

# 2015 - 2016 Route Performance Report

## Introduction

This is CDTA's annual performance report for fixed route services during Fiscal Year 2016 (April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016). The report includes information on our route network (specifically ridership and productivity), a description of major service changes, and recommendations for the coming year. It will guide planning activities through fiscal year 2017 and help the organization use its resources in the most effective manner possible.

## State of Affairs

In Fiscal Year 2015-16, CDTA ridership continued to increase, setting a new record of 17.1 million boardings. As expected at this time last year, the rate of increase has slowed significantly (as compared to prior years), due mainly to the decreasing price of gasoline. However, new universal access partnerships and increases in service hours allowed us to build upon last year's successes.

This year, CDTA made significant progress in the planning and design of future capital improvements, such as the BusPlus Blue and Purple Lines, Uncle Sam Transit Center, and the Lark/Library station. We also conducted extensive data gathering and outreach activities to plan and implement the Saratoga County Route Restructuring, which will be implemented at the end of May 2016. Finally, CDTA has been preparing itself and the public for the roll-out of *CDTA Navigator*, the new contactless card and mobile-based fare collection system that will be fully unveiled this year.

## Existing Route Evaluation

This evaluation focuses on CDTA's regular route service, which is evaluated on two criteria. These standards are defined in our adopted 5-year Transit Development Plan.

- **Total Rides:** The best way to evaluate transit service is to look at ridership. CDTA's Route Classification system establishes thresholds and ranges of ridership by route category. Acceptable ridership thresholds vary by the type of service:
  - Trunk/BusPlus – 250,000 annual rides
  - Neighborhood – 100,000 annual rides
  - Express – 30,000 annual rides
  - Commuter – 15,000 annual rides
- **Ridership Productivity:** Rides per revenue hour measures route productivity, and indicates whether resources are used efficiently. A route may have high ridership, but due to over-allocation of resources, may still be unproductive. Productivity thresholds vary, depending on the type of service:
  - Trunk/BusPlus – 25 rides/hour
  - Express – 20 rides/hour
  - Neighborhood – 15 rides/hour
  - Commuter – 12 rides/hour

Routes that fall below acceptable thresholds are considered for corrective actions and assessments of promotional opportunities to increase usage. Routes that exceed the range for a category, or perform well above average, are examined to determine if a change in category is warranted, or if a route restructuring is advisable.

It is possible that a route may perform well in one criterion but not in another. If a route is underperforming in total ridership but over-performing in riders per hour, this could indicate the route warrants increased resources. If the opposite is true, a reduction in service may be warranted. Although total riders and riders per hour are clear quantitative measures, routes are also evaluated on the following:

- **Productivity Change:** Changes over time are used to judge the effectiveness of route changes and other factors. CDTA provides new and restructured services with a trial, or growth period to obtain productivity targets.
- **Community Service Needs:** We consider community services such as medical facilities, convalescent centers, and locations that serve seniors, disabled, and other special needs populations. This may also include geographic and social equity considerations.

