The METRO board listened to planners, engineers, other transit professionals... and to thousands of Harris County residents. Here's the regional transit plan they produced.
Metropolitan Transit Authority

METRO
REGIONAL TRANSIT PLAN

Approved by
Harris County residents
July, 1978
The Challenge

Harris County is the fifth largest metropolitan area in the country. Already recognized for its strong economy, Houston is the nation's fastest growing big city, adding 1,000 new residents each week. The key to the area's vibrant economy is diversity. This is an energy capital, a financial center, and a leader in retailing, engineering and construction. Yet some of Harris County's most promising qualities also present our most difficult problem: How to maintain mobility while accommodating growth.

Transportation, how to get people from place to place, is a challenge made more demanding by unique characteristics of the region.

Typically Texan, Harris County is big — our rapidly expanding population is spread over a large land area, nearly 1,940 square miles.

The City of Houston's size can be appreciated when compared to other urban centers. The Houston City Limits 540 square miles areas of Detroit, Atlanta, Denver, Boston, San Francisco, and Louisville — all together — can fit inside Houston's city limits of 540 square miles.

The Harris County area is not just big, it is growing at a tremendous rate. The population of the county will probably double by 1995. The problem is not space, however. Even with 2.25 million residents, the population density in Harris County remains low, less than 3,000 persons per square mile.

Detailed studies have been conducted to analyze population and employment projections for future growth. Regardless of the assumptions made, the prediction is the same: Growth will continue, most intensively in the region outside Loop 490.

Our growth is also the reason for our phenomenal economic prosperity and high employment.
Activity in downtown Houston will continue to expand, as evidenced by anticipated development and new office space. But the central business district is not alone. Other activity centers like Greenway Plaza and City Place I have grown equally as fast. The result is multiple "downtown" centers, each requiring special attention for transportation services to ensure continued access and internal mobility.

And our economic viability is regional. Throughout Harris County, activity centers are growing into bustling activity centers which are the hubs of commercial, professional and residential activity. Each outlying community creates a demand for regional transportation.

Regional growth patterns have already been influenced by one of the nation's most outstanding transportation systems: The 490-mile Freeway network developed by the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation. Almost every part of the county is accessible by our excellent freeway system.

But our ability to expand the capacity of our freeways is limited. New highway construction cannot keep pace with the 350 new vehicles which are added to the Harris County streets and freeways every day. Money and land simply are not available for substantial or adequate expansion and new development. This limited capacity has, therefore, resulted in overcrowded streets and freeways. The outcome is an ever shrinking mobility. Peak hour frustrations for commuters are most severe at points of major traffic congestion. Transportation has become one of our biggest problems.

Today it takes twice as long to drive to work as it did ten years ago. And, our congestion problem will only get worse. By 1996 the rush hour traffic you see on your way home from work could last all day long.

Our own transportation habits are part of the problem. More than 85% of the cars on the road during peak hours are carrying only one person. Only 18% of our daily commuters carpool. Enormous amounts of fuel are being wasted every day, not to mention the damage to the quality of our air.

The days of cheap oil and gasoline supplies are over, even in our nation's energy capital. Other fuel supplies are being sought. And as energy and anti-pollution laws make cars more of a luxury, public transportation becomes more of a necessity.

Yet the City of Houston's outdated transit system cannot possibly keep pace with growing demands for regional public transportation services.

Houston has been served by some form of public transit for nearly 100 years. At first, in 1865, public transportation started as a mule car operation known as the Houston and Harrisburg Railway Company. The 1880's ushered in electric street cars which graduated to motor buses in the 1920's and 1930's. Ridership on buses hit a peak during World War II and then began to decline as Houstonians gradually abandoned public transit for individual travel in cars. The remarkable affection for the automobile gave birth in the 1950's and 1960's to the excellent freeway system which has encouraged our rapid regional growth.

Transit services were provided by a private operator in the City of Houston until 1974. As typical throughout the transit industry, Houston's private operator was caught in a cost/price squeeze resulting from declining ridership revenues. Faced with escalating operating costs, the private bus company was unable to maintain acceptable levels of service or provide needed improvements. Realizing that public transit would continue to deteriorate if it did not act quickly, the City of Houston purchased the assets of Rapid Transit Lines in April of 1974 with the area's first major grant of federal transit funds.

The bus company was renamed the Houston Transit System or Hottot in order to establish a new identity for the City-owned system. So that state and federal laws pertaining to labor relations might be reconciled, the City retained the private management company to handle daily operations and union negotiations.

In January, 1975, the City of Houston's Office of Public Transportation was created to plan and implement transit improvements and coordinate public transportation services for the Houston metropolitan area. An aggressive transit program was launched in an effort to provide a balanced transportation system that will most effectively meet the demands of area residents. A number of notable successes followed:

1975 — CarShare became the most successful carpool matching program in the country.
1976 — New buses arrived, the first since 1961.
1976 — Private companies first offered transit incentives to employees.
1976 — Downtown MiniBus implemented.
1976 — Hottot fares were reduced and the zone system was simplified.
1976 — Ridership increased 10%.
1976 — MiniBus equipped with wheelchair lifts began barrier-free service.
1977 — Express commuter bus service was initiated with the help of the Houston Jaycees.
1977 — Town Meetings encouraged community discussions of transit needs and alternatives.
1977 — Office of Public Transportation was designated the transport planning agency for the Houston area.

— Advance design Omnibus arrives.
— Accessibility policy for elderly and handicapped riders is adopted.
— Contraflow Lane construction on North Freeway begun.
— Gulf Freeway busway proposal.
— Information outlets are expanded throughout the service area.
— Park & Ride service expanded.
— Neighborhood MiniBus service launched in the Third Ward and East End.
Yet, despite the progress which has been made, the City of Houston has not begun to meet the challenge of providing adequate transportation services. Houston currently provides transit to only 45% of the eligible service area.

There is no question that our current transit system is woefully inadequate. But it is no wonder when you consider the condition of the system which was purchased 15 years ago. In 1974 Houston was the last of the major cities in the country to enter the areas of public transit. Our area had already outgrown the transit system. At the time of the City’s acquisition, the average age per transit vehicle was 13.5 years and well over 500,000 in vehicle miles.

Today, even with the arrival of new advance design buses, more than half the fleet is over 15 years of age. We are trying to serve the fastest growing urban area in the country with only 420 vehicles. Los Angeles area is served by over 2,500 buses which are minimally maintained in a 1910-era trolley car barn designed for 180 coaches. The Milby Bus Barn is totally inadequate as an efficient maintenance facility. Without modern new facilities, expansion of the bus fleet is limited.

Acquisition of equipment and construction of facilities are the key ingredients for regional transit development. Costs will never again be as low as they are now. But the City of Houston cannot afford to spend more on transit. Pressures on the City budget to provide other essential services such as fire and police protection, sewer lines, and water supplies are already tremendous. Time and red-tape further limit the City’s ability to respond to the demand for transit.

