Passenger Air, Rail, and Transit Systems

5

Today's Passenger Transportation 206
- Urban Transit Services 207
  - *Bettendorf Transit 212*
  - *Davenport CitiBus 216*
  - *Rock Island County Metropolitan Mass Transit District (MetroLINK/Metro) 222*
- Regional Transit Services 227
  - *River Bend Transit 227*
  - *RIM Rural Transit 228*
  - *Other Passenger Transportation Services 228*
- Intercity Transportation 229
  - *Intercity Bus 230*
  - *Passenger Rail 230*
- Passenger Air Travel 233

Passenger Transportation Tomorrow 236
- Future Passenger Transportation Needs 239
  - *Bettendorf Transit 241*
  - *Davenport CitiBus 241*
  - *MetroLINK 242*
- Transit Priority Corridors 242
- Intercity Travel 244
- Other Passenger Transportation Options 245

Today's Passenger Transportation

Passenger transportation serves many purposes and destinations for its riders and the communities in which they operate. In-town, regional and intercity passenger services in the Quad Cities offer options for those who cannot or choose not to operate a car. Recent redevelopments in the urban core of the Quad Cities, especially in the downtown areas, benefit passenger transportation services by increasing commercial and residential densities that provide potential new areas for new ridership. Multimodal transportation is an attractive option in the Quad Cities, as all fixed-route buses have bike racks for riders to complete the first mile and last mile of their trips.

Passenger transportation services offer more than just a means to get around, they offer economic development opportunities to communities wishing to take advantage of street-side activity, such as in the form of transit-oriented development. Some members of the community are transit dependent, meaning public transit and other passenger transportation may be the sole means of mobility for these residents (seniors, low-income, and individuals with disabilities, for example). Others choose to use public transportation for a variety of reasons: environmental, economic, health, etc. Improving access for all in the community, both transit-dependent as well as choice riders, will lead to a healthier, more efficient, and livable region.

Strong passenger transportation systems contribute to a more economically vibrant Bi-State Region. Future improvements across the region will increase access to employment centers, schools, shopping centers, and medical facilities while spurring economic activity and mitigating congestion and air and noise pollution. According to the Federal Transit Administration, public health and safety also improve with the use of public transportation. On-going promotion of multimodal transportation, such as the availability of bike racks on buses or micro-transit services, expand mobility choices in the Quad Cities metropolitan area. The benefits of public transportation are clear, and the Quad Cities Area is capable and prepared to take advantage of its existing and future passenger transportation infrastructure.

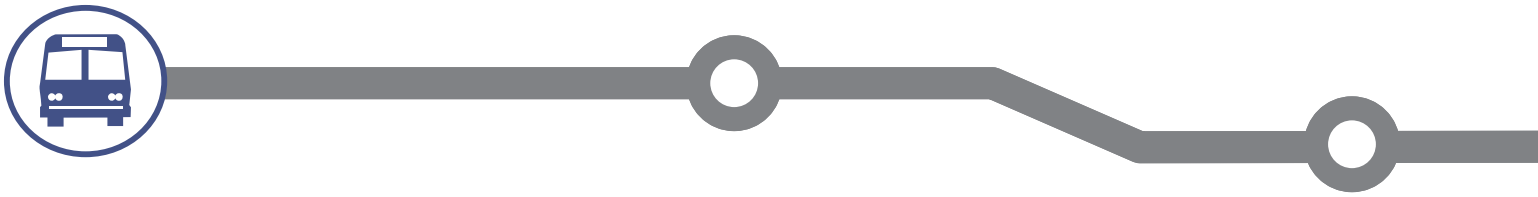
Urban Transit Services

The Quad Cities Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) is served by three urban fixed-route transit services: Bettendorf Transit, Davenport Citi-Bus, and the Rock Island County Metropolitan Mass Transit District (MetroLINK) (see Map 5.1). Coordination among the three systems is an ongoing effort that includes quarterly meetings. In total, approximately 69.2%[1] of the MPA population is located within a quarter-mile, or about a five-minute walk, of a bus route. Development along the most popular corridors expands economic opportunities that could bolster ridership and quality of life resulting in greater accessibility, cleaner air, and a healthier lifestyle. Economic activity is already high near existing fixed transit routes. Approximately 79.6%[2] of businesses in the urban area, representing approximately 136,132 employees, are located within a quarter mile of a transit route. The Transit Priority Corridors shown in Map 5.2 represent corridors with high potential for transit-oriented development.

Transit operators have worked to improve passenger access to their facilities through investments in new transit-oriented developments and upgrades to stations. All three systems operate as flag-down service, meaning that riders may stand anywhere along a route and request a bus to stop. Locations with bus shelters must meet ADA accessibility standards, as do all transfer facilities. Additionally, new developments, such as the partnership between MetroLINK, the City of Rock Island, and Rock Island Economic Growth Corporation called The Locks, have improved station access while also promoting transit and multimodal transportation. The residential development consisting of a 34-unit apartment building next to the transit station is also located across IL-92 from the Great River Trail. New access can also be utilized between Centre Station in Moline and the Q passenger rail station. The pedestrian crossing over the railroad tracks was completed in 2020 and connects future passenger rail service, local fixed-route service, intercity bus, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and water taxi in one centralized location. Likewise in 2015, MetroLINK completed construction of a new Mega Stop at South Park Mall to

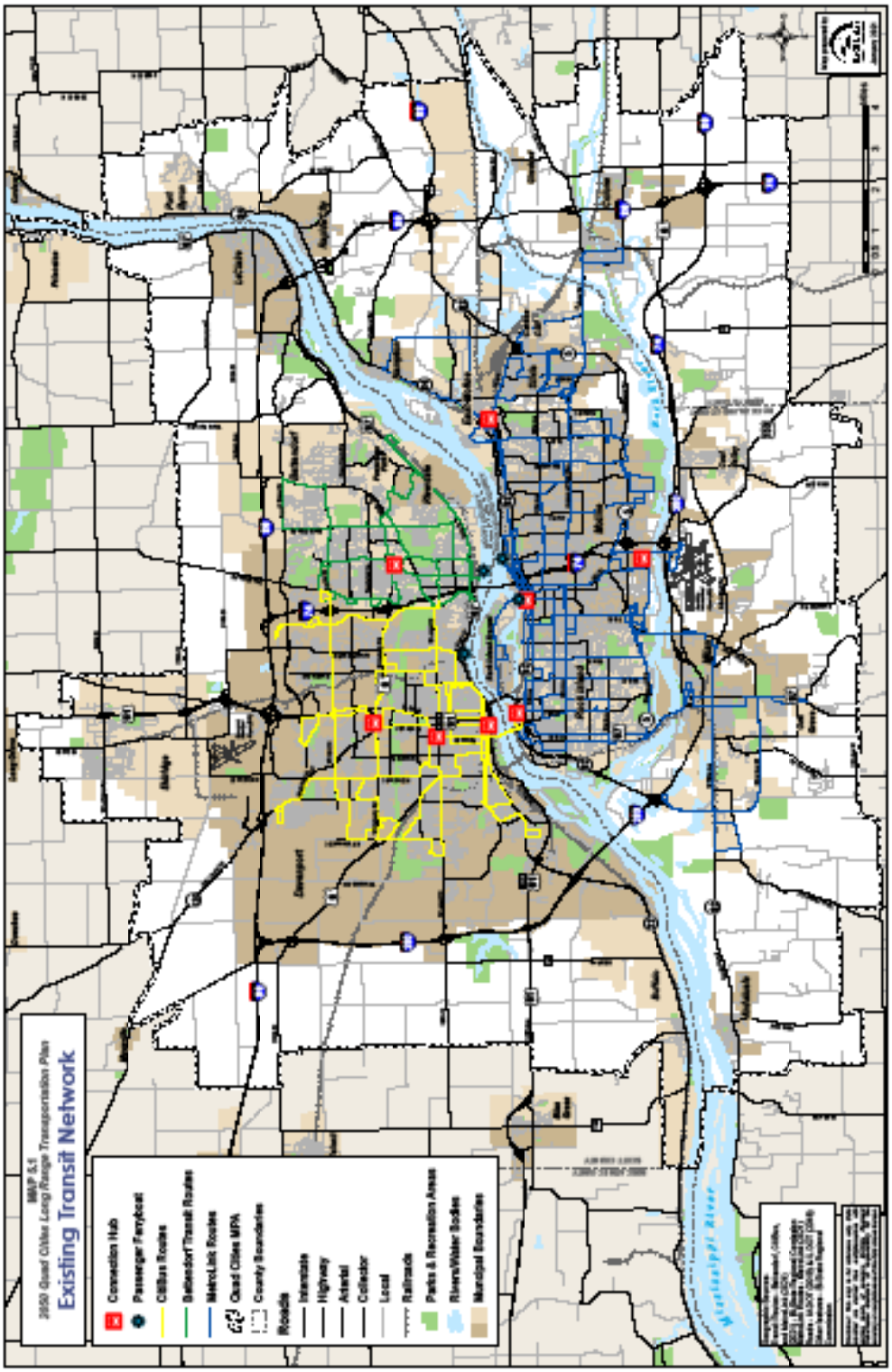
1 ESRI Community Analyst, Data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates.

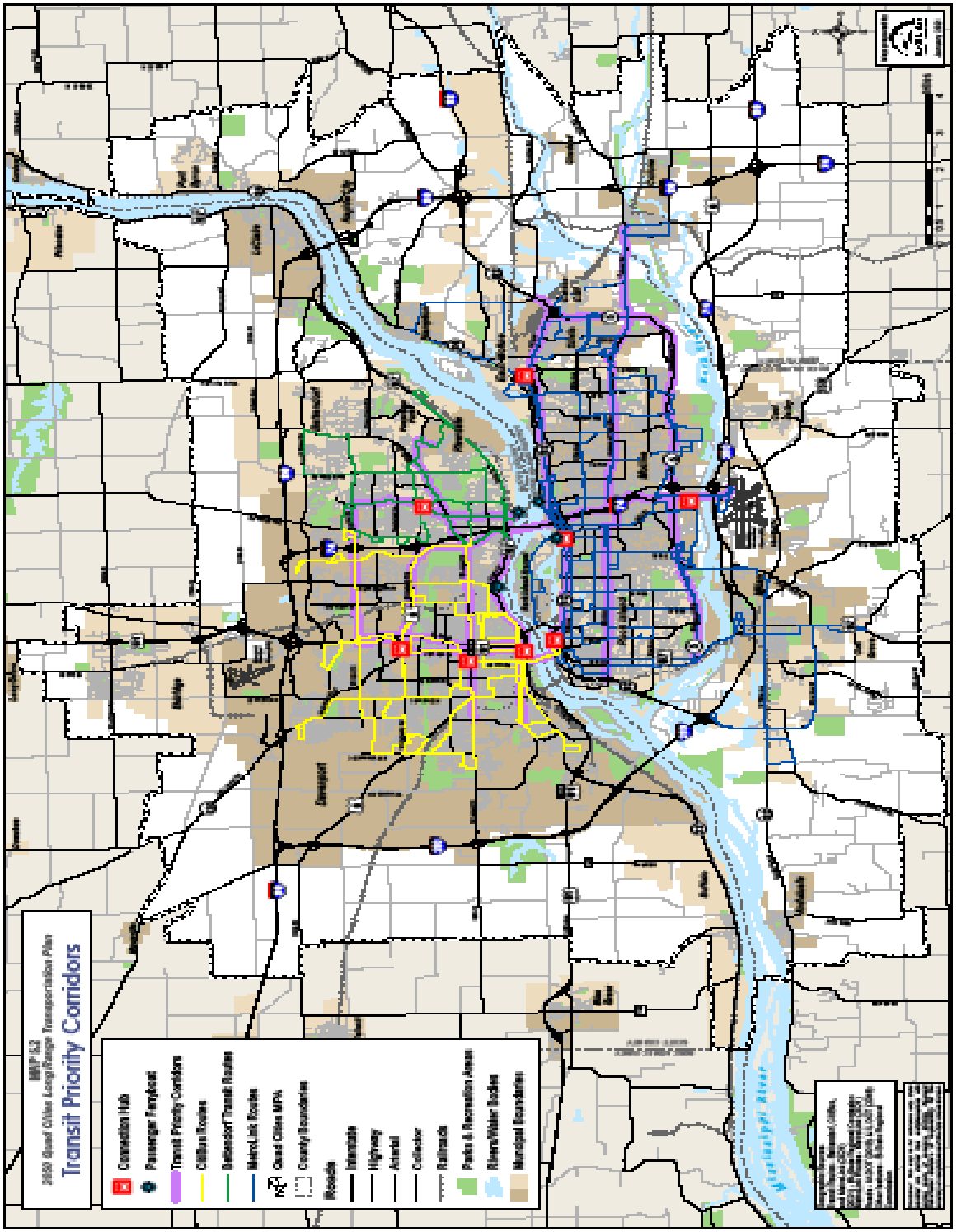
2 ESRI Community Analyst, Data from Infogroup, Inc., 2020.



accommodate shoppers and employees. The project consists of an improved walkway to connect directly with the "front door" of the mall and a 3,400 square-foot covered platform designed to accommodate four buses.

