

Dayton Transit Study

Executive Summary

October 2025



Houston-Galveston
Area Council



Foreword by Judge Jay Knight

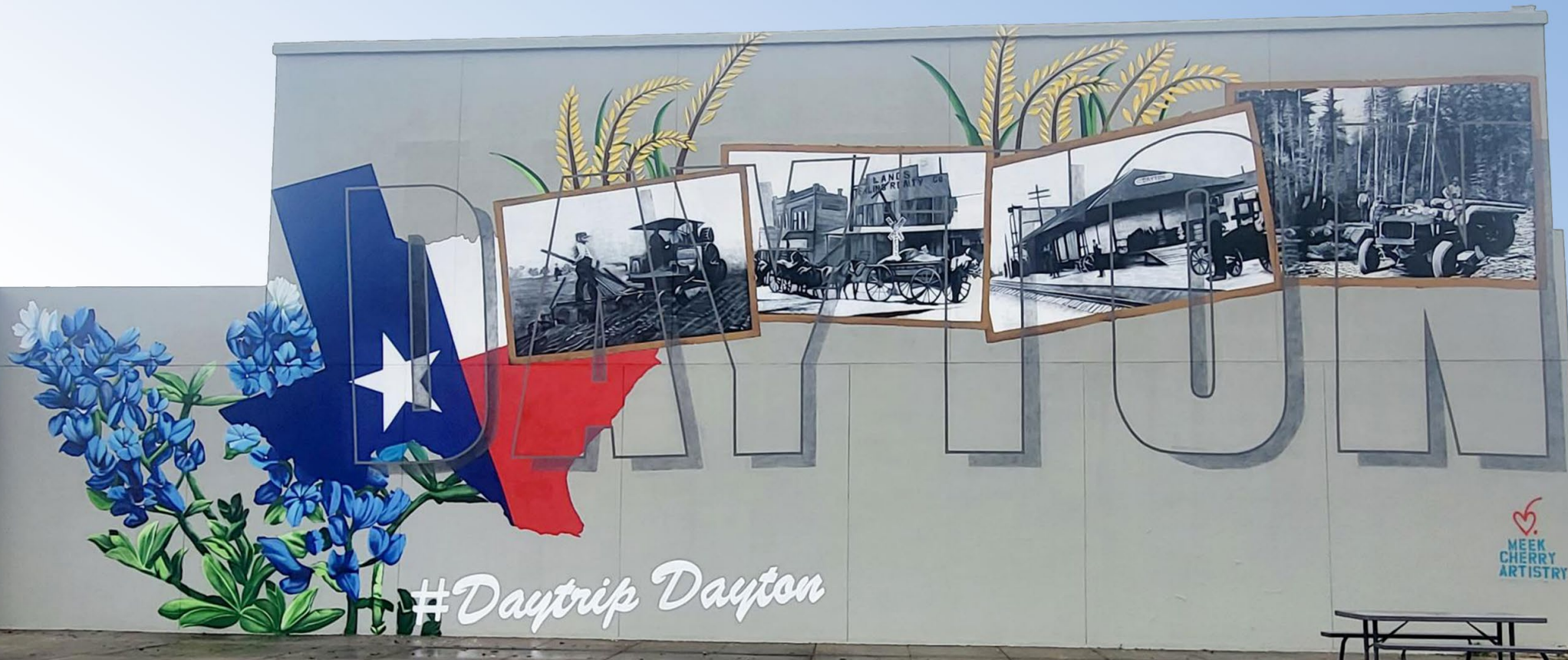


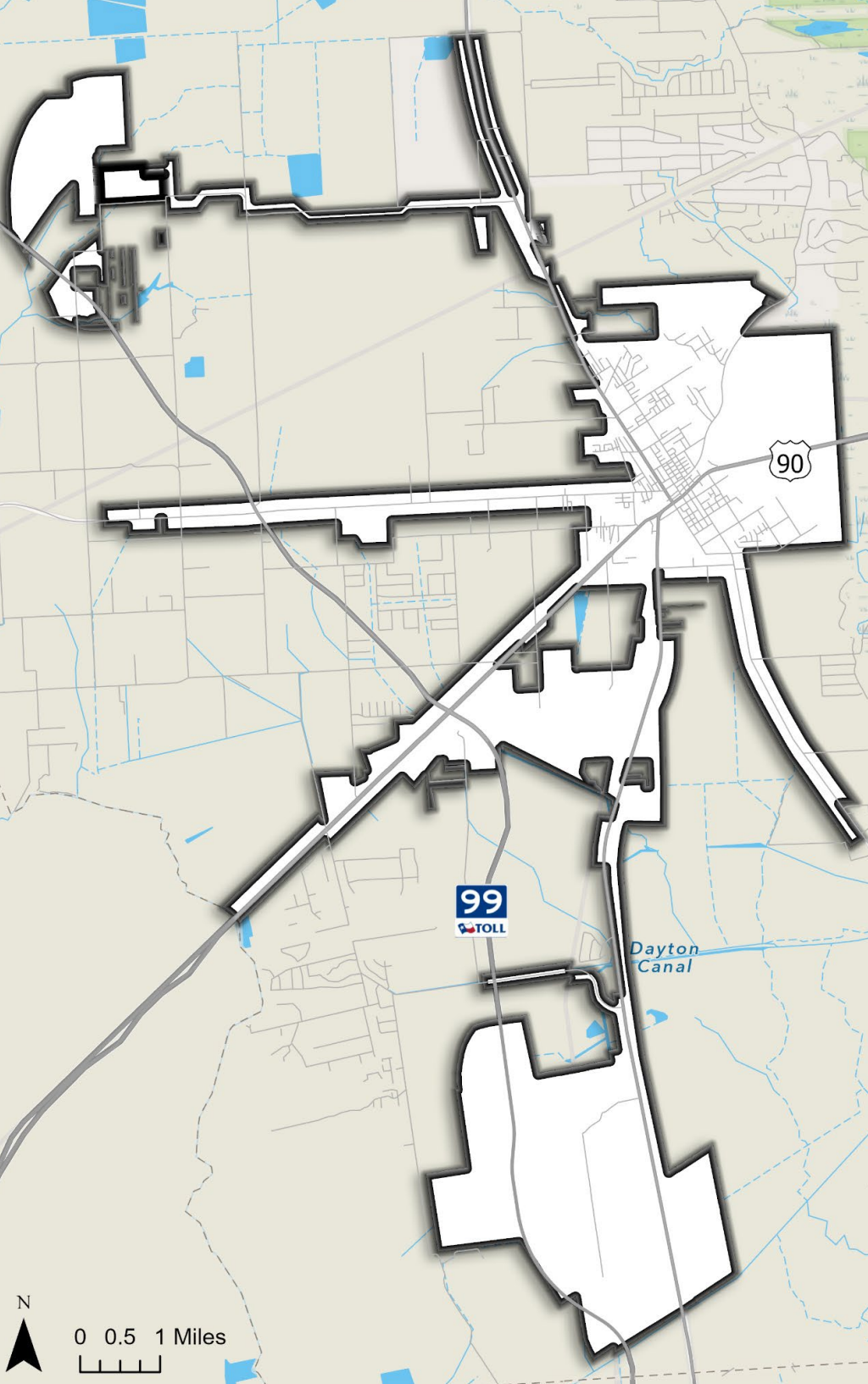
This City of Dayton Transit Study was conducted by City of Dayton staff, Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) along with and nationally recognized consulting firm, the Benesch Company. The study combined strong public outreach efforts with existing transit services and explored potential needs to better connect residents and visitors of this community. Approximately 270 community members composed of residents, visitors, students, and business owners participated in this effort through meetings, surveys, workshops, and interviews. The City of Dayton and H-GAC's planning team worked throughout 2025 to listen, reflect, and prepare this transit feasibility study that can help guide the City of Dayton make more informed decisions when considering improving mobility and connectivity within and around the region.