Despite the City of Houston’s effort to initiate an aggressive transit improvement program with Park & Ride, advances design buses, and neighborhood MiniBus service, an almost unbelievable amount of work remains to be done. But with so many other demands on its budget, Houston cannot afford to spend enough money on transit to develop a truly modern system.

What is needed is a more efficient method, a regional approach to transit. The growing demand for transportation services does not stop at city lines. The entire Harris County area will benefit when we have a truly adequate regional transportation system, with a strong financial base.

Only with a regional transit system will we begin to meet the challenge of maintaining mobility while accommodating growth.

To give transit the attention it deserves throughout the metropolitan area, we must create a separate authority, with no jurisdictional boundaries to restrict it, and give it separate and sufficient tax funds to do the job.

A Metropolitan Transit Authority board should be a separate governmental body with one special task: the transit system. The authority would be able to collect tax funds for mass transit purposes, but only with voter approval of the type and amount of tax.

Under state law, the transit authority will serve Harris County and all incorporated areas whose boundaries overlap the area they vote to join. This means that the authority could be created initially upon approval of voters in the principal city (Houston) and in the communities located within Houston’s boundaries plus all other cities, towns and villages which vote to join. Communities which do not approve the authority initially can vote to join at a later time.

An interim Metropolitan Transit Authority Board took office late 1977. The interim board has no official powers to oversee transit, and will not until voters approve creation of a permanent authority.

The responsibility of the interim board is to present a regional transit plan and proposed taxing proposal before the voters of Harris County.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority interim board consists of seven (7) members: five (5) selected by Houston, one (1) by Harris County Commissioners and one (1) by all other incorporated areas in the county.

The representation of the county and the other cities will increase as areas of responsibility join the authority. If the entire region joins, there will be eleven (11) board members: five (5) selected by Houston, three (3) by Harris County, two (2) by all other incorporated areas and one (1) chairperson selected by the ten (10) members.

The regional transit plan has been developed by the MTA Board with the technical assistance of local and area transit officials including the Houston-Galveston Area Council, the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation, the Houston-Galveston Regional Transportation Study office, and the City of Houston Office of Public Transportation.

Immediately after their appointment, board members began meeting on a regular basis to review and analyze all recent transit studies and planning. The board, individually and as a group, met with transit professionals across the country, studying various transportation systems in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Atlanta, San Antonio, Montreal, Mexico City, and Washington, D.C.

Then the MTA Board turned to citizens to find out what was needed and wanted in a regional transit plan. The board launched the most extensive and comprehensive series of public meetings ever held in this area on any topic. More than 2,000 citizens attended thirty (30) community meetings held throughout Harris County between April 13 and June 13, 1978. Citizens met with the board to express their opinions on the type of regional transit system they want to see developed in this region, to offer suggestions, and to ask questions. Throughout the county, ideas and demands were made again and again by citizens:

- Take action. The problem is enormous, we have to start now to make basic service improvements in our current bus system.
- Immediate improvements are needed to relieve traffic congestion through low-cost programs that demonstrate priority for mass transit.
- We can not afford to wait too long to start to find solutions to our growth problems.
- Any transit system proposed must be economical and flexible to allow for adaptations. A regional plan will have to be practical and affordable, within available resources and in accordance with the proposed tax plan.
- Private enterprise must be encouraged, especially where private transportation services are more efficient than public.
- Automated guided way or rail transit must be considered.
- More Park & Ride should be provided, along with downtown service and neighbor-
- Preferential treatment such as express lanes should be provided for public transit along major travel corridors.

The METRO Regional Transit Plan, as presented by the Metropolitan Transit Authority, is a proposal which specifically responds to the recommendations of thousands of citizens and transit professionals who have worked with the Board.
THE INTERIM BOARD

Howard W. Horse CHAIRMAN
President of The Horse Company, a real estate firm. A native Houstonian, he received a B.S. degree in Business from Texas A&M University. A past director of the Houston Convention and Commerce, he currently serves as Chairman of the Downtown Committee and as a member of the Transportation Committee. He is a board member and past president of the Houston Board of Realtors, a director of the Texas Real Estate Association and of the 1st International Bank.

George A. DeMontreux, Jr. VICE CHAIRMAN
President of the DeMontreux Buick Company and past president of the Houston Buick Dealers Association, he is currently president of the Houston Automobile Dealers Association. Born in Houston and a resident for 25 years, he received his B.A. degree from Southern Methodist University. An active member in many community organizations, he is president of the Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Houston Chamber of Commerce and the Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce. He is also an Advisory Board member for the Northwest Medical Center and a member of the Board of Directors of the First National Bank of Bellaire.

E. L. Oakes Financial Secretary of the Ironworkers Local Union, AFL-CIO. A member for 12 years, he served as President from 1987 to 1990, as Business Agent from 1965 to 1969, as Apprentice Coordinator from 1969 to 1970 and Business Agent again until he became Financial Secretary in 1984. A high school graduate, he completed the Ironworkers Apprenticeship and Training School and other advanced leadership programs. He is a delegate to the Harris County AFL-CIO Labor Council, where he served on the executive board six years. He also served as an officer on the Houston Gulf Coast Building Trades Council. He is a 32d Degree Mason and has been a member of the Gus A. Brandt Masonic Lodge for 38 years.

John R. Butler, Jr. Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of GeoQuest International, Inc., which he founded in 1972. A graduate of Kinkaid High School and of Stanford University, with a B.S. degree in Chemical Engineering. Butler also is President and Chief Operations Officer of J.R. Butler & Company. He is a member of the Boards of Directors for Taping for the Blind, for the Camp Branch of the YMCA and for River Oaks Bank.

Edward V. Dorr A resident of the First National Bank of Bellaire.

Nina R. Laurozeno Chairman of the Board, Nina's Taco Al Carbon, Inc. A native of Harlingen, she moved to Houston in 1948, when the Laurozeno started a food manufacturing business, Rio Grande Food Products. When her husband passed away in 1969, Mrs. Laurozeno continued to manage the family business. In 1976, she opened the first Nina's on Navigation (now Nina's Taco Al Carbon). A director of Houston Bellas Artes, she also serves on the Advisory Board of the American National Bank. She has a BS in Education from Texas A&M in Kingsville.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN

"Elected and Technical Groups To Assist MTA Board"

Two formal citizen groups will be formed to assist the proposed Metropolitan Transit Authority in the planning and implementation of regional transportation improvements. An elected Citizen Advisory Board representing up to 28 distinct neighborhoods through the MTA region will help guide the transit board in developing services.

In addition, the Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) now in place will continue to monitor long-range planning and other more technical aspects of a regional transit program.

The neighborhoods from which citizens will be elected are those identified for the MTA Board's recent series of 30 community meetings on transit plans. Those areas were chosen for regional planning purposes.

