

## **INTRODUCTION**

Identification of Mississippi's Statewide Transportation Framework (STF) is an integral component of the MULTIPLAN. STF identification lays the foundation by which other plan components will be developed and applied, particularly those relating to transportation system investment and economic development strategies. Through identification of the STF, an evaluation of the transportation network as it currently exists can be made, and, from this initial analysis, a description of the system's future.

Mississippi is a predominantly rural state, with three Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and one additional portion of the state that falls within the Memphis, Tennessee metropolitan area. While Hattiesburg, Jackson and the Gulf Coast are all large urbanized areas and designated as MPOs, the Gulf Coast provides the most complete example of an area of regional, multimodal transportation planning significance with respect to highways, rail, aviation, transit, and ports.

All regions of the state have been analyzed for the ability of STF facilities to meet mobility and accessibility needs. Both rural and urban modal facilities have been considered for their ability to satisfy the goals of the STF.

Building upon the 1996 LRTP, the criteria have been developed and refined to identify "state interest" facilities within each mode. This refinement has been undertaken considering Mississippi's rural nature and the desire for accessibility to the transportation network for the state's citizens, as well as providing a transportation network which facilitates and enhances economic development opportunities throughout the state. The state interest transportation network addresses all modes, and includes those facilities that serve the most people and provide the highest level of benefits for the investment.

Recognizing Mississippi's growing multimodal focus in transportation investments, existing and potential intermodal connections for both passengers and freight are primary components of the overall state interest network. These facilities have been identified using data provided by MDOT's modal experts, as well as other sources. Of particular importance are intermodal connectors to the National Highway System (NHS). Realizing the importance of these connectors for both accessibility and economic development reasons, all NHS Intermodal Connectors are considered to be of statewide significance.

In identifying and prioritizing those facilities which are to be placed within the STF, stated goals of improving mobility for Mississippi's people, commerce and industry; encouraging and supporting economic development; improving intermodal efficiency and connectivity; and providing a sound financial basis for the transportation system will be more easily attained. Through such efforts, relevant decisions on prioritization and programming as related to the state's transportation network can more easily be made.

## **STF DESIGN**

In order to maintain a sense of consistency for planning purposes when stratifying modal facilities, and reflecting the state's rural nature and demographic characteristics, the primary focus of STF identification within Mississippi is on specific modal facilities of state interest significance. When analyzing all modal facilities collectively, in line with the state's demographic and sociographic characteristics, and in recognizing the collective efforts of the MPOs and MDOT in participating in a unified transportation planning process, further stratification of facilities on multiple levels (e.g. regional or local) is not applicable to the state interest defined goals of the STF.

Defining the level of focus as state interest does not prohibit local entities from implementing regional prioritization and programming initiatives, nor does it lessen the importance of such regional initiatives and regional facilities within a statewide network. What this system of identification does is establish a consistent mechanism to stratify Mississippi's transportation system across modes, placing the greatest emphasis on those facilities of statewide significance, in a manner that provides flexibility as the transportation network grows.

The STF is therefore a means by which transportation facilities are identified and grouped by mode as being of state interest, providing at the same time the intermodal relationship between selected facilities. The complete STF is detailed in **Exhibit 3-1**.

