



**TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA**  
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center  
CH-14 and [Join TSAC Meeting via Zoom here.](#)  
February 9, 2023  
4:00- 5:30 pm

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| I. Call to Order<br>Approval of January 12, 2023 Summary   | Chair Krissy Oechslin                         |
| II. Public Comment   |   |
| III. Information Item:<br>A. MTC Committee Roles and Responsibilities<br>B. FY 24 Preliminary Budget Update<br>C. Microtransit Public Outreach | Jason Lawrence<br>Chad Howell<br>Brian Horton |
| IV. Chair Report   | Krissy Oechslin                               |
| V. Service Issues  | All   |
| VI. Service Planning Report  | Pamela White                                  |

**NEXT MONTH'S TSAC MEETING IS MARCH 9, 2023**

## TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Meeting Summary

Thursday, January 12, 2023

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**TSAC Members Present:** Krissy Oechslin, Charlotte  
Leroy Fields, Charlotte  
Sam Grundman, Charlotte  
Walk Horstman, Matthews  
Jarrett Hurms, Charlotte  
Antonette Love, Charlotte  
Tim Spaulding, Charlotte  
Linda Webb, Charlotte

**CATS/City of Charlotte Staff:** Jason Lawrence, Pamela White, Kelly Goforth, Rachel Gragg, Jennifer Fehribach, Kimera Coburn, Edwin Johnson, Natalie Bouchard, Lashima Tate, Logan Lover, Jayla Gittens, Deltrin Harris, Brandon Hunter, Arlanda Rouse, Brad Thomas, Brian Horton, Carlos Parada

***Meeting Time 4:00-5:30 PM***

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#### I. **Call to Order**

Chair Krissy Oechslin called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

#### **Approval of December 2022 Meeting Summary**

Chair Krissy asked for a motion to approve the meeting summary from December 2022. Tim motion to approve the summary. Antonette seconded the motion. The December 2022 meeting summary was approved unanimously.

#### II. **Public Comment on Agenda Items:**

No public comment

#### III. **Information Item:**

##### **A. Interim CEO Introduction**

Brent Cagle introduced himself to TSAC members. He has been with the City of Charlotte for about ten years. Brent moved to Charlotte from Phoenix where he was with the City of Phoenix. Came to Charlotte in 2012. Started out with Aviation. Ended up being the CEO for Charlotte Douglas up until about two

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years ago. Then Brent moved over to the City Manager's office where Brent has been an Assistant City Manager for the last two and a half years. Mr. Jones asked Brent if he would be willing to step in as interim CEO. Brent was more than happy to do it and excited to be part of the CATS team during the process to recruit and hire a new CEO.

## **B. 2023 A Look Ahead**

Jason Lawrence went over a look at the year that CATS has had and what CATS is anticipating ahead in 2023. Last year it was a dialogue around reliability and finding ways to improve reliability with bus service on issues that CATS was having with missed trips. It was a big conversation throughout last year. Go into conversations about potential reduced workforce scenarios. A big piece of work that CATS will be doing most of this year is the rollout of microtransit that will touch nearly all aspects of CATS service, CATS policy and communications with the public.

Looking back at where CATS was at this time last year, real time tracking wasn't working consistent on the app. Whole light rail wasn't completely live at the time. CATS made great strides last year on real time tracking on bus app to know where CATS communicates when missing trips but that has been reduced greatly. Didn't have an app that clearly communicated all the things that CATS needed and that CATS wanted to communicate to the public. CATS did the August 2022 service change where CATS modified schedules to reduce the missed trips. From the bus service since then have an ongoing evaluation of capacity on bus and on rail to really understand. CATS wants to bring back service, but it needs and has to be reliable. Looking at ridership at a trip-by-trip level on bus and rail to really understand. Same thing with rail service CATS did have to modify rail service with that August change to go back to 20 minutes where CATS was 15 minutes prior.

In the analysis, CATS looked at every route and every trip throughout the day. Looked at where CATS could find some savings on the bus side. Find some savings on late night trips where there were fewer people riding or potentially reduce frequency to save operators. Jason presented an example of what the analysis looked like. Also looked at where service that needed extra service at very specific times versus throughout the day. CATS did some improvements with retaining service after the August change rather than reducing frequency throughout the day.

Jason showed an example of route 16 prior to the change before August. It was an example of where CATS used the analysis to look at the boardings. The two lines on the analysis show 20 average boardings per day and 30 average boardings a day. It is a long route. It is not the load but how many people got on. It was a route that CATS felt comfortable reducing frequency but still maintain healthy amount of boardings. Jason presented what it looks like today after reduced frequency. Similar pattern and ridership is spaced out. CATS is

doing less frequency but still comfortably within 20 boardings for most trips or some trips approaching 30 or going over. Still doesn't reach service thresholds for load standards. CATS is still monitoring this and is looking at where CATS needs to put in frequency. At this time the way ridership is looking still within service threshold for route 16.

Looking at January 2022 to December and from April to May to July experiencing issues with the missed trips on a weekly basis. In December that reduction really and the frequency changes helped CATS improve reliability. Continuing to monitor this and feel reduced frequency has helped. CATS will continue to monitor this moving forward.

Jason presented a summary of the frequency implemented in August of 2022. For the moment, it is the frequency that CATS will maintain. Routes adjusted and did put some additional frequency on route 9 where CATS saw afternoon peaks that needed some additional service. As it gets better, CATS will bring frequency back. For the February change maintain these changes throughout and keep looking at June and October for potential opportunities to bring back frequency. Completely related to the number of operators that CATS has to implement the service each and every day.

Jason provided a summary of the Express changes that CATS has made and continue and retain these changes. Primarily focused on the express routes, not suggesting any new or increased service for this primarily on I-77 corridor. Have noticed on some of the earlier trips on route 77 consistent with outreach that Pamela and her team did that people want more early trips. People's work patterns have changed a bit. Investigating whether a 3:00pm or 3:30pm trip might make more sense in the afternoon versus starting at 4:00pm. In November restored 41X, 61X and 88X. In this corridor CATS is looking at proposed conversion of the Village Rider and the 290 route for microtransit. Potentially free up some operators to help in this corridor to increase frequency.

Jason presented a couple of examples of rail. The peak has increased a lot. Have seen a lot more ridership in the peak. During the pandemic throughout the day ridership was fairly flat and didn't see that peak travel. That has certainly returned. From a pattern standpoint, in 2019 had pretty defined peaks and in the current year there is defined peaks. Approaching more than 50 people per car similar to 2019. In 2019, had much more increased frequency than there is today. A lot more frequency but the pattern is still the same that CATS is seeing right now.

Looking at loads, CATS is seeing patterns where Tuesdays and Thursdays show higher ridership than Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Certainly, seeing that pattern. The service threshold is 150. From a policy standpoint if there are more than 150 people in a trip from a load standpoint that is an alarm for CATS to start evaluating for additional frequency. At this point CATS is approaching those loads at the Carson Station as it is coming from the South

from the North as well.

CATS believes it is time to implement 15-minute peak day frequency on the Blue Line for the February change and keep all the other changes that were put in place in August as they are. Continue to evaluate that. That is the major change that CATS has going to 15-minute peak weekday frequency on the Blue Line. Feels that is warranted given the capacity issues that CATS is seeing and the loads on that route.

Walt commented that on the rail it looks like people are traveling earlier. It looks like it peaked earlier in the morning and early in the afternoon. When going to the fewer trips and had fewer dropped trips was there a negative impact on ridership? Were people willing to wait or find other alternative needs?

Jason responded that there is a difference in the daily pattern than what it was before because people are doing two in or three days in the office. The times have changed seeing people want to start earlier in the afternoon and maybe a little bit later. The patterns are changing and somewhat stabilize. On the bus side reliability is the key in transit and being reliable and consistent. CATS has seen some slight improvements in some of the bus ridership and stabilized. Hope that continues.

Jarrett commented that Tuesdays and Thursdays have a heavier pace, certain frequency will go by certain days. Mondays and Fridays a lot of people would prefer to work from home if in a hybrid schedule versus Tuesdays and Thursdays. Do you see the middle of week Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday as far as day-by-day bases have to increase capacity to get over threshold?