**FY 2015-2016**  
**CDTA ROUTE PERFORMANCE**

Route	Description	Total Rides	Revenue Hours	Rides per Rev. Hour	1-Year Ridership Trend	2-Year Ridership Trend
<b>1</b>	Central Ave./Wolf Rd.	1,282,612	33,696	<b>38.1</b>	-4%	-5%
<b>12</b>	Washington Avenue	1,659,262	43,741	<b>37.9</b>	2%	12%
<b>11</b>	UAlbany Shuttle	361,704	10,325	<b>35.0</b>	-3%	-18%
<b>905</b>	BusPlus Red Line Albany - Schenectady	1,906,208	57,289	<b>33.3</b>	5%	13%
<b>22</b>	Albany-Troy-Watervliet	1,163,362	35,039	<b>33.2</b>	3%	3%
<b>100</b>	Mid-City Belt	841,528	25,886	<b>32.5</b>	8%	16%
<b>6</b>	Second Avenue	576,801	20,215	<b>28.5</b>	7%	20%
<b>10</b>	Western Avenue	835,890	29,999	<b>27.9</b>	2%	2%
<b>85</b>	Troy-Waterford	614,602	22,469	<b>27.4</b>	0%	-1%
<b>353</b>	Mont Pleasant/Scotia	333,142	12,917	<b>25.8</b>	14%	24%
* <b>80</b>	Albia-Fifth Avenue	311,850	12,526	<b>24.9</b>	2%	9%
* <b>87</b>	Beman Park Sycaway	414,781	17,011	<b>24.4</b>	-4%	1%
<b>114</b>	Madison/Washington	399,886	16,485	<b>24.3</b>	9%	21%
<b>355</b>	Schenectady/Wolf Rd.	570,362	23,632	<b>24.1</b>	-4%	-12%
* <b>7</b>	Glenmont	338,210	14,402	<b>23.5</b>	-2%	-8%
<b>370</b>	Troy/Schenectady	515,744	22,181	<b>23.3</b>	5%	4%
<b>531</b>	St. Luke's Express	53,883	2,347	<b>23.0</b>	-5%	-13%
<b>289</b>	Griswold Heights - St. Mary's Hospital	110,374	5,005	<b>22.1</b>	-6%	-9%
<b>224</b>	Albany-Troy via I-90	332,427	15,167	<b>21.9</b>	-4%	16%
* <b>18</b>	Delaware Avenue	449,722	20,643	<b>21.8</b>	-8%	-3%
<b>522</b>	Hudson River Express	52,290	2,465	<b>21.2</b>	-3%	3%
<b>138</b>	Allen/Livingston	239,169	11,404	<b>21.0</b>	0%	17%
* <b>13</b>	New Scotland Avenue	446,085	21,946	<b>20.3</b>	3%	5%
<b>540</b>	Northway Xpress	184,108	9,102	<b>20.2</b>	-5%	-7%
<b>BusPlus</b>		<b>Trunk</b>	<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Express</b>	<b>Commuter</b>	<b>Seasonal</b>

\*Routes with an asterisk are below productivity thresholds.

**FY 2015-2016**  
**CDTA ROUTE PERFORMANCE (Continued)**

Route	Description	Total Rides	Revenue Hours	Rides per Rev. Hour	1-Year Ridership Trend	2-Year Ridership Trend
<b>351</b>	Broadway/Van Vranken	218,968	10,837	<b>20.2</b>	-2%	8%
<b>712</b>	Harriman/Patroon Creek	131,536	6,789	<b>19.4</b>	0%	22%
<b>763</b>	Albany/Schenectady via Route 20	80,621	4,232	<b>19.1</b>	1%	3%
<b>190</b>	Fuller/Wolf	181,072	9,964	<b>18.2</b>	0%	-1%
<b>214</b>	Rensselaer 3rd Street	199,549	11,106	<b>18.0</b>	0%	8%
<b>182</b>	Troy-Latham-Cohoes	521,646	29,896	<b>17.4</b>	6%	26%
<b>125</b>	Clinton/Sand Creek	226,902	13,359	<b>17.0</b>	12%	7%
<b>354</b>	Nott Street/Rotterdam Sq. Mall	125,923	7,572	<b>16.6</b>	9%	1%
<b>233</b>	Albany/Schodack	78,430	4,831	<b>16.2</b>	3%	5%
* <b>520</b>	Nassau Express	24,994	1,595	<b>15.7</b>	16%	0%
<b>116</b>	Albany/Menands	55,380	3,554	<b>15.6</b>	5%	-10%
<b>737</b>	Corporate Woods/Airport	99,868	6,541	<b>15.3</b>	28%	56%
* <b>50</b>	Route 50	303,710	20,576	<b>14.8</b>	0%	-4%
* <b>734</b>	Hackett/Buckingham Pond	31,600	2,175	<b>14.5</b>	7%	35%
* <b>280</b>	Troy-Albia	54,934	4,175	<b>13.2</b>	-8%	-17%
* <b>352</b>	Altamont Ave/McClellan	55,510	4,298	<b>12.9</b>	-6%	-15%
* <b>117</b>	Guilderland/Colonie Crosstown	110,220	8,632	<b>12.8</b>	6%	18%
* <b>719</b>	Altamont/Voorheesville	28,674	2,774	<b>10.3</b>	22%	6%
* <b>155</b>	Suburban Circulator	86,875	8,848	<b>9.8</b>	-12%	-22%
* <b>530</b>	Exit 26 - Rotterdam Square Express	19,378	1,981	<b>9.8</b>	0%	-20%
* <b>473</b>	Jefferson Street	89,600	12,062	<b>7.4</b>	-3%	-16%
* <b>472</b>	Lake Avenue	30,487	4,864	<b>6.3</b>	1%	-8%
* <b>286</b>	RPI Shuttle	20,491	4,607	<b>4.4</b>	-19%	-17%
* <b>96</b>	Grafton Summer Service	323	180	<b>1.8</b>	0%	-12%
* <b>875</b>	Saratoga Trolley	2,720	1,780	<b>1.5</b>	-30%	-45%
<b>BusPlus</b>		<b>Trunk</b>	<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Express</b>	<b>Commuter</b>	<b>Seasonal</b>