Urban transit faced unprecedented challenges beginning in early spring 2020, as the coronavirus pandemic began to affect the daily lives of Americans across the country. Residents of the Quad Cities, likewise, severely altered their travel behaviors, and ridership on public transit decreased by 50-60% in each fixed-route system. Nonetheless, many essential workers continued to rely on transit services throughout the pandemic. Demand-response service, such as River Bend Transit, experienced a decrease of approximately 80% in ridership, whereas MetroLINK's microtransit service did not experience a decline. Regional ridership recovered throughout the summer of 2020. The U.S. Congress passed the CARES Act in spring 2020 to assist with, among other things, budgetary shortfalls at public transit agencies. The one-time infusion of funds helped bridge the funding gap. However, the long-term implications of passengers' travel behavior will be unclear for months or years after the pandemic is over.


MAP 5.1
2050 Quad Cities Long Range Transportation Plan
Existing Transit Network
Connection Hub
Passenger Ferryboat
CitiBus Routes
Bettendorf Transit Routes
MetroLink Routes
Quad Cities MPA
County Boundaries
Roads
Interstate
Highway
Arterial
Collector
Local
Railroads
Parks & Recreation Areas
Rivers/Water Bodies
Municipal Boundaries
Mississippi River


Transit Priority Corridors
Connection Hub
Passenger Ferryboat
Transit Priority Corridors
Cities Routes
Bettendorf Transit Routes
MetroLink Routes
Quad Cities MPA
County Boundaries
Roads
Interstate
Highway
Arterial
Collector
Railroads
Parks & Recreation Areas
Rivers/Water Bodies
Municipal Boundaries

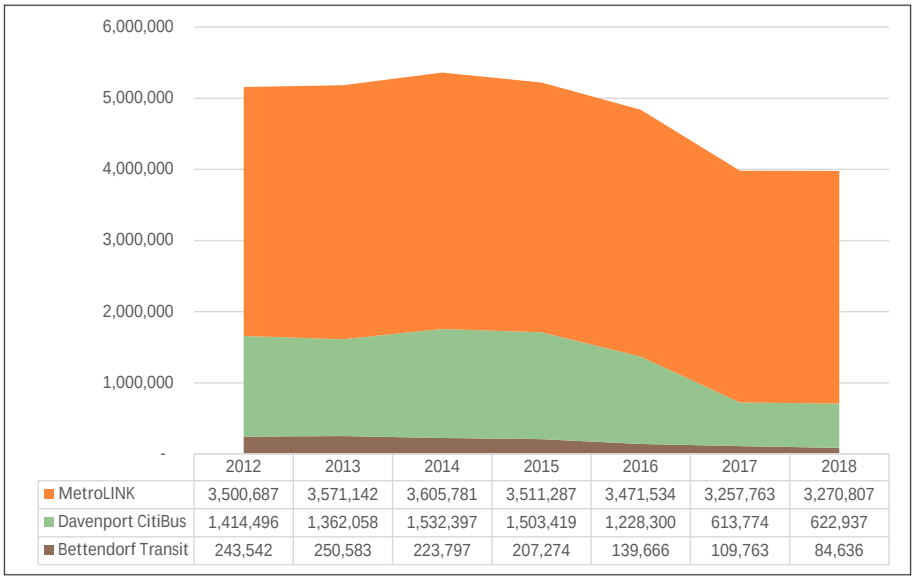
Since 2005, local transit ridership has seen a steady rise, followed by a plateau and declining trips. Since ridership peaked regionally in 2014, the number of trips taken has fallen from 5,361,975 to 3,978,380, a decrease of 25.8%. The decrease has not been entirely shared among the three systems, as Bettendorf Transit and Davenport CitiBus saw ridership declines of 66% and 59% respectively. MetroLINK meanwhile saw a decline of 9%. Bettendorf Transit and Davenport CitiBus implemented major route modifications and restructurings, which may explain some of the decrease. Unlinked trips may not capture the full picture of transit usage in the Quad Cities; however, as the route restructuring may have reduced the need for transfers between routes, this looks like a decreased in overall ridership. Bettendorf decreased route frequency to 60 minutes across the three routes, while CitiBus implemented 60 minute headways across all but one of its routes. Nationwide, trips taken by bus fell from 5.4 billion in 2007 to 4.7 billion in 2019 according to ridership data from the American Public Transit Association.

Figure 5.1 – Annual Unlinked Trips in Quad Cities Urbanized Area, FY2005-2018



Source: FY2005-2011 data self-reported by transit agencies. FY2012-2018 data retrieved from National Transit Database.

Figure 5.2 – Annual Unlinked Trips by Transit Agency, FY2012-2018



	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
MetroLINK	3,500,687	3,571,142	3,605,781	3,511,287	3,471,534	3,257,763	3,270,807
Davenport CitiBus	1,414,496	1,362,058	1,532,397	1,503,419	1,228,300	613,774	622,937
Bettendorf Transit	243,542	250,583	223,797	207,274	139,666	109,763	84,636

Source: National Transit Database, Annual Agency Profiles, 2012-2018

Bettendorf Transit

The City of Bettendorf operates a municipal transit system known as Bettendorf Transit. The fixed-route system was established in 1980 and currently operates three routes. Riders are able to connect to CitiBus near the intersection of Middle Road and Kimberly Road. Effective fall 2015, the three routes extend from two main transfer points along Middle Road. Service is provided to the most densely populated areas of the city in addition to many employment and activity centers, including the Family Museum, Scott Community College, the Isle of Capri casino, and the Arconic Industrial Plant among many others. Service hours for Bettendorf Transit vary depending on the day. Currently, weekday service is provided from 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and Saturday service is from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. There is no service provided on Sundays or major holidays. Regular fares are $1.00 for all fixed-route buses; however, reduced fares are available for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and college students. Children under age five may ride free if accompanied by an adult.

Riders may also purchase the QC Monthly Pass for $30.00. The QC Monthly Pass is a universal bus pass that entitles the bearer to unlimited rides for the calendar month on all three Quad Cities fixed-route systems.

Bettendorf Transit currently operates a fixed-route revenue fleet of five 21-passenger buses. All vehicles were acquired in 2017 and are equipped with bicycle racks to encourage multi-modal travel. Vehicles are stored indoors at the Bettendorf Public Works facility. Bus maintenance and fueling are done onsite. Between 2013 and 2019, the City of Bettendorf contracted with MetroLINK to house its administrative and operational functions. Such functions included state and federal transit reporting, grant applications and administration, a customer call center, and dispatching services. Bettendorf Transit has also implemented a computer-aided dispatch/automatic vehicle location (CAD/AVL) system, Google Trip Planner, and mobile app in recent years, increasing the availability of on-demand information.

In 2015, Bettendorf Transit underwent a route analysis that recommended moving the central transfer hub from downtown. Routes focused on serving more established parts of the city to improve efficiency, but no longer came together at a single point. Instead, customers could transfer between lines at numerous transfer points, including three main connections along Middle Road. The grid structure was chosen to reduce trip times and transfers, which had the effect of reducing unlinked passenger trips. Cross-river access on Bettendorf Transit will be reestablished in July 2021, as Stretch service will be discontinued. The Route 1 will cross the Mississippi River on the new I-74 bridge and connect to Centre Station in Moline. Bettendorf Transit's average monthly ridership can be seen in Map 5.3. This data shows that the highest ridership occurs along the U.S. 67 and Middle Road corridors.

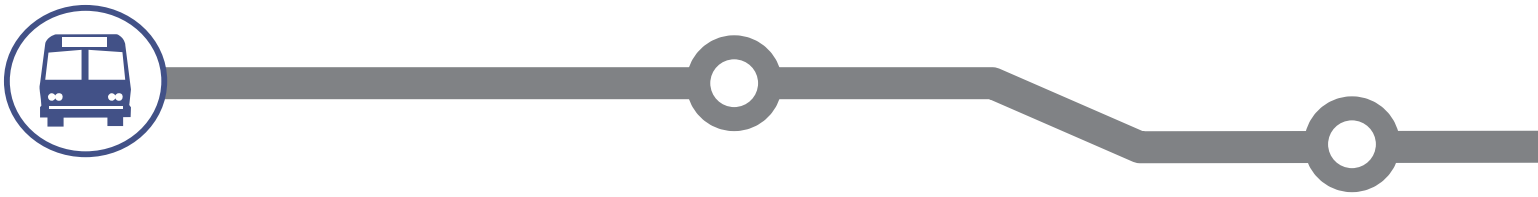
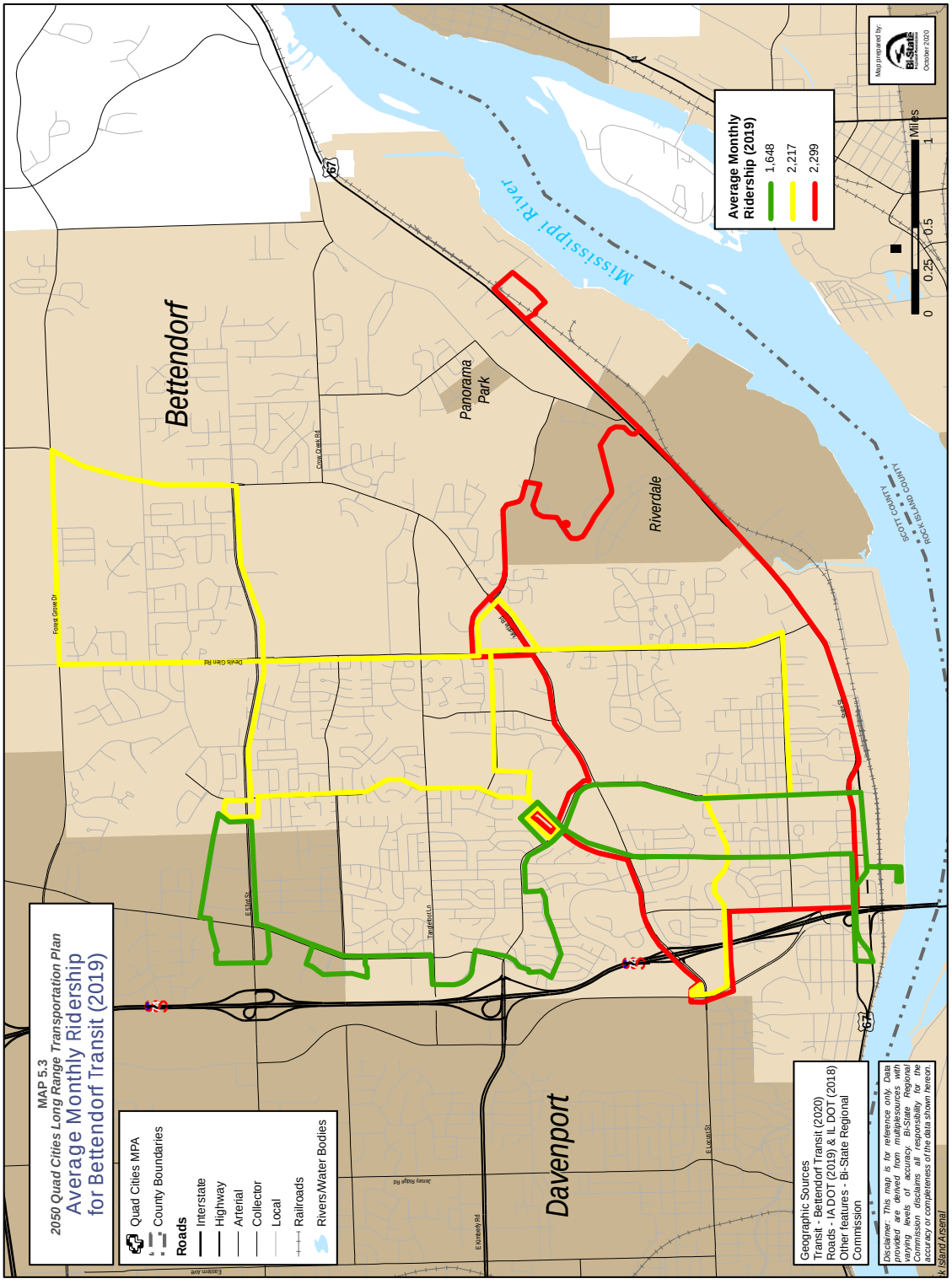


