

Central Omaha Bus Rapid Transit

Connecting the Dots



2014 TIGER Application



Westroads Mall



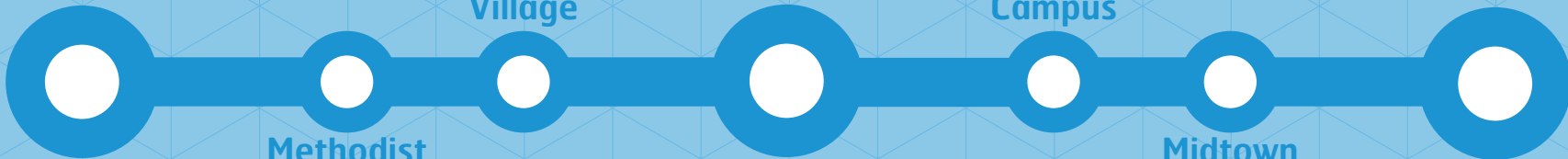
Crossroads Village



UNMC Campus



Downtown



Methodist Hospital

UNO Campus

Midtown Crossing



APRIL 28, 2014
DUNS: 137920450

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“Omaha is at an important crossroads in the development of better transit in our city.”

-Sara Howard
Nebraska State Senator

Electronic versions of Narrative and Appendices can be found at www.ometro.com/tiger

CENTRAL OMAHA BUS RAPID TRANSIT

Project Type: Transit (Bus Rapid Transit)

Location: City of Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska
Congressional District 2, an urban area

Total Project Cost: \$30,583,680

TIGER Grant Funds Requested: \$18,591,960

Primary Point of Contact:

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The infographic is a grid of blue and white icons and text. The top row features '8 MILES', 'BRT', a bus icon, '1.5 MILES', and a diamond icon with 'SEMI-EXCLUSIVE GUIDEWAY'. The second row shows '10 MIN PEAK', '15 MIN OFF-PEAK', '20 MIN EVENING', and '7 DAYS PER WEEK'. The third row includes a traffic light icon with 'Q JUMP SIGNAL PRIORITY', a dollar sign icon with 'PREPAID BOARDING', and 'LEVEL BOARDING' with a person boarding icon. The bottom row has 'BRANDED STATIONS' and a station icon.

2,740

PASSENGERS
OPENING DAY

1,200

JOBS

1,350

RESIDENTS

\$450
MILLION

DEVELOPMENT

\$18.5 MILLION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Connecting the Dots best describes the Central Omaha Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Omaha is fortunate to have a linear 7.98 mile corridor which includes major retail, the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO), and three major medical complexes: Methodist, Children’s, and the University of Nebraska Medical Center,

a renowned research and medical facility. The corridor also includes a recently developed dense, mixed use, urban area known as Midtown Crossing. The headquarters of all of Omaha’s five Fortune 500 companies (Berkshire Hathaway, ConAgra Foods, Mutual of Omaha, Peter Kiewit & Sons, and Union Pacific) are located within a block of the project corridor.



District	Description
Westroads	Existing mall with over 130 shops undergoing renovation and modernization.
Methodist & Children’s Hospitals	2 major medical facilities that serve over 600,000 patients per year and 4,5000 employees.
Crossroads	Planned mixed-use redevelopment to include retail, restaurants, offices, and residential facilities. Site of future planned Metro transit center.
UNO	Over 15,000 students and nearly 200 programs of study.
UNMC	Hospital, 6 colleges and 2 institutes serving more than 3,400 students; over 11,000 employees.
Midtown Crossing	New mixed-use development with restaurants, housing and hotel.
Downtown	Largest concentration of civic, cultural, and employment facilities in Omaha with a growing residential population.
Old Market	Downtown premier arts and entertainment district featuring dining, shopping, corporate meeting facilities, hotels, and night life. One of Nebraska’s most popular tourist destinations.

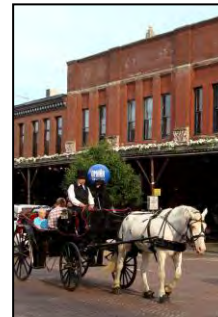


Three Metro transit centers will be directly linked by the BRT route, two of which are currently in project development. Today, local bus service operating on this alignment carries more than 11% of Metro’s daily passengers. The Central Omaha BRT will intersect nearly every route in the transit system and will serve as the spine of the regional transit network.

“Transit is a vital component of helping our community thrive.”

**-Jamie Berglund,
Omaha Chamber of Commerce**

Anchoring the corridor is Downtown Omaha, the region’s largest employment center and entertainment destination including the Old Market District, convention center, and arena (Host of the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Swim Trials and the NCAA College World Series). The corridor connecting these dots is tailor made for BRT service that will thrive and improve the efficiency of the entire regional transit system.



Interest in improving transit in our community is at a level not seen in the past 25 years. The broad base support for this project and transit in general is evidenced by the diversity of the support letters in Appendix H. A summary of the many studies in the region that point to improved transit services as being critical to the vibrancy and sustainability of the Omaha metropolitan area is in Appendix E.

As stated recently by a public participant,

“It’s time to stop studying and time to start building”. *We agree.*

As you review the following pages and appendices, you will quickly discover the potential this project has to not only effectively connect these destinations but position the entire regional transit system for future growth and sustainability.

The Central Omaha Bus Rapid Transit project provides an urban transit alternative to connect activity centers and neighborhoods in Central Omaha while tying together the regional transit network to improve mobility and foster employment growth and economic development.

