REIMAGINE dart

CREATING CONNECTIONS. BUILDING COMMUNITIES.

DART is redesigning its public transit network and plans to change bus routes and services beginning in summer 2026. We seek public input on what the future of our bus network could look like, so we align the services we provide within our budget to best meet central Iowans' travel needs.
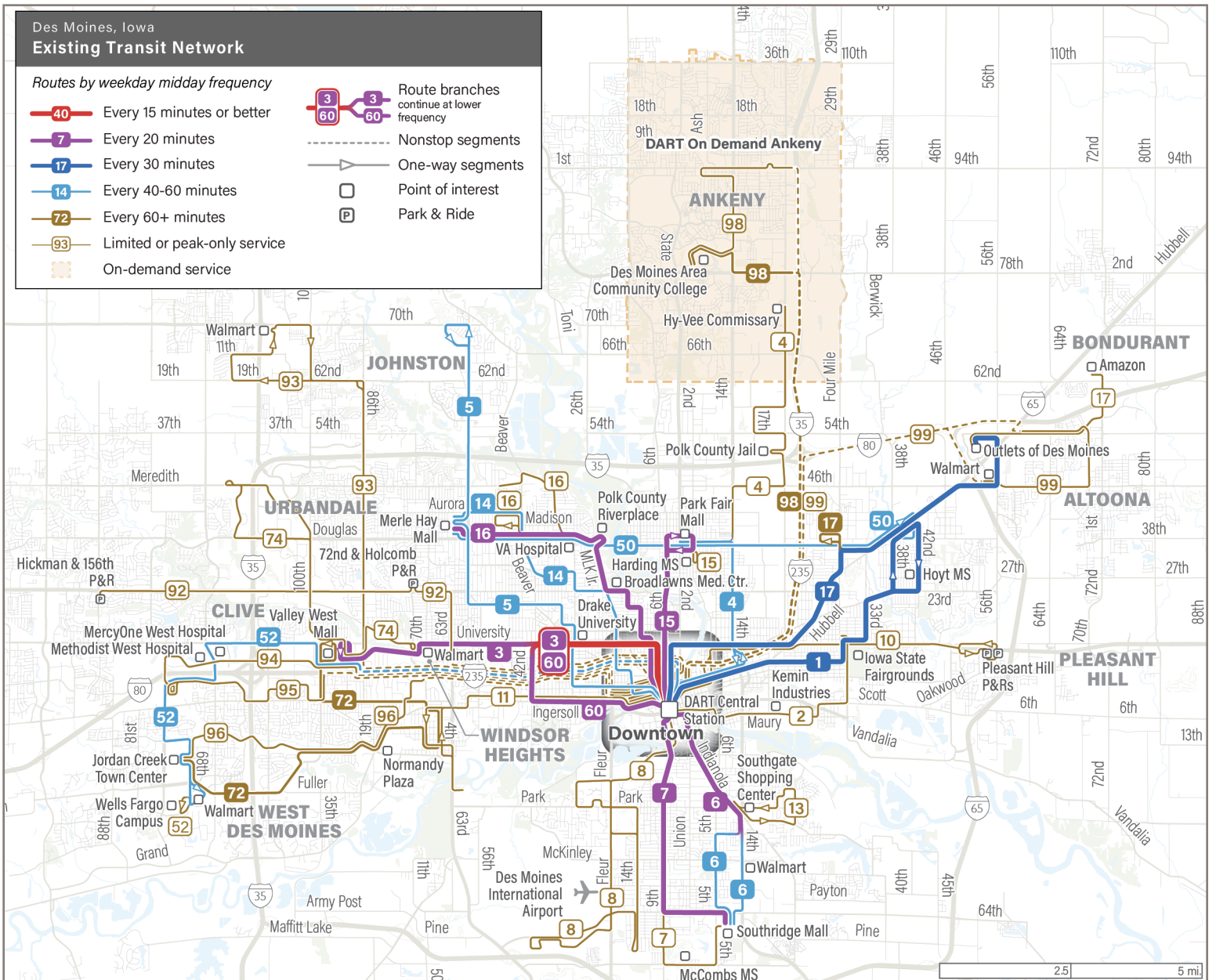
This first conversation will focus on what the goals for public transit in Greater Des Moines should be. This input will inform decisions elected leaders make about priorities and budget before we design a new transit network.

