CHAPTER 4: REGIONAL TRANSIT FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

The Regional Transit Framework discusses the project team’s process in identifying customized route and network recommendations for Bentonville, Rogers, Springdale, and Fayetteville. Both ORT and RT routes were analyzed and realigned to create an optimized and connected transit network at the local and regional level. The identification of key transit corridors that provide enhanced connectivity and direct routing focused on moving NWA residents in an intuitive, time efficient manner, and resulted in community supported recommendations. The alternative development process resulted in recommendations for a mix of fixed route, demand response, and potential high-capacity transit corridors in the latter phase of the Transit Development Plan that balance quality with cost.

Draft recommendations (including both level of service updates and route realignment) were created using findings from in-depth technical analyses (i.e. market and operational analyses) and robust public engagement efforts performed earlier in the TDP process. These recommendations were provided to the public for comment, through both a series of community events and online and paper surveys to obtain public feedback about the proposed changes. Following the public outreach phase of the alternative development, feedback was incorporated back into the draft recommendations to create a locally preferred alternative (LPA). The following sections further discuss the methods and process behind the regional transit framework, as well as the draft and final recommendations that were a result of the analysis.

RECOMMENDATION OVERVIEW

The draft recommendations were generated through close coordination between all involved agencies (NWARPC, ORT, RT), key stakeholders, and the NWA community. Transit service was initially analyzed at the fixed route region level - a geographical extent used in the Chapter 2 Market Analysis - to create level of service, route realignment, and demand response suggestions unique to each community.

INTERNAL REVIEW

Several meetings were held over a four-week period to provide initial recommendations for each fixed route region. Recommendations were strictly based on potential alignments (level of service was analyzed after finalizing the draft). Initial recommendations provided to the agencies contained a phased implementation plan; that is, route alignments categorized into three distinct phases for implementation to help disperse cost and prioritize sustainable phased changes. The phases are listed below:

- **Phase I**: 1 to 2 years
- **Phase II**: 2 to 5 years
- **Phase III**: 5 to 10 years

NWARPC, ORT, and RT were allocated time to review initial recommendations and return feedback for further analysis. Once agency feedback was incorporated, draft alternatives were produced with modified system design. The next round of review was conducted with city leadership from each of the four major cities in the service area. Feedback from each city was gathered and the recommendations were further refined to incorporate City leadership input. Final meetings involving all agencies were then held for each fixed route region prior to draft finalization.

PUBLIC REVIEW

Following the internal vetting of system alternatives, draft alternatives were presented to the NWA public in the form of two public open houses, as well as online and paper surveys. The engagement effort was conducted to obtain public opinion on the preliminary system recommendations. The system was split into recommendations based on fixed route region extents and one displaying Phase III regional corridors. Following public outreach, comments from the open houses and surveys were collected and synthesized for incorporation
into the final alternative. Public input will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

**METHODOLOGY**

In order to develop transit alternatives that provide the region efficient, well connected, more accessible, and more frequent transit service, analyses from earlier stages of the project were utilized. These methods were used to prepare the draft alternative that was presented to the agencies (NWARPC, ORT, RT) for review. The following section discusses methods used for preliminary route realignments.

**MARKET ANALYSIS**

The market analysis serves as a critical tool for developing transit alternatives as it provides a snapshot of where current transit markets are located. Utilizing previous market analysis efforts allowed the project team to visualize transit demand in the NWA region, and realign the existing system accordingly. Aspects of the market analysis utilized in the recommendation development process are listed below:

- **Transit Demand** displays where the current market for transit ridership currently exists;
- **Transit Supply** displays where current service exists and where service is lacking; and
- **Future Demand** shows where future markets will be located based on the NWA Travel Demand Model (TDM).

For more information on the above market analysis components, refer to the Chapter 2 Market Analysis.

**OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS**

The operational analysis provided another layer with which the team used to guide the decision-making process. The parameters detailed further in this section provided an in-depth look at the state of existing transit service in NWA, therefore displaying regional levels of transit supply in further detail.

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**Productivity**

In order to develop an understanding of existing travel patterns and potential opportunities to improve connectivity in the NWA region, boarding and alighting data was analyzed at the stop, segment, and network level. The purpose of the analysis was to evaluate current ridership and make observations about route performance to inform the draft alternative.