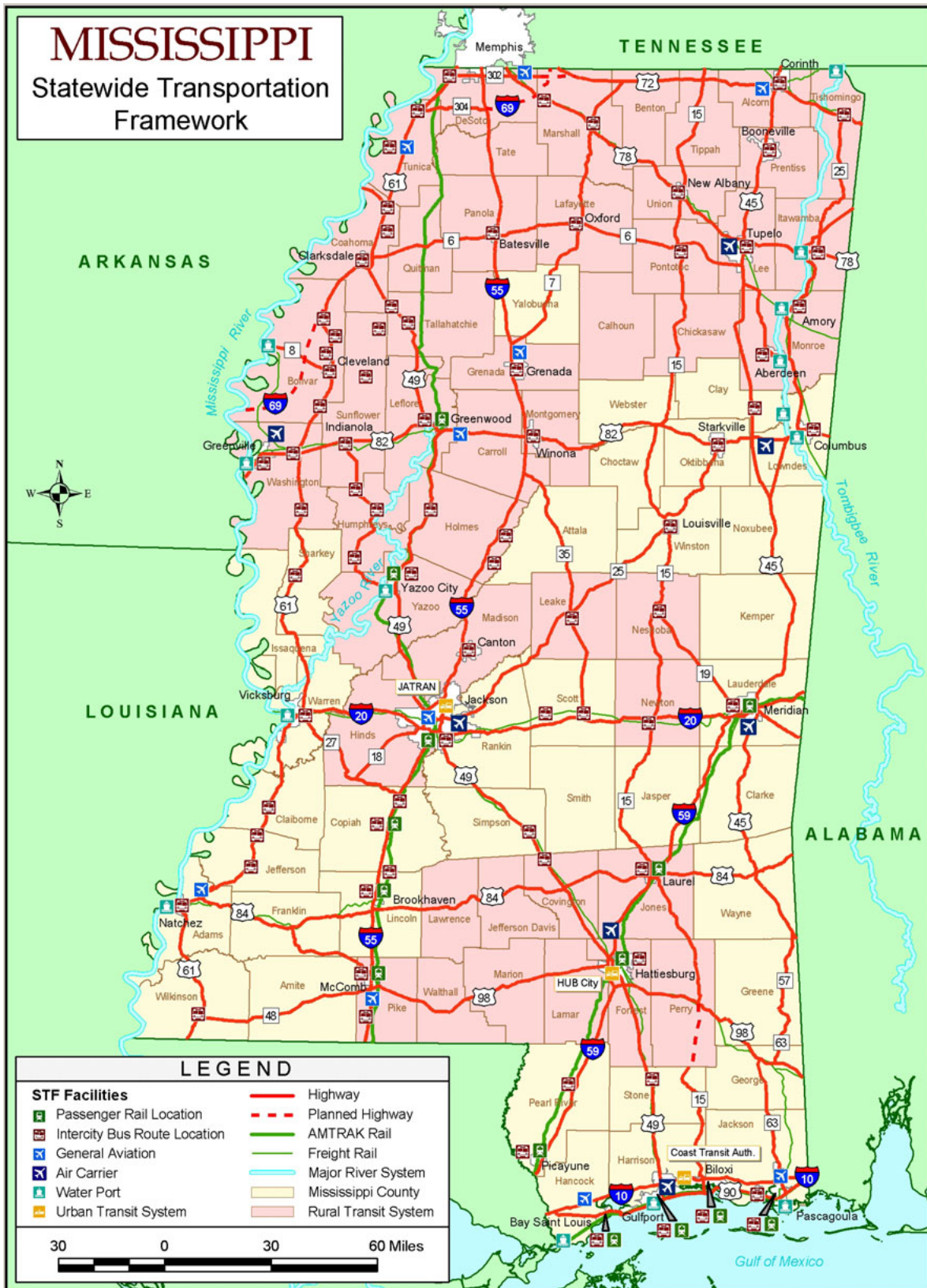
## **STF APPLICATION**

STF development is not intended to identify limits on future transportation system investments, nor does it determine which facilities will benefit from future state support. While Mississippi's interest would normally be focused on higher order facilities, the STF does not preclude state funding for regional or local facilities, where appropriate. The STF does not make any recommendations as to transportation system ownership, but rather directs appropriate planning and programming decision-making to those entities (whether state, regional or local) most directly impacted.

Identification of state interest transportation facilities is a tool that will assist in prioritizing and focusing statewide transportation planning efforts. By establishing the principal physical framework of Mississippi's intermodal transportation framework through a focus on international, interstate and intrastate considerations, the macro-level STF is distinguished from intra-urban and regional networks that are more appropriate to more micro-level local planning efforts.

With limited funding available for a multitude of statewide transportation network needs, prioritization of transportation needs is essential for successful facility and capital planning efforts. These efforts are made difficult when all facilities are treated as equally important to the state transportation network. The STF provides a mechanism for describing transportation needs by providing decision-makers with the foundation to prioritize those needs.

Exhibit 3-1  
STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION FRAMEWORK



## STF CRITERIA

The following sections describe the criteria, by mode of transportation, utilized for consideration of facilities to the STF. The criteria have been devised both to recognize the existing transportation system within Mississippi, and to also incorporate future changes to the system that may impact what facilities are considered as components of the STF. Such an approach will allow the STF to adapt to future changes in the state's transportation network.

### Highways

The following designation criteria have been utilized in allocating Mississippi highways to the STF:

1. Functional classification (Interstate, Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, etc.)
  2. Average Daily Traffic (ADT)
  3. Connectivity / Proximity to other facilities and population centers
  4. Truck traffic
- Criteria may be adjusted depending upon the availability of consistent, reliable data.
  - Both U.S. and Mississippi highways will utilize the same criteria, recognizing that in certain areas of Mississippi state routes are the only means of access and are therefore of similar importance in that regard.
  - Truck traffic is considered, as the existence of a higher volume of commercial use may be indicative of a particular facility's importance for economic development purposes through its utilization for freight transport. Such a consideration is taken into account with other designation criteria.
  - All NHS Intermodal Connectors, with particular importance given to those serving STF intermodal facilities, will be identified. The following facilities are identified within the FHWA's NHS Intermodal Connectors Database, but with no mileage listed due to their being served by other connectors:
    - Jackson Amtrak Rail Facility
    - Jackson Greyhound Bus Facility

The facilities listed in **Table 3-1** are identified as having direct NHS Intermodal Connectors:

**Table 3-1  
NHS INTERMODAL CONNECTORS**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>NHS Connector Description</b>	<b>NHS Connector Mileage</b>
Port of Aberdeen	From US 45: S 0.82 miles on Port Access Rd. (Cannell Rd.) to the port.	0.82 miles
Port of Amory	From US 45: E 6.8 miles on US 278; N 0.8 miles on Waterway Dr. (Cemetery Rd.); W 0.2 miles on Port Access Rd. to port.	6.5 miles
Port of Bienville	From US 90 / MS 607: SW 3.8 miles on US 90, then S 6.0 miles on Lower Bay Rd. (Ansley Rd.) to port.	9.8 miles
Port of Biloxi	From I-110: E 0.6 miles on U.S. 90 to port.	0.6 miles
Port of Columbus	From US 82: S 2.7 miles on Port Access Rd. to port.	2.7 miles
Port of Greenville	From US 82: SW 2.8 miles on Harbor Front Rd. to port.	2.8 miles
Port of Gulfport	(East) From US 90: S 0.6 miles on Port Access Rd. to port.	0.6 miles
	(West) From I-10: S 0.1 miles on Canal Rd., 5.6 miles SE on new location, S 2.4 miles on 30th Ave. Ext. to port.	8.1 miles
Port of Itawamba	From US 78: N 0.3 miles on Old MS 25; W 0.6 miles on south access route to port.	0.9 miles
Port of Natchez	From US 65 / 84 / 98: S 0.7 miles on Government Fleet Rd. to S 1.7 miles on Providence Rd., then W 1.85 miles on River Terminal Rd. to port.	4.25 miles
Port of Pascagoula	(East) From US 90: S 3.8 miles on MS 611 to Port Access Rd. to port.	3.8 miles
	(West) From US 90: S on MS 993 (Litton Access Rd.) to MS 991, E to River Edge Rd., ending at port.	3.06 miles
Port of Rosedale	Port Access Rd. to Russell Crutcher to MS 8 to US 61.	19.9 miles
Port of Vicksburg	From US 61: S 4.3 miles on Washington St. to south route (MS 18P 2), to 1.50 miles S on Mulberry St., Dorsey St., and Levee St.	5.8 miles
	(South) From I-20: W 2.6 miles on Clay St., Cherry St., and 1st East St., then N 1.8 miles on Washington St., and W 2.9 miles on Haining Rd.	7.3 miles
Port of Yazoo County	From U.S. 49W: MS 3 S 0.8 miles to River Rd.; then W 0.5 miles to Levee Rd. and S 0.25 miles to port.	1.55 miles
Port of Yellow Creek	(North) From U.S. 72: 13.56 miles N along MS 25 to the Port Access Rd. (CR 370), then E 0.5 miles to port.	14.06 miles
	(South) From U.S. 72: S 1.96 miles along MS 365 to the Port Access Road (CR 219), then E and N 1.3 miles to port.	3.16 miles

**Table 3-1 Continued**

Facility	NHS Connector Description	NHS Connector Mileage
Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport	(North) From U.S. 49: E 1.2 miles on Airport Rd., S 0.74 miles through and including the Terminal Route, returning to Airport Rd., then W 0.28 miles on Airport Rd. ending at the airport entrance.	2.22 miles
	(South) Follows 34 <sup>th</sup> St. E 1.42 miles, existing 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave. N 0.5 miles, and existing Strawberry Rd. W and 12 <sup>th</sup> Ave. S 0.613 miles back to 34 <sup>th</sup> St.	2.53 miles
Jackson International Airport	From I-20 (Exit 52): N 2.8 miles on MS 475 to Airport Rd. to airport.	2.8 miles
CN/IC Rail (Jackson)	(North) N. Mill St. (facility to Woodrow Wilson Blvd.), Woodrow Wilson Blvd. (N.Mill St. to I-55).	3.6 miles
Jackson Amtrak Rail Facility	(South) Pearl / Pascagoula Sts. (one-way pair) from I-55 to Mill St. then N to CN/IC Railroad.	4.2 miles
Jackson Greyhound Bus Facility		

The following criteria will be utilized in identifying highways within Mississippi as state interest, and therefore a component of the STF:

**Statewide Transportation Framework**

- All Interstate Highways
- All NHS Highways and intermodal connectors
- All rural Principal Arterials
- Select other routes meeting general traffic / truck counts / connectivity levels:
  - Generally greater than 5,000 ADT in rural areas and 15,000 ADT in urban areas
  - Recognized corridors of commercial (truck) traffic
  - Connectivity in areas not served by other state interest facilities

Based on the defined criteria, 100 percent of U.S. Interstate mileage, 100 percent of the National Highway System (as well as all NHS Intermodal Connectors), and 100 percent of the rural Principal Arterial highway mileage have been identified as components of the STF. Less than 1 percent of the remaining highway network (mainly consisting of minor arterials) has been designated as part of the STF. Approximately 5.4 percent of the total Mississippi highway network mileage has been allocated to the STF.

**Exhibit 3-2** details the Highway component of the STF.



**Rail**

Existing highway corridors in many instances follow existing rail lines, which together brings about a true transportation corridor. Rail corridors to be identified as part of the STF therefore utilize a similar basis of criteria as do highways.

Rail facility designation will include those lines with the highest amount of traffic, which are typically maintained to higher standards in order to address service volumes, frequency and speed. Rail lines providing significant interstate passenger and freight services, as well as those connecting intermodal facilities (highways, aviation, water ports and transit) will be included within the STF.

The following designation criteria have been utilized in allocating Mississippi rail facilities to the STF:

**Statewide Transportation Framework**

- Passenger Service
  - Existing Amtrak service passing through the state and providing connections to/from out-of-state destinations/origins
  - USDOT designated High Speed Rail corridors
  - MDOT planned High Speed Rail corridors
  
- Freight Service
  - Freight rail lines that:
    - connect with major interstate markets; or
    - connect with state interest identified public ports; or
    - serve principal rail-highway intermodal facilities

**Table 3-2** identifies passenger rail service (operated by Amtrak) of state interest, and therefore a component of the STF.