Table 5.1 – Transit Operations Summary

Transit System	# of Routes	# of Vehicles	Weekday Hours	Weekend Hours	Service Frequency on Routes (Headways)	Adult Basic Fare	Annual Unlinked Trips (FY18)
Bettendorf Transit	3	5	6:15 a.m. – 6:45 p.m. varies by route	8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. varies by route; Saturday only	60 minutes by route	$1.00	84,636
Davenport CitiBus	10	23	6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. varies by route	9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Saturday only	30 or 60 minutes by route	$1.00	622,937
Rock Island Co. Metropolitan Mass Transit District (MetroLink)	12	76; 3 vessels (Channel Cat)	5:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.; Channel Cat is seasonal	Saturday: 7:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Sunday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	15, 30 or 60 minutes by route	$1.00	3,270,807


MAP 5.3
2050 Quad Cities Long Range Transportation Plan
Average Monthly Ridership
for Bettendorf Transit (2019)
Quad Cities MPA
County Boundaries
Roads
Interstate
Highway
Arterial
Collector
Local
Railroads
Rivers/Water Bodies
Average Monthly Ridership (2019)
1,648
2,217
2,299
Miles
0
0.25
0.5
1
Bettendorf
Davenport
Riverdale
Panorama Park
Mississippi River
Rock Island County
Scott County
Map prepared by Bi-State Regional Commission October 2020
Geographic Sources
Transit - Bettendorf Transit (2020)
Roads - IA DOT (2019) & IL DOT (2018)
Other features - Bi-State Regional Commission
Disclaimer: This map is for reference only. Data provided are derived from multiplesources with varying levels of accuracy. Bi-State Regional Commission disclaims all responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the data shown hereon.
Rock Island Arsenal

Davenport CitiBus

Public investment in transit in Davenport began in 1969 with the creation of the City Transit Authority, which subsidized the privately-held Davenport City Lines Bus Company. The city purchased Davenport City Lines and placed the operation of the transit service under the jurisdiction of the city's Department of Municipal Transportation.

The City of Davenport operates a fixed-route system known as CitiBus. The 10 CitiBus routes are largely oriented in a grid pattern, with seven serving the Ground Transportation Center (GTC) located in the heart of downtown Davenport on River Drive between Ripley and Harrison Streets.

The approximate service hours for most routes are 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturday. Sunday service was discontinued in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and upon review by CitiBus and city staff. Headways vary by route and time of day but are generally 30 or 60 minutes.

The CitiBus service area encompasses much of the city, approximately 26 square miles. Numerous schools, shopping centers, hospitals, businesses, and several local tourist attractions are within short walking distances of CitiBus routes. CitiBus reaches out to the other two fixed-route transit systems of the Quad Cities. CitiBus connects to Bettendorf Transit at a transit hub at Lincoln and Kimberly Roads and at 53rd Street by the Northridge Shopping Center. CitiBus crosses the state line by traveling to the MetroLINK Rock Island transfer hub via the CitiBus Route 7 "Bridgeline" and Stretch service.

CitiBus provides service to the growing Eastern Iowa Industrial Area north of Interstate 80 during peak hours for the businesses located in this area. The City of Davenport contracts this service, along with their complimentary Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service and other demand-response services, to River Bend Transit, the regional transit provider.

Paratransit service is available during the hours that fixed route service operates. Demand-response service is available on Saturday mornings for work-related trips, from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., before

regular fixed-route service begins. These services are also operated by River Bend Transit.

In anticipation of I-74 bridge construction in downtown Bettendorf and Moline, Davenport CitiBus initiated and implemented the Stretch shuttle service to provide cross-river connections in response to congestion caused by construction. The Stretch service eliminated the need for Bettendorf Transit buses to cross into Illinois. The service will end in summer 2021, and cross-river access will be reestablished on Bettendorf Transit's Route 1.

Stretch service operates two routes as shuttle service, stopping only at designated locations including Burlington in Bettendorf near I-74 and Middle Road, the GTC, the District Station in Rock Island, and Centre Station in Moline. Buses were rehabilitated and offer free on-board wifi for passengers. Between December 2018 and February 2020, the Bettendorf-Moline route provided 15,318 rides while the Davenport-Rock Island route served 18,164.

General one-trip fares are $1.00, with special reduced fares available for seniors, individuals with disabilities, unemployed individuals, students, and children. In addition to the monthly QC Monthly Pass for $30.00, CitiBus launched a CitiPASS program in October 2007, allowing unlimited rides throughout Davenport for the month. Riders can purchase a monthly CitiPASS for $23.00, which allows unlimited rides and transfers on any routes within the Davenport system.

Davenport CitiBus has transit agreements with Scott Community College, Palmer College of Chiropractic, and Saint Ambrose University enabling students, faculty, and staff to ride without incurring any additional cost. Saint Ambrose University utilizes three CitiBus routes to enhance student access to and from its Health Sciences Building at Genesis West. The agreements are reciprocal with Illinois college and university agreements.

Beginning in 2011, the City of Davenport and the Davenport Public Schools System partnered to provide free transit service to schoolchildren between kindergarten and grade 12 upon presentation of their school ID. Monthly student ridership has fallen since initiation of the service, likely caused by service changes in 2016.

Davenport CitiBus has 23 operating vehicles in its fleet, 22 of which are 35-foot, 32-passenger low-floor heavy duty buses, and one 40-foot, 38-passenger heavy duty bus. All vehicles are ADA-compliant and equipped with bicycle racks to promote multimodal connections. The replacement schedule for heavy-duty transit buses is 14 years. Vehicles are maintained at the city's Public Works building.

With all buses equipped with bike racks, CitiBus provides easy access to the nationally designated Mississippi River Trail, which runs one block south of the facility, just by taking a bus to the downtown station

The City of Davenport currently owns and operates a centralized Ground Transportation Center (GTC) in downtown Davenport. Built in 1985, the facility is in fair condition and is ADA-accessible. The GTC has limited office space for supervisors, modest driver break room accommodations, and acts as the primary transfer location for the majority of CitiBus routes.

Construction of an addition to the Davenport Public Works building was completed in 2014. CitiBus management/administrative staff relocated to the new addition, which houses new administrative offices, a large conference area, multiple workstations, and driver accommodations. Limited supervisory staff remain at the GTC during operating hours for customer assistance. Dispatch services are coordinated out of the Public Works building. CitiBus and MetroLINK operate consolidated call center services through an intergovernmental agreement.

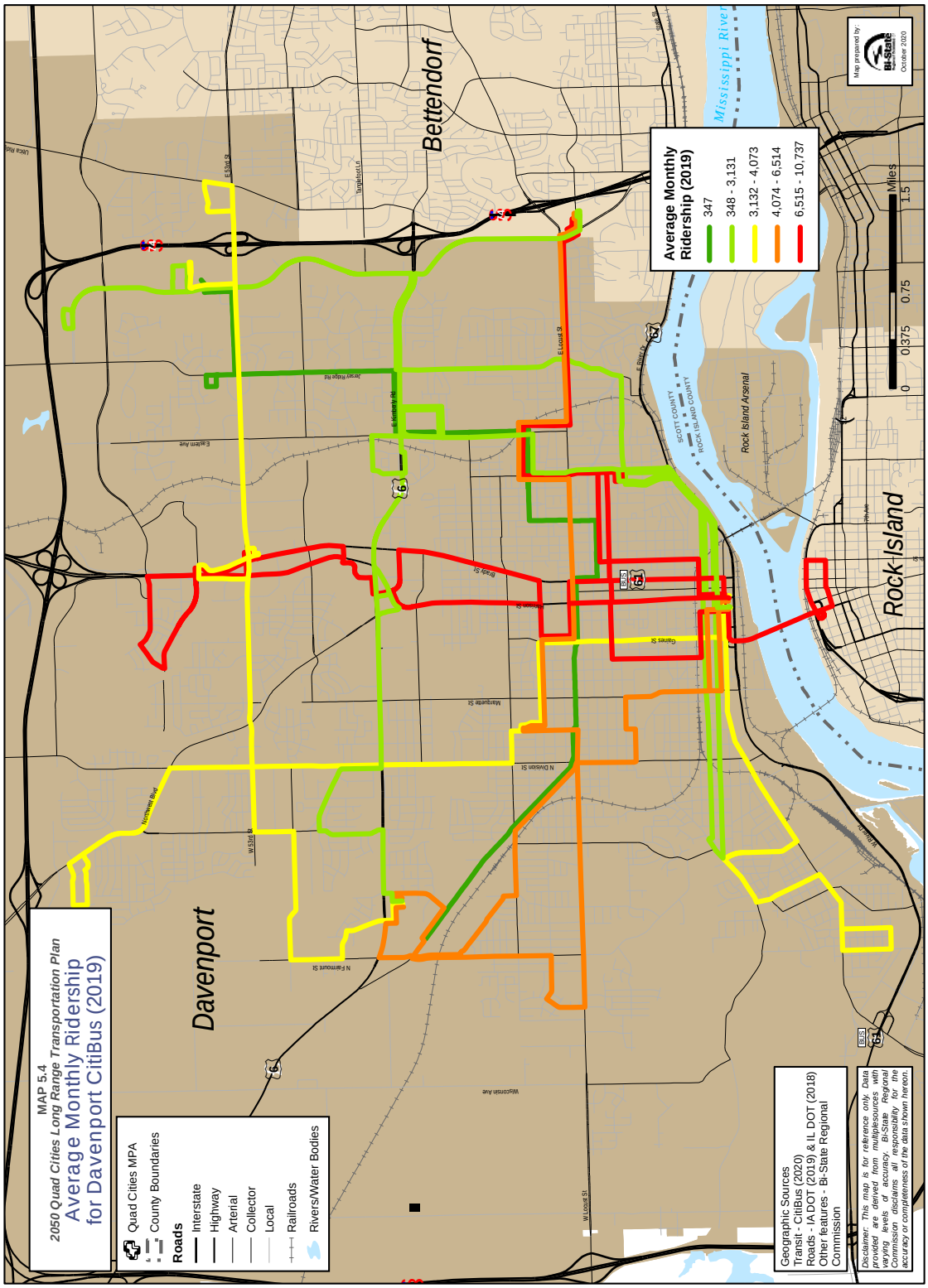
In response to recommendations made in the city's transportation plan, *Davenport in Motion*, and in an effort to improve service efficiency, CitiBus conducted a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) in 2015. The goals of the COA were to improve efficiencies within the CitiBus system while leveraging resources to meet the growing needs of the citizens of Davenport. Since the COA was completed, CitiBus implemented updated GIS technology and installed new technology such as:

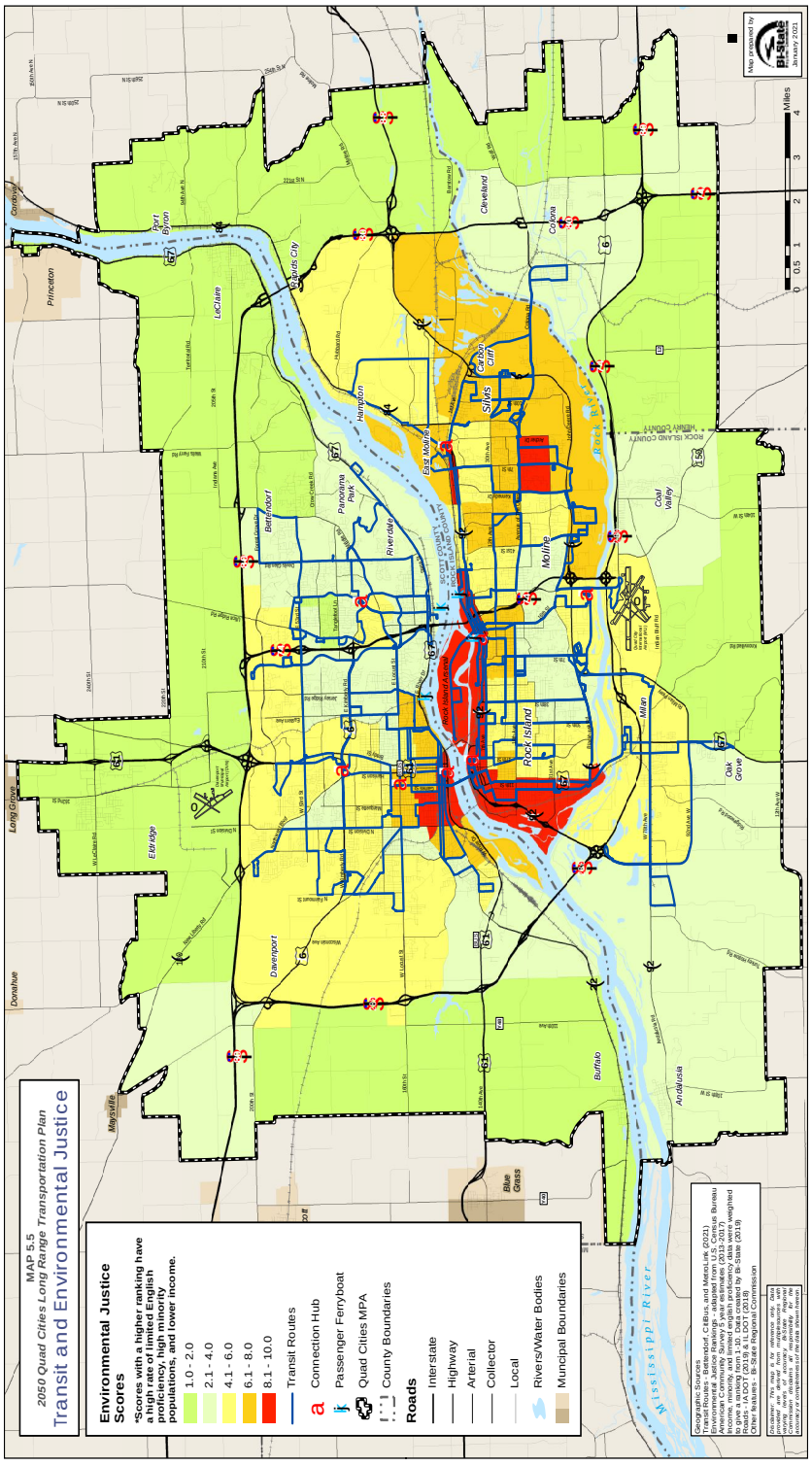
- Fareboxes with Smart Card technology
- Automatic Vehicle Locator System that allows customers to track buses, and

- A voice annunciator system in both English and Spanish.

The increase in the downtown residential population over the past 10 years, which is anticipated to continue to grow modestly, will provide continuing demand for alternative transportation and bus service to retail, employment, and recreation centers throughout the city and the region. Additionally, redevelopment along major corridors, such as the U.S. 61 corridor, offers the City of Davenport and CitiBus numerous opportunities to increase residential and commercial density to appeal to more transit-oriented development.

Likewise, throughout the Quad Cities Region, corridor planning has indicated the demand and potential of transit service in providing for a more livable community in the future. The average monthly ridership throughout the CitiBus system is depicted in Map 5.4, showing a high concentration of riders along the U.S. 61 corridor and along and south of Locust Street. The area south of Locust Street includes downtown Davenport and older neighborhoods with higher population densities and concentrations of low-income residents, minority populations, and LEP groups, the latter three of which are shown as a composite measure in Map 5.5.


MAP 5.4
2050 Quad Cities Long Range Transportation Plan
Average Monthly Ridership
for Davenport CitiBus (2019)
Quad Cities MPA
County Boundaries
Roads
Interstate
Highway
Arterial
Collector
Local
Railroads
Rivers/Water Bodies
Average Monthly Ridership (2019)
347
348 - 3,131
3,132 - 4,073
4,074 - 6,514
6,515 - 10,737
Miles
0
0.375
0.75
1.5
Davenport
Bettendorf
Rock Island
Rock Island Arsenal
Mississippi River
Geographic Sources
Transit - CitiBus (2020)
Roads - IA DOT (2019) & IL DOT (2018)
Other features - Bi-State Regional Commission
Disclaimer: This map is for reference only. Data provided are derived from multiplesources with varying levels of accuracy. Bi-State Regional Commission disclaims all responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the data shown hereon.
Map prepared by:
Bi-State Regional Commission
October 2020


MAP 5.5
2050 Quad Cities Long Range Transportation Plan
Transit and Environmental Justice
Environmental Justice Scores
*scores with a higher ranking have a high rate of limited English proficiency, high minority populations, and lower income.
1.0 - 2.0
2.1 - 4.0
4.1 - 6.0
6.1 - 8.0
8.1 - 10.0
Transit Routes
Connection Hub
Passenger Ferryboat
Quad Cities MPA
County Boundaries
Roads
Interstate
Highway
Arterial
Collector
Local
Rivers/Water Bodies
Muncipal Boundaries
Miles
Map produced by
Rock Island
Mississippi River
Moline
Davenport
Bettendorf
Silvis
East Moline
Riverdale
Milan
Oak Grove
Coal Valley
Carbon Cliff
Hampton
Port Byron
Cleveland
Orion
Buffalo
Andalusia
Blue Grass
Eldridge
Long Grove
Donahue
Maysville
Princeton
LeClaire
Camanche
Geographic Sources
Transit Routes - Bettendorf, CitBus, and MetroLink (2021)
Environmental Justice Scores - Census Bureau's 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5 year estimates (2013-2017) by block, intensity from 1:10. Data analysis by RSG
Roads - IA DOT (2019) & IL DOT (2018)
Data Source: Bi-State Regional Commission

Microtransit

IT-enabled private multi-passenger transportation services…that serve passengers using dynamically generated routes, and may expect passengers to make their way to and from common ***pick-up or drop-off points.*** *Vehicles can range from large* ***SUVs to vans to shuttle buses.*** *Because they provide transit-like service but on a smaller,* ***more flexible scale, these new*** *services have been referred to* ***as microtransit.***

[TCRP Research Report 188]

Rock Island County Metropolitan Mass Transit District (MetroLINK/Metro)

Rock Island County Metropolitan Mass Transit District, commonly referred to as MetroLINK, is a multi-city public transit system that was created in 1970 to serve the Illinois Quad Cities. Fixed-route service is provided to the communities of Carbon Cliff, Colona, East Moline, Hampton, Milan, Moline, Rock Island, and Silvis. In addition to fixed-route transit service, MetroLINK serves as a ticketing agent for Greyhound Bus Lines and Burlington Trailways, provides paratransit, special transportation and microtransit services, and operates a passenger ferry, locally known as the Channel Cat Water Taxi.

MetroLINK's active revenue fleet consists of 60 transit coaches, 7 paratransit vehicles, 9 Special Transportation Services (STS) vehicles, and 3 passenger ferryboat vessels. Seventy-two percent of the fixed-route fleet is powered by Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). In 2018, MetroLINK introduced its first electric bus and has expanded its electric fleet to 13% of its overall fleet as of 2020, resulting in quieter operations and substantially less pollution resulting from transit operations. The agency uses a 12-year replacement cycle for its fixed-route fleet, with major rehabilitation on the vehicles after approximately six years of use. All transit coaches and modified vans meet ADA requirements and are equipped with low-floor ramps or lifts and passenger notification signals.

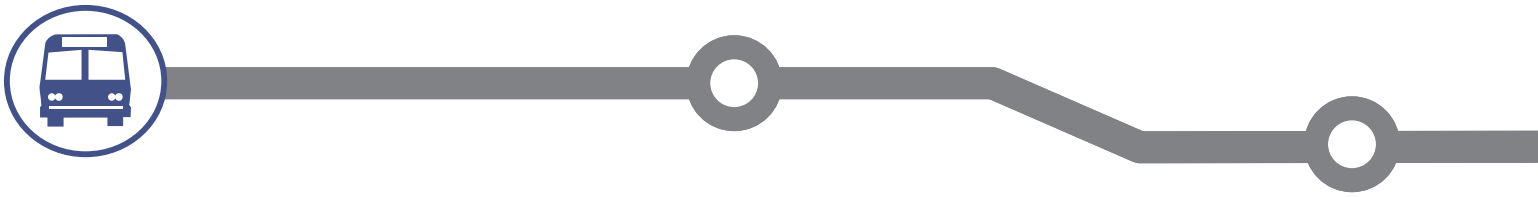
MetroLINK's fixed-route services, referred to as "Metro," operate seven days a week on 15, 30, or 60-minute headways. The system is comprised of 13 fixed routes, with additional peak service to serve employment and education centers. The system is a combination of grid and radial route service with connections to Davenport CitiBus and River Bend Transit at Rock Island's District Station, and Bettendorf Transit and River Bend Transit at Centre Station in Moline.

In 2019, MetroLINK introduced a microtransit pilot project in Milan as a supplement to existing fixed-route service. The service offers an on-demand public transportation option within the corporate limits of Milan. Passengers can be picked up and dropped off within the designated service area. Multiple riders may be grouped together based on demand and the location of their destinations.

The adult base fare is $1.00. Special reduced rates are available for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and children. Pre-paid passes provide discounts for purchasing multiple rides. Seniors and individuals with disabilities who are enrolled in the Illinois Benefit Access Program can ride the Metro fixed-route services free of charge. Metro also accepts the QC Monthly Pass, which costs $30.00 for unlimited rides on any of the Quad Cities fixed-route services.

