

Presentation to the
**Southeast Corridor High-Performance
Transit Alternative Study
Public Forum**



Overview of MTA

presented by
**Marian Ott, MTA Board
Chair, Planning and Marketing Committee**



SEPTEMBER 2004

Outline of Presentation



- **Overview**
- **History**
- **MTA Today**
- **MTA Plans**



Who we are:



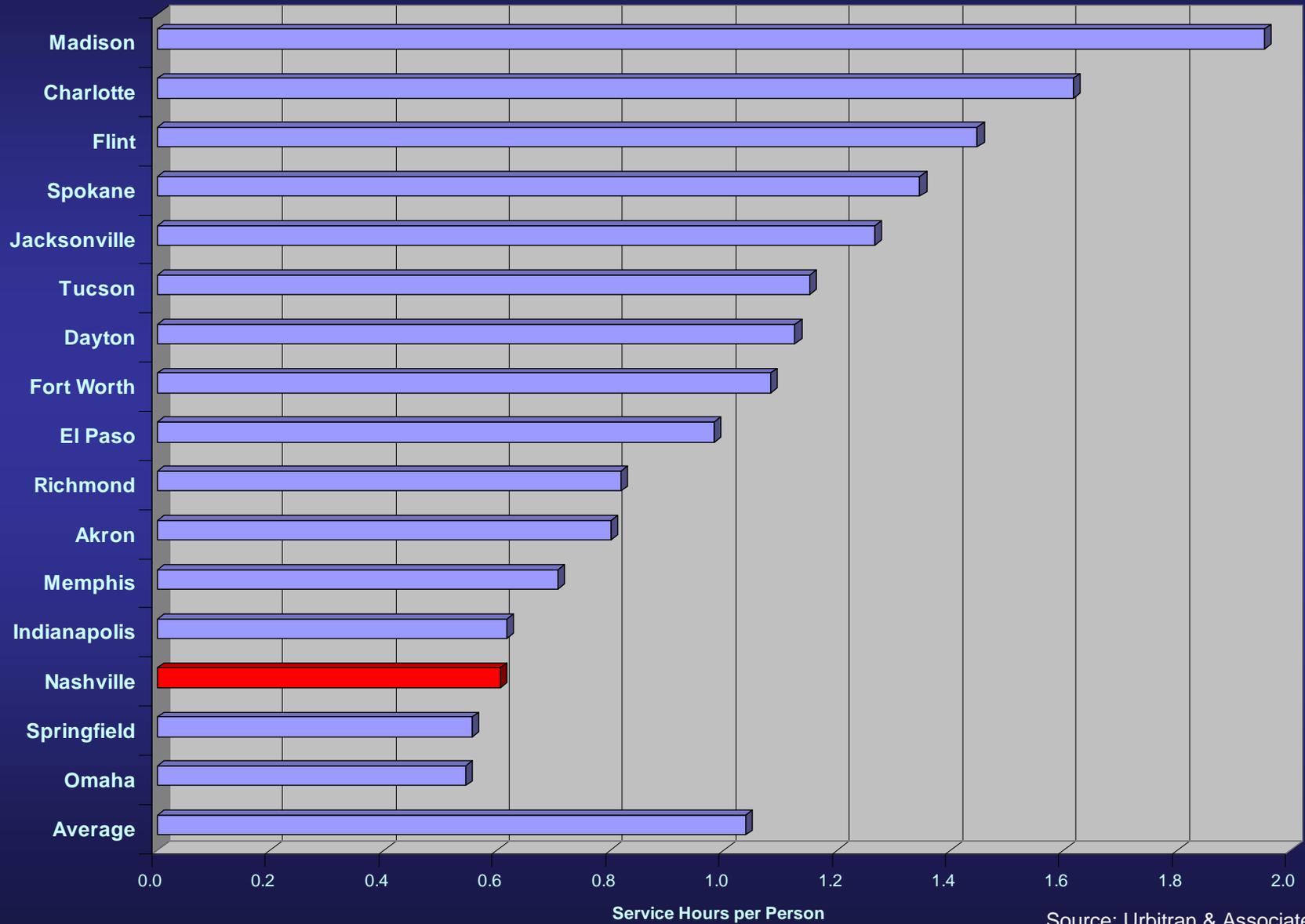
- Part of Metro Charter
- 5 member Metro appointed Board
- Davidson County focused



- 49 member Board, local elected officials and 6 Governor appointed
- 9 county area
- Created by state statute

- **No significant fleet investment**
- **Delivery infrastructure decimated**
- **Nashville lags significantly behind peer cities in Transit Service Level**

