



TOGETHER we can achieve

QUALITY TRANSIT



coalition for
**QUALITY
TRANSIT**

FUELED BY



ABOUT THE COALITION FOR QUALITY TRANSIT

The Coalition for Quality Transit is transit riders and supporters, businesses, affordable housing advocates, public health leaders, environmental stewards and community leaders, all working together to strengthen New Orleans transit, to reduce congestion and pollution, improve mobility, bolster economic growth and increase access to opportunity for all New Orleanians. The Coalition for Quality Transit is fueled by RIDE New Orleans.

Visit QualityTransitforNewOrleans.com for more information.

ABOUT RIDE NEW ORLEANS

RIDE New Orleans is an independent non-profit organization. Our vision is a world class, multi-modal transportation system that promotes a vibrant, healthy and sustainable New Orleans region. Our mission is to enhance the quality of life in the New Orleans region by promoting safe, convenient, and affordable transportation options.

Visit RideNewOrleans.org for more information.



WORLD CLASS TRANSIT FOR NEW ORLEANS

OUR VISION FOR QUALITY TRANSIT IS...

DEFINING A **COMMUNITY VISION FOR QUALITY TRANSIT**

Throughout 2015, the Coalition for Quality Transit talked with hundreds of New Orleanians from all corners of our city. From New Orleans East to Hollygrove and Central City to the West Bank, we asked a simple question: "What is your vision for quality transit?"

The answers we received from fellow transit riders, high school students, non-profit leaders, small business owners and more shaped our community vision for quality transit. This vision includes ten aspirations for quality bus, streetcar and ferry service for New Orleans.

This is a vision that community thinks is most important moving forward for NOLA transit now and into the future.

- 1 **Reliable** service running every 15 minutes
- 2 **Fast** travel times
- 3 **More** early morning, late night and weekend hours
- 4 A shaded **place to sit**
- 5 **Fast** and **easy** transfers
- 6 **Excellent** customer service, communications and up-to-date information
- 7 A **comfortable** ride
- 8 **Seamless** regional travel options
- 9 **Easy** access to school
- 10 **Community involvement** shapes planning and decision-making

CONFRONTING HARD REALITIES

The pursuit of a community vision for quality transit was developed after confronting the hard realities that New Orleans families, employers and schools face today.

As of August 2015, ten years after the devastation wreaked by the levee failures following Hurricane Katrina, bus service was still down by 65% from 2005 levels. Almost one in five New Orleans households don't have access to a car making quality transit essential.

Current limited transit service makes it hard for New Orleans families to get to work, school and other important destinations and poses challenges for New Orleans employers to attract and maintain a competitive workforce.

THE TIME IS NOW

The stars have aligned in 2016 making the goal of achieving quality transit possible for the first time in years.

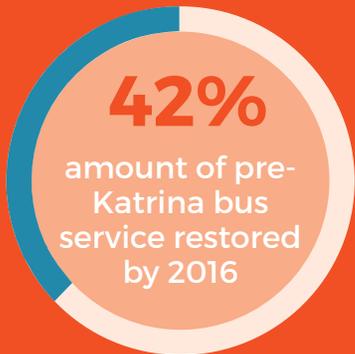
In 2016, the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (NORTA) and their contracted operator TransDev will launch a community planning effort to develop a strategic transit plan. This represents the first, post-Katrina community transit planning process undertaken by NORTA and the resulting plan will guide how the agency will lay the groundwork for investment in transit over the next ten years.

The City of New Orleans is another key partner to realizing quality transit. Under the Landrieu Administration, the City has committed to advance a new resilience strategy that puts regional and multi-modal transit front and center. In January 2016, the City was awarded \$140 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to bring this strategy to life. The City can support quality transit by working to make all transit stops accessible and providing roadway priority for transit vehicles to ensure fast and convenient transit trips.

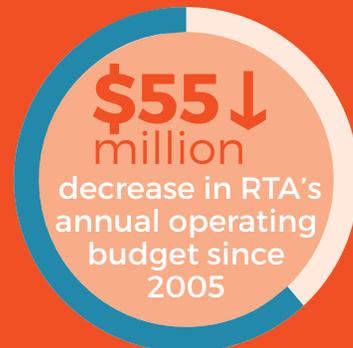
With new leadership in place in the Governor's office, we expect new opportunities to emerge in Baton Rouge to support our vision.