Metro's transportation network includes three key terminals located in Moline, East Moline, and Rock Island. Centre Station, Metro's premier transportation hub, was constructed in 1998 and is a joint-use facility in Downtown Moline. Centre Station is also a transfer station and ticketing location for Burlington Trailways. A skywalk was constructed in 2020 to connect Centre Station to the Q, which will act as the passenger rail station when service to and from Chicago is reinstated. East Pointe Station was constructed in East Moline in 2005 and is situated north of the Iowa Interstate Railroad tracks on 14th Avenue. In January 2014, MetroLINK opened District Station in downtown Rock Island at 2nd Avenue and 20th Street. The station has passenger amenities, such as restrooms and real-time arrival information, and a heated waiting room. The station has room for ten bus docking bays for easy pull-in and pull-out. The site had been an underutilized parking lot just west of a 199-unit residential tower. To the north of the facility are Schwiebert Park, the Mississippi River, and access to the 62-mile-long Great River Trail. MetroLINK collaborated with the City of Rock Island and Rock Island Economic Growth Corporation (GROWTH) to construct The Locks, a 34-unit rental housing development adjacent to the new transfer station. The development is transit-oriented, allowing its residents to access the five Metro routes and one CitiBus route that utilize the facility. Other major transfer points in the Metro system are City Line Plaza, Black Hawk College, and the Moline Walmart. There are also two "Mega Stop" locations at SouthPark Mall and the Quad City International Airport. In 2015, MetroLINK completed construction of a signature transfer hub at SouthPark Mall. The project incorporates four bus bays with canopies, real-time signage, and passenger seating.

MetroLINK's average monthly ridership is shown in Map 5.6. The most heavily traversed routes generally run east-west. They serve downtown areas, key transit terminals, and major shopping and



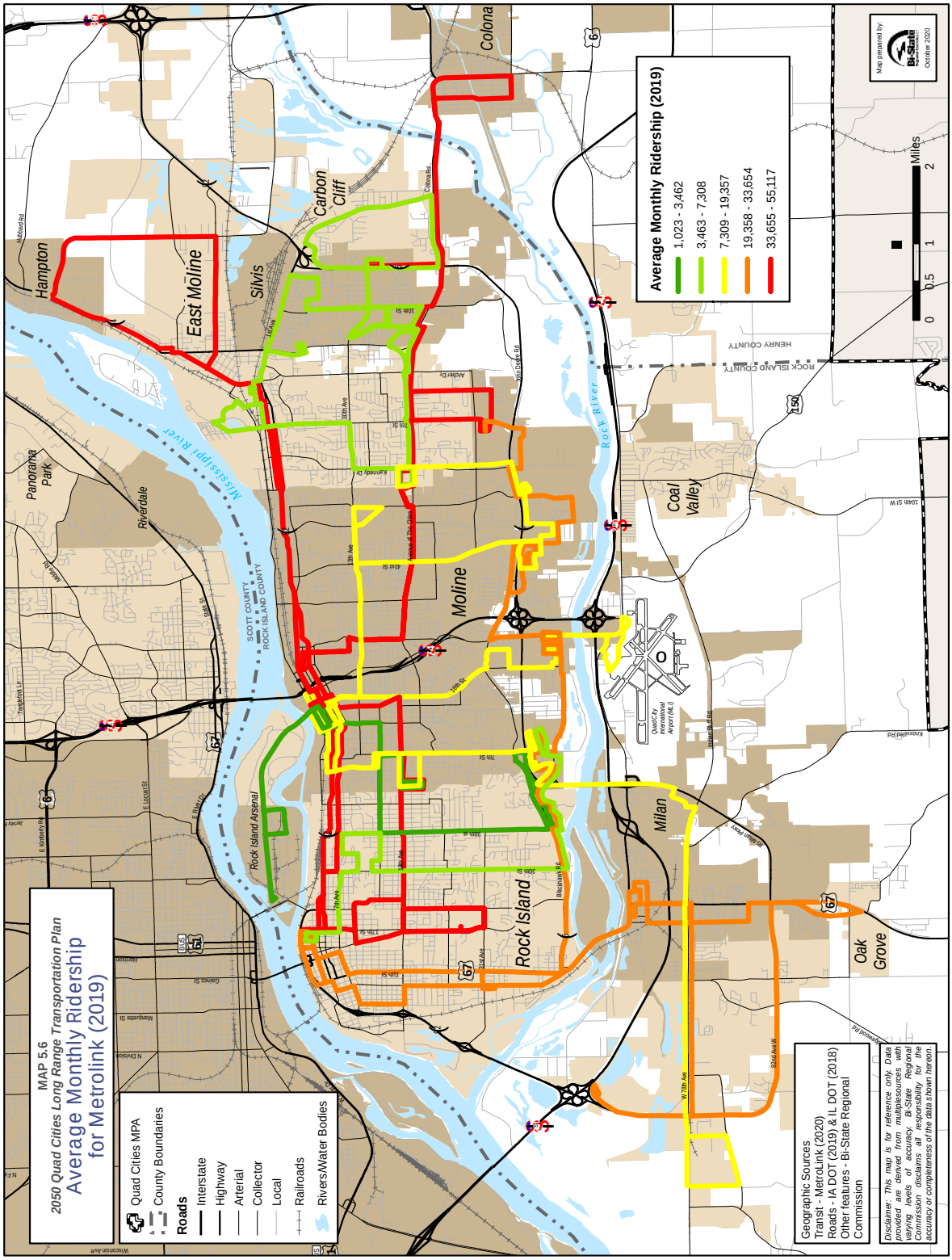
medical facilities. All routes also serve residential areas throughout the Illinois Quad Cities. MetroLINK buses are equipped with automated passenger counters at each door. Ridership data is downloaded every evening when buses pull into the garage.

MetroLINK has committed to transition to environmental sustainability initiatives such as the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) Sustainability Commitment in 2018. It also achieved silver recognition for efforts pertaining to organization-wide reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, criteria air pollutants, and water usage in 2019. Staff annually sets performance targets and updates APTA on progress towards environmental goals. MetroLINK has one maintenance facility to serve the operational and maintenance needs of its fixed-route fleet. The maintenance facility opened in 2014 and is located in Rock Island's Columbia Park redevelopment area near 45th Street and 4th Avenue. The 140,000 square-foot facility has the potential to achieve LEED (Gold) Certification and will provide the maximum sustainability standards for MetroLINK for the next three decades. Key design features include a photovoltaic (PV) solar array, a solar thermal hot water system, a CNG fueling station, a bus wash water reclamation system, bioswales, and white thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) roofing. MetroLINK's ADA and STS operations are served by a second facility in Rock Island, with vehicle maintenance being contracted by a third party vendor. Administrative functions for the agency are provided at a separate location in downtown Moline.

MetroLINK also operates the Channel Cat Water Taxi. The service includes three 49-passenger ferryboats equipped with bicycle racks that create cross-river access between two docks each in Illinois and Iowa. The Channel Cat operates between Memorial Day and Labor Day, weather permitting, and provides 45,000 trips annually. Tickets are $8.00 for an adult and $4.00 for ages 2 to 10. Hours may vary depending on the day but range from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. MetroLINK replaced its terminal at Riverbend Commons Landing in 2016. The project also enhanced ADA access and real-time signage. The terminal acts as the home port for MetroLINK's three Channel Cat vessels. Design and engineering, as well as environmental review, is currently underway for a replacement dock at John Deere Commons. Funding has been awarded for a replacement dock at the

Village of East Davenport, and coordination with the city is currently underway.

MetroLINK continues to upgrade its utilization of real-time technology with CAD/AVL technology and Google Trip Planner. Real-time LED signage at bus shelters and transfer stations allows passengers to have up-to-the-minute information on their bus. All three transit systems have purchased the TransLoc mobile app that allows real-time information, arrival alerts, and route assistance. MetroLINK is also investigating automation and driver assistance technology. Collision avoidance technology was installed in 2020.


MAP 5.6
2050 Quad Cities Long Range Transportation Plan
Average Monthly Ridership for Metrolink (2019)
Quad Cities MPA
County Boundaries
Roads
Interstate
Highway
Arterial
Collector
Local
Railroads
Rivers/Water Bodies
Average Monthly Ridership (2019)
1,023 - 3,462
3,463 - 7,308
7,309 - 19,357
19,358 - 33,654
33,655 - 55,117
Miles
0
0.5
1
2
Map prepared by: Bi-State Regional Commission October 2020
Geographic Sources
Transit - MetroLink (2020)
Roads - IA DOT (2019) & IL DOT (2018)
Other features - Bi-State Regional Commission
Disclaimer: This map is for reference only. Data provided are derived from multiplesources with varying levels of accuracy. Bi-State Regional Commission disclaims all responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the data shown hereon.
Hampton
East Moline
Silvis
Carbon Cliff
Colona
Moline
Rock Island
Milan
Coal Valley
Oak Grove
Riverdale
Panorama Park
Rock Island Arsenal
Mississippi River
Rock River
SCOTT COUNTY
ROCK ISLAND COUNTY
HENRY COUNTY
ROCK ISLAND COUNTY
Quad City International Airport (MLI)

Regional Transit Services

River Bend Transit

In addition to the fixed-route services described above, the urban Iowa Quad Cities are served by River Bend Transit (RBT). River Bend Transit, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation that has been designated as the regional transit provider for the Iowa Counties of Muscatine, Scott, Cedar, and Clinton. River Bend Transit utilizes a contractual relationship with counties, municipalities, social service agencies, and other organizations within its service area to provide curb-to-curb demand response to specific clients of these organizations and to the general public for medical appointments, work, school, and education trips. Both Bettendorf Transit and Davenport CitiBus provide paratransit services under contract through River Bend Transit. Principal clients are 64% disabled, 17% elderly, and 19% other.

RBT's regular demand-response service operating hours are 5:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. RBT also provides extended work-related transportation hours that include service from 7:00 p.m. to midnight, Monday through Saturday, and 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Sunday. Fares for seniors (age 60+) and individuals with disabilities are a round-trip suggested donation of $1.50 for in-town service, $3.00 round-trip for county service, and $3.00 round-trip for Bettendorf/Davenport trips. An additional fare of $5.00 has been established for the general public.

RBT also coordinates with Davenport CitiBus to provide early Saturday morning demand-response work trips within the CitiBus service area. The CitiBus fixed-route service does not start until 9:00 a.m. on Saturday. This service allows low-income workers access to their early morning jobs that start before the fixed-route service begins. Hours of service are 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. every Saturday. This service is limited to passengers going to and coming from work only. Riders can utilize the CitiBus service for their return trips later in the day.

The RBT fleet includes a total of 72 lift or ramp-equipped vehicles ranging in size from mini-vans to 25' coaches. RBT completed construction of a maintenance and administrative center in 1996 and

has expansion capabilities at its existing site. Vehicle wash bay and parking lot improvements were completed in 2010.

RBT annually provides more than 200,000 rides, approximately 45,000 of which are paratransit services for Davenport and Bettendorf. The agency utilizes a 15-year replacement cycle for its fleet, replacing one-third of its revenue fleet every five years. However, due to inadequate funding, RBT has not been able to replace many of its vehicles until they have reached 10 to 12 years of age and have accumulated 170,000+ miles.

RIM Rural Transit

RIM Rural Transit is a public transportation system operated by Project NOW to serve rural Rock Island and Mercer Counties. RIM began providing service in March 2010. Operations are managed through Project NOW's Rock Island County Senior Center and are an expansion of the agency's existing senior transportation program. Hours of operation are currently 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and fares range from $3.00-$7.00, depending on the length of the trip. Plans are underway to expand services to enhance mobility options in the RIM service area. Trips that are 41 miles and higher have a fee of $7.00. RIM's vehicle fleet includes nine minivans and three 12-passenger paratransit vehicles ranging in model years from 2010 to 2019.

Other Passenger Transportation Services

There are numerous agencies providing specialized transportation services with non-DOT funds throughout the Greater Bi-State Region. Senior Express, Inc., located in Davenport, is a private, non-profit transportation service that has been serving the Quad Cities Area since October of 2012. They offer service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Shuttles are registered with the Iowa Department of Transportation, and each driver is fully trained and certified. Services are available within the Quad Cities, but also to Iowa City, Clinton, Eldridge, Peoria, and possibly other extended destinations that may be requested.

There are a number of private for-profit transit providers within the Bi-State Region, including commercial intercity bus services, charter bus services, shuttle services, and taxi companies. Charter services may include short-term or multi-day travel, local or long-distance travel, tours or group accommodations, shuttle services, and school transportation services.