As Chair of the Houston-Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) Board of Directors, I encourage you to review this feasibility study as we continually strive to improve our transportation services and facilities.

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What is the Dayton Transit Study?

The Dayton Transit Study focused on evaluating public transportation service options and recommending strategies in Dayton, Texas. The study considered innovative planning techniques and a range of transit modes, including newer transportation technologies. Through community input, data analysis, and stakeholder engagement, the study developed recommendations to enhance mobility, accessibility, and service quality in the Dayton area. Part of the community input process included establishing a Steering Committee that guided the process and facilitated input into the Study. The Steering Committee prioritized goals to guide the Dayton Transit Study and more broadly, the future of transit services in Dayton.

City of Dayton | Transit Goals



Encourage a connected, sustainable, and efficient multimodal transportation system



Provide quality, consistent, and reliable on-demand microtransit service



Provide high-quality commuting services to local destinations



Increase awareness of service through education, marketing, and outreach



Enhance the quality of life in Dayton

Existing Transit Services

The Liberty & Dayton Community Circulator, operated by Brazos Transit District, is the primary public transportation service connecting the cities of Liberty and Dayton. This fixed-route service runs Monday through Friday from 9:52 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., providing four trips throughout the day and serving designated time points approximately every hour and 49 minutes. Riders may wave at the bus to signal it to stop at any point on the route. The area is also served by microtransit. Microtransit is a flexible, on-demand transportation service that connects riders to and from destinations within a designated zone. Microtransit provides a convenient first-mile/last-mile connection to and from the Liberty & Dayton Community Circulator.

Total system ridership has increased 79.4% from October 2024 to May 2025, with a notable increase after the public outreach efforts in March through May 2025. As shown in Figure 1, Fixed-Route ridership has increased 36.9% and microtransit has increased 219.7% in the same time period.

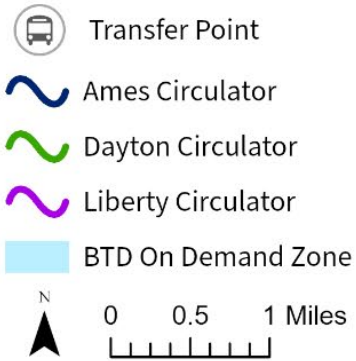
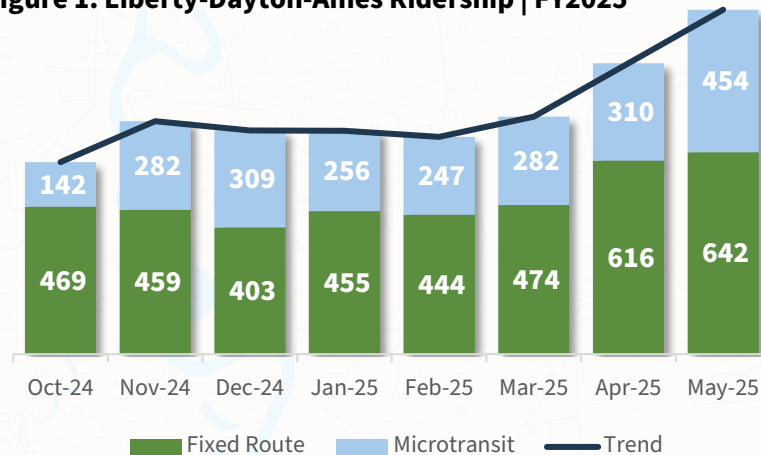


