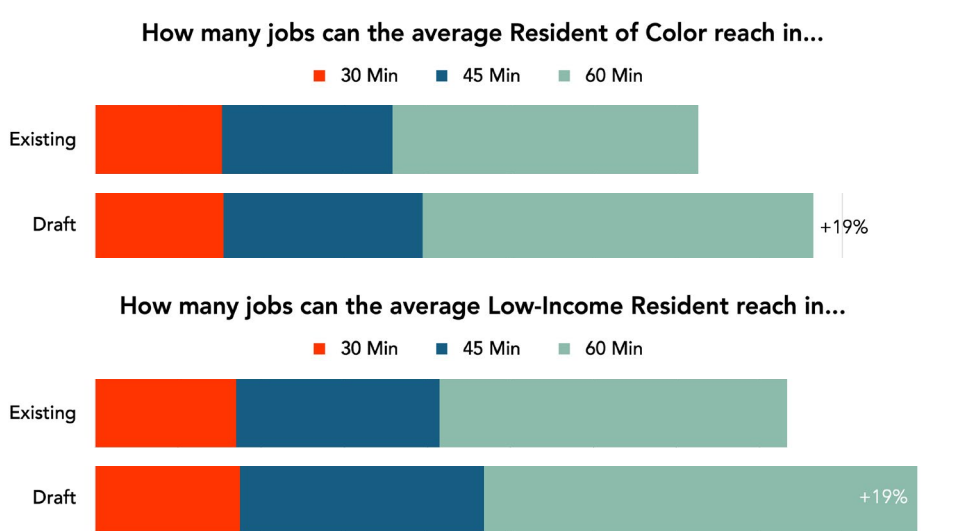


Figure 10: Jobs Reachable for the Average Resident



The Draft New Network allows the average resident to reach 17% more jobs in 60 minutes.

Figure 11: Jobs Reachable for the Average Resident in Poverty and Resident of Color



What can I do?

How to use this Report?

This report shows the Draft New Network in detail. To assess this Draft New Network and how it fits your goals for transit, we suggest you:

- Look at the maps starting on page 15, find the places you care about and note the nearby routes and their frequencies (as indicated by the color). Route numbers in the Draft New Network may not match existing route numbers.
- Consider how all the routes connect various parts of the whole region. Remember that no bus network can provide direct service to and from every origin and destination, so look at how routes connect with each other.
- Frequencies (how often) and spans (how long) of every route in the Draft New Network can be found in the tables starting on page 19. This tells you when the route(or routes) you care about run and at what frequencies.
- For information about how the Draft New Network would affect access to jobs, look at the job access maps starting on page 21.
- If you care about proximity to transit, look at page 26, which describes how many people and jobs are near any transit service and near frequent service.

What is in the rest of this report?

In Chapter 2, we describe the Draft New Network compared to the Existing Network.

In Chapter 3, we review the outcomes of the Draft New Network, including the number of people and jobs near transit, the amount of jobs and opportunities residents can reach by transit, and other outcomes.

In Chapter 4, we describe the next steps and engagement opportunities.

Appendix A provides additional maps that show travel time change for multiple locations around the city.

What's next?

This Report is meant to help you, the general public, existing transit riders, stakeholders, and elected officials understand the Draft New

Network for The COMET. The agency and the consultant team will be conducting surveys and other engagement efforts to help explain the Draft New Network and get your feedback. That engagement process will ask you what you think about this new bus network. Responses from the public and stakeholders will be used to finalize the details of the network.

The outreach process around the Draft New Network will run from [dates], and a survey will be available for public input both online and via paper at COMET Central and via staff riding buses.

If you agree this Draft New Network would be an improvement for The COMET, it's important to speak up. And if you don't like the plan, please let us know how it can be improved.

For more information and to stay involved in the project, go to reimaginethecomet.org and:

- take the survey about this Draft New Network;
- register to attend one of the public meetings scheduled for [dates].
- sign up for email updates about the project;
- generally stay up-to-date on the latest happenings with the network redesign process!