Jason responded that just like CATS customers like consistent and reliability in schedules workforce does to. Having that consistent ability to pick shifts knowing what CATS will be operating from a workforce management standpoint. Patterns could change. There could be a big even happening. Have seen a greater return to office. CATS practice has been throughout the pandemic more of a 7-day week schedule and have more patterns throughout the week.

Tim asked if there are any issues from a mechanic/equipment standpoint?

Allen Smith responded that CATS is trying to accomplish not only reliability but sustainability. With the age of the fleet with some of the overhauls that CATS has coming up with the light rail vehicles have to be able to put out a schedule that CATS can maintain in the short term and in the long term. It is a delicate balance right now.

Jason responded that CATS would not have recommended this increase without feeling comfortable with the number of vehicles. On the planning and

operations side work hand in hand in these recommendations. When CATS rolls the recommendations out to TSAC CATS has worked that out between the two divisions.

Krissy commented on the chart that showed route 16. Service policy refers to how many people get on the bus and is about capacity on a bus and not about people's weight. Are people just not taking that bus anymore? If people have given up on taking the 16 then that is all to fitting too many people on the bus problem.

Jason responded the first strategy was make it reliable first and see how that is going and then if there are people that have dropped off then that is a separate issue. CATS is looking at service policies in general because need to add microtransit to that. As CATS goes through that process CATS will be bringing those service policies to TSAC for information.

Krissy had a question regarding the retain adjustment to 20%. It just means that CATS is keeping service levels on the local and the express buses.

Jason responded that the 20% was a number that CATS used in the August 15<sup>th</sup> change that were only affecting 20% of the routes.

Krissy commented that CATS is not adding more trips right now.

Jason responded that CATS is not adding more trips on buses at this time. Want to keep going with reliability success that CATS has had.

Krissy commented that CATS is going to 15 minute so there will be 4 per hour instead of 3 per hour. During rush hour during the week, Krissy has heard many people complain about crowding. Number of people taking train by car there was a significant difference between cars. Do more people go in the front than the back car?

Jason responded typically yes. There is a transportation study on how people board trains.

Sam was wondering on capital expenses on extending platforms to three cars.

Jason responded that CATS long range plan is to bring all of the light rail platforms to three cars. There are eleven remaining to extend to three cars on the Lynx Blue Line. The extension has three car platforms and then four on the original Blue Line were extended through a separate effort. Largely driven by ridership and capacity. At this point, two cars do meet needs on those platforms. It is something that CATS wants to continually evaluate and when the timing is right CATS would advance.

Sam asked if CATS project would want to extend all platforms together or one

or two stations at a time?

Jason responded that it would depend. CATS got funding for four before and that was the path CATS took. When looking at the CTC project look for opportunities to extend platforms as that project is happening. Would make sense to do it with that kind of larger development. It would be a case-by-case bases if there was funding to do all the platforms then that would be something to be considered. Ridership and funding opportunities as the opportunities become available locally and federally.

Sam commented that the first platforms in the south were extended to three cars. There was some talk about running three car trains for special events. Has CATS considered that?

Allen responded on the original Blue Line eleven stations down and it would be difficult to run a train and then a three-car train pass those stations leaving customers. It is not in CATS best effort to do that.

Sam commented the idea of three car trains but not every car opens at every station. At some of the stations either the front car or back car would open. Would that be a consideration?

Allen responded that it is not actually feasible. It would take cutting the doors out and blocking the doors. It would also cause the operator to go to the last car when getting to Brooklyn Village Station and then open that car up so it would be able to accommodate three cars. The timing it would take and the effort it would take it would not be worth it. It would be easier for CATS to put another two-car train out there.

JL commented that the ridership at this point does not justify three car trains.

Brendan (non TSAC Member) asked if CATS would have to upgrade the power to run three car trains?

Allen responded that when CATS did the upgrades for the BLE extension, CATS added traction power substations and now have the capability traction power wise to run three car trains. It is not the power that would be the problem it's the real estate with the platforms the extension of the platforms.

Brendan (non TSAC Member) commented driving one three car train around and pull up to the first two cars and pull up to the last car and just drive away. Would that add more time to delays?

Allen responded for CATS to run three cars now in the stations that could not accommodate three cars. Have to block and lock out all the doors on the last car so no one would have access. When that train got to Brooklyn Village station that operator would then have to come out of the front car all the way



back to the third car and unblock and open all those doors to then go in service from that point all the way up to University of North Carolina in Charlotte. It is not feasible to do it that way.

Brent wanted to clarify what block and lock out means. If CATS had a three-car train at a three-car station and passengers were allowed to load all three cars but that train would ultimately stop at two car station the operator before pulling out of that three-car station would need to manually lock that door on the third car so the passengers on board so that door wouldn't open to blank space when it hits a two-car platform. Brent would think that from a customer from a Safety and Security type of situation would also be less than ideal beyond the operator having to manually lock in passengers and then release passengers later on down the line. That would be concerning from a safety perspective if something were to happen or those kinds of things.

Walt commented that CATS wasted a lot of money on three platforms. 2008-2030 built something that has sat there unused for a couple of decades.

Jason responded when building this big projects, it is always easier to do the work up front and CATS got funding for three car. The original project was originally for three car platforms and then gave CATS money to add four back in. It is CATS goal to make all platforms three car platforms.

Brent started the presentation regarding reduced workforce scenarios. Brent knows that everyone in the community wants to know more about the possibility of a strike. The reduced work force scenarios are not specific to a strike. Reduced work force scenarios are there for emergency planning and how CATS would plan to operate in any reduced work force scenario, but strikes would apply.

In general terms about the agreement that RATP Dev CATS contractor has collective bargaining agreement that RATP Dev has with Smart Union with operators and mechanics. Collective bargaining agreement between RATP and Smart Union the city is not and cannot be a party to that. There are reasons why this entire structure exists. Revolve around federal requirements and state law requirements. Federally there is a right for those jobs to be unionized positions. However, in North Carolina municipalities or public entities are not able to enter into collecting bargaining with Unions. Charlotte is not unique and there is a name for it. It is called the Memphis Plan and is called that because Memphis created it. Charlotte is one of many organizations that have to deal with it. Collective bargaining agreement is not something the City of Charlotte is a party to or can be engaged in actively negotiating those items. Where does the city involvement lie? The city has RATP Dev as the city's operator and pay RATP Dev on services provided. To the extent of negotiating agreement in things like pay or benefits or other things that can ultimately have a higher cost to the City of Charlotte contract. The city has been in communication with RATP to let RATP know that the city respects RATP's



negotiation. As negotiating for those things that may result in higher contract cost, the city is open to and willing to accept higher contract cost within reason. Should value employees and the employees are the most important asset. Fair pay and benefits are important to this organization and expect contractors to have similar values. Hope both parties are negotiating in good faith and come to an agreement before there is a strike.

Related to the strike, at this point RATP and the Smart Union have agreed to continue to negotiate through January 15<sup>th</sup>. That means there would not be a strike before that because agreed to negotiate. On January 7<sup>th</sup> the Union did take a vote to enable to go on strike at some point in the future possibly. There are some rules and regulations around that. If a strike occurs, it would likely be beyond the end of January. Do have contingency plans for what would happen in a strike. Paratransit and rail services are not impacted because both are operated by city employees CATS City of Charlotte employees. However, in any strike scenario CATS would fully expect pretty serious negative impacts to daily bus service. Have a lot of scenarios for reduced work force unfortunately if going into a strike scenario will be able to maintain service at reduced level. CATS will have to make operational discussions daily. It will probably be twice a day one at the beginning of the morning shift and beginning of the second shift and that operational decision will really be contingent on the number of operators who actually are present.

Jason went further into detail. This would be an evolving scenario each and every day. Jason presented a proposed level of service on a reduced network. Looking at each of the ridership of each of the routes and using methodology practices. If in Tier 2 see some improvement and have more operators that need to be in Tier 1 to bring back in each and every day. The way CATS approached this was if there was a pandemic for example. If there was something that required CATS to reduce the number of service each and every day due to something on the vehicle side or operator side. Essentially have three scenarios and the difference between Tier 1a and Tier 1b is just frequency.