**Table 3-2  
STF - PASSENGER RAIL**

Train/Service	Stations Served
City of New Orleans	Greenwood, Yazoo City, Jackson, Hazlehurst, Brookhaven, McComb
Crescent	Meridian, Laurel, Hattiesburg, Picayune
Sunset Limited	Pascagoula, Biloxi, Gulfport, Bay St. Louis

Truck-rail intermodal facilities, including bulk transfer and COFC (*container* -container on flat car) / TOFC (*piggyback* - trailer on flat car), exist in the urban areas of Greenville, Jackson, Pascagoula and Vicksburg. Each location is served by one or more STF-identified freight railroad.

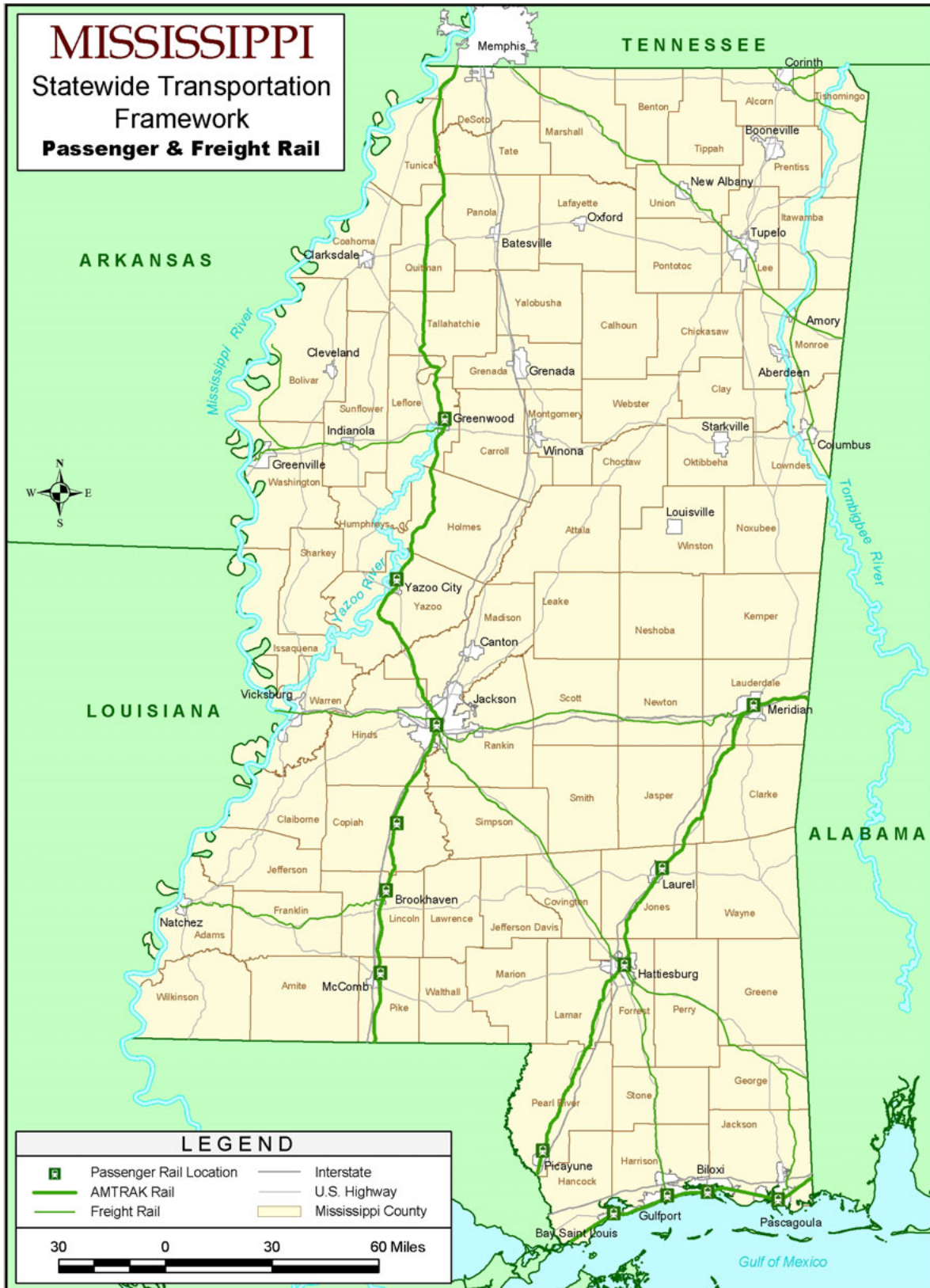
**Table 3-3** identifies freight railroads serving ports of state interest, and therefore a component of the STF.

**Table 3-3**  
**STF – FREIGHT RAIL**

<b>Railroads</b>	<b>State-Interest Water Port Connection</b>
Canadian National/Illinois Central (CN/IC)	Natchez, Yazoo County
Kansas City Southern	Lowndes, Vicksburg, Yellow Creek
Norfolk Southern	Lowndes
Burlington Northern Santa Fe	Amory, Lowndes
CSX Transportation	Gulfport, Pascagoula
Columbus & Greenville	Greenville
Great River	Rosedale
Mississippian	Itawamba

**Exhibit 3-3** details the Passenger and Freight Rail components of the STF.

Exhibit 3-3  
STF – PASSENGER AND FREIGHT RAIL



## **Transit**

The focus of transit facilities to be identified as part of the STF is on existing general passenger-related facilities and systems, with criteria developed that, in conjunction with other modal criteria and subsequent designations, will address areas of service and employment-related concern within the state. Such criteria will also allow for future additions to the Transit component of the STF as the need may dictate.

