



1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The 2019-2020 Iowa City Area Transit Study, or ICATS, is the result of one year of public outreach, technical analysis, and service planning conducted by CAMBUS, Coralville Transit, Iowa City Transit (the study agencies), and consultant staff. The final product of the ICATS is a fiscally constrained Preferred Alternative that makes detailed route-level recommendations for improving public transit in the Iowa City area.

ICATS Goals

Goals for the ICATS were developed based on public input collected through surveys and in-person outreach, as well as from study agency goals. The primary goals of the ICATS are to increase transit ridership, better collaborate across agencies, improve communication to riders, and take a regional approach to transit planning.

Methodology

The ICATS included in-depth analysis of existing conditions at the study agencies and in the Iowa City area. This analysis included a comprehensive review of local planning work, a review of agency key performance indicators, an analysis of the local market and the distribution of likely transit demand, and a route-by-route examination of ridership, on-time performance, running time, alignment, and capacity. Comprehensive ridership and on-time performance data was collected for all three agencies. This analysis is included in Chapters 3 through Chapter 6.

The ICATS also includes analysis of best practices for transit infrastructure and transit fare policy, which are in Chapter 10 and Appendix D of this report, respectively.

Public Outreach

Three major phases of outreach were conducted as a part of the ICATS: an early fall onboard survey, a late fall series of in-person outreach events and survey, and a winter series of in-person outreach events and survey. The early fall onboard survey collected information on rider behaviors, the late fall outreach and survey collected information on community visions and goals for public transit, and the winter outreach collected feedback on three hypothetical scenarios for improving transit in the Iowa City area. Feedback collected on these three scenarios shaped the Preferred Alternative. Detailed information on and results from outreach work are in Chapter 8.



Recommendations

The ICATS Preferred Alternative for service was developed using public input, market conditions, and existing ridership data. Initially, three scenarios were developed that represent different principles of route planning and areas of emphasis. Following a public outreach and comment period on these three scenarios, a fiscally constrained Preferred Alternative was developed to address operational issues, future growth, industry-standard best practices for route design, and established project goals. The most significant improvements made by the Preferred Alternative are listed below by improvement category:

Increasing frequency on core routes

- 15-minute peak period service on Iowa City Transit's most popular route, the Oakcrest, and 15-minute all-day service on the Iowa City Transit Southside Downtown Shuttle
- 20-minute peak period service on the Iowa City Transit Lower Muscatine/Kirkwood route to Kirkwood Community College and South Iowa City
- 20-minute all-day CAMBUS service between the Hawkeye Commuter Lot, Aspire at West Campus, the University of Iowa hospitals, and downtown Iowa City
- Iowa City Transit Saturday service improvements

Simplifying routes

- Restructuring Iowa City Transit routes with a single set of alignments, instead of operating two different alignments for each route
- Shifting routes to arterials so riders can easily understand where a bus will take them
- Simpler CAMBUS service to and from the Hawkeye Commuter Lot
- A route numbering system to make the three systems easier for riders to use

Addressing on-time performance problems

- Shifting Coralville Transit and Iowa City Transit routes to major arterials for improved speed and reliability
- Eliminating time-consuming and dangerous deviations into parking lots
- Shifting service off roads with operational problems, such as Lee Street in Manville Heights, and off roads with congestion, such as Newton Road near the hospitals

Providing more direct service to popular destinations

- Better connections to major shopping destinations that eliminate the need to transfer vehicles for many riders
- Direct, all-day service between Iowa River Landing and downtown Iowa City
- A one-seat ride from the Pheasant Ridge neighborhood to the Walmart-anchored commercial area south of Highway 6
- Shifting route design away from ineffective loop routes to bi-directional alignments
- A one-seat ride from downtown Iowa City to commercial destinations in Coralville
- Direct service to and from the Hawkeye Commuter Lot

Maps of the preferred alternative for each transit system are in Figure 1-1 through Figure 1-3. A detailed description of the Preferred Alternative is in Chapter 9 of this report.