Tier 1a and 1b primarily CATS higher ridership routes and are routes that service critical destinations like hospitals, the airport, and key employment centers. Range somewhere between 30-45 minutes depending on the route. Less operators, less frequency. If additional operators were available, then get more coverage. Start to bring in more of CATS circulator routes that serve light rail stations. The first tier 1 was primarily straight-line routes that come out of uptown. The Sunday service and what CATS operates on Sunday most of the routes operating on that day the Village Riders come back into play but what is consistent across all three and a reduced workforce scenario CATS would suspend express service. The light rail could continue running as paratransit and vanpool services.

Walt asked if CATS would increase frequency on light rail because more

people might use it?

Jason responded that that would be case by case and can work with Allen's team. It would be live monitoring it is not as easy to put in a light rail vehicle as it is to pull a bus out of the garage and roll it into service. CATS will continue to evaluate that. The Gold Line would also be operating during this time.

Jarrett commented that the 11,16, 22 those are routes that may have somewhat of a close concurrency or close to parts of the Blue Line. Is there any form of communication strategy via the app or social media is a person wanted to take any of those four routes then recommended to take the light rail as a potential alternative?

Jason responded that CATS would have a robust communication strategy. With the App, CATS is able to push notifications out.

Brandon commented that CATS will use local media, social media channels, and rider alerts.

Jarrett commented that if there are routes that are interlining near concurrencies between different bus routes. Letting riders know about alternative routes. Will this potentially lead to an increase in the use in STS services in terms of people that may be bus riders but have some degree of disability but actively taking the bus using STS service? Is there a way to present some degree of increase employment capacity from an STS perspective?

Jason responded that CATS paratransit services is not impacted and not part of the collectively bargaining agreement.

Jennifer Fehribach responded that the way paratransit operates is a person has to book trips at least one day in advance. If that should occur, CATS can react to that ebb and flow. CATS is short on operators but just had six come online. CATS would just put that out there for overtime. Most of the time don't have pushback on that on the paratransit side. As far as allowing noncertified ADA rides, Jennifer believes that CATS would have to reach out to FTA and get permission because people have to go through that certification process and requires an application to be submitted. CATS has a contract now where the company that is doing the assessments, so it is a longer process and that requires and application to be submitted.

Krissy commented that there is going to be spillover and if there is a strike then a lot more people would walk over and take the Gold Line. Krissy imagines a lot more people that when the bus isn't coming and when it comes it will be full of people then people are going to take trains. People that might be qualified for STS service but perhaps just take the local bus more often than those people are going to call STS because it is still running. Krissy thinks there is going to

be a huge spillover of passengers to STS and the trains. Krissy thinks that CATS needs to run all the trains that CATS can because she feels buses will be full.

Walt commented that he could see the 27 that starts in Matthews and by the time it hits there is no room left on the bus. Is there an option having not every bus in the line to make sure there is room for people that live closer that can actually ride the bus?

Jason responded that if CATS ran the route, then the route would need to run fully. Have to monitor that in real life and eventually add trippers.

Jennifer commented if that were to occur CATS could take the bus that is scheduled on a particular route and block which is called "dead head" go straight to the end of the line to get everyone off. Insert another bus where the bus is full, so the passengers don't see interruption in the frequency, but CATS is able to offload a full bus by doing operational mechanisms like that. If there is not an operator, then the fallback contingency option would be is to have street supervisors go to that route and drive it and anyone at a bus stop they will communicate. CATS wants to get the bus to the end of the line unload it and turn around and get it back on route where it should be. It is a lot of movement and there are contingencies in place.

Jarrett responded to think of the 27 specifically. The two areas that Jarrett is thinking about would be the Wendover and the east Mecklenburg high school area. Jarrett could see those area where people are trying to wait for a bus but by the time the bus comes it is full.

Jason a key piece of the communication is communicate to some CATS partners and CATS sister agencies like CMS because that route in particular has a lot of high school ridership. The communication will have to be robust and frequent.

Jason gave a preview of the work that is going to be coming up throughout this year. Envision My Ride the effort that CATS has been working on for a number of years was adopted. Bruce Jones and the team led that effort to high frequency bus routes, 23 mobility hubs throughout the county that provide connections to on demand microtransit services. Adopted by MTC and CATS is working towards the implementation phase. One of the strategies that microtransit can potentially help with is the operator availability as CATS converts routes to on demand. Then start to fold fixed route back into the network. Microtransit first/last mile connections evolving on demand areas a lot of agencies have put this in place. CATS will be coordinating this through the pass app using Spare open fleet platform which connects a person in the zone to dedicated providers with potentially taxiing other operators in that zone. DART has used this with great success and expanded program frequently since implementation.

This is essentially a new service mode for CATS. Going to be running this in a couple of pilot phases. First pilot launch would be to look at working with rideshare companies such as Lyft to coordinate two key light rail platforms at the Parkwood Station at the JW Clay and connecting people to defined points within a zone. Near employment center. Still working through the details on that and how to work through if someone doesn't have a smart phone? How does ensure ADA accessibility vehicles? CATS hopes to launch this year.

First full conversion of microtransit is to target the Village Rider routes the three routes in the northern community that currently do on demand services. Have to call a day in advance and test that route to make sure the bus can make the turns and make the drop off. Already performing some level of on demand. CATS thinks this is a great opportunity for full conversion to fully on demand. It would operate out of the Park and Rides that are already kind of hubs in the community two in Huntersville, one in Cornelius and one at Northlake Mall. Starting coordination with the town staff. Public outreach and service and fare equity analysis. CATS hopes to implement in late 2023. Going out for another provider another contract to have contracted services that would be an expansion of existing services. Received funding 100% no match. Federal Grant to do route restoration planning. CATS will be issuing a procurement to help flush out microtransit from an education standpoint and understanding the digital divide and the fleet needs that CATS has. Brain Horton is going to be leading the charge.

Leroy asked will microtransit routes be operated by a third party?

Jason responded that it will be mixture. Right now, CATS does not have the smaller sized fleet to operate these services. Initially start with Lyft and Uber and rideshare companies and once CATS has a provider then it will be third party. All would be required to work through the CATS Pass app.

Jarrett asked if there has been any consideration for microtransit services for the eastern part of Charlotte?

Jason responded that CATS has 19 zones currently on the map. Those will be refined. In concept have a couple of zones in east Charlotte. Think about routes 222 and 221 things that come out of the Eastland Transit Center. In the mix with that. How those are rolled out will be dependent upon budget and vehicle availability.

Krissy commented in the event of a strike thoughts about reaching out to the Mecklenburg County version of STS. Might get some spillover there. Reaching out to major employers to make contingency plans to get workers to work. Reaching out to Joyride to see if Joyride perhaps will offer free bike rentals.

### C. February Service Change

Pamela stated that the first Monday in February CATS will implement February Service Change. Will not be implementing anything that will add service on the street. CATS has some on-time performance things that CATS will do and some adjustments on two routes to help better serve customers and safely do that. Continue to look at services and adjust whenever this is a need to improve that.

CATS has several routes adjusted on-time performance so CATS can improve the reliability. The 24, the 56 and several of CATS express routes, the 40X, 46X, 77X and 82X. In addition, CATS will improve weekday peak service on LYNX Blue Line to every 15 minutes. The peak service between 7am in the mornings on weekdays and between 4pm and 6pm.

Back in March of 2020 made some adjustments to services in response to COVID there were two variances on the route 10. The solid line is a portion of the route that it does every single trip. There are two variances on the route the Cargo trip that goes out to Yorkmont Road and towards town that is a Cedar trip. CATS worked with the employers out at Yorkmont Street. Worked closely to provide a service that would match the demand. Prior to COVID those services were significantly underutilized. Marked for monitoring for discontinuation however COVID came and since variances discontinued at that time and still discontinued today. CATS will officially discontinue again. Yorkmont service provided service for approximately four trips a day and the Cedar trip was under one person a day.