The COMET Board will review this Draft New Network and ultimately decide if and when it will be implemented, and how it might be changed. **Your opinion matters in determining the final recommendations.**

Your voice matters! Contact the project team and take the Draft New Network Survey at reimaginethecomet.org



Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG Technical Committee

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: August 16, 2022

SUBJECT: 2020 – 2027 TIP Amendment – Recreational Trails Program Projects

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests a recommendation of approval to amend the 2020 – 2027 TIP to add two South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism (SCPRT) Recreational Trails Program Projects.

BACKGROUND

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism (SCPRT) is pleased to announce that 11 projects from across the state were selected to receive grant funding through the federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP).

RTP is a federal-aid assistance program designed to help states provide and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. SCPRT administers the RTP under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration.

Projects were evaluated in terms of their overall quality, need, public support, and planning process; whether adequate resources are available to execute the project; and whether resources are available to adequately manage, maintain, and operate the project after completion. Priority is given to trail projects providing connections or extensions for trail systems that are at least 10 miles long and projects in low-income areas.

Staff has identified that two (2) of the eleven (11) awarded projects are in the COATS MPO region and will be required to be added to our TIP.

ATTACHMENT

The 11 projects selected from the pool of 35 applicants.

Columbia, S.C. – The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism (SCPRT) is pleased to announce that 11 projects from across the state were selected to receive grant funding through the federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP).

RTP is a federal-aid assistance program designed to help states provide and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. SCPRT administers the RTP under the approval of the Federal Highway Administration.

“We are thrilled to see nearly \$1.2 million heading to South Carolina to support trail projects across the state,” said SCPRT Director Duane Parrish. “These dollars will go toward the creation of new trails, and the enhancement of existing trails, helping improve the quality of life for locals and helping attract more visitors – and the tourism dollars they bring – to these areas. Outdoor recreation has been booming since 2020, making it an excellent time to invest in these critical green spaces and recreation areas.”

The following 11 projects were selected this year from the pool of 35 applicants:

- **Summerville Preserve, Town of Summerville**
Project total: \$563,717 | Grant total: \$100,000
- **Hamlin Trails, Town of Mount Pleasant**
Project total: \$290,870 | Grant total: \$100,000
- **Saluda River Pedestrian Bridge Project, City of West Columbia**
Project total: \$7,490,000 | Grant total: \$100,000
- **The Saluda River & Riverwalk Access Improvements, City of Columbia**
Project total: \$125,000 | Grant total: \$100,000
- **Green Crescent Trail - Gateway Park Connector, City of Clemson**
Project total: \$127,000 | Grant total: \$100,000
- **Gap Creek Passage, Palmetto Trail (Phase I), Palmetto Conservation Foundation**
Project total: \$250,000 | Grant total: \$100,000
- **A Better Balance: Bringing Mountain Biking Back to CNP, Conestee Nature Preserve**
Project total: \$93,000 | Grant total: \$60,000
- **Town-wide Trailhead Establishment, Town of Edisto Beach**
Project total: \$170,775 | Grant total: \$100,000
- **Gilder Creek Multi-Use Trail, City of Mauldin**
Project total: \$125,000 | Grant total: \$66,000
- **Wambaw Cycle Trail 2022 Enhancement Project, USDA Forest Service, Francis Marion National Forest**
Project total: \$62,500 | Grant total: \$50,000
- **The Sanctuary Phase 1, Jason Griffin Racing Foundation**
Project total: \$375,000 | Grant total: \$300,000

Projects were evaluated in terms of their overall quality, need, public support, and planning process; whether adequate resources are available to execute the project; and whether resources are available to adequately manage, maintain and operate the project after completion. Priority is given to trail projects providing connections or extensions for trail systems that are at least 10 miles long and projects in low-income areas.

Recreational Trails Program grant information and eligibility criteria:

- Funding is provided on a cost-reimbursement basis. The grant recipient must pay 100% of the cost of an item before submitting a reimbursement request for 80% of eligible costs.
- Funds can be spent on both motorized and nonmotorized recreational trail projects. The project can include constructing new recreational trails, improving or maintaining existing trails, developing or improving trailhead or trailside facilities, and acquiring trail corridors.
- Eligible applicants include local, state, and federal governmental agencies, qualified private organizations, and registered nonprofits.

