

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) 2024182
MURFREESBORO PIKE ALL ACCESS CORRIDOR**

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I. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

1.1 OVERVIEW

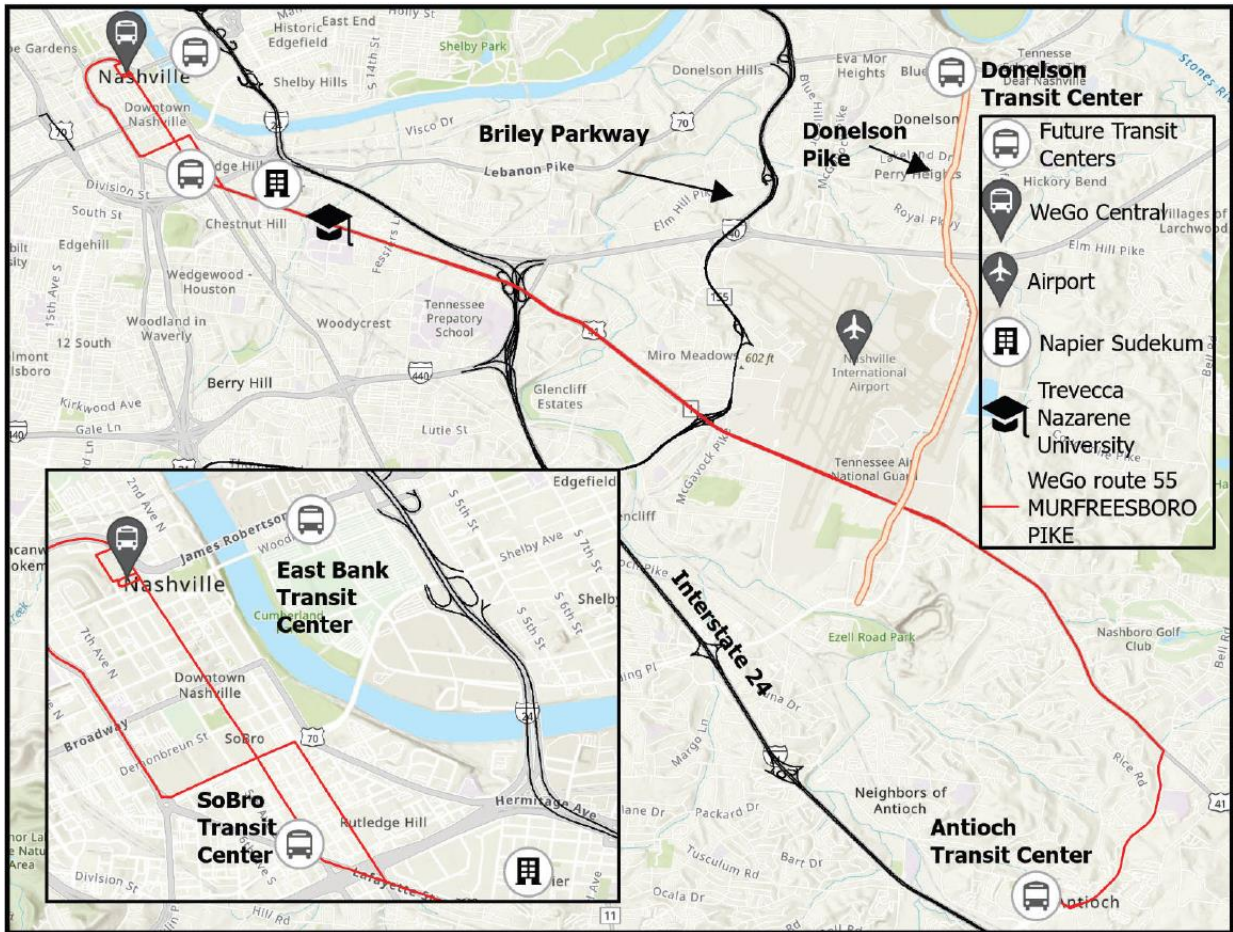
WeGo Public Transit aims to connect people to their lives and communities, one ride at a time through a network of local buses, express buses, commuter rail, microtransit, and complementary paratransit services. The 2016 [nMotion Strategic Plan](#) outlined a 25-year plan for a series of investments to improve Nashville’s public transit. One such investment was the development of a high-capacity transit network to move more people faster and effectively. A subsequent study analyzed the potential opportunities and constraints for high-capacity transit along five major Nashville corridors, including Murfreesboro Pike. The comprehensive high-capacity transit study gave Murfreesboro Pike a commendable “Best” rating for its feasibility and overall favorable evaluation.