In seeking representation from civic groups and other community organizations, as well as individuals, the MTA will make special efforts to involve transit users, who are most knowledgeable of transit problems and needs.

Citizen Advisory Groups formed in each neighborhood will meet regularly with MTA staff to plan and supervise transit programs. Each neighborhood group will elect one member and one alternate to the Citizen Advisory Board.
The elected board also will meet regularly with MTA staff to review policies, complaints, route changes and other transit developments. The citizen board additionally will meet at least four times a year with the MTA Board to review transit program and policy decisions.

In an effort to continue its program of community meetings, the MTA board will meet monthly in different neighborhoods throughout the region, on a rotating basis. These meetings will be organized by the Citizen Advisory Groups.

The technical planning work of TAG began in 1977, with a series of 11 meetings attended by more than 300 area residents, who met with planners from local, regional and state highway and transportation offices to develop long-range transit plans for Harris County.

All interested citizens in the Houston-Harris County area are invited to participate in the ongoing activities of this group. The continuation of this effort with the Metropolitan Transit Authority will assure that the MTA Board and staff will have input into the long-range planning process from a broad spectrum of citizens.

### MTA GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Develop and maintain an effective network of public transportation services for the benefit of all Metropolitaan Transit Authority area residents in order to:

- accommodate the phenomenal growth of the greater metropolitan area;
- increase transit mobility for all segments of the population; and
- generate maximum benefits to the regional economy and environment.

Provide efficient, convenient and safe transit service through the regional area in accordance with service quality standards and adopted criteria in order to:

- provide basic public transportation for those without other means of travel; and
- make public transit a convenient and attractive alternative to the private auto.

Increase daily average ridership by 100% from fiscal year 1979 through fiscal year 1983, an average annual increase of 15%, in order to:

- reduce traffic congestion on existing streets and highways;
- conserve energy and natural resources;
- improve air quality; and
- reduce the need for excessive capital expenditures to accommodate increasing automobile traffic.

Increase transit revenues in proportion to operating cost increases (operating cost categories include wages, salaries and fringe benefits; fuel; insurance; spare parts and supplies; etc.) so that the percentage of cost offset by system revenue remains in the range of 40-50%, in order to:

- maintain the overall financial soundness and efficiency of the system; and
- increase the number of vanpools at least ten-fold from the current level of 210 vans within five years.

Secure funding from state and federal sources to supplement the regional effort for improving transit in order to:

- maximize use of all available resources; and
- provide regional transit services at the lowest possible cost per person.

Develop a system of exclusive transitways on available right-of-way along major travel corridors in order to:

- maximize the utilization of existing transportation facilities; and
- reduce the need for extraordinary capital expenditures.

- Minimize necessary planning and construction time; and
- provide a logical and cost-effective step toward a more sophisticated regional transit system which may be warranted by future demands.

Initiate immediate planning for future transportation systems, including automated guideway/rail systems, in order to:

- accommodate anticipated rapid growth;
- support regional comprehensive long-range planning efforts; and
- insure that capital improvements for transportation are fully coordinated with related public investments and
- provide guidance to short and intermediate term implementation programs.

Provide an ongoing community involvement program in both the planning and implementation of regional transportation improvements in order to:

- increase responsiveness to citizen needs; and
- provide a source of continual communication between the MTA Board and area residents.

Promote carpooling and vanpooling through public information, computerized trip matching programs, vanpool administrative assistance and traffic management preferential facilities in order to:

- increase regional carpooling by 10% each year, or a total increase of 120,000 carpoolers by 1983; and
- increase the level of public transportation available to the elderly and handicapped in order to:

- improve accessibility of regular service; and
- support implementation of essential special services to improve significantly the mobility of these groups.

Encourage private involvement in meeting the goals of the regional transit authority whenever feasible in order to:

- adequately serve regional transit demand; and
- implement cost-efficient services; and
- promote private enterprise.

### MTA BOARDadopts AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

The Metropolitan Transit Authority interim board has adopted an Affirmative Action Policy which includes the following elements:

- The prime contractor must agree that his or her company is in compliance with the MTA's Affirmative Action Policy. The MTA's Affirmative Action Officer will provide assistance and will monitor contractor's program.

- Outreach programs with minority community organizations to communicate information on available MTA positions.

- A strong employee recruitment program with special emphasis on recruiting Mexican-Americans, blacks and other minorities for all MTA positions, including the recruitment of Mexican-American and females of all races for transit operator positions.

- Development of a comprehensive transit operator training program and procedures manual.

- Career Development Programs in three areas: Secondary schools, with special emphasis on the cooperative program with the Barbara Jordan Vocational-Technical School; local colleges and universities, with internship and cooperative education programs; in-house career development and training programs for all MTA employees.

The Affirmative Action Plan also includes a provision whereby the MTA adopts the City of Houston's and Harris County's prevailing wage rates.
IMMEDIATE SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Service Quality Standards

The following service quality standards will be used in conjunction with approved Metropolitan Transit Authority goals to analyze present service and requests for new service. Implementation of improvements in service to meet these standards will proceed as rapidly as vehicle availability, maintenance facility construction, and cost criteria permit.

Accessibility — public transit service should be available to all parts of the regional area with direct, speedy service to major destination points.

- In urban areas with high residential density, bus routes should be provided so that no person is further than 1/4 mile from a bus stop.
- Suburban residential areas of medium density should have bus routes so that no person is further than 1/2 mile from a transit route.
- Residential areas with low to medium density should have bus routes to meet the particular needs of the transportation disadvantaged.
- Park & Ride lots should be located along major travel corridors in areas of low to medium residential density.
- Crotown service should be provided that enables transit patrons to travel across the region without going through downtown Houston.
- A network of regular route and special services should be developed to facilitate access to major centers of activity.
- Express commuter service may be provided to major activity centers when supportive ridership of at least 40 riders per bus is available on a regular basis.

Dependability — transit service

must be managed to insure dependable operation and on-time performance.

- The transit system should dispatch every scheduled bus from its garages every day. In no event should missed dispatches exceed 1/2 of 1% of total daily dispatches.
- In-service bus breakdowns should be an unusual occurrence. In no event should the frequency exceed the industry standard of one breakdown per 6,000 bus-miles; with new equipment acquisition, improved maintenance capability, breakdowns should not exceed one per 10,000 bus-miles.
- Major arterials and streets which are utilized for bus routes should have the highest priority for traffic engineering improvements and grade crossings.

METRO REGIONAL TRANSIT PLAN

The Metropolitan Transit Authority interom board proposes a plan that will provide:

- Immediate improvements in bus service
- Neighborhood feeder services and other special transit programs, using private enterprise where possible
- Faster ways to travel crotown and to major activity centers during peak hours
- Transportation system improvements to relieve traffic bottlenecks at busy intersections and railroad crossing;

and

- A modern transitway system, suitable for adaptation to automated guideway/rail to serve our growing regional transit demand.