STATEMENT OF NEED

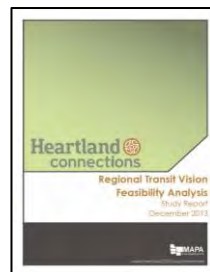
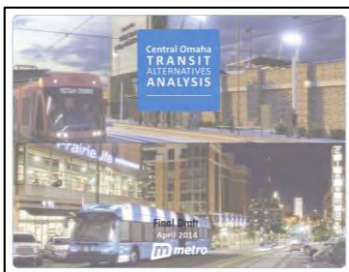
- Spatially disconnected activity centers
- Lack of transit priority corridor
- Increased transit demand from population and employment growth
- Imbalanced parking availability and capacity
- Poor trip circulation for special events
- Lack of transit access to jobs
- Lack of adequate stop and service amenities
- Sustainability goals / measures in adopted plans



Figure 1: Major Activity Centers within the BRT corridor



The project is a selected locally preferred alternative, as identified in an Alternatives Analysis Study (AA) cooperatively commissioned by the City of Omaha and Metro. This corridor was also identified as the priority for transit investment in a recently completed Regional Transit Vision Study (RTV), a cooperative study commissioned by the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) and Metro. The RTV is the first completed element and input into the MAPA Heartland 2050 effort, a regional planning study to develop future metropolitan growth scenarios promoting livability funded by a HUD Sustainable Communities grant. The Bus Rapid Transit project effectively addresses the 2030 sustainability goals outlined in the *Omaha Master Plan Environmental Element (2010)*. The Urban Form and Transportation category of this plan provides direction for Omaha to substantially reduce its impact on the environment and the per capita cost of critical infrastructure and municipal services, increase urban quality and community health, increase density, and encourage pedestrian activity and alternative modes of transportation (*especially transit*).



Project Goals

- Improve mobility for those who live, work, shop, seek medical treatment and recreate in the corridor
- Improve level of transit in community
- Support sustainable growth
- Support local plans

Improved Mobility

The project improves transit connectivity, increases opportunities for mobility, and addresses the challenges of navigating an under-connected corridor. Easy, frequent, convenient travel throughout the Dodge/Farnam Street corridor strengthens the connection between major districts, destinations, and activity centers along the BRT line, fostering a more unified and cohesive corridor.

By connecting employment and educational hubs, residential, shopping areas, civic resources, historic districts, cultural landmarks, entertainment venues and medical providers in central Omaha, the proposed project increases mobility and accessibility for the people who live, work, shop, seek medical treatment, and recreate along the corridor. Furthermore, it provides convenient connections to the entire metropolitan area by way of improved connectivity to the transit network. The project improves walking, biking, and transit within the corridor while reducing the need to travel by automobile.

It provides improved transit service for low to moderate-income populations in Downtown, throughout the corridor and by virtue of connectivity, the entire metro area. This includes providing connections that overcome existing physical barriers (length of the corridor, topography, street grades and an interrupted street grid) as well as improving travel times for transit riders.

Distances between key activity centers and districts creating voids of investment and activity:

- North Downtown to Old Market 0.9 miles
- Old Market to Midtown 1.8 miles
- Midtown to UNMC 1.0 mile
- UNMC to UNO 1.8 miles
- Downtown to Crossroads 5.0 miles
- Crossroads to Westroads 3.0 miles
- Westroads to Downtown 8.0 miles

In concert with local efforts, the proposed BRT will play a pivotal role in improving pedestrian connections to the Missouri riverfront. Local plans such as the *Destination Midtown Plan* and *North Downtown Plan* identify needs to improve transit connections to areas immediately adjacent to the Downtown core, the *Downtown Omaha Master Plan* envisioned a need to create more effective transit service into Downtown and provide convenient connector service to the transit network.

Special Populations Will Be Better Served

16% of the households within ¼ mile of the proposed BRT route do not have access to a vehicle and will benefit directly from this project. The Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) in Appendix A found that transit dependent populations will realize \$6,214,000 in benefits over a 20 year period (discounted at 7%) as a direct result of this project.

As the BRT corridor transverses the major employment and educational institutions in the region, this project improves access to jobs and educational opportunities for low-income individuals throughout the community. Furthermore, the corridor intersects many older, established neighborhoods bolstering the middle class in the Omaha region.

Improved Level of Transit in the Community

The Regional Transit Vision study highlighted a number of corridors for capital investments in transit infrastructure including a network of BRT projects. Of these corridors, Dodge/Farnam was identified as the highest priority serving as the spine of the long-range transit network.

Metro has experienced a growth in support in recent years. Annual ridership now exceeds 4.2 million trips per year, the highest in decades. The visibility and convenience of the BRT will allow this trend to continue.



The Central Omaha BRT incorporates a combination of mixed traffic operations and 1.5 miles of semi-exclusive guideway. The project also features:

- Construction of 14 station pairs
 - 6 station pairs 120 ft in length
 - 8 station pairs 60 ft in length
 - 36 fare collection machines
 - 5 shared bicycle rental facilities (B-Cycle)
 - Bicycle parking, pedestrian improvements and landscaping
 - Level boarding
 - Real time arrival displays

- Modifications to traffic signals
 - 2 signals replaced
 - 10 major modifications
 - 4 minor modifications
- Signal prioritization at 16 intersections
- Queue jumps in at least 2 locations
- 8 state-of-the-art BRT vehicles

BRT provides dramatic improvements in travel time, frequency, and service reliability. Transit riders traveling the entire corridor will benefit from a 15.7 minute travel time reduction.

Two of the 14 station pairs are strategically incorporated into the design of planned transit centers at Crossroads and Downtown, successfully leveraging investment resources and promoting system cohesion. This along with soon to be implemented service improvements will provide a seamless integration of the BRT into the transit network as whole. The benefits of this investment will extend to Metro's passengers throughout the transit network and provide regional improvements by virtue of improved connections to all routes including those serving Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Please see Figure 2, displaying the BRT service integration with the regional transit network. Figure 3 shows the the existing transit service in the project area and the proposed improvements to the network.