Figure 1: Liberty-Dayton-Ames Ridership | FY2025

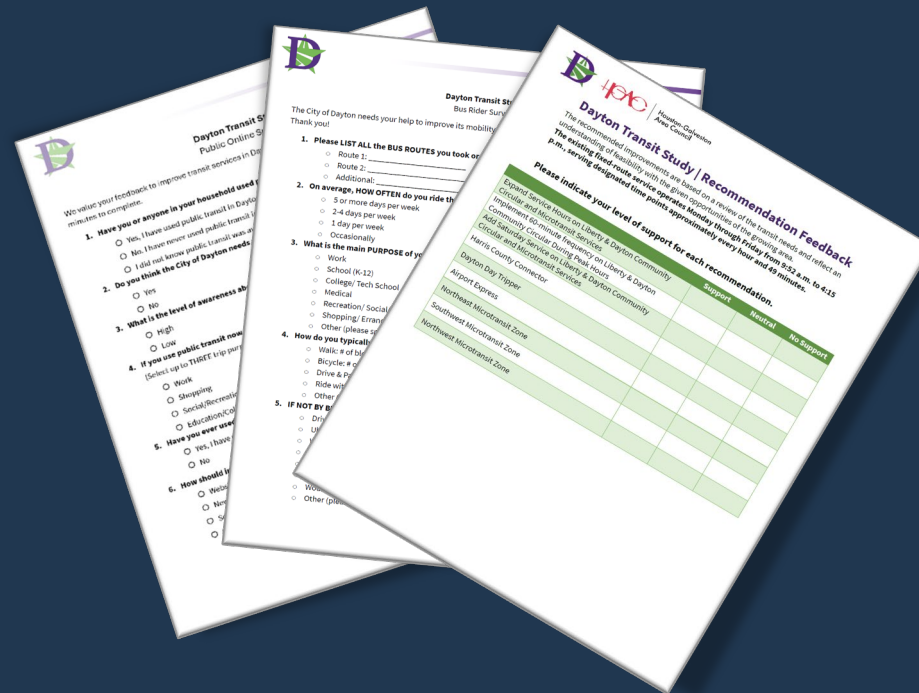


Public Outreach

Public involvement provides valuable guidance and direction for identifying transit needs in the community and public perceptions on and expectations for local and regional transit services.

To engage a full range of community stakeholders and facilitate active participation during the Dayton Transit Study process, direct and indirect outreach techniques were used. Efforts employed outreach techniques such as stakeholder interviews, two open house public workshops, and survey efforts to obtain input and raise awareness about transit services in Dayton and to assess public perception of transit services in the community.

3,348
Engaged



Surveys, 253 responses



440
Email &
Other
Outreach

Web &
Social
Media **2,609**

H-GAC wants public input on transit options in Dayton area

By Bloomberg News June 18, 2025



US 50 from Liberty to Dayton is a major thoroughfare for east-west traffic. In recent years, due to growth and other factors, it is not uncommon to see westbound traffic backed up to the Trinity River bridge, causing frustration and safety issues.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is working with the city of Dayton to study ways to improve public transportation in the community. They want to hear from people who live, work, or travel in Dayton to help shape the future of local transit.

This study will look at how people get around Dayton and explore new options to make transportation easier, safer, and more convenient for everyone.

You can share your thoughts by attending one of two public meetings—one in person and one online. Both meetings will share the same information and give you a chance to give feedback.



Public Workshops, 32

9
Stakeholder Interviews



Needs Development

When developing transit needs, an unconstrained outlook on the community's transit service and capital requirements was used.

The following were also considered:

- **Community Direction** - Findings from public outreach efforts and input from stakeholders were reviewed to gauge public interest.
- **Steering Committee Guidance** - The feedback and comments provided were reviewed to help identify service and capital needs.
- **Operating Context** - The analyses' results and implications were reviewed to understand the influence of how transit may function in the City of Dayton.
- **Plans and Policy Input** - The review of local, regional, and state plans and policies often provide insight into transit needs within the community and the potential means with which to meet them.

Recommendations

The recommended service and capital/policy improvements are based on a review of the transit needs presented and reflect a realistic understanding of feasibility with the given opportunities of the growing area. According to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), there is a five to one economic return for long-term investments in transit service with more than three-quarters of federal funding for transit benefiting private sector entities. Transit has the ability to support access to jobs and shopping/recreation opportunities thus bolstering the local and regional economy.



Service Recommendations

Improvements to Existing Service

Expand Service Hours on Liberty & Dayton Community Circulator and Microtransit Services

Implement 60-minute frequency on Liberty & Dayton Community Circulator During Peak Hours

Add Saturday Service on Liberty & Dayton Community Circulator and Microtransit Services