Boarding and alighting data was provided by ORT and RT staff, and are representative of all stops within the NWA fixed route system. For each stop along each route, the project team analyzed daily boarding and alighting data. The data was aggregated to calculate average daily boarding activity for each stop. Stops were then given a performance classification (Table 4.1) based on the amount of boarding activity compared to other stops found in the regional system. Stops were evaluated on a universal scale applied to ORT and RT.
### TABLE 4.1: CONNECT NWA PERFORMANCE CLASSIFICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STOP LEVEL RIDERSHIP SCORES</th>
<th>DAILY BOARDING ACTIVITY</th>
<th>BUS STOP COUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor (1)</td>
<td>0 - 5 passengers</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate (2)</td>
<td>6 - 19 passengers</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good (3)</td>
<td>20 - 49 passengers</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent (4)</td>
<td>50 or more passengers</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that Union Station (Fayetteville) was not included in the analysis to avoid skewing the stop classifications, as the station’s daily boarding activity presents itself as an outlier and its importance is already established.

Once boarding activity was classified for all stops, the project team identified and classified segments along each route based on performance (i.e. how much activity occurs at a given location). Segments were identified using a qualitative approach that involved observing stop classifications along a route and identifying where there were similar levels of boarding activity between adjacent stops. For example, if four stops in row were classified as “Excellent”, the route segment connecting these stops was considered to be performing well.

For the entirety of each route, segments were identified based on groups of stops with similar performance classifications, and each segment was assigned a second performance classification; productive, average, or unproductive. This resulted in categorized segments by route that served as ‘building blocks’ used to evaluate real-world solutions. In the map example (Figure 4.1), productive segments are displayed in green, average in yellow, and unproductive in red. From this it is inferred that the productive segments should not be removed. Average and unproductive segments are more likely to be rerouted, realigned, or served using an alternative service delivery method. Conducting this analysis at the route level allowed for the project team to compare both the route’s individual productivity and the productivity of the corridor and system as a whole.

### Public Engagement

Findings from the team’s previous public engagement efforts, held in the Spring of 2019, were also used to inform draft alternatives. This allowed for qualitative, local knowledge to help drive recommendations for the new transit system. Survey results and comments were used to make the recommended alternatives better reflect the region’s transit vision. Specifically, outreach played a large role in defining the updated levels of service for both ORT and RT routes. Routes were generally given higher frequencies, more convenient span (e.g. running later in the evenings), and more intuitive route designs based on what the project team heard during these events. Refer to Chapter 1 for further information on previous public engagement efforts.
Chapter 4: Regional Transit Framework

FIGURE 4.1: ROUTE 17 PRODUCTIVITY MAP

- Key Destination
- Productive
- Average
- Unproductive
DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Following extensive agency coordination and analysis review, a draft alternative recommendation was displayed at both the regional (1) and fixed route region (3) extents. Coverage measures (i.e. how many people and jobs are covered) comparing existing and future systems were generated to display the potential benefits of the system. These measures were displayed at the city and regional level. The regional draft alternatives were presented as a complete build out, meaning the recommendations showed all routes from the three implementation phases of the TDP. The following sections discuss each part of the draft alternative in further detail.

PRELIMINARY ROUTE ALIGNMENTS & SERVICE LEVELS

Figure 4.2 below displays a summary of the measures used to compare existing service to the proposed alternative service. The figure displays improvements in connectivity and efficiency in transit occurring by city and the overall region if the alternative were implemented. Increases in transit routes and buses are provided for a better understanding of what will be required to achieve these improved measures in the future.

