

**Prospect MAX**  
**Kansas City, Missouri**  
**Small Starts Project Development**  
**(Rating Assigned November 2016)**

Summary Description	
<b>Proposed Project:</b>	Bus Rapid Transit 10.0 Miles, 26 Stations
<b>Total Capital Cost (\$YOE):</b>	\$53.81 Million
<b>Section 5309 Small Starts Share (\$YOE):</b>	\$29.89 Million (55.5%)
<b>Annual Operating Cost (opening year 2019):</b>	\$4.69 Million
<b>Current Year Ridership Forecast (2015):</b>	7,400 Daily Linked Trips 2,240,300 Annual Linked Trips
<b>Overall Project Rating:</b>	Medium-High
<b>Project Justification Rating:</b>	Medium-High
<b>Local Financial Commitment Rating:</b>	Medium

**Project Description:** The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) proposes to implement bus rapid transit (BRT) service, known locally as MAX, in the Prospect Avenue corridor from downtown Kansas City to 75<sup>th</sup> Street. The project includes transit signal priority, a real-time bus arrival information system, and the purchase of 12 uniquely branded vehicles. The service is planned to operate for 21 hours a day, seven days a week, with buses every 10 minutes on weekdays and every 30 minutes on weekends.

**Project Purpose:** KCATA believes the project will improve mobility in the corridor by reducing trip times, increasing frequency of service, improving passenger amenities, and complementing existing bus service. In addition to improving access to employment and education opportunities for transit-dependent populations, the project is also expected to increase transit ridership and attract new businesses and investment to the corridor, which serves an economically distressed area of the city. Household poverty rates in the corridor are between 21 percent and 35 percent higher than the city rate of 14 percent.

**Project Development History, Status and Next Steps:** KCATA selected a locally preferred alternative in June 2013 that was adopted into the region's fiscally constrained long range transportation plan in January 2014. The project entered Small Starts Project Development in August 2015. KCATA completed the environmental review process with a Categorical Exclusion in March 2016, anticipates receipt of a Small Starts Grant Agreement (SSGA) in 2017, and the start of revenue service in March 2019.

**Significant Changes Since Last Evaluation (November 2015):** KCATA postponed its anticipated SSGA date from fall 2016 to 2017 to allow additional time for project design.

## Locally Proposed Financial Plan

<u>Source of Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds (\$million)</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
<b>Federal:</b>		
Section 5309 Small Starts	\$29.89	55.5%
FHWA Flexible Funds (Surface Transportation Program)	\$8.00	14.9%
<b>Local:</b>		
Cash Contribution from the City of Kansas City, Missouri	\$12.43	23.1%
KCATA Transportation Sales Tax	\$3.49	6.5%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$53.81</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**NOTE:** The financial plan reflected in this table has been developed by the project sponsor and does not reflect a commitment by DOT or FTA. The sum of the figures may differ from the total as listed due to rounding.

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**LAND USE RATING: Medium**

The land use rating reflects population density within one-half mile of proposed stations, employment served by the line, and the share of legally binding affordability restricted (LBAR) housing in the station areas compared to the share in the surrounding county.

- Average population density across all station areas is 4,100 persons per square mile, which rates Medium-Low by FTA benchmarks. Total station area employment is 64,000, which rates Medium-Low. The average daily parking cost in the central business district (CBD) is \$13.20, which rates Medium-High. The CBD has 0.48 parking spaces per employee, which rates Medium-Low. The proportion of LBAR housing units in the corridor compared to the proportion of LBAR housing units in the county through which the project travels is 3.06, which rates High by FTA benchmarks.
- Transit-supportive character is strongest in the downtown segment of the corridor. The portion of the corridor outside the downtown area includes numerous parcels of vacant or undeveloped land. Much of the commercial developments include surface parking located in the front of the buildings.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RATING: Medium**

**Transit-Supportive Plans and Policies: Medium**

- *Transit-Supportive Corridor Policies:* The Greater Downtown Area Plan promotes the density needed to support transit, strongly supports pedestrian facilities, and calls for reducing parking requirements in the CBD. The Heart of the City Area Plan provides a framework for future growth for the area south of Interstate 70 and north of the Emanuel Cleaver II Boulevard. The plan calls for applying the concept of transit-oriented development along principal transit corridors, including Prospect Avenue.
- *Supportive Zoning Regulations Near Transit Stations:* The majority of the corridor is zoned as a neighborhood business district, which allows for a maximum floor area ratio of 2.2 and reduced parking requirements for lots located within 1,000 feet of rapid transit stops. An Urban Redevelopment District zoning overlay was proposed for some station areas that would allow flexibility of design to support the redevelopment of underdeveloped and blighted areas.
- *Tools to Implement Land Use Policies:* State and local development incentives include Enhanced Enterprise Zone designations, which provide tax credits and local property tax abatement to businesses, and Urban Renewal Area designations, which assist in the removal of blighted conditions within urban renewal areas. Incentives also include expedited development review and infrastructure financial tools that are available for the downtown portion of the corridor.

**Performance and Impacts of Policies: Medium**

- *Performance of Land Use Policies:* The Downtown District has seen recent growth due to the new streetcar system, which has served as a catalyst for economic development. While there have been recent developments within the Prospect Corridor, they are not consistent with transit-oriented design principles including higher density, limited parking, and pedestrian-friendly design characteristics.
- *Potential Impact of Transit Investment on Regional Land Use:* At present, there are 615 land bank properties within the project area. Land bank properties are available for purchase or transfer for economic development or neighborhood revitalization. Over 100 permitted planned developments and improvements have occurred in the past five years.

**Tools to Maintain or Increase Share of Affordable Housing: Low**

- The Green Impact Zone Housing Strategy was a catalyst to transform neighborhoods near the project study corridor, by identifying eight project areas in which revitalization of homes and the building of new homes is taking place. Low-Income Housing Tax Credits will be used in many of the projects.
- There are no specific plans or policies, limited tools and little developer activity to preserve or increase existing affordable housing within the corridor.