Major employment centers, such as the Nissan Motor Company plant under construction in Madison County, or casinos in the Delta and along the Gulf Coast, will need to be included in any transit-related discussions at multiple levels, as will service-related centers such as those for job and skills-related training and government services. While these centers may provide benefits to both local entities and the state as a whole, transit routing patterns will generally be within local or regional proximity. The intermodal needs of such centers will be of statewide significance, and will be addressed as such.

Public transportation, with the exception of intercity bus service and certain aspects of passenger rail service, is typically of regional or local planning significance, due to the nature of passenger trips taken. Owing to Mississippi's rural character, public transportation from a statewide perspective is generally not of similar significance when compared to other modes.

For the purpose of developing the STF, transit components will include urban, rural, and intercity elements. Local fixed-route systems in large urbanized areas will be included in the STF to identify transportation clusters, and multicounty rural transit systems will be included to identify areas with major trip destinations.

The following designation criteria have been utilized in allocating Mississippi transit facilities to the STF:

### **Statewide Transportation Framework**

- Intercity bus facilities (locations)
- Urban fixed-route / paratransit systems of state interest
- Rural multicounty transit systems of state interest

Transit systems / facilities meeting the following criteria will be considered to be of regional / local significance, and therefore not a component of the STF:

- Commuter / excursion rail services
- Urban fixed-route / paratransit systems of no state interest (lack of population base and ridership)
- Rural transit systems of no state interest (lack of population base and ridership)

**Table 3-4** identifies intercity bus locations that are considered part of the STF.

**Table 3-4  
STF – INTERCITY BUS LOCATIONS**

Aberdeen	Durant	Iuka	Natchez	Shelby
Amory	Fayette	Jackson	New Albany	Starkville
Batesville	Forest	Jonestown	Newton	Tchula
Bay St. Louis	Fulton	Laurel	Oxford	Tunica
Belzoni	Gautier	Leland	Parchman	Tupelo
Biloxi	Goodman	Lorman	Pascagoula	Tutwiler
Booneville	Greenville	Louise	Philadelphia	Vicksburg
Brookhaven	Greenwood	Louisville	Picayune	Walls
Byhalia	Grenada	Magee	Pontotoc	Webb
Canton	Gulfport	Magnolia	Poplarville	Wesson
Carthage	Hattiesburg	McComb	Port Gibson	West Point
Clarksdale	Hazlehurst	Meridian	Rich	Wiggins
Cleveland	Hollandale	Merigold	Robinsonville	Winona
Columbus	Holly Springs	Morton	Rolling Fork	Woodville
Corinth	Indianola	Mound Bayou	Ruleville	Yazoo City
Crystal Springs	Isola	Mt. Olive	Shaw	

**Table 3-5** identifies urban fixed-route systems of state interest, and therefore a component of the STF.

**Table 3-5  
STF – URBAN FIXED ROUTE SYSTEMS**

Coast Transit Authority (Gulfport/Biloxi)	Hub City Transit (Hattiesburg)	Jackson Transit (Jatran)
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Rural, multicounty public transit systems of state interest have been identified based on a collective review of the following criteria:

- Service area population
- Service area square mileage
- Transit ridership
- Transit mileage

