



Transit Plan Executive Summary

WeGo Star

Future Direction Strategy

Prepared for the Regional Transportation Authority of
Middle Tennessee
By Hatch

HATCH
December 2024

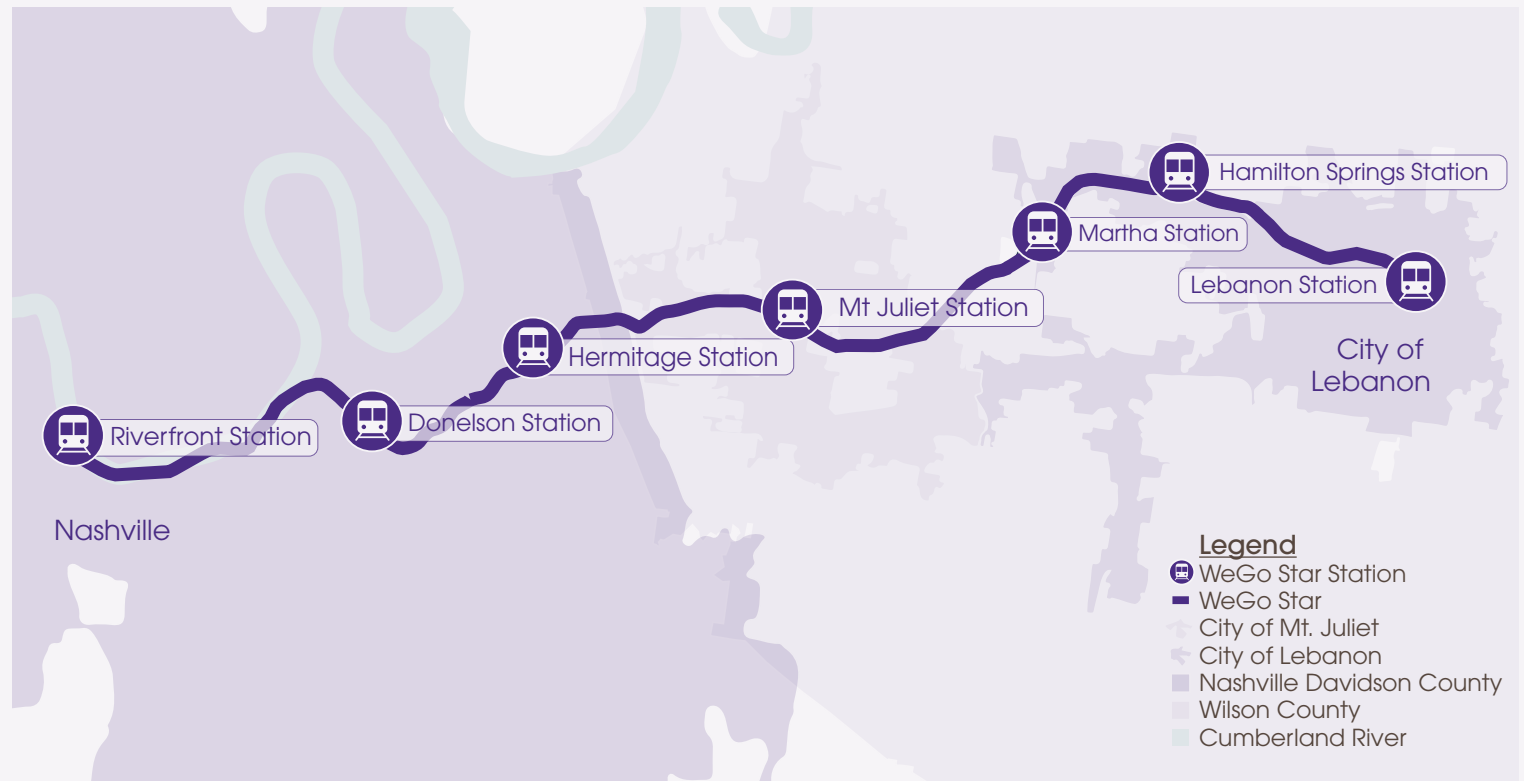
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All Aboard

WEGO STAR OVERVIEW

With the WeGo Star Future Direction Strategy, there is the opportunity to unlock community benefits and economic development for Davidson and Wilson Counties.