Taxis, limousines, and special event services also address travel needs within the Quad Cities and surrounding region. A majority of these providers in the region are not currently ADA-accessible. Many of these transportation services offer local airport service and shuttles to Chicago. On-demand, app-based transportation services are increasingly coming into competition with taxi services around the country and the world. Consumers begin by using a smartphone application to request service. Once the ride is requested, the service providers send a driver to the requested location for pick-up. Drivers utilize their own vehicle and must pass extensive background checks prior to employment. The recent introduction of this type of service in the Quad Cities market will have effects on the broader transportation system for years to come.

Intercity Transportation

Interregional travel affects residents and businesses in the Quad Cities Area every day, even if they are not the individual who is travelling. Intercity transportation in the Quad Cities affects air quality, congestion, and the economy. A high quality and interconnected intercity passenger transportation system can have beneficial effects on all of these issues. Passenger rail, for instance, offers riders a more environmentally-friendly choice of regional travel, reducing the carbon emissions released by driving alone. Likewise, travelling by rail removes cars from the roads, thereby not adding to congestion and the cost of road maintenance due to wear and tear. The regional economy benefits from having interconnected local and regional transportation systems to move people and goods to local and other markets. Tourism benefits as well from being able to draw visitors from other regions to visit area attractions and festivals while staying in local hotels.

Intercity Bus

Commercial intercity bus service in the Quad Cities is available through Burlington Trailways and Greyhound Bus Lines. Both utilize Moline's Centre Station and Davenport's Ground Transportation Center (GTC). Proposed improvements and rehabilitation to Centre Station, discussed in more detail under "Proposed Future Passenger Transportation Needs," will benefit intercity bus travelers in addition to fixed-route riders. Intercity bus services provide mobility options extending east, west, and south from the Quad Cities and may play a cost-effective role in reducing congestion, pollution, and energy consumption.

The I-80 corridor is traversed by both service providers heading west toward Iowa City and heading east toward Chicago. Burlington Trailways offers service on other corridors as well, such as I-74. Service varies between carriers in regard to ADA-accessible wheelchair access; however, the number of buses with wheelchair access is increasing. Amtrak passenger rail service can be accessed via Amtrak's Thruway service with Burlington Trailways to Galesburg, IL.

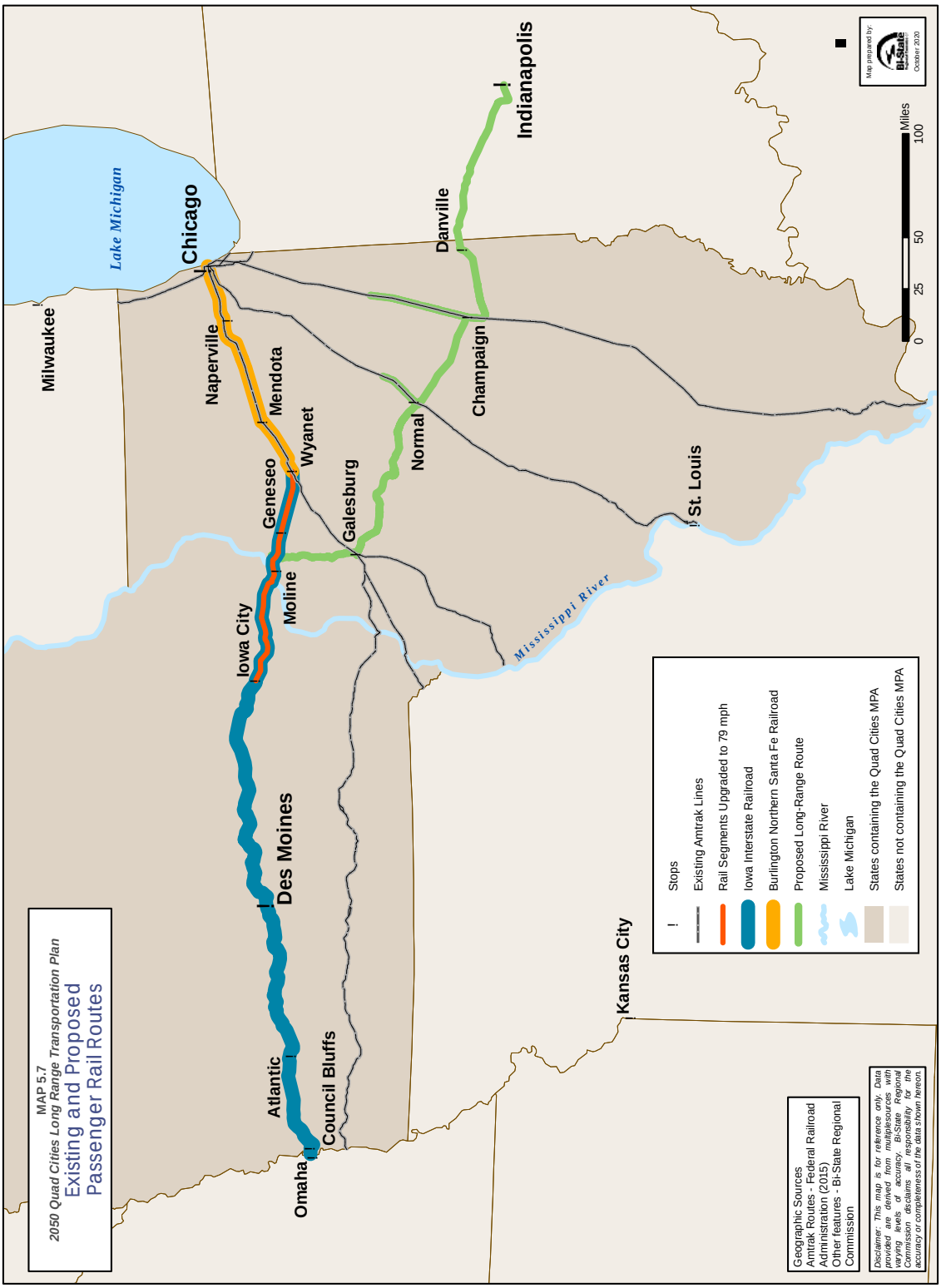
Greyhound Bus Lines began operating Greyhound Connect service in 2015 from Davenport along the I-88 corridor to Moline, Dixon, Rochelle, Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, and the Route 59 Metra station in Naperville. The rural bus service is funded through the Federal Transit Administration to connect rural communities to larger urban areas.

Passenger Rail

Passenger rail in the United States has increased in popularity over the past decade. Amtrak ridership is increasing on routes across the country, and likewise on routes radiating out from Chicago to destinations including St. Louis, MO, Detroit, MI, Milwaukee, WI, and Galesburg, IL. Between SFY 2007 and SFY 2019, Amtrak ridership in Illinois grew by 60%, according to the Illinois DOT. Ridership growth is expected to continue as new routes in Illinois begin to be imple-

mented, namely Chicago-to-Rockford and Chicago-to-Quad Cities. According to Amtrak, in FY 2018 there were 58,119 boardings and alightings in Iowa and 4,786,210 in Illinois.

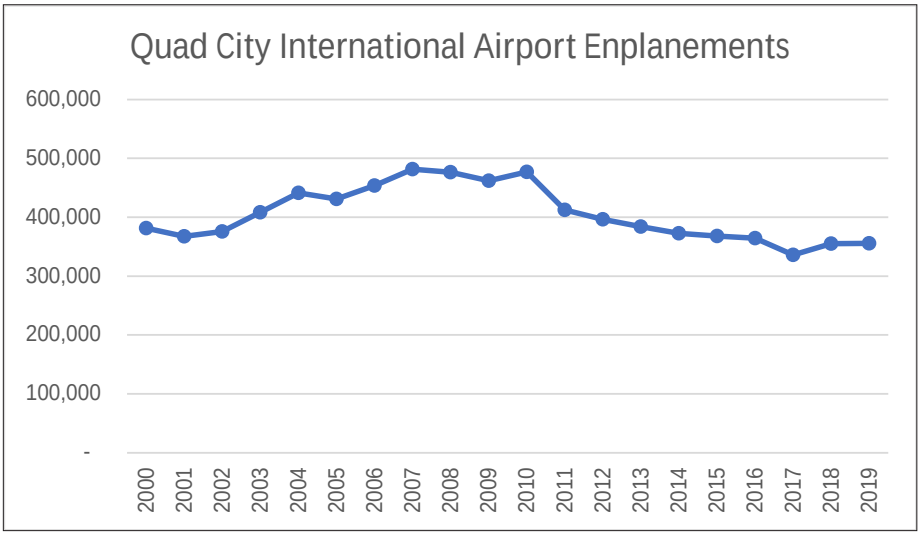
The Illinois and Iowa Departments of Transportation requested in 2007 and 2008 that Amtrak conduct feasibility studies to explore the potential for passenger rail services from Chicago to the Quad Cities and Iowa City. The studies found passenger rail would carry approximately 110,800 passengers annually initially between Chicago and the Quad Cities and 76,100 passengers annually between the Quad Cities and Iowa City. The study found that ridership on the Chicago-Quad Cities route would increase to 187,000 annually if the Chicago-Iowa City route were established. Both lines could travel at speeds up to 79 mph; however, investment would be required to increase from current speeds to that level. As of 2020, preliminary engineering and environmental work is ongoing to reestablish passenger rail service to the Quad Cities. Map 5.7 depicts existing and proposed passenger rail routes throughout Illinois and Iowa.


MAP 5.7
2050 Quad Cities Long Range Transportation Plan
Existing and Proposed Passenger Rail Routes
Lake Michigan
Chicago
Milwaukee
Naperville
Mendota
Wyanet
Geneseo
Galesburg
Moline
Iowa City
Des Moines
Atlantic
Council Bluffs
Omaha
Kansas City
Normal
Champaign
Danville
Indianapolis
St. Louis
Mississippi River
Stops
Existing Amtrak Lines
Rail Segments Upgraded to 79 mph
Iowa Interstate Railroad
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad
Proposed Long-Range Route
Mississippi River
Lake Michigan
States containing the Quad Cities MPA
States not containing the Quad Cities MPA
0
25
50
100
Miles
Map prepared by:
Bi-State Regional Commission
October 2020
Geographic Sources
Amtrak Routes - Federal Railroad Administration (2015)
Other features - Bi-State Regional Commission
Disclaimer: This map is for reference only. Data provided are derived from multiplesources with varying levels of accuracy. Bi-State Regional Commission disclaims all responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the data shown hereon.

Passenger Air Travel

The Quad Cities is served by two airports in the urban area: the Quad City International Airport and the Davenport Municipal Airport. The Quad City International Airport (MLI) is a full-service airport serving commercial aviation for eastern Iowa and western Illinois. It is the 3rd busiest airport in Illinois. Four commercial airlines provide service from the airport to 11 destinations, shown in Map 5.8, totaling 355,626 passenger enplanements in CY 2019 (see Figure 5.3). The number of passengers using the Quad City International Airport decreased 7% between 2000 and 2019. Airlines serving the airport include Allegiant Air, American Airlines, Delta Airlines, and United Airlines. Destinations include major hubs, such as Chicago-O'Hare and Atlanta Hartfield, and popular vacation destinations, such as Las Vegas and Orlando-Sanford. Airport infrastructure is discussed further in Chapter 7.