\*Routes with an asterisk are below productivity thresholds.

***FY 2015-2016***  
***CDTA ROUTE PERFORMANCE (Continued)***

**Notes:**

- Generally, routes with the highest levels of service (e.g. #10, #12, #22, #100, #905) have experienced continued increases in ridership. This is regardless of the reduced rate of additional service enhancements than in previous years, and lower gas prices which make automobile travel more competitive against transit.
- Neighborhood Routes #100, #114, #125, #182, and #353 all saw significant ridership increases, and have now seen this upward trend for several years. CDTA has recently increased service on all of these routes, increasing their attractiveness to prospective customers.
- While trunk Routes #1 and #11 remain the first and third most productive (and at capacity) routes in the system, they have seen a slight decrease in ridership over the past two years. This was planned as CDTA increased service on Routes #905 and #12, which travel on the same corridors. With the #905 and #12 now arriving more frequently, they alleviate their own capacity issues, and those on other routes that service similar areas.
- Because the development and travel patterns in Saratoga County are more rural in nature than that of the rest of our service area, attracting ridership to Saratoga routes remains a challenge. To better align the level of service to corridors with high transit propensity, CDTA will build upon the last Saratoga restructuring by implementing a second reconfiguration in late May 2016.

## **Service Changes and Accomplishments**

The following is a summary of service changes that have occurred over the previous fiscal year.

### **Service Enhancements – May 2015 to January 2016**

As a result of increasing ridership, many of our routes warranted service enhancements. The majority of enhancements occurred during off-peak hours which are less likely to require additional operators or buses.

<b>Route</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Service Change</b>
#18	Weekday – Night	Frequency increased from 60 mins to 45 mins
	Sunday – Night	Span extended to 7:15pm
#114	Weekday – 5:30am-7:00pm	Frequency increased from 35 mins to 30 mins
#351	Weekday – 11:00am-6:00pm	Frequency increased from 45 mins to 35 mins
	Saturday - Night	Span extended from 6:00pm to 7:30pm
#353	Saturday – Night	Span extended from 6:00pm to 7:30pm
	Sunday – Night	Span extended from 6:00pm to 7:30pm
#354	Saturday - Night	Span extended from 6:00pm to 7:30pm
#370	Sunday - Night	Span extended from 6:00pm to 7:30pm

### **Service Reductions – August 2015 to January 2016**

In order to minimize the impact of service enhancements on CDTA's budget, the least productive services had to be reduced in accordance with their level of demand. All reduced services were on routes below productivity thresholds, or on parts of routes with extremely low ridership.

<b>Route</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Service Change</b>
#18	All Days	Route short-turned at Slingerlands Price Chopper except for select trips
#114	Weekday - Night	Frequency reduced from 50 mins to 60 mins
	Saturday – All Day	Frequency reduced from 50 mins to 60 mins
#155	Weekday - Night	Frequency reduced from 45 mins to 90 mins
#352	Weekday – AM Peak	Eliminated first AM round trip
#712	Weekday – Peaks	Eliminated 3 AM EB trips and 3 PM WB trips
#719	Weekday – AM, Midday	Eliminate 1 eastbound and 1 westbound trip