These new initiatives and bold leadership across the city, region and state bring us closer to making quality transit a reality. Now is the time to grow our coalition - consider joining us today!

Learn more at www.QualityTransitforNewOrleans.com



number of RTA's transit lines that provide frequent service



THE VISION

FOR QUALITY
TRANSIT



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RELIABLE SERVICE RUNNING EVERY 15 MINUTES



RELIABLE SERVICE IS...

Frequency is freedom! With frequent transit service, you don't have to look at a schedule, you can just walk out and wait for a bus, streetcar or ferry and know that it's coming within a few minutes. This is especially important during busy morning and evening commutes.

Today, more than half of New Orleans' transit routes require riders to wait 30 minutes or longer for the next bus. That's not freedom; it's frustration.

How long you have to wait for the bus impacts whether or not you can make it to work and school on time, how easy it is to make the transfer to the next

bus, and how long you're stuck waiting in New Orleans' extreme summer and winter weather.

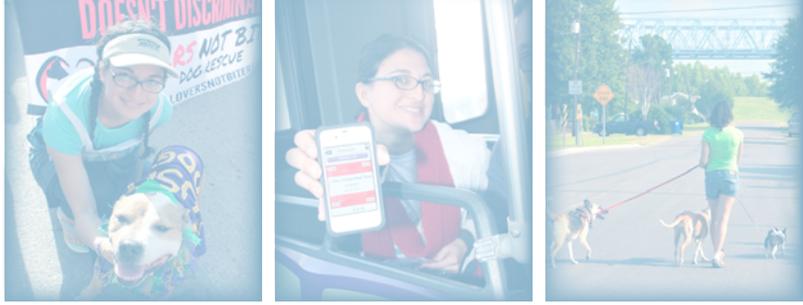
"Bus service every 15 minutes would mean a great deal to me. I could trust the service knowing I will accomplish my daily goals and ambitions. I work and am a full-time student. Dependable and frequent service would give me the freedom to make plans so that I can grow and live my life to its fullest."

- Cedric Thompson,
Downtown Commuter and Student
at Southern University of
New Orleans

“

**Bus service every
15 minutes gives
me the freedom
to live my life to
its fullest. ”**

- Cedric, Downtown Commuter
and Student



FAST TRAVEL TIMES

FAST TRAVEL TIMES MEAN...

Commuting by bus, streetcar and ferry should provide **quick and easy trips**, competitive with traveling by car. Yet too often, a trip that would take only 15 minutes by car can take upwards of an hour by bus.

Fast travel times means giving transit vehicles priority on the roadway, so they can sail through traffic. This is particularly important on bridges, in our Central Business District and along other busy corridors.

It also means designing transit routes and express service to create rapid

transit connections across the city and region, so a commuter from New Orleans East can quickly get to work in the French Quarter or in Elmwood.

"My business requires me to be in many different places over the course of a single day. That's why transit going slow can be a drag. Fast travel times would help me increase my client base and reach new markets throughout New Orleans."

- Michelle Abeyta
Owner, 504Petsitter



“

**Fast travel times
would help me
increase my
client base. ”**

-Michelle, Owner, 504Petsitter

MORE HOURS MEANS...

Many important New Orleans industries – like hospitality and healthcare – are 24/7. One of the greatest challenges for workers and employers alike is relying on transit to get to and from work, on-time for those early morning, late evening and weekend shifts. Limited transit schedules also present a safety issue as workers endure long waits in dark and isolated areas.

Fortunately, NORTA has already conducted an extensive planning effort to address these gaps in service. They concluded “service must be available where and when people need it.” In 2016, NORTA will begin adding 24-hour service to several routes, a much welcome addition!

New Orleans is a tourist destination and has an emerging medical district coming on line. Now is the time to fund early morning and later evening service so that our culture, economy and people will thrive.

“New Orleans is 24 / 7 city... My business depends on frequent transit for our customers and employees at all hours of the day and night. Early morning, late night and weekend service is good for my business and our economy.”

- Polly Watts, Owner of Avenue Pub

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MORE EARLY
MORNING, LATE NIGHT
AND WEEKEND HOURS

“
Early morning,
late night and
weekend service
is good for my
business and our
economy. ”

- Polly, Owner of Avenue Pub



A SHADED PLACE IS...

Relying on transit means waiting at transit stops - an experience that should be safe and comfortable.

