2 What’s in the Draft Network?
Network Redesign Principles

Policy Assumptions
In this chapter, we present maps of the Draft Network, and information about how it differs from the existing network. As stated previously, the key policy assumptions that drive this network redesign are:

- Slight shift toward ridership, and away from coverage. 60% of KCMO transit resources should be spent to maximize ridership, and 40% should be spent to maximize coverage. This compares to a roughly 50/50 split in existing service.
- In practice, this means a little more service in areas where many people are likely to use transit often, and a little less service in outlying and/or low-density areas where relatively few people are likely to ride.

- Most coverage service should be provided in higher-need areas, where more people lack transportation alternatives.
  - In practice, this means that any reductions in coverage should avoid impacting areas with significant low-income population and/or many zero-vehicle households.

- No new resources are available. To make the redesign achievable in the next two years, the proposed network design is budget- and cost-neutral. In other words, we are assuming that the resources available are the ones available today. This is important, because it means every proposed transit service improvement requires a service reduction somewhere else.

The first two of these policy assumptions are based on public input on key choices, as described in the previous chapter. The next phase of public input will test whether the results of these assumptions is in fact acceptable to stakeholders, policy-makers and the broader public.

The fixed-budget assumption reflects KCATA’s current financial reality, but it does not reflect KCATA’s opinion on how much transit service should be available.

KCATA is actively seeking increased sources of funding to increase the total amount of transit service in Kansas City, MO and regionally. If more resources were available, the community’s answers on questions like ridership vs. coverage, and where to spend coverage dollars, might be different.

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What’s in the Draft Network?

- Same amount of service, but a higher priority on expanding ridership.
- A frequent grid, seven days a week, to connect more people to opportunity.
  - 19% more people would live within a 1/2 mile of a frequent route. Upgraded East-West frequent service on 12th, 39th, and 47th Streets.
  - All frequent routes would have service every 15 minutes or better on weekdays and Saturdays, every 20 minutes or better on Sundays.
  - In an hour or less, the average KCMO resident could reach 7% more jobs on weekdays, and 22% more jobs on Saturdays on transit.
- A simpler, easier and more efficient network.
  - Flex service expanded to more locations North of the Missouri river.
  - Fewer routes 1/4 mile apart or less connecting the same neighborhoods to Downtown.
  - Routes with fewer than 200 riders per day removed or substantially redesigned.
  - Nine fewer routes, but the network would still serve 99% of the places it serves today.
- Retaining options for those who need transit the most. Number of low-income residents within 1/2 mile of service essentially unchanged.

Principle no. 1: Build the Frequent Grid with Better East-West Service
Increasing ridership requires fast and frequent service in areas where transit can provide useful service to the most people. In KCMO, this means more frequent bus routes in the area south of the Missouri River, north of 75th Street and west of the Blue River.

KCATA has already made investments in north-south service, with MAX routes operating every 10 to 12 minutes on Main St, Troost Ave and Prospect Ave. But it’s still hard to reach opportunities in places like Midtown, Westport, the Plaza and beyond from many places on the East Side. As a result, the Draft Plan proposes a bus every 15 minutes on more East-West streets.

- Independence Avenue, from Downtown KCMO to Winner Road, as in existing service.
- 12th Street, from the Blue Valley to Downtown KC. This is made possible by combining service currently provided every 30 minutes on 9th Street and 12th Street to Downtown KCMO, and combining the routes that run between Downtown KCMO and Downtown KC into a single, more frequent service. This would reduce travel time to Downtown KCMK from many parts of KCMO.
- 31st Street, from MCC - Penn Valley to Van Brunt Blvd. Service would remain frequent on the higher ridership parts of Route 31. East of Van Brunt Blvd, service would continue every 30 minutes to Blue Ridge Crossing, and would be extended every to Three Trails Transit Center, via East 47th St and Blue Ridge Blvd.
- 39th Street, from KU Medical Center to Jackson Ave. The midday frequency of Route 39 would increase from every 20 minutes to every 15. East of Jackson Ave, service would split into two branches, continuing every 30 minutes to Dunbar (39A) and to the Shops on Blue Parkway via the Vineyard neighborhood (39B).
- 47th Street/Blue Parkway from KU Medical Center to the Shops on Blue Parkway. The new Route 47 would provide a connection every 15 minutes between KU Med, Westport, Country Club Plaza and the Shops on Blue. To make this route work more reliably, service on 47th/Blue has been separated from service on Broadway (proposed Route 40).