Figure 2: Omaha Regional Transit Network and BRT Service Characteristics

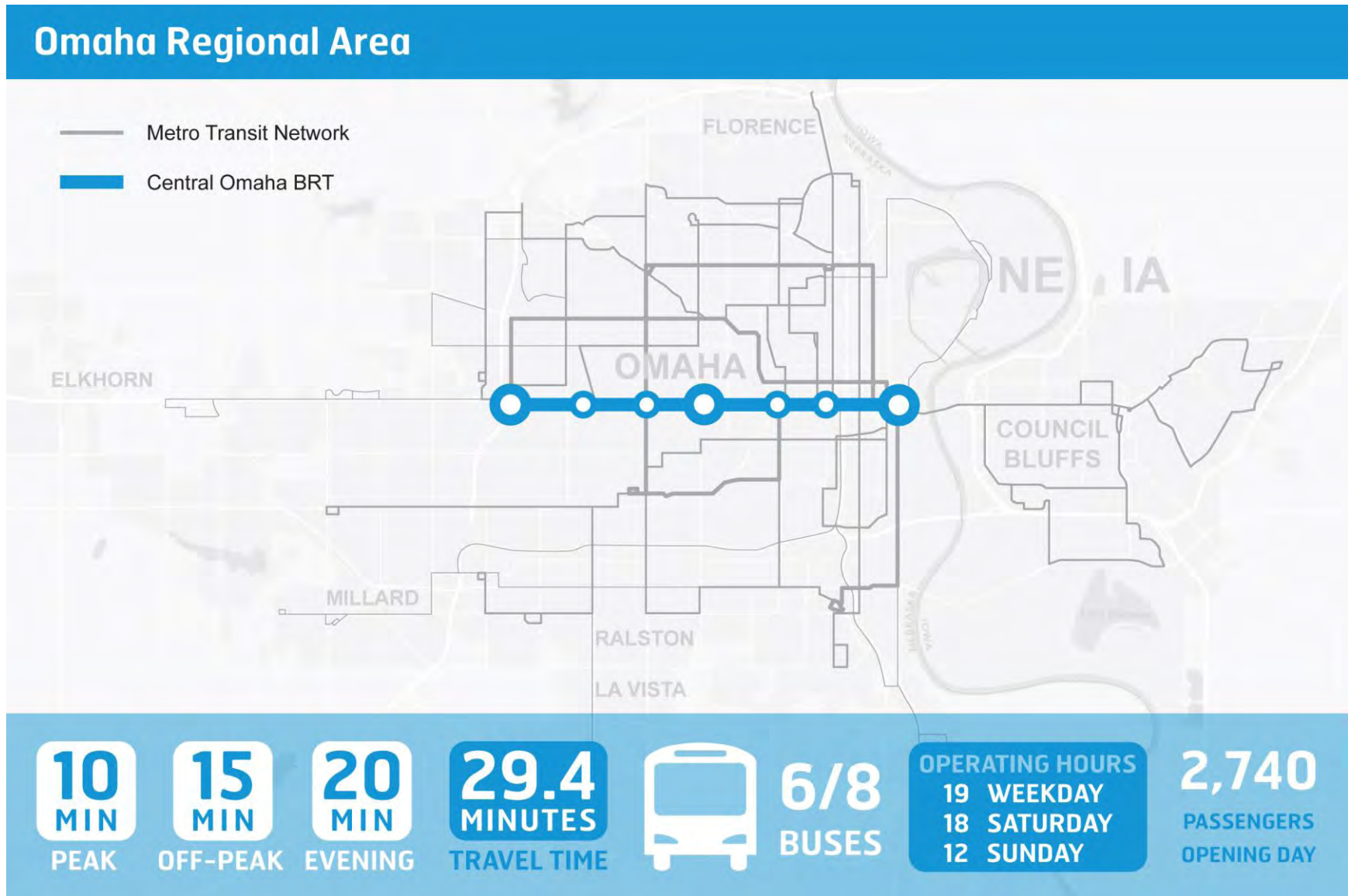
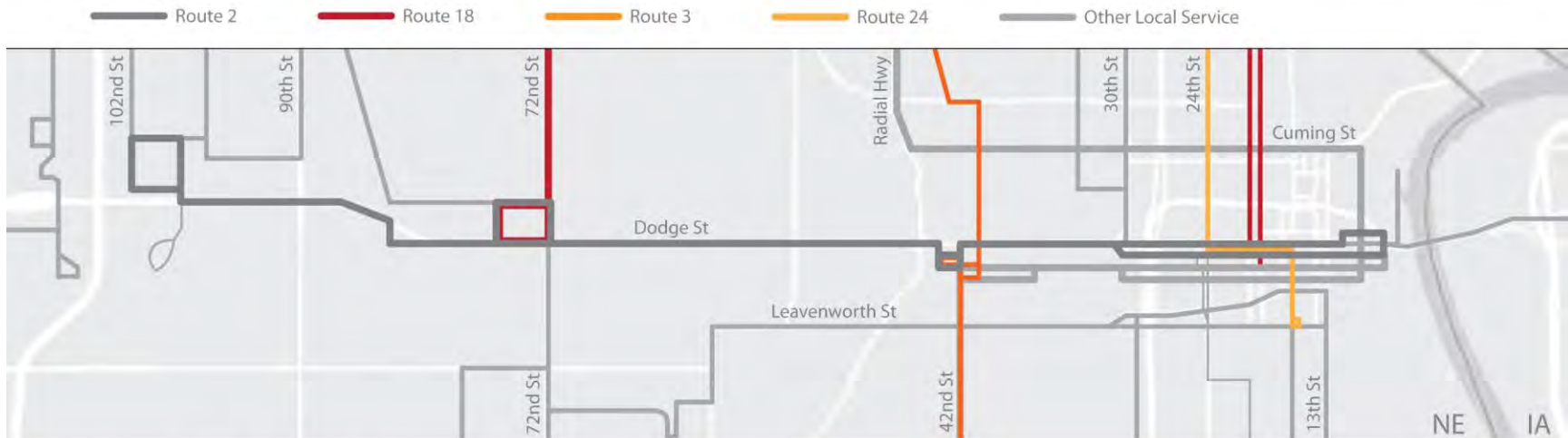
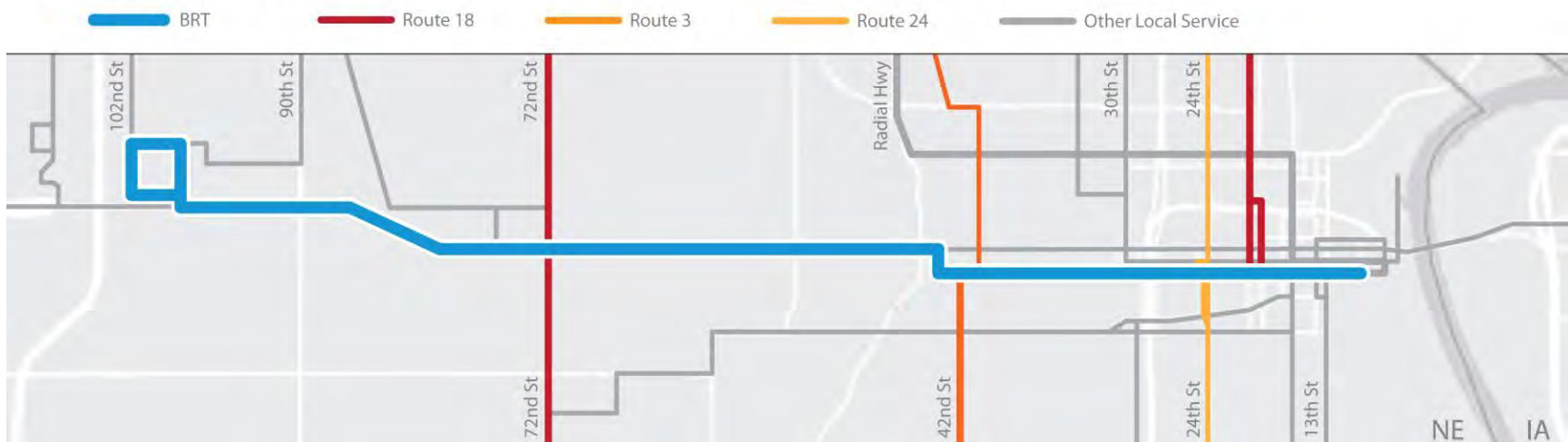