Mayors from the mountains, the midlands, and the coast weighed in about what this funding means to their communities:

- "We are ecstatic that we received funding through SCPRT for our gateway connector project. This is a critical connection for recreation and alternative transportation. The funding also demonstrates a collaborative effort between the City, Clemson University, the State PRT, and the Green Crescent Trail group. We look forward to our future amenity for the whole community." – Mayor Robert Halfacre, Clemson
- "We are grateful that the City of Columbia is receiving funds from the Recreational Trail Program to make the Saluda River more accessible to everyone. The river is one of our greatest assets in Columbia and increasing everyone's ability to get in and out lets more people participate in the fun our city has to offer." – Mayor Daniel Rickenmann, City of Columbia
- "Edisto Beach has seen record growth over the last decade with our Census population nearly tripling and our tourists market exploding. Being awarded this grant funding allows our Town to partner with the state to ensure these much needed recreational assets, which are cherished by our residents and visitors, are provided." – Mayor Crawford Moore, Edisto Beach

Find additional award criteria and eligibility information for the Recreational Trails Program at scprt.com/recreation/recreation-grant-programs/recreational-trails-program (/recreation/recreation-grantprograms/recreational-trails-program). Learn more about SCPRT grant programs at scprt.com/grants (/grants).

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Need more information?

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Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG **Technical Committee**

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: August 16, 2022

SUBJECT: Feasibility Study: Blythewood Road to US 21 to Langford Road

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests recommendation of approval to amend the 2020 – 2027 Transportation Improvement Program to add \$300K to conduct a feasibility analysis for the Blythewood Road to US 21 to Langford Road Improvement Project.

BACKGROUND

Recognizing the rapid growth in the area and the increasing traffic congestion and safety issues, the Central Midlands Council of Governments (COG) contracted AECOM to conduct this traffic improvement plan by taking a holistic approach at growth and traffic issues in the area over the next 20 years. AECOM studied the entire Blythewood area and not just the official town limits as much of the growth surrounding Blythewood will have a huge influence on traffic within the town. Therefore, rather than focusing on one particular area or intersection, this study sought to understand the existing and future growth patterns, in the Blythewood area, and to provide sequential recommendations on improvements that should be considered over the next 20 years.

Based on this study, the Town of Blythewood has requested a feasibility analysis of the Blythewood Road to US 21 to Langford Road. This analysis will be conducted as part of the SCDOT Feasibility Report. SCDOT will devise a project development team that will define the project scope, goals and objectives, purpose and need, potential environmental, cultural, and social impacts, estimated cost, schedule, benefit/cost analysis, and risk analysis.

ATTACHMENT

Blythewood Traffic Improvement Plan – Blythewood Road to US 21 to Langford Road



6.4 Blythewood Road to US 21 to Langford Road

More Detailed Description of Recommendation #14

The improvement of this project will begin at the On- and Off- ramps on the eastside of I-77 and Blythewood Road to just east of Sandfield Road along Langford Road. The length is less than a mile. The right-of-way for this section of project is yet to be determined, however, acquisition of adjacent properties is necessary to accommodate the potential improvements to this section of Blythewood Road. A roundabout is planned at the intersection of McNulty Street, Creech Road and Blythewood Road. Roadway treatment is also planned at the next signalized intersection of Boney Road and Blythewood Road with a dedicated left turn lane and two travel lanes for both eastbound and westbound traffic.

Significant changes are planned at the Blythewood Road and US 21 intersection. Langford Road would be redesigned from Sandfield Road to join Blythewood Road at the intersection of US 21/Main Street. Samuel Bookhart Lane would be redesigned as well to be extended to a new intersection at the proposed Langford Lane. Private properties that had their access from the old Langford Road would now have new access from the proposed Samuel Bookhart Lane. The old Langford Road intersection at US 21 would be closed. The elevation at the new intersection of Blythewood Road, Langford Road and US 21/Main Street would be lowered to be at the same elevation as the existing railroad track located along US 21/Main Street. Safety railroad crossing arms would be located at Langford Road before the Blythewood Road US 21/Main Street intersection. Langford Road at the intersection would have five lanes with two lanes going southbound on US 21/Main Street, two lanes to Blythewood Road and one lane going eastbound on Langford Road. The outer lane of the westbound lanes would have right turn lane going northbound on US 21/Main Street. The eastbound lane would be separated by a narrow median from the westbound lanes.