Peer Comparison



Source: Urbitran & Associates

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- **Poorly funded
(operations and capital)**
 - **Using capital for operations =
deteriorated fleet**
 - **Inadequate organizational structure =
poor service quality, low credibility**

MTA Organization Prior to Audit



- **Hired first CEO as Metro Employee**
- **Added other recommended management staff**
- **Obtained Metro commitment to capital funding**



- **Stable budget for last three years**
- **High credibility**
- **Ridership increases**



Overview of MTA's Services



- Fixed Route Bus (39 routes)
- State employee shuttle service
- Relax & Ride (under contract to RTA)
- AccessRide
- Titan's End Zone Express
- Vanpools

MTA Quick Stats



Total number of vehicles in service:	224
Total number handicap equipped:	116
Ridership last fiscal year:	7,078,734
Miles driven last fiscal year:	5,712,118



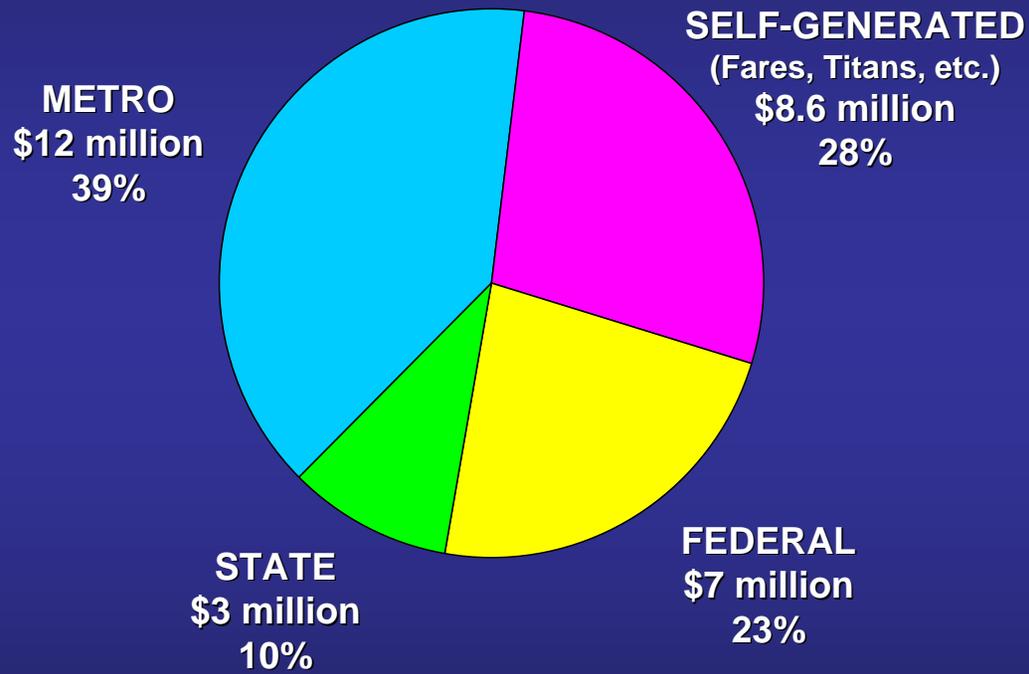
Total annual budget this fiscal year

Capital budget:	\$18.2 million
Total Operating budget:	\$30.5 million



Total number of employees:	405
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MTA Revenue Sources for FY 2005 Budget



New Buses



- Low floors
- Fully accessible
- Superior HVAC
- Automatic stop announcements
- Bike racks
- 25 new buses in service
- 51 more on order

New Bus Destination Signs



Suburban Bus



Used on Longer Routes

- Murfreesboro
- Lebanon
- Hendersonville
- Other destinations

Features

- High Back Seats
- Reading Lamps
- Overhead Luggage Racks

New Fareboxes



Last fall, new "state of the art" fareboxes were installed on our buses.

To make the transition easier for our customers, we:

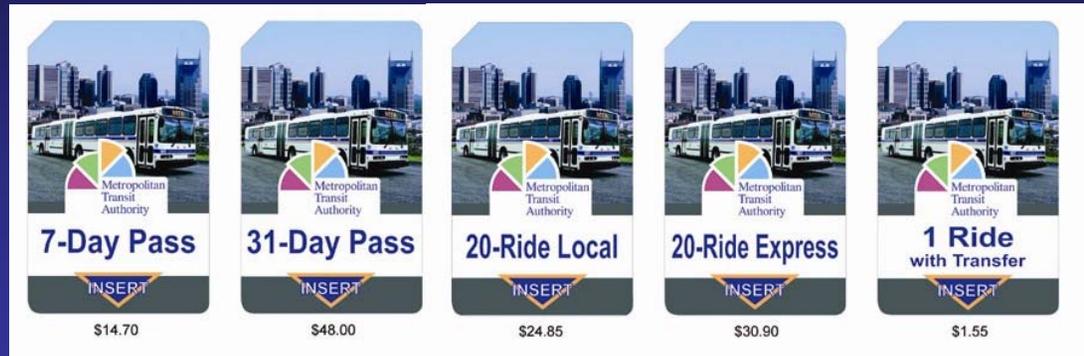
- "phased-in" the new tickets gradually over several weeks;
- began with the MTA transfer tickets and change cards;
- scheduled several farebox demonstrations for customers.



New Fare Cards



Change Card
and
Transfer Card



Adult Passes



Discounted Passes
for seniors 65 and older
and people with disabilities



Youth Passes
for youth 19 and under



RTA express
rides for bus
transportation
into and out of
Metro Nashville
and Davidson
County

Improved Customer Signage



- NextBus display signs have been installed to provide information on arriving buses.
- Currently, 9 signs are located in the downtown area and at other selected locations.



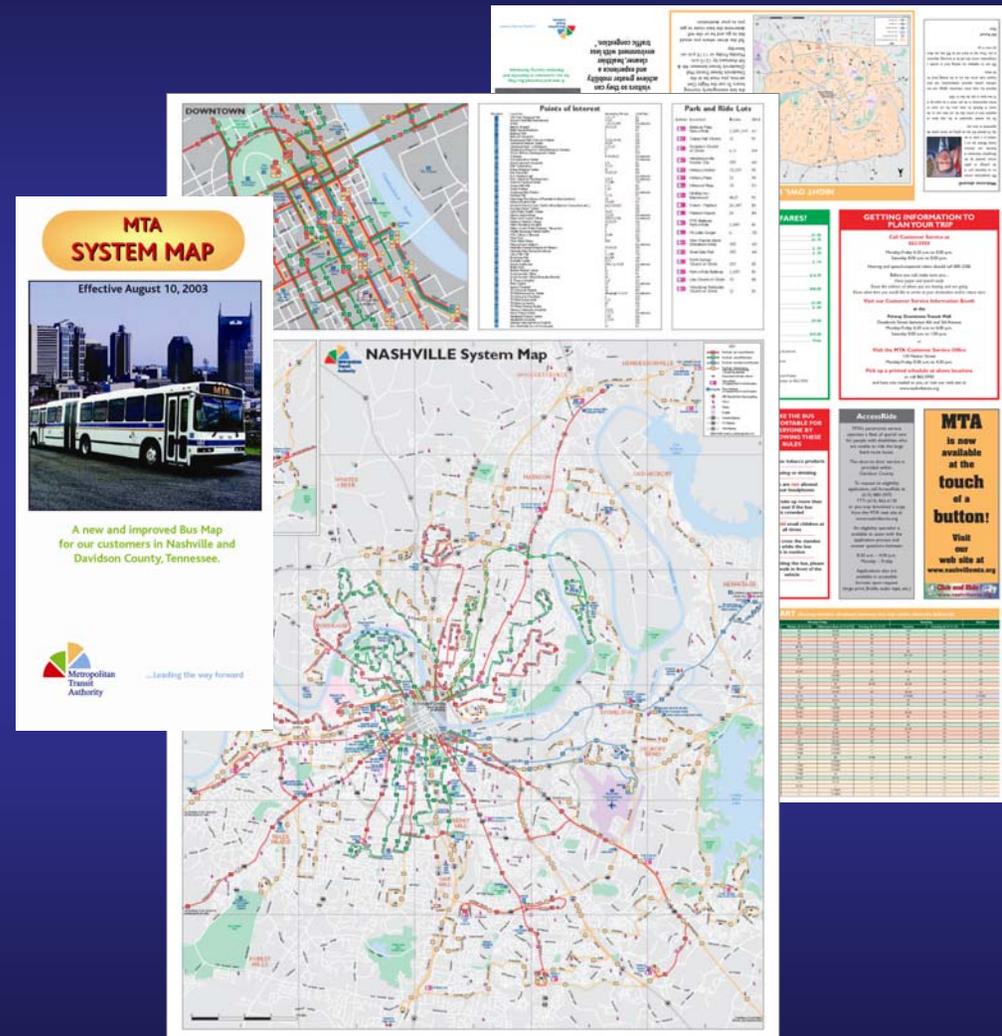
Voice reader box with button

New and Improved System Map



Packed with information ...