FIGURE 4.2: CONNECT NWA ALTERNATIVE COVERAGE BY REGION AND CITY

REGIONAL TRANSIT BENEFITS OF CONNECT NWA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bentonville</th>
<th>Fayetteville</th>
<th>Rogers</th>
<th>Springdale</th>
<th>Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>Future</td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>Future</td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit Routes #</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Peak Buses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># People &amp; Jobs</td>
<td>31,451</td>
<td>40,426</td>
<td>66,484</td>
<td>67,404</td>
<td>26,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 mile Walkshed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33,412</td>
<td>59,357</td>
<td>63,447</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Time to Mobility Hubs</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>125,827</td>
<td>80,646</td>
<td>129,189</td>
<td>23,859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>44,247</td>
<td>81,604</td>
<td>47,290</td>
<td>76,793</td>
<td>14,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>33,580</td>
<td>41,908</td>
<td>24,886</td>
<td>37,189</td>
<td>8,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>13,009</td>
<td>14,739</td>
<td>6,408</td>
<td>6,474</td>
<td>2,533</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bentonville & Rogers

As shown in Figure 4.3, the Bentonville/Rogers area contains 12 recommended routes with an additional 28 peak hour buses. Frequencies range from 15 to 60 minutes. The draft alternative establishes several linear routes providing more connectivity between Bentonville and Rogers, including mobility hubs at the Arkansas Music Pavilion and both Downtown Bentonville and Rogers.

**FIGURE 4.3: BENTONVILLE & ROGERS DRAFT ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS**
Springdale

As shown in Figure 4.4, Springdale adds 2 routes with an addition of 10 peak hour buses. Frequencies range from 15 to 60 minutes; previous service did not provide a route running at or lower than a 30-minute frequency. The draft alternative looks to create major transfer points at Shiloh Square and the future NWACC campus.
Fayetteville

As shown in Figure 4.5, Fayetteville adds no new routes (maintains 15) but adds 12 peak hour buses to existing service, consolidates various route segments and proposes realignment efficiencies. Frequencies range from 15 to 60 minutes. The draft alternative creates a more regionally connected Fayetteville, with proposed ORT routes using Union Station and a high frequency route connecting downtown Fayetteville to Springdale.
MOBILITY HUBS

Mobility hubs are specific areas or locations within an urban/suburban environment where several modes of travel on varying networks converge to form an integrated, multimodal site that provides users with convenient and connected mobility options. These hubs optimize connections between individual modes and the broader transportation network and serve as anchor points for activity and intraurban travel. Mobility hubs also support and serve as catalysts for Transit Oriented Development (TOD). They provide opportunities for Public Private Partnerships (PPP) and value capture development projects. Mobility hubs will perform a crucial role in Connect NWA and help tie the local and regional transit networks together as well as provide transit supportive land use.

Mobility hubs are best situated at fixed route transit stops and/or stations that experience high levels of rider boarding and alighting activity. In addition, these hubs should be well connected to active transportation networks, such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes/routes, and shared-use paths, as well as the street network so that options such as carpool/carshare/rideshare, private vehicles, and scooters are accessible. Mobility hubs provide users with connections to various modal networks – they provide spaces for users to appropriately access these modes, such as bus/rail stops, bus bays, bicycle parking, safe curbside spaces for rideshare or carpool pick-up/drop-off, docking stations for options such as bikeshare and carshare, and parking for private vehicles.

PRIMARY CHARACTERISTICS

The primary characteristics that will enable a successful mobility hub include:

- Locating near in-demand destinations and a high-density mix of transit-supportive land uses;
- Creating direct connections to various modal transportation networks;
- Providing the necessary space and infrastructure to allow users to make transfers between the different modes; and
- Integrating the connecting modes using wayfinding and technology, such as mobile apps, to allow users to seamlessly enter and exit the hub.

AMENITIES

Depending on the scale, established mobility hubs typically have several amenities that separate the facility from standard transit stations/centers. This can include amenity types that help support the multiple modes of transportation meeting at the hub, including:

- Open space for aesthetic and recreational purposes
- Retail space
- Bicycle storage/support stations (e.g. repair shops, vendors, etc.)
- Wayfinding
- Real-time information/kiosks
- Wi-fi

The final two amenity types, also referred to as information amenities, allow for better informed and connected users. Taking advantage of the widespread use of smartphone technology can positively impact first-last mile connectivity and allow users to better understand what options are available in the area.

ANALYSIS

While technical work is essential in a location selection exercise, it is equally important to consider local knowledge/qualitative reasoning when defining potential mobility hub locations. Prior to the route alternatives development, participating agencies provided possible mobility hub locations for each of the NWA region’s major municipal areas (Bentonville, Rogers, Springdale, Fayetteville) based on local expertise and their understanding of the region.