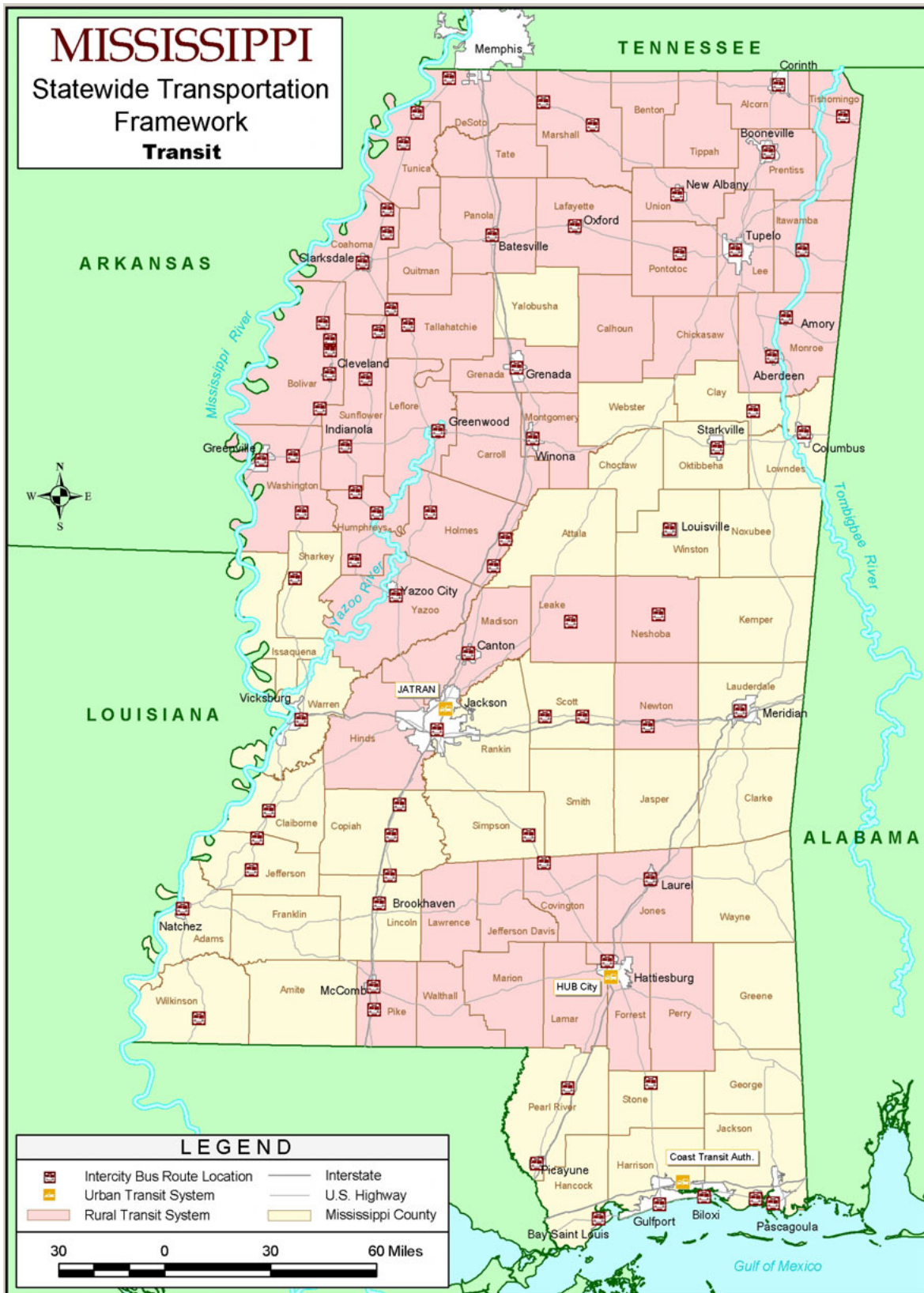
Based on the above criteria, **Table 3-6** identifies rural multicounty transit systems that are a component of the STF.

**Table 3-6  
RURAL MULTICOUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEMS**

<b>Transit System</b>	<b>Service Area (Counties)</b>
Aaron Henry CHSC	Bolivar, Coahoma, DeSoto, Panola, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tunica
Bolivar County COA	Bolivar, Sunflower, Washington
Choctaw Transit Authority	Leake, Neshoba, Newton
Five County Child Development Council	Covington, Jefferson Davis, Lawrence
Lift, Inc	Calhoun, Chickasaw, Itawamba, Lafayette, Lee, Monroe, Pontotoc, Union
Madison County HRA	Hinds, Holmes, Leake, Madison, Yazoo
Mississippi VSU Mass Transit	Carroll, Grenada, Holmes, Humphreys, Leflore, Montgomery, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Washington
Northeast Mississippi Comm. Services	Alcorn, Marshall, Prentiss, Tishomingo
Pearl River Valley Opportunity	Covington, Forrest, Jones, Lamar, Marion, Perry, Pike, Walthall
United CAC	Benton, Tippah

**Exhibit 3-4** details the Transit component of the STF.

Exhibit 3-4  
STF – TRANSIT



## Aviation

The *Mississippi Statewide Airports Study* completed in 1999 developed a system of criteria to be used in constructing a statewide network of general aviation airports serving Mississippi. The criteria as developed placed emphasis upon the service needs of the state's residents in attaining economic development goals, as well as utilization of the airport system for transportation and emergency needs.

Airport system levels are identified incorporating two primary criteria:

- *Location* – the geographic location of the airport and the location of several demand centers which may provide activity for an airport and vice versa; and
- *Level of service and activity* – the level of service and facilities expected for various categories of airports within the statewide system. This criteria was designed to recognize existing as well as future needs, activity levels expected to accommodate business jet type aircraft, and facilities required to serve each airport category.

With respect to business development, the goal is to be able to reach a specific local community's airport within 30-45 minutes ground access time from another airport with better instrument approach and service facilities.

The three airport system levels identified include:

- Type I – General Purpose Airports
- Type II – Business Airports of Local Impact
- Type III – Business Airports of Regional Impact
- Type III Enhanced – Business Airports of State Impact

Type III Enhanced airports are recognized as being the highest level of general aviation airports within Mississippi, while also serving areas of regional significance. As such, the airports identified within this level are considered state interest and therefore included within the STF. Each of the three remaining system types are considered to be of regional/local significance for the purpose of STF stratification; however, their collective impact is recognized.

The minimum criteria required to meet the Type III Enhanced level of airports include a runway length of 5,000 feet, requiring a precision instrument approach. More detailed facilities standards are found within the *Mississippi Statewide Airports Study*. Recognizing the direct correlation to the economic interest of Mississippi, Type III Enhanced airports also must possess airport capacity, capability and amenities at levels substantial enough to serve the traveling public.

