



DRAFT

TRANSIT SERVICES PLAN

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

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RAPID CITY AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

LSA

LSA ASSOCIATES, INC.

TRANSIT PLAN

Transit plays an important part in the provision of transportation facilities and services in the Rapid City region. Although not suitable for everyone, transit serves many residents of the community for which driving is not an option, or a poor one, due to disability, income limitations, or other factors. As part of the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan's (LRTP) development, both a vision plan and a financially constrained plan will be recommended for the transit system.



EXISTING CONDITIONS



Rapid City provides two types of transit services – a fixed bus route system known as RapidRide and a curb-to-curb service called Dial-a-Ride, both of which are operated by Rapid Transit System.

The fixed route system, shown in Figure 1, consists of four routes that serve the north, south, west, and central parts of the community. These routes operate on a 70 minute frequency (headway) and reverse every 35 minutes with small variations in the actual routes. The four routes are augmented by two connector routes that do not reverse but rather are run consecutively. The fixed routes operate roughly from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm weekdays and converge at the downtown Milo Barber Transportation Center to facilitate transfers. RapidRide serves approximately 600 riders each day or about 160,000 riders annually.

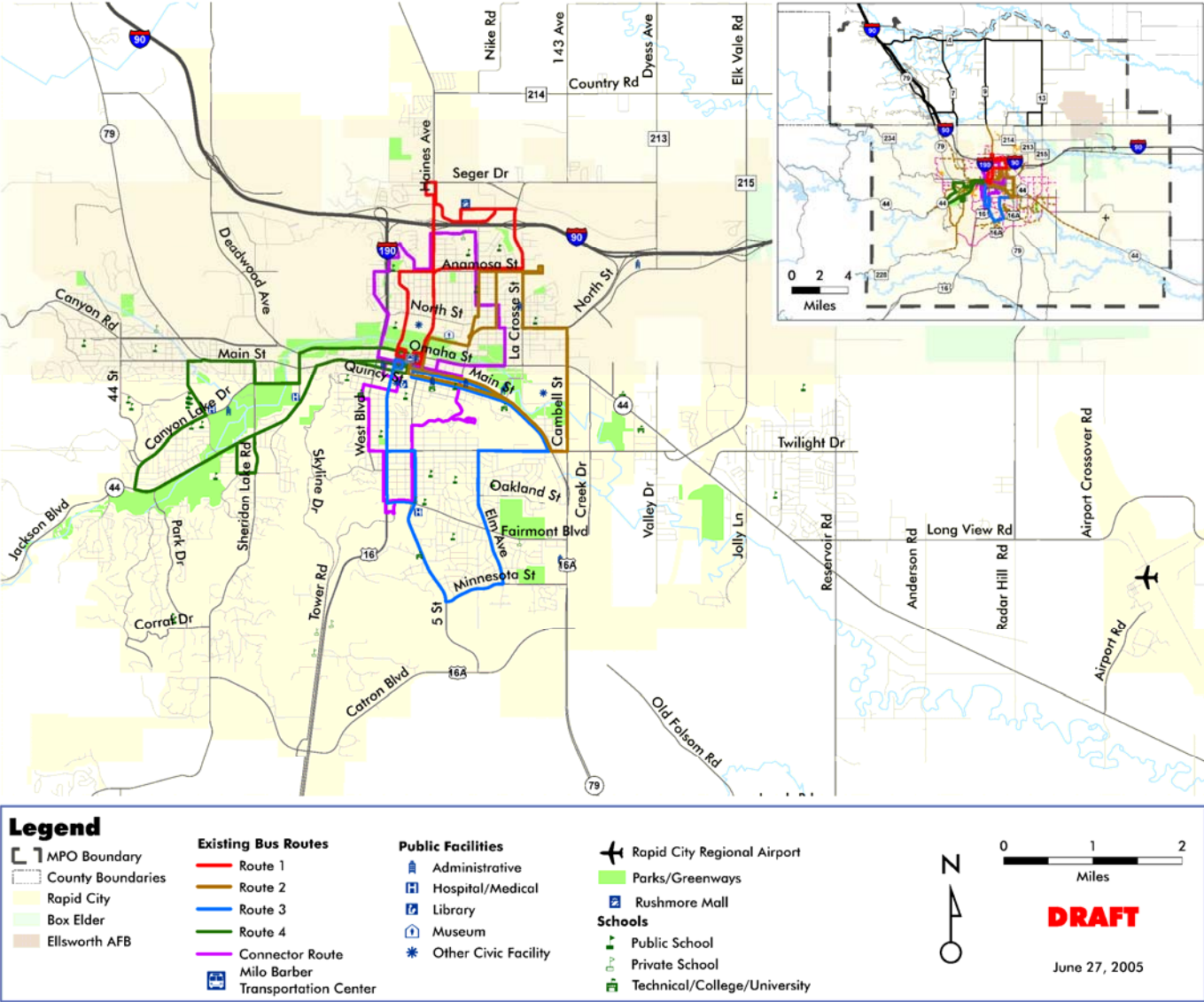
The Dial-a-Ride service provides bus transport for the general public through a paratransit feature and a door-to-door (or curb-to-curb) service for patrons that are certified passengers through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions. ADA certified passengers have disabilities that prevent them from using the regular fixed route service.