The areas recommended were based on knowledge of existing transit, active transportation (bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure), and roadway connectivity; available land for development; future development of bond projects; and available right-of-way (ROW) in the immediate area. These recommendations were overlaid and tagged to the Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) layer for reference when completing the quantitative analysis. Areas recommended by agency staff are as follows:
Bentonville: The parcel adjacent to SW. Henry St., bordered by SW. A St. and S. Main St. southwest of Bentonville City Square.

Rogers: The land west of I-49 and north of the Arkansas Music Pavilion, as well as Downtown Rogers (W. Cherry St. and S. 1st St.).

Springdale: Shiloh Square and the vacant space within the Pleasant St. Walmart, adjacent to S. Thompson St./US Hwy. 71B.

Fayetteville: The parcel adjacent to the Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and S. School Ave. intersection, and the corner of Dickson St. and West Ave. at the Walton Arts Center.

FIGURE 4.6: POTENTIAL MOBILITY HUB LOCATIONS
To further analyze potential mobility hubs for the NWA region, the project team paired quantitative and qualitative methods to justify options. The NWA TDM is a tool that forecasts travel patterns throughout the NWA roadway network based on roadway characteristics and transportation demand. The TDM served as the basis of the overall analysis as it provides the geographical areas used to select suitable locations for mobility hubs. These areas are defined as Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) and are geographical delineations used to generate TDM outputs. Accordingly, the NWA TDM TAZs allowed the project team to perform a geographical information systems (GIS) analysis using future values in the form of TDM outputs, as well as data available from participating agencies (NWARPC, ORT, RT) representing multimodal connectivity/supply found within the NWA region (e.g. sidewalk line features).

To pair existing and projected multimodal supply/demand with agency recommendations, a quantitative GIS analysis was performed to rank TAZs for mobility hub suitability based on current/future transit markets, current transit activity, and current multimodal connectivity. Using data obtained through local agencies, each TAZ was scored from 0 to 4, with 0 being the lowest possible score (Park & Ride Score was ancillary, and the only metric which utilized a binary score), for the following metrics:

- Future Productions (based on 2040 forecasts)
- Future Attractions (based on 2040 forecasts)
- Future Modal Suitability
- Active Transportation Density
- Transit Ridership
- Park & Ride Connectivity

Figure 4.7 provides an example of the overlay analysis/metrics that went into the GIS analysis.

**FIGURE 4.7: BENTONVILLE GIS INPUT EXAMPLE**
Individual metric scores were combined to create a comprehensive score, representing overall suitability for a mobility hub at that location (Figure 4.9). Comprehensive scores were then separated into similar breaks (0 to 4), with the two highest classes (scores 3 and 4) being used to identify areas most prime for mobility hub designation, referred to as High Scoring TAZs and Highest Scoring TAZs. These two breaks are composed of the following comprehensive scores:

- **High Score TAZs**: This group consists of TAZs with final scores of 7 and 8.

- **Highest Score TAZs**: This group consists of TAZs with final scores of 9, 10, and 15 (only one TAZ, containing the University of Arkansas, scored a 15 and is understood to be an outlier).

TAZs receiving “High” and “Highest” scoring designations were then reviewed in an overlay analysis using aerial imagery to manually enter binary scores-tags for available land, ROW, and whether the TAZ contained a recommended parcel from the initial qualitative analysis. This process further acknowledges the feasibility of mobility hub implementation (based on available space) while also recognizing the connection and support of local knowledge and presence within the TAZ.

**FINDINGS**

Of the 7 areas recommended by participating agencies, 5 were found within one of the 29 TAZs achieving either a “high” or “highest” score (the Pleasant St. Walmart in Springdale and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. parcel in Fayetteville were not included in those scoring ranges). Due to the latter two’s locations and future land uses conducive to transit planning, they were both included along with the other 5 recommended locations in the draft alternative presented to the public. Figure 4.8 displays final mobility hub scores for the NWA region.

