

SECTION II: NEEDS AND FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

Prior to investing in a transportation facility, it is common practice in the industry to conduct a needs analysis to establish that the project is in fact a worthwhile investment. This includes an analysis of the transportation provider's needs and an evaluation of the existing facilities. The feasibility of developing new facilities is evaluated along with other options, such as making modifications to existing facilities. This section documents the needs analysis performed for the 3-Trails Transit Center (also referred to as the "3-Trails Transit Station").

A. Evaluation of Existing Service and Facilities

Transit service in south Kansas City consists of several routes that serve the vicinity of the CID. Over the years the individual routes have been coordinated and converge at two surface bus stops on Hillcrest Road at 90th Street. This location has become the focus for transit in the area, and is the primary transfer point in the service area.

The current focus at Hillcrest and 90th Street is inadequate for the purpose because it is isolated from other land uses and facilities for transit passengers are minimal. Passengers must walk over 1,000 feet to the primary commercial destinations across surface parking lots without sidewalks or dedicated pedestrian corridors. There is no effective "front door" destination service from the current super stop. Also, some transferring passengers must cross Hillcrest Road, a four-lane arterial roadway. Bus passenger shelters are provided at both the northbound and southbound bus stops, and turn out lanes are provided buses can pull out of the traffic lanes on Hillcrest Road. Figure 1-1 shows the existing super stop.

The six KCATA routes that currently serve the area represent a level of service that warrant a transit center, especially with the level of transferring that occurs among the routes. In addition, the KCATA plans to increase transit service in the south Kansas City area with the addition of three additional routes. These routes will be implemented as part of KCATA's response to the successful transit tax referendum in November 2003.

**Figure 1-1:
Current Super Stop at 90th and Hillcrest**



Table 1- 1 provides a summary of the current service KCATA operates in the CID vicinity.

**Table 1-1:
Current Transit Service Summary**

Route	Service Type and Area	Service Frequency (minutes)					Routing
		Peak	Midday	Night	Saturday	Sunday	
25 Troost	Fixed route – Troost Avenue from downtown to Bannister Road	30	35	30	30	30	Bannister to Hillcrest from west
171 Hickman Mills/Bannister	Fixed route connector – connects with #71 Prospect at 75th & Prospect.	30	30	30	30	30	Bannister to Hillcrest from west
28 Blue Ridge	Fixed route – SE Kansas City along Blue Ridge Blvd. to downtown.	30	60	N/A	60	N/A	Bannister to Hillcrest to 87 th from east
28XX I-435 South Express	Express – south KC to downtown	5 trips	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Hillcrest to 87 th to I-435
298 South KC Flex	Flex route – Hickman Mills area	on demand	on demand	N/A	N/A	N/A	Typically Bannister to Hillcrest from east
253 Raytown Flex	Flex route – Raytown area	on demand	on demand	N/A	N/A	N/A	Typically 87th to Hillcrest from east

The KCATA plans to improve service in the area by adding routes and enhancing others. Following is a summary of these plans:

- Rapid Rider (Bus Rapid Transit) will be established along the #25 Troost alignment.
- A Bruce R. Watkins Express service will be established using the Watkins Roadway to provide commuter service between south Kansas City and downtown Kansas City. Bannister Mall will be the southern terminus.
- An 85th Street Crosstown route will be established linking the Ward Parkway Mall area with the Bannister Mall area.
- A Longview Community College Connector will be established linking Bannister Mall with the community college to the south east.

These new routes take advantage of CID's strategic location in the south part of the metropolitan area to create a transit hub that truly offers opportunities for travel by transit throughout the metropolitan area.

In addition, the CID has plans to advance the concept of creating an Intra CID circulator shuttle to link the various destinations within the CID, and add to the attractiveness and utility of transit service in the area. Front door destination scheduled service wherever possible is the CID goal. Other major stakeholders adjacent to the CID have expressed interest in circulator shuttle service participation.

The current super stop at Hillcrest and 90th does not have the amenities that are expected in a transit center, according to KCATA and industry standards. In addition to sheltered passenger waiting areas, a transit center that serves the function intended for the 3-Trails Transit Center would ideally include the following elements:

- Physical sheltered connection to some destinations
- Off street staging area for buses
- Park and ride lot for commuters
- Bicycle securement facilities
- Landscaping and other amenities
- Connection to Metro Green 3-Trails Corridor
- Climate controlled interior passenger and driver areas including restrooms and services.

The current facility has none of these additional features, thus must be considered inadequate.

B. Transit Center Improvement Options

KCATA has three options for improving the current inadequate transfer facilities in the CID:

1. Redesign and expand the current facilities at 90th and Hillcrest.
2. Develop a new transit center specifically designed for KCATA's needs in the area.
3. Pursue joint development opportunities with another agency, such as the CID, to create an integrated facility.

It has been determined that the current super stops at Hillcrest and 90th Street are unsuitable for a transit center, primarily due to a lack of adequate space.

Thus, redesign and expansion of the existing facilities is not an attractive option for KCATA to pursue.

The development of a new transit center is certainly an option, and there are sites in the CID that could accommodate a transit center.

An attractive option is to partner with the CID and others in the area to develop a transit center integrated with one or more other uses in the area. Because the CID views the area's transit service as an asset integral to the successful economic revitalization of the District and has included transit service in the CID's master plan, a partnership between the CID and KCATA is a natural alliance. One of the owners of the Bannister Mall property has indicated a willingness to donate approximately 4 acres of the Mall property to the CID to develop as a transit center. In addition, the Owner is willing to donate additional property to insure the transit center is connected to the 3-Trails Corridor. This option is very attractive because it would significantly reduce the cost of developing the center, and would allow the transit center to be connected to existing destinations.

C. Conclusion

The CID is currently a key node in the KCATA transit system, and KCATA plans to significantly increase transit service in the area. The increased service will strengthen the CID's role as a transit node, increase the need for a facility to accommodate the increase in transferring transit users, and promote transit supportive mixed use sustainable development within the CID and the surrounding areas that are now poised for significant development. The current facilities do not adequately meet the current or future needs of KCATA's transportation functions. It is concluded that the KCATA develop a transit center consistent with the agency's Gateways Study and the Smart Moves regional transit plan.