WeGo Public Transit Route 55 – Murfreesboro Pike is currently the busiest route in the transit network, carrying over 4,000 riders each day. This route is now operating at approximately 133% of pre-pandemic ridership levels and continues to experience challenges to reliability due to traffic congestion in the corridor. Regional plans call for the eventual implementation of high-capacity transit in this corridor – either “high level” bus rapid transit or light rail. Several recently completed initiatives, and more “soon-to-be-completed” projects, have made this the ideal time to advance a consolidated planning, feasibility, and preliminary design process to initiate this project, and to better connect this crucial corridor to the broader Nashville transit network. Among these initiatives are the following:

1. ***Imagine East Bank Vision Plan*** – The Imagine East Bank Vision Plan includes recommendations for dedicated lane bus rapid transit along a north-south, East Bank Boulevard from the River North development to Korean Veterans Boulevard. It also calls for an East Bank Transit Center to include a major transit route connection point.
2. ***Global Mall Planning Study*** – Metro Planning has undertaken a planning process to reimagine the site of the former Global Mall in Antioch. An element of the emerging plan will be another Transit Center connecting various transit services in Southeastern Davidson County to the Murfreesboro Pike Corridor project.
3. ***Connect Downtown Neighborhood Traffic Project*** – The Nashville Department of Transportation and Multimodal Infrastructure has completed a broad examination of downtown mobility to enhance the flow of traffic and improve safety in the downtown core. Among many other elements, the Connect Downtown Project has recommended options for transit priority corridors through the downtown core, connecting the Elizabeth Duff Transit Center at WeGo Central to the proposed East Bank Transit Center and SoBro Transit Center.

4. **BNA Vision Plan** – Nashville International Airport continues its multi-billion dollar, several phase expansion plan with an eye toward huge increases in annual enplanements, and associated job and economic development. An element of the BNA Vision Plan anticipates the development of high-capacity transit to the airport as part of the overall access plan, along with upgrades to the existing transit stop facilities to accommodate expanded service to the Airport.

5. **Donelson Station Joint Development** – In late 2022, the Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee entered into a period of exclusive negotiation with a development partnership comprised of HG Hill and Southeast Ventures. The intent is to create a higher density transit-oriented development on RTA property currently utilized for surface parking at Donelson Station on the WeGo Star. Along with the RTA’s ongoing business planning process to evaluate future strategies to enhance the effectiveness of the Star, the emerging development in that part of Donelson calls out a need for better connectivity of this neighborhood to other parts of the city, including the Airport and Murfreesboro Pike Corridor.



Murfreesboro Pike Corridor General Study Area

Murfreesboro Pike is a vital link between Downtown Nashville, the Nashville International Airport (BNA), and the Antioch area in southeast Davidson County. The corridor encompasses a diverse range of roadway configurations, including a seven-lane road with a center turn lane, bike lanes, and a five-lane road that also includes bike lanes and sidewalks.

The Murfreesboro Pike corridor and its surrounding neighborhoods are experiencing a rapid and diverse community expansion. Nashville's future investment in high-capacity transit along this corridor has generated excitement among long-time and new residents, business owners, nonprofits, and academic institutions. It promises improved mobility, increased connectivity, and growth prospects. However, there are also concerns about the potential challenges that may arise if Nashville fails to adequately plan for the subsequent growth that will occur following the introduction of enhanced transit options. These concerns include the displacement of vulnerable communities.

On November 5, 2024, Nashville-Davidson County voters approved an additional half-penny sales tax to fund the enhancement and expansion of transit services. This funding is detailed in [Choose How You Move: Nashville's Transportation Improvement Program](#). The All-Access Pass to Sidewalks, Signals, Service, and Safety encompasses projects across WeGo's service area, aiming to maintain, enhance, and expand Nashville's capacity to provide safe multimodal transit service that benefits all residents. One significant project is the Murfreesboro Pike All-Access Corridor, a 13.75-mile stretch spanning from the Elizabeth Duff Transit Center at WeGo Central to the future Antioch Transit Center at Global Mall via Murfreesboro Pike/Bell Road with a spur to Nashville International Airport via Donelson Pike.

This proposed project would expand the scope of the Metro Transit Authority's Murfreesboro Pike Corridor Planning process to better capitalize on the opportunities presented with dedicated transit resources. The additional funding would be utilized to support the following planning and project development activities:

1. Expand the boundaries of the existing Murfreesboro Pike Planning process. The original boundaries of the project were from the proposed SoBro Transit Center at Lafayette Street and Representative John Lewis Way South on the northern end to the Global Mall site at the southern end. The expanded project boundaries would examine broader connections of this crucial corridor to the more comprehensive transit network, including:
 - a. The Elizabeth Duff Transit Center at WeGo Central through Downtown Nashville via the West Side Transit Priority Corridor as identified in Connect Downtown.
 - b. The proposed East Bank Transit Center and East Bank BRT Corridor via Korean Veterans Boulevard.
 - c. Connection of the Murfreesboro Pike corridor to Nashville International Airport and Donelson Station via Donelson Pike.