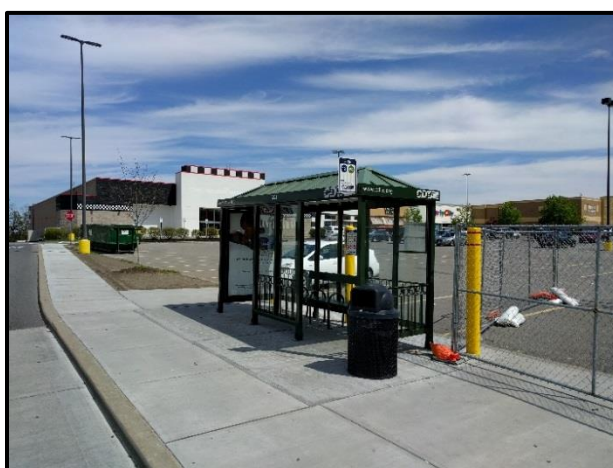
## Other Route Changes – Crossgates Commons & SUNY Poly

In August 2015, as part of our new Universal Access agreement with the SUNY Polytechnic Institute, CDTA rerouted and/or added stops on Routes #114, #117, #190 and #712 to serve their campus. SUNY Polytechnic reconstructed a portion of Fuller Road to accommodate transit service and provide infrastructure to allow pedestrians to safely cross the roadway. This is also the location for the future BusPlus Purple Line station.

Since opening, the new custom-branded SUNY Polytechnic stops and shelters have attracted over 60 rides per average weekday and is expected to increase next year when universal access is expanded to the 4,000+ members of the campus community.



*New SUNY Poly Bus Stop & Shelter.*



*New Crossgates Commons Bus Stop & Shelter.*

New stops, shelters, and pedestrian infrastructure were also constructed at Crossgates Commons. This necessitated changes to Routes #12 and #155, which previously stopped at the Walmart Garden Center, but now use the enhanced stop & shelters along Springsteen Road. The new stops & shelters have attracted over 500 rides per average weekday and the location is also a future BusPlus Purple Line station.

## On-Time Performance Adjustments – Ongoing

CDTA continued to make detailed adjustments to route schedules with on-time performance issues. Over 20 schedules were fine-tuned and on-time performance of the system has increased to over 72%.

