

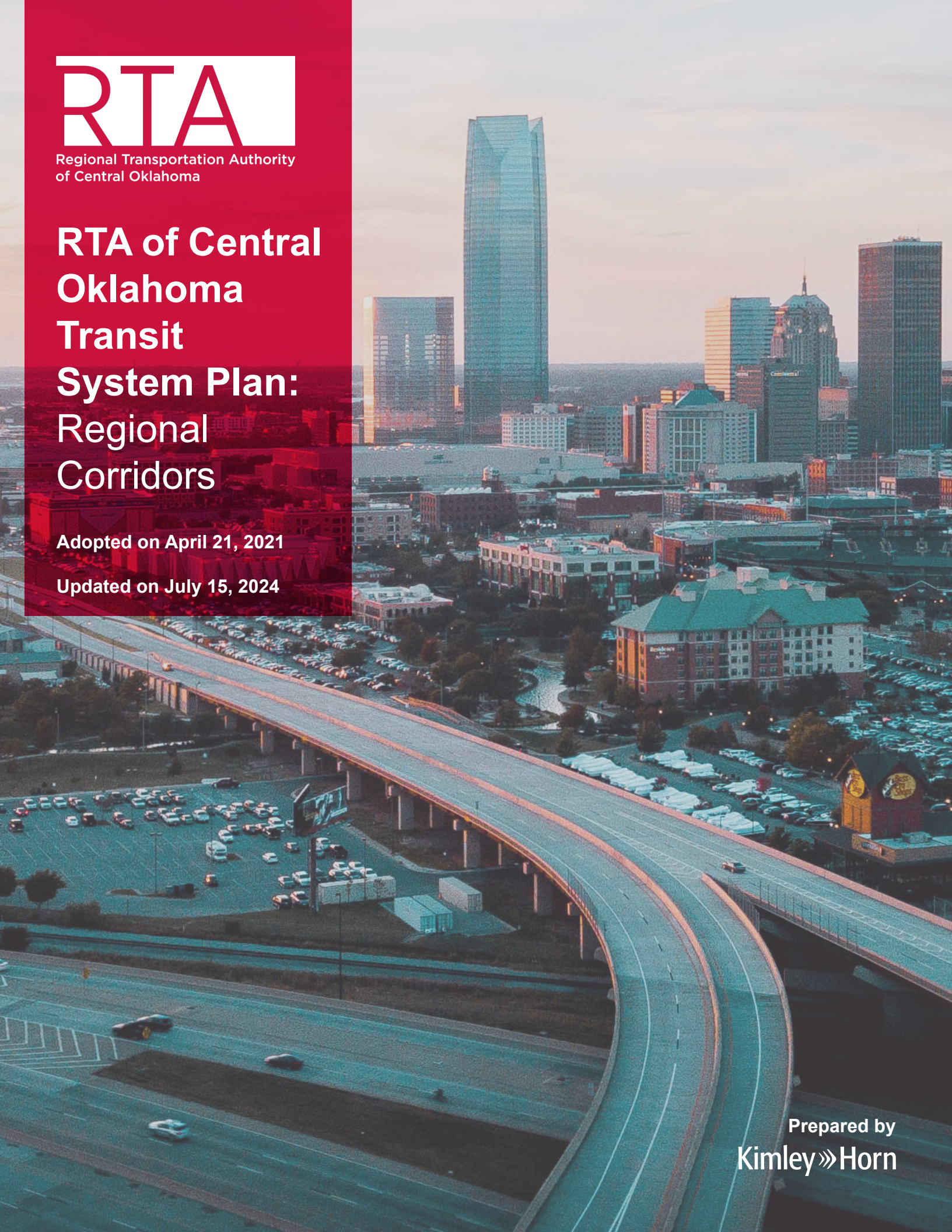


Regional Transportation Authority
of Central Oklahoma

RTA of Central Oklahoma Transit System Plan: Regional Corridors

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RTA of Central Oklahoma Transit System Plan: Regional Corridors