It is important to note that mobility hubs are not limited to traditional transit stations but instead take the form of the local area they are connecting. In congested areas they may simply be a section of curb space where multiple frequent bus routes pick up and drop off. This helps transition transit away from timed transfers and hub-and-spoke systems that result in significant capital costs, major right-of-way acquisition, and unreliable service. Figure 4.8 provides an example of a modern mobility hub.
FIGURE 4.9: COMPREHENSIVE MOBILITY HUB ANALYSIS SCORES
MOBILITY ZONES

Demand response service was also a product of the alternatives development process. Referred to as mobility zones, these geographical areas are recommended to connect specific markets to the fixed route system with demand response service. This allows for unproductive routes in high demand areas to maintain service coverage, but in a more cost-effective manner (i.e. switching out fixed route service to mobility zone service). Figures 4.10 - 4.11 display the initial mobility zone recommendations for the NWA region. The Bentonville mobility zone captures 5,967 people/jobs, and the Fayetteville mobility zone captures a total of 1,164 people/jobs (7,131 total).

FIGURE 4.10: POTENTIAL BENTONVILLE MOBILITY ZONE
FIGURE 4.11: POTENTIAL FAYETTEVILLE MOBILITY ZONE

Fayetteville Transit

Transit Routes
- Ozark Regional Transit Route
- Razorback Transit Route

Symbols:
- Mobility Hub
- Mobility Zone
REGIONAL CORRIDORS

Regional corridors were identified for consideration in Phase III recommendations that will only be plausible once a strong transit base is derived from the implementation of Phases I and II. Surrounded by frequent, high quality transit, these corridors serve as possible alternatives to connect the entire NWA region through fixed route bus, or even high capacity transit with fully or partially dedicated guideways. Figure 4.12 displays four corridor alternatives based on existing and intuitive linear infrastructure in the region listed as follows (West to East):

- AR Hwy. 112
- I-49
- US Hwy. 71B
- AR Hwy. 265
FIGURE 4.12: PRELIMINARY REGIONAL CORRIDORS

Regional Transit
- Transit Routes (Phase I/II)
- Regional Connectivity Analysis Corridors (Phase III)
- Mobility Hub
- Mobility Zone
- Union Station
COMMUNITY INPUT PROCESS

The project team organized two major community input events and a public survey to capture the community’s input on Connect NWA draft recommendations for route alignments, service levels, and service delivery concepts. The goal was to build on the success of Connect NWA’s initial public engagement effort that involved community wide outreach with the focus of bringing the conversation to the community where they work, live, and play. This effort resulted in over 1,200 surveys, 10 public events, onboard riding sessions, and multiple stakeholder meetings.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Two public open houses provided an opportunity for NWA citizens to attend an event in either county of the project study area. In Benton County an open house was held on Wednesday, October 16, 2019 from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm, at the Rogers Public Library located at 711 S. Dixieland Rd., Rogers, AR, 72758. In Washington County an open house was held on Thursday, October 17, 2019 from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Fayetteville Town Center located at 15 West Mountain St., Fayetteville, AR 72701. Due to the nature of the material being covered, the need for Wi-Fi and other technology resources, and the time of year the Connect NWA team determined that an open house style of event was the most appropriate method for gathering public input. At the events there were boards and visual aids that presented the draft recommendations and staff on hand to help the public understand the following:

- What the proposed recommendations are;
- Why the recommendations were proposed; and
- The benefits that can be expected from the recommendations if implemented.

There was also an exercise that the public could participate in where they could visually see the difference in travel time between the existing transit systems and the recommendations using a software called Remix. This software used a feature known as ‘Jane’, shown in Figure 4.13, to display how far someone could travel using transit from a point on the map of their choosing.

PROMOTION

In order to ensure an equitable outreach effort, the project team used a wide array of promotional mediums to spread the message of the October public open houses. Display ads and public notices were first developed in both English and Spanish formats. After creating a variation of promotional graphics, the project team used several mediums to disperse the open house purpose and location to the public.