Three major elements comprise the METRO Plan. The first element insures Immediate Service Improvements.

Convenience and Speed — frequent service, appropriate times of operation, passenger amenities, and customer service must be provided to make public transit reasonable and to increase ridership.

- The current system of routes should be immediately simplified to eliminate unnecessary turnbacks and minimize branching. Existing routes should be analyzed to identify major branches which can be designated as separate, independent routes. Through town routing should be minimized.
- The alignment of a route should be as direct as possible to minimize trip travel time.
- Route names should designate destination landmarks or the street of primary route coverage whenever possible. The same route designation should apply to both inbound and outbound trips.
- Route identification should be provided on bus stop signage.

Only in peak periods should standing situations exist, and then no load should ever exceed 150% of bus capacity. Additional service should be added when ridership consistently exceeds 130% of seated capacity. Where standing situations do exist, in no event should standing time normally exceed 10 minutes. Route design and service levels should be provided so that patrons are not normally passed by a full bus load.

The new and simplified route and schedule maps should be published in Spanish and English.

Schedules should be displayed in a precise public timetable format. Schedules should be improved to include intermediate time points.

Schedules should be widely disseminated in schools, libraries, local civic organizations, neighborhood information displays, newspapers, and other media.

Transit passes or other forms of prepayment should be made available to every major ridership group.

Suburban information service centers should be established throughout the region for distribution of schedules, receipt of identification cards.
and sale of passes.
- The centralized telephone service should be readily available 24 hours a day. All calls should be answered immediately. During busy periods, when overloaded lines cannot be avoided, an automatic answering system should be available to apprise callers of the situation. At least 50% of the information operators should be bilingual.
- An in-school education program should be developed with local independent school districts to teach young people, grades 1 through 10, the advantages of public transit and provide information about regional transit services.

Cost-Effectiveness—regional transit services must be provided in a financially sound manner which is effective in serving a target market at a reasonable cost within the Authority's ability to support. Transit revenues should be increased in proportion to operating costs so that the percentage of cost offset by system revenues is within the range of 40-50%. In no event shall application of service schedules result in erosion of the total system revenue/cost ratio below 40%.
- Each transit service must be continually analyzed according to established level of service criteria to insure the most effective utilization of resources.
- If transit service performance on a route is less than half the system average in terms of cost per passenger mile, the route should be designated as "provisional."

Service Levels for Local Bus Routes—The following criteria will be utilized in conjunction with approved service quality standards to establish appropriate levels of transit service.
- Service level objectives for local bus routes will vary by relative patronage, based on transit system performance quartiles. Performance will be determined according to criteria which reflect total passengers, total revenue, passengers/service mile, revenue/passenger trip, and revenue/operating cost ratio.
- Heavily patronized primary bus routes (top 25% of system)
  - minimum span of service: 24 hours a day, 6 days a week
  - Sunday/holiday service: at least every 15 minutes
  - peak hour frequency: at least every 5 minutes
  - mid-day bus frequency: at least every 15 minutes
  - Well patronized bus routes (second 25% of system)
    - minimum span of service: 4:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m., 6 days a week
    - Sunday/holiday service: at least every 60 minutes, 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
    - peak hour frequency: at least every 10 minutes
    - mid-day bus frequency: at least every 20 minutes
    - Sunday/holiday service: at least every 60 minutes

Route Extensions:
- A bus route should be considered for extension if:
  - the extension will serve at least 500 households per route mile or
  - the extension will provide access to at least 500 jobs per route mile or
  - the extension will serve activity centers (schools, shopping centers, hospitals, malls, etc.) attracting at least 1,000 people daily per route mile or
  - the extension has been requested by at least 50 potential riders per route mile or
  - the extension meets minimum criteria through some combination of the above.

Accessibility for the Handicapped
The Metropolitan Transit Authority will make the following special efforts to ensure that mass transportation services are available to the handicapped:
- Acquire vehicles which will maintain or improve accessibility.
- Take steps to develop a comprehensive system of accessible transportation services, including passenger lifts, in areas where conventional transit is not sufficient or feasible.
- Include members of the handicapped group as active participants in the Citizen's Advisory Group.
- Seek input on issues specifically related to the handicapped.

patronage/revenue estimate by the end of the 16th week; 50% by the end of the 24th week; and 75% by the end of the 48th week. Failure to meet these utilization levels will result in service discontinuance.
- When implemented, a route extension shall yield 40% of its weekly patronage/revenue estimate by the end of the 8th week; 50% of the 12th week; and 75% of the 24th week. Failure to achieve these utilization levels will result in service discontinuance.

Service Route: The Metropolitan Transit Authority service should be provided along major arterial routes which generally connect centers of shopping, business, medical, and/or educational activity.
- Crosstown service should focus on centers of activity where transit frequency, fare, and travel time are minimal, and other crosstown routes are easily available.
- Terminals should be provided at crosstown transfer points in activity centers.
- Where neighborhood activity creates a demand for internal transit trips and multiple transfers, crosstown service should be provided and integrated into the internal circulation system with neighborhood minibus service.

Commuter Express Service:
Express service with neighbor-
bor or residential complex
collective should be provided when:
- average loadings in excess of 40 passengers can be attractively served with a collector route segment which does not exceed in travel time by more than 10 minutes; and
- the distance of the express portion of the route is at least 10 miles.
- Collector express service schedules and promotions should initially be subject to special marketing and fare promotion programs. These programs can build ridership and revenue at a rate which significantly exceeds the system average, the route may be sustained without service adjustments.
- If further service level adjustment is infrequent, the provisional route should be curtailed, in whole or in part, with the bases assigned to more productive areas. No service will be eliminated without specific approval of the MTA Board.
- At least twice each year, the MTA Board shall analyze all provisional routes, reviewing current status and 3-6 month plans.

Park & Ride Service:
- Park & Ride lots should be located along all major travel corridors, at least 0.5 miles away from the major activity center destination.
- Lots should be situated to conveniently intersect auto trips, with traffic engineering techniques applied to speed ingress and egress of autos and buses.
- A leased lot should have potential to attract at least 200 cars per day; a publicly developed lot will have potential to attract at least 500 cars per day.
- Bus wait facilities should be provided for auto passenger drop-offs and for transfers from local transit services.
- Design of Park & Ride express service should also consider opportunities for reverse commuting.
Equipment Acquisition

In order to achieve the recommended criteria for level of service and maintain Service Quality Standards, the Metropolitan Transit Authority will increase the existing transit bus fleet at a rate of 10% annually until the goal of approximately 1,500 buses is met in 1988.

Cost Summary

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(Includes allowance for replacement of equipment)

Projects and includes allowances for support equipment and related facilities (ladders, safety necessary to meet MTA service standards).

Maintenance Facility Development

Additional maintenance facilities are required to meet current transit needs and to adequately serve expanded fleet requirements. The Metropolitan Transit Authority must include a Maintenance Facility Development program which will provide improved efficiency of operations and cost-effective maintenance.