New Orleans summers can be scorching hot, our rain torrential and our winters bitterly cold. That's why having a shaded place to sit at busy transit stops makes a transit commute that much easier.

Our bus and streetcar stops should be well-lit and accessible to all - regardless of age and ability. Crosswalks and sidewalks are essential for safe passage. Coordination between NORTA and the City of New Orleans must be a priority to ensure safe access getting to and waiting at transit stops.

At busy transit stops, maps, and route information, and signage to nearby

destinations and connecting routes would improve the wait. Our transit stops can provide the basics to ease the commutes of busy riders.

"We see our kids and grandkids waiting in the rain or, on a hot day, running across the street from a shaded area to try and catch the bus as it rolls by. We're proud of our community and we are concerned for our children, elders, and handicapped who need safe areas and protection from the elements while waiting for the bus. Our entire lives we've stood up for public transportation, and quality transit would provide all of us with a safe, shaded place to sit."

- Jacqueline Gibson,
Faubourg Lafitte Tenants Association

“

Our neighborhood needs a safe place to wait for the bus with seating and shelter. ”

- Jacqueline, Faubourg Lafitte Tenants Association

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A SHADED PLACE TO SIT



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FAST AND EASY TRANSFERS

FAST AND EASY TRANSFERS ARE...

Synchronized bus and streetcar schedules make for fast and easy transfers.

Nothing is more frustrating than seeing your connecting bus pull off as you pull up - with long wait times, a missed connection can add hours to your commute. At busy transfer points in the CBD and on Canal Boulevard, timed connections will reduce commute times.

And transfer fares must allow adequate time to make the connection - especially to those routes with infrequent service - to prevent riders from paying twice.

"Every day I transfer from bus to streetcar to get to and from work. If transfers were fast and easy it would mean less time standing in the heat, cold, or rain. I wouldn't have to walk so far, especially in dark areas and I would be less stressed out.

If transfers were faster, more efficient, and easy I would have more time to do work, spend time at home, and be with my friends and family."

- Rachel Guillory,
Downtown Commuter



“

Fast and easy transfers would mean more time at home with my family and friends. ”

- Rachel, Downtown Commuter

EXCELLENT SERVICE IS...

Friendly and helpful NORTA staff, as well as easy-to-access, up-to-date information are **essential to a high quality transit experience.**

Transit drivers are on the customer service frontline and the good news is that most often they are friendly, welcoming and helpful. But there are also instances of drivers passing by waiting riders running to catch a bus, or being unhelpful or unprofessional when asked for information. Treating all riders with courtesy and respect is the foundation for quality transit service.

Next, being able to access information about transit service in many ways - including in real-time - makes riding transit easier and more predictable. To start, we must have system maps AND route schedules at transit stops and on board buses, streetcars and ferries. Notices of detours and service changes

should be posted at impacted transit stops - because no rider should be left waiting for a bus that's not coming.

New technologies should be embraced and transit apps have made it easier to ride. There's much potential for real-time data to make riding transit easier and more predictable, including countdown clocks at transit stops, text alerts for service delays and more. Therefore, we must make real-time transit location tracking 100% accurate.

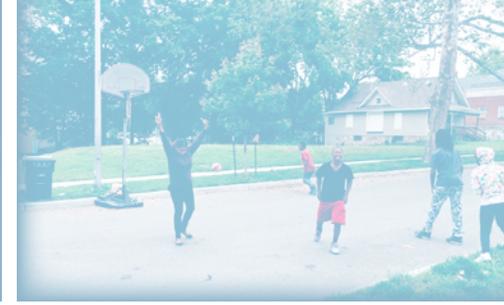
"When my bus or streetcar is delayed or detoured it puts my whole day off track. Real-time communication would keep me up-to-date and informed so I could adjust my schedule accordingly. Excellent customer service and real-time communication would keep my day running smoothly."

- Sue Mobley, Daily transit commuter

“
Excellent customer service and real-time communication would keep my day running smoothly.
”

-Sue, Daily Commuter

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**EXCELLENT
CUSTOMER SERVICE,
COMMUNICATIONS, &
UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION**



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A COMFORTABLE RIDE



A COMFORTABLE RIDE IS...

Travelling by transit is a great way to connect with friends, neighbors, fellow New Orleanians and visitors to our city. With demand for transit on the rise, it's no surprise that our buses, streetcars and ferries are sometimes overcrowded with passengers.

