Strategic Scenarios



SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

Three scenarios of CUMTD's possible future are presented in the following section within a strategic context with opportunities to pre-plan decision-making outlined. The scenarios include: 1) Maintain System; 2) Moderate Growth; or 3) Moderate Reduction.

Each scenario is a set of guidelines that can guide the district through the environment created by each scenario, thus adequately preparing the district for whichever scenario occurs.

To ensure that the strategic goals of the mission and vision statements can be achieved, performance metrics that support these goals will be developed with input and buy-in from the staff and the management team.

It is assumed that the Maintain and Moderate Growth scenarios will be based on adequate funding from the current local, state, and federal sources. With consistent funding, CUMTD is in control of how the system will change in either scenario. With the Reduction Scenario, the Agency is not in control of funding levels and will be required to make changes that reflect the lower funding level.

MAINTAIN SYSTEM SCENARIO

The "Maintain System Scenario" is designed to support and continue to maintain the current bus system. It recognizes that the current external trends and factors will continue to influence the transit system and that ridership and services may expand to meet external demands. It is not a flat/no growth scenario.

As the Champaign-Urbana metropolitan area, the University of Illinois and travel patterns change, the MTD will modify its services to meet those external influences. The Maintain Scenario will most likely see some increases in service to meet demand, but there will not be an effort to stimulate demand for service.

The Maintain Scenario recognizes several key elements:

- Basic bus operations will continue to provide high-quality service
- Current routes and schedules will be essentially unchanged, except for capacity
- Current span of service will continue
- Infrastructure will be adequately maintained
- Equipment will be replaced at design life standards
- Technology will be used responsibly and efficiently
- Management structure will reflect a complex 350+ person organization
- Management retirements and transitions will be appropriately addressed
- Workforce retirements at all levels of the organization will be planned and will proceed smoothly
- The system will be financially stable with appropriate fund balances
- MTD will continue to be a conduit for communication for a variety of organizations
- All non-single-occupant automotive modes will be supported

OPERATIONS

Operations

Bus operations has been the key component in the success of the CUMTD. Consistent, daily, high-quality service has the maximum impact on the traveling public and is the basis for the overall positive reputation of the MTD. High-quality service delivery allows management to pursue other opportunities and not devote excessive time to solving operating problems. In the Maintain Scenario, bus operations will continue to be a very high priority to provide safe, reliable, and efficient service. The Safety and Training programs will respond to changes in workforce demographics as well as any new federal requirements.

BUS OPERATIONS HAS BEEN THE KEY COMPONENT IN THE SUCCESS OF THE CUMTD.

Route Network

In the Maintain Scenario, the current route system will be essentially unchanged. Minor adjustments can be made to routes and schedules to resolve operating problems such as continually late buses or overload situations. Increases in ridership caused by change in mode choice or community growth will be addressed by adding service where appropriately funded. Minor route changes due to land-use changes can also be addressed in the Maintain Scenario where there is a compelling need to change.

Newly annexed areas will receive minimal service designed to meet the needs of transit-dependent residents of the new areas. Some low-density new commercial or social service development may not be served in this scenario. There will be no expansion of service to neighboring communities or newly developed areas in the transit district without significant new financial support. The existing revenue levels will not support expansion to new areas and *current services will not be reduced to support expansion* to new areas.

Span of Service

CUMTD offers a comprehensive route network with a span of service that is essentially a 24-hour-per-day, seven-day-per-week service during the school year. An analysis of semester break and summer break span of service will indicate if service needs to be gradually increased to meet demand for services during these previously lightly used time periods. As the demographics of the community change and as travel habits change, the service times will be adjusted accordingly with additional revenue to support the longer span of service.

Communication

The MTD will continue to function as a conduit of communication between the cities of Champaign, Urbana, the U of I administration, U of I students, and Champaign County. Effective communication with other local taxing bodies and other cities will also be expanded as appropriate.