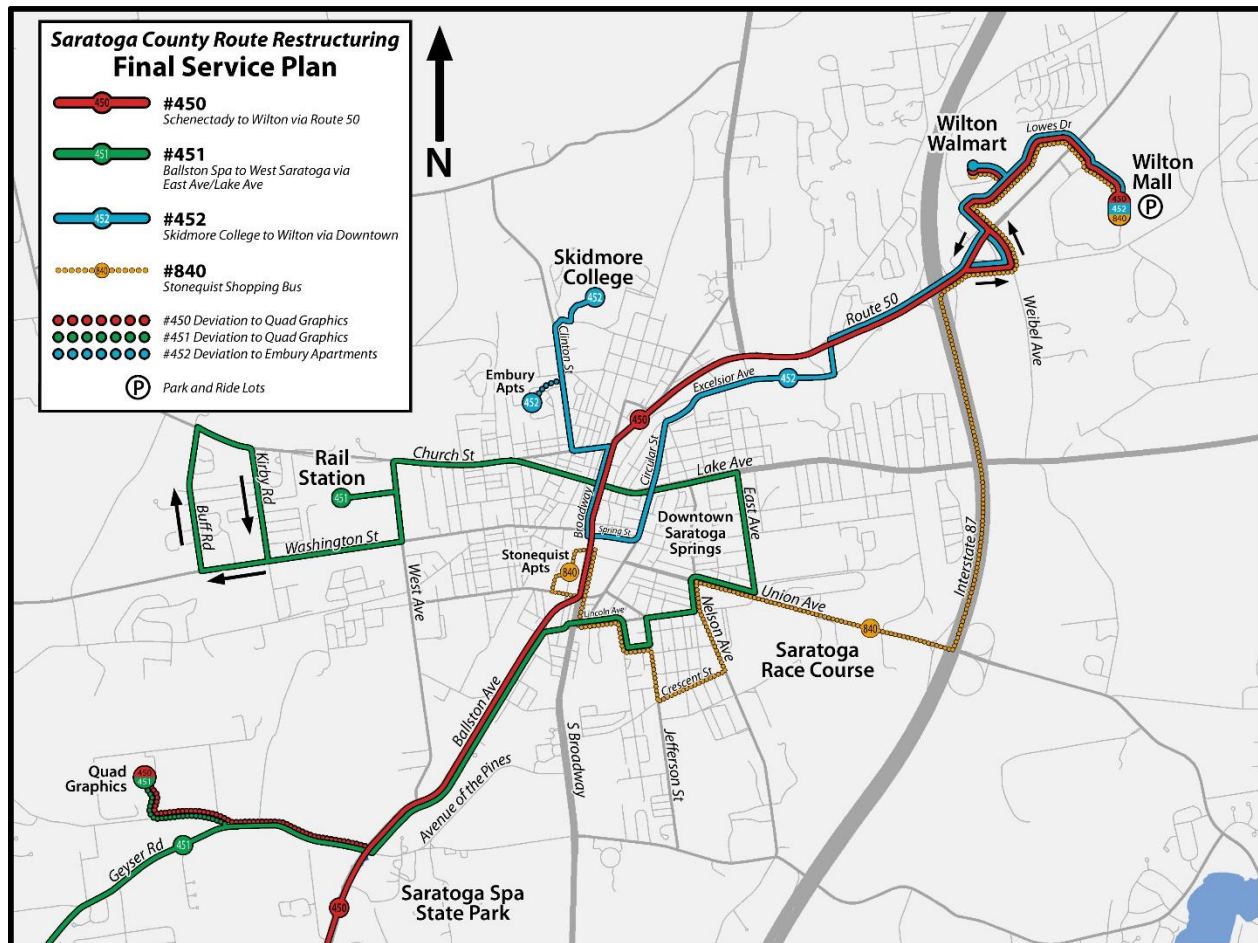
## Saratoga County Route Restructuring

In 2007, CDTA restructured all Saratoga County neighborhood routes and increased the total level of service, yet the utilization of transit remained lower than in the rest of our service area. However, segments of these routes have generated a significant amount of ridership, and revealed valuable information about transit travel patterns within the City of Saratoga Springs.



During the past fiscal year, CDTA staff worked with Saratoga County customers, elected officials, businesses, service providers and other stakeholders to develop a new route network. The final plan allocates more service to the corridors with highest demand (such as NYS Route 50), while providing new connections to destinations that previously did not have service (such as the Kirby Road / Buff Road neighborhoods).

The Saratoga County Route Restructuring will be rolled out in late May 2016.



*Final Saratoga County Route Restructuring Plan.*

## Bus Rapid Transit & Transit Centers - Ongoing

CDTA continues to move forward the design of new BusPlus lines and their associated transit centers along the River Corridor (Blue Line) and Washington-Western Corridor (Purple Line). This year, CDTA obtained \$13.7 million in set-aside funding from the region's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for BRT projects. These funds will allow us to advance "sub-projects" within each corridor ahead of schedule, such as the new Lark/Library station on the Red and Purple Lines, and the Uncle Sam Transit Center on the Blue Line. Meanwhile, CDTA continues to prepare the remainder of both lines for funding through the Federal Transit Administration's Small Starts program, which is specifically designed for the implementation of BRT projects.



## BusPlus Blue Line

The Blue Line formally entered into the Project Development phase of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Small Starts funding process, which is a program tailored to BRT projects. The Blue Line also received federal environmental clearance this year, via a D-List NEPA Categorical Exclusion. This step was critical to establishing the viability of the project and justifying its suitability for federal funding. We have also continued to advance the design and layouts of other Blue Line stations and vetted them with the various municipalities along the corridor.

CDTA was awarded \$1.6 million in late 2014 by the federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) for the construction of site work for eight Blue Line stations. Design is nearing completion and construction will begin this year, in advance of the Small Starts timetable. The improvements, which enhance pedestrian safety and infrastructure in the areas surrounding the future stations, will benefit riders of existing routes along the corridor before the Blue Line is fully implemented.

CDTA was also awarded \$650,000 in December 2015 to put toward construction of the Uncle Sam Transit Center. The grant came from NYS Empire State Development grant via the Regional Economic Development Councils initiative. Final design and engineering for the transit center is currently underway, with an construction anticipated in 2017.



*Rendering of Uncle Sam Transit Center.*

## BusPlus Purple Line

On the BusPlus Purple Line (Washington-Western BRT), CDTA laid the groundwork for the first BRT stations with construction of the new stops, shelters, and transit/pedestrian infrastructure at SUNY Polytechnic and Crossgates Commons.