Still looking at services to make improvements. Worked with CPCC the Harris Campus which is near Mooresville Road. CATS is extending the route 10 to serve CPCC going to give passengers access to education. The dark purple will be the extended service to the CPCC campus, and this will not increase the need for operators, but it will provide a service that is necessary for the passengers that are trying to access the college. The dotted line is an area that will be discontinued serving the route by the 10.

The Renaissance Center which is a community that utilizes route 235. The 235 is a smaller vehicle that the residents feel more comfortable with and will still have access to that. Passengers can either walk out to West Blvd or walk to route 10. There is still access.

Also making a change to the 290 Davidson shuttle. Worked closely with bus operations division. There is a challenge in safety with terms. Addressing those safety concerns with a new turn. Route 99 still serves this area. Passengers will still have access to service. This route currently has a low ridership. Modification was made because of safety concerns.

Jason added on the airport service that CATS continues to work with airport

employment on some potential alternatives.

#### **D. CTC Redevelopment**

Jason started off the CTC Redevelopment presentation with staff recommendations for a conceptual design to recommend to the MTC. It is a requirement federal does have interest in this and a Raise Grant that is part of this. Unique placement of the Charlotte Transportation Center within mobility network and the opportunity for CATS to fully capitalize and realize the transit and land use integration at this location. Many of the lots around have been that way for many years but a lot of changed. Spectrum Center, Blue Line, Gold Line none of those were there when the transit center was built in 1995.

Started off with a vision not only about transit but growth and place that has led CATS through over the years adopted sales tax referendum and the system plan. The system plan that CATS has today been updated several times over the years. Mostly rail plan. Now it has a document Envision My Ride Bus Priority Network. These two documents help to guide CATS future and mobility vision.

The transit center was built at a time when CATS was solving a problem with passenger amenities. The intersection Trade and Tryon was where the vast majority of bus passengers would transfer. Worked to develop a new transit center at the time beside what was the old convention center along a future light rail line. It solved the problem of the day to create shelter to create a single point in place for all transfers to occur.

CATS has additional problems to solve today. Passenger conflicts and over the years expectations of passenger conflicts and how that should be addressed is different in years past. If CATS in a situation to improve this scenario where people don't have to cross bus travel lanes. The rail and the rial trail can be integrated with a new facility. Mobility expectations and needs have changed. Now have a mobile app and there is the expectation to use the app to be the door to all mobility. CATS is electrifying fleet. Expectations and needs have changed drastically since the mid 90's.

In order to move forward with that vision of a redevelopment transit center CATS has to find a way to fund it. Still need to find a temporary facility. With the transit and land use integration funding opportunities to activate the surrounding spaces.

An opportunity that was brought to CATS an unsolicited proposal to redevelop the transit center mixed use development. Took that and had an open procurement and through that process received three proposals and selected White Point Partners and Dart Interests.



Jason presented the project timeline. In the early process of this effort. In the public input adoption phase right now. Feasibility analysis in the design process helped CATS inform the recommendation. Still have many steps to go forward with. Ongoing public outreach when moving forward with this project. Environmental assessments looking at service levels at the temporary and permanent facilities, service equity analysis. The permanent buildout later part of the decade.

In a redevelopment center want to set up a number of goals for transit and mobility. Must have continuity service in a temporary facility. Elevating the experience. Safety and security is a top priority. CATS wants to take the opportunity to really make that easy and convenient connections transit connection between all modes around the center. Have an opportunity to have a sustainable design, be a battery electric bus hub and integrate with mixed use development consistent with the vision that CATS has held over 20 years.

Early in the process many options were evaluated. Some with the transit facility on the same block. Some at street level and some that crossed over 4<sup>th</sup> street to the parcel that the developer currently owns. Three main design options to consider. A street level option at grade still integrated within a mixed-use development, a Terrace option that crosses over 4<sup>th</sup> street to the neighboring block and Concourse just the below street level option. Evaluation of how these options are rated and how the options improve on some existing conditions. The at grade facility feel have some improvements to bus-to-bus and bus to rail transfer. Terrace option had great improvements to bus to bus great to bus to rail because all at one level with the light rail. Concourse good for bus to bus with same level bus to rail not as great as the Terrace option because you have to go up a level to get to light rail. The at grade option really doesn't meet the needs that CATS would want to see in a new facility but also to be successfully integrated with mixed use development.

The early evaluation phase that led to submitting the Raise Grant recommended to eliminate the street level for further conversation if going to advance Terrace it would be refine. For the Raise Grant purposes needed a concept and advance that concept for the Raise Grant purposes. After the Raise Grant CATS did refine the Terrace option and the Concourse option to make sure got design right and walked through a public process to get a locally preferred alternative with the MTC. There are key differences between the two options. Availability of natural light and the flexibility of bus operation. The Concourse option would have a main entrance off of fourth street with a connecting road at grade across the neighboring parcel to third street. The two-level Terrace option would require a ramp from third street up and over 4<sup>th</sup> street to the level at the light rail platform with eight bays and have six bays at street level. The key difference on the Concourse has some more controlled and climate-controlled space. With each of these options how to enhance passenger experience.



Jason provided the path to recommendation. Had an initial larger conversation with Charlotte City Council September last year. Had a lot of public and stakeholder engagement in October. Went to Council Committees and MTC with updates on public outreach in November. Last week went to the Transportation Planning and Development Committee and Charlotte City Council January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Be at CTAG on Tuesday. In front of MTC on January 31<sup>st</sup> to share staff recommendation. Both committee and council did endorse the staff recommendation.

Over 400 bus riders engaged at CTC pop ups. CATS felt it was really important to talk to the customers in this outreach. Have had numerous views of virtual public meetings. Went to bus operators and went to shift changes at the Davidson South Tryon garages to get feedback. Had over 300 completed surveys.

Jason showed visuals of the two options. Two level Terrace transfer between bus route is challenging to transfer with routes. Somewhat more natural lighting but with less climate control space compared to Concourse option. Bus riding would be complicated could be integrated with mixed use development and be less efficient than Concourse option. From an environmental standpoint based on high-level screening there is a low potential for negative human or natural resource impacts.

Jason presented an image of what the Concourse option would look like. The concourse would be the main entrance open at street level going down to the facility. Have great opportunities to fully integrate LYNX Blue Line to the frontage of that and the rail trail. Great opportunity there with City LYNX Gold Line as well. Key difference is there is a simple transfer between bus routes all on the same level. Consolidated climate control ability to have more climate control space. Single platform will be more secure. Only watching one platform versus two. Would reduce greatly more of those pedestrian conflicts. Much more efficient bus routing. Maximizes economic development integration. Same thing on environmental studies. Through the design process careful attention to air quality will be addressed but will be mitigated by CATS bus fleet electrification.

Both options are pretty comparable in a lot of ways. Both would be safe and secure. Bus to rail slightly better on the two-level given the eight bays at the light rail level but bus to bus would be much better on concourse. More climate control and more natural lighting on the two level. What CATS heard from the public and on the surveys indicated and from an overall just ranking 52-53% in approval of the Concourse option. Similar numbers from CATS bus operators. Any one of these options is a conversation of tradeoffs with any project. It comes down to the tradeoffs willing to move forward with into the next phase.

Jason gave a quick overview of the financial framework. If CATS was going to go on CATS own with this and without a Raise Grant CATS would be

somewhere around \$50 million for a new transportation center. Would still need to find a temporary location. Able to receive that through the development partner owns land near the transit center. Unlikely CATS would have received a Raise Grant as a funding source for a standalone facility but the integrated transit center with the mixed-use development does enable CATS to leverage \$62 million of land value because CATS will put that back into the public tax docket and got the Raise Grant.

To the recommendation it must support broader transit needs but also the broader land use division in this type of scenario. Staff recommends to Charlotte City Council Committee and full council on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Staff recommends the Concourse option as preferred design. CATS will be recommending to MTC on January 31<sup>st</sup>. For the reasons more climate-controlled space, more seamless transfer between bus routes and CATS feels it best supports the goals surrounding citywide initiatives. Through the design process CATS is early on. Find ways to increase the climate control beyond what CATS has more natural light find ways to use technology to assist operators as operators enter the facility. Have an opportunity to incorporate sustainable design and electric vehicle charging. A lot more work to do on the design side and will continue to engage the public on.