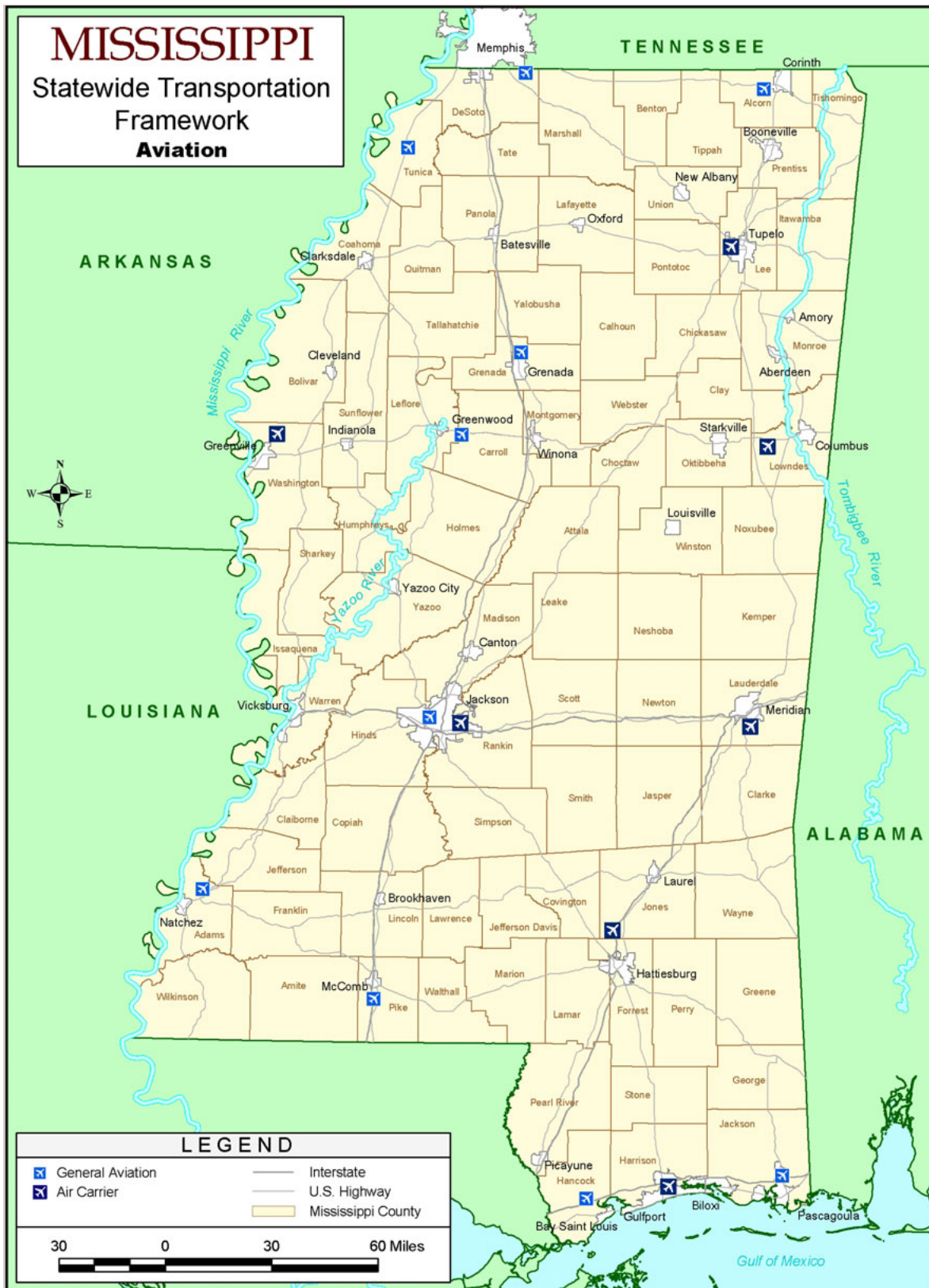
**Table 3-7** identifies airports that are of state interest, and therefore part of the STF.

**Table 3-7  
STF - AVIATION**

<b>Air Carrier</b>		<b>General Aviation</b>	
Columbus	Golden Triangle Regional	Bay St. Louis	Stennis International
Greenville	Mid-Delta Regional	Corinth	Roscoe Turner
Gulfport	Gulfport-Biloxi International	Greenwood	Greenwood-Leflore
Hattiesburg	Hattiesburg-Laurel Regional	Grenada	Grenada Municipal
Jackson	Jackson International	Jackson	Hawkins Field
Meridian	Key Field Meridian Regional	McComb	McComb-Pike County
Tupelo	Tupelo Regional	Natchez	Hardy-Anders Field
		Olive Branch	Olive Branch
		Pascagoula	Trent Lott International
		Tunica	Tunica

**Exhibit 3-5** details the Aviation component of the STF.

Exhibit 3-5  
STF – AVIATION



## Ports & Waterways

Mississippi is home to 16 public ports, two of which are controlled by the state, with the remaining locally owned and operated. Both ports under state jurisdiction are considered to be of state interest for both jurisdictional and operational reasons, and are therefore part of the STF.