Local Connection

Kenefick Connector

Regional/Intercity Connections

Baytown Connector

Dayton Day Tripper

Airport Express

Microtransit

Northeast

Southwest

Northwest

Capital and Policy Recommendations

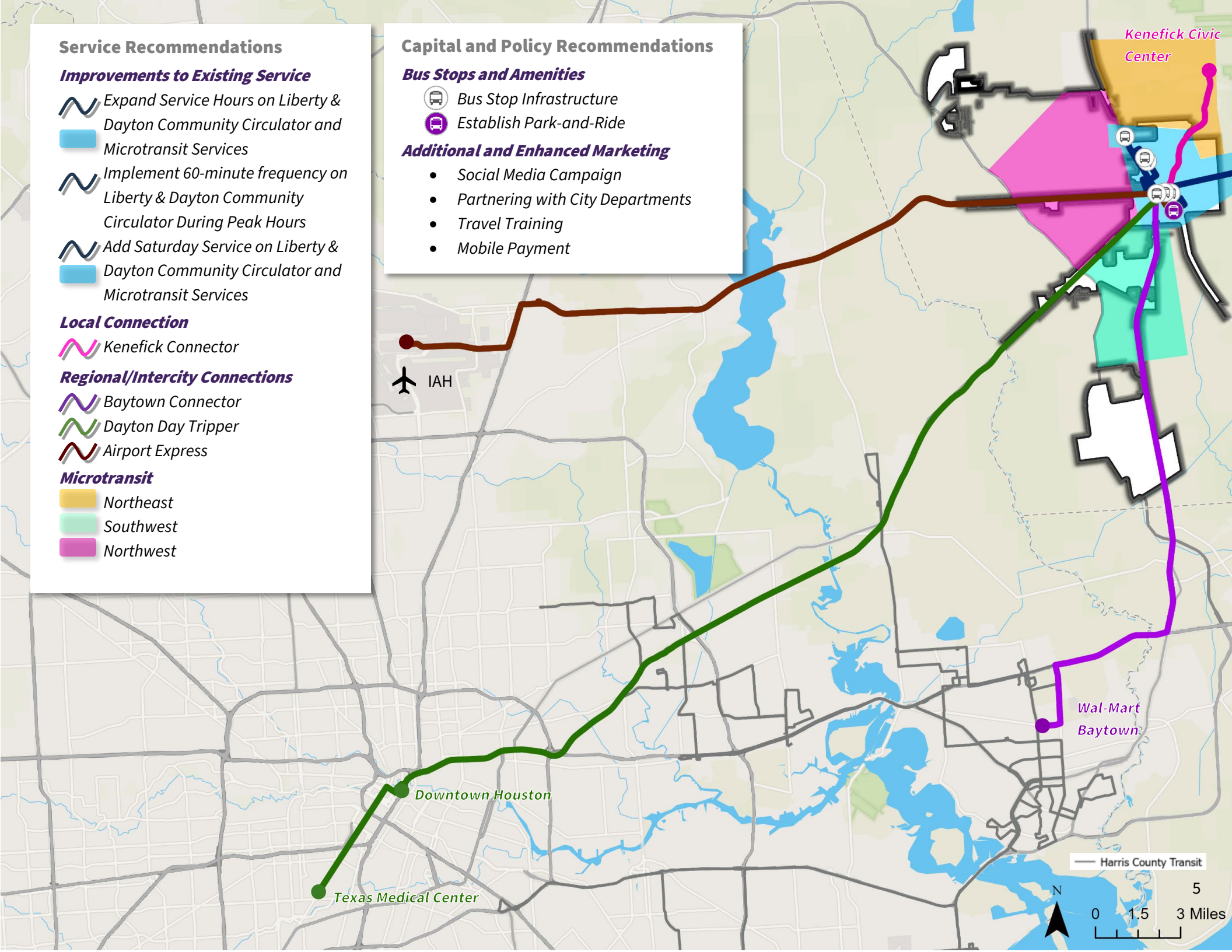
Bus Stops and Amenities

Bus Stop Infrastructure

Establish Park-and-Ride

Additional and Enhanced Marketing

- Social Media Campaign
- Partnering with City Departments
- Travel Training
- Mobile Payment





Phasing Evaluation

After the recommendations were established, a framework was developed to phase the recommendations into the short-, mid-, and long-term time periods. The phasing process is structured to cover a wide spectrum of factors that are qualitative and quantitative to ensure it is complete as well as comprehensive.

- *Steering Committee Input* - Ensuring that the Study is developed with the necessary oversight, quality control, and a transparent process, the Steering Committee was formed to guide the process and their input on recommendations was considered.
- *Public Input* - Public outreach process conducted for this study resulted in numerous opinions and suggestions about transit services from transit users and non-users
- *Transit Orientation Index Results* – Existing population segments that historically have had a higher propensity to use transit and/or are dependent on public transit for their transportation needs.
- *Density Threshold Assessment Results* - Potential riders living in higher-density areas of the City that may choose to use transit as a commuting or transportation alternative.

Phases

A phased approach was developed for transit services in the City of Dayton to expand its transit options in a practical way. The plan is structured into the short-, mid-, and long-term timeframes, designed to guide transit over the next 20 years while supporting overall growth in the City of Dayton.

- **Short-Term Recommendations (0–5 Years)** focuses on local recommendations to build demand for transit services.
- **Mid-Term Recommendations (6–10 Years)** recommends building on expanding and improving existing services.
- **Long-Term Recommendations (11–20 Years)** envisions expanding transit services regionally.

Each timeframe includes service recommendations supported by infrastructure and policy initiatives, phased according to implementation needs, logical progression, feasibility, and practical judgment.

While the phasing provides a framework for action, they are flexible; recommendations may be accelerated or delayed based on shifting priorities and funding availability.



Short-Term Recommendations (0-5 Years)

Short-term recommendations focus on enhancing the reliability and accessibility of existing services within the next five years. Map 1 shows the recommendations that may increase demand while laying the groundwork for future growth.

Expanding existing service can significantly improve rider experience by expanding accessibility to new destinations. These recommendations are relatively quick to implement, and critical for building public confidence in transit as a viable transportation alternative.