The WeGo Star is a commuter rail service operating along a 32-mile route between Nashville and Lebanon, Tennessee. Star services began in 2006 using tracks owned by the Nashville and Eastern Railroad Authority and sharing operating windows with freight trains. The Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) is responsible providing commuter service.



The WeGo Star Transit Plan Preferred Option

The WeGo Star transit plan is the result of a multidisciplinary approach to engage and inform stakeholders about the history of the WeGo Star operation and its relationship to the line's freight service; how it fits within the region's need to mitigate traffic congestion; how it may be better utilized to offer new options for accessing downtown Nashville and Wilson County to enhance regional livability, affordability, and quality of life; and how the pandemic and its long-term changes in employment and commuting patterns may require permanent changes in the utilization, operation, and financial support structure for commuter-focused transportation services. The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) Executive Committee formally approved the WeGo Star transit plan in October 2024.

- » WeGo Star weekday peak period and evening service
- » WeGo Star day and evening Saturday service
- » WeGo Star special events and Titans service on Sundays
- » All trips Lebanon to Nashville and Nashville to Lebanon
- » Optional two mid-day regional bus roundtrips between Lebanon and Riverfront on weekdays (Wilson County WeGo stations and Riverfront Station, fixed route bus currently serves Davidson County stations)
- » Optional On-Demand Microtransit service for Wilson County stations (van-type contracted service for catchment zones operating 1 hour before until 1 hour after WeGo Star scheduled service; or WeGo Link Uber service for Wilson County)