- More prominent street signs and landmarks
- Color-coded bus routes
- Frequency chart
- Colleges and universities
- Government offices and shopping malls
- Major tourist attractions



February 2004

Targeted Marketing of Specific Routes



Attention Residents!

The Metropolitan Transit Authority now offers convenient bus service in your area. Ride the MTA for only \$1.45 each way.

Route 15-Murfreesboro Road leaves from Hickory Hollow Mall and travels via Bell Road and Murfreesboro Road to downtown.

weekday schedule



Buses leave Hickory Hollow Mall every 17 minutes or less during peak hours.

First bus – 5:25 a.m.

Last bus – 10:06 p.m.

weekday schedule



Buses leave downtown every 17 minutes or less during peak hours.

First bus – 5:40 a.m.

Last bus – 11:15 p.m.

Route 15-Murfreesboro Road also has Saturday and Sunday/Holiday service. Please pick up a Route 15 pocket schedule for more information at the apartment manager's office.

If you have questions, please call the MTA Customer Service office at (615) 862-5950 or check our web site at www.nashvillemta.org



Customer Service Hours • 6:30 a.m.–8 p.m. Mon.-Fri. • 8 a.m.–8 p.m. Sat. • Closed Sundays and Holidays

Call (615) 862-5950 to request this information in an alternative format.

- 15 Murfreesboro Road connecting to the Hickory Hollow Mall area
- 11 Southeast Connector connecting 100 Oaks to Opry Mills Mall
- 33X Hickory Hollow Mall connecting to the Nolensville Road area

Modern Central Transfer Station



Birmingham – Jefferson County Transit Authority

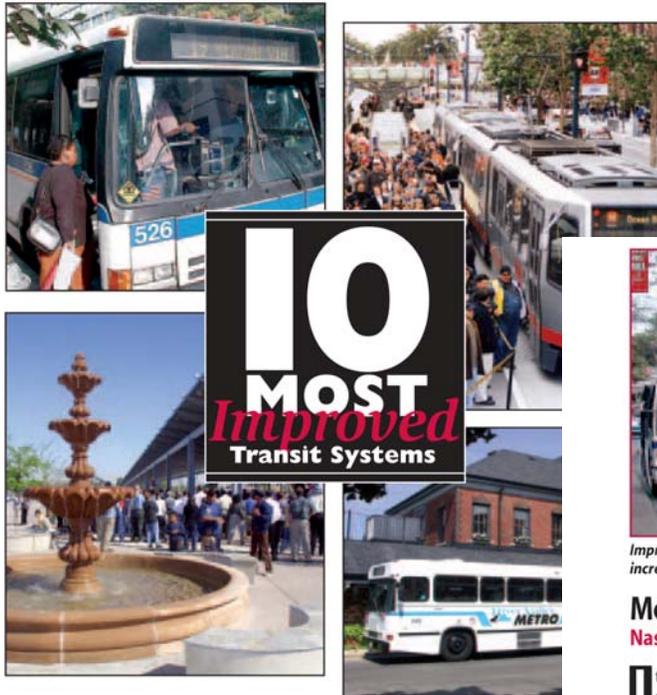


New Downtown Transfer Station



- **Will serve as a central hub for MTA**
- **Climate controlled waiting area**
- **MTA sales and information**
- **Parking facility**
- **Restroom facilities**
- **May include:**
 - Retail stores
 - Coffee shop
 - Daycare center
- **Site has not yet been determined**

One of 10 Most Improved Transit Systems



10
MOST
Improved
Transit Systems

With a strong emphasis on customer service, this year's 10 Most Improved Transit Systems are proving that big budget marketing isn't everything.

Instead, communication in the form of better route maps, more personal attention and additional service has proven good for ridership at these agencies. At the **Fairfax Connector Bus System** in Fairfax, Va., negative customer service comments were down about 27% and ridership was up more than 11%, much of which can be credited to customer surveys done by the agency.

This year's Top 10 proves the importance of maintaining good customer service. See how reaching out to passengers translates to an increase in ridership.

By **METRO Staff**

The **Palm Tran** West Palm Beach reinvented itself to reduce its rider part by improving service delivery.

Many of this year's most improved

transit agencies have seen vast improvements in ridership through good customer service.

The Top 10 were chosen from entries submitted by readers via our Website, www.metro-magazine.com.



Improved on-time performance and a new driver hiring program increased MTA's ridership by 5.8% in the past year.

Metropolitan Transit Authority Nashville, Tenn.

It wasn't rocket science that boosted funding and ridership numbers for Nashville's **Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA)** — it was just good old-fashioned communication.