The Central Oklahoma region is growing and will continue to grow rapidly into the future. At the same time, the mobility landscape is evolving with new technology and innovations, and people desiring alternative transportation options to connect them to key activity centers such as employers, educational institutions, and commercial areas. The Regional Transportation Authority of Central Oklahoma (RTA) developed a long-term transit system plan for the Central Oklahoma region. To do this, the RTA is focused on identifying regional corridors to evaluate for high-capacity transit options and meet goals for the transit system plan. The identified regional corridors are outlined in this RTA Transit System Plan: Regional Corridors (Plan).¹ The RTA Board has adopted a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for each Corridor, inclusive of both an alignment and transit mode.²

The regional corridors outlined in the Plan will build upon the existing fixed-route transit system of member cities and transit initiatives by partner agencies. The regional corridors are based on previous studies and plans completed for the region and present key opportunities for high-capacity transit, connecting more people to the key activity centers in Central Oklahoma region. In future phases, these regional corridors will require design and environmental analysis before implementation.

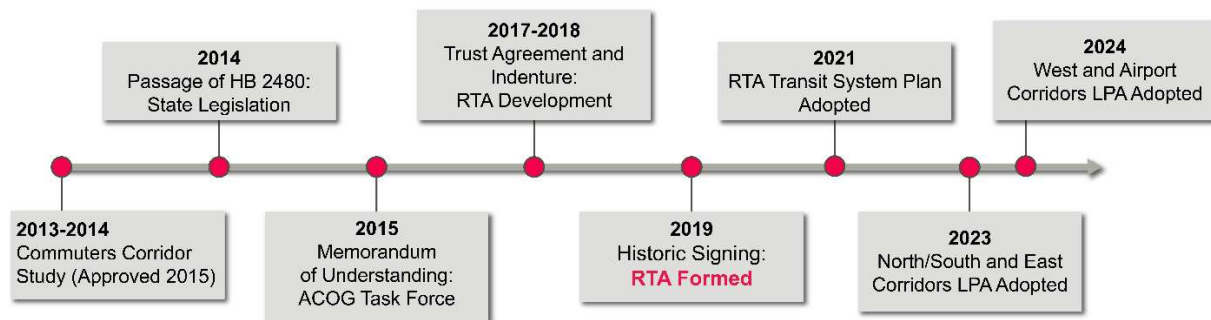
About the RTA

The RTA is a regional independent governmental agency established in 2019, under the laws of the State of Oklahoma. **Figure 1** shows the timeline of RTA's formation. The responsibilities of RTA include developing, funding, constructing/implementing, and operating/maintaining projects within the RTA district boundaries. In 2024, member cities include **Edmond, Norman, and Oklahoma City**.

¹ The adopted Transit System Plan from 2021 can be found here: <https://www.rtaok.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/RTA-Transit-System-Plan-2021-Approved.pdf>

² A transit mode is a type of transit vehicle (such as Light Rail, BRT, or Commuter Rail)

Figure 1. Timeline of RTA



Process

The RTA has initiated the development of a high-capacity transit system for the region. The process RTA is undertaking is shown in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2. Transit System Plan Implementation Process



The first phase is the Transit System Plan, which included the following tasks:

- Assessment of Prior Work**
 Review and assess the key findings of transit studies and plans completed for the region to help inform the goals of the transit system and the identification of regional transit corridors
- Development of Goals**
 Build on the community and stakeholder input from prior work to develop goals that align with the region’s vision for the future transit system
- Identification of Regional Transit Corridors for Evaluation**
 Use the findings and community outreach of prior work to identify regional transit corridors to evaluate in the alternatives analysis phase

Since the development of the Transit System Plan (adopted by the RTA Board of Director’s in 2021), the RTA has completed the Alternatives Analysis phase, the results of which are also summarized in this updated document. Next steps include environmental, engineering, and implementation as funding allows.

Review of Prior Work

An assessment and review of four previous transit studies and plans informed the development of the RTA Transit System Plan. These prior efforts identified transit opportunities for the Central Oklahoma region. The four studies reviewed are described in **Table 1**.

These studies served as the foundation for the Transit System Plan by leveraging prior community feedback to inform the development of the goals for RTA’s regional transit system vision and identification of regional transit corridors for high-capacity transit.