Figure 3: Existing and Proposed Transit Service in the BRT Project Area

Existing Bus Network



Proposed Bus Network



Support Responsible Growth

The BRT corridor not only links nearly all of the major destinations in the City of Omaha on one linear, high frequency route, but is also an area targeted for development and redevelopment. Recent and currently planned in-fill developments at Midtown Crossing, UNMC, Crossroads, and the Methodist and Children's medical complexes have created higher demand for new connections between these points and a desire for a revitalized transit system throughout the corridor.

As outlined in Appendix C, an analysis of current land uses and parcels reveals a baseline of \$1.1 billion in development that is projected to occur in this corridor by 2030. Construction of the BRT will generate an additional \$450 million in development on top of this baseline forecast. This infill development will increase density, reduce regional VMT and VHT, and promote the livability of the Omaha region.

- \$450 million in additional new development
- 1,200 new long-term jobs created
- 1,350 new residents in the corridor
- 199 short term BRT construction jobs
- 4,244,500 VMT reduction annually, opening year
- 11,222,120 VMT reduction annually, 2040
- 105,040 VMT reduction annually, opening year
- 502,320 VMT reduction annually, 2040

UNMC – Planned Buffet Cancer Center



Midtown Crossing Development



Project Benefits

The anticipated benefits of the Central Omaha Bus Rapid Transit are far reaching. Benefits in the BCA in Appendix A are conservative in nature and reflect a return of \$1.85 for every \$1 invested. This ratio reflects only those benefits which will accrue to the nation as a whole through investment in the project. There are numerous other benefits to this project that are specific to the Omaha - Council Bluffs urbanized area and are omitted from the the BCA including:

- \$450 million in increased construction
- 1,200 new jobs
- 1,350 new residents
- 199 short term construction jobs
- Increase in worker productivity
- Property value increases associated with transit oriented development





Project Costs

The capital cost of this project is \$30.5 million with an annual increase in operations and maintenance costs of \$1.3 million including both direct and indirect costs.

Criteria	Benefit	Description	Value (7% Discount)
Economic Competitiveness	Vehicle Operating Cost Savings	Reductions in monetary costs to drivers switching to public transit.	\$ 8,604,000
	Travel Time Savings	Door-to-door trip time savings to BRT users.	\$ 37,328,000
Livability	Transit Dependent Mobility	Portion of trip cost and time savings accruing to transit dependent persons.	\$ 6,214,000
Sustainability	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Air Quality Damage Reductions	Reductions in pollutants and greenhouse gases relative to the no-build condition.	\$ 2,428,273
	Water Quality Damage Reductions	Reductions in runoff and fuel spill pollution relative to the no-build scenario.	\$ 915,000
Safety	Accident Reduction	Reductions in property losses, injuries and deaths due to reductions in automobile use.	\$ 11,701,000
Total			\$ 67,190,273

PROJECT PARTIES

The following agencies play a key role in the development of the Central Omaha Bus Rapid Transit project.

Agency	Role
<p>Transit Authority of the City of Omaha</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Agency providing express, circulator, and local bus service • \$6 Million Local Match contribution • Project Lead on NEPA Documentation • Oversight expertise for design, construction, operations, and maintenance • Has technical, financial, and legal capacity to complete this TIGER project on time and on budget
<p>City of Omaha</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application supported by the Mayor of Omaha • Public Works Department will coordinate on design, construction, and maintenance of the guideway and traffic signals • \$150,000 in-kind contribution towards professional planning services • Design review, project permits
<p>Metropolitan Area Planning Agency</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Greater Omaha region • Approval of Draft Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment by MAPA's Board of Directors on April 24, 2014 • \$50,000 in-kind contribution in planning services
<p>Nebraska Department of Roads</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application supported by the Nebraska Department of Roads • \$1 Million of Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funding • Coordination for queue jump and signal priority along Dodge Street (Nebraska State Highway 6)

PARTNERS

GRANT FUNDS AND SOURCES / USES OF PROJECT FUNDS

Project Budget

Metro is requesting \$18.6 million in TIGER 2014 funding or approximately 60.8% of the estimated project construction cost. Appendix D contains the detailed project budget using the FTA Standard Cost Categories (SCC) format and a table of project elements by funding source.