Jason went over the next steps as CATS moves forward. CATS will need the approval of the transit center design concept with MTC and make that recommendation. There will be further conversations about the framework to move forward with the development proposals. This recommendation was endorsed by Charlotte City Council on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. CTAG next Tuesday. On January 31<sup>st</sup> with the Metropolitan Transit Commission for action for this recommendation.

Tim has heard different things about being between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> or using the existing building for the Concourse. Are we talking about the same physical footprint of the transit center just digging a hole?

Jason responded that both options are on the same block as the Charlotte Transportation Center. CATS would build a temporary center at the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Brevard. Once that has been constructed then the current center would be demolished and then construction of the permanent facility at the same location.

Brent wanted to clarify is it literally the same footprint and the answer to that is no. Concourse gives CATS the ability to develop a wider footprint to be able to add at grade because the conflicts with other right of way if below grade.

Jason responded and gave an example of a sidewalk that is above. Would gain additional footage that is really critical for circulation of bus and bus bays.

Tim asked between 4<sup>th</sup> and the Silver Line and the physical point where the

buses are now. Dig a hole go under the street go under the rail to have bigger footprint.

Jason responded it is bound by the Blue Line, Trade Street, 4<sup>th</sup>, and Brevard. All that would happen in the same space.

Tim asked if CATS is still taking in account sound and navigation?

Jason responded through the design process CATS will have to ensure accessibility. Sound is included in the documentation.

Walt commented what the Panthers owner has done to Rock Hill and the east side. Walking away halfway through design center and don't have any choices soon.

Jason responded that CATS is dealing with the information that CATS has today. Nothing really happens until CATS has a design that is approved and endorsed by the various public and elected officials and then CATS can begin the conversation with development partner.

Krissy went around to TSAC members asking TSAC members what design was preferred. Sam, Walt, Tim, and Leroy support the Concourse option. Jarrett and Krissy prefer the Terrace option. Krissy mentioned that this is not binding. Strong support for Concourse but a couple of people that like Terrace.

#### **IV. Chair Report:**

There was no MTC meeting last month. Krissy mentioned there are some vacancies on TSAC Committee. Working on finalizing a final list because some of those are in process of being filled. When Krissy has that finalized, she will share that with everyone. It is a lot of people from the towns.

Krissy announced that is it Walt's last meeting. Walt commented that when he first started the committee was a lot smaller. Walt feels that it has more weight now than it did 20 years ago. At the time, there was not light rail or even consideration for a light rail. It was a twenty-year plan, and all the questions were strategic and TSAC is the only one that really deals with the tactical. Walt would take the 65 and the 27 daily for 25 years and at times the 65 used to stop now completely but at the time it would stop at 5:45 and then they would actually put on extra routes. The 27 stopped at 6:15. The 6:15 didn't go to Matthews it stopped North and Walt would have to walk a couple of miles to Matthews to get his car. By the end Walt would take a bus after midnight so that worked until midnight and he could still get home on the 27. The amount of change in the system would last 30 years has been amazing. It is nice in some small way to be a part of it.

Krissy thanked Walt for his service.

David Snyder had planned on continuing to serve on TSAC, but Krissy believes he had to move out of state. He is no longer going to be able to serve on TSAC. Krissy thanked David for his service.

Krissy will the share list of openings that TSAC is looking for.

## **V. Service Issues:**

Tim asked what is the expectation with someone standing at a bus stop for the bus to stop? Is the driver expecting the rider to wave at the driver to give some indication that the person is waiting for the bus? Personally, Tim has had a couple of buses pass him by.

Jennifer responded that if someone is standing by the pole or wave, people do different things, and the operators are aware. If that should ever occur on all buses, there is audio and video. If it happens call the customer service number and provide the route, and the time of day, Jennifer can track down what bus that was and Jennifer will pull the video from it and review. Any valid complaint the operator is addressed through a disciplinary system.

Krissy asked if that is called a pass by?

Jennifer responded yes. Jennifer and team investigate every single one of those. Customer just needs to provide the date, time, and location.

Krissy commented on the detour on N Kings Drive detour because there is some sewer maintenance and that impacts the 9 and the 27. Every time there has been a detour on that small slice of the system that Krissy rides, she has never seen CATS tell people about it and she doesn't get rider alerts about it. The traffic is terrible and there is no information about the detour. The detour is right by CPCC. Is there a policy about only major detours get told to riders? There have been four detours that Krissy has experienced and there hasn't been any notice.

Pamela responded that it varies depending on how the detour comes about. If there is a water main break or something that happens overnight, CATS bus operations division provides a detour around it. Under normal circumstances particularly if it is going to be for a long period of time put a notice on bus stops itself and get out a rider's alert. Unfortunately, not every single rider alert gets to everyone. Sometimes detours are a surprise to CATS. There are sometimes when CATS gets an email from CDOT or some developer. If there is notice of an interruption, then CATS can properly plan on long enough notice. Sometimes it is within hours that CATS must react. Sometimes it is supposed to last 24 hours, but it last three days.

Jennifer commented that if it is going to be an extension amount of time for instance if there was a wreck and everyone is detoured it would more than likely be one trip that wouldn't be communicated out. If it is going to be an extended amount

of time, then the turn by turn literally left here right here will be communicated internally to include Brandon's team in Marketing and then put on the CATS website. That is the communication that is put out to get pushed to the operator. It is a combined effort.

Rachel responded that detours entered into the AVL software get passed through the CATS Pass app.

Brandon commented that Marketing leans on because of the amount as well that come in that Marketing would be able a dedicated person just to enter detours. That is why CATS is trying to consistently push CATS Pass app.

## **VI. Service Planning Report:**

Pamela feels like she covered everything during the service change and had no further reporting.

Jarrett has heard from people that work in the Westinghouse Blvd corridor which is the more industrial part. If the strike does come to fruition many of them may take the Blue Line directly to Sharon Road West and then take the 55 which is the Westinghouse. As far as communication to riders and potentially communication out to the employers in that corridor. Some may directly get on the 55 and take it over there but some may be able to get to the Blue Line and get off of Sharon Road West and be able to do the 55. To some degree that also exists with the 56 which serves the Charlotte Premium Outlets which is a major employer.

Pamela responded that there are some employers along the Westinghouse Boulevard that Pamela is in contact with because the employees are seasonal where it is really heavy at times. Pamela will be working closely with Brandon's group to make sure the messages get out.

Brent commented that one thing he can say about messaging is that he knows that this could be very disruptive. Transit is a central service and anytime central services are disrupted it will be difficult. The Mayor and the City manager's office, beyond a CATS communication standpoint also think about ways to be in communication with employers, with the community and with everyone to figure out alternatives because if a strike occurs it will be very disruptive.

The meeting was concluded and adjourned 5:45pm.

***NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY February 9, 2023***

# FY 2024 Preliminary Operating Budget & FY 2024 – FY 2028 Capital Improvement Plan

Presentation to Transit Services Advisory Committee  
February 9, 2023





# Discussion

- ▶ CEO Focus Areas
- ▶ Operating Revenue
- ▶ Operating Expenditures
- ▶ Debt Service
- ▶ Capital Investment Program
- ▶ Pending Items & Budget Schedule