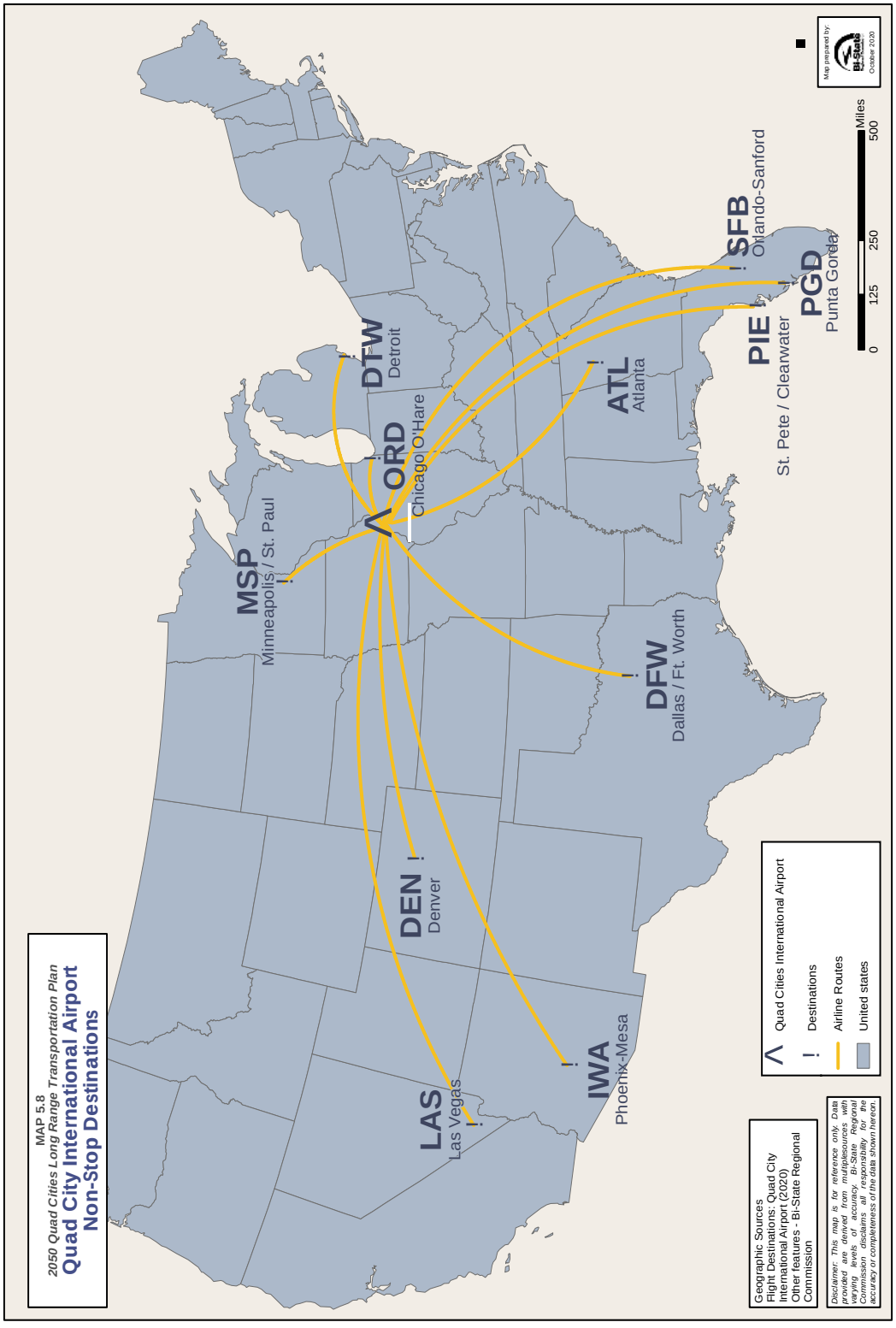
Figure 5.3 – Annual Enplanements at Quad City International Airport (Origin Airport)



Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration. Passenger Boarding (Enplanement) and All-Cargo Data for U.S. Airports - Previous Years.

Direct nonstop service from the Quad City International Airport to Washington, D.C. was discontinued in June 2016 after service began in October 2015. A direct connection from the Quad Cities to Washington is seen as vitally important for the regional economy. One of the area's largest employers, the Rock Island Arsenal, is subject to the federal BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) process, which evaluates federal defense bases around the country in order to improve operational efficiency of the armed forces. Any alteration of the functions of the Rock Island Arsenal will affect the Quad Cities in a dramatic way, positively or negatively. A direct flight between the Quad Cities and Washington increases the attractiveness and competitiveness of the Arsenal compared to other bases around the country, and while the service was discontinued, there remains interest in a direct connection. The trial connection to Dulles Airport provided access to other national and international destinations for increased mobility. The establishment of this route had been supported by the Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce and the State of Illinois. The area will continue to evaluate opportunities for direct service to Washington, D.C.

The Davenport Municipal Airport, a general aviation airport, is located in northern Davenport providing basic transport with a full instrument landing system (ILS). The ILS runway is 5,511 ft. long, while the secondary runway is 4,001 ft. Recently, the City of Davenport finished an analysis of the facility that recommended various airport improvements. There are 114 based aircraft at the Davenport Municipal Airport and 28,100 operations annually. According to the Iowa Department of Transportation's *Economic Impact of Aviation* (2009) report, the Davenport Municipal Airport generated 209 full-time equivalent jobs and induced another 133 as a result of on-airport activity.


MAP 5.8
2050 Quad Cities Long Range Transportation Plan
Quad City International Airport
Non-Stop Destinations
MSP
Minneapolis / St. Paul
ORD
Chicago O'Hare
DTW
Detroit
ATL
Atlanta
SFB
Orlando-Sanford
PIE
St. Pete / Clearwater
PGD
Punta Gorda
DFW
Dallas / Ft. Worth
DEN
Denver
LAS
Las Vegas
IWA
Phoenix-Mesa
Quad Cities International Airport
Destinations
Airline Routes
United states
0
125
250
500
Miles
Map prepared by:
Bi-State Regional Commission
October 2020
Geographic Sources
Flight Destinations: Quad City International Airport (2020)
Other features - Bi-State Regional Commission
Disclaimer: This map is for reference only. Data provided are derived from multiplesources with varying levels of accuracy. Bi-State Regional Commission disclaims all responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the data shown hereon.

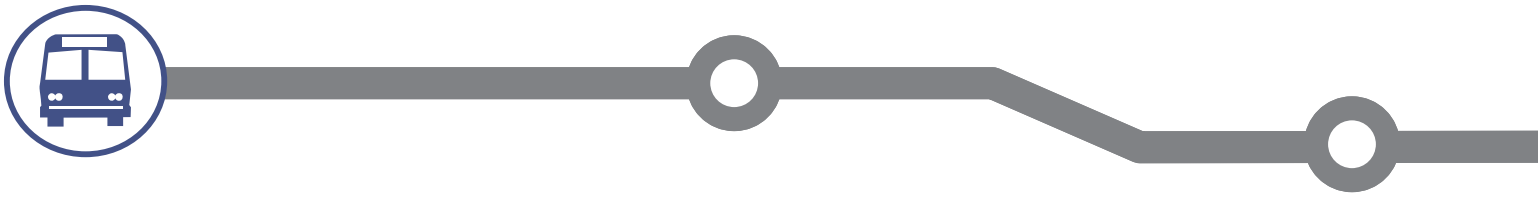
Passenger Transportation Tomorrow

As in previous plans, one of the most important priorities for the future of passenger transportation systems in the Quad Cities Region is the maintenance of the existing system. Table 5.2 lists the anticipated public transit vehicle replacement needs through 2050 with their projected costs in year of expenditure dollars that are tied to average inflation. Base year costs are based on information from the transit managers and the *Quad Cities: Davenport-Moline-Rock Island Urbanized Area FFY 2021-24 Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP). While some elements will change from their current form, such as technological and fleet advancements, the core transit services will be maintained.

Population and economic growth forecasts show more growth occurring on the edge of the current built-up environment. Sprawling development poses numerous difficulties for transit, as access to employment and housing options becomes much more challenging when needs are spread out. The issue of access to services, such as shopping or medical care, affects residents of all ages. Seniors, for instance, may experience personal isolation due to the difficulties in mobility associated with growing older. From a land development perspective, new development in the fringe areas that cluster employment and housing may help public transit efficiency by encouraging more concentrated development and potential customers. However, if those new developments detract from existing ones in denser areas, the net effect may be negative on transit efficiency. Ridership projections on the three urban fixed-route systems is shown in Figure 5.4. Projections were made using a logarithmic growth trend line, indicating that ridership will level out by 2050. It is anticipated that there will be over 7 million rides taken across the three systems in 2050.

Table 5.2 – Vehicle Replacement Schedule

FY2020-FY2024		
Transit System	**Anticipated Vehicle Replacements**	**Estimated Costs***
Bettendorf Transit	5 buses	$601,630
Davenport CitiBus	5 buses (30'-42')	$2,318,479
RICMMTD (Metro)	(26) 35'-40' CNG or electric buses and accompanying chargers; (10) Med/Light Duty buses and/or mini-vans	$21,373,435
FY2025-FY2029		
Transit System	**Anticipated Vehicle Replacements**	**Estimated Costs**
Bettendorf Transit	None	$—
Davenport CitiBus	8 buses (30'-42')	$3,979,680
RICMMTD (Metro)	(20) 35' or 40' CNG or electric buses and accompanying chargers; (14) Med/Light Duty buses and/or mini-vans	$18,146,135
FY2030-FY2034		
Transit System	**Anticipated Vehicle Replacements**	**Estimated Costs**
Bettendorf Transit	5 buses	$727,972
Davenport CitiBus	8 buses (30'-42')	$4,898,067.20
RICMMTD (Metro)	(30) 35' or 40" CNG or electric buses and accompanying chargers; (13) Med/Light Duty buses and/or mini-vans	$46,943,840
FY2035-FY2039		
Transit System	**Anticipated Vehicle Replacements**	**Estimated Costs**
Bettendorf Transit	5 buses	$889,846
Davenport CitiBus	6 buses (30'-42')	$4,078,721
RICMMTD (Metro)	(16) 35'-40' CNG or electric buses and accompanying chargers; (8) Med/Light Duty buses and/or mini-vans	$22,525,930
FY2040-FY2044		
Transit System	**Anticipated Vehicle Replacements**	**Estimated Costs**
Bettendorf Transit	None	$—
Davenport CitiBus	6 buses (30'-42')	$4,483,892.4
RICMMTD (Metro)	(39) 35'-40' CNG or electric buses and accompanying chargers; (12) Med/Light Duty buses and/or mini-vans	$49,321,750.0



FY2045-FY2049		
Transit System	**Anticipated Vehicle Replacements**	**Estimated Costs**
Bettendorf Transit	5 buses	$1,065,824
Davenport CitiBus	10 buses (30'-42')	$8,148,439
RICMMTD (Metro)	(26) 35'-40' CNG or electric buses and accompanying chargers; (9) Med/Light Duty buses and/or mini-vans	$38,365,950

* *Forecast adjusted to show linear growth as opposed to compounded. 1.5% growth FY20-29; 3% growth FY30-49 - 2/25/21.*

Future Passenger Transportation Needs

Public transportation will continue to play a pivotal role in the development of the Quad Cities Region and allow for more personal travel choice. Moving people quickly and efficiently will help the region develop in an organized and sustainable manner, and providing access to all members of the community will assist in equitable development. Many growth areas in the Quad Cities are not currently served by transit. Dispersed developments strain the efficiency of transit infrastructure requiring more time to access a fewer number of destinations compared to compact, urban, developmentally diverse, and walkable environments. The decision to serve new developments at the outer limits of the metro area should consider the effects on the transit network as a whole, and efforts to focus on increased route efficiency in the established areas of the Quad Cities where people and their destinations are more concentrated.