Description of Scope	% of Total Cost	Estimated Cost
Guideway Elements	16%	\$5,040,000
Stations, Stops, Terminals	35%	\$10,560,000
Sitework & Special Conditions - Pedestrian and Bicycle Access & Landscaping	1%	\$430,100
Systems – Traffic Signals, Communications, Fare collection	10%	\$3,204,000
Right of Way – Curb cuts	1%	\$300,000
Professional Services – Design, construction management, geotechnical survey	17%	\$5,193,210
Vehicles	14%	\$4,400,000
Project Reserve	5%	\$1,456,370
Total Cost		\$30,583,680
TIGER Request		\$18,591,960
Percentage of Tiger Request to Total Cost		60.8%

Project Funding Sources

39.2% of the total project budget is secured. Metro has the financial capacity to provide the local non-federal match. Evidence of Metro’s capacity is contained in the Project Readiness section and Appendix I.

Capital Funding Sources	Amount
TIGER 2014 Request	\$18,591,960
Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) - Secured	\$1,000,000
Surface Transportation Funds (STP) - Secured	\$1,707,000
FTA Bus Livability 5309 Funds - Secured	\$768,000
FTA Transit Center Construction Funds - Secured	\$704,000
Transportation Alternatives Program - Secured	\$735,980
FTA 5339 Formula Funds - Formula	\$960,000
Metro Local Match - Secured	\$6,116,740
Total Funding	\$30,583,680

“A successful transit system is key to creating a high quality of life in Omaha that is accessible to all.”

-Connie Spellman
Omaha by Design

Funding Source	Description
Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)	Requested funds for guideway investment, stations, sitework and special conditions, traffic systems and fare collection, engineering professional services, and BRT vehicles
Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ)	Award letter from NDOR in Appendix I. Funds will be used toward guideway investment.
Surface Transportation Funds (STP)	Programmed in 2015 TIP. Funds will be used towards BRT vehicle procurement.
FTA Bus Livability Funds – Crossroads*	Awarded 5309 funds for the Crossroads Transit Center at 72 and Dodge Streets; includes a BRT station pair, transit signal modification and priority, and fare collection equipment
FTA Downtown Transit Center Funds*	Awarded funds for Downtown Transit Center which will include 1 BRT station pair and fare collection equipment for BRT in final design
Transportation Alternatives Program	Flexed to Metro in 2013 as 5307 funds / Ready to be programmed toward station development and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
FTA 5339 Formula Funds	Formula Bus and Bus Facility Funds to Metro Transit to be used toward BRT vehicles.
Metro Local Match	Property taxes, fare revenues, local contributions, and non-federal grants.

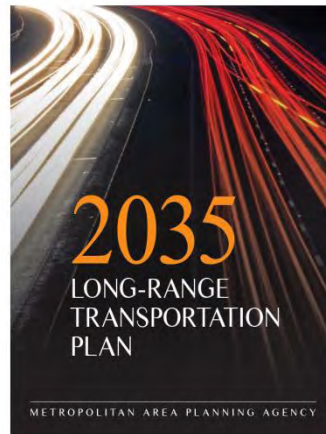
* Funds are awarded and projects are in project development. Only those portions of the project costs which directly relate to cost elements of BRT project are included. Project budget does not reflect entire federal award amounts.

PRIMARY SELECTION CRITERIA

State of Good Repair

The Central Omaha Bus Rapid Transit project improves the efficiency of the regional transit system and was recommended for adoption by resolution of MAPA’s Board of Directors for inclusion in the Long Range Transportation Plan. The BRT project is consistent with local and regional multi-modal transportation objectives and numerous planning studies which have concluded a need for upgraded transit services.

Metro has the financial capacity and facilities to assure the continued operation and success of the project. The following details the long-term benefits created by the project:



- As a result of the phased Regional Transit Vision recommendations, the background bus network is being realigned to allow convenient, frequent feeder service to the BRT.
- The project will connect multiple mixed use venues throughout the corridor, in the densest part of the metropolitan area. It will allow for greater ease of travel and promote continued

Central Omaha Bus Rapid Transit: Connecting the Dots

development in a corridor that has experienced approximately \$2 billion of public and private development over the past decade.

- The project will add eight uniquely branded BRT vehicles to the Metro fleet.



Realignment and Improvement of Existing Metro Bus System

As this corridor is already the major east-west route in the Metro transit system, Metro is planning route realignments consistent with recommendations from the Regional Transit Vision Study (RTV). The recommendations improve feeder service to this important corridor by way of realignment and increased frequencies. For example, Metro’s second busiest route, #18, which runs north south on 72nd Street providing an important connection with the BRT at the Crossroads Transit Center, is slated to increase to 15 minute frequency all day. The RTV report in Appendix G includes the recommended phased transit network improvements.

- The BRT is projected to provide passengers traveling the full length of the corridor a time savings of 15.7 minutes per one way trip during the peak periods, as compared to current service. Realignment of other Metro feeder routes will also result in travel time savings.
- On opening day, the BRT will enjoy 2,740 daily passenger trips, a net increase to the Metro transit network of 1,833 trips.

Economic Competitiveness

The BRT project provides economic benefits, both in the corridor and throughout the region. These benefits help assure the economic competitiveness of the region, improving the lives and livability in general for our residents. The Alternatives Analysis Study for this corridor utilized projected new construction starts, as compared to the baseline, their economic contribution, and a projection analysis of economic benefit, by sector. See Appendix F. A net gain in construction activity of \$456,492,650 is projected for this corridor.

As previously stated, this corridor has enjoyed development investments of approximately \$2,000,000,000 over the past decade.