# CEO Focus Areas

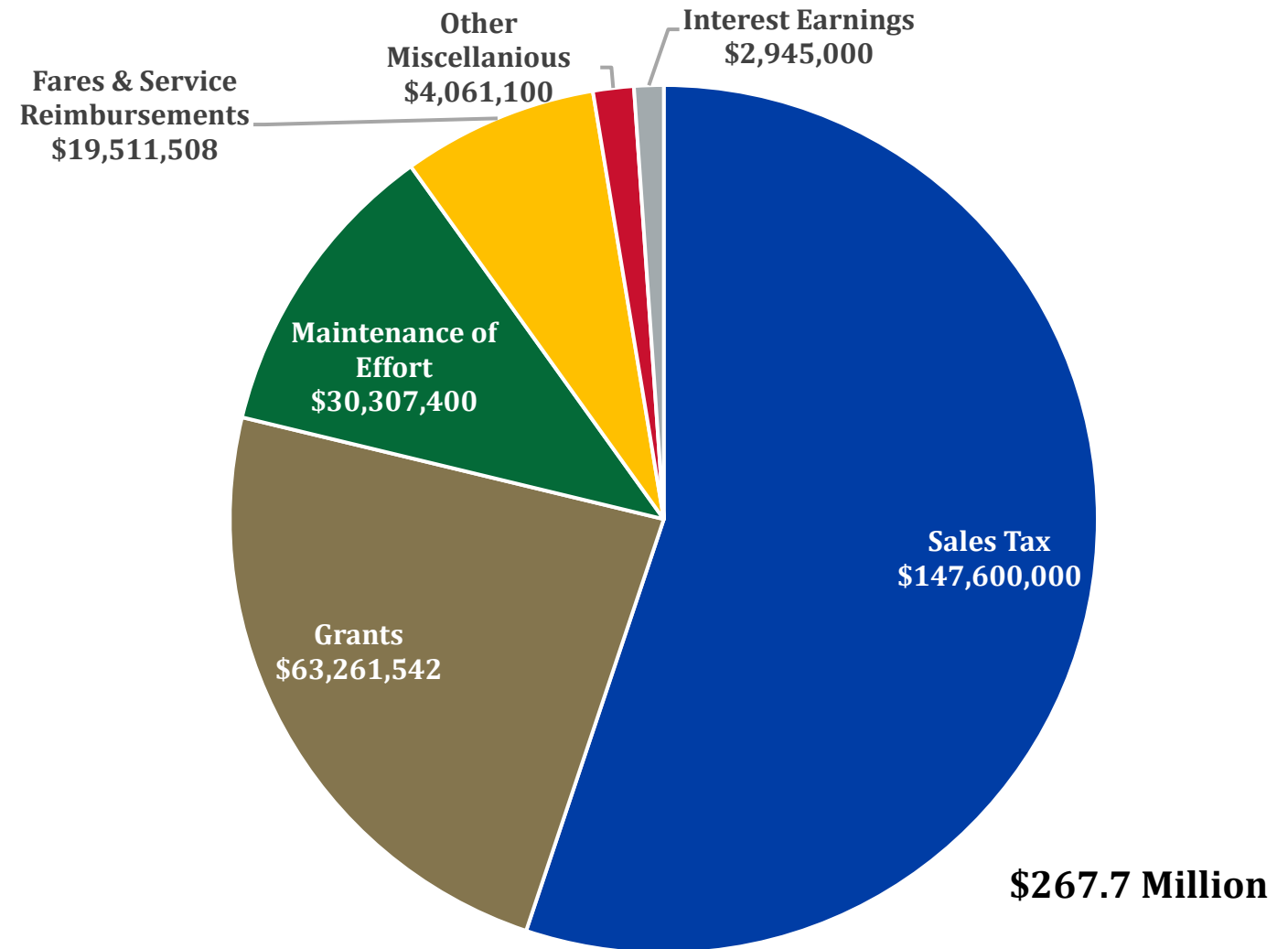
- ▶ Balanced budget
- ▶ Safety and Security
- ▶ Valuing Employees
- ▶ Maintenance & Asset Preservation



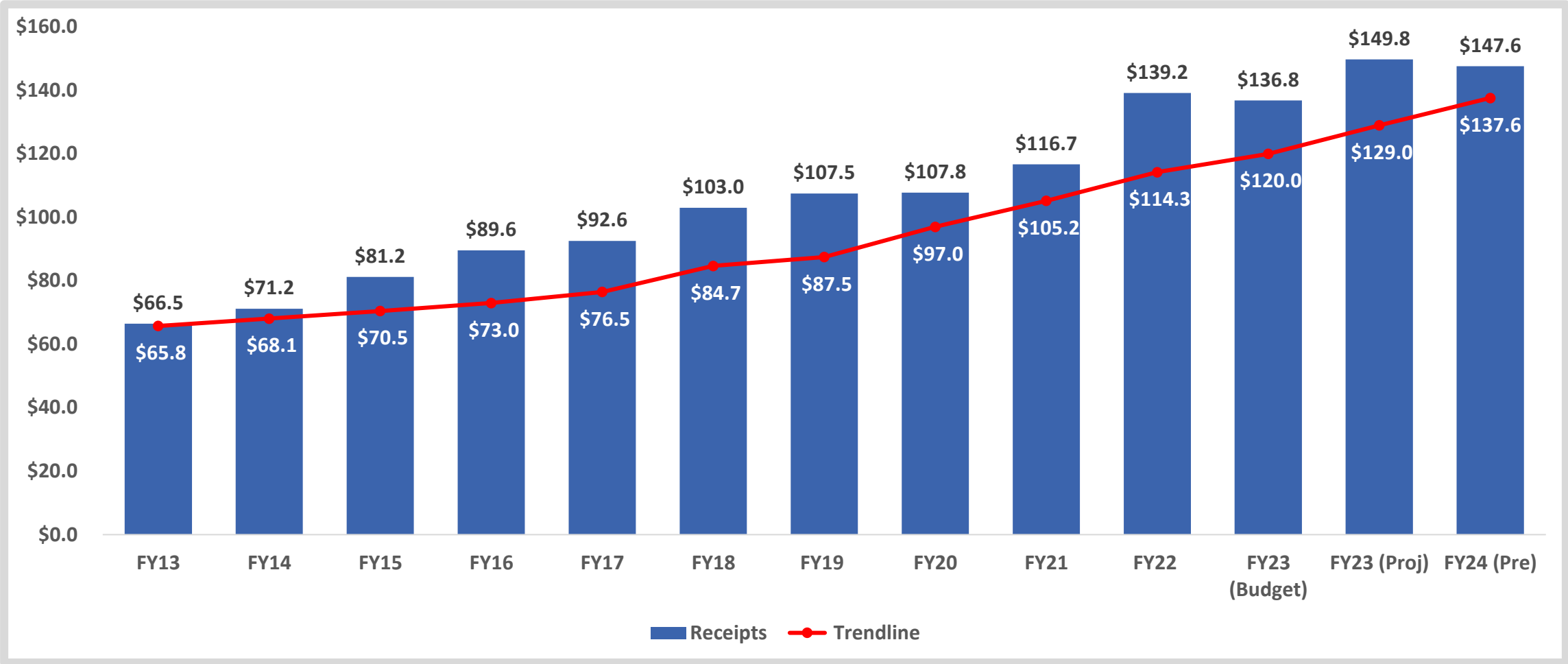
# Preliminary Revenue Projections

# Operating Revenues

Key Changes FY 2024 vs FY 2023	
FY 2023 Adopted Budget	\$243,181,016
Article 43 Sales Tax	\$10,792,979
Federal Grants	\$8,308,994
Interlocal Agreements	\$0
State Grants	-\$3
Advertising	\$168,001
Other Charges	-\$1,420,009
Passenger Fares	\$3,017,202
Interest Earnings	\$2,004,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$757,100
Sale of Assets	\$0
Transit Pay-Go Transfer	\$877,270
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$267,686,550</b>