Combining frequent north-south and east-west routes creates a “frequent grid” effect, making it easier and more convenient to use transit to travel in all directions with a short wait at a single transfer.
How to Read the Maps on This Page

The maps on this page illustrate how the frequent network would expand and begin to represent a grid of connecting North-South and East-West services.

Because the focus of these maps is frequent, high-ridership service, these maps show only the areas where underlying demand (i.e. residential density, job density, and built environment) best supports high-ridership transit service. The little squares represent key points in the network.

Areas within KCMO city boundaries are highlighted in white, though KCMO extends further to the north, south and east of the extent shown.

Existing and proposed transit frequency on each street is denoted by line color, where red lines mean frequent service, every 15 minutes or better. Other colors indicate lower frequencies, as shown in the legend below.

For a detailed route map of the proposed network, please refer to page 27.

Figure 14: Simplified maps of existing and proposed service frequency by major street in the parts of Kansas City, MO that support high ridership service with current resources.
Principle no. 2: Extend Frequent Service to the Weekends

Improving weekend service is crucial to making transit a more useful part of daily life. In existing service, nearly all routes that provide frequent service on weekdays switch to service every 30 minutes on Saturday and Sunday. As a result, the transit network as a whole is much less useful on weekends than on weekdays.

The Draft Plan would change this by ensuring:

- **Saturday service every 15 minutes or better on all frequent routes** (Main MAX, Troost MAX, Prospect Max, Independence Ave, 12th Street, 31st Street, 39th Street, 47th Street)
- **Sunday service every 20 minutes or better on all frequent routes.**

Public transit has traditionally been planned on the assumption that most travel happens on weekdays and during the daytime. But there are good reasons to question whether this should still be the case:

- More and more jobs are on nontraditional schedules requiring occasional or regular weekend shifts. This trend is especially pronounced for lower-wage jobs in retail, healthcare, restaurants and personal services, so improving weekend service especially helps improve the lives of people with lower incomes.
- In addition, these sectors also drive significant and growing numbers of weekend trips for shopping, socializing, recreation and other purposes, many of which could be made by transit.
- Many people may be reluctant to use transit because of its inconsistent availability. If you need to drive to get to a weekend shift, you’re less likely to take transit on a weekday, even at a time when the bus comes every 15 minutes.
- KCATA’s own ridership data shows evidence of unmet weekend demand, particularly on Saturdays, as shown in the Choices Report.

Principle no. 3: Reduce Service Duplication

Some routes in the inner core of KCMO don’t attract high levels of ridership, and don’t extend the network to areas that otherwise wouldn’t be served. The Draft Plan would pay for many improvements by **reducing mostly duplicative routes.** Examples include:

- **Existing Route 9 (9th Street) runs within 1/4-mile of Route 12 (12th Street) and Route 24 (Independence). Route 9 consistently gets lower ridership than Route 12, despite providing a similar level of service in similar neighborhoods. This is likely because more frequent service on Route 24 is available nearby.**
  - In the Draft Plan, **resources currently spent on 9th Street would be used to double frequency on nearby 12th Street.**
- **Existing Route 10 (Woodland-Brooklyn) runs mostly within 1/4-mile of the Prospect MAX, and connects the same East Side neighborhoods north of 39th Street to Downtown KCMO. Route 10 attracts fewer than 100 boardings per weekday, compared to over 4,000 boardings per weekday on Prospect Ave.**
  - In the Draft Plan, **resources currently spent on Route 10 would be used to improve weekend frequency on Prospect MAX.**
- **Existing Route 25 (Troost Local) mostly overlaps the Troost MAX. Nearly 2/3 of Route 25’s approximately 900 weekday boardings are at shared stops with Troost MAX. Virtually all areas served by Route 25 are within 1/2 mile of Troost MAX or Route 18.**
  - In the Draft Plan, **resources currently spent on the Troost Local would be used to improve weekend service on Troost MAX.**
- **Existing Route 55 (Uni-Crossroads) runs north-south on SW Trafficway, within 1/4 mile of service on Broadway, which is somewhat duplicative. It also runs east-west between the Plaza and Shops on Blue via UMKC, 55th Street and 51st Street. But the once-an-hour frequency and circuitous routing makes it very difficult to use effectively for east-west travel.**
  - In the Draft Plan, **resources currently spent on Southwest Trafficway would be used to improve frequency on Broadway to every 30 minutes.** Resources spent on the east-west segment would contribute to the new more frequent and direct route on 47th Street and Blue Parkway.
Principle no. 4: Reduce and Reorganize Routes that Very Few People Use
In areas that have developed at lower densities and/or less continuously than the urban core, major destinations are much farther apart, and far fewer people live in walking distance to any given street. As a result, transit service is much less likely to be useful to many people. Bus routes in such areas are provided for coverage and should not be expected to generate high ridership.