Newspaper

Local newspapers served as an important medium for the promotion of the public open houses. Several newspapers published display ads, legal notices, and summary articles prior to the events. These publications include:

- Two separate legal notices published on October 9th and October 10th.
- A display ad published in Spanish in Springdale’s La Prensa Libre on October 10th.
- A display ad published in the NWA Democrat-Gazette on October 13th.
- An article summarizing the events in the NWA Democrat-Gazette on October 13th.

The publication of these ads, notices, and articles roughly one week prior to the events allowed for those without internet/smartphone access to learn about the public involvement efforts.
Project Website

The project website has continuously been the hub for all information Connect NWA. This includes project analysis updates, survey links, and project meeting/information bulletins. Weeks prior to the October events, the open house display ad was uploaded to the project website (located within the NWARPC web page). A banner providing a link to an online version of the alternatives survey was also posted (Figure 4.14), compatible with both computers and smartphone devices.

Promotional Emails

In order to ensure continued involvement from stakeholders and other interest groups, the project team sent promotional emails containing the open house display ad and additional information. The first email was sent through the NWARPC listserv on September 18th, while the second was sent to the TAC email list containing the same information.

Social Media

On September 19th, NWARPC staff created a Facebook event for the public open houses. This post/display ad was shared throughout the weeks leading up to the event by NWARPC, as well as other stakeholders actively involved with Connect NWA.

Survey

To stay committed to the project goal of bringing the conversation to the community the project team developed a survey that could be taken online or in hard-copy format to help reach those that were unable to attend one of the public open houses. The survey was designed to provide the public with information about the methods used to improve transit service. The true/false questions provided the community an opportunity to identify the methods of improvements they value the most for their transit system. This included items such as walking less, higher frequency, or whether they needed transit earlier in the morning or later in the evening. Providing input in this manner as opposed to making a participant pick from a handful of scenarios avoids the issue of only capturing the input of those who participate and ending up with an ‘all or nothing’ scenario. Instead, the project team can identify strengths and isolate the weaknesses associated with the draft recommendations and use this to develop final recommendations that will serve as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

Findings

Overall, respondents of the survey conveyed that the draft route alternatives improved the region’s public transportation. The following provides a summary of survey responses:

- 63% thought the proposed recommendations would save them time;
- 71% thought the recommendations would increase their ability to get where they need to go; and
- 71% thought the proposed recommendations would improve their ability to move around the NWA region.

Primary findings from engagement efforts regarding potential improvements to the recommendations were focused on transit improvements for the Springdale fixed route region. Multiple comments asked for added coverage to the southeast region of the city (surrounding Electric Ave.), as well as the northwest region (between W. Sunset Ave. and Backus Ave).
Adequate market, public transportation to industrial/light industrial jobs, and previous lack of efficient transportation were all reasons cited for service expansion into the areas. Accordingly, the project team, based on public comment and the previous market analysis, decided the addition of both fixed route and demand response service in Northwest Springdale and demand response service in Southeast Springdale would be appropriate for the areas of primary concern.

Numerous comments were also made regarding the general expansion of span (hours of service) and days of service in each city of the NWA region. Reasons for such expansion ranged from better connectivity to employment, better accessibility to health care, and more travel options for recreation. Later service into the night and Saturday service have previously been offered through RT, specifically for Fayetteville. This disparity between ORT and RT days and span of service highlighted the need for similar service regionally. Further, the lack of Sunday service in general was highlighted by the community, and thus will be implemented in Connect NWA’s phased implementation plan.

**FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section provides a description of elements added to the regional transit recommendation following the October public open houses. Maps are provided to show where realignments and additions were made. Final levels of service are also provided for better understanding of the final recommendation’s improved frequencies, span, and days of service.

**FINALIZED ROUTE ALIGNMENTS**

Route alignments for the final recommendation largely remain the same. However, based off public input, RT 21 was realigned to extend east along west Drake St. in order to provide a new connection with RT 26 as well as capture anticipated development north of Drake St. (Figure 4.16).

**ORT 44** is located in Springdale and was also added as a result of the public engagement process (Figure 4.17). The route provides service to Northwest Springdale, creating transfer opportunities at Shiloh Square and the new NWACC campus. ORT 44 is programmed to be a Phase II/III project in the staged implementation plan, which will be further discussed in the Implementation Chapter.