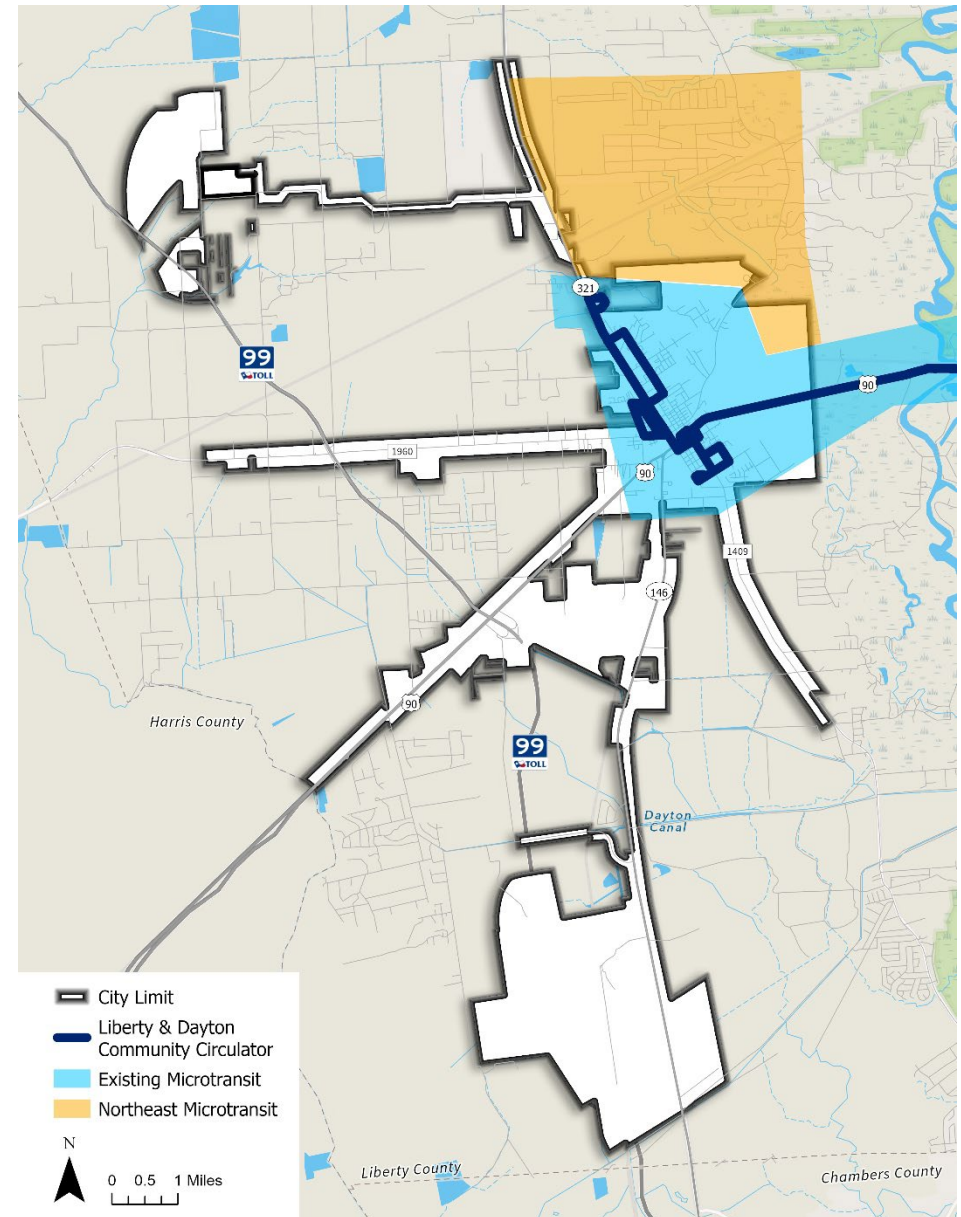
Service

- Add Northeast microtransit zone
- Expand service hours on existing services from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Capital and Policy

- Add bus stop infrastructure at designated time points
- Implement social media campaign
- Partner with City Departments

Map 1: Short-Term Recommendations





Mid-Term Recommendations (6-10 Years)

Mid-term recommendations are designed to strengthen the overall transit network and support economic development. Recommendations in the 6- to 10-year horizon support improving local mobility while expanding and enhancing existing services to meet growing demand (Map 2). These improvements build upon short-term enhancements and introduce regional services.

Regional services will increase access to top destinations, such as Baytown and other Harris County destinations. Park-and-ride facilities will support the regional service and make transit more accessible and attractive.

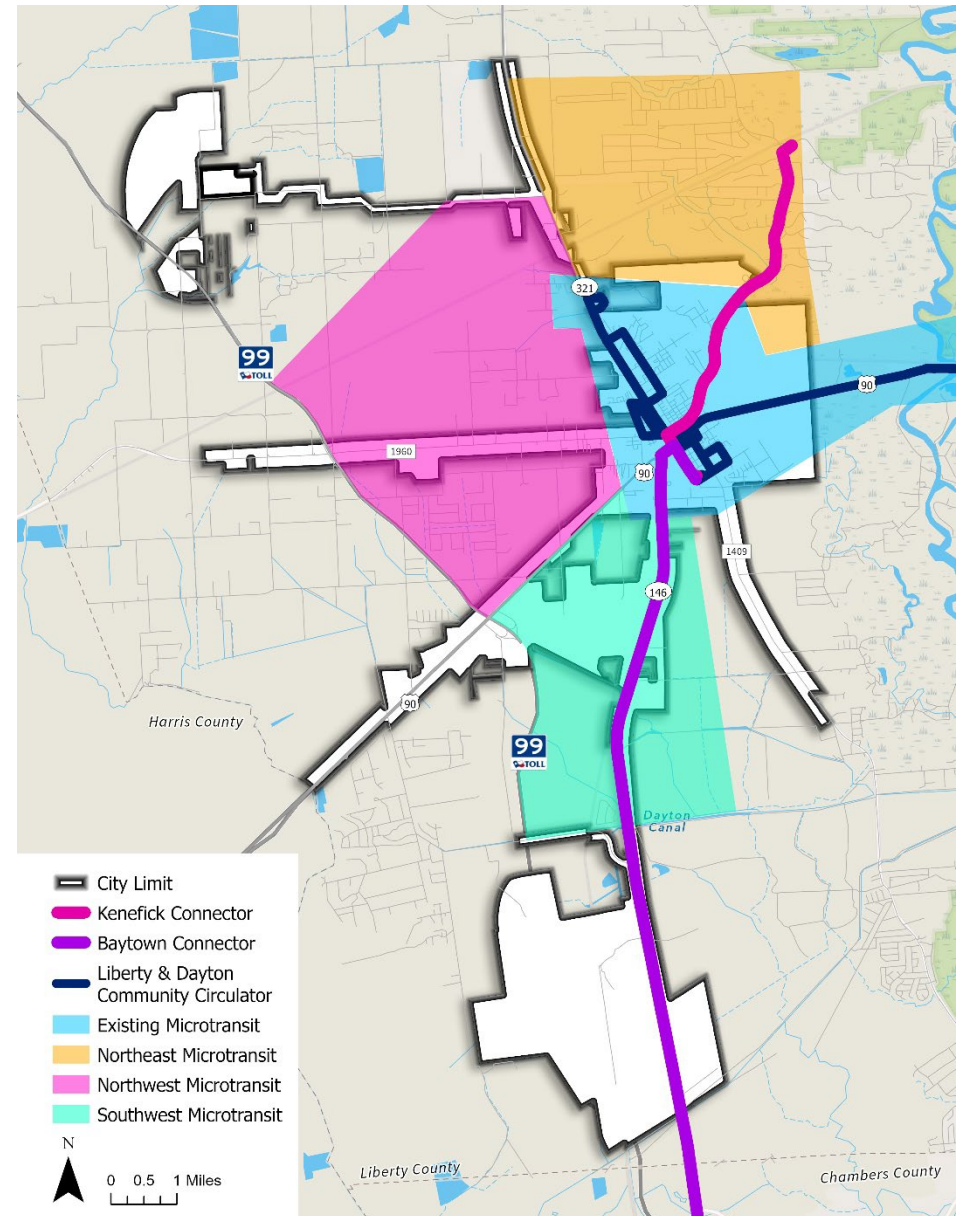
Service

- Implement 60-minute frequency on circulator route during peak hours
- Add Southwest microtransit zone
- Add Northwest microtransit zone
- Implement Kenefick Connector
- Implement Baytown Connector

