

CHAPTER 7 – TRANSIT STATION SERVICE PLAN

Background

At present, nearly all of Chatham Area Transit's (CAT) routes begin in the City of Savannah and circulates via the Downtown Loop, bounded by Oglethorpe Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, Broughton Street, and Abercorn Street. Buses enter and exit the loop at several locations, depending upon their orientation, and all routes travel in a clockwise direction, i.e., west on Oglethorpe Avenue and east on Broughton Street.

The Downtown Loop provides CAT customers with several locations to transfer between bus routes; the primary transfer location is on Broughton Street between MLK Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street, where buses also lay over before beginning their outbound trips.

Chatham Area Transit is currently studying two locations for the development of a transit station to coordinate services and provide a passenger transfer facility for the core bus routes to downtown Savannah. This facility would consolidate CAT's layover locations and transfer opportunities while also providing customers with basic amenities such as route and schedule information, a ticket window, and restrooms. The two sites under consideration are as follows:

1. **Greyhound:** Block bounded by Oglethorpe Avenue, Fahm Street, Youmans Street, Ann Street
2. **Louisville Road:** Parcel located at northwest corner of Louisville Road and Boundary Street

As part of this Transportation Development Plan (TDP), the study team analyzed the two locations from an operations perspective to provide a recommended circulation path for each CAT bus route in downtown Savannah and to the transit station, as well as the cost impacts of moving the transfer nexus from the Downtown Loop to either site. Cost impacts were calculated relative to the current CAT route network as well as the proposed route network outlined in this TDP. The analysis was based upon a desire to meet the following goals:

- Provide optimal route connections to facilitate passenger transfers and simplify travel
- Maintain core bus services within downtown Savannah
- Streamline route network where possible to reduce travel times and operating costs
- Eliminate bus layovers and idling on downtown streets

Both sites being studied are located west of downtown Savannah. The Greyhound site is within close proximity to the Downtown Loop, while the Louisville Road site is more removed. Being in the same general area, however, both sites allow for a similar approach to bus routing through the city.

Route Changes

Routes from the south and west that currently reach the Downtown Loop via MLK Jr. Boulevard will access the sites directly, streamlining operations and reducing unnecessary circulation due to diversions from the natural route path. Conversely, routes from the south and east sides that enter the Downtown Loop closer to Abercorn Street will access the sites via Oglethorpe Avenue or Broughton Street.

Figures 7-1 through 7-4 on the following pages depict the route recommendations described below. The maps show the proposed routing to each site individually, as well as comparisons to both the existing CAT route network in downtown Savannah and the complete network as proposed in this Transportation Development Plan. The recommendations outlined in this section build upon TDP route and service recommendations, however cost comparisons are also provided for the existing CAT route network.