Figure 1-2 Coralville Transit Preferred Alternative System Map

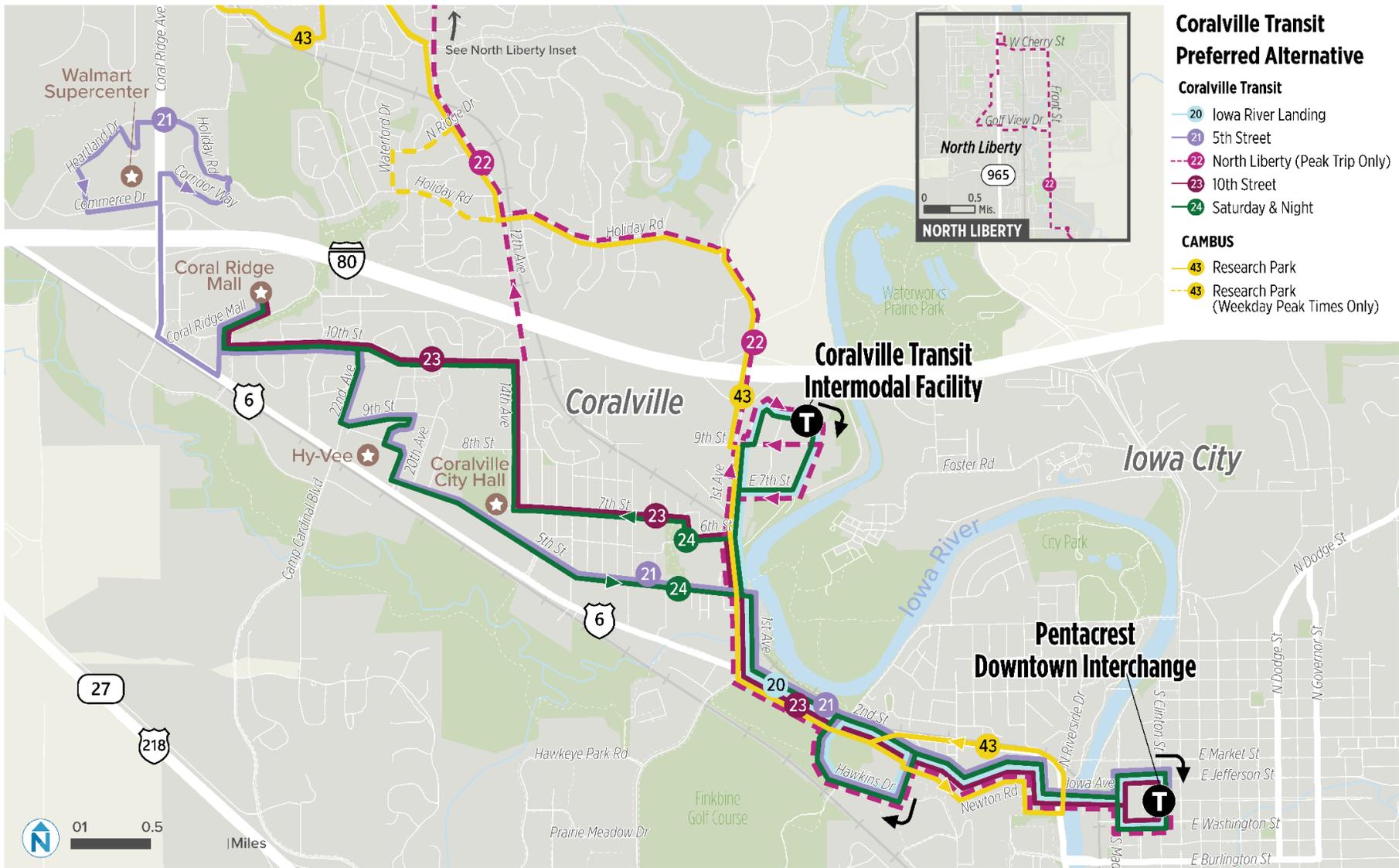




Figure 1-3 Iowa City Transit Preferred Alternative System Map

