Madison Area Bus Rapid Transit Study

Bus rapid transit (BRT) is high-frequency, limited-stop transit system that offers faster service and improved urban mobility. It is part of a larger family of premium or high capacity transit systems including subway, light rail, streetcar, and commuter rail. Bus rapid transit is a cost effective investment in the Madison area's major transit system – Metro Transit – that will build a network of fast, high capacity transit corridors to assist in accommodating expected future transit ridership.

Most BRT systems share a few necessary features that distinguish BRT from regular bus service – direct routing, frequent all-day service, branding, and transit signal priority. Two levels of investment in bus rapid transit are available – Corridor BRT and Fixed-Guideway BRT.

Corridor BRT	Fixed Guideway BRT
• Direct routing, fewer stops	• Direct routing, fewer stops
• Frequent all-day service	• Frequent all-day service
• Branding	• Branding
• Transit Signal Priority	• Transit Signal Priority
• Off-board fare payment	• Off-board fare payment
• Minor traffic improvements	• Minor traffic improvements
• Restricted lanes and mixed traffic	• Fully dedicated bus-only lanes

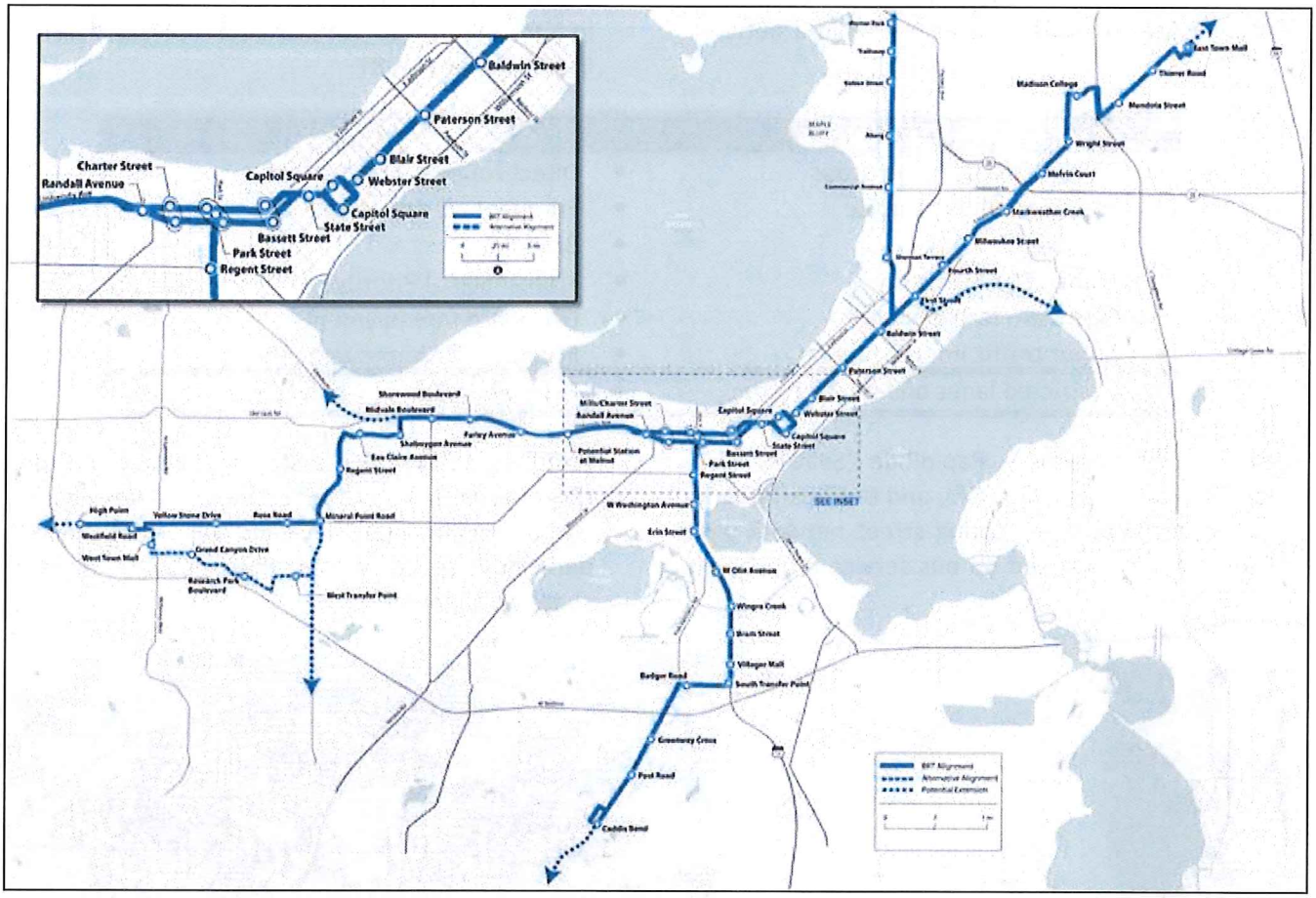
Corridor BRT systems – RapidRide (Seattle, WA), MetroRapid (Los Angeles, CA), and BusPlus (Albany, NY) – operate on the existing street network with minor changes to speed up bus service and keep it on time.

Fixed Guideway BRT systems – Emerald Express (Eugene, OR), the Orange Line (Los Angeles, CA), and the Health Line (Cleveland, OH) – use their own dedicated space within the roadway or on a separate alignment.

BRT systems use high capacity vehicles and distinctive stations with premium shelters, platforms, and maps and schedules. The system is given a simple service design with a unique identity that makes it easy to navigate for new and occasional users, similar to urban rail systems.

The Madison Area Bus Rapid Transit Study identified four corridors that are appropriate for BRT – west, south, east, and north, connected through a central common transit spine through the UW campus, Capitol Square, and Isthmus. It examined about 40 alignment alternatives in these corridors looking at existing transit use, potential for urban development, and the transportation network; as well as station locations; and identified the system below to study for feasibility. Although these alignments were chosen for the study, further planning work and public engagement will determine the exact routing of the BRT system.

System Summary
• 21-22 miles
• 50-52 stations
• 15,500 weekday boardings
• $138-192 million capital cost
• $9.8 M annual operating



The proposed BRT system provides substantial travel time savings over today's bus service, primarily with more direct routing and by eliminating transfers. Maximum typical wait times for these trips are reduced from 30 minutes to 15 minutes. Mid-day estimated in-vehicle travel times are shown below.

Capitol Square to:	BRT	Existing
West Towne	34-36 min.	51 min.
Hatchery Hill	29 min.	40 min.
East Towne	26 min.	30-37 min.
Warner Park	19 min.	30 min.

Implementation of BRT would likely require a new funding source for transit.

Next steps for BRT are:

- Expand community engagement
- Refine alignments, stations, and project scope
- Identify implementation stages
- Detailed design and environmental analysis
- Secure capital and operating funding
- BRT supportive land use/transportation policies

For more information, contact:

Madison Area T • P • B

Transportation Planning Board

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

http://www.madisonareampo.org/BRT.cfm