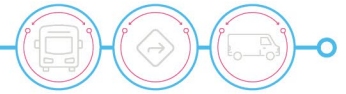




BCRTA Transit Plan Facilities Recommendations

March 2023





Introduction

The Butler County Regional Transit Authority (BCRTA) Transit Plan is BCRTA's first ever transit plan. This plan outlines recommendations to grow and improve BCRTA's system based on the changing demographics and transportation needs within Butler County. This plan makes immediate and near-term recommendations for the BCRTA system.

The purpose of this report is to build off of the Existing Facilities Assessment and document capital recommendations for BCRTA facilities.

Operations & Maintenance Facility

The BCRTA Operations and Maintenance Facility is located at 3045 Moser Court, Hamilton, Ohio on a 9.8-acre parcel. While BCRTA has made the most of facilities on this site, there are some existing challenges that could be addressed with improvements over time.

Existing Facility Challenges

The BCRTA system has grown since the existing operations and maintenance facility was built in 2000. As a result, several elements of the facility do not have the capacity to support existing operations (Figure 1). One example of this is the administration space, which is small for the current number of employees and does not have a board room large enough to host a meeting with all BCRTA employees. The facility also does not have enough storage space, which has led to one of the maintenance spaces being used for storage, and there is not sufficient bus parking currently available on site. Further, the vehicle storage building at the BCRTA facility was constructed with a short-term vision, which as led to challenges with lighting and drainage. In addition to capacity constraints, the facility currently lacks some infrastructure, such as a loading dock, laydown space, and bus fueling, which impact BCRTA operations.

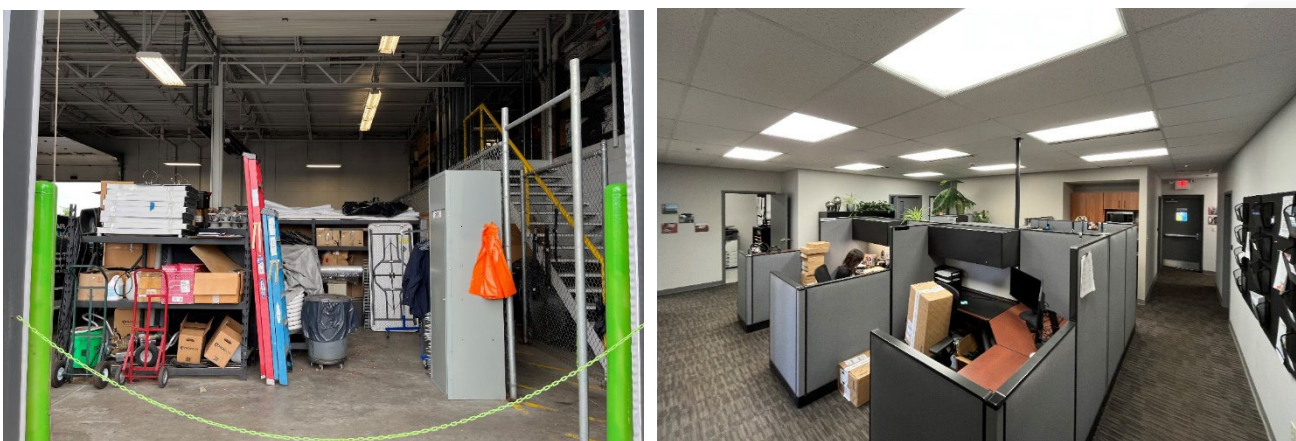
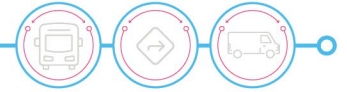


Figure 1: Existing Facility Spaces with Capacity Constraints (Maintenance Space Used as Storage on the Left; Administrative Space on the Right)



Facility Concept Recommendations

The project team explored four potential concepts to address the existing operations and maintenance facility challenges.

These options included:

- Option 1: Construct separate materials storage building
- Option 2: Add 2nd floor to administration building
- Option 3: Construct new maintenance facility and expand the administration area
- Option 4: Expand administration to existing maintenance area and construct separate maintenance and materials storage buildings

Based on the benefits and drawbacks of these options, the project team recommends BCRTA explore Option 3 further. While this option likely more expensive than Option 1 and Option 2, it is better aligned with current expansion work underway at the location and would lead to a more effective and functional use of the site.