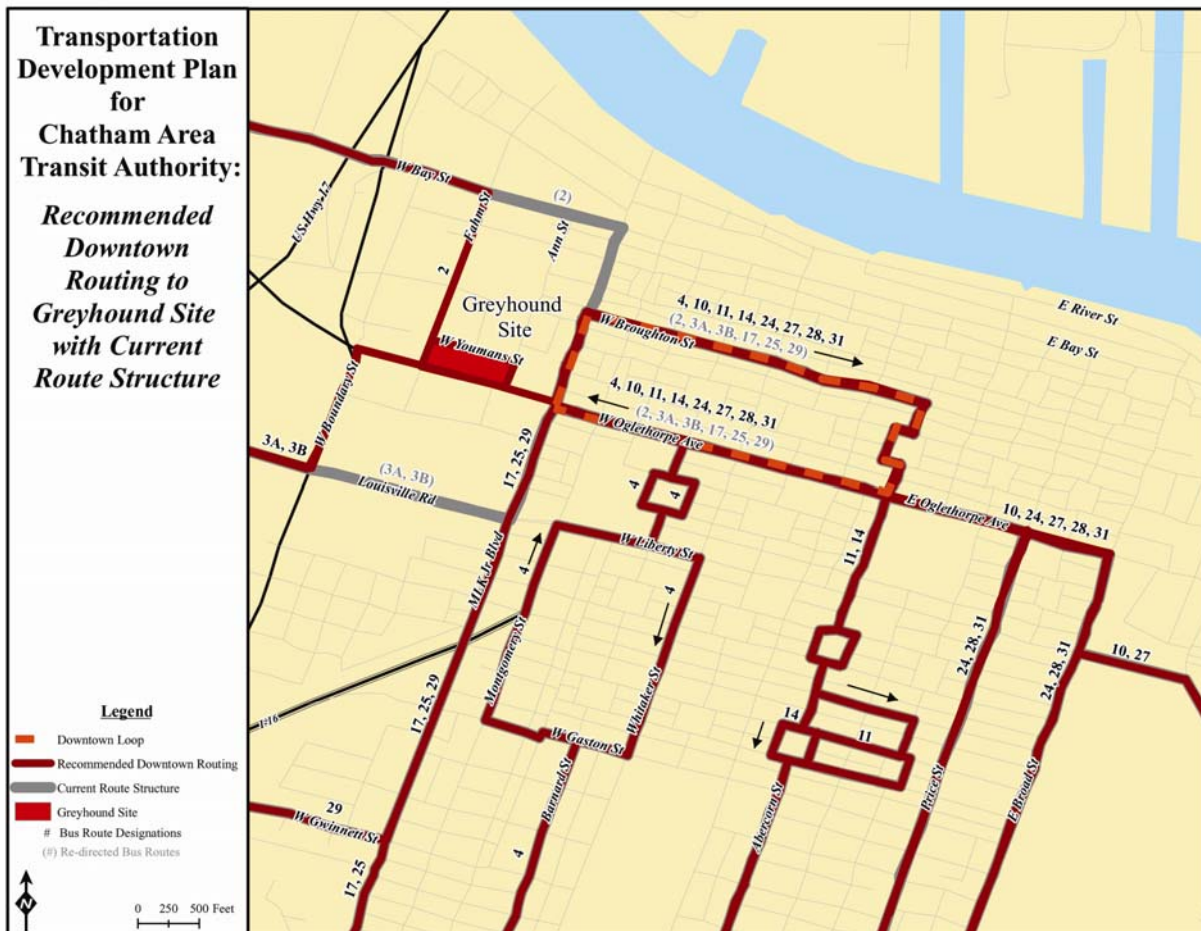
These routes will continue to provide service to some or all of the Downtown Loop, maintaining vital access to the heart of downtown Savannah. By providing space for bus layovers at either of the new facilities, congestion will be reduced on Oglethorpe Avenue and Broughton Street. Through buses will maintain an appropriate level of service for downtown Savannah, although the total number of buses around the current Downtown Loop will be reduced with the west side routes accessing a facility directly. For those passengers who wish to reach the central business district east of MLK Jr. Boulevard and the south/west sides, a simple transfer can be made at either proposed facility site; all buses departing to the east/south sides will follow the same path via Broughton Street. Specific route recommendations are as follows:

Route 2 will divert from its current route into downtown Savannah from West Bay Street via Fahm Street to the Greyhound site, or via Fahm Street, Oglethorpe Avenue and West Boundary Street to the Louisville Road site. Route 2 will terminate at the Transit Station and will no longer serve the Downtown Loop.

Routes 3A and 3B will also terminate at the Transit Station and no longer serve the Downtown Loop. They will reach the Louisville Road site from their current route along Louisville Road, or will reach the Greyhound site via Louisville Road, West Boundary Street, and Oglethorpe Avenue.

Routes 4, 10, 11, 14, 27, 28, and 31 will continue to serve the Downtown Loop. To reach the Transit Station, they will travel westbound on Oglethorpe Avenue to the Greyhound site, or via Oglethorpe Avenue and West Boundary Street to the Louisville Road site. After serving the Transit Station, they will return via West Boundary Street and/or Oglethorpe Avenue to the intersection of Oglethorpe Avenue and MLK Jr. Boulevard, from which they will continue around the Downtown Loop via eastbound Broughton Street. Routes 10 and 14x (proposed 14 express service) will follow East Broughton Street between East Broad Street and Abercorn Street rather than East Oglethorpe Avenue in order to better serve the northeastern section of downtown.