How should we design our new network?

It depends on our goal. If our goal is to get lots of people to ride the bus (high ridership), we would run frequent service where there are lots of people and jobs close together. If our goal is to reach as many places as possible (high coverage), we would spread out our bus service.

Existing Transit Network

DART's existing network only has one frequent route. Most routes come every 20-60 minutes, but other routes run only during peak morning and afternoon hours on weekdays.

Des Moines, Iowa
Existing Transit Network

Routes by weekday midday frequency

- 40 — Every 15 minutes or better
- 7 — Every 20 minutes
- 17 — Every 30 minutes
- 14 — Every 40-60 minutes
- 72 — Every 60+ minutes
- 93 — Limited or peak-only service
- On-demand service

3 60 / 3 60 — Route branches continue at lower frequency

- Nonstop segments
- One-way segments
- ▢ Point of interest
- Ⓟ Park & Ride

Ridership Concept

The **Ridership Concept** focuses on providing frequent service where most people and jobs are. Most buses in these places would arrive every 15 or 30 minutes during most of the day, seven days a week. So many people would have to wait less time for a bus.

However, by providing so much bus service in these places, there would be fewer total bus routes, even with the same amount of money that DART has to deliver service today. Some riders would have longer walks to their bus routes, while others may not have bus service at all.

Where service remains, most buses would come more often than today, so more people would be able to get to more jobs and other locations faster. More people would find the service useful, so more people would ride the bus.
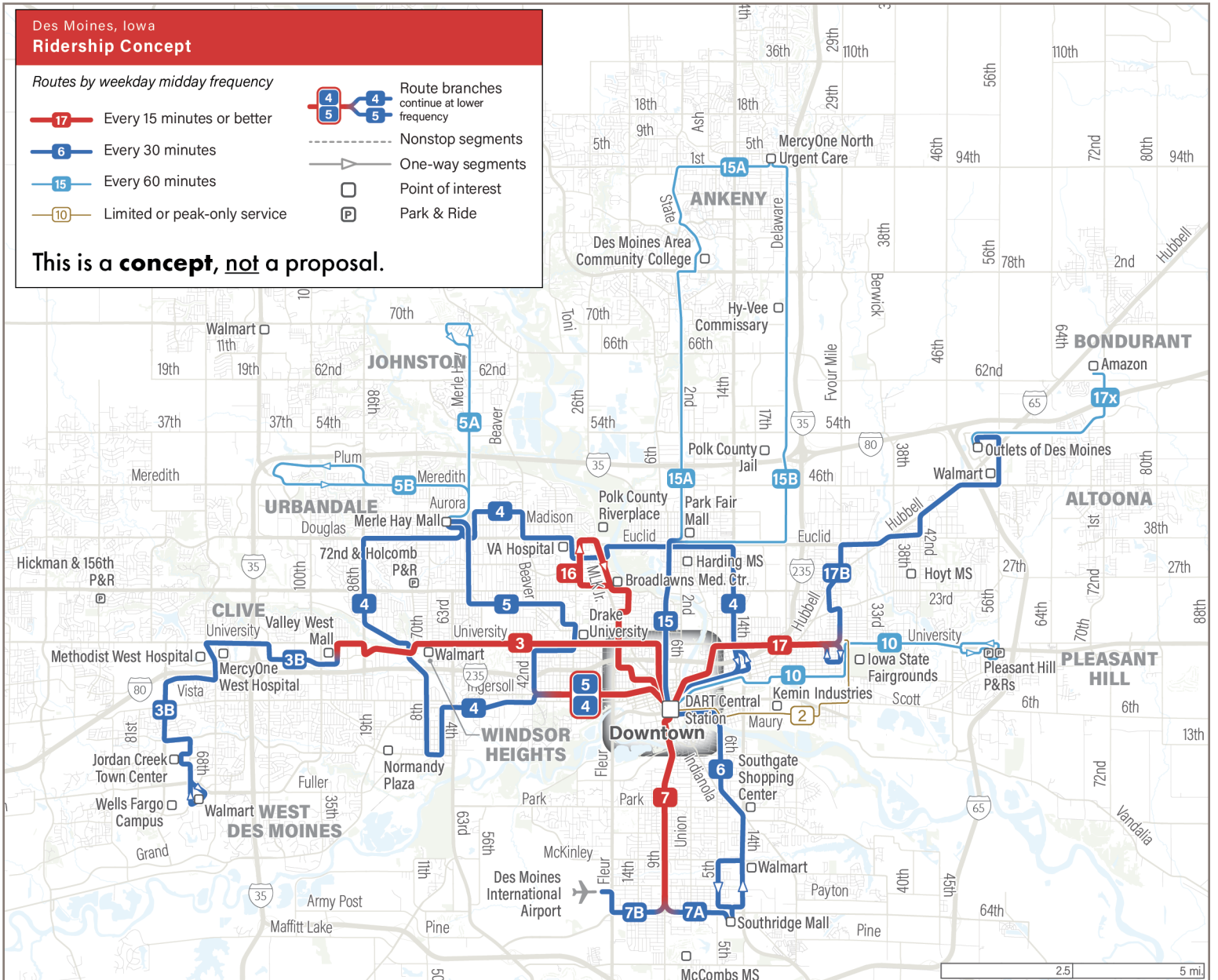
Higher Frequencies