Capital and Policy

- Introduce mobile payment
- Continue to add bus stop infrastructure at high-ridership stops
- Continue social media campaign and expand marketing channels
- Continue partnerships with City Departments and explore Public Private Partnerships (PPP)
- Offer travel training

Map 2: Mid-Term Recommendations





Long-Term Recommendations (11-20 Years)

Long-term transit improvements focus on expanding regional reach to meet the needs of the growing City. Over the 11- to 20-year timeframe, new regional services will reach downtown Houston, the airport, and the major medical center (Map 3).

These recommendations are designed to reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs) and accommodate future population and employment growth.

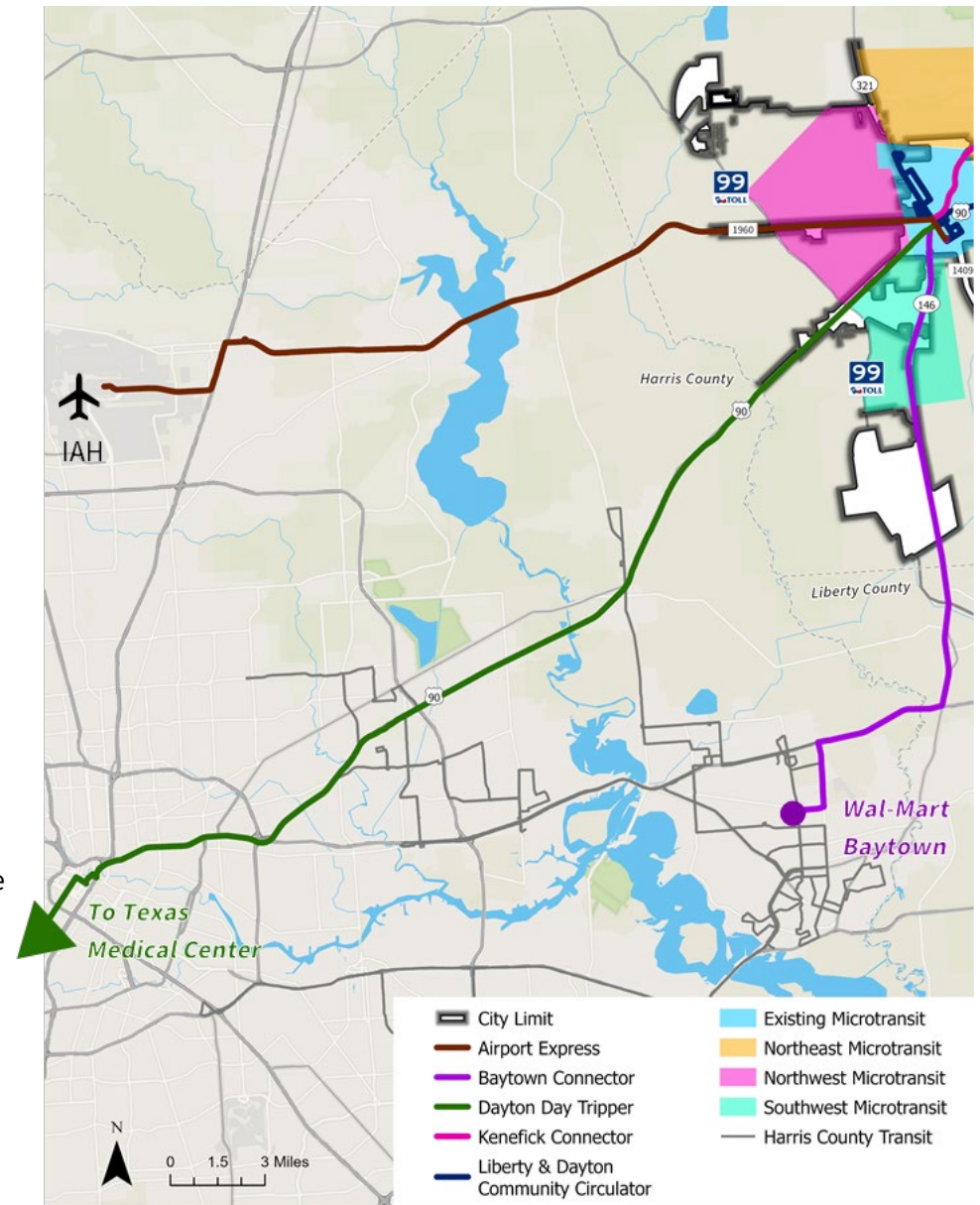
Service

- Implement Dayton Day Tripper
- Add Airport Express
- Add Saturday Service on Existing Services

Capital and Policy

- Establish Park-and-Ride facility at Dayton Community Center
- Continue mobile payment and support mobile app with new features
- Continue to add bus stop infrastructure at high-ridership stops
- Continue social media campaign and expand marketing channels
- Continue partnerships with City Departments and explore Public Private Partnerships (PPP)
- Continue travel training

Map 3: Long-Term Recommendations





Funding Scenarios

Three funding scenarios were developed so the City of Dayton can implement mobility options at an appropriate pace (Table 1). The three scenarios, Status Quo, Enhanced, and Ambitious, were developed to provide practical and implementable strategies to support growth and mobility needs. Each scenario identifies the proposed services, anticipated revenue sources and options such as grants, dedicated local funding, or public-private partnerships.