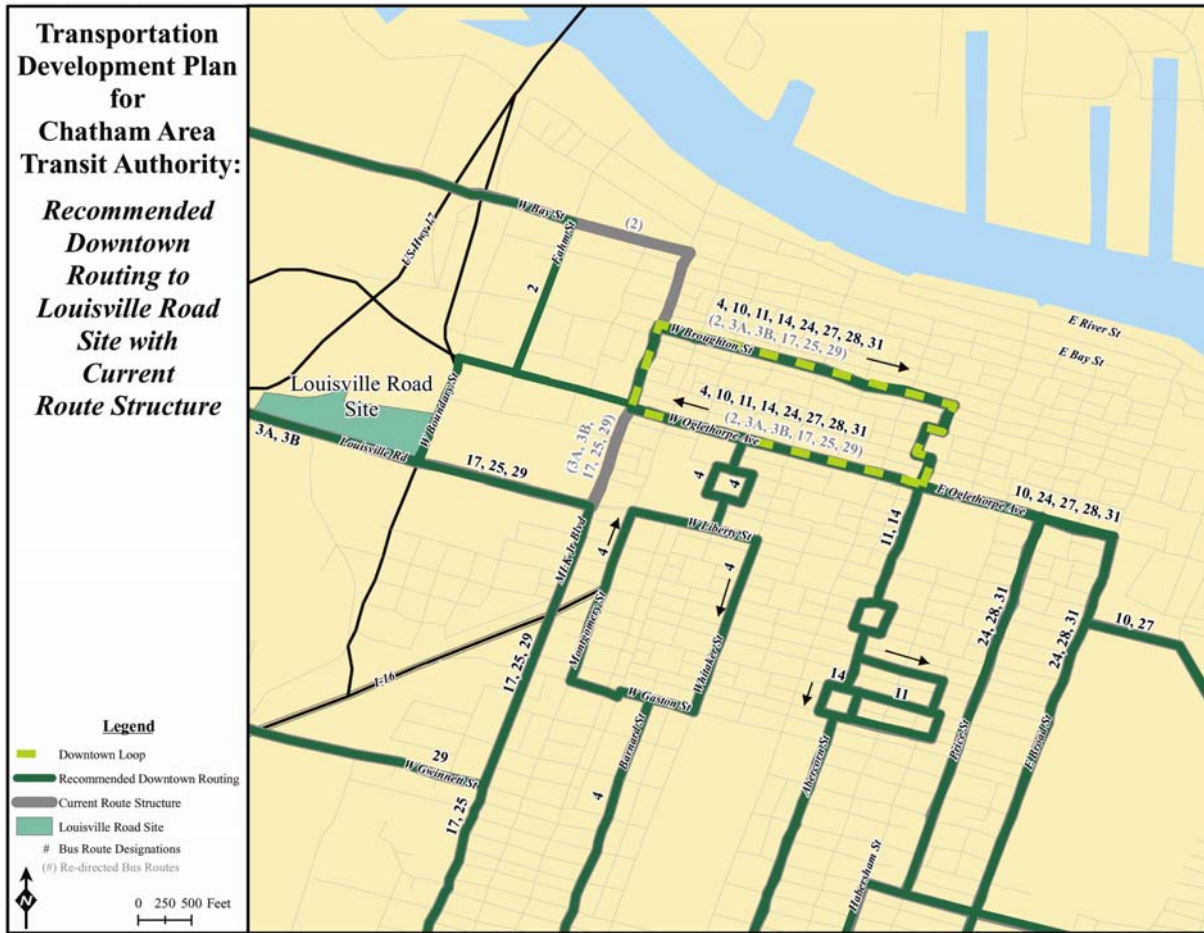
**Figure 7-1
Routing to Greyhound Site (Existing Network Comparison)**



Routes 17, 25, and 29 will terminate at the Transit Station, no longer serving the Downtown Loop. From their current routes along MLK Jr. Boulevard, they will reach the Louisville Road site via Louisville Road, or the Greyhound site via Oglethorpe Avenue.

Of the three routes entering Savannah from the south on MLK Jr. Boulevard, only route 25 exhibits significant boarding and alighting at the eastern end of the Downtown Loop. By operating directly to the Transit Station (at either proposed location), it is possible that some passengers may be inconvenienced by having to transfer to an outbound bus to reach a downtown destination on or near Broughton Street, even if the frequency of outbound buses will assure simple, quick transfers. Nonetheless, the recommendation to operate the southwest routes directly to the Transit Station is made in an effort to streamline operations, reduce some operating costs, and minimize redundancy or excessive deviation.

Figure 7-3
Routing to Louisville Road Site (Existing Network Comparison)



were not included in this average cost/mile ratio in order to most accurately reflect the anticipated impacts on CAT's overall operations.

Table 7-1 outlines annual system mileage and operating costs for CAT's present-day routes serving the Downtown Loop, followed by annual mileage and operating costs for both the Greyhound and Louisville Road sites. Table 7-2 provides the same mileage and costs for the sites relative to the collection of route proposals presented in this TDP.

Summary of Impacts

Relative to the current CAT route network, centered on the Downtown Loop, a move of transfer operations to the Greyhound site would result in a net operating cost savings of \$92,410, while the Louisville Road site would require an additional \$84,142 in operating expense.

When considered in the context of the proposed route network outlined in this TDP, the moving selected services to the Greyhound site would allow a reduction of \$430,518 in operating expenses when compared to the Downtown Loop. Conversely, adjusting the proposed TDP route network to serve the Louisville Road site would require an additional annual operating expense of \$120,830.

The primary reason for added expense to the Louisville Road site is the increase in vehicle miles and hours required to reach the more remote location from central downtown Savannah. Cost increases or savings differ between the current CAT network and the proposed TDP network due to different service levels on various routes with the TDP recommendations.