Marketing/Brand Image

CUMTD has developed a strong brand image through the continuous effort of all employees over many years. The delivery of high-quality, cost-effective service is key to maintaining the brand image. The marketing program, along with the service delivery and the strong existing relationships, will continue to provide the consistent brand image that is expected of CUMTD.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Facilities

In the Maintain Scenario, the basic infrastructure of the MTD will be maintained adequately with a long-term perspective on financial decisions. Facility components (HVAC, roof, etc) will be rehabilitated or replaced on a scheduled basis and programmed into the capital investment strategy. All components will function as designed or modified, and the appearance, functionality, and cost effectiveness will be properly funded.

Vehicles

All vehicles will be replaced within one year of their design life. Vehicle replacement (large bus, small bus, and support) will be programmed for an orderly replacement with new buses entering the fleet every year. Support vehicles will be replaced at design life standards.

A contingency fleet will be established and over-age vehicles in good condition will be stored out of service, but available to be returned to service quickly. This will be in addition to the normal available spare bus ratio. This will provide MTD with the flexibility to respond to sudden ridership increases as well as other service opportunities that may occur. The daily spare bus ratio will be 15%, and the contingency fleet will be 10% to 12% of the peak vehicle requirement.

Financial

The transit district will maintain financial stability in the Maintain Scenario. The mix of fees, fares, university support, and local property taxes will be analyzed yearly. Relationships that have been cultivated over the years that led to the stable funding base will be continued. This may require a prioritization of management duties that is different than the current priorities.

An ending balance goal for the operating fund will be established and reviewed each year. The fund balance will be consistent with fund balances of other taxing districts in the area. A capital fund that provides local match for federal funds or for 100% local capital purchases will be maintained and will provide adequate funding to maintain the infrastructure of the organization and timely vehicle replacement.

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Relationships

MTD will continue its infrastructure of complex relationships with the University of Illinois, as well as a variety of government, business, and social service organizations. Cooperation and leadership with other modes and the agencies that have primary responsibility for those modes will continue. Financial support of non-automotive modes will continue at its current levels. There will be board-level involvement with modes that bring potential MTD customers to the area, and enhancement of those services will be encouraged.

Multi-Modal

MTD will continue its cooperation and leadership with other modes and the agencies that have primary responsibility for those modes. Financial support of non-automotive modes will be maintained at current levels.

TECHNOLOGY / ENVIRONMENT

Technology

Technology will be used in a responsible and efficient manner. CUMTD will continue to purchase advanced technology and be an early adopter of technology changes that promise to improve operations. Decisions will be made based on cost-effectiveness. It is recognized that there is some risk associated with purchasing early development technology. Technology that does not deliver the promised improvements will be replaced.



MAINTAIN SYSTEM SCENARIO

WORKFORCE AND ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

Organization Structure

The current management structure for the organization has evolved in a piecemeal fashion as the system has grown. It has relied on the experience and skill of the individuals in the management positions. It will be difficult and likely impossible to find candidates to fill these positions with similar experiences and diverse skill sets to replace those people retiring in each individual management position.

In the Maintain Scenario, the board and senior management will develop an organization structure that reflects the complex realities of providing transit service with a diverse workforce in the second decade of the 21st century. Duties and tasks will be analyzed, and an appropriate number of managers will be hired to reflect the needs of a 350- to 400-person organization.

Workforce Requirements

The impending retirements of large numbers of drivers, mechanics, support personnel, administrators, and managers presents a challenge to maintain adequate staffing levels and to continue to move the organization forward.

Anticipated retirements of drivers and mechanics will be calculated, and new drivers and mechanics will be trained before the retirements occur. *This may mean a slight level of inefficiency in staffing* until the large wave of baby boomer retirements is accommodated in the next five to seven years.

Support personnel, supervisory, and management retirements will be replaced as quickly as possible while conducting national or local searches as is appropriate. The use of part-time retirees or contract labor will be carefully analyzed during the transition period for each position.

MTD will remain competitive in its wage and benefit levels to attract the best employees at all levels of the organization. Changes in external requirements, such as the Affordable Care Act, will be addressed with appropriate funding mechanisms. The external competitive labor pool will be examined periodically to determine appropriate investments in attracting competent employees.

MODEST GROWTH SCENARIO

The "Modest Growth" scenario recognizes elements that can affect the transit system, and outlines direct efforts to enhance and grow the system. These elements are reflective of the efforts of the past decades to spur continuous growth, but reflect the changing transit environment and different opportunities for growth. The transit system will make a conscientious effort to stimulate ridership growth through additional routes, frequencies, and span of service.

