



MetroRAPID BRT North Corridor

Public Meeting Questions & Answers

November 18, 2021 | 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Thank you for joining us during our MetroRAPID Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) North Corridor Study virtual public meeting. There were so many good questions asked during the Question & Answer session that we were unable to respond to them all in time.

Below are the answers to the questions asked during this meeting. Thank you for your interest!





Q: Will the access to BRT be covered or protected from the elements? The distance to travel by foot or wheel at Northcross will be almost a half-mile if you park at the furthest parking space.

A: Yes, the access to the BRT Station at Northcross Option 1 is envisioned to be an enclosed structure like the one built on the LYNX Blue Line Extension at the Sugar Creek Station and University City Blvd Station. The structure would be located in the median of the BRT highway.

Q: Adding charging stations can be a financial burden and not a little upgrade. How will CATS incorporate this into budget forecasting?

A: CATS has a separate program to incorporate electric buses into its fleet. A future phase of the study will look at charging stations and whether they would be beneficial at MetroRAPID mobility hubs.

Q: What about Express to CLT? Can you see a feasible bus route to that CATS station at exit 28 without snags and delays? Is this the only Park and Ride available at Exit 28?

A: The preferred option in Cornelius addresses the congestion at Exit 28 and looks to connect the existing Cornelius Park and Ride through an alternative way, including constructing bus-only accessibility.

Q: How will the needs of people of color and low-income residents, as well as physically challenged individuals, be served?

A: CATS will work with the disabled community and follow all ADA requirements throughout the design. The public engagement calls for ensuring all public meetings are



fully accessible to all citizens, providing translation and addressing all language, culture and economic barriers.

Questions about Current Bus Operations and Local Services:

Participants were asked to submit the following questions via telltransit@charlottenc.gov or 704.336.RIDE.

Q: Could the 7N Northlake have midday service at the Northlake Park and Ride during the hours when 53x Northlake is not running?

A: Route 7 currently serves Northlake Mall approximately every 30-40 minutes from 5:47 a.m. -- 11:07 p.m. For most of the daytime, the frequency is every 30 minutes, and late-night trips run every 40 minutes.

Q: What are the plans for the areas that the express buses currently serve beyond the Park and Rides? For example, the 77x service along 115 and Catawba (Cornelius Town Hall, etc.).

A: With the implementation of the MetroRAPID BRT service, CATS would study the bus service network that would connect the mobility hubs to the surrounding areas. It will include how to serve the existing Express Buses areas. Additionally, the Envision My Ride (EMR) Bus Priority Study will develop recommendations for transportation on-demand that will include areas currently served by the Village Rider. It will provide the framework for near-term service improvements.

Q: What plans are in development for local service to replace the Village Rider model?

A: CATS will develop a bus integration plan as part of the MetroRAPID service. This plan would create a strategic bus network to the surrounding areas. Additionally, the EMR Bus Priority Study will develop recommendations for transportation on-demand that will



include areas currently served by the Village Rider. It will provide the framework for near-term service improvements.

Q: This sounds great for those that are not elderly or disabled. Will Special Transportation Services (STS) for the disabled be part of this massive plan? Why is it that STS is not permitted in Cornelius other than via private rental from private companies such as nursing homes?

A: CATS provides STS (paratransit) service to locations within 3/4 mile of local fixed routes. Most service in Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson is provided by express lanes rather than a local fixed route. CATS does not provide STS service more than 3/4 mile from non-local fixed routes such as express routes. To supplement the express route service in the northern towns, CATS provides local fixed route service through the Village Rider routes: 97, 98 and 99. The Village Riders can be better explained as an alternate fixed-route service. In our case, local fixed routes do not deviate.

Q: Are there any prospects for increasing the frequency of 97, 98, 99 buses? Even a 30 min headway would be so much better than hourly service.

A: CATS is studying ways to increase service on several of its routes in the EMR Bus Priority Study. The EMR project has an aspirational goal of no service greater than 30 minutes. The Village Rider routes currently operate every 60 minutes. Long-term, and when resources are available, CATS' goal is to improve the village rider routes to every 30 minutes. Additionally, the EMR will develop recommendations for transportation on-demand that will include areas currently served by the Village Rider. It will provide the framework for near-term service improvements.



Questions Answered During the Public Meeting:

Q: Now that longer buses 45 feet and articulated buses are now legal in NC, when do you expect to procure the first full-electric articulated bus for CATS?

A: We will have to look at the different buses and technologies available. Articulated buses might not be the best use for this corridor. CATS is in the process of studying shifting to battery-powered electric buses soon. The over-road coach vehicles (MCI buses) that are used for the service today seem like an efficient way for the near-term, but we will be studying different vehicle types in the next phase.

Q: Will the MetroRapid service come to Gastonia, Rock Hill and Monroe too?

A: Because of the I-77 managed lanes, we can run the existing service and utilize these lanes. The North Corridor is the first corridor CATS is studying for MetroRapid service, but this can be extended into other areas. For instance, similarly managed lanes are being built on I-485 in South Charlotte. In the future, we will be looking at other corridors where MetroRAPID BRT service could be an option.

Q: What about active transportation and ADA accessibility? Will the Park and Ride lots provide minimum standards or will they provide safe, comfortable facilities for first/last mile connections?

A: All our Park and Rides will meet all the requirements for ADA accessibility. Suppose there is a structure where you must get to a second level. In that case, there will be some combination of elevators, escalators and stairs so that everyone can access it easily. As we move to the next phase, we'll begin studying land use, not just at the Park and Ride itself, but in the station areas. We will explore what improvements can be made in the surrounding area regarding the road network, bicycle and pedestrian connections and greenways.

Q: Will long-term bike parking include electrification for eBikes? As they get larger, they should be part of the initial investment to promote use rather than respond to demand.

A: There is an array of options for mobility hubs, and that is one. Each mobility hub will be sized with the needs and services it demands. As electric bicycles' demand grows and there is a need to charge these at stations, we can incorporate them. As we develop and design these mobility hubs, we want to not only include today's vision. Still, we have the flexibility to add additional services as they are introduced.

Q: Will the Davidson service require a redesign for electric articulated buses?

A: In the future, we will study whether articulated buses are the right vehicles for the MetroRAPID BRT service. We studied the actual turning radius movement of the existing MCI vehicles and articulated buses, and they can safely maneuver the Davidson roundabouts today.

Q: Will the Cornelius lot require a rebuild to support electric buses, or will it be prioritized for showers and long-term bike storage?

A: A future planning phase will study each mobility hub and determine what level of amenities will be recommended at each one. If electric buses were added to the service, we would need to determine what electric bus amenities would be required at each mobility hub.

Q: Could all MetroRAPID buses going to the north be able to start picking back up passengers at a designated spot around the Charlotte Transportation Center for easier access and connections?

A: The service currently exits I-277 and utilizes Church Street, a one-way southbound street, and College Street, a one-way northbound street, through the significant part of the central business district. The service could access the future Charlotte Gateway Station to the west or the existing Charlotte Transportation Center to the east. The next phase of the study will determine the Uptown Charlotte circulation and how the BRT is incorporated into the rest of the CATS system.