Table 1: Funding Scenarios

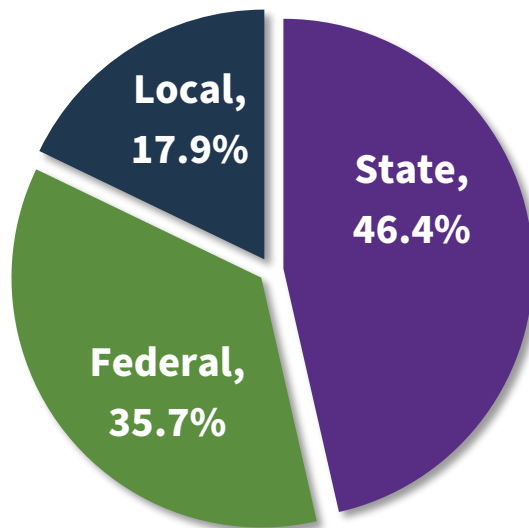
New Service/Improvement	Scenarios		
	Status Quo	Enhanced	Ambitious
Northeast Microtransit		●	●
Southwest Microtransit		●	●
Northwest Microtransit		●	●
Baytown Connector		●	●
Dayton Day Tripper		●	●
Kenefick Connector			●
Airport Express			●
Extend Circulator service span from 7AM to 6PM			●
Saturday service in Microtransit service			●
Increasing Circulator's frequency to 60 minutes			
Add Saturday service on Circulator			



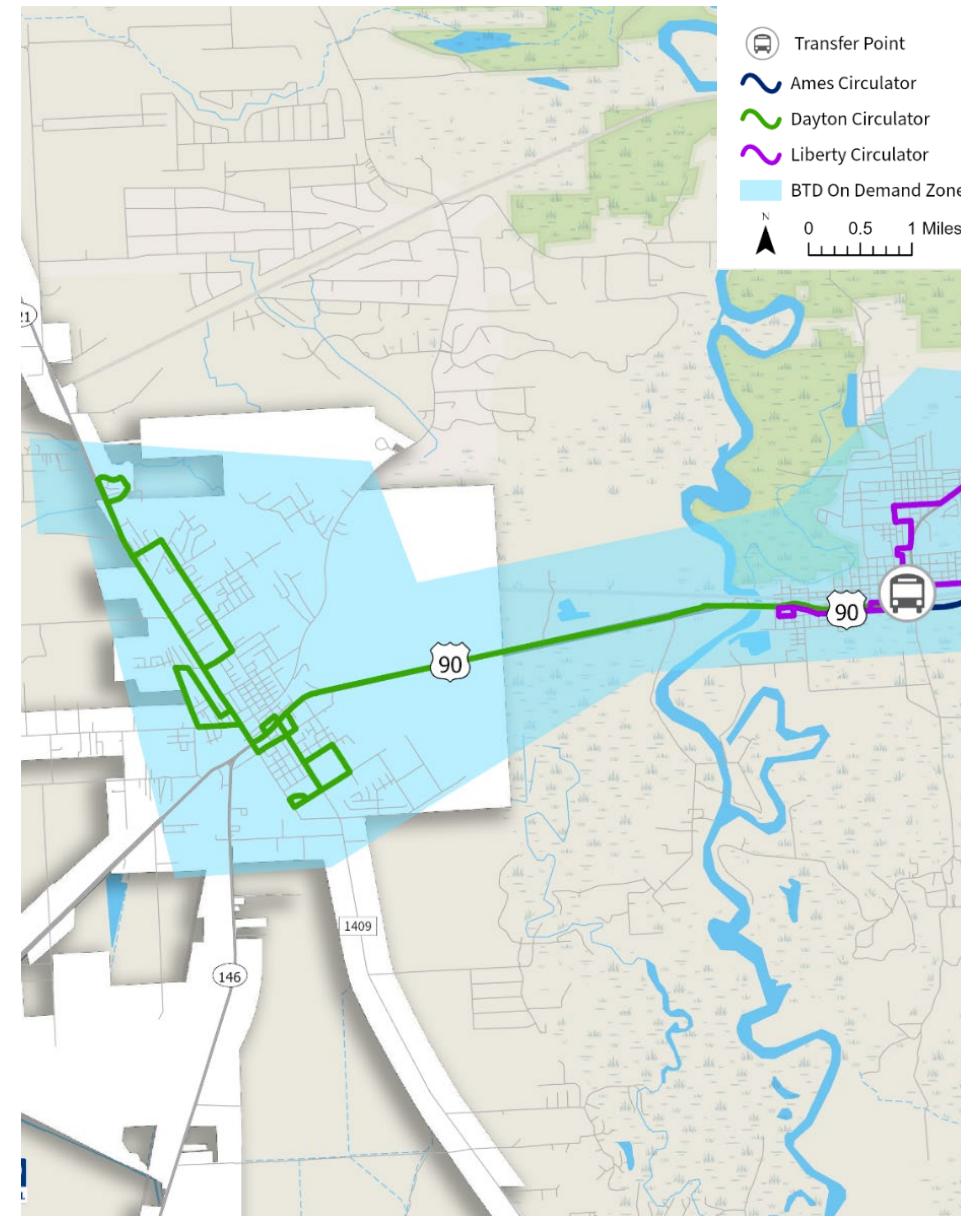
Status Quo Scenario

The Status Quo Scenario maintains the existing fixed-route and microtransit zone serving Dayton, Liberty, and Ames (Map 4).