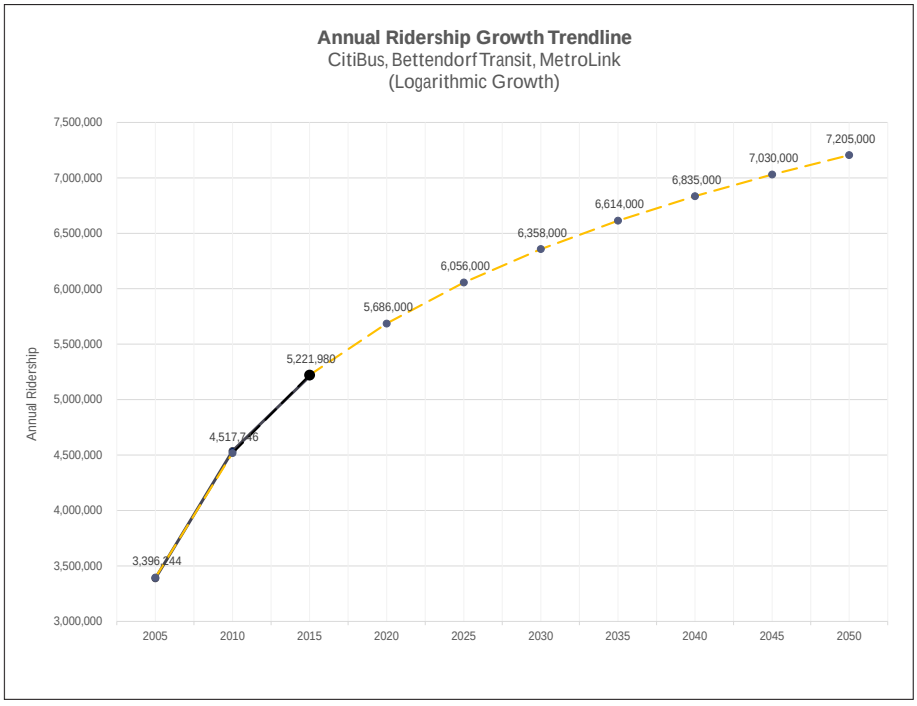
Development along existing and established corridors increases route efficiency by adding potential riders and destinations without the negative travel effects caused by sprawling developments. Input received indicated a desire to consolidate the three urban fixed-route systems into one bi-state system. System consolidation was studied by the three systems, which found numerous challenges in governing and financial consolidation. Some efficiencies were pursued in regard to administration of transit in the Quad Cities.

Another gap in service that was stated in public input was the difficulty of third shift workers finding rides to and from work. Their hours of work may not coincide with transit hours of service on one or both ends of their shift, thus leaving some workers left to find their way home through other means. These means include rides from coworkers, family members, nonmotorized transportation, or private taxi services. MetroLINK begins fixed-route service at 4:30 a.m. and operates until between 10:30 and 11:00 p.m. on weekends. Staff continually assesses demand for different ridership markets, such as afterhours service, through a variety of survey tools. MetroLINK currently provides commuter service to a meat processing facility outside of the MPA three times per day, including trips after regular service hours. Weekend subscription service is offered to help assist riders with early morning commutes. Davenport CitiBus patrons may

schedule rides through River Bend Transit during third shift or other off-hours.

Ridership changes since the Great Recession have shown general decreases in the Quad Cities, consistent with national bus ridership data from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). Ridership, measured by annual unlinked trips, did not decrease uniformly across all three fixed-route systems in the Quad Cities. Bettendorf Transit's ridership decreased from 243,542 unlinked trips in 2012 to 84,636 in 2018, the result of route restructuring, service reduction, and the reallocation of cross-river traffic to Centre Station to the Stretch service. Davenport CitiBus witnessed a decline from 1,414,496 unlinked trips in 2012 to 622,937 in 2018. The city implemented a new automated system to track ridership, which may have resulted in lower, albeit more accurate, ridership data. In addition, CitiBus implemented a comprehensive route restructuring in 2016, which may have reduced the number of transfers between routes. The result of the more direct routes is the appearance of lower ridership, as transfers appear as two unlinked trips in the NTD data.

Figure 5.4 – Annual Ridership Growth Trendline



Bettendorf Transit

Bettendorf Transit underwent changes to its bus routes in fall 2015 that transitioned away from a centralized focal point. Instead, the system is interconnected at numerous hubs rather than the central transfer station in downtown Bettendorf in an effort to reduce transfer needs and decrease passenger travel times. The study, which was conducted in 2014 and 2015, proposed two cross-river routes to connect to MetroLINK's Centre Station and the new passenger rail station, The Q. The routes were eliminated in 2018 when Stretch service commenced in response to construction on the new I-74 bridge. The system will continue to monitor expansion of microtransit operations, such as the service run by MetroLINK in Milan, to serve the needs of its riders while providing flexibility.

Davenport CitiBus

The City of Davenport's 2010 transportation plan, Davenport in Motion, provided numerous findings and recommendations based on several goals. The Comprehensive Operations Analysis conducted in 2015 identified a clear mission for CitiBus. The goals of the COA were to improve efficiencies within the CitiBus system while leveraging current resources to meet the growing needs of the citizens of Davenport. This in-depth study examined the issue of finding a balance between frequent, high-quality service and broad geographic coverage for the city.

A Service Allocation Policy was completed as part of the COA to guide current and future policies, more effective routing and use of resources, and increased service efficiencies while maintaining the standards of CitiBus service. Among the findings, the Service Allocation Policy recommended transitioning from a hub and spoke route system to a grid system and extending evening and weekend hours. The initial changes were implemented in July 2016, with final alterations based on rider feedback being completed by the following November. CitiBus intends on maintaining its existing system and routes for the foreseeable future. Improvements to rider amenities and system performance, such as improved bus shelters and security systems, will be implemented to provide a more comfortable and reliable service. CitiBus aims to introduce electric buses to its fleet in

the near future. The buses will decrease the overall diesel emissions, leading to cleaner air. As wind is the State of Iowa's single largest source of energy, the electricity used by the buses will largely come from renewable sources.

MetroLINK

MetroLINK's focus is currently on providing service to core corridors, while maintaining a balance of service to communities within its service area. It underwent a significant restructuring in 2017 that included the addition of more evening service in the communities of Silvis, East Moline, Moline, Carbon Cliff, and Colona. Centre Station is the signature hub of the Metro system. In the coming years, MetroLINK plans to rehabilitate the station to meet the needs of today's passengers. Renovations will include major mechanical systems, door/vestibule, and interior improvements.

The Operations and Maintenance Center may also see redevelopment in the form of an office expansion, storage expansion, and charging infrastructure expansion. In addition, partially automated facility-related improvements and vehicle modifications for vehicle movement within the Operations and Maintenance Center are planned. MetroLINK anticipates upgrading fareboxes on its buses and replacing the CAD-AVL system on their vehicles in coming years. The construction of additional "Mega Stops" or streetscape improvements will be made in conjunction with local governments to promote TOD concepts. Microtransit services may also expand within the urbanized area, particularly in underserved neighborhoods and in fringe urban/rural communities.

Transit Priority Corridors

Focusing development along specific thoroughfares amplifies the potential of walkable, transit-oriented development taking place. As transportation of all kinds, not just transit, is strongly tied to land use decisions, development conducive to alternative transportation will leave a lasting, beneficial effect on the fabric of the urban landscape. Mobility options for people of all ages will lead to a more vibrant and healthy community and will allow residents to feel connected to their community.

Within the Quad Cities, a number of corridors have been identified as Transit Priority Corridors (Map 5.2) during conversations with metropolitan area transit managers and as part of prior studies, such as the Iowa Quad Cities Transit Alternatives Analysis, the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Congestion Management Process, and the IL-92 Corridor Study. Efforts should be made along these corridors to promote density of housing units and commercial activity and supplement existing infrastructure with transit supporting elements, such as bus turnouts, shelters, properly maintained sidewalks, and a mix of land uses near bus stops. MetroLINK, in partnership with Rock Island Economic Growth Corporation (GROWTH) and the City of Rock Island, has implemented one transit-oriented development (TOD) in downtown Rock Island. The Locks development is located directly adjacent to MetroLINK's new Rock Island Transfer Station and offers 34 units of rental housing, some of which is targeted to short-term corporate rentals. On-going development efforts in downtown Moline, likewise, employ transit-oriented development elements near the future multi-modal station. In addition, MetroLINK is working with Silvis, East Moline, and Moline on potential TOD projects. Efforts will continue in other service communities as opportunities arise.

The identified Transit Priority Corridors, including cross-river routes via Centennial Bridge (U.S. 67) and the I-74 Bridge, offer opportunities to implement more intensive transit services, such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). BRT has become a popular alternative to much more expensive rail options like light rail or streetcars. BRT is characterized as having various features to make travelling by bus easier and faster. Bus-only lanes in the roadway allow buses to move without being slowed down by traffic. Prepaid fares allow for faster boarding times at designated stations along the route. Buses and stations are built to ADA standards to allow no-step boarding for riders in wheelchairs, increasing the mobility options for individuals with disabilities. The cumulative result of these improvements vastly upgrades the rider experience by offering amenities that streamline overall transit service. In the Quad Cities, a cross-river BRT route along one or more of the Transit Priority Corridors would promote economic development and sustainability while alleviating some of the weaknesses in the regional transit system as noted in public input sessions, most notably the fractured nature of transit in the Quad Cities. The noted corri-

dors were identified cumulatively by the region's transit managers in keeping with system plans. Chapter 7 identifies bus rapid transit corridors as requiring additional study to determine if feasible and what the needs of each corridor would require. Four corridors are noted in the Illinois Quad Cities, three east-west and one north-south.

Intercity Travel

Transportation into and out of the region will improve in coming years. Numerous modes of transportation will be augmented or altogether introduced in the Quad Cities Area. These new services will offer more mobility options for Quad Cities residents to travel in the region and across the country. Recent and planned improvements to transit facilities, such as Centre Station and the Ground Transportation Center, will enhance the rider experience for both local fixed-route transit service and intercity bus operations that use those facilities. The local economy benefits from newly introduced and enhanced services as well, paving the way for a prosperous community for years to come.

The implementation of the Amtrak route from Moline to Chicago remains a priority for the Quad Cities Region. Construction is complete east of the Wyanet connection, but no date is set for service to begin. The Chicago-to-Moline route, described earlier this chapter, would be the first step in establishing a Chicago-to-Omaha regional route via Iowa City and Des Moines. Initial speeds on the line would be 79 mph, but could be increased with further investment. The Q passenger rail station will provide intermodal access from regional passenger rail to local fixed-route transit services. A skyway connecting the train platform to Centre Station was constructed in 2020.

In addition to Chicago-to-Moline passenger rail service, additional passenger rail service has been proposed that would serve several downstate Illinois communities: Moline, Galesburg, Peoria, Bloomington-Normal, Champaign-Urbana, and Danville. The Illinois General Assembly approved non-binding legislation in 2014 (HJR0072) in support of the route that would serve numerous state and private higher education institutions, including Bradley University, Illinois State University, and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The IL DOT indicated it has no plan to study the route.

Other Passenger Transportation Options

Carpooling is an integral component of transportation for the Quad Cities. It represents the second-most used method of commuting to work according to the 2018 ACS 5-year estimates and the 2014 household travel survey. The ACS estimated that 7% of workers used a carpool to travel to work, while 85.3% drove alone. Because this is an important component to the overall transportation system within the State of Iowa, the Iowa DOT conducted a statewide study of the topic in 2014. Entitled the *Statewide Park and Ride System Plan*, it proposed two candidate locations in the Quad Cities for a park and ride facility. The first candidate location is proposed for near the intersection of U.S. 61 and Kimberly Road close to North Park Mall. The second location would capture traffic coming into or going out of the Quad Cities on the west side of Davenport at U.S. 61 and Iowa 22. The plan named the Scott County-to-Rock Island County corridor as third in their prioritized list of candidate locations. A park-and-ride location was announced in 2017 near the I-80 and U.S. 61 interchange in Davenport.

The FTA and U.S. DOT are monitoring the development of automated vehicle (AV) technology, including its deployment for transit buses. Several fully automated shuttle vehicle prototypes have been introduced in the U.S. and abroad. According to the FTA, most, if not all, AVs will meet the definition of "bus" and will require the same program specifications affecting Buy America, ADA, Title VI, etc. The first phase of AV development will likely include driver assistance features, which is already being introduced in new edition buses. AV development will continue to be monitored as it will likely affect transit usage in the years to come.