The corridor includes:

- Three major medical/research complexes,
- A soon to be redeveloped 4 square block area, currently called the “Crossroads” estimated at \$400,000,000,
- A major university with current enrollment of over 15,000 students,
- A revitalized mixed use development (\$330,000,000) called Midtown Crossing,
- The Downtown core, the regions’ largest employment destination. Additionally, within the Downtown core is TD Ameritrade Park, the Century Link Convention and Arena complex, and the Old Market,
- Headquarters of five Fortune 500 businesses.

Projected Development Investment by 2030:

	Baseline without BRT	With BRT	Net Gain from BRT
Residential	\$420,000,000	\$613,200,000	\$193,200,000
Office	\$625,800,000	\$840,375,900	\$214,575,900
Hotel	\$58,987,500	\$65,958,750	\$6,971,250
Retail / Service	\$42,920,000	\$84,665,500	\$41,745,500
Total	\$1,147,707,500	\$1,604,200,150	\$456,492,650

“The BRT will help ensure that Omaha can attract and retain the best and brightest minds.”

-Craig Moody
Verdis

Economic Competitiveness Benefits of BRT:

- Increased development investment - \$456,492,650
- Vehicle Operating Cost Savings (mode shift) - \$8,604,000
- Travel time savings - \$37,328,000
- Creation of 1,200 new jobs in the corridor
- Attract 1,340 new residents
- 199 short term construction jobs

Preferential treatment for transit vehicles at intersections and reduced vehicular traffic, relative to the baseline, through a mode shift from personal vehicles to BRT will provide travelers throughout the region significant travel time savings. By 2040, the system will reduce daily regional travel time by nearly 2,000 hours per day, or over 500,000 hours annually. The economic benefit associated with the improved efficiency is estimated to be over \$37 million (2014\$) over the first twenty years of service. Drivers switching to public transportation will realize \$8 million in transportation cost savings.

BRT will create 1,200 long-term new jobs in the corridor and 199 short-term construction jobs. The introduction of Bus Rapid Transit also attracts 1,340 new residents.





UNMC Durham Research Center

Quality of Life

The region as a whole will benefit from the BRT project by providing fast, reliable, safe, frequent service connecting major destinations. Other changes to the background transit network will truly make this regional vision a reality. At a minimum, the BRT project provides:

- Enhanced mobility and multi-modal opportunities by virtue of the frequent BRT service,
- Expanded “B” cycle, shared bike rental, program via strategically placed bicycle stations along the BRT route,

- Improved pedestrian access to and from BRT stations. Connections will be enhanced to two regional mixed use trails, building upon the bus to bike to trails programs,
- Faster travel times though signal prioritization, queue jumping, and more direct service will allow for more effective competition with private vehicle travel times. Travel time for passengers will improve by as much as 35% resulting in a benefit of \$35 million (2014\$) over 20 years,
- Improved access throughout the region through realignment of background bus system which will improve feeder routes and frequencies for routes that intersect the BRT,
- Enhanced passenger amenities at each station, allowing for safe convenient boarding and alighting. Amenities will include; real time arrival display, pre-board fare collection systems, and safe modern waiting areas,
- Improved air quality in the region. Significant reductions in emissions are forecasted for both opening year and through year 2040,

- Transit dependent populations are expected to accrue over \$6 million in benefits (2014\$) in trip costs and time savings over a 20 year period.

- Harmful emissions are reduced as a result of this project, both for opening year and year 2040. Refer to Appendix A for more detailed information.

Quality of Life Benefits of BRT:

- Increased multimodal opportunities
- Improved walkability
- Faster travel times
- Improved transit access to entire region
- Enhanced passenger amenities and comfort
- Improved air quality
- Transit dependent populations will experience \$6,214,000 in trip cost and time savings benefits
- Location efficiency and higher density infill development



Memorial Park, located on BRT Corridor
Site of annual Bank of the West “Celebrates America” Concert, attracting over 50,000 attendees.

Environmental Sustainability

The BRT project will help to keep Omaha within attainment guidelines by reducing harmful emissions. As Omaha is in borderline non-attainment, this will contribute to overall area efforts to achieve measureable, sustainable ozone reductions. The BRT project will help the region and the City of Omaha by significantly contributing toward meeting the goals in the Environmental Element of the City of Omaha Master Plan.

The Urban Form and Transportation element of the Environmental Element of the City of Omaha Master Plan sets forth the following goals to which this project will contribute:

- Population density will grow from the current 3,489 people per square mile to 4,500 by year 2030.
- Ten percent of all trips in Omaha will be made via active transportation modes by year 2030, versus today’s 2 percent.

- A goal of 65 percent of all work commutes in single – occupancy vehicles by year 2030, as compared to the current 82 percent.
- Per capita motor vehicle miles traveled will decrease by 10% by year 2030.

Model runs conservatively estimate the BRT service will generate 2,740 passenger trips, opening day. Nearly 67% of these or 1,833 will be new riders. The resultant decrease in daily vehicle miles traveled (VMT) equals 16,325 or 4,244,500 VMT per year.

Over the next 20 years, the BRT will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by over 52,000 metric tons and decrease emissions of pollutants such as nitrogen oxides, particulate matter, and volatile organic compounds. Similarly the reduction in VMT will lessen the harmful effects of runoff and oil spills on water quality.

- **Economic benefit associated with reduced damage to air quality: \$2,428,273**
- **Economic benefit associated with reduced damage to water quality: \$915,000**

Safety

As is the case with all of Metro’s fleet, the BRT vehicles will be equipped with video surveillance in order to enhance the safety of passengers and Metro drivers. This system allows Metro staff to watch real time video, in the event of an incident or accident.



Reductions in regional VMT brought about through the implementation of the BRT will decrease the potential for crashes, improving public safety. In addition, providing a multimodal corridor establishes a mix of modes on the roadway for users to choose, including buses, cars, trucks, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Pedestrian amenities supporting the BRT will have a traffic calming effect, reducing speeds and improving safety for all road users.