This Draft Plan would reduce coverage-oriented service. But because coverage service is a lifeline for people who lack options, it’s important to minimize the overall number of areas, and especially high-need areas, that would no longer be near any service. The Draft Plan would do so using the following strategies:

- **Reorganize or eliminate routes that serve fewer than 100 boardings per day or 10 boardings per service hour.**
  - Existing Route 51 (Ward Parkway) operates 3 morning two-way trips and 3.5 evening two-way trips (i.e. 13 total one-way trips) between Downtown KCMO and Overland Park. It averages 7 boardings per hour of service. The Draft Plan would replace parts of this route with a new Route 40.
  - Existing Route 52 (Ward Pkwy Limited) operates 3 morning and 3 evening one-way trips between Red Bridge and Downtown KCMO. It averages about 70 boardings per weekday. The Draft Plan would replace parts of this route with a new Route 40.
  - Existing Route 231 (Riverside-Antioch) operates hourly from 7 AM to 7 PM between Tom Watson Pkwy and Antioch Crossing, for a total of 23 one-way trips. It averages about 60 boardings per day. Parts of this route would be served by a new Route 239.
  - Existing Route 234 (Boardwalk-Antioch) operates hourly from 7 AM to 7 PM between Tiffany Springs and Antioch Crossing, for a total of 26 one-way trips. It averages about 60 boardings per day. Parts of this route would be served with a new Route 239.
  - Existing Route 235 (Winnwood-Gracemor) operates 2 morning and 2 evening one-way trips between Gracemor and Downtown KCMO. It averages about 20 boardings per weekday. The Draft Plan would eliminate this route.
  - Existing Route 236 (East Gladstone) operates 3 morning and 3 evening one-way trips between Barry Road and Downtown KCMO. It averages about 40 boardings per weekday. The Draft Plan would eliminate this route.
  - Existing Route 340 (TMC-Lakewood) operates hourly from 9 AM to 3 PM between Blue Ridge Crossing and Truman Medical Center - Lakewood, making a total of 12 one-way trips. It averages about 20 boardings per weekday. The Draft Plan would eliminate this route.

- **Combine the more productive parts of the least efficient routes.** Some existing routes have very low ridership overall, but the majority of riders are in just a few locations that can be combined into a more efficient service. For example:
  - Proposed Route 40 combines the most productive segments of existing Routes 51, 52 (Ward Parkway) and 57 (Wornall) into a service that provides an hourly one-seat ride from Martin City though south Kansas City to Country Club Plaza, Westport, Broadway and Downtown KCMO.
  - Proposed Route 239 incorporates the most productive segments of existing Routes 231 and 234, and would provide an hourly one-seat ride not just to Antioch Crossing but also North Kansas City and Downtown KCMO.

- **Reduce trips on peak-only routes with relatively low passenger loads.** In areas where peak-only routes provide unique coverage that can’t be efficiently reorganized or replaced, the Draft Plan proposes to reduce the number of trip.
  - Route 29 (Blue Ridge Limited) currently operates 6 morning and 6 evening trips. It averages fewer than 20 boardings per trip. It would be reduced to 3 morning and 3 evening trips.
  - Route 571 (71 Hwy Express) currently operates 5 morning and 5 evening trips. It averages about 10 boardings per one-way trip, and would be reduced to 3 morning and 3 evening trips.