Table 1. Review of Prior Work

Year Published	Study Name	Sponsor	Key Findings/Purpose
2005	Fixed Guideway Study	COTPA ³	Identifies 2030 System Plan Vision including blend of enhanced bus, BRT, streetcar, and commuter rail corridors
2011	Intermodal Transportation Hub Master Plan	ACOG ⁴	Identifies a feasible, centralized intermodal hub site to accommodate the fixed guideway system identified in 2005 Study
2015	Commuter Corridors Study	ACOG	Analyzes corridors from 2005 Study, and recommends transit connections to the North (to Edmond), South (to Norman), and East (to Tinker Air Force Base)
2016	Encompass 2040	ACOG	Metropolitan Transportation Plan identifies how to invest \$10b in transportation system over 25-year horizon within the OCARTS area

Collaborating with Our Partners

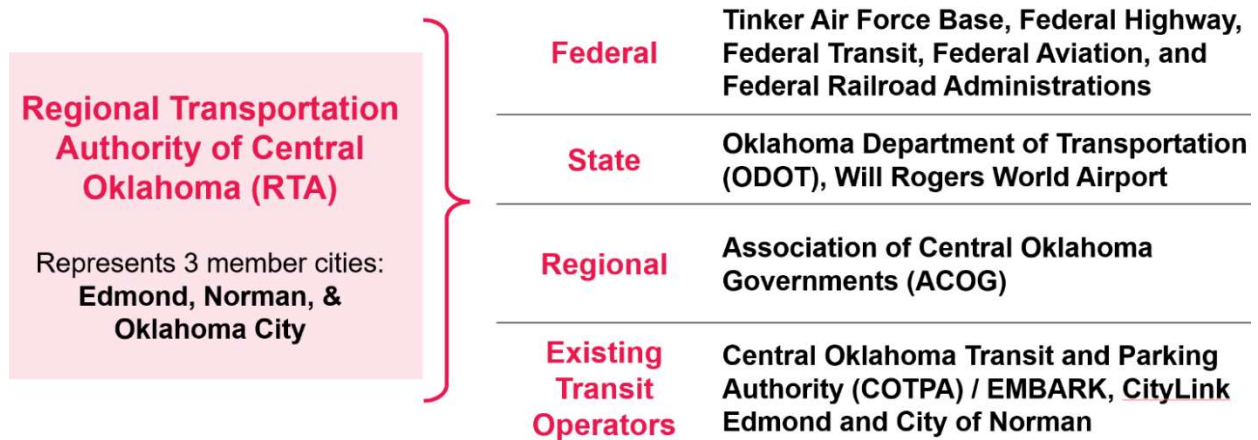
Collaboration is an important element in the development of the region’s transit system. With limited funding and a diverse range of mobility needs for the region, working together is critical to implement a transit system that aligns with the region’s needs, vision, and goals.

The RTA is governed by a seven-member board of directors, with appointed officials from each member city. As shown in **Figure 3**, RTA will continue to closely collaborate with several agencies through the various phases of the process, in addition to working with member cities.

³ Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority (COTPA)

⁴ Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG)

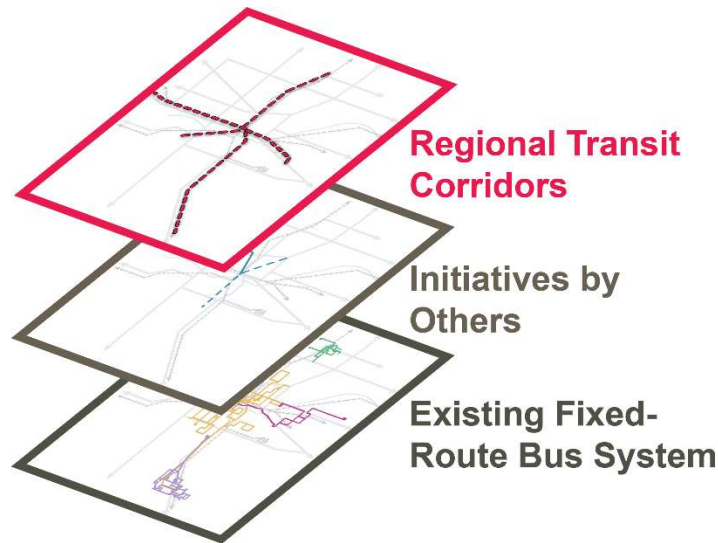
Figure 3. RTA's Partners



Transit Framework

Understanding how the future high-capacity corridors relate to the local transit network is an important component of planning for the overall transportation system. The transit framework consists of three layers as shown in **Figure 4**. The layering of existing fixed-route bus services, initiatives by others, and the regional transit corridors create a comprehensive transit system that provides access and options to help connect people to key activity centers and their everyday destinations. Each layer in the transit framework is described in this section.