Of the remaining 14 public ports, the cargo and freight transport capacities vary, as does their impact to Mississippi. The following criteria, **not** in order of importance, but in conjunction with one another, have been used in identifying ports as state interest, and therefore part of the STF:

### Statewide Transportation Framework

- Ports with deep-draft capacity
- Ports with barge capacity and facilities
- Ports of industrial significance
- Ports with connections to the National Highway System

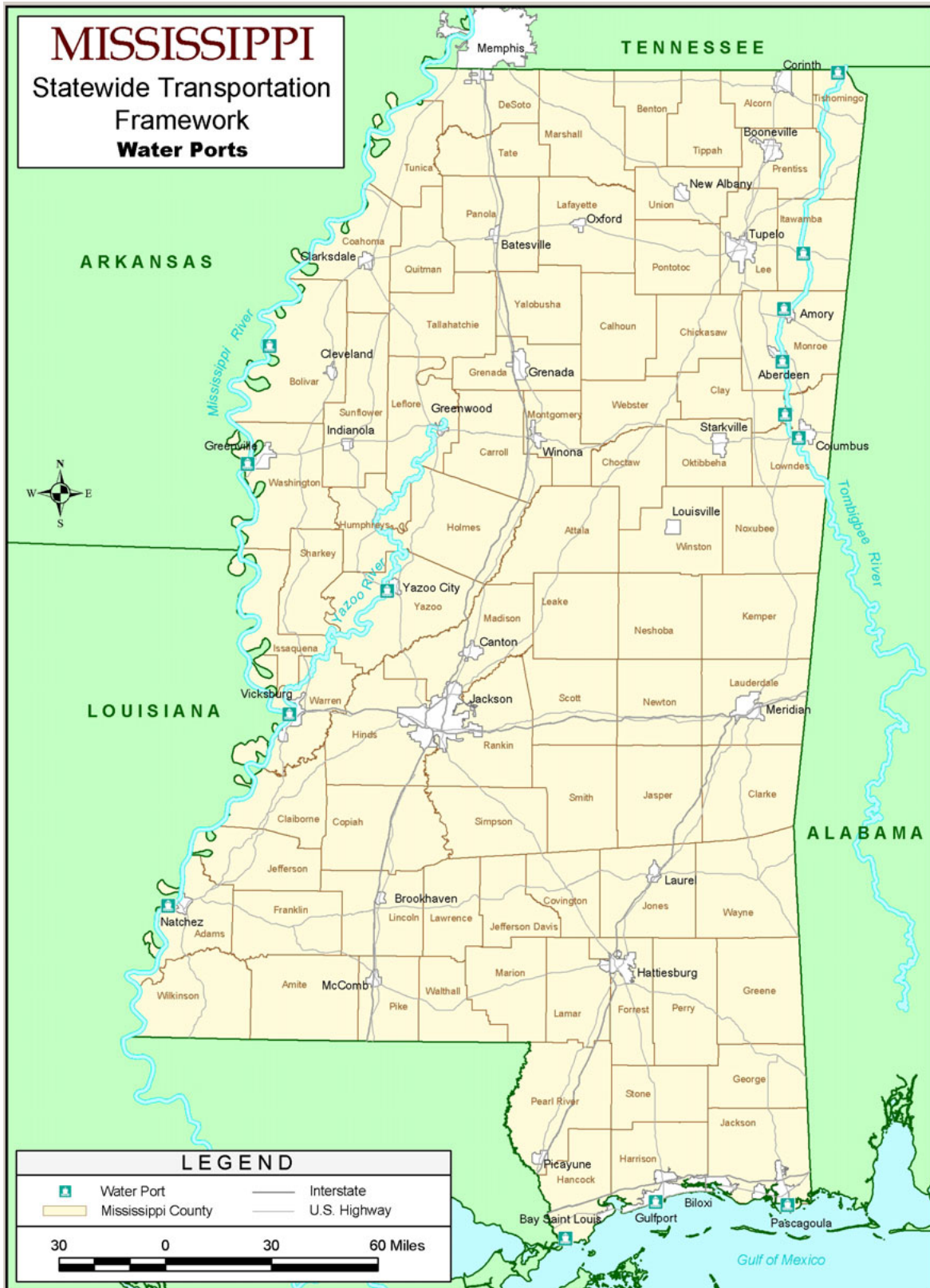
**Table 3-8** identifies public ports that are of state interest, and part of the STF:

**Table 3-8**  
**STF – WATER PORTS**

Location	Port
<i>State Control:</i>	
Gulfport	Port of Gulfport
Iuka	Yellow Creek State Inland Port
<i>Local Control:</i>	
Aberdeen	City of Aberdeen Port
Amory	Port of Amory
Bay St. Louis	Port Bienville Industrial Park
Columbus	Lowndes County Port
Fulton	Port Itawamba
Greenville	Greenville Port Commission/Terminal
Natchez	Natchez Adams County Port
Pascagoula	Port of Pascagoula
Rosedale	Port of Rosedale
Vicksburg	Port of Vicksburg
West Point	Port of Clay County
Yazoo City	Yazoo County Port

**Exhibit 3-6** details the Water Ports component of the STF.

Exhibit 3-6  
STF – WATER PORTS



### **Bike/Pedestrian Facilities**

Generally speaking, within Mississippi there is an absence of bike routes of statewide significance. With the exception of the on-road Mississippi River Trails bike routes, all remaining facilities are of local or university-related significance. The Mississippi River Trails are primarily recreation-oriented, with a minor impact to the state's tourism efforts.

All pedestrian facilities are of local significance. There are therefore no bike or pedestrian facilities identified as part of the STF. Intra-urban and university-located bike facilities are considered as being of either regional or local significance, as are all off-road bike facilities and all pedestrian facilities.