CDTA has further developed the Crossgates Mall Transit Center and UAlbany-Harriman Busway, a process that has involved intensive coordination with the University at Albany and the New York State Office of General Services. We have also continued to advance the design and layouts of other Purple Line Stations and vetted them with the City of Albany.

## Universal Access Contracts

This year, CDTA entered into new Universal Access agreements with the SUNY Polytechnic Institute, Albany Public Library and Albany Medical Center.

SUNY Polytechnic Institute is a growing college and center for research & development. The campus continues to expand and with it its student and campus population. SUNY Polytechnic entered the Universal Access program in August 2015 to alleviate parking demand as well as provide students alternative transportation options. Free access to the CDTA system is currently limited only to students and staff but will expand this year to the entire 4,000+ members of the campus community.

**SUNY POLYTECHNIC  
INSTITUTE**

Albany Medical Center is among the largest employers in the Capital Region with over 9,000 employees and has been undergoing a major expansion of its main campus on New Scotland Avenue. In an effort to provide more transportation options to the hospital, AMC joined the Universal Access program in September 2015. In just over 6 months, ridership at AMC has increased by 40% to over 18,000 per month.

 **Albany Medical Center**

Albany Public Library began in January 2016 and included employee pilot testing *CDTA Navigator* smart cards and piloting of retail point of sale units at the main branch. Overtime all branches will sell and refill *CDTA Navigator* products.

  
**Albany Public Library**

## Articulated Buses

Late in 2015, CDTA purchased two New Flyer 60-foot articulated buses and placed them in revenue service along high-ridership trunk routes on a trial basis. These new buses allow us to expand ridership capacity by 50% on routes where increasing the level of service below 10-15 minutes is unfeasible due to operating costs. Later in 2016, two more articulated buses will arrive and be placed in revenue service, with CDTA having the option of further expanding our articulated fleet in the near future.



*CDTA Articulated Bus.*

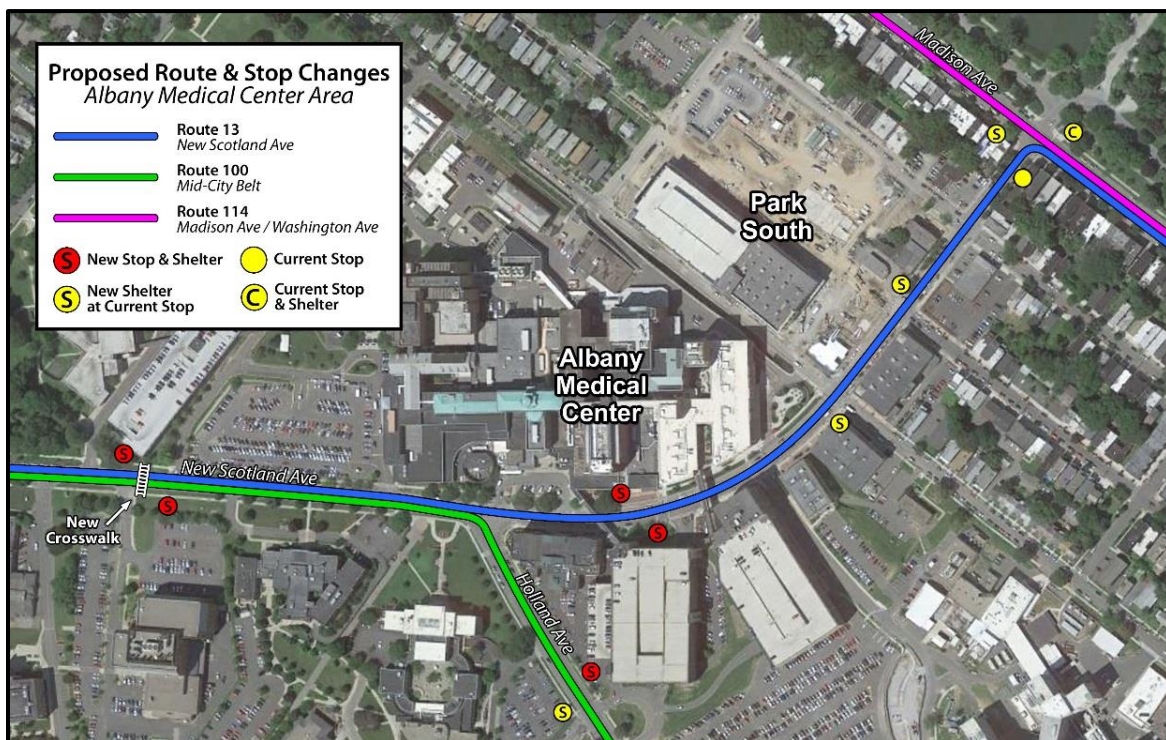
# Service Recommendations for 2016 - 2017