The Maintenance Facility Development program will accommodate a fleet of approximately 1,500 buses by 1988 which include the following:
- Retain the current Milby Bus Barn through 1982 as an operating and heavy maintenance facility for 300 buses.
- Improve the Polk Street interim facility as a central operating/light maintenance facility to accommodate 300 buses.
- By 1981 develop the Kashmere site, at the intersection of U.S. 59 North and Loop 610, as a central heavy maintenance facility to accommodate a total fleet size of 1,500 buses. Transfer heavy maintenance from Milby.
- Provide for the operation of 150 buses at the Kashmere site on an interim basis until total fleet size reaches approximately 1,000 buses in 1984.
- By 1982 develop an operating facility in the southwest quadrant of the region to receive Polk Street.
- By 1988, develop additional heavy maintenance capacity to handle the portion of the fleet in excess of the Kashmere 1,500 bus capacity. This additional capacity may be obtained by expanding the Kashmere facility, converting the Polk Street facility, or developing a second heavy maintenance facility.

Regional Transit Systems

ParaTransit

In order to meet the particular needs of communities of the City of Houston, the Metropolitan Transit Authority will provide innovative regional paratransit services which are varied in approach.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority will encourage private investment in the provision of regional transit services whenever possible.

Demand-Responsive Transit

Approximately 12% of the Harris County adult population is either elderly or handicapped. An estimated 9.6% of the population is physically unable to use conventional transit at all.

In order to meet the particular needs of the elderly and handicapped, the Metropolitan Transit Authority will provide specialized demand-responsive transit service to mobility limited transit patrons who cannot avail themselves of regularly scheduled transit services due to age, mobility limitations, or other valid reasons.

Local Feeder Services

In many instances, innovative new paratransit services will be more appropriate than fixed-route regular transit for local circulation systems. In areas where effective transit has not been offered before, paratransit can provide an opportunity to more efficiently serve a growing new service area.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority will investigate the feasibility of utilizing paratransit vehicles (minibuses, taxis) for local circulation systems in regional communities where regular transit service is not immediately appropriate or practical.

As an adjusted to a coordinated regional transit system, feeder systems will be established to collect persons in low density areas.

NORTH FREEWAY FEEDER AREA
Local transfer terminals will allow coordination between neighborhood transit service and regional transportation systems. and deliver them to a priority service and/or activity center transfer terminal. The MTA will contract to local private transportation providers for feeder services to transfer terminals.

Substation Bus Service
The Metropolitan Transit Authority will encourage private investment in priority, express, point-to-point-subscription service in areas which cannot be adequately served according to the established Service Quality Standards of the Authority. Subscription bus service should be available to provide specific point-to-point transit needs. Franchises should be issued to private enterprises to service these needs, without cost to the Metropolitan Transit Authority, where public transit service cannot serve the demand. Franchises should allow specific service from a private enterprise will be encouraged to provide subscription bus service for commuters in suburban areas. Authority reserves the option of providing such services in the public interest.

HARRIS COUNTY TRANSIT PLAN
The Metropolitan Transit Authority has pledged to work with local planning staffs in cities and towns outside of Houston to provide transit services geared to the particular needs of those areas. The following plan is excerpted from a special plan for county areas which was adopted by the board at its June 29, 1975 meeting:

"Rapid transit service to those communities outside the City of Houston must be varied in approach to meet the particular needs of the areas served. The possibility of the use of new and innovative approaches to those needs is practically limitless. Transit plans proposed by those cities having a sufficient backing staffs should be implemented as soon as practical within the service guidelines adopted, realizing the lack of transit experience by the residents and the need for patience in the evaluation of each.

Areas of relatively heavy concentration of traffic need an internal system of transportation as well as feeder routes to Park & Ride facilities.
establish vanpooling programs. Emphasis will be placed upon coordination with employers in remote locations where vanpools or subscription buses can provide more effective service than public transit. The goal of the Authority is to increase vanpooling ten-fold over the next five years.

Transportation Systems Management

The Metropolitan Transit Authority proposes a wide range of capital improvements which will address the short-term needs of the regional area through more efficient use of existing transportation resources. The proposed projects which include traffic operation improvements, priority grade separations, and transit shelter construction, are intended to make more productive use of existing street and transit investments. In order to achieve maximum benefit from transit productivity, preferential bus facilities will be considered whenever street improvements are designed.

Traffic Operation Improvements on Arterials A number of arterial corridors have been identified for low capital, implementable, traffic management improvements to accelerate transit and/or vehicular flow. These improvements will take advantage of the existing street network to provide for the rapid movement of express and local buses where routes have been consolidated to provide adequate bus frequency.

Traffic Operation Improvements on Arterials A number of arterial corridors have been identified for low capital, implementable, traffic management improvements to accelerate transit and/or vehicular flow. These improvements will take advantage of the existing street network to provide for the rapid movement of express and local buses where routes have been consolidated to provide adequate bus frequency. Improvements to each of the identified arterial corridors will be subject to local government approval and technical coordination. In each case, the Metropolitan Transit Authority will seek funding commitment from local governments.

Types of Arterial Improvements

- Traffic Improvements
- Signalization
- Channelization
- Left Turning Movement
- Diamond Lanes or Designated Bus Lanes
- Exclusive or Contraflow Bus Lanes
- Bus Priority Signal Systems

The following arterial corridors have been identified as candidates for low capital improvements. Additional suggestions will be sought from local governments and area residents:

- Almeda Road (Highway 288) from Almeda Genoa north to the CBD
- North Braeswood Blvd. from Chimney Rock Blvd. to Main Street north to the CBD
- Chimney Rock Blvd. from Main Street north to Wetherbee Road connecting with north Braeswood Blvd. and Westpark Drive
- S. Post Oak from the West Loop (IH 699) south to S. Main Street
- S. Main Street from Hillcroft Road to downtown Houston
- Northwest Freeway Frontage Road from West Little York Road south to Memorial Drive, connecting to Katy Freeway
- North Shepherd Drive/Durham from Shepherd-Airline Road south to Washington Avenue
- North Main Street from the North Loop south to the CBD
- Hardy Street from the North Belt south to the CBD
- Westpark Drive from South Georgeart to Edloe (part of Southwest Freeway)
- Westheimer Road from Fondren Road to South Post Oak, south to Richmond Avenue, and east to the CBD
- Richmond Avenue from Hillcroft to S. Post Oak
- Katy Freeway Frontage Road from Dairy Ashford Road to S. Post Oak Road, south to Richmond Avenue, and east to Katy Road
- Katy Freeway Frontage Road from Dairy Ashford Road to S. Post Oak Road, north to Katy Road, east to Washington, and west to the CBD
- Marcons/Decker Road from the East Freeway east to the LaPorte/Baytown tunnel entrance
- Winkler/Bichler from the Gulf Freeway to Broadway
- Sherwood Road from Edgemoor to LaPorte Freeway (288)
- Passadena Blvd. from LaPorte Freeway (288) to Red Bluff Road
- Airport Blvd. College from Telephone Road to Spencer Road
- Lackwood Drive from the North Loop south to Navigation Blvd., west to the CBD
- Lawndale from South Freeway west to Broadway, north to Harragood Blvd., and west to the CBD
- Gulf Freeway Frontage Road from Fondren Road north connecting with phased construction of the Gulf

CarShare Annual Benefits 1983:

- 720 million miles of travel reduced
- 48 million gallons of fuel conserved
- 24,000 tons of pollutants reduced

Each carpooler can save $1,500 a year.