- **Expand Flex routes.** This makes it possible to provide a limited service in areas where expected ridership is so low that a fixed route is an inefficient use of resources.
  - Flex Route 299 (Gladstone - KC North) covers parts of northern Kansas City located between North Kansas City, Gladstone and Claycomo. The service hours and area covered by Route 299 would be greatly expanded to maintain Northland coverage.
Figure 15: Map of the proposed Draft Network in core and outlying areas of Kansas City, MO. In this map, routes are color-coded by frequency, where the most frequent routes are in red (every 15 minutes or better), followed by dark blue (every 30 minutes) and light blue (every 40 to 60 minutes). Areas served by Flex routes are shown in light brown.
More Consistent Hours Across Routes

In existing service, almost every route has its own pattern of service hours and frequencies. These patterns have evolved over years of small service changes responding to changes in ridership and KCATA’s finances.

The network redesign is an opportunity to restore more consistency to the system, making service more legible for existing and potential riders. The network redesign proposes the following broad frequency categories:

- **MAX routes** (Main, Troost, Prospect) would operate from 5 AM to midnight on weekdays, and from 6 AM to midnight on weekends. In the daytime, they would operate every 10 minutes on weekdays, every 15 minutes on Saturdays and every 20 minutes on Saturdays. Evening service would be every 30 minutes.

- **Frequent routes** (12, 24, 31, 39, 47) would operate from 5 AM to midnight on weekdays, and from 6 AM to midnight on weekends. In the daytime, they would operate every 15 minutes on weekdays and Saturdays, and every 20 minutes on Sundays. Like on MAX, evening service would be every 30 minutes.

- **30-minute routes** (11, 15, 18, 27, 35, 40, 63, 75, 85, 87) would operate from 5 AM to 11 PM on weekdays, and from 6 AM to 9 PM on weekends. On weekdays, they would operate every 30 minutes from 5 AM to 7 PM. On evenings and weekends, they would operate every 60 minutes.

  - Several MAX, frequent and 30-minute routes would feature longlines or branches (Main MAX, Troost MAX, 31, 39, 47) which would typically operate at half the frequency of the main line.

- **Most 60-minute routes** (21, 23, 238, 239) would operate from 6 AM to 7 PM on weekdays, and from 6 AM to 9 PM on Saturdays. They would always operate every 60 minutes.

  - Some 60-minute routes (77, 229) would have extended hours due to airport and casino hours. Route 201 would have extended hours and peak 30 minute frequency due to the desire to upgrade the route in the near future (see page 34).

- **Peak-only** (16, 29, 525, 571) and **Flex** routes (99, 297, 298, 299, 399) would each retain route-specific service hours, reflecting the specialized markets they each serve.
This page highlights the key changes between existing service and the proposed Draft Network, between Downtown KC and 75th Street, west I-435 and the Blue River.

**Existing Service**

**Draft Network**

Route 11 on Saint John Ave would continue from Indian Mound to Hardesty Ave, instead of the East Bottoms.

Routes 9 and 12 would merge, providing a frequent service on 12th Street from Downtown KCK to Blue Valley.

Route 23 would deviate on Vine Street to cover areas currently served by Route 10, and would no longer serve KU Med.

Route 31 would remain frequent as far east as Van Brunt Blvd, but would operate every 30 minutes to Blue Ridge Crossing.

Route 35 would terminate at KU Med instead of travelling through Westport and backtracking to the Plaza.

Route 39 would be upgraded to service every 15 minutes. The east end would split into two 30-minute routes instead of a long one-way loop.

New Route 40 on Broadway, Ward Pkwy and Wornall Rd would combine parts of existing Routes 47, 51, 52, 55 and 57. Service every 30 minutes from Downtown to the Plaza, and once an hour continuing to Ward Pkwy, south KC and Martin City.

Main MAX would stop at 47th & Main, instead of deviating into the Plaza. This would allow 10-minute service to continue to UMKC.

Route 47 would become a frequent east-west route between KU Med, the Plaza, and the Shops on Blue Pkwy, replacing existing routes 47 and 55.

Route 18 - Indiana/Cleveland would be extended to 75th St & Prospect.

Route 21 coming from Antioch Crossing would terminate at the Shops on Blue Parkway instead of 75th St & Prospect.
A new express Route 529, with direct freeway service between Boardwalk Square and Downtown every 30 minutes in both directions in the morning and evening peaks would replace extra peak-hour trips on Route 229. At least one morning and one evening trip would continue to/from the airport.