The general public can utilize the Dial-a-Ride service if space is available and the patron lives more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the nearest point on an established fixed route. Dial-a-Ride goes anywhere within the incorporated city limits of Rapid City and operates every day but Sunday and holidays. Requests for rides must be made at least one day in advance. Dial-a-Ride carries approximately 71,000 riders annually.

Two other operators, Wheel Chair Services of the Black Hills and Beverly Health Care, also provide paratransit service for patrons with special transportation needs and those accessing health care services.

Figure 1
Existing Fixed Bus Routes



TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

As part of the public involvement process for developing the 2030 LRTP, several comments and suggestions have been received with regard to transit service. Generally, the participating public has indicated a desire for increased geographic coverage, higher bus frequencies, and evening and weekend service. Of course, this would require more funding to operate an expanded system, which will be difficult to secure with today's limited resources.



The public also suggested several areas in the community that should be considered for bus service in the future. Figure 2 identifies these locations, which were subsequently evaluated for ridership current and future ridership potential.

The transit service areas suggested by the public were compared with existing routes and assigned a "high," "medium," or "low" designation based on the household and employment density within the geographic area or within ¼ mile from the potential transit corridor. Also considered in this analysis was the relative household income of the potential area and any nearby activity centers. As can be seen in Figure 3, the vast majority of medium and higher density areas within the MPO area are already served by transit. The results of the service potential analysis of the citizen suggested transit service areas is presented in Figure 4.

RECOMMENDED VISION PLAN

The areas currently covered by the fixed route RapidRide bus service should continue into the foreseeable future based on the analysis of routes, areas, and densities. Additional service is not recommended at this time because the analysis does not indicate sufficient ridership potential



On the other hand, the comments received through the LRTP's public involvement efforts have indicated a desire for more service hours and coverage. In response to these requests, additional funding through several possible sources could be pursued. In particular, the identification of new local funding sources could leverage additional federal dollars for transit, which typically require local matching funds. As identified in the *2004-2008 Rapid City Transit Development Plan*, several potential local funding sources exist.