More Frequent Service



Service to More Special Events

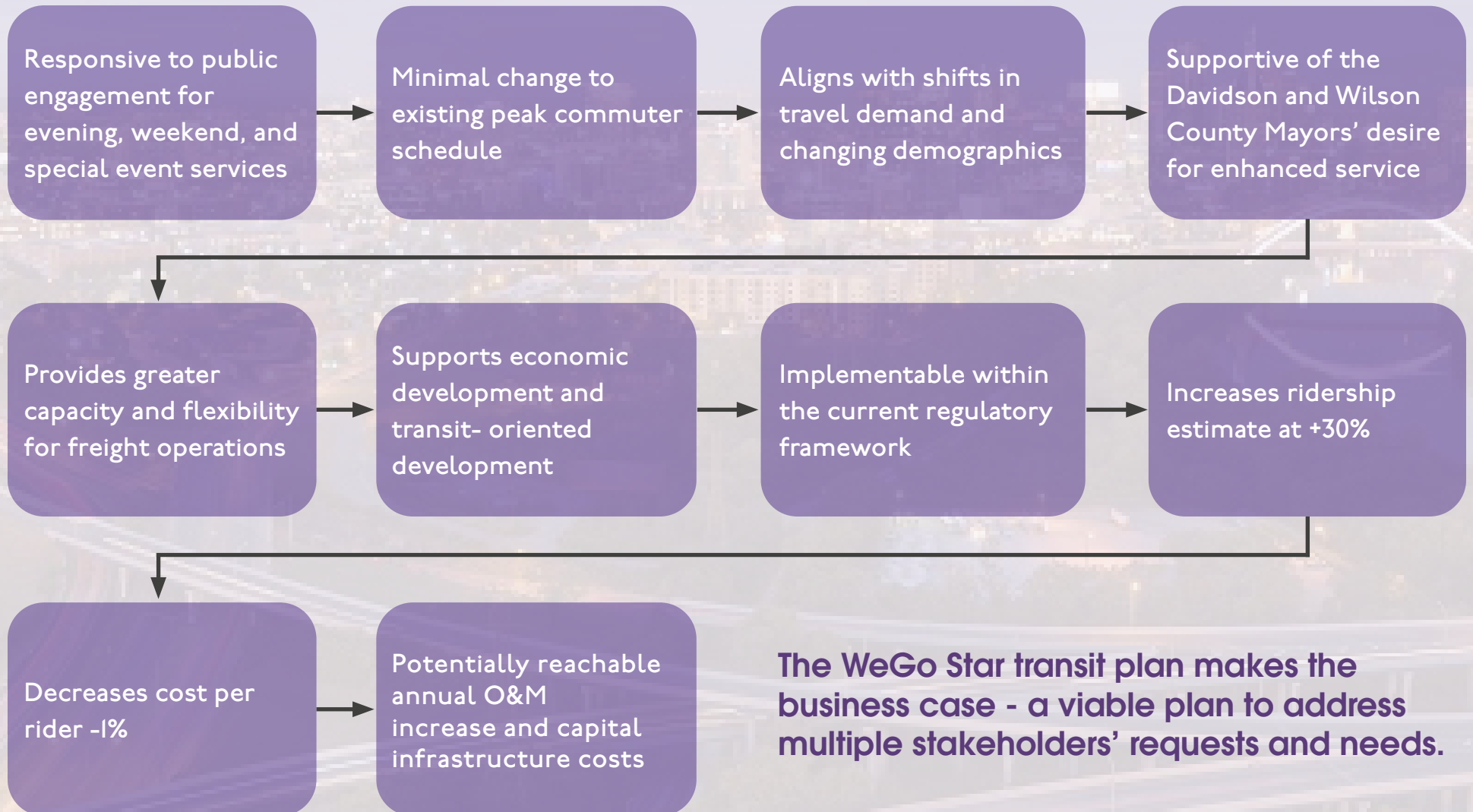


Saturday Service



Service Later in the Evening

Preferred Option Makes the Business Case

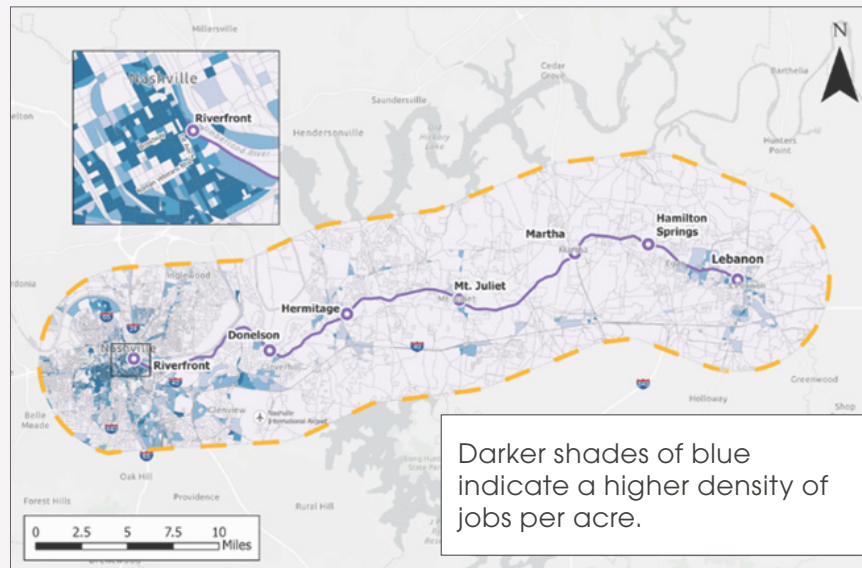


Challenges for an All-Day Service Option

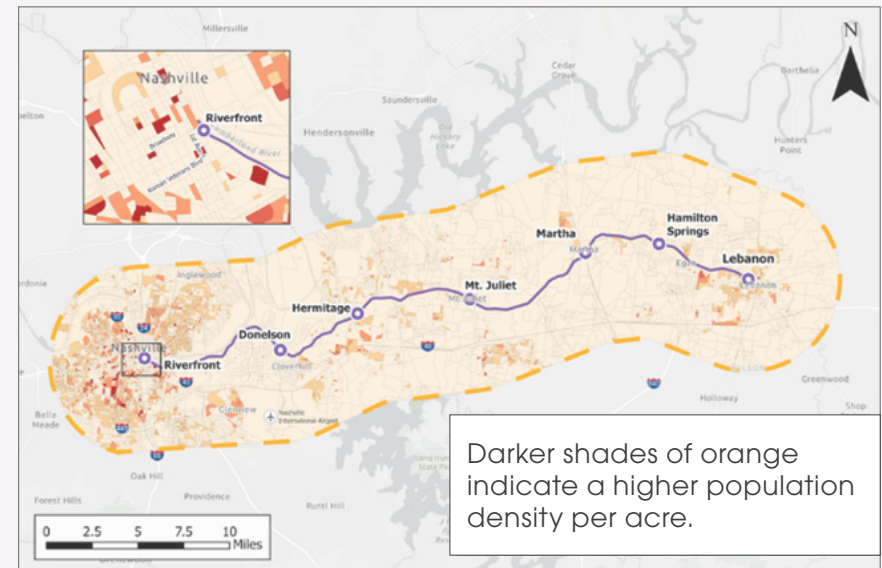
The “Preferred Option” was selected over the all-day service plan or what could be considered the most expansive build out because the all-day service plan is not a viable or sustainable alternative requiring extensive investment for extremely low return in a limited demand transportation corridor. Details are listed below.

- » Capital cost investment of approximately \$65-75 million, largely due to federally mandated Positive Train Control technology implementation
- » Increased operation and maintenance cost of \$4.5 million/year
- » Lack of sustainable funding within the RTA structure
- » Low population and employment density, low transportation demand
- » Currently does not meet the criteria for a high performing transit corridor
- » Federal grant potential for the investment is very low

WeGo Study Employment Density, 2045



Population Density, 2045



Preferred Option Sample Schedule