But overcrowding is an issue, particularly for elderly and disabled passengers who may have difficulty standing for long periods. Overcrowding can heighten tensions and make riding transit feel uncomfortable and unsafe. Simply put, there is no room for overcrowding in quality transit.

The easiest way to alleviate overcrowding is to provide more transit service. Larger transit vehicles like the articulated "bendy" buses running along the #94 Broad bus route are a good option too, but only if the overcrowding is not solved by providing highly frequent bus service on the route.

"An overcrowded bus or streetcar can be frustrating at best and unsafe at worst. For me, the problems with overcrowding are compounded by my partial sight. Everyone deserves a safe and comfortable ride."

- Andrew Kingsley,
Downtown Commuter

“
Everyone deserves
a safe and
comfortable
ride.
”

- Andrew, Downtown Commuter

SEAMLESS REGIONAL TRAVEL IS...

Our economy, services and networks are regional, and our public transit can be too. Yet there is little coordination between urban and suburban transit agencies in the New Orleans region.

We must grow regional transit routes that connect people to opportunities - regardless of political boundary lines. A unified regional transit fare would make regional commutes affordable. Coordination and collaboration across political boundary lines is essential to achieving seamless regional transit.

Bus schedules can be synchronized between transit agencies so that riders never have to watch their connecting bus pull off just as their arriving bus approaches.

NORTA, Jefferson Transit, St. Bernard Urban Rapid Transit and the New Orleans Regional Planning Commission must prioritize and coordinate strong regional transit connections.

"To see my doctor I have to take the Lakeview bus to the Canal Streetcar, then transfer to the Tulane bus to the end of the line. THEN, I get the Jefferson Transit bus to Ochsner. Without regional coordination a doctor's visit becomes an all-day affair! My vision of quality transit is easy access to the health care I need"

- Pam Legge,
Downtown Commuter

“
Regional
coordination
helps me access
the health care
I need.
”

- Pam, Downtown Commuter

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**SEAMLESS REGIONAL
TRAVEL OPTIONS**





EASY ACCESS TO SCHOOL



Photo Credit: Adam Schultz,
Clinton Foundation

EASY ACCESS TO SCHOOL MEANS...

School choice has opened the door for New Orleans students to attend schools from across the city, regardless of where they live. But the new reality means that students are traveling long distances - often leaving home before the sun rises and returning after it sets.

Schools are supposed to foot the bill but the expenses of transporting students is encroaching on classroom budgets and many schools simply ignore a state mandate to provide transportation.

Prior to Katrina, NORTA worked together with schools to provide additional service on school tripper routes; yet the new landscape of autonomous schools and lack of a centralized negotiating authority has made this level of

coordination difficult. We still must strive for coordination because public transit can make it easier for students to get to school more easily, cheaply and safely than other options.

This will require many government agencies, from NORTA and the City Council to the Recovery School District and Orleans Parish School Board, to work together to make it easier for all New Orleans students to excel in school.

"In order to build healthy communities, we need to ensure our children's safety as they travel to and from schools each day. Stronger coordination around transit is an important part of that."

- LaToya Cantrell,
Councilmember District "B"

“

Quality transit helps ensure our children's safety to & from school. ”

- LaToya, Transit Champion

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IS...

Community transportation priorities must inform major investments in transit infrastructure and service. To make this a reality, we must create opportunities for transit's many stakeholders to meaningfully engage with the City, NORTA, and New Orleans Regional Planning Commission.

Fortunately, we're off to a good start. Because of the Coalition for Quality Transit's advocacy, NORTA recently appointed 22 members to serve on a new Riders' Advisory Committee that is paving the way for innovative engagement.

But there's more to do. Transit providers must create new and better educational and engagement opportunities as they

consider service changes, long-term plans, major investments and more.

New Orleanians want our voices to be heard, and our ideas to help make quality transit a reality for our city and region.

"A quality transit system reflects the lives of New Orleanians and the needs of our communities. It is vital to workforce development, healthcare, education, and many other issues important to our overall quality of life. Community voices are fundamental to equitable transportation choices and necessary to ensure access to opportunities for all."

- Timolynn Sams Sumter,
Neighborhoods Partnership Network

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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SHAPES PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING

“
Community voices are fundamental to equitable transportation choices.
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-Timolynn, Neighborhoods Partnership Network



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