Minor changes were made to ORT 6 and ORT 8 by switching each route’s entry/exit to and from the Promenade and Arkansas Music Pavilion Mobility Hub (Figure 4.18). ORT 6 will now use S. Bellview Rd. (as ORT 8 previously did), and ORT 8 will utilize S. Promenade Blvd. (as ORT 6 previously did). ORT 8 will also connect to the Downtown Rogers Mobility Hub via W. Walnut St. rather than W. Oak St.
FIGURE 4.18: ORT 6 & 8 REALIGNMENT
FINALIZED MOBILITY ZONES

Two mobility zones were added to the draft recommendation as a result of the October public input process. One additional mobility zone, covers the southern portion of Springdale, south of Electric Ave. and west to US Hwy. 71B, with northern limits to E. Robinson Ave. (Figure 4.19). The zone captures 9,599 people/jobs.

The second additional mobility zone covers Northwest Springdale, with boundaries of Backus Ave., N. West End St., W. Sunset Ave., and N. 40th St. (Figure 4.20).
This added mobility zone serves to add coverage in tandem with the additional ORT 44. The NW Springdale zone captures 12,755 people/jobs, bringing the overall mobility zone capture (including previously added mobility zones in Bentonville and Fayetteville) to 29,480 people/jobs.
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FINALIZED LEVELS OF SERVICE

Finalized levels of service provide transit users expanded span and days of service, and drastically increase high frequency routes throughout the NWA region. Most notably, service has generally been extended to start earlier in the morning and run later into the evening on both weekdays and Saturdays. Sunday service has also been added, however, level of service has not yet been specified. Detailed, route specific level of service information will be provided through the implementation analysis later in the plan. Figure 4.21 provides an overview of the final recommendation’s level of service improvements.

CONCLUSION

The project team developed regional route recommendations through a combination of internal analysis, coordination, and public input. The team built upon previous phases of Connect NWA to understand and identify gaps in transit service, allowing the team to produce recommendations that better connect and serve the existing transit markets in the NWA region. Recommendations for each fixed route region were thoroughly vetted by all participating agencies before draft designation. The final draft alternatives generated a regional system containing:

- A drastic increase in high frequency routes (frequencies equal to or less than 30 minutes);
- Routes providing regional connectivity through established mobility hubs;
- Mobility zones providing demand response service to maintain or increase transit coverage;
- Phased routes to implement in a sustainable manner; and
- Possible regional corridors to connect Bentonville, Rogers, Springdale, and Fayetteville.

Finalized draft recommendations were provided to the public for comment. All feedback from the public engagement process was used to create final route recommendations for the region. The following lists key findings from the engagement process that were used to generate the final recommendations:

- Overall, the public believed the draft recommendations improved their ability to get where they needed to go in the region and would save them time traveling.
- Citizens commented on the need for increased span and days of service to better suit the schedules of those in need of transit.
The public voiced a need for better transit coverage in Southeast Springdale. In response to public comment, the project team enhanced the draft recommendations by increasing span into the evenings, days of service to include Saturdays and Sundays, and added fixed route and mobility zone service to enhance coverage in Springdale. Following these additions, the project team finalized local and regional route recommendations that will be advanced through the next phases of Connect NWA to develop the implementation plan, funding and financial analysis, and final recommendations. Figure 4.22 displays the enhanced regional measures generated by the added system improvements.

**FIGURE 4.22: CONNECT NWA ENHANCED ALTERNATIVE COVERAGE BY REGION AND CITY**

### REGIONAL TRANSIT BENEFITS OF CONNECT NWA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bentonville</th>
<th>Fayetteville</th>
<th>Rogers</th>
<th>Springdale</th>
<th>Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>System Characteristics</strong></td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>Future</td>
<td>Existing</td>
<td>Future</td>
<td>Existing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit Routes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peak Buses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service Coverage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People &amp; Jobs</td>
<td>31,451</td>
<td>40,426</td>
<td>66,484</td>
<td>67,404</td>
<td>26,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent Service Coverage (30 minutes or better)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33,412</td>
<td>59,357</td>
<td>63,447</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel Time to Mobility Hubs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>People &amp; Jobs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>60</td>
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