Five routes would come every 15 minutes, all week (including weekends). The number of residents near frequent service would increase from 4% to 13%. Jobs near frequent service would increase from 12% to 23%. Riders would have faster travel times across the region.

Higher Access

In this Concept, the average resident would be able to reach 23% more jobs in 45 minutes, compared to DART's Existing Network.

Coverage Loss

The total number of residents near any transit service would decrease from 44% to 38%. The number of jobs near any transit service would decrease from 50% to 46%.

Des Moines, Iowa
Ridership Concept

Routes by weekday midday frequency

- **17** Every 15 minutes or better
- **6** Every 30 minutes
- **15** Every 60 minutes
- **10** Limited or peak-only service

- **4 / 5** Route branches continue at lower frequency
- Nonstop segments
- One-way segments
- Point of interest
- P Park & Ride

This is a **concept**, not a proposal.

Coverage Concept

The **Coverage Concept** focuses on providing some service to as many people and places as possible. All places that have service today would still be near some service, and some areas would get new, though minimal, service.

Spreading the service out to so many areas means that most routes can't offer service that comes often (every 15 minutes). There would be more total routes, but most buses would only come every 30 or 60 minutes. So most people would still have to wait a long time for a bus.

This concept has microtransit zones where you would use an app or call to get a ride to another point within the zone. The response time could be up to an hour, and you may be asked to walk to a major street.
