

Community Focus Statement F: Improve the delivery of essential services to the community.

Action Statement F.3: Collaborate with the Morongo Basin Transit Authority to improve bus routing.

F3

Benchmark: MTBA transit services are improved with an increase in routes and services.

Champion: Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

Estimated Cost: Contingent on level of improvements



Bus from the Morongo Basin Transit Authority. Photo source: Morongo Basin Transit Authority

The Morongo Basin Transit Authority (MBTA) currently provides two kinds of bus services in Joshua Tree. A single fixed route, Route 1, extends through the community along Highway 62, connecting Joshua Tree to Yucca Valley to the east and Twentynine Palms to the west. The route does not diverge from the highway, so no regular service extends into the community's

residential neighborhoods, nor does the bus stop at parks, commercial areas, or other destinations located away from the highway. MBTA also provides an on-demand/destination service, Ready Ride, throughout the community. The service is primarily intended for seniors and the disabled who may use the service for a discounted rate, but other residents can use the service for a premium. Ready Ride is only available from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. during the week and can be subject to delays.

To better meet the community's transit needs, both services can be increased. As the primary service for most users, the fixed route can be rerouted to extend north and south from Highway 62 to reach residents who are not within reasonable walking distance to the highway and to serve popular destinations away from the highway, such as Sportsman's Park. In addition, the Ready Ride service can be expanded to serve customers on weeknights and/or weekends and to provide more timely service.

Both enhancements will require the community to encourage MBTA to modify its service. Any changes are likely to result from the demonstration of demand for additional service and the funding to support the operational change. The Federal Transit Administration and Caltrans offer a number of grants that may help MBTA modify its service to better meet the community's needs.

Joshua Tree National Park piloted a free shuttle service, the Roadrunner Shuttle Bus, in Spring 2018 and 2019. The shuttle connects to MBTA routes at the Joshua Tree Visitors Center and the Stater Brothers, Rite Aid and Holiday Inn on Highway 62 near the Oasis Visitors Center.

Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1. Host a community meeting to identify stakeholders in need of an improved local transit service and willing to serve on the Transit Committee.	Champion	Months 1 – 3	Morongo Basin Transit Authority http://www.mbtabus.com/ready_ride.html Federal Transit Administration Grant Programs https://www.transit.dot.gov/grants
2. Contact San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, MTBA, and CSA 20 – Joshua Tree Special Districts Department to voice interest in an improved transit service system.	Transit Committee	Months 1 – 3	Caltrans – Transportation Development Act http://dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/State-TDA.html Caltrans, Rural Transit & Intercity Bus – FTA Section 5311 and 5311(f) http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/5311.html
3. Identify potential improvements to the current fixed route (Route 1) and Ready Ride services.	Transit Committee with Community, Morongo Basin Transit Authority, CSA 20 – Joshua Tree Special Districts Department	Months 3 – 6	Joshua Tree National Park Shuttle Bus- http://www.jtnproadranner.org/
4. Identify potential funding sources.	Transit Committee with Community, Morongo Basin Transit Authority, CSA 20 – Joshua Tree Special Districts Department	Months 6 – 9	
5. Apply for federal, state, or private funding sources.	Transit Committee with Morongo Basin Transit Authority, CSA 20 – Joshua Tree Special Districts Department	Months 9 – 12	