For the past 10 years, the MTA faced cutbacks and a reduction of services, forcing it to operate one of the oldest bus fleets in the state without proper funding. The MTA has since turned things around with a new communications campaign extolling the benefits of public transit. It's directed at elected officials, community leaders and the chamber of commerce.

The MTA's campaign presentations focused on air quality and congestion issues, as well as the need for newer vehicles. "We've got buses that should have been retired 12 years ago," says MTA CEO **Paul J. Ballard**. "That really hit home," he says of the campaign.

Another key point centered on the MTA's level of service, which was far behind comparable cities. "This is the state capital. It needs to be a far higher level of service," he says.

Getting the word out about system benefits has given the MTA the most support it has ever received in terms of funding. "This fiscal year we received a 20% increase in our operating budget and the capital budget is 10 times the amount the government has ever given the MTA before," Ballard says.

The MTA has also been more aggressive in its search for alternative revenue sources. "We've been successful in getting federal grants and we are also looking to private institutions such as universities for partnership opportunities," Ballard says.

With its new operating budget, the MTA placed an order for 25 new buses to replace existing vehicles. The new low-floor 40-foot vehicles, to be manufactured by **Gillig Corp.**, will include electronic fareboxes and multi-colored destination signs.

Another important issue tackled by the MTA was improving on-time performance of buses. This new focus led to a 5.8% ridership increase in the past year.

Ballard also credits a new hiring program for MTA's improved passenger numbers. "In the past we looked for people with a CDL. Now we look for people with a personality and we train them to drive."

JANNA STARCIC

- More frequent schedules to make transit more convenient

- Simplify current routes for better service

- New Routes in Donelson, Hermitage, Creive Hall, Antioch, Goodlettsville.
 - Demand Zone in Southwest Nashville
 - More feeder routes in all areas of Nashville

MTA Five Year Plan: Improved Service

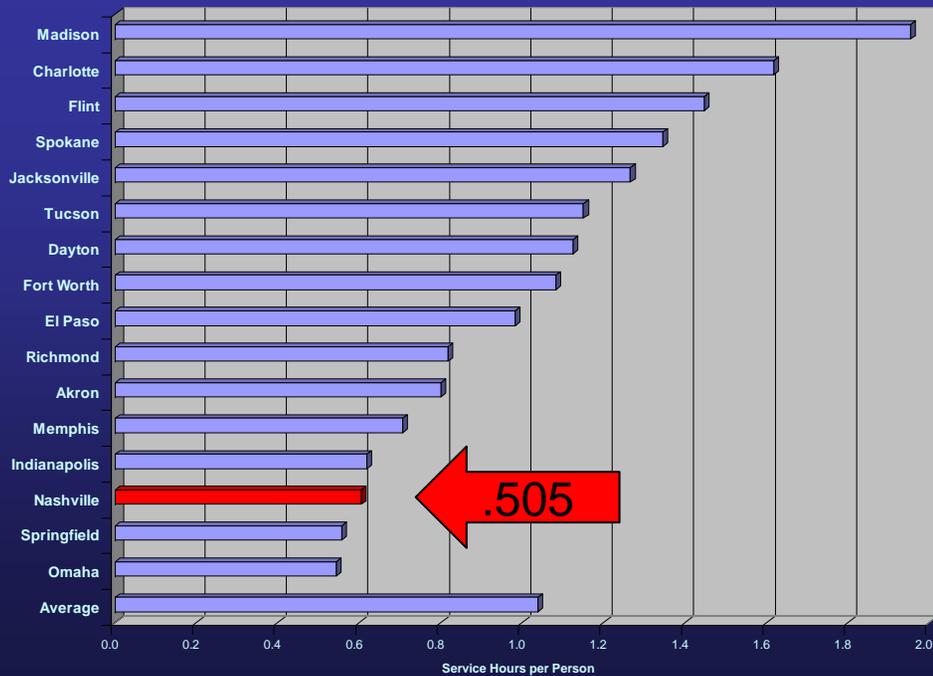


- Corridor service every 10-15 minutes (vs 22 min now)
- Neighborhood service every 15-20 min (vs 36 min now)
- Suburban service every 30-40 min (vs over 90 min now)

Peer Group Comparison



Current



2009

After the 5 Year Plan



- MTA will provide a good level of transit service within Davidson County
- Downtown transfer station will be operational
- Fleet upgrade will be complete
- MTA hopes to be working on implementation of Southeast Transit recommendations!

- Land-use planning & development should become more people/transit friendly
- Highway and transit investments should be considered as a system
- Need more balanced approach to funding