Building the infrastructure creating significant traffic bottlenecks where existing or proposed bus movements would benefit:

- Grade Separations at railroad crossings where major delays occur along existing and proposed transit routes and
- Transit transfer terminals which are coordinated with street improvements to minimize bus conflict with auto traffic.

Grades Separations/Arterial Intersections

Where excessive delay to transit and/or vehicle flow is identified along major arterial streets, the Metropolitan Transit Authority will enter into joint funding commitments with local governments for the construction of grade separations or major intersection redesign. The Metropolitan Transit Authority will determine which are coordinated with the period 1979-1988 for improvement of 10-15 intersections. Additional intersections may be considered dependent upon the participation of local governments.

The selection of priority projects will be based upon an evaluation of the benefits to be realized from the proposed improvements. Benefit is determined by the reduction in total delay at an intersection for both transit and vehicular traffic on the basis of passenger delay. Reduction in passenger delay can be translated into savings in energy, time, and commuting cost.
**Activity Centers**

Major activity centers in the Metropolitan Transit Authority area should be considered for internal distribution systems and development of intermodal transit terminals when regional demand for transit routes local congestion and loss of mobility. The following four steps will be considered by the Metropolitan Transit Authority to relieve congestion and improve internal transit services within activity centers:

1. Consolidation of transit routes onto several parallel streets to facilitate bus movement and passenger transfer.
2. Development of a transit street or mall to provide priority treatment for transit vehicles.
3. Construction of a pedestrian and controlled pedestrian tracks to interconnect express bus facilities and facilitate their transfer to an internal distribution system.
4. Development of an effective internal distribution system (minibus or automated) connecting the peripheral terminals to major internal destinations.

Initial demand for internal circulation systems in activity centers can be met with carefully designed and marketed minibus routes. An automated mobility system may be warranted in a given activity center when the peak hour passenger volume on the minibus circulation system exceeds the practical capacity limit of approximately 2,500 passengers per peak hour, or if operational conflicts such as severe traffic congestion preclude an effective at-grade system.

**Cost Summary**

**Cost Terminal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Phase III</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PARK & RIDE**

The success of the program evidences the potential for Park & Ride as an effective regional transit service. The Metropolitan Transit Authority will immediately take action to secure sites for Park & Ride service. The initial effort will be to locate existing paved lots which can be leased at minimal or no cost. Due to limitations upon the availability of existing lots, the Metropolitan Transit Authority will also immediately attempt to secure public land which may be developed to serve as Park & Ride facilities. Specifically, a concerted effort will be made to pursue recommendations for regional Park & Ride sites which have been proposed by the Houston-Galveston Area Council, the State Department of Transportation.

**Cost Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<td>$25.00</td>
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</table>

**Transportation Systems**

**Estimated Cost (in Millions)**

**Arterial Improvements**... $10.00

**Road Improvements**... $15.00

**Highways and Public Transportation**

**Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979-1988</td>
<td>$155.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**References**


**Notes**

- Union Station has been recommended for historical preservation as a major regional transportation terminal.
- The following railroad crossings are...
TRANSITWAY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The long range transportation needs of Harris County can only be met by the total separation of transit vehicles from automobile traffic on our major travel corridors. A balanced transportation system must include exclusive access for high occupancy transit vehicles which will provide the incentive for automobile oriented commuters to convert to transit travel.

Exclusive access for transit vehicles will increase the capacity of the existing freeway system to accommodate the tremendous growth of Harris County and to provide a transportation system capable of fulfilling the mobility needs of the future.

Exclusive access for transit will dramatically increase the ability of our transportation system to carry large numbers of people efficiently, economically, and comfortably with tremendous savings to the community in fuel consumption, pollutants and travel time.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority will design and construct a system of totally separate, exclusive and largely elevated transitways on major travel corridors in Harris County. The transitways will connect residential areas with major regional activity centers along express facilities. Provision will be made for logical connections between transitways and other transportation modes.

The transitways will be designed to accommodate bus, automated guideway/rail or a combination depending upon the particular needs of the area being served. Extensive utilization of available freeway, utility and railroad rights-of-way will minimize community disruption, land acquisition and construction time.

Low Capital Strategies
The transitway development program covering the period 1979-1986 will be an evolutionary process. Low capital improvement strategies will be immediately implemented on all major freeway corridors. These improvements will range from contraflow and at-grade exclusive bus lanes to special signalization on freeway frontage roads. Special by-pass ramps for transit vehicles and ramp metering will also be included. These improvements will provide priority treatment for transit in an effort to build transit ridership during the course of transitway construction.

Transitways
Transitways for exclusive use of transit vehicles can be built over or along available freeway and railroad right-of-way. The METRO Regional Transit Plan includes the development of 80 miles of largely elevated, separate transitway facilities.

The METRO transitways will be designed to permit conversion from exclusive bus corridors to an automated guideway/rail system as demand warrants. Conversion can be accomplished without disrupting peak hour express bus service along the transitway.

An automated guideway/rail system operating on exclusive METRO transitways will provide high speed, advanced transit for Harris County. Certain transit corridors may be appropriate for early development of an automated system.

The North Freeway Contraflow Demonstration (Under construction)
Gulf Freeway Median Bus Lane (Design stage)

Guideway/rail can reasonably take place.

The first stage of transitway development (1979-1980) will include design and engineering for the entire transitway program. A series of low capital and freeway improvements to provide priority treatment for transit vehicles will also be initiated.

The second stage (1981-1984) will include the construction of transitways along radial freeway corridors across major bottleneck areas in the vicinity of Loop 610. Additional low capital freeway improvements will also be implemented.

The final stage (1985-1988) will provide the extension of transitways from downtown Houston to the Outer Belt areas.

Automated Guideway/Rail Transit
An automated guideway/rail system operating on exclusive transitways offers the most cost-effective transit service at high passenger volumes. Therefore, transitways will be designed and constructed to permit conversion to an automated guideway/rail system as demand warrants. The facility design will also permit the continued operation of buses on the transitway during construction required for conversion to an automated system.

