Outline

- Service History
- Route Overview
- Network Connections
- Route Alignment Alternatives
- Airport Survey
- Implementation Timeline
The vision for enhanced service on Riverside between downtown and the airport is not a new concept.

- BRT service operating on Riverside/SH-71 to ABIA identified in 2004 in the Capital Metro “All Systems Go!” Long-Range Transit Plan.
  - Thousands of citizens provided input into the plan’s creation.
  - Rapid service out to ABIA identified as 1 of 10 Rapid corridors to be established across transit network.
- Service Plan 2020, finalized in 2010, calls for a Riverside MetroRapid service to replace service between ABIA and Downtown with 15 minute or better frequencies throughout the day.
- Plan final recommendations informed by input from Capital Metro board of directors, 2 Advisory Committees (Technical Advisory Committee & Community Advisory Committee), staff, bus operators, public feedback received via the project website, customer surveys, 2 rounds of public meetings, targeted neighborhood outreach (neighborhood association meetings & block walking), and intercepts surveys at major route transfer locations
- Analysis in plan finds “The Riverside corridor between downtown and Ben White is
one of the highest density transit markets in Austin. In addition, the market research analysis identified it as having one of the highest transit potentials of any area in Austin.” (page 5-11)

- Project Connect, finalized in 2012, calls for urban rail on Riverside/SH-71 between ABIA and downtown

  - Public & stakeholder outreach included a Transit Working Group, open house meetings, media briefings, roadside shows, social media dialogues, webinar, Regional Stakeholder meeting, newsletter, website, etc. Over 55 briefings held with various organizations during the planning process.

  - Identified as one of a handful of corridors across the city to be targeted for high-capacity transit investment (urban rail)

- The City of Austin was one of 7 finalists for the $40M USDOT Smart City Challenge grant. The City’s proposal was a collaborative effort that included the support of public agencies (including Capital Metro), universities, national labs, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector

  - An electric bus rapid transit service (e-BRT) operating in dedicated lanes along Riverside between ABIA and downtown with service every 10-15 minutes was a major component of the proposal.
Connections 2025 envisions a new MetroRapid service operating between ABIA in the Southeast and the Springdale Shopping Center in the Northeast along SH-71, E Riverside Dr, Guadalupe/Lavaca, the Drag, Dean Keeton and Manor Rd.

- At full build out, route directly serves four City Council districts (1, 2, 3 & 9) with 10-minute frequent service, stops placed every ¼ to 1/3 mile, and transit priority treatments to improve speed and reliability
- Route joins existing Routes 801 & 803, plus the new proposed Route 804, to provide the backbone of frequent, convenient transit service in Austin operating every 7 ½ to 10 minutes, 7-days per week
Major activity generators along the route include ABIA, the Riverside corridor, the Lakeshore District, Downtown, University of Texas, and the Mueller neighborhood.
Network Connections

- Riverside from ABIA to South 1st St
  - Directly connects to 11 routes
    - 5 of 11 are frequent routes
    - 6 of 11 serve District 2

- System-wide
  - 21 direct route connections outside Riverside corridor
    - 9 of 21 are frequent routes
    - 2 of 21 serve District 2

SH 71/Riverside corridor - direct transfer to 820:

Route 7 Duval/Dove Springs – Frequent Route
Route 228 Veterans Administration
Route 271 Del Valle
Route 300 Oltorf Springdale – Frequent Route
Route 310 Wickersham
Route 311 Stassney – Frequent Route
Route 350 Airport Blvd
Route 450 Congress Shuttle – Frequent Route
Route 670 Crossing Place
Route 671 Lakeshore
Route 810 N Lamar S Congress – Frequent Route
Route Alignment Alternatives

- Current proposal terminates MetroRapid 820 at ABIA
  - Recommended in all previous plans
  - Connection to major destination & Del Valle service
  - Reduces Local & Flyer route duplication ($$)

- Terminus requirements
  - Ability to safely & efficiently turn bus around
  - Location to sit bus for operator layover

- Alternative terminus options evaluated
  - ACC Riverside
  - Ben White at US 183
Current proposal reduces service duplication and increases financial efficiency by replacing current local and flyer routes (20, 100) with a more frequent MetroRapid service. A retooled Route 271 will serve the future HEB and ACC campus on 973 before connecting directly to ABIA and the Rapid 820. The 271 will also operate 7-days per week (versus the current weekday-only service), allowing for 7 day-per-week connections between Del Valle and the core transit network.

A streamlined 820 replacing existing Route 20 & 100 services also simplifies the network (one route now doing what two used to do previously) & increases frequency along the entire corridor – two requests we heard repeatedly from the public during outreach.

Annual Operating Cost (weekdays) = Total Wkd Rev Hrs x Annual Wkdays x Average Operating Cost
820 would terminate at Ben White using the E Ben White frontage Rd, 183, and E Riverside Dr to turn around.

Alternative maintains connections between 271 Del Valle and the core transit network via a connections to the 820 at the Ben White terminus
Alternative maintains a one-seat ride from the Airport to downtown via current Route 100 Airport Flyer. Best practice for transit service from an airport is to provide a one-seat ride to downtown – minimizes transfers for travelers (luggage) and employees.

Annual Operating Cost (weekdays) = Total Wkd Rev Hrs x Annual Wkdays x Average Operating Cost
820 would terminate at ACC Riverside

Alternative maintains connections between 271 Del Valle and the core transit network via a connections to the 820 at ACC Riverside

Alternative maintains a one-seat ride from the Airport to downtown via current Route 100 Airport Flyer. Best practice for transit service from an airport is to provide a one-seat ride to downtown – minimizes transfers for travelers (luggage) and employees.

Annual Operating Cost (weekdays) = Total Wkd Rev Hrs x Annual Wkdays x Average Operating Cost
Current proposal offers the most efficient use of resources & buses compared to the alternatives.

Annual Operating Cost (weekdays) = Total Wkd Rev Hrs x Annual Wkdays x Average Operating Cost
60% of interviewed Route 100 Airport Flyer passengers were Austin residents, ABIA employees, or travelers on business in Austin

40% of interviewed passengers were travelers visiting Austin for pleasure
- MetroRapid 804 & 820 alignments (routing) created in 2018 & 15-minute frequency established along those routes

- MetroRapid 804 & 820 stations/priority treatments established in 2020-2022 & routes upgraded to Rapid service with 10-minute frequency
In Closing

- Riverside corridor between ABIA & downtown repeatedly recommended for enhanced transit service for over a decade
  - Serves multiple high-density transit markets & activity generators all along the line
- MetroRapid 820 will join three other Rapid lines to create the backbone of frequent, convenient transit service in Austin
  - Directly connects to over 30 individual routes in the proposed network, providing more options for moving around Austin via transit
- Current proposal anchored at ABIA provides the most cost effective service option with the highest frequency for the most people
  - Service will start at 15-minute frequency before graduating to 10-minutes as capital investments & transit priority enhancements are made