The WeGo Star transit plan proposed schedule is the result of comprehensive modelling of over a dozen service scenarios, a series of stakeholder workshops, robust public engagement, and input from the RTA and the Nashville and Eastern Railroad Authority (NERA) Boards.

WEEKDAYS

Three trips (morning peak) | Four trips (afternoon peak to late evening)

To Nashville	Lebanon	Hamilton Springs	Martha	Mt. Juliet	Hermitage	Donelson	Riverfront
	5:40 AM	5:47 AM	5:52 AM	6:01 AM	6:09 AM	6:16 AM	6:35 AM
	6:30 AM	6:37 AM	6:42 AM	6:51 AM	6:59 AM	7:06 AM	7:25 AM
	7:20 AM	7:27 AM	7:27 AM	7:32 AM	7:41 AM	7:49 AM	7:56 AM
	3:55 PM	4:02 PM	4:07 PM	4:16 PM	4:23 PM	4:35 PM	4:50 PM
	5:37 PM	5:44 PM	5:49 PM	5:58 PM	6:06 PM	6:13 PM	6:32 PM
From Nashville	7:10 PM	7:17 PM	7:22 PM	7:31 PM	7:38 PM	7:50 PM	8:05 PM
	Riverfront	Donelson	Hermitage	Mt. Juliet	Martha	Hamilton Springs	Lebanon
	6:53 AM	7:04 AM	7:17 AM	7:25 AM	7:34 AM	7:39 AM	7:48 AM
	7:45 AM	7:56 AM	8:09 AM	8:17 AM	8:26 AM	8:31 AM	8:40 AM
	4:18 PM	4:30 PM	4:37 PM	4:45 PM	4:54 PM	4:59 PM	5:13 PM
	5:15 PM	5:27 PM	5:34 PM	5:42 PM	5:51 PM	5:56 PM	6:10 PM
	6:50 PM	7:02 PM	7:09 PM	7:17 PM	7:26 PM	7:31 PM	7:45 PM
	8:25 PM	8:37 PM	8:44 PM	8:52 PM	9:01 PM	9:06 PM	9:20 PM