The elements of the Modest Growth scenario :

- Operations will continue to provide high-quality service
- Current routes and schedules will be expanded where market development is likely
- Current span of service will increase for services with growth potential
- Infrastructure will be adequately maintained and enhanced
- Equipment will be replaced at design life standards
- Technology will be used responsibly and efficiently; risky new technology will be evaluated for implementation
- Management structure will reflect a complex 400+ person organization that provides high-quality service
- Management retirements and transitions will be appropriately addressed
- Workforce levels will reflect timely retirement replacement and expansion plans and will proceed smoothly
- The system will be financially stable with appropriate fund balances
- MTD will continue to be a conduit for communication
- All non-single-occupant automotive modes will be supported
- A more aggressive approach to inter-city transit modes will be implemented

OPERATIONS

Operations

Modest growth can place significant stress on bus operations and provide great risk if growth is not adequately planned. Advanced planning for growth needs to include proper staffing levels, training, and analysis of the components of the new service that will affect overall bus operations. Changes that require additional personnel will be planned several months in advance of implementation.

Creative uses of taxis or other local for-hire transportation providers will be evaluated and determined if MTD should support them in a contractual manner that enhances services for residents of the area.

Route Network

In the Modest Growth Scenario, the current route system will be responsive to demand changes as in the Maintain Scenario. The system will be gradually expanded with service levels that are appropriate for the new areas served after careful analysis. A higher level of risk will be acceptable, and experimental services will be implemented for two-year test periods and then evaluated for overall performance. It might include the establishment of new transit centers and/or increased service to fringe areas to induce demand.

Newly annexed areas will receive an appropriate level of service designed to meet the needs of all potential customers. New commercial or social service development with reasonable transit potential would be served in this scenario. There may be expansion of service to neighboring communities where cooperative funding agreements can be established that reflect the benefits to all involved.

Span of Service

Span of service improvements as indicated in the Maintain Scenario will be implemented. Additional span of service improvements will be implemented on some routes that have potential for later or earlier service on an experimental basis for a one-year period. Evaluation after the first year of service will determine decisions for permanent inclusion in the overall service mix provided by MTD.

Communication

The MTD will continue to function as a conduit of communication between the cities of Champaign, Urbana, the U of I administration, U of I students, and Champaign County. Effective communication with other local taxing bodies and other cities will also be expanded as appropriate.

Marketing/Brand Image

CUMTD has developed a strong brand image through the continuous effort of all employees over many years. The delivery of high-quality, cost-effective service is key to maintaining the brand image. The marketing program, along with the service delivery and the strong existing relationships, will continue to provide the consistent brand image that is expected of CUMTD.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Facilities

Basic infrastructure of the MTD will be maintained adequately with a long-term perspective as stated in the Maintain Scenario. Facility components (HVAC, roof, etc) will be rehabilitated or replaced on a scheduled basis and programmed into the capital investment strategy. Some additional risks will be taken with experimental or newly developed technologies.

Vehicles

All vehicles will be replaced within one year of their design life. Vehicle replacement (large bus, small bus, and support) will be programmed for an orderly replacement with new buses entering the fleet every year. Support vehicles will be replaced at design life standards.

A contingency fleet will be established and over-age vehicles in good condition will be stored out of service, but available to be returned to service quickly. This will provide MTD with the flexibility to respond to sudden ridership increases as well as other service opportunities that may occur. The contingency fleet will be 15 to 20% of the

MODEST GROWTH SCENARIO

peak vehicle requirements. As buses are retired, they may rotate into the contingency fleet depending on their condition and the condition of the contingency fleet.

New vehicle technologies will be explored and tested in conjunction with manufacturers and other transit systems that have a professional engineering staff. MTD will be the test center for small transit operators for new vehicle developments.

Financial

The transit district will maintain financial stability as in the Maintain Scenario. An operating fund ending balance goal will be established and reviewed each year. The fund balance will be consistent with fund balances of other taxing districts in the area.