Using the societal costs of crashes included in the TIGER BCA guidance, the reduction in crashes associated with implementing BRT in the corridor is approximately \$11.7 million (2014\$).

SECONDARY SELECTION CRITERIA

Innovation

The BRT will employ a number of innovative technologies and techniques. For example, on the eastern end of the route, from 42nd Street to Downtown, Farnam and Harney Streets are adjacent one-way only pairs. The one-way westbound configuration of Farnam Street will be modified to allow for a contraflow, transit only eastbound lane.



This will allow for faster movement eastbound and preserve Harney Street for future implementation of the Harney Street Cycle Track.

The Harney Street Cycle Track was ranked as the #1 project in the recently completed City of Omaha Transportation Master Plan. Implementation of the BRT and Harney Cycle Track will place these two important transportation elements within one block of each other, providing true multi-modal opportunities.

The recently completed Alternative Analysis Study also selected dual technologies in the eastern section of this corridor, utilizing modern streetcar as a complementary urban circulator. As such, station platforms in the coincidental operating areas will be constructed so as to accommodate a future streetcar application. Other technologies planned include:

- Signal prioritization will be utilized in order to provide the BRT preferential treatment.
- Queue jumps employed at two of the busiest intersections along the corridor giving the BRT an advantage in speed and reliability.
- Passenger amenities will be state-of-the-art, with solar power, wherever possible; heating; ticket vending / fare collection; real time displays and lighting.
- WIFI will be available across the entirety of the BRT corridor.
- BRT vehicles will include video surveillance equipment.

Partnership

The BRT project has broad backing, as is evidenced by the support letters included in Appendix H. Main project partners include the City of Omaha, The Metropolitan Planning Area Planning Agency and Live Well Omaha.

The City of Omaha, a partner with Metro on the recently completed AA study which identified BRT as a locally preferred alternative has offered up to \$150,000 of in-kind planning and traffic engineering services toward the effort. Similarly, MAPA has offered up to \$50,000 of in-kind services.

Live Well Omaha is a broad based organization that promotes health and well-being in the community, with a particular focus on bicycling. Live Well has established “B” cycle shared rental stations throughout Omaha and has committed to providing the bicycles, valued at \$35,000 for 5 new “B” cycle stations as part of this project.

Also, Omaha’s heralded philanthropic community has encouraged Metro to apply for funding to augment the project through their Grant application processes.

The Nebraska Department of Roads has awarded Metro Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality funds in the amount of \$1,000,000 toward this project, if selected.

Additionally, community and stakeholder engagement has been extensive throughout the planning process for this project and will continue into final design and construction. The AA study alone included 22 stakeholder meetings, four public meetings, four mobile workshops, a project specific online town hall, and website. The engagement of several stakeholders including the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Downtown Improvement District, Mutual of Omaha, Omaha Public Power District, and Metropolitan Utilities District has been so extensive as to include substantial financial contributions to the AA and preliminary engineering phases of project development.



Rendering of BRT on Farnam, Alternatives Analysis Study

PROJECT READINESS

Technical Feasibility

The Central Omaha Bus Rapid Transit project has successfully completed the Alternative Analysis process in accordance with FTA guidelines and was selected as the locally preferred alternative. The AA included a screening for fatal flaws, existing right of way, and other considerations. No barriers to implementation were identified and all key stakeholders were in full support.

Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds have been identified for additional study in order to complete preliminary engineering and the environmental process pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The preliminary engineering and NEPA study is being conducted as a partnership between Metro, the City of Omaha, and MAPA to be completed by August 2015. Metro is able and willing to comply with all performance management measures throughout this project. Appendix I includes design layout examples demonstrating technical feasibility.

Financial Feasibility

The Transit Authority of the City of Omaha, dba Metro, was established by Nebraska State Statute in July of 1972 and has operated as the Metropolitan Omaha

public transit agency thereafter. Operating as a Transit Authority, Metro possesses broad statutory authority which helps preserve both its day-to-day operations and ability to obtain and maintain assets vital to the operation. These powers include, but are not limited to, the levying of taxes, bonding/borrowing authority and the ability to enter into contracts that are in Metro's best interests. Throughout its history, Metro has demonstrated its ability to successfully deliver essential services to the community.



Metro strives to maintain contingency reserves equal to 35 - 50% of its operating budget (CY 2014: \$10,000,000-\$14,000,000).

Metro is financially sound, with no indebtedness or identifiable financial risks or threats. Metro prides itself on being good stewards of all federal, state and local tax dollars. A copy of Metro's CY 2013 audited financials is included in Appendix I.

Central Omaha Bus Rapid Transit: Connecting the Dots

Numerous capital projects over the years have been successfully undertaken to improve the service and infrastructure offered to the public. Most recently, Metro successfully completed renovation of its North Omaha Transit Center, a 2.3 million dollar project. This project was funded with a State of Good Repair competitive grant award in 2010. To name a few, other notable grants awarded and completed were:

Bob Kerrey Missouri River Pedestrian Bridge. Overall, a \$22,600,000 project with a \$3,900,000 transit element, which opened in 2008.

ARRA funding in the amount of \$9.9 million received in May of 2009 with project completion and grant closeout by October 2011.



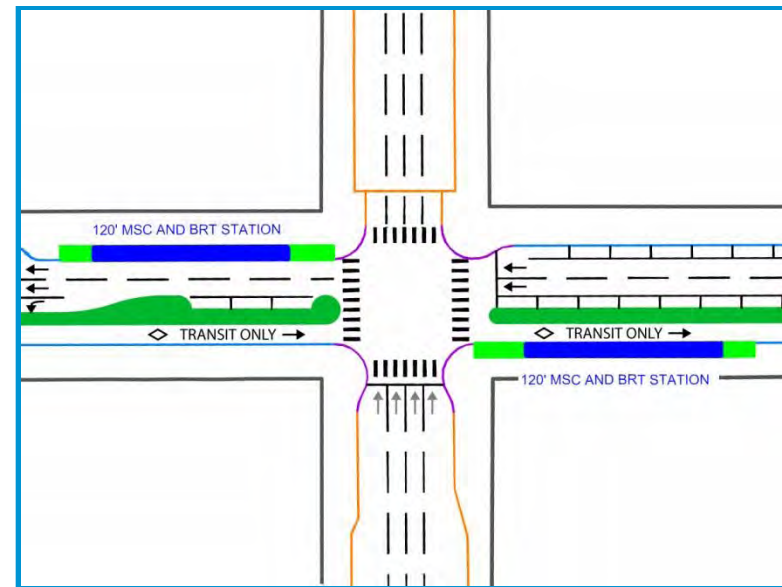
The project is ready for rapid implementation. Metro, the City of Omaha, and MAPA have partnered to complete preliminary engineering and NEPA for this project (outside scope for this application), which will be completed by August 2015. Metro will obligate TIGER grant funding by January 2016.

