1 How did we get here?
How were the Draft Plan priorities determined?

The Draft Plan is a product of nearly 10 months of work by the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA), a consultant team, as well as stakeholders and the public.

**Choices Report**
In June 2019, the KCATA released the Choices Report (available at RideKCNext.org), the first step in the network redesign process. It:

- Reviewed land use and demographic conditions in Kansas City, and how those impact the performance of transit service.
- Assessed the purpose and performance of all KCMO bus routes. This included distinguishing routes provided for ridership vs. coverage, highlighting under-performing service, and showing evidence of service duplication and unmet weekend demand.
- Set out the key choices in redesigning the transit network.

**Public Outreach and Survey**
Following the release of the Choices Report, KCATA carried out a comprehensive public outreach and consultation. This effort lasted from early June to the end of July 2019 and included:

- **Community leader workshop.** 139 groups active in the civic, business, neighborhood, non-profit, social service and faith communities were invited to learn about transit network design, and the key choices facing KCATA. This event was attended by 53 community leaders who were polled on the key choices. It also served as a launch pad for broader public outreach.

- **An online and paper survey** on the purpose of transit and the key network choices. This survey gathered over 2,700 responses, including over 1,900 responses from residents of KCMO ZIP codes. It was publicized through actions including:
  - Promoting by e-mail and social media, via accounts tied to KCATA, KCATA staff and stakeholders.
  - Distributing over 600 fact sheets and over 400 surveys to 31 different locations throughout KCMO.
  - Direct outreach to transit riders at 13 high-boarding locations and in eight two to three-hour rides on different bus routes.
  - Ads and media coverage in community-oriented newspapers, radio and television.
Outreach Results

1. Which goals should transit serve?

The online and paper survey asked members of the public to rank seven common goals of transit service by level of importance. These included:

- Less pollution from car and truck traffic.
- Options for people who can’t drive or don’t have access to a car.
- Lower subsidy for customer.
- Service to everyone who pays taxes.
- Maximize access to jobs and opportunity.
- A better economy without more traffic congestion.
- Service to new suburban employment or residential areas.

Among the options available, the responses suggest a strong consensus for prioritizing (1) options for people who can’t drive, and (2) maximizing access to jobs and opportunity.

About 80% of respondents considered “options for people who can’t drive” as one of their top three goals for transit, and around 60% considered “maximize access to jobs and opportunity” among their top three. None of the other goals attained this kind of majority response.

This was true across different demographics and regardless of residential location, as shown in Figure 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which goal should transit serve?</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Options for people who can’t drive or don’t have access to a car</td>
<td>All: 62%</td>
<td>KCMO: 61%</td>
<td>Northland: 77%</td>
<td>South of River: 62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximize access to jobs and opportunity.</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less pollution from car and truck traffic.</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A better economy without more traffic congestion.</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service to new suburban employment or residential areas</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service to everyone who pays taxes.</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower subsidy per customer.</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample size (n): 2722

Figure 10: Survey response tables, part 1. Survey respondents were asked to rank priorities among seven common goals for transit. These tables show that options for people who can’t drive, and maximizing access to opportunity, had much stronger support than any other goals.
2. How to Balance Ridership vs. Coverage goals?
KCATA currently spends about 50% of KCMO service resources on maximizing ridership, and about 50% on maximizing coverage. We asked community leaders (who attended the workshop) and survey respondents whether those percentages should change.

Community leaders tended to favor a significant shift toward a higher ridership network and away from extensive geographic coverage. Nearly 80% of those who answered the workshop poll were in favor of focusing more on ridership, and less on coverage. The median response among workshop attendees was a shift to a 70% ridership/30% coverage balance.

In contrast, only 45% of survey respondents favored a shift toward a higher ridership network. 29% favored a shift to more extensive coverage, and 26% preferred maintaining the existing balance. The median response among survey respondents was to maintain the existing 50/50 split. The main factors that determined opinion on the ridership vs. coverage spectrum included:

- **Age.** 53% of respondents ages 18 to 35 favored a shift toward a higher ridership system, compared to 35% of respondents age 65 and over.
- **Location.** 50% of KCMO residents south of the Missouri river favored a shift toward a higher ridership system, compared to only 35% of KCMO Northland residents.
- **Disadvantage.** People with low incomes and people of color were less likely to favor a shift toward high ridership, and more likely to favor the status quo, than the average respondent.