## Rollout of Saratoga County Route Restructuring

After finalizing the service plan earlier this year, CDTA completed a public education campaign in April to inform riders and residents of the upcoming changes. Installation of new bus stops and other final preparations was completed in early May for service to begin on Memorial Day weekend.

## Albany Medical Center / Park South

As part of our universal access partnership with Albany Medical Center, improved service will be in place on New Scotland Avenue between Holland Avenue and Madison Avenue, which is the location of the hospital's expansion in association with the Park South redevelopment project. In addition, new stops, bus shelters, and pedestrian infrastructure will be installed in strategic locations on the corridor. This will allow front-door access to the center of the medical campus and further encourage employees and visitors to travel to the hospital via transit.



## Major Service Increases

In alignment with financial commitments from the State, CDTA anticipates the ability to increase frequency and span on routes with the highest demand and greatest ability to attract additional riders. The majority of these routes are on existing or future BRT corridors, promoting increases in ridership in areas that will see even more investment in coming years. Over the summer, CDTA staff will determine the specific routes and level of service expansion to be provided, with rollout expected in August.



## Bus Rapid Transit & Transit Centers

### BusPlus Blue Line

This fall, CDTA will submit the full project application for the BusPlus Blue Line to the FTA for project rating. The application will consist of, among many other elements, 60% engineering for all stations, a narrative of project justification, and a section demonstrating our financial readiness for the project. CDTA staff fully expect a rating that will result in a Small Starts Grant Agreement for the requested amount the following year.

#### *Project Schedule*

<b>Project Rating Package Submission</b>	September 2016
<b>Announcement of Selected Projects</b>	February 2017
<b>Allocation of Small Starts Funds</b>	October 2017
<b>Construction</b>	2017-2018
<b>Begin Operations</b>	Spring 2019

### Uncle Sam Transit Center

The Uncle Sam Transit Center, which will be the centerpiece of the BusPlus Blue Line, will be constructed ahead of the main project schedule with funding from the CDTC TIP and Empire State Development programs. This summer, CDTA will complete design and negotiate a lease to secure the land on which the transit center will be built. CDTA plans to begin construction of the Uncle Sam Transit Center in the fall of this year with completion in late 2017.

### BusPlus Purple Line

CDTA continues to work on the BusPlus Purple Line project application for rating to the FTA. This year, we will finalize the design of all stations and infrastructure along the corridor, including the UAlbany-Harriman Busway and the Crossgates Mall Transit Center. This process will include continuing coordination with key partners and stakeholders, including the University at Albany, the New York State Office of General Services, and the City of Albany.

### Lark/Library Station

The existing Lark-Armory westbound Red Line station at Washington Avenue and Lark Street will be relocated to a new site down the block, in front of the Albany Public Library, as an advance component of the Purple Line. This new configuration will allow Washington Avenue and Western Avenue bus routes to proceed directly westbound, eliminating the “zig-zag” pattern necessitated by the existing layout.

Improvements will also be made to the traffic and pedestrian infrastructure at this intersection, reducing vehicular-pedestrian conflicts and providing a new, signalized, mid-block crossing at the new westbound station. The station will be renamed “Lark/Library” to reflect its new location, and will be rebranded to red & purple upon the implementation of the Purple Line. CDTA plans to begin construction of Lark/Library Station by fall of this year.



*Rendering of future Lark/Library Station.*

## **CDTA Navigator**

*CDTA Navigator* is CDTA's new fare collection system, which replaces paper passes with plastic smart cards and mobile payment technology.

These media are linked to individual customer accounts, in which customers may hold a stored value ("Pay As You Go") and/or a monthly period pass similar to today's Swiper ("Frequent Rider").

In 2015, CDTA performed successful employee and customer pilot testing on *CDTA Navigator*. Full roll-out is expected in the summer of 2016.