2. In close cooperation with affordable housing organizations and advocates such as Metro Planning and the Metropolitan Development and Housing Authority (MDHA), examine and recommend strategies for retaining and increasing affordable and mixed income housing opportunities as the corridor develops with a future transit project.
3. In close cooperation with small business interests similarly examine and recommend strategies for enhancing small business creation and retention in the corridor, and mechanisms to maximize the participation of small and minority businesses in the development and construction of the project. This element would also recommend strategies for business continuity in the corridor during any construction period to minimize disruptions and business loss.
4. Undertake necessary environmental work to obtain a record of decision by the United States Department of Transportation with respect to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to gain eligibility for Federal funding.
5. Achieve necessary planning and development milestones for both the Murfreesboro Pike and East Bank high-capacity transit corridors to enable each project to enter into, and be competitive for, the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program of the Federal Transit Administration.
6. Undertake necessary ridership and traffic impact modeling to satisfy requirements of the Tennessee Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration with respect to the creation of dedicated transit lanes in TDOT controlled right of way.
7. Engage in a robust public engagement process to assure that residents and business in the corridor are properly informed about the process and are provided the opportunity for input into final designs and alignments.
8. Reach a conceptual design (to about 30%) for the corridor and associated elements of the project, including station location and design and associated roadway and pedestrian improvements.

II. REQUESTED INFORMATION

2.1 WEGO'S INTENT

This RFI seeks qualified consultant teams to propose a diverse range of activities (and recommended methods) that will guide WeGo leadership in making well-informed decisions regarding the approach to advancing Nashville's first true high-capacity transit project rooted in collaboration across local, state, and federal agencies coupled with robust community stakeholder engagement throughout the process.

It is likely that a formal procurement document will be created based on the information and/or suggestions provided in response to this RFI. Respondents to this RFI will not be excluded from future requests for these services.

The implementation of the Murfreesboro Pike All-Access Corridor project will be a pivotal moment for Nashville, enhancing public transportation efficiency and expanding ridership along WeGo's highest-ridership corridor. This project, conceived as a multi-agency corridor redevelopment project with transit as a key component, emphasizes equity and is not solely driven by transit. Its success could influence future All-Access Corridor planning, design, funding, implementation, and operations. WeGo leadership values your input and seeks your comments, advice, answers, and suggestions on the following:

1. Provide a comprehensive overview of your familiarity of the proposed Murfreesboro Pike All-Access Corridor's primary objectives and goals. How would the project address the immediate needs of the community? What anticipated challenges do you foresee and how would you address them?
2. What are the fundamental components of effective project management practices, and how do they define a project management plan that ensures the successful delivery and ongoing operations of a high-capacity, all-access corridor? Drawing upon your experience, what is a realistic timeline for a project of this magnitude? Are there any tasks that could be completed concurrently to expedite the project's transition from planning to implementation?
3. Provide examples of comparable transit infrastructure projects undertaken by your firm(s). Were these projects successfully completed? What valuable lessons were learned from these projects that could be applied to future high-capacity transit corridor projects in Nashville? Additionally, discuss innovative approaches or solutions being employed to enhance the accessibility and functionality of high-capacity transit corridors.
4. The public engagement process should be meaningful, measurable, and reflective of the community's needs and concerns. It should prioritize those most affected by the project, such as historically underrepresented communities. Who are the key community stakeholders along the Murfreesboro Pike corridor? What strategies can be implemented to ensure collaboration among diverse stakeholders throughout the process?

5. Based on your professional experience, what funding options are available to support the Murfreesboro Pike All-Access Corridor? What are some strategies that could be considered to both maximize federal funding for the corridor and minimize risk? What specific support and milestones will be required to advance the corridor through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Capital Investment Grant Program? What are some strategies that WeGo could take today to improve the corridor’s future rating? Provide a realistic timeline for completing the New Starts Project Development phase within the required 2-year time period. Provide examples of similar, recent projects that are currently navigating or have successfully navigated the process.
6. What impact would the implementation of high-capacity transit have on land values and development demands along the Murfreesboro Pike corridor? Can you share your firm’s experience working with the development community in station-area planning and transit-supportive development? Have there been instances where the development community was strategically engaged to lead transit-oriented development initiatives? How was it accomplished?
7. What measures are currently in place to support the retention and growth of affordable housing and small businesses along Nashville’s future high-capacity corridors? How can these procedures be enhanced to achieve their objectives more effectively? How can community benefit agreements be integrated into the Murfreesboro Pike project?
8. Are there any local, state, or national programs that provide support to small businesses during the construction of a high-capacity corridor project? These programs could be a valuable resource for small business owners along Murfreesboro Pike, as major infrastructure investments can impact their operations.
9. Considering recent and ongoing local efforts like [Connect Downtown](#) and the East Bank planning process, how can this corridor better integrate with Nashville’s transportation system including the rest of the WeGo network?
10. Murfreesboro Pike is a state-controlled roadway. What specific strategy should be implemented to effectively engage with TDOT leadership regarding the desired investments in the roadway? Additionally, TDOT’s future I-24 Choice Lanes project runs parallel to Murfreesboro Pike. Are there any potential implications of this project that should be considered to ensure the successful delivery of both projects?

2.2 SOLICITATION SCHEDULE

All questions and information proposals must be submitted via email to Matthew.Taylor@Nashville.Gov by the deadlines listed below.

Questions/Clarifications Submittal Deadline	Monday, January 13, 2025, by 1:00 PM CST
Proposal Information Submittal Deadline	Thursday, January 30, 2025, by 1:00 PM CST