Project Timeline	2015			2016			2017			2018	
	JAN	JUN	DEC	JAN	JUN	DEC	JAN	JUN	DEC	JAN	JUN
Preliminary Engineering / NEPA	[Bar from Jan to Dec]										
Completion of Preliminary Engineering / NEPA			[Bar at Dec]								
Obligation of TIGER funds in FTA Grant				[Bar from Jan to Jun]							
Final Design / Construction Documents					[Bar from Jun to Dec]						
Construction						[Bar from Dec to Dec]	[Bar from Jan to Jun]	[Bar from Jun to Dec]	[Bar from Dec to Dec]		
Begin Operations											[Bar at Jun]

Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Implementation of the proposed BRT is expected to proceed smoothly as the project enjoys strong community, political, and financial support and has been developed in coordination with many project partners and stakeholders including but not limited to the Nebraska Department of Roads, MAPA, and the City of Omaha. Numerous stakeholders and groups along the corridor have been involved in the development and refinement of this project.

The primary risk to the project is the incorporation of the transit-only contraflow lane along a portion of Farnam Street currently operating with one-way traffic. This design provides numerous benefits to passengers, system cohesion and economic development along this corridor. The local planning process for the project development included a review of traffic patterns, driveway access, and parking capacity and needs. As this is the most technically complex portion of the project, it will be reviewed closely during preliminary engineering which is scheduled for completion in August 2015.



Contraflow Intersection Preliminary Engineering Alternatives Analysis

However, mitigation strategies are in place should the inclusion of this contraflow lane pose a risk to the project. To mitigate any concerns that may arise, the AA and corresponding Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) amendment have identified a design option that would utilize a couplet service operation on Farnam and Harney Streets that would allow the project and the anticipated benefits and enhancements to proceed on schedule.

Environmental Approvals

Coordination with FTA Region VII has been ongoing throughout the process. It is anticipated that the BRT will proceed as a categorical exclusion as no significant environmental, historic, or social impacts have been identified. The NEPA process along with preliminary engineering is funded and will be completed by August 2015.

Legislative Approvals

The project has received significant support from both state and local officials. Appendix H includes letters of support from the City of Omaha and State of Nebraska. The BRT project is broadly supported by Metro's Board of Directors. A board resolution in support of this TIGER application is included in Appendix I. No other legislative approvals are required per Metro's statutory authority.

State and Local Planning

The project has been developed through FTA's AA process including extensive public outreach and has been recommended for inclusion in the LRTP by the MAPA Board of Directors and Transportation Technical Advisory Committee. If awarded funding, the project will be expeditiously included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). A letter from MAPA to this effect is in Appendix I.



Broad public support for this project as a result of local planning efforts is evidenced by the letters of support in Appendix H and by local financial support for the Alternative Analysis, preliminary engineering, and NEPA documentation phases of the project. These studies have been supported financially with over \$1 million in local funds by the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Downtown Improvement District, Mutual of Omaha, Omaha Public Power District, Metropolitan Utilities District, MAPA, and the City of Omaha in addition to the local match provided by Metro.

“**The Omaha metro area is ready to move forward with enhanced transit service to increase access to jobs, create opportunities for economically distressed residents, and improve the region’s quality of life.**”

-Gregory Youell
Executive Director, MAPA

The project aligns closely with and draws support from other previous and ongoing planning documents for the region.

A call for additional investment in transit and support for the project goals can be found in numerous major studies for the region:

- Central Omaha Alternatives Analysis
- Heartland Connections Regional Transit Vision
- MAPA Heartland 2050 Regional Vision
- Omaha Transportation Master Plan Update
- S-Curve Area Connectivity Project
- Harney Street Bicycle Study
- Omaha Downtown Parking Management Plan
- Omaha Master Plan Environmental Element
- Downtown Omaha Master Plan
- North Downtown: Omaha’s New Urban Neighborhood
- Destination Midtown Plan

A summary of these complementary studies can be found in Appendix E.

FEDERAL WAGE CERTIFICATION

A signed certification that all project activities and the project sponsor will comply with the requirements listed in subchapter IV, Chapter 31, U.S.C. Title 40 can be found in Appendix J.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Benefit-Cost Analysis

- Technical Memorandum
- Summary of Benefits and Costs

Appendix B: Ridership Forecast

Appendix C: Economic Development Forecast

- HDR Forecast of Development Impacts for BRT Extension
- SB Friedman Memorandum
- Short Term Job Creation Calculation

Appendix D: Project Capital Budget Using SCC Format

Appendix E: Summary of Complementary Studies and Projects

Appendix F: Alternative Analysis Final Report

Appendix G: Heartland Connections Regional Transit Vision Study Final Report

Appendix H: Letters of Support

Appendix I: Documentation of Project Readiness / Feasibility

- Examples of Technical Feasibility
- Metro 2013 Audited Financial Report
- Letter from MAPA
- Letter from NDOR
- 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment
- Metro Board Resolution in Concurrence of TIGER submittal

Appendix J: Federal Wage Certification

“Overall, this project
will be the first of its
kind in Nebraska.”

-Randall D. Peters
NDOR

SUPPORTING
DOCUMENTS