At the signalized Blythewood Road and Langford Road intersection, US 21/Main Street would have four lanes on the north side and five lanes on the south side of this road. On the north side, the travel lanes consist of a northbound lane, a left turn lane going eastbound on Langford lane, and two southbound lanes with the outer lane accommodating a right turn lane as well. A detailed map of the Blythewood Road to US 21 Improvement Project recommendations is shown in **Figure 6.5** on the following page.



Blythwood Traffic Improvement Area Plan



- LEGEND**
- Study Area Boundary
 - Highways
 - State Highways
 - Railroads
 - Proposed Signal Control
 - Proposed Laneage
 - Proposed Stop Control
 - ▼ Proposed Yield Control
- 14 Blythwood Road to US 21**
• Install Crech Road Connector (two lane Road) from Blythwood Road to US 21.

0 3,000 6,000 9,000 12,000 Feet

BLYTHEWOOD TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN
Blythwood, South Carolina

Figure 6.5 Blythwood Road to US 21 Improvement Project Recommendation Map



Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG **Technical Committee**

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: August 16, 2022

SUBJECT: Feasibility Studies: SC 6, US 76, and US 176

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests a recommendation of approval to amend the 2020 – 2027 Transportation Improvement Program to add \$500K to conduct a feasibility analysis for the SC 6, US 76, and US 176 Corridors.

BACKGROUND

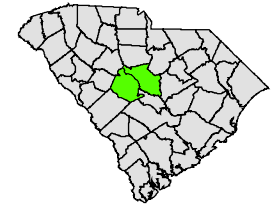
The Central Midlands Council of Governments and Columbia Area Transportation Study (COATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) serves as the comprehensive plan for transportation investment to support the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within the CMCOG region and the Columbia urbanized area through the plan horizon year of 2045. It establishes the purpose and need for major projects included in the federal transportation funding program, identifies activities to address major transportation issues, and prioritizes investments in the transportation system.

Based on this plan, a feasibility study has been requested for the SC 6, US 76 and US 176 corridors. This analysis will be conducted as part of the SCDOT Feasibility Report. SCDOT will devise a project development team that will define the project scope, goals and objectives, purpose and need, potential environmental, cultural, and social impacts, estimated cost, schedule, benefit/cost analysis, and risk analysis.

The following segments have been identified for the feasibility analysis:

- Broad River Rd (US 76/176) – from Dutch Fork Rd (US 76) to Woodrow Street
- Broad River Rd (US 76/176) – from Woodrow Street to I-26 Interchange
- Chapin Rd (US 76) – from Murray Lindler Road to Sid Bickley Road
- Chapin Rd/Dutch Fork Road – from Sid Bickley Road to Three Dog Road
- Dutch Fork Road – from Three Dog Road to Twin Gates Road
- SC 6 from Bush River Road to US 76