In the end, KCATA staff and consultants opted to assume a slight shift toward ridership in the Draft Plan (a 60% Ridership/40% Coverage split) for the following reasons:

- **Community leaders present at the workshop polled strongly in favor of higher ridership after extensive discussion on transit issues in Kansas City.**
- **More survey respondents favored a shift toward ridership than any other option. But the survey results did not support the level of change favored by workshop attendees.**

1 This is also true of frequent riders of the existing system, a significant percentage of whom were either low income, people of color, or both.

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Figure 11: Survey response tables, part 2. Community leaders who attended the stakeholder workshop strongly favored a shift to higher ridership and away from coverage. This was less favored among survey respondents, though more survey respondents preferred a shift toward a higher ridership network than maintaining the status quo, or a shift to more extensive coverage.
3. What should the main purpose of Coverage service be?

We asked stakeholder workshop attendees and survey respondents whether it was more important to provide service near (1) people and areas with the highest need, or (2) as many people and places as possible.

Both stakeholder workshop attendees and survey respondents preferred service to places where the need is highest, compared to service to as many places as possible. However, a plurality of survey respondents (47%) indicated that it would be best to do a little bit of both.

The combination of the preferences expressed here with the response on question 1 regarding general goals of transit (high priority for giving options to people who can’t drive), suggests that in the context of a slight shift away from coverage in general, any reductions in coverage should minimize impacts on areas where incomes and/or car ownership are low.

![Survey response tables, part 3. Community leaders who attended the stakeholder workshop strongly prioritized coverage service to places with higher needs for transit over providing service to as many places as possible. A plurality of survey respondents indicated it would be best to do a little bit of both. Nonetheless, far more survey respondents favored focusing on high need areas (40%) than on trying to provide service everywhere (13%).](image-url)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To provide coverage, what is the higher priority between providing service in places where the need is highest, or providing a little service in as many places as possible?</th>
<th>Stakeholder Workshop</th>
<th>Survey Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service to as many places as possible</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little bit of both</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service to places where the need is highest</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size (n)</td>
<td>2375</td>
<td>2375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Survey response tables, part 3. Community leaders who attended the stakeholder workshop strongly prioritized coverage service to places with higher needs for transit over providing service to as many places as possible. A plurality of survey respondents indicated it would be best to do a little bit of both. Nonetheless, far more survey respondents favored focusing on high need areas (40%) than on trying to provide service everywhere (13%).](image-url)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To provide coverage, what is the higher priority between providing service in places where the need is highest, or providing a little service in as many places as possible?</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>KCMO</th>
<th>Northland</th>
<th>South of River</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service to as many places as possible</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little bit of both</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service to places where the need is highest</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size (n)</td>
<td>2375</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>1409</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Survey response tables, part 3. Community leaders who attended the stakeholder workshop strongly prioritized coverage service to places with higher needs for transit over providing service to as many places as possible. A plurality of survey respondents indicated it would be best to do a little bit of both. Nonetheless, far more survey respondents favored focusing on high need areas (40%) than on trying to provide service everywhere (13%).](image-url)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To provide coverage, what is the higher priority between providing service in places where the need is highest, or providing a little service in as many places as possible?</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Frequent Transit Riders</th>
<th>Low Income</th>
<th>Minority</th>
<th>Seniors (65+)</th>
<th>18 - 35 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service to as many places as possible</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little bit of both</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service to places where the need is highest</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size (n)</td>
<td>2375</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>781</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How was the Draft Plan designed?

Design Retreat and Internal Review
Following on the Choices Report and public outreach process, the KCATA project team convened an intensive retreat in September 2019, to collaboratively develop a network design that reflected the priorities communicated by stakeholders and survey respondents.

This retreat brought over 20 staff from the following groups together in a single room for 3 days to develop the core of the network redesign proposal.

- KCATA - Planning, Scheduling and Operations
- City of Kansas City, MO
- City of North Kansas City
- Mid-America Regional Council (MARC)
- Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance
- BikeWalkKC
- KCATA Consultant Team

Internal Review and Draft Plan
The outputs of the Design Retreat were sketch versions of the network redesign map, and the associated service cost estimates.

From September 2019 to January 2020, KCATA staff and consultants worked to refine the designs developed in the Design Retreat, and analyze their consequences.

The results of that process are presented in this Draft Plan report.

Figure 13: Picture of an early sketch of the redesigned bus network, taken during the Design Retreat in September 2019. Note that the lines represented here *DO NOT* represent the full design proposed in this Draft Plan. Please refer to Figure 4 on page 10 for the proposed Draft Network.