The concept developed for Option 3 is shown in Figure 2 and includes a second access point to the facility, additional parking, an expansion of the existing administrative space (shown in orange), eight new maintenance bays (shown in green), new bus storage (shown in blue), a new receiving and parts storage space (shown in purple), and a potential fueling island. While additional design would be needed to move forward with any of these facility improvements, this concept provides a direction that BCRTA could move in with one large project or incrementally to address the challenges with the existing facility over time.

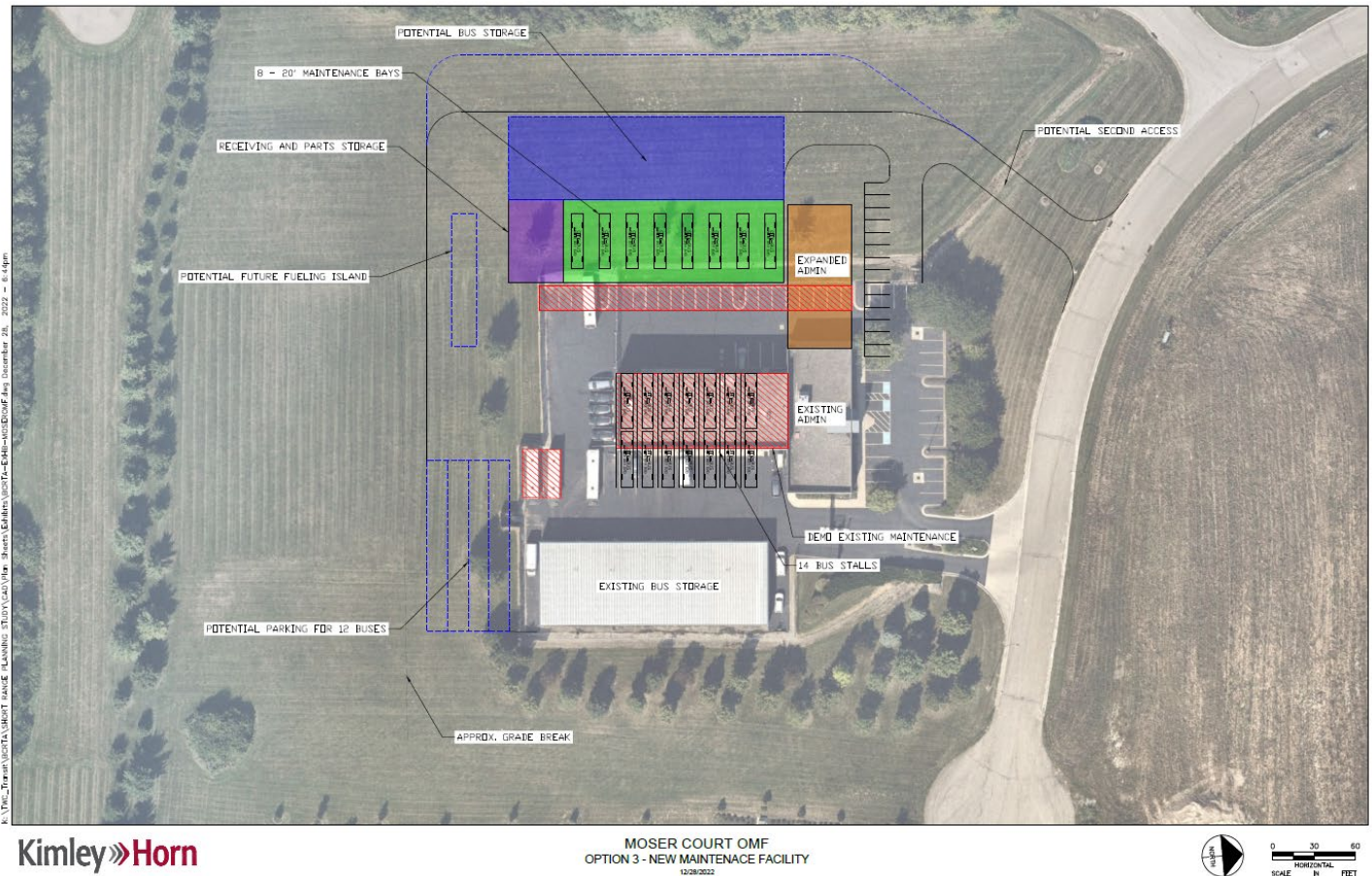
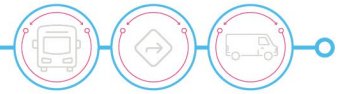


Figure 2: New Maintenance Facility Concept

Passenger Facilities

BCRTA provides passenger facilities throughout the system to give riders a place to wait for the bus with some protection from the weather elements. While there are currently some passenger facilities available throughout the BCRTA system, these facilities could be improved, and additional facilities are desired by riders.