Full conversion of the transitways to accommodate automated guideway/rail will require the extension of transitways into the downtown area with provision for interconnections with other modes of travel.
Types of Low Capital Strategies

- Contraflow Lane
- Busways
  - Reversible Shoulder Lane
- Dedicated High Occupancy Lane
- Frontage Road Improvements
  - Bus Bypass Ramps
  - Arterial Improvements
  - Frontage Road Completion

Freeway Corridor Improvement Program 1979-1983

The major travel corridors have been analyzed and these techniques appear to be applicable on specific corridors in the following manner:

1979 North Freeway—Construction of preferential transit lane along a 36 mile segment of the North Freeway has begun and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 1978. This lane is primarily a contraflow lane; however, a reversible shoulder lane and a median barrier are also included within the design.

1980 Katy Freeway—Improvements to the freeway frontage road are proposed, including bus priority signalization, intersection re-design and the widening of a small segment of the roadway for improved flow.

LaPorte Freeway (SH125)—Improvements are proposed for the frontage road including progressive signalization, intersection redesign and provision of busway facilities onto and off of the constructed portions of the freeway.

Southwest Freeway—High occupancy vehicle bypass facilities for inbound traffic are planned as part of a proposed realigning project which supplies "controlled demand" to the freeway main lanes. Frontage road improvements will be made for outbound traffic including bypass ramps and the redesign of the arterial connection to Westpark. Westpark is planned to be improved to a reversible one-way roadway for peak hour traffic.

1981-1984 Northwest Freeway—Frontage road improvements will be implemented including the redesign of intersections and special by-pass ramps onto the completed portion of the freeway main lanes. Also, special access will be provided by nodes originating from Park & Ride lots.

Transitways

As transit ridership and auto congestion increase, exclusive facilities for transit become critical. The following exclusive transitway facilities are proposed for construction by the Metropolitan Transit Authority:

1981-1983 Transitway Construction Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gulf Corridor</th>
<th>Southwest Corridor</th>
<th>West Loop Corridor</th>
<th>Katy Corridor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almeda-Glen to Telephone Rd.</td>
<td>10 miles</td>
<td>3 miles</td>
<td>8 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eola west to Hillcroft</td>
<td>3 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellerica north to I-10</td>
<td>3 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoine west to Eastex</td>
<td>2 miles</td>
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Cost Summary

Transitway Development

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corridor</th>
<th>Estimated Cost (in Millions)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>$30.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northwest</td>
<td>80.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katy</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop 610</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>65.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northside</td>
<td>110.0</td>
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</table>

1979-1988 Total $523.2

Cost Summary

Low Capital Strategies Freeway Corridor Improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Estimated Cost (in Millions)</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>$2.5 Million</td>
<td>For North Freeway Contraflow Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>$4.6 Million</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>$3.7 Million</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>$1.8 Million</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>$6.0 Million</td>
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</table>

1979-1983 Total $19.1

*All terminals and lengths are approximate and may vary based on further design considerations.

24

25
TRANITWAY CONVERSION PROGRAM

RAIL COORDINATION

The development of an extensive transi-
tway program does not preclude opportuni-
ties for provision of commut-
erail service along existing rail rights-of-
Transit Authority Board appointed a
committee to pursue discussions with
representatives of the Missouri-Kansas-
Texas Railroad concerning potential
joint use of right-of-way along the Katy-
Houston MRT rail corridor. The
committee, including the Mayor of the
City of Katy, the Harris County Judge,
the Transportation Planning Manager
of the Houston-Galveston Area Council,
and the Transit Administrator for the
City of Houston, held a preliminary
meeting with the MRT in June. Poten-
tial for coordination is encouraging.

Private rail operators are
encouraged by the MTA Board to
consider joint use of current rail
facilities. Existing railroad tracks
may be utilized for mass transit if a
cooperative private rail company is
identified.

Automated Guideway/Rail
Automated guideway/rail
transit will provide sufficient
capacity to accommodate antici-
pated growth in transit demand and
provide Harris County with a
regional transit system which will
function efficiently into the next
century.

Automated Guideway/Rail
Cost Summary
(Automated Guideway/Rail
Conversion
(Millions)
80.0 Miles of Guideway.... $490.0
7.5 Miles of Extension.... 310.0
Maintenance Facilities.... 15.0
Rolling Stock............. 175.0
Total (1979 Dollars)..... $990.0

FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

Analysis
The Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO) Financial Plan is a
conservative balancing of anticipated local income from a one-cent
sales tax and matching federal capital grants. Needs have been pro-
tected for a ten-year period, both for capital investment and operat-
ing costs.

Ten Year Capital Cost
Building transits along the
freeway or rail corridors and
making planned bus improvements will cost $1.2 billion, including an
allowance for appreciation. This esti-
mate is based on a ten-year con-
struction schedule. Conversion of the
transitways to an automated
guideway/rail system will require
additional local funds of $251 million.
The total cost of METRO

compares favorably with the costs in
Washington D.C. ($6 billion) and
Atlanta ($2 billion). By the use of
free public right-of-way, and a
commitment to a flexible system
using reliable, proven technology,
METRO will keep costs to an
essential level and avoid the costly
mistakes of other cities.

Federal Matching Funds
The initial capital cost of $1.2
billion, federal transit and high-
way funds will supply $444 million.
Local tax dollars will provide the
remaining $366 million. These
federal transit funds, collected
throughout our income taxes, have been
heavily used by other cities for more
than 15 years. The MTA Board has
recognized that the availability of
federal tax dollars is no reason to
construct a costly and unused

system, as has occurred in other
cities. The development of a cau-
tious, flexible system, coupled with
voluntary commitment of a local tax
source to transit, however, is the only
way to obtain this area’s fair share of
federal transit funds. The METRO
Financial Plan assumes the avail-
ability of these matching federal
dollars, both for the initial $1.2
billion phase of construction and for
the automated guideway/rail system.

Pay-As-You-Go Financing
In line with conservative fiscal
policy, the MTA Board will commit
local funds for capital improve-
ments on a pay-as-you-go basis. This
approach will save more than $200
million in interest expense over a
twenty year period. It will also pro-
tect the local share of funding so that
the construction of the system is
assured. No tax bonds can be issued by
the MTA Board without voter
approval.

Tax
The MTA Board has proposed a one-
cent limited sales tax. By law, no
increase in METRO taxes can ever
occur without voter approval. Also
by law, the Board cannot levy a
property tax on homes and businesses.

Under the state law creating
METRO, the Board is authorized to
propose any tax, other than a proper-
try tax, for voter approval. The
alternatives, other than a sales tax
considered by the MTA Board, and
the reasons for their rejection, are:

- Emissions Tax: This proposal was
rejected by voters by a 5-1 margin in
1978. Further, it would produce insuf-
icient revenue. The County Tax
Assessor has indicated it cannot be
efficiently or fairly collected.

- Gasoline and Motor Vehicle Regis-
tration Taxes: All net revenue from these
taxes are committed by the Texas
Constitution to highways and public
schools (Sec. 7a, Art. 8, State
Constitution).