The *Transit Development Plan* also recommends several changes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the current transit operations. Because buses operate on the roadway system, there is a great deal of flexibility in route locations and other aspects of transit service. Some of the *Transit Development Plan's* recommendations that could be further pursued include:

- Revise route structure to eliminate the A/B configuration
- Revise the service frequency to 30 minutes
- Operate fixed routes in a more direct manner by reducing the number of routes with loops

Figure 2
Fixed Route Transit Service Alternatives

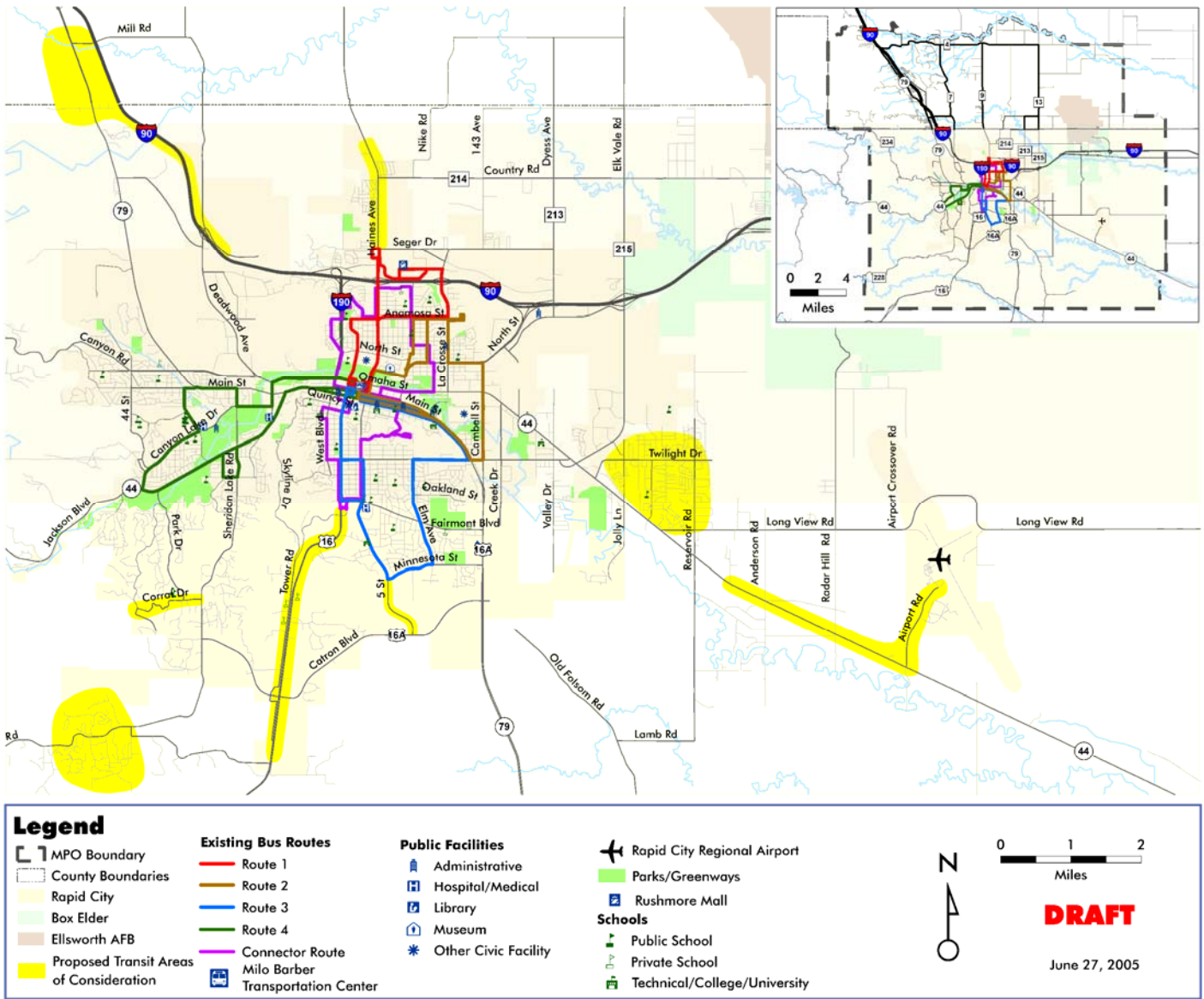


Figure 3
Household and Employment Density

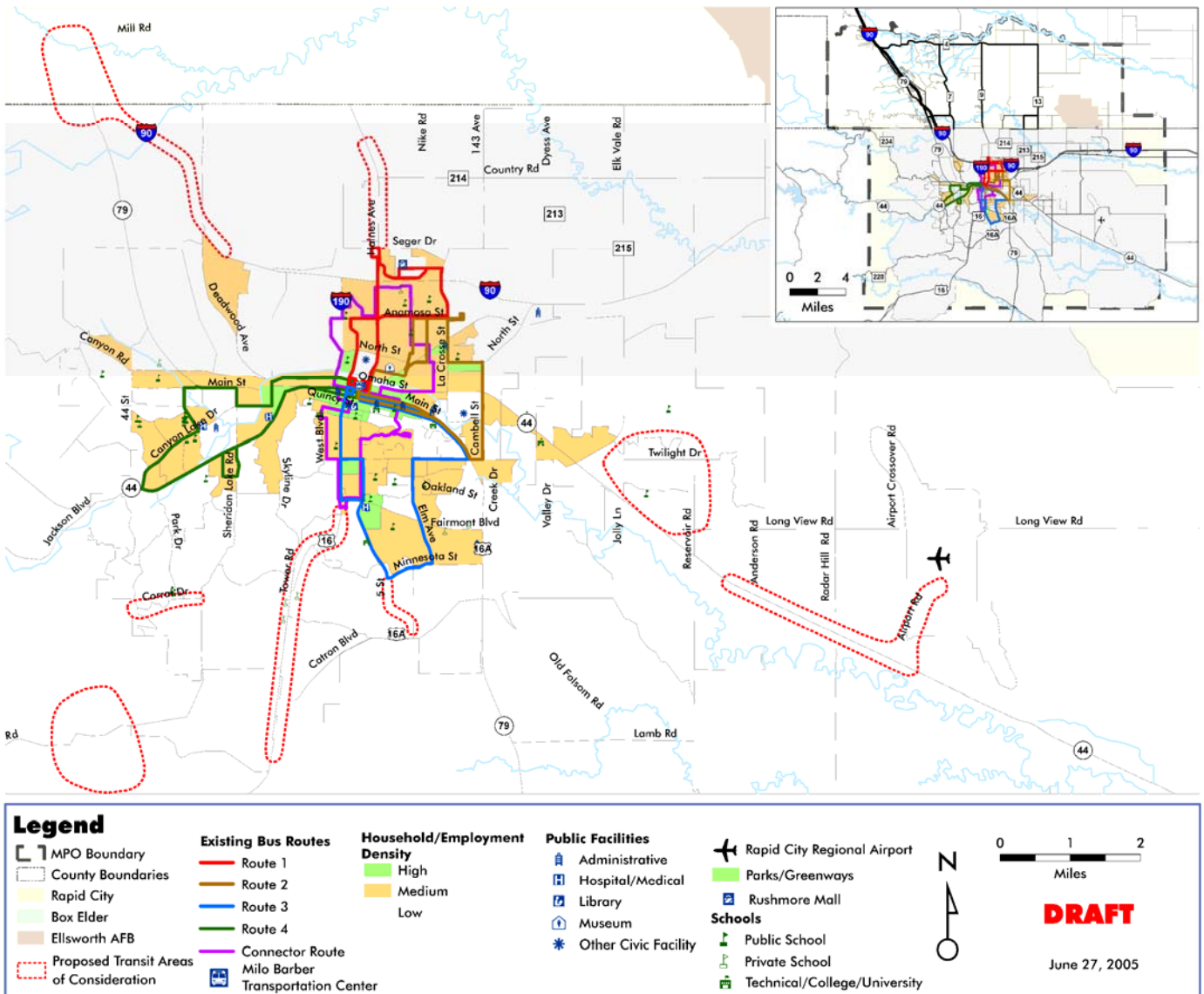


Figure 4
Transit Service Potential Analysis Results