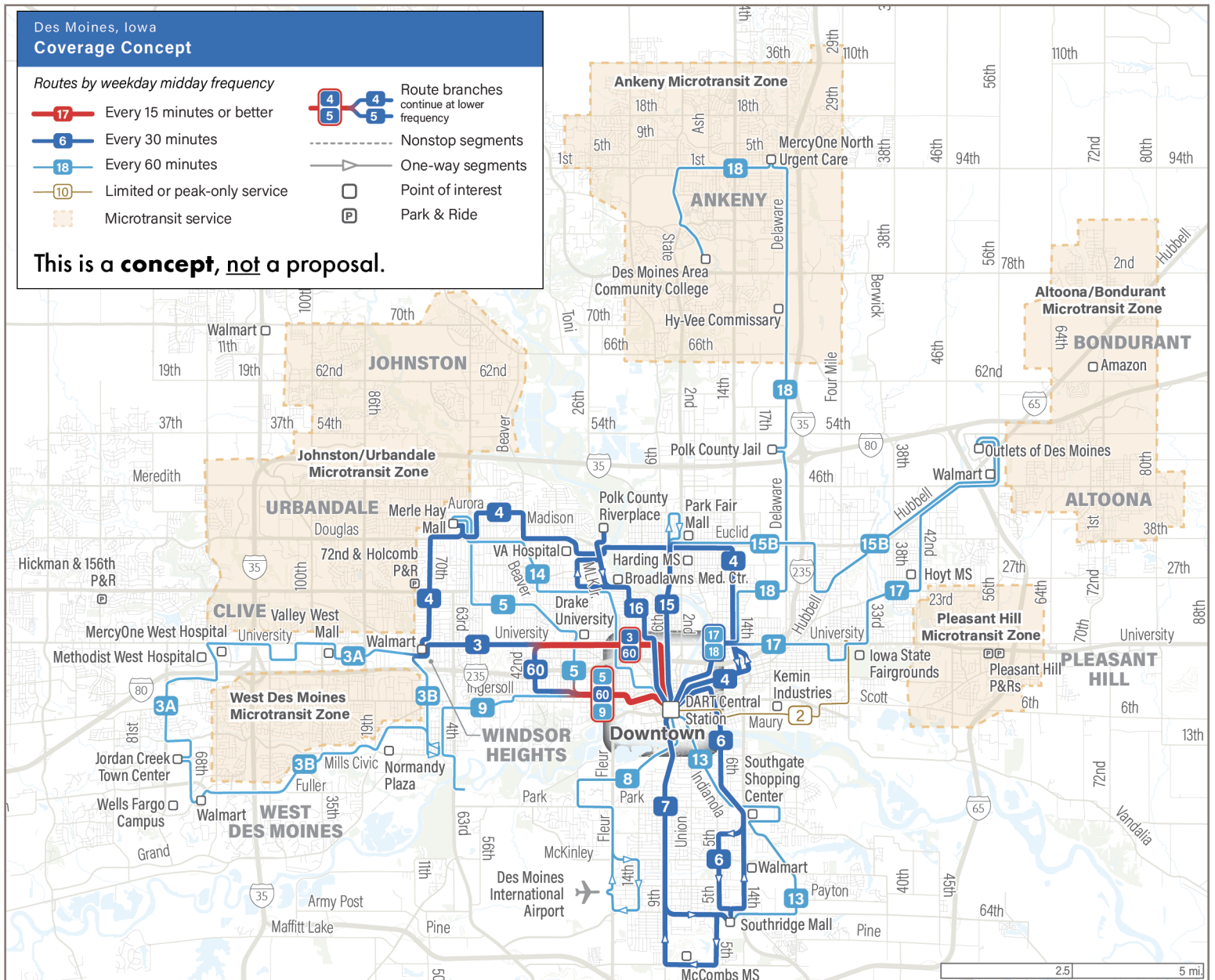
Higher Coverage
Since the service is spread out, the number of residents near any transit service would increase from 44% to 67%. The number of jobs near any service would increase from 50% to 71%.

Shorter Walks
This Concept offers more total routes, so it would offer shorter walks to transit.

Longer Waits
Most routes would arrive every 30-60 minutes, so people would have to wait a long time for the bus and total travel times would be longer. In 45 minutes, the average resident would able to reach 9% less jobs, compared to DART's Existing Network.

Des Moines, Iowa
Coverage Concept

Routes by weekday midday frequency

- **17** Every 15 minutes or better
- **6** Every 30 minutes
- **18** Every 60 minutes
- **10** Limited or peak-only service
- Microtransit service

- **4 / 5** Route branches continue at lower frequency
- Nonstop segments
- One-way segments
- Point of interest
- **P** Park & Ride

This is a **concept**, not a proposal.

We want to hear your feedback!

DART would like to hear from you as we rethink bus routes and frequencies in Greater Des Moines. Your opinion matters—help us create a great bus network!

Take the survey here!

To take the survey from your phone or computer, go to ReimagineDARTdsm.com/survey or scan the QR code below:

Para tomar la encuesta con su teléfono o cumputadora, visite a ReimagineDARTdsm.com/encuesta o escanee el código QR:

English

Español

To learn more about the project, go to ReimagineDARTdsm.com

Para aprender más sobre el proyecto, visite ReimagineDARTdsm.com/es