Figure 4. Transit Framework



Existing Fixed-Route Bus System

The Central Oklahoma region has a robust fixed-route bus network and streetcar system in place, especially in the Oklahoma City metro area. The existing fixed-route bus system is shown in **Figure 5**. The existing fixed-route bus system consists of local bus services in Edmond, Oklahoma City, Midwest City, and Norman with streetcar services in downtown Oklahoma City.

The existing fixed-route bus system is the foundation of a comprehensive transit system and helps riders connect to more local community destinations. This layer in the transit framework will help connect people from localized destinations to the future high-capacity transit system being proposed for the regional transit corridors.

Initiatives by Other Partners

Key to the future regional transit system plan are planning initiatives by others within Central Oklahoma including COTPA/EMBARK and Metropolitan Area Projects (MAPS) 4. These transit planning initiatives include the following:

- Northeast and South Oklahoma City BRT project – MAPS 4 has identified an adopted LPA that serves Northeast (the Adventure District) and South Oklahoma City.⁵ With the alternatives analysis process complete, the project will enter the preliminary engineering and environmental phase.

These initiatives by others are shown in **Figure 6**.

⁵ https://engagekh.com/maps-4-brt-alternatives-analysis/recommended_alternative

Figure 5. Existing Fixed-Route Bus Transit System

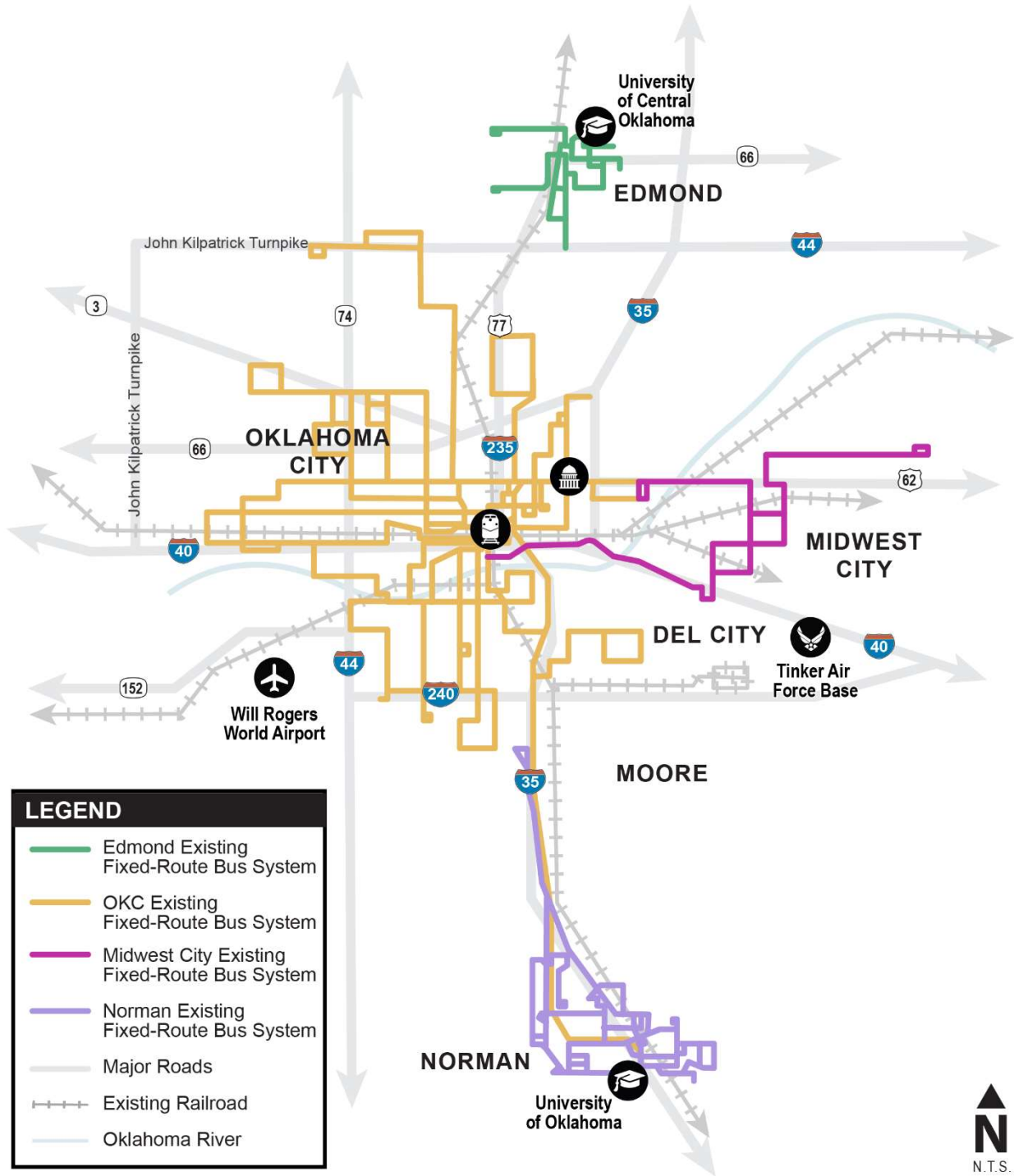
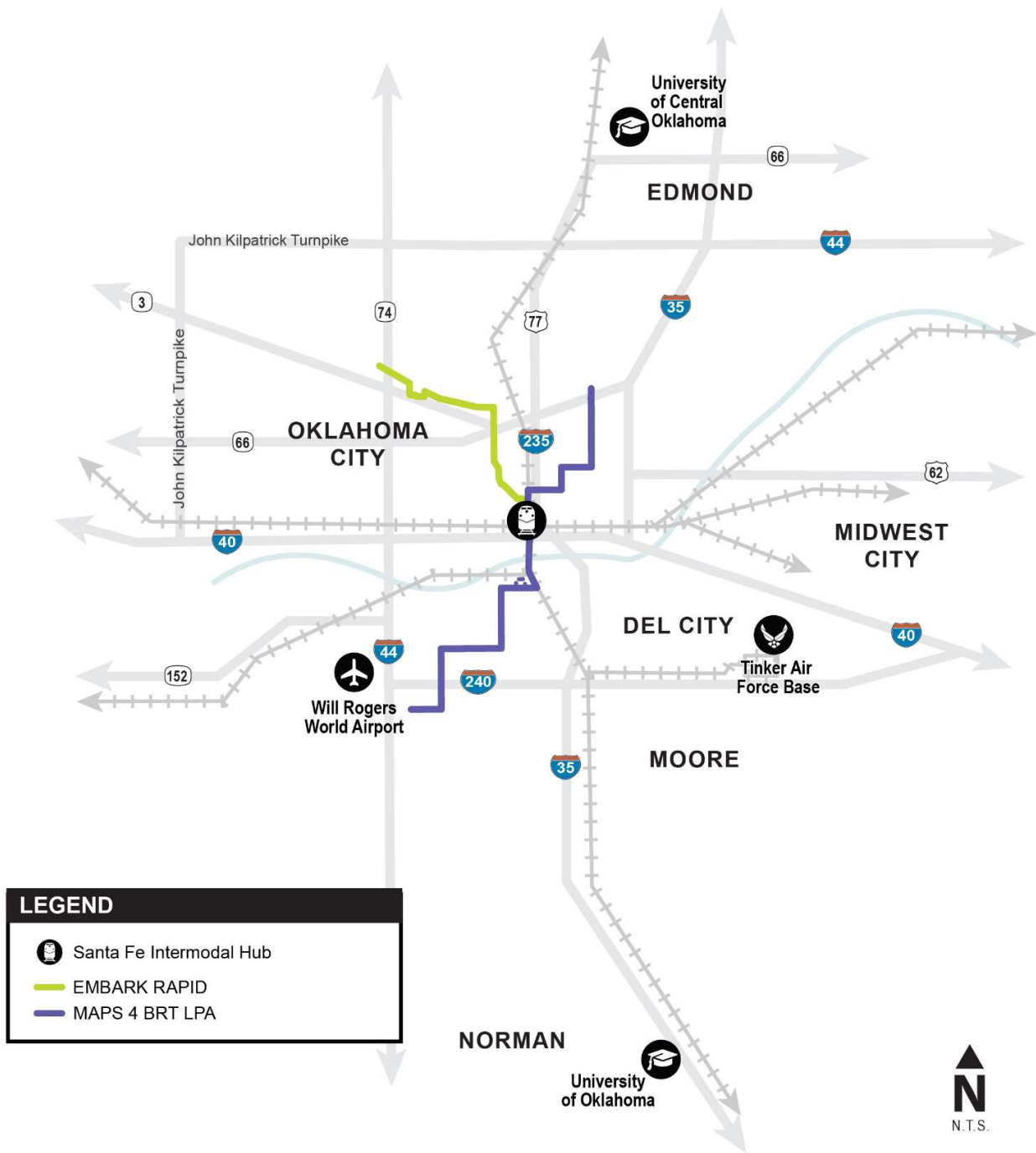