\$459,359 average annual operating expense



Map 4: Status Quo Scenario



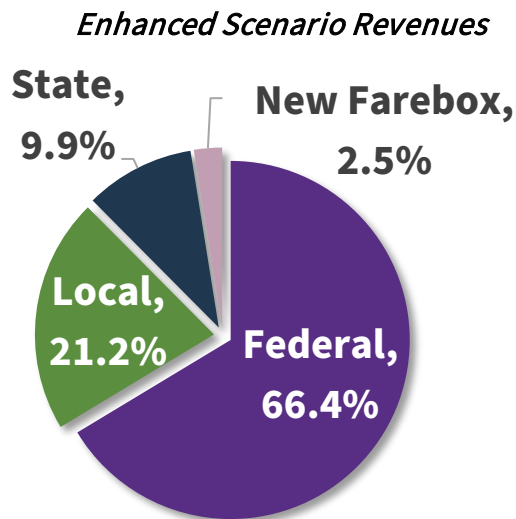


Enhanced Scenario

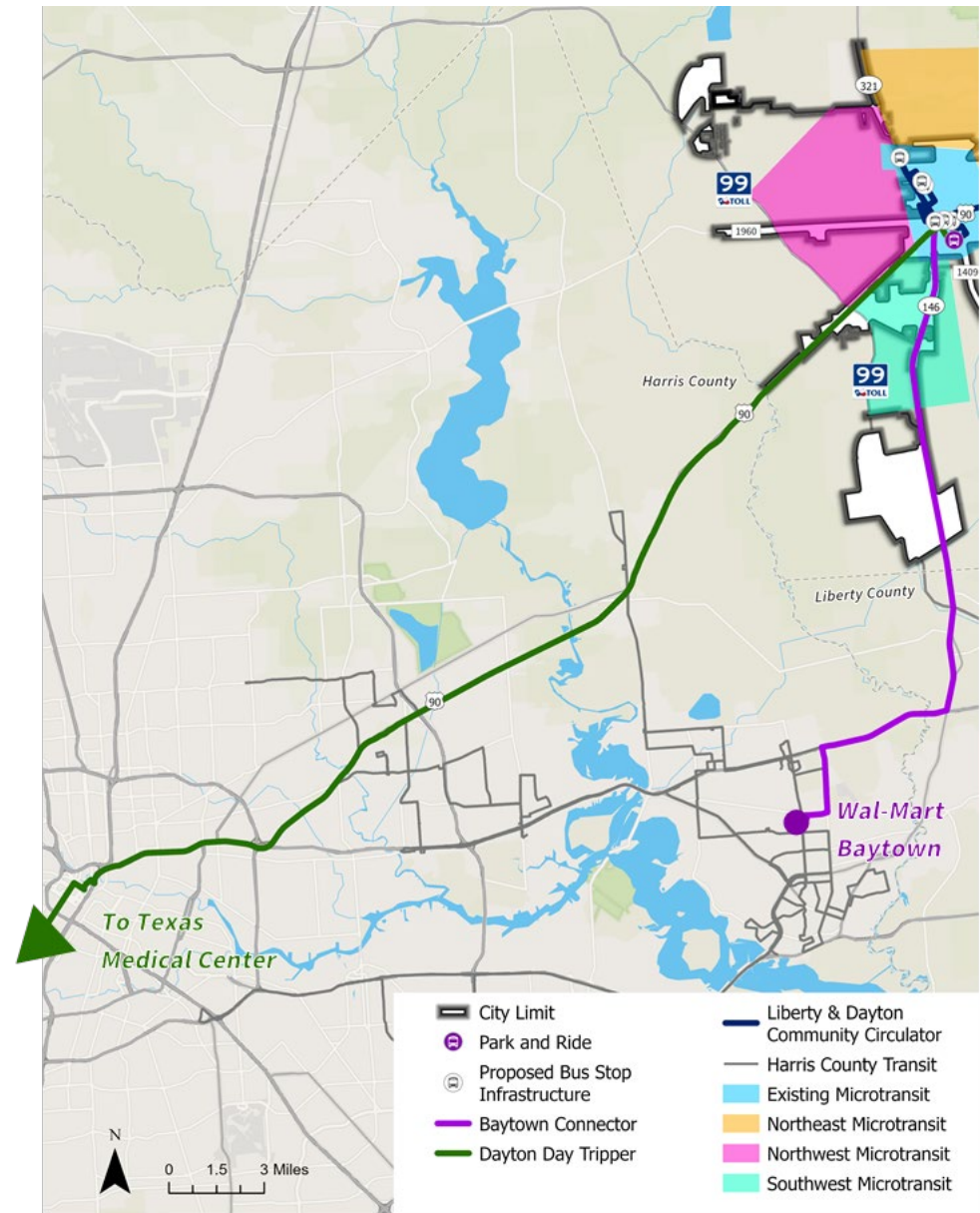
In addition to maintaining the services in the Status Quo scenario, it is recommended that all microtransit zones, Baytown Connector, and the Dayton Day Tripper be implemented (Map 5). Additionally, bus stop infrastructure, some multimodal infrastructure, and a park-and-ride facility are recommended to support the new services.

\$2.2 million average annual operating expense

\$248,968 average annual capital expense



Map 5: Enhanced Scenario



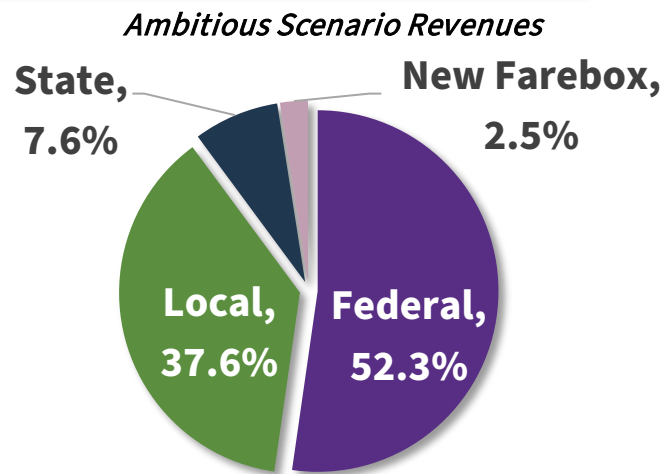


Ambitious Scenario

In addition to the services in the Enhanced scenario, it is recommended that service hours on the existing Circular should be expanded, the Kenefick Connector, Airport Express, and Saturday service on existing microtransit be implemented (Map 6). Additionally, bus stop infrastructure, social media campaign, travel training, multimodal infrastructure, and a park-and-ride facility are recommended to support the new services.

\$2.6 million average annual operating expense

\$504,306 average annual capital expense



Map 6: Ambitious Scenario