A capital fund that provides local match for federal funds or for 100% local capital purchases will be maintained that will provide adequate funding to maintain the infrastructure of the organization and timely vehicle replacement.

A separate budget section within the operating budget for new and experimental services will be established. A three- to five-year extrapolation of this section of the budget will be incorporated into future budget projections. It will assume that the new services will be successful and permanently funded. If the services are not successful, the extrapolated budget will be reduced proportionately.

Relationships

Relationships will be nurtured, evaluated, and strengthened. MTD will continue its relationships with the University of Illinois, as well as a variety of government, business, and social service organizations. Cooperation and leadership with other modes and

the agencies that have primary responsibility for those modes will continue. Financial support of nonautomotive modes will continue at its current levels. There will be board-level involvement with modes that bring potential MTD customers to the area, and enhancement of those services will be encouraged.



Multi-modal

MTD will continue its cooperation and leadership with other modes and the agencies that have primary responsibility for those modes. Financial support of non-automotive modes will be gradually increased.

Board and management staff will be actively involved in improving inter-city bus service in the region and state, as well as have proactive involvement with efforts to improve rail service between Champaign and the Chicago metro area. Efforts for more frequent and reliable 79-mph rail and potential 110-mph rail will be a high priority.

TECHNOLOGY/ENVIRONMENTAL

Technology

Technology will be used in a responsible and efficient manner. CUMTD will continue to purchase advanced technology and will be a beta test system for technology changes that promise to improve operations or infrastructure. Decisions will be made based on cost effectiveness and a variety of factors including environmental and social benefits and other non-tangible benefits. The transit board recognizes that there is inherent risk associated with purchasing untested but promising technology.

WORKFORCE AND ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

Organization Structure

The current management structure for the organization has evolved in a piecemeal fashion as the system has grown. It has relied on the experience and skill of the individuals in the management positions. It will be difficult and likely impossible to find candidates to fill these positions with similar experiences and diverse skill sets to replace those people retiring in each individual management position.

The board and senior management will develop an organization structure that reflects the complex realities of providing transit service in the second decade of the 21st century. Duties and tasks will be analyzed and an appropriate number of managers will be hired to reflect the needs of a 400- to 450-person organization.

Workforce Requirements

The impending retirements of large numbers of drivers, mechanics, support personnel, administrators, and managers presents a challenge to maintain adequate staffing levels and to continue to move the organization forward.

Anticipated retirements of drivers and mechanics will be calculated and new drivers and mechanics will be trained before the retirements occur. This may mean a slight level of inefficiency in staffing until the large wave of baby boomer retirements is accommodated in the next five to seven years.

Support personnel, supervisory, and management retirements will be replaced as quickly as possible while conducting national or local searches as appropriate. The use of part-time retirees or contract labor will be carefully analyzed during the transition period for each position.

MTD will remain competitive in its wage and benefit levels to attract the best employees at all levels of the organization. Changes in external requirements, such as the Affordable Care Act, will be addressed with appropriate funding mechanisms. The external competitive labor pool will be examined periodically to determine appropriate investments in attracting competent employees.

Expansion of services can be directly operated with MTD employees or contracted to other transportation providers who will provide high-quality services with employees that are compensated at wage levels similar, but not identical, to MTD wage levels. For services that will be expanded with MTD personnel, adequate time will be incorporated into the service implementation plan to have the system fully staffed before the service commences.

MODEST REDUCTION SCENARIO

The "Reduction Scenario" identifies the current external trends and factors that will increase demand for service from the transit system while recognizing external pressures to reduce expenses or services. While decisions required by the Maintain Scenario and Modest Growth Scenario are primarily controlled by the Transit Board, *the Reduction Scenario will primarily be driven by external factors that the MTD will not be able to control.* These factors will primarily be reduced federal and state funding, or a strong resistance to increasing local funding. However, the MTD can make decisions that will minimize negative impacts on the customer base and the local communities while preserving the integrity of overall system.

The Mission Statement and the values of the organization will not change when faced with a funding reduction. Safe, reliable, and high-quality service will continue. Efforts to restore or replace funding levels will become a high priority of the transit board and staff.