The new Route 252 would connect Boardwalk Square to MCC-Maple Woods and Liberty, subject to local match funding.

The new Route 239 would combine the most used segments on Routes 231 and 234. It would continue past Antioch Crossing to North Kansas City and Downtown KCMO.

Flex Route 299 would cover a much larger area, and its hours would be extended from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM.

Routes 238 and 239 would have staggered schedules to provide service every 30 minutes between Antioch Crossing, North Kansas City and Downtown KCMO.

Routes 235 and 236 would be eliminated due to extremely low ridership.

Routes 238 would serve Antioch Road and Armour Road instead of Vivion Road, 44th Street and North Oak, to allow for service every 30 minutes between Downtown KCMO and Antioch Crossing.
This page highlights the key changes between existing service and the proposed Draft Network, mostly north of the Missouri River, east of North Oak Trafficway.

**Existing Service**

**Draft Network**

The new Route 252 would connect Boardwalk Square to MCC-Maple Wood and Liberty, subject to local match funding.

Routes 235 and 236 would be eliminated due to extremely low ridership.

Routes 238 and 239 would have staggered schedules to provide service every 30 minutes between Downtown KCMO and Antioch Crossing.

Flex Route 299 would cover a much larger area, and its hours would be extended from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM.

Routes 238 would serve Antioch Road and Armour Road instead of Vivian Road, 44th Street and North Oak, to allow for service every 30 minutes between Downtown KCMO and Antioch Crossing.

Routes 238 and 239 would have staggered schedules to provide service every 30 minutes between Antioch Crossing, North Kansas City and Downtown KCMO.

Route 21 would serve the East Bottoms, providing a more direct connection to MCC and jobs in this area from the Northland.
This page highlights the key changes between existing service and the proposed Draft Network, south of 63rd Street, mostly west of I-435 and the Blue River.

**Existing Service**

Route 63 would deviate into Swope Park to replace Zoo service currently provided on Route 18. Service every 30 minutes.

Route 18 - Indiana/Cleveland would be extended to 75th St & Prospect. Route 21 from Antioch Crossing would terminate at the Shops on Blue Pkwy instead.

Route 75 would terminate at 75th & Prospect. It would operate as an extension of Route 18, combining north-south and east-west service.

The new Route 87 would replace the eastern half of Route 75. It would run from Hickman Mills to 75th & Troost.

The new Route 40 on Broadway, Ward Parkway and Wornall Road would combine parts of existing Routes 47, 51, 52, 55 and 57.

**Draft Network**

Midday Frequency
- MAX & Streetcar
  - 15 min
  - 20 – 25 min
  - 30 min
  - 40 – 60 min
  - Limited Service
  - Flex Service
  - Transit Centers

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**Route 87**
- Replacing the eastern half of Route 75.
- From Hickman Mills to 75th & Troost.

**Route 28 - Blue Ridge Boulevard**
- Replaced by an extension of Route 31 to Three Trails.
- Provides service to Midtown instead of Downtown.
- Operates twice as frequently on weekdays and operates longer hours on weekends.

**Route 31**
- Operates every 30 minutes between Midtown and Blue Ridge Crossing.
- Instead of every 15 minutes.
- Frequency reduction allows for more frequent service on 39th Street, 47th/Blue Pkwy and Blue Ridge Blvd.

**Route 28 - Blue Ridge Boulevard**
- Replaced by an extension of Route 31 to Three Trails.
- Provides service to Midtown instead of Downtown.
- More direct path to Blue Ridge Crossing.

**Route 47**
- Every 60 minutes instead of every 45 minutes, due to significantly lower demand.
- More direct path to Blue Ridge Crossing, staying south of I-70.

**New Route 87**
- Replaces the eastern half of Route 75.
- Runs from Hickman Mills to 75th & Troost.
Priorities for Future Improvements

Given projected trends in sales tax revenue, KCATA cannot responsibly assume that new resources will become available for additional service in KC MO in the next two years.

Due to these fiscal constraints, the Draft Plan for RideKC Next leaves many known areas for improvement on the table for the future. Should sales taxes or other revenue sources increase, the following improvements are "next in line".