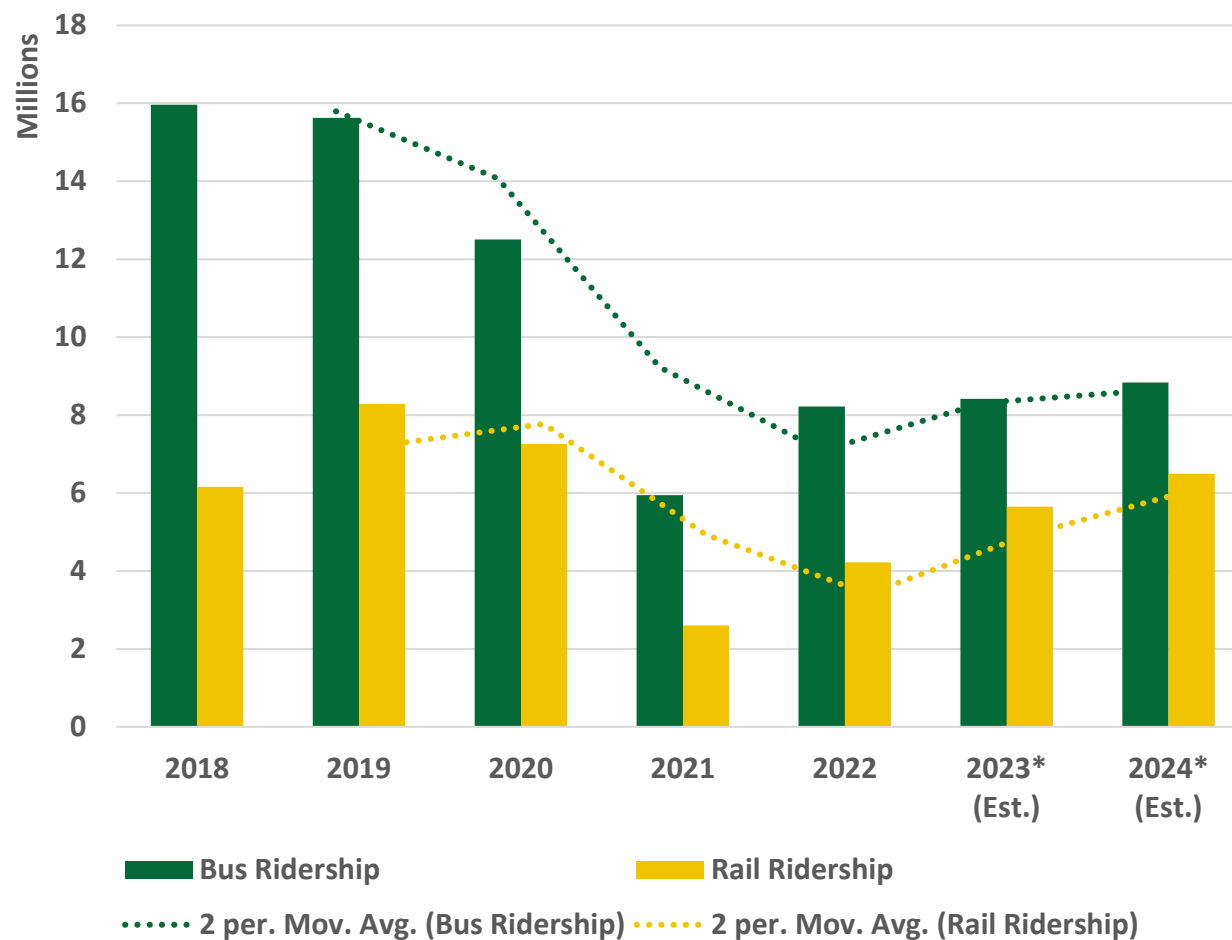


# 1/2% Sales Tax FY 2013 – FY 2024





# Ridership Trends



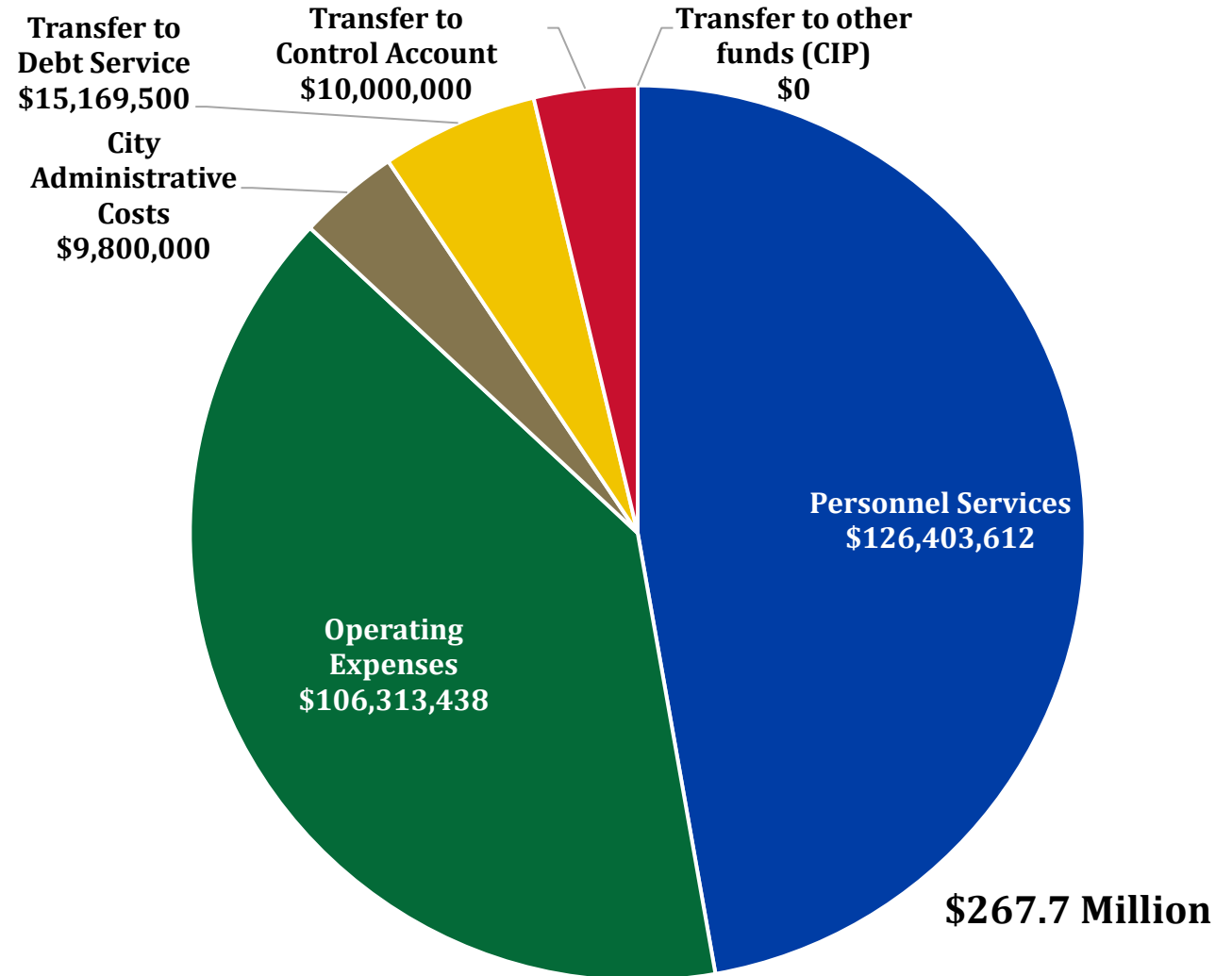
Based on current trends:

- ▶ In FY 2024, Bus ridership is estimated to recover to 57% of pre-pandemic levels
- ▶ In FY 2024, Rail ridership is estimated to recover to 78% of pre-pandemic levels