Existing Facility Challenges

One of the existing challenges with BCRTA passenger facilities is that there are very few of them. As a result, a desire for more benches, shelters, and real-time transit information was expressed by riders throughout the public and stakeholder engagement for this project. The existing passenger facilities are not currently placed based on a distribution policy and have varying levels of amenities provided.

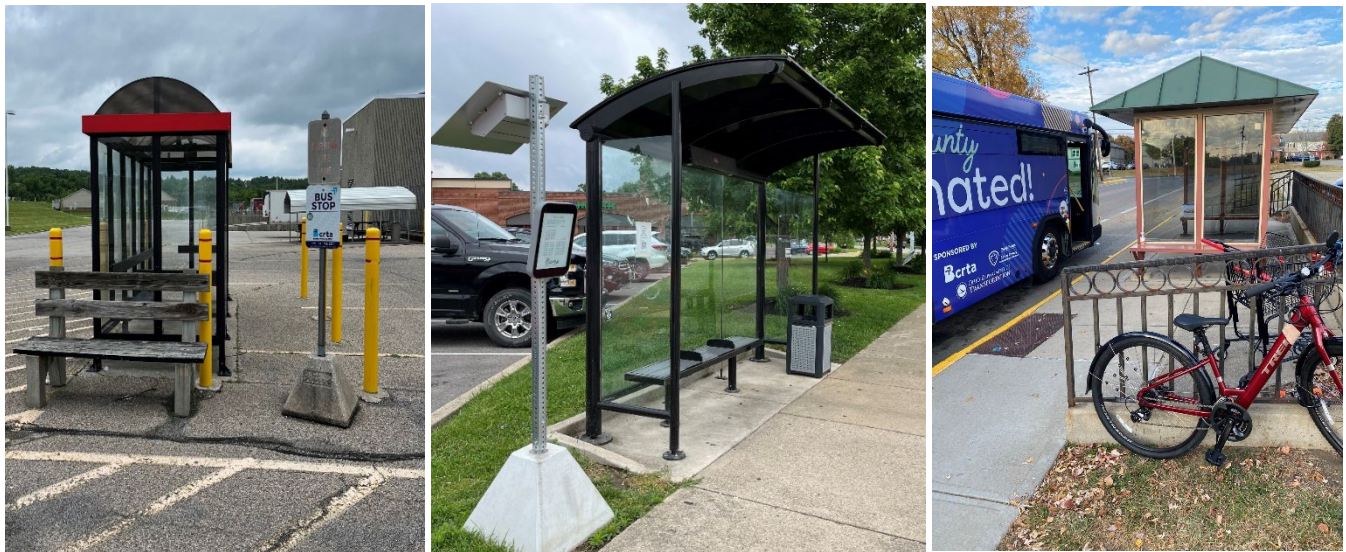
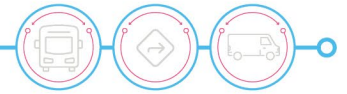


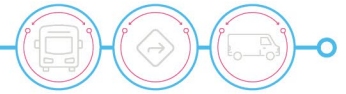
Figure 3: Various Existing BCRTA Passenger Facilities

Market Street Station Challenges

BCRTA's Market Street Station faces some specific challenges due to the location of the facility. Market Street traverses under the second story of a parking structure and has the appearance and feel of a dimly lit tunnel. There is some natural lighting from the south, but the bus stops are in an area abutting several commercial buildings, which block the natural light. There is also a lack of signage at the station, as well as directional signage to provide guidance to transit users. There is little ongoing activity in the area and a lack of public restrooms, which has led to some undesirable behavior, such as public urination.