Coverage: On-Demand Service on Flex Routes

In existing service, the RideKC network includes fixed routes (i.e. regular bus routes) and five “Flex” routes. The “Flex” routes cover low-density suburban areas in Kansas City, North Kansas City, Gladstone and Raytown. These are shown in brown on the network maps on page 6 (existing) and page 10 (draft proposed).

For the most part, Flex routes run only on weekdays, often just for a few hours in the middle of the day. And to use Flex, customers must call KCATA a day in advance and make reservations.

KCATA would like to transition the Flex routes to provide an on-demand service. With an on-demand service, customers wouldn’t need to make reservations. Anytime during Flex service hours, anyone located in the Flex zone could summon a bus by using a smart phone app, or making a phone call to KCATA.

To make such a service work, KCATA would need the resources to increase Flex route capacity. Allowing people to hail a vehicle at any time requires more vehicles, otherwise variable wait times can make using the service to access jobs or any other time-sensitive destinations difficult. KCATA may also need to extend Flex service hours, as several routes currently operate only 8 or fewer hours per day.

Ridership: Better Service to Downtown

The Draft Plan’s slight shift of resources toward high ridership is mostly used to increase East-West service and provide higher frequencies on weekends in areas of high density and need.

But the Draft Plan does not change the fact that transit service levels in Kansas City are relatively low compared to demand. Many streets with service every 30 minutes could support a bus every 15 minutes, and others with service every 60 minutes could support a bus every 30 minutes.

This is true even for buses that go to and from Downtown KC MO, in theory transit’s strongest market. Through the RideKC Next process, KCATA has identified the following North-South routes to Downtown as the strongest candidates for a frequency increase when resources become available:

- Route 18 - Indiana/Cleveland. This route, located about 3/4 mile to the east of the new Prospect MAX, is the strongest candidate for a frequency increase on the south side. This is due to the combination of relatively high population density and the high number of local residents with low incomes and households with no vehicles.
  - The Draft Plan extends Route 18 out to 75th Street, but otherwise retains the existing 30-minute frequency. KCATA would like to increase frequency on Route 18 to every 15 minutes.

- Route 201 - North Oak. This route is the strongest candidate for a frequency increase on the north of the Missouri River. In existing service, Route 201 runs every 30 minutes in the morning and evening peak, but only every 60 minutes at other times. KCATA would like to increase frequency on Route 201 to every 30 minutes at all times, to reflect relatively strong demand.
  - However, nearly half of Route 201 is located outside KC MO. The 201 goes through the cities of North Kansas City and Gladstone, and the villages of Oaks, Oakview, Oakwood, and Oakwood Park, none of whom contribute resources to this route. Until more jurisdictions come to the table, upgrading Route 201 is not an efficient use of KC MO tax dollars.

Ridership: More Frequent East-West Routes

With existing resources, the Draft Plan increases East-West frequency to every 15 minutes, 6 days a week (and every 20 minutes on Sunday) on 12th Street, 39th Street and 47th Street.

However, it’s clear that the need for frequent East-West service doesn’t end here. The bigger the area the frequent grid covers, and the fewer gaps within it, the more useful the transit system will become. KCATA has identified the following streets as the strongest candidates for an East-West frequency increase:

- 63rd Street from Wornall Road to the Zoo as the strongest candidates for an East-West frequency increase. This stretch of 63rd Street features many employers and several major destinations, particularly the Research Hospital at Blenheim Square. The existing Route 63 is the single most productive 30-minute route in the RideKC system. This is a strong indication that service on 63rd Street should be upgraded to every 15 minutes when resources become available.

- 18th Street from the Crossroads to Indiana Ave. If Route 18 - Indiana/Cleveland were upgraded to provide service every 15 minutes, it may make sense to extend east-west service on 18th Street all the way to Broadway before turning into Downtown, rather than the current path to Downtown via Troost Ave.
  - This would make it possible to provide frequent service to and from more jobs in the emerging Crossroads area.

- 75th Street from Prospect Ave to State Line Rd. This is another street where service could be improved in conjunction with upgrading Route 18 to every 15 minutes. It would be possible to extend Route 18 to cover 75th Street, and a higher frequency would on 75th Street, combined to north-south service on Indiana/Cleveland would make this a more useful east-west element in the network.