- Motor Vehicle Sales Taxes: By state
law, the net revenue from this tax is
committed to public schools and the state
Omnibus Tax Fund (Art. 2401, VAT.
Tax Code).

- Payroll Taxes: This tax is generally
levied as a flat percentage against
income, much like the social security
tax. There is no precedent in Texas for
this tax, and the MTA Board found
too little public support for this approach,
which is basically a personal income
rate.

- Corporate Income Taxes: There is no
established system in Texas for collect-
ing any state income taxes. Further, this
tax is ultimately passed on to the con-
sumer in the prices paid for goods and
services. Again, the Board found no
support for this tax either.

- Amusement Taxes and Parking
Taxes: These taxes result from the retail
sale of the admission prices of amuse-
ment parks. These taxes are not subject
to the requirements for capital
improvements.

Total Operating Cost $677.7
1Peak hour vehicle need based upon 90% of total fleet.
2Service miles are based upon 40,000 miles of annual revenue service per peak hour bus.
3Operating cost represents total system operating expense less anticipated farebox revenue, plus an administrative increment.

Inflation factor included.

Operating Cost Analysis
1979-1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Peak</th>
<th>Service</th>
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<td>455</td>
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<td>621</td>
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<td>1,464</td>
<td>1,318</td>
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Total Operating Cost $677.7

Metropolitan Transit Authority
Capital Program
1979-1988

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<tr>
<td>Maintenance Facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation Systems Mgmt</td>
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<td>Transit Terminal Facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park &amp; Ride</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low Capital Freeway Improv</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transiways</td>
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Total Capital Cost $1,210.4
Less Federal Share $844.3
Total Local Capital Cost $366.1

*Inflation factor included

Metropolitan Transit Authority
Financial Summary - Local Funds
1979-1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Operating Costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Capital Cost</td>
<td>$366.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automated Guideway/Rail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Local Expenditures</td>
<td>$1,295.1</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*With federal funding match, local commitment could generate up to $1,295.1 million.
On July 13, 1978, the Interim Board of the Metropolitan Transit Authority passed a resolution which called an election for Saturday, August 12, 1978 for the submission of the following proposition:

SHALL THE CREATION OF THE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY BE CONFIRMED AND SHALL THE LEVY OF THE PROPOSED TAX BE AUTHORIZED?

The vote is called for all registered voters in Harris County (and voters living within the incorporated area of any city, the boundaries of which fall partly in Harris County).

Upon approval of the above proposition, the Metropolitan Transit Authority will be confirmed and the Board of the Authority will be authorized to levy a limited sales tax at the rate of one percent (1%) on receipts from retail sales within the area of the Authority. Sales for medicine, food, and rent are exempted from the sales tax. The maximum rate of the tax shall never exceed one percent (1%) without specific voter approval.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority will be created if the residents of the City of Houston, including enclave cities, approve the proposition. The jurisdiction of the Authority will extend to all areas that vote in favor of the proposition. If less than fifty percent (50%) of the population of Harris County resides outside the limits of the Authority, the Board of the Authority shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the City of Houston; one member appointed by the mayors of all incorporated municipalities (except Houston) that are within the Authority; and one member appointed by the Commissioners' Court of Harris County. If more than fifty percent (50%) but less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the population of Harris County resides outside of the City of Houston, the Board will consist of nine (9) members of whom five (5) will be appointed by the City of Houston; two (2) will be appointed by the mayors of the incorporated municipalities (except Houston); and two (2) will be appointed by the Commissioners' Court. If seventy-five percent (75%) or more of the population of Harris County resides within the limits of the Authority, the Board will consist of eleven (11) members. Five (5) will be appointed by the City of Houston; two (2) by the mayors of the incorporated municipalities (except Houston); three (3) by the Commissioners' Court; and one member, who will serve as Chairman, will be appointed by the other ten (10) members of the Board.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Metropolitan Transit Authority wishes to express their gratitude for the many hours of assistance and cooperation on the part of many people in the completion of the METRO Regional Transit Plan for Harris County. In particular, appreciation is extended to the thousands of area citizens who made presentations before the Board and participated in the MTA Community Meetings. Their guidance to the development of this plan was invaluable.

Technical Assistance
City of Houston
City of Baytown
City of Pasadena
Harris County
Houston-Galveston Area Council of Governments
State Department of Highways and Public Transportation
Houston-Galveston Regional Transportation Study
Texas Transportation Institute, Texas A&M Research Foundation
HouTran, Inc.
Texas Southern University Urban Resources Center
Dept. of Public Affairs
Ripley House
Transportation Advisory Group (TAG)
Arthur Young & Company
Bernard Johnson, Inc.
Brown & Root, Inc.
Dannenbaum Engineering Corp.
Educational Facilitators and Community Consultants (EF-ACS)
Haywood, Jordan, McGowan, Inc.
John Chase and Associates
Louis Fontenot and Associates

Pratt and Associates
Ramirez and Associates
Rice Center for Community Design + Research
Robert Harmon and Associates
S. I. Morris and Associates
Simpson and Curtin, a division of Booth-Allen, Inc.
Turner, Collins, and Braden
Walter P. Moore & Associates
Watson Smith and Associates
Martilla, Payne, Kelley, Towner & Associates
Staples and Staff, Inc.
Jim Ray and Associates
Coalition for Barrier Free Living
Continental Oil Corporation
C. S. Draper Laboratory, NASA

Advisory
All Hoc Social & Health Transportation Committee
Houston Independent School District
Greater Houston Transportation Company
Houston Chamber of Commerce
Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce
Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce
Vista 26
Houston County Commissioners
Harris County Mayors and Councilmen Association
Houston Urban League
Houston Area Railroads
Operation Breadbasket
City Port Oak Association
Westheimer Corridor Association
Katy Freeway Association
South Main Center Association
Public Technology, Inc. of the Urban Conservancy
American Public Transit Association
San Antonio Transit Authority (VIA)
Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Association (MARTA)
Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD)

Tri-Metropolitan Transit District (TRI-MET, Portland)
Golden Gate Bridge Transit District (San Francisco)
Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART, San Francisco)
Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
Urban Mass Transportation Administration
Federal Highway Administration
Office of the Secretary, U.S. Dept. of Transportation
U.S. Dept of Labor
Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Texas Air Control Board

Agencies appearing before the Board
Houston Junior Chamber of Commerce
Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Co.
Southern Pacific Railroad
7-K Transit Company
Transportation Enterprises, Inc.
SHIFIT
ZIP Transportation
Billboards Limited
Texas Association of Community Organizations for Reform New Texas Association of Railroad Passengers
Greater Houston Civic Council

Recognition is made of the effort and enormous contribution of the Administrator and Staff of the Office of Public Transportation, City of Houston for their technical planning and administrative assistance in the preparation of the METRO Regional Transit Plan.