Figure 6. Initiatives by Others



Transit System Vision – Our Goals

Based on community/stakeholder input and prior transit studies, the following goals have been developed to help guide RTA’s development of a high-capacity transit system in the Central Oklahoma region. These goals guide the RTA, the RTA Transit System Plan, the Alternatives Analysis, and future high-capacity project development activities.



Mobility & Connectivity

Increase regional transportation choices by connecting activity centers with high-capacity transit that is fast and reliable.



Equity & Accessibility

Implement a safe and accessible system for all people that creates a community with options.



Economic & Workforce Development

Develop a transit system that inspires economic development to promote growth in the region and national competitiveness.



Sustainability & Viability

Provide a cost-effective sustainable system that invests resources responsibly.

Regional Transit Corridors

RTA wants to build upon the existing fixed-route bus system and the initiatives by others with regional transit corridors which aim to connect people via high-capacity transit to regional activity centers such as job centers, educational institutions, entertainment, and commercial areas. These regional transit corridors can help connect more people to activity centers such as Tinker Air Force Base, Will Rogers World Airport, University of Oklahoma, University of Central Oklahoma, and Downtown Oklahoma City, allowing people to take transit to go to work, go to shop or to restaurants, or to educational institutions.

RTA also recognizes that in the future there may be new member cities who join RTA and additional activities occurring in parts of the Central Oklahoma region that are rapidly growing and will need high-capacity transit options. To account for these conditions, RTA has identified regional transit corridors with this consideration in mind. Using prior work completed in the region and building upon community input received, RTA identified several regional transit corridors. The regional transit corridors include:

- **North/South Corridor:** Connecting Edmond to the North and Norman to the South
- **East Corridor:** Connecting Downtown Oklahoma City to Tinker Air Force Base to the East
- **Airport Corridor:** Connecting Downtown Oklahoma City to the Will Rogers World Airport
- **West Corridor:** Connecting Downtown Oklahoma City to west Oklahoma City

Locally Preferred Alternatives (July 2024 Update)

After completing the Alternatives Analysis process for each of the four corridors, the RTA has adopted the following LPAs. The four corridors build upon the originally identified corridors by specifying an alignment and transit mode and are shown as part of the future regional network in **Figure 7**.

- **North/South Corridor (Commuter Rail):** Connecting Edmond to Norman via Oklahoma City, utilizing the existing BNSF railroad corridor
- **East Corridor (Bus Rapid Transit):** Connecting Downtown Oklahoma City to Tinker Air Force Base to the East via Reno Avenue, Eastern Avenue, and 29th Street.
- **Airport Corridor (Light Rail):** Connecting Downtown Oklahoma City to the Will Rogers World Airport via Reno Avenue and Meridian Avenue.
- **West Corridor (Bus Rapid Transit):** Connecting Downtown Oklahoma City to Western Oklahoma City via 10th Street, MacArthur Boulevard, Reno Avenue, Council Road, and 15th Street.

The next steps for further advancing these corridors would be to complete environmental and preliminary engineering studies and identify funding plans. Final design and construction will commence once these phases of project development have been completed.

The RTA anticipates that LPAs adopted as part of the TSP will be reexamined periodically over time to account for changes in conditions, including growth and development. This Transit System Plan embodies a vision for high-capacity transit to complete a comprehensive transit system providing important connections to the Central Oklahoma region for years to come.

Figure 7. Future Transit System