The Reduction Scenario acknowledges several key elements:

- Operations will continue to provide safe, reliable, high-quality service
- Current routes and schedules will be prioritized
- Current span of service will continue where appropriate
- Infrastructure will be adequately maintained
- Equipment will be replaced at longer intervals than design life
- Technology will be used responsibly and efficiently
- Management structure will reflect a complex 350-person organization that provides high-quality service
- Management retirements and transitions will be appropriately addressed
- Workforce retirement replacements at all levels of the organization will be planned
- Reductions in staffing levels will be accomplished through attrition where possible
- The system will be financially stable with appropriate fund balances
- MTD will continue to be a conduit for communication
- All non-single-occupant automotive modes will be supported at reduced levels
- Involvement with other modes will be reduced

OPERATIONS

Operations

When transit systems are in financial crisis, there is a tendency to reduce the quality of the operating program. Bus operations is the key component to the success of the transit system. Consistent, daily, high-quality service has the maximum impact on the traveling public and is the basis for the overall positive reputation of the MTD. In the Reduction Scenario, bus operations will continue to be a priority.

The MTD will insure that safe, reliable, and efficient service will continue and that needed financial reductions will come from other parts of the operating and capital budget. Reduced services will mean fewer drivers and mechanics, and supervision will be reduced if the number of drivers and mechanics, service area, and span of service are significantly reduced.

Route Network

In the Reduction Scenario, the current route system will be modified to reflect the available funding levels for operations. *Routes and services will be prioritized by productivity.* The social benefit component of each service will also be analyzed by the social value of the trips typically taken on the route. For example, dialysis trips will have a higher value than a short trip between a dorm and class.

Additional local funding may be sought to maintain new services as well as any existing services that may not meet productivity standards. Support can come from a variety of sources and may not be exclusively local property tax supported.



Span of Service

The span of service will be evaluated in a similar manner to the routes and service methodology. Highly valuable trips occurring at the ends of the existing span of service may be retained over less valuable services despite a lower productivity.

Communication

The MTD will continue to function as a conduit of communication between the cities of Champaign, Urbana, the U of I administration, U of I students, and Champaign County. A prioritization of effort may be necessary to determine if strategic changes are needed to continue the strong and effective relationships with the local funders.

Marketing/Brand Image

The brand image in the Reduction Scenario will remain strong and consistent. Highquality, safe, reliable service will be emphasized. The MTD presence in the community will continue, but will be slightly reduced. Market research activities will continue to determine if the decisions made in the reduction scenario adopted by the Board are appropriate for the magnitude of the problem.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Facilities

In the Reduction Scenario, the basic infrastructure of the MTD will be maintained adequately with a long-term perspective. Facility components (HVAC, roof, etc) will be rehabilitated or replaced on a scheduled basis and programmed into the capital investment strategy. All components will function as designed or modified, and the appearance, functionality, and cost effectiveness will be properly funded. Reducing infrastructure investments can have devastating long-term financial consequences. A modest extension of one or two years on replacement schedules will be carefully analyzed to provide modest financial relief to the capital budget while preserving the integrity of the asset being analyzed. Replace at failure will not be an acceptable strategy.

Vehicles

Vehicle life can be extended beyond design requirements for a selected group of highquality vehicles. Buses will not be retired solely based on age. Not all vehicles within a specific procurement will be retained. Only those vehicles that have a longer life remaining in them will be retained. Strategic investments in maintenance, including rehabilitation instead of replacement, may be necessary.

Vehicles that do not have the structural or mechanical ability to be extended beyond normal design life will be replaced as in the Maintain Scenario. The contingency fleet will be maintained at 10 to 15% of peak requirements. If the Reduction Scenario becomes a long-term problem, the contingency fleet can be used as a parts source for expensive vehicle components. If it is a short-term problem and service is restored, the buses can be brought back into service quickly.

Financial Stability

The transit district will maintain financial stability. The operating fund ending balance goal will be reviewed each year. The purpose of a strong fund balance policy is to have adequate funds to provide a one-year cushion to determine if the funding threat is long-term or short-term. A temporary reduction in the fund balance will be carefully analyzed. The fund balance will be consistent with fund balances of other taxing districts in the area. Adjustments to the fund balance will be made after all potential increases from other sources of revenue have been exhausted.