The Greyhound site location is clearly preferable from both a geographic perspective, reflecting service and transfers located closer to downtown Savannah, as well as a financial perspective, as seen in the cost savings relative to the current Downtown Loop. The Louisville Road site, being more removed from the downtown core of CAT's operations, presents the likelihood of increased costs as well as increased inconvenience for CAT customers.



**Table 7-1
Annual Operating Cost Impacts Relative to Current CAT System**

Route	Current System with Downtown Loop		Current System with Greyhound Site		Current System with Louisville Road Site	
	Miles	Cost	Miles	Cost	Miles	Cost
2 West Chatham	85,561	\$238,360	83,013	\$227,455	85,346	\$237,440
3A Augusta Ave / Garden City	131,132	\$826,042	116,972	\$734,351	108,396	\$678,818
3B Augusta Ave / Hudson Hill	67,876	Included with 3A	60,613	Included with 3A	56,214	Included with 3A
4 Barnard	160,875	\$882,683	165,263	\$901,464	173,258	\$935,682
6 Crosstown*	181,602	\$731,544	181,602	\$731,544	181,602	\$731,544
10 East Savannah	161,484	\$551,364	165,171	\$567,144	171,889	\$595,897
11 Candler	129,640	\$572,802	132,393	\$584,584	137,410	\$606,058
12 Henry*	155,617	\$763,916	155,617	\$763,916	155,617	\$763,916
13 Coffee Bluff / 20 Montgomery *	77,634	\$275,332	77,634	\$275,332	77,634	\$275,332
14 Abercorn	358,902	\$1,749,589	365,651	\$1,778,475	377,949	\$1,822,550
17 Silk Hope	209,017	\$602,380	204,905	\$584,781	205,199	\$586,039
24 Wilmington Island	84,069	\$251,002	84,855	\$254,366	84,560	\$253,103
25 MLK Jr Blvd / West Lake	194,654	\$830,429	184,139	\$781,145	183,962	\$803,913
27 Waters Ave	147,197	\$675,679	151,068	\$692,247	152,113	\$722,438
28 Waters Ave	102,108	\$489,391	104,871	\$501,217	109,906	\$522,766
29 West Gwinnett / Cloverdale	89,515	\$510,728	80,434	\$471,861	81,082	\$474,635
31 Skidaway / Sandfly	142,400	\$650,898	144,491	\$659,847	148,300	\$676,150
SYSTEM TOTAL	2,479,283	\$10,602,139	2,458,692	\$10,509,729	2,490,437	\$10,686,281

* Route does not serve Downtown Loop/Transit Station.

**Table 7-2
Annual Operating Cost Impacts Relative to TDP Service Proposals**

Route	Proposed System with Downtown Loop		Proposed System with Greyhound Site		Proposed System with Louisville Road Site	
	Miles	Cost	Miles	Cost	Miles	Cost
2 West Chatham	111,229	\$356,513	107,916	\$342,333	110,950	\$355,319
3A Augusta Ave / Garden City	105,098	\$540,398	91,556	\$482,438	83,354	\$447,334
3B Augusta Ave / Hudson Hill	67,544	\$403,275	57,286	\$359,371	51,073	\$332,779
4 Barnard	160,875	\$882,683	165,263	\$901,464	173,257	\$935,678
6 Crosstown*	195,387	\$738,792	195,387	\$738,792	195,387	\$738,792
10 East Savannah	135,581	\$649,617	139,964	\$668,376	147,951	\$702,561
11 Candler	115,727	\$630,464	118,003	\$640,205	122,151	\$683,408
12 Henry*	155,617	\$762,462	155,617	\$762,462	155,617	\$762,462
13 Coffee Bluff / 20 Montgomery**	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
14 Abercorn	414,385	\$2,373,758	423,286	\$2,411,854	439,504	\$2,481,267
17 Silk Hope	187,729	\$612,112	183,311	\$593,203	183,626	\$594,551
24 Wilmington Island	94,981	\$284,957	96,112	\$289,798	95,688	\$287,983
25 MLK Jr Blvd / Chatham Pkwy	296,776	\$1,335,817	286,332	\$1,291,117	287,078	\$1,294,310
27 Waters Ave	135,699	\$673,271	139,268	\$688,546	145,771	\$716,379
28 Waters Ave	102,108	\$485,416	104,871	\$497,242	109,906	\$518,791
29 West Gwinnett / Cloverdale	87,634	\$575,216	78,786	\$537,347	79,418	\$540,052
31 Skidaway	153,479	\$674,560	156,287	\$686,578	161,403	\$708,475
SYSTEM TOTAL	2,519,849	\$11,979,311	2,499,245	\$11,548,793	2,542,134	\$12,100,141

* Route does not serve Downtown Loop/Transit Station.

** Routes eliminated in proposed system.