Figure 4: Existing Conditions at Market Street Station



Passenger Facility Recommendations

The project team developed passenger facility recommendations for BCRTA at a high-level as well as recommendations specific to the Market Street Station.

Passenger Facility Distribution

The Federal Transit Administration's Title VI requirements regulate several aspects of transit agencies that receive federal funding, including the distribution of transit amenities. The regulations state that transit agencies develop a policy regarding the distribution and siting of transit amenities, including seating (benches), shelters, provision of information (signs, maps, schedules, real-time signage), and waste receptacles.

Based on natural breaks in BCRTA ridership by stop as well as the distribution policies of similar sized systems, the following thresholds are recommended for distribution of transit amenities within the BCRTA system:

- Benches at stops with 15 or more boardings per day
- Shelters with waste receptacles at stops with 25 or more boardings per day
- Real-time signage and bicycle parking at stops with 100 or more boardings per day

At the time of this plan, 25 stops met the threshold for benches, 15 stops met the threshold for shelters and waste receptacles, and three stops met the threshold for real-time signage and bicycle parking. Given that this is much more infrastructure than BCRTA currently provides, it may be beneficial to set the thresholds higher and work towards these levels as resources are available.

Market Street Station Recommendations

The project team identified several opportunities for improving the environment at Market Street Station. They included additional signage, lighting and light colored materials, activating the space, adding restrooms, and placemaking at the station.

Signage

One recommendation for improving Market Street Station is to add additional signage. There is not currently any signage at the intersection of Market Street & 3rd Street or Market Street & 2nd Street to make it clear that Market Street Station is located at the middle of the block. Adding bold, bright signage (such as that shown in Figure 5) at each end of the block would both make the transit station more attractive and inviting as well as better identify that the station is there.

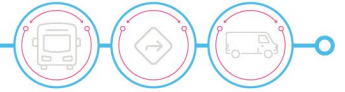


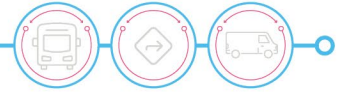
Figure 5: Mall of America Transit Station Signage

Lighting and Light Materials

The addition of lighting and light colored materials (such as those in Figure 6) would also benefit Market Street Station. The station is currently dark and uninviting, and light and light materials would both brighten up the space and make it feel warmer and inviting.



Figure 6: Lighting at Mall of America Transit Station



Space Activation

It is also recommended that BCRTA partner with the City of Hamilton to activate the space surrounding the transit station. There is currently vacant commercial space surrounding the transit station, which provides the opportunity to intentionally fill this space with uses that are transit-supportive and could integrate a public restroom for transit riders to use. Some examples of ways that the space could be activated are a transit customer service center, a social service office, or a food pantry. One creative example of space activation adjacent to transit stations that has been deployed in Atlanta is the addition of soccer facilities at transit stations. This has provided youth and adults with a positive activity to engage in and has also activated space that was previously vacant and uninviting.



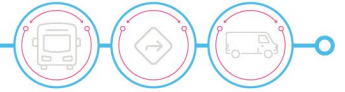
SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.METROSTLOUIS.ORG/MOBILE-FOOD-PANTRY/](https://www.metrostlouis.org/mobile-food-pantry/)

Figure 7: A Mobile Food Pantry at a St. Louis Metro Transit Station



SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.METROSTLOUIS.ORG/MOBILE-FOOD-PANTRY/](https://www.metrostlouis.org/mobile-food-pantry/)

Figure 8: Station Soccer in Atlanta



Placemaking

Placemaking activities would also be beneficial at Market Street Station. Whether that's BCRTA and the City of Hamilton inviting food trucks to locate in the area, having times with music and yard games, or inviting musicians to come play music, placemaking activities would help make Market Street Station more vibrant and bring more people to the area with positive and engaging activities.

Relocation

In addition to the previously discussed recommendations, another option that may be beneficial for the BCRTA transit station in Hamilton is to move it to another location. Locations on 2nd Street or 3rd Street could have better visibility from High Street as well as opportunities to locate in proximity to supporting businesses or organizations. Relocating the transit station in Hamilton would likely require additional investment and would have less cover.

Next Steps

The facilities recommendations from this technical memo will be included in the BCRTA Transit Plan final plan document. These recommendations present opportunities for BCRTA to improve system facilities in the near-term as well as over time as capital funding becomes available.