A capital fund that provides local match for federal funds or 100% local capital purchases will be maintained that will provide adequate funding to maintain the infrastructure of the organization and timely, although reduced, vehicle replacement. With the extension of vehicle life and minor adjustments to other capital purchases, contributions to this fund may be reduced. However, adequate funding for the replacement of some vehicles is always necessary. Purchases of new vehicles may be scheduled every two or three years instead of every year.

Compensation levels will be carefully analyzed in 1% increments to determine if wages and benefits should be temporarily or permanently curtailed. Savings from service/ support reductions will be quantified and evaluated yearly until a new equilibrium level of expenses and revenues is achieved.

Relationships

MTD will continue its infrastructure of complex relationships with the University of Illinois, as well as a variety of government, business, and social service organizations. Cooperation and leadership with other modes and the agencies that have primary responsibility for those modes will continue. Financial support of non-automotive modes will continue at its current levels. There will be board-level involvement with modes that bring potential MTD customers to the area and enhancement of those services will be encouraged.

Board members and senior staff will be actively involved in developing new relationships with federal or state officials that control the level of state and federal funding that has caused the Reduction Scenario to be adopted.

Multi-Modal

MTD will continue its cooperation and leadership with other modes and the agencies that have primary responsibility for those modes. Financial support of non-automotive modes will be reduced, but not eliminated.

The board-level involvement with modes that bring potential MTD customers to the area will continue. Enhancement of those services will be encouraged with funding from other sources.

TECHNOLOGY / ENVIRONMENT

Technology

Technology investments will be curtailed in the Reduction Scenario. Only proven, reliable technology will be purchased to replace existing technology that does not function well. Minimal risk will be exercised in technology improvements or experiments. Technology life may be extended and replacements will occur at longer intervals than recommended by the vendors.

WORKFORCE AND ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

Organization Structure

The current management structure for the organization has evolved in a piecemeal fashion as the system has grown. It has relied on the experience and skill of the individuals in the management positions. It will be difficult and likely impossible to find candidates to fill these positions with similar experiences and diverse skill sets to replace those people retiring in each individual management position.

The board and senior management will develop an organization structure that reflects the complex realities of providing transit service in the second decade of the 21st century. Duties and tasks will be analyzed and an appropriate number of managers will be developed and/or hired to reflect the needs of a 300+-person organization. Organizational structural change will be implemented as soon as possible in order that it can be evaluated in a subsequent year when the Reduction Scenario becomes a primary concern. The current organization structure may not be appropriate to provide the necessary leadership and support in a Reduction Scenario.

Workforce Requirements

Adequate staffing levels as described in the Maintain Scenario will be implemented as planned. Training, supervision, and staffing levels will be continued to provide safe and reliable service.

MTD will remain competitive in its wage and benefit levels to attract the best employees at all levels of the organization. Careful examination of wages and benefits will determine the best cost-effectiveness ratios for each position. Compensation and benefit levels will be carefully scrutinized for an appropriate level of future increases.

SUMMARY

The three scenarios presented reflect some of the proactive decision-making that is needed. By making calculated decisions now, instead of being forced to respond in a reactive, inconsistent manner later, CUMTD will demonstrate to the public and local of-ficials that it is balancing the investment of public funds with the demands for services. Taking steps to outline these possible scenarios and the subsequent decisions that need to accompany each is a proactive way to ensure the preservation of the integrity of the transit system and its strength, solvency, and growth for future generations.

In the fall of 2013 the consulting team held three study sessions with the CUMTD Board and staff. These scenarios were presented in depth along with an examination of CUMTD's mission, vision and goals. After these critical discussions and input, the CUMTD Board came to the consensus to move forward with the moderate growth scenario development. The strategic plan is a tool that will provide guidance as system moves into the future. Although CUMTD's future path may fluctuate from the moderate growth scenario due to external circumstances, this plan provides a road map so that the board and staff can have a proactive direction in place.

CUMTD has been successful as it has grown and is positioned for future growth with a highly motivated staff. By making strategic decisions, CUMTD will be successful as it becomes a larger organization that builds on its past and prepares for its future.