SATURDAYS

To Nashville	Lebanon	Hamilton Springs	Martha	Mt. Juliet	Hermitage	Donelson	Riverfront
	8:00 AM	8:07 AM	8:12 AM	8:21 AM	8:28 AM	8:40 AM	8:55 AM
	10:35 AM	10:42 AM	10:47 AM	10:56 AM	11:04 AM	11:11 AM	11:30 AM
	3:00 PM	3:07 PM	3:12 PM	3:21 PM	3:29 PM	3:36 PM	3:55 PM
From Nashville	Riverfront	Donelson	Hermitage	Mt. Juliet	Martha	Hamilton Springs	Lebanon
	9:10 AM	9:21 AM	9:34 AM	9:42 AM	9:51 AM	9:56 AM	10:05 AM
	1:45 PM	1:56 PM	2:09 PM	2:17 PM	2:26 PM	2:31 PM	2:40 PM
	5:00 PM	5:11 PM	5:24 PM	5:32 PM	5:41 PM	5:46 PM	5:55 PM
	10:00 PM	10:12 PM	10:19 PM	10:27 PM	10:36 PM	10:41 PM	10:55 PM

Estimated Capital Costs

The WeGo transit plan requires capital investment and infrastructure improvement to achieve the desired schedule. There are several grant programs (described in the summary and extended reports) that may provide opportunity to obtain capital investment funds.

CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

Description	Estimated Cost*
Martha Siding (0.51 miles track and 2 interlockings)	\$2-3 million
New yard track	\$1 million
Additional train set	\$1.2 million
Maintenance of way project advancement	\$5-10 million
Total Estimated Capital Costs	\$9.2-15.2 million

*Estimated costs are conceptual and not based on engineering, subject to final vetting/review.

ADDITIONAL O&M COSTS

Option	Additional Annual O&M Cost*	Ridership Impact	Pros	Cons
WeGo Star	\$4.3 million	Positive	All tribes Lebanon, Best overall schedule, fewest negative impacts	Cost of four trainsets and crews, plus 2 passenger trip losses (~3 and ~9 riders)
Mid-day regional bus	\$0.3 million	Minimal	Provides better all-day connectivity/access	Cost vs. small ridership gain
On-demand Microtransit	\$2.2 million	Minimal	If Uber capacity, good economic option	Cost of van-type service vs. little return in ridership

*Costs are estimates and subject to final vetting/review with RJ Corman (freight operator).

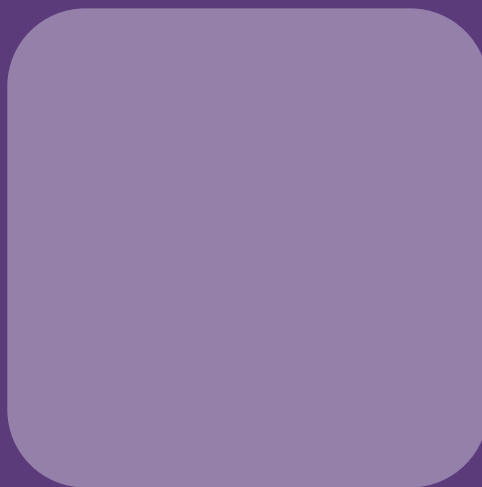
*WeGo Star current annual O&M ~\$5.4 million.

Implementation Roadmap

The implementation roadmap shows the high-level tasks necessary to implement the WeGo Star transit plan. The most challenging aspects are obtaining formal funding agreements for increased annual operations and maintenance funding and funding for capital investment.

WEGO STAR - TRANSIT PLAN ROADMAP TO IMPLEMENTATION

Timeframe to Implement	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Task/Area				
RTA Board Transit Plan Review and Approval				
Sustainable Annual Financial Plan				
Obtain formal annual operations & maintenance funding commitment, Wilson County jurisdiction				
Obtain formal annual operations & maintenance funding commitment, Davidson County jurisdiction				
Capital Funding				
Local match strategy/obtain formal local match commitment (Critical Path, need this to advance)				
Coordination/Collaboration with RJ Corman				
Coordination/Collaboration with NERA				
Tri-Party Agreement				
Design and Construction				
Additional Trainset				
Additional Staffing				
Testing and Commissioning				
Service Changes				



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