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 statue
MTA in the 1990’s

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

Service Hours per Person

Source: Urbitran & Associates
MTA Performance Audit

- Poorly funded (operations and capital)
- Using capital for operations = deteriorated fleet
- Inadequate organizational structure = poor service quality, low credibility
MTA Organization Prior to Audit

MTA Board

Management Company

Planning and Operations
Hired first CEO as Metro Employee

Added other recommended management staff

Obtained Metro commitment to capital funding
MTA Today

- 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of vehicles in service</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number handicap equipped</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridership last fiscal year</td>
<td>7,078,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles driven last fiscal year</td>
<td>5,712,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total annual budget this fiscal year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital budget</td>
<td>$18.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Operating budget</td>
<td>$30.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of employees</td>
<td>405</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
MTA Revenue Sources for FY 2005 Budget

- **STATE**: $3 million (10%)
- **METRO**: $12 million (39%)
- **SELF-GENERATED (Fares, Titans, etc.)**: $8.6 million (28%)
- **FEDERAL**: $7 million (23%)
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

3 WEST END

19 HERMAN
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.

- **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

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.–6 p.m. Sat. • Closed Sundays and Holidays

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

More information online at ... www.nashvillemta.org

Online ticket sales for First Quarter 2004 was nearly $5800.
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

With a strong emphasis on customer service, this year’s Top 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 25% 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 To West Palm Beach initiative of its oldest part by improving service delivery. Many of this year’s winners were improvements in response times, achievements that reflect in partnership with other coalitions. Read on to see how these agencies were able to ruffle their riders through good customer service.

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

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 3.8% 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
MTA’ Five Year Plan

- More frequent schedules to make transit more convenient
- Simplify current routes for better service
- New Routes in Donelson, Hermitage, Creive Hall, Antioch, Goodletsville.
  - 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

Source: Urbitran & Associates
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