SC 6, US 76 and US 176 Corridors



Legend

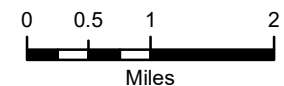
Corridor

Miles

- A - 1.79
- B - 2.11
- C - 2.8
- D - 1.74
- E - 1.14
- F - 4.55

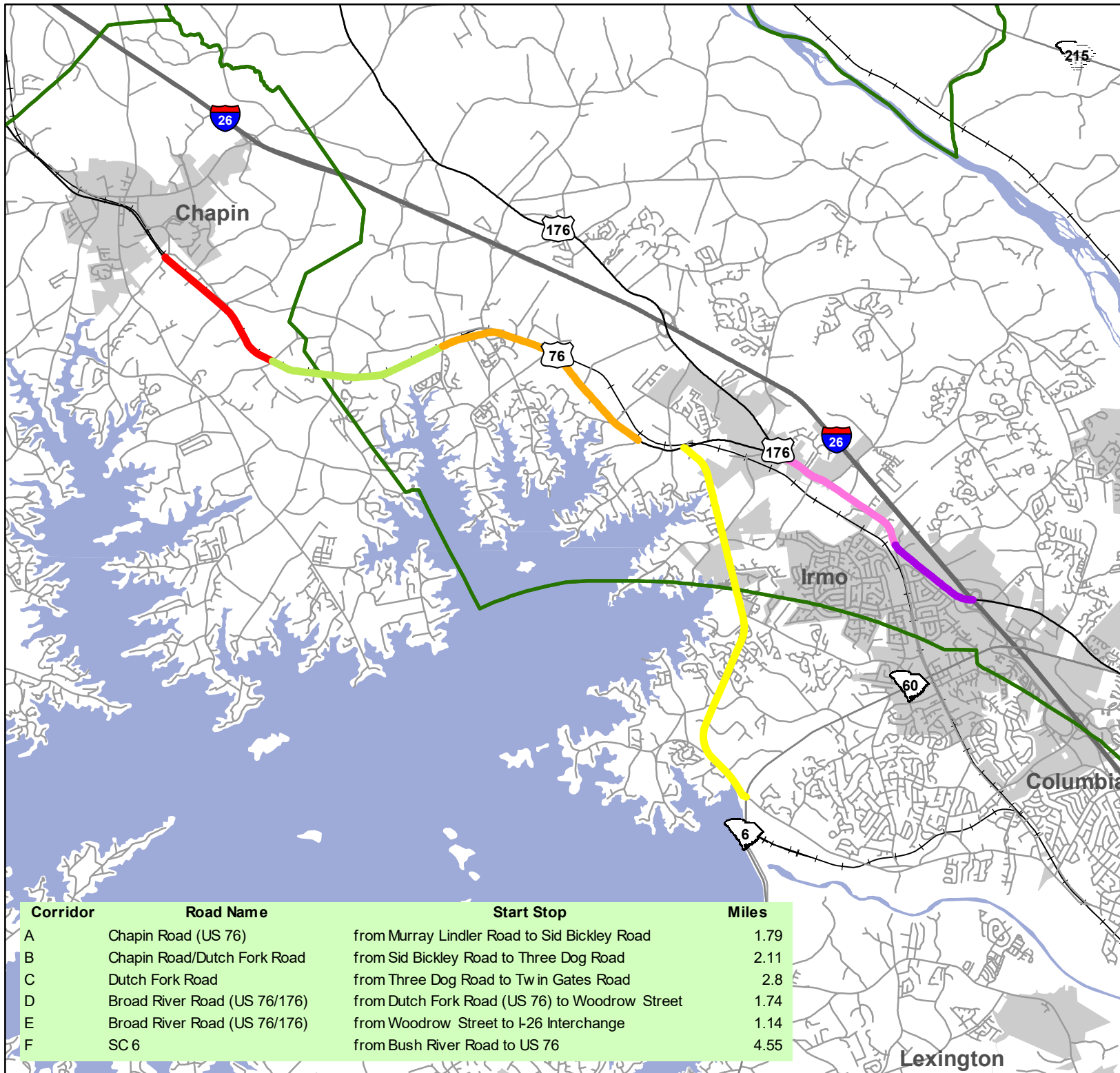
- Municipal Boundaries
- Interstates
- US Highways
- SC Highways
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water
- County Boundary

Central Midlands Council of Government disclaims responsibility for damage or liability associated with the use of this information. All reasonable efforts have been made to ensure accuracy.



Date Map Created: 18 August 2022

C:\...Transportation\Reginald\2022\



Corridor	Road Name	Start Stop	Miles
A	Chapin Road (US 76)	from Murray Lindler Road to Sid Bickley Road	1.79
B	Chapin Road/Dutch Fork Road	from Sid Bickley Road to Three Dog Road	2.11
C	Dutch Fork Road	from Three Dog Road to Twin Gates Road	2.8
D	Broad River Road (US 76/176)	from Dutch Fork Road (US 76) to Woodrow Street	1.74
E	Broad River Road (US 76/176)	from Woodrow Street to I-26 Interchange	1.14
F	SC 6	from Bush River Road to US 76	4.55