# Preliminary Operating & Debt Service Expenditures

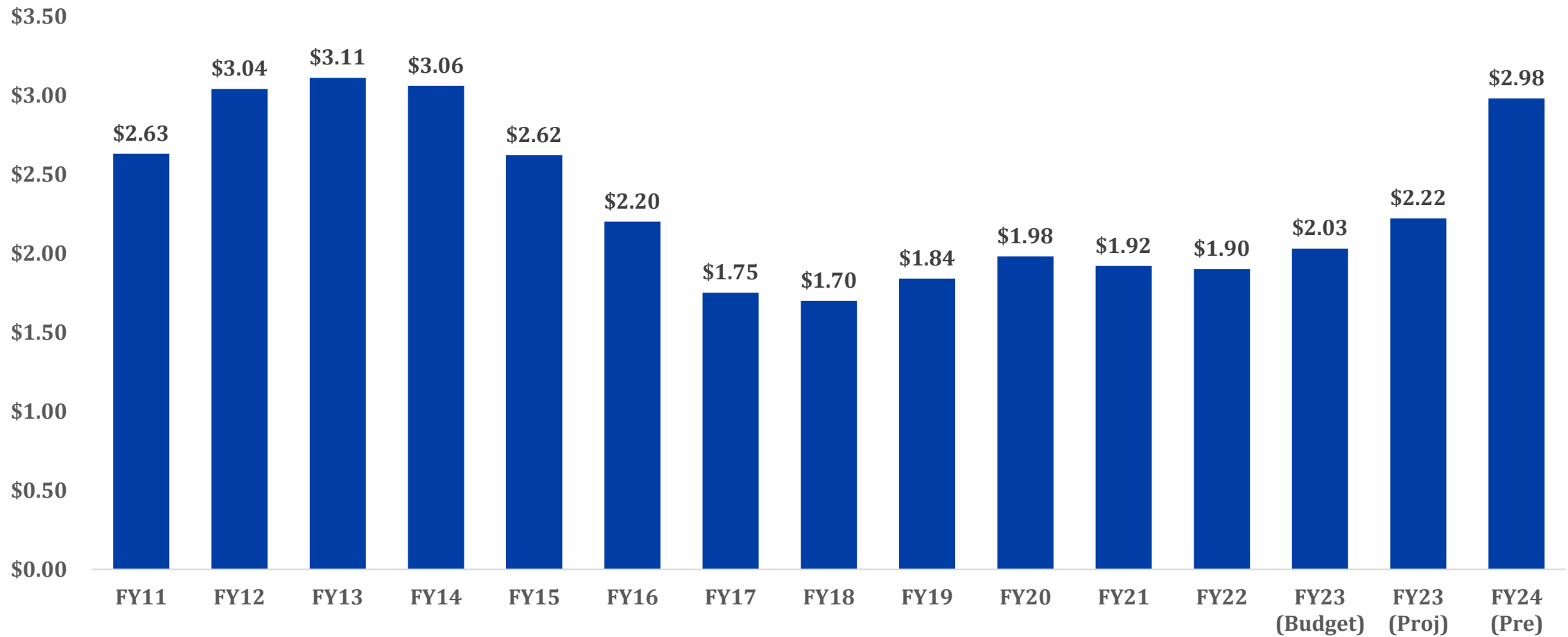
# Operating Expenditures

Key Changes FY 2024 vs FY 2023	
FY 2023 Adopted Budget	\$243,181,016
Personnel Services	\$4,298,907
Operating Expenses	\$25,914,477
City Administrative Costs	\$1,198,077
Transfer to other funds	-\$100,000
<b>Subtotal Operating</b>	<b>\$31,311,461</b>
Transfer to Debt Service	\$619
Transfer to Control Account	-\$6,806,546
Transfer to CIP (PAYGO)	\$0
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$267,686,550</b>



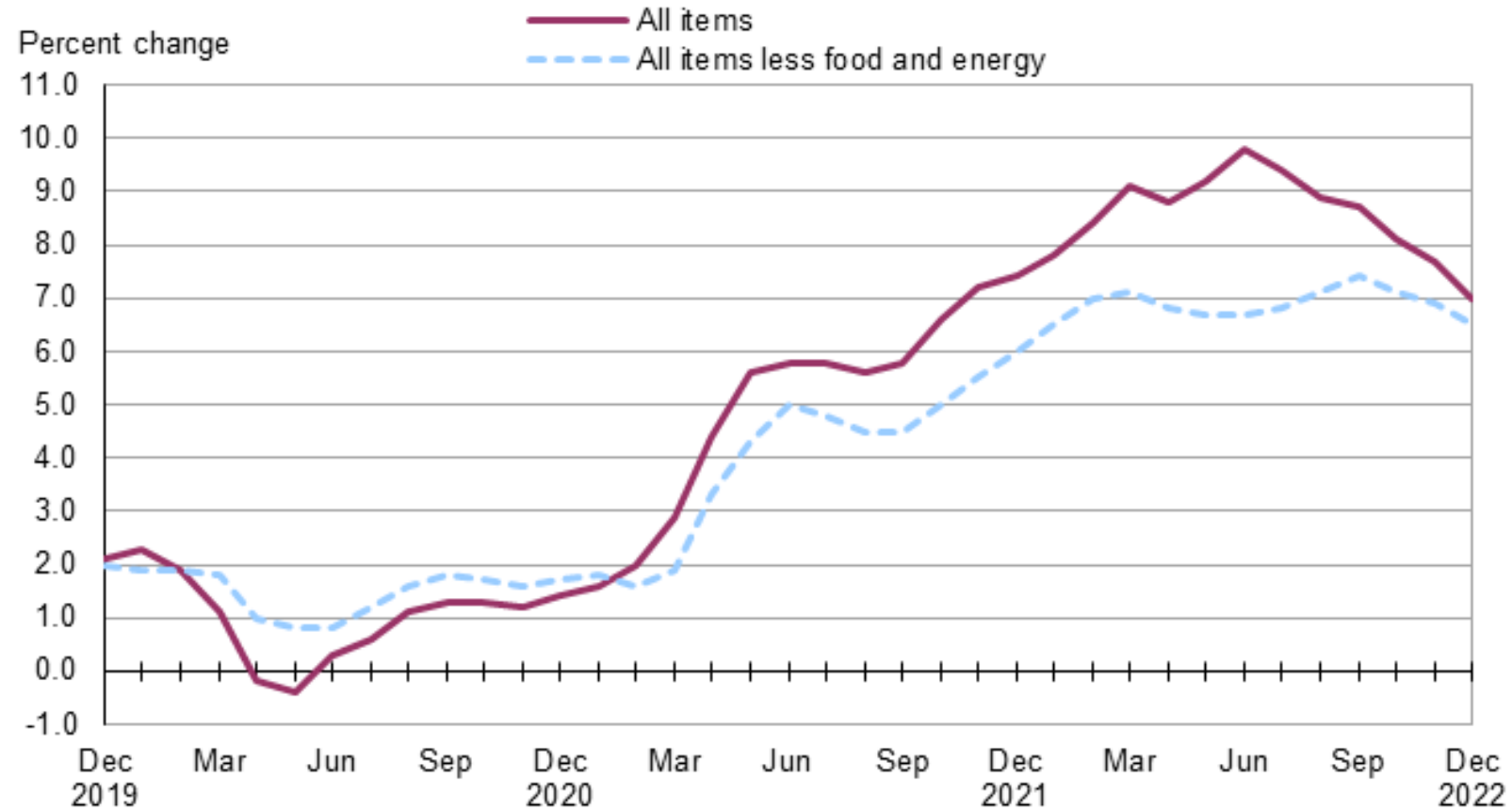


# Diesel Fuel Average Price Per Gallon



# CPI, South Region — December 2022

- ▶ CPI for the South increased 7.0% for the year ending December 2022
- ▶ Business Impacts
  - Rising costs of commodities and services
  - Decreased buying power for businesses



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

# FY 2024 Debt Service

- ▶ FY2024 Debt Service Budget \$18.1 million  
Transit Sales Tax, Federal and State grant funds pay annual principal and interest expenses

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Adopted	FY 2024 Preliminary
<b>Revenues</b>					
Transfers from CATS Operating	\$17,410,943	\$17,368,654	\$16,939,110	\$15,168,881	\$15,169,500
Transfers from CATS Capital	\$15,000,000	\$81,810,000	-	-	
Federal Grants	\$4,888,713	\$4,646,121	\$3,549,340	\$2,929,475	\$2,927,800
State Grants	\$1,006,825	\$863,031	\$41,637,850	-	
Interest on Investments	\$163,985	\$35,502	-	-	
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$38,470,466</b>	<b>\$104,723,308</b>	<b>\$62,126,300</b>	<b>\$18,098,356</b>	<b>\$18,097,300</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Principal Payments	\$24,148,288	\$91,346,094	\$51,214,000	\$8,920,000	\$9,365,000
Interest Payments	\$14,292,699	\$13,329,951	\$10,798,300	\$9,064,356	\$8,618,300
Other Fees	\$29,479	\$47,263	\$114,000	\$114,000	\$114,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$38,470,466</b>	<b>\$104,723,308</b>	<b>\$62,126,300</b>	<b>\$18,098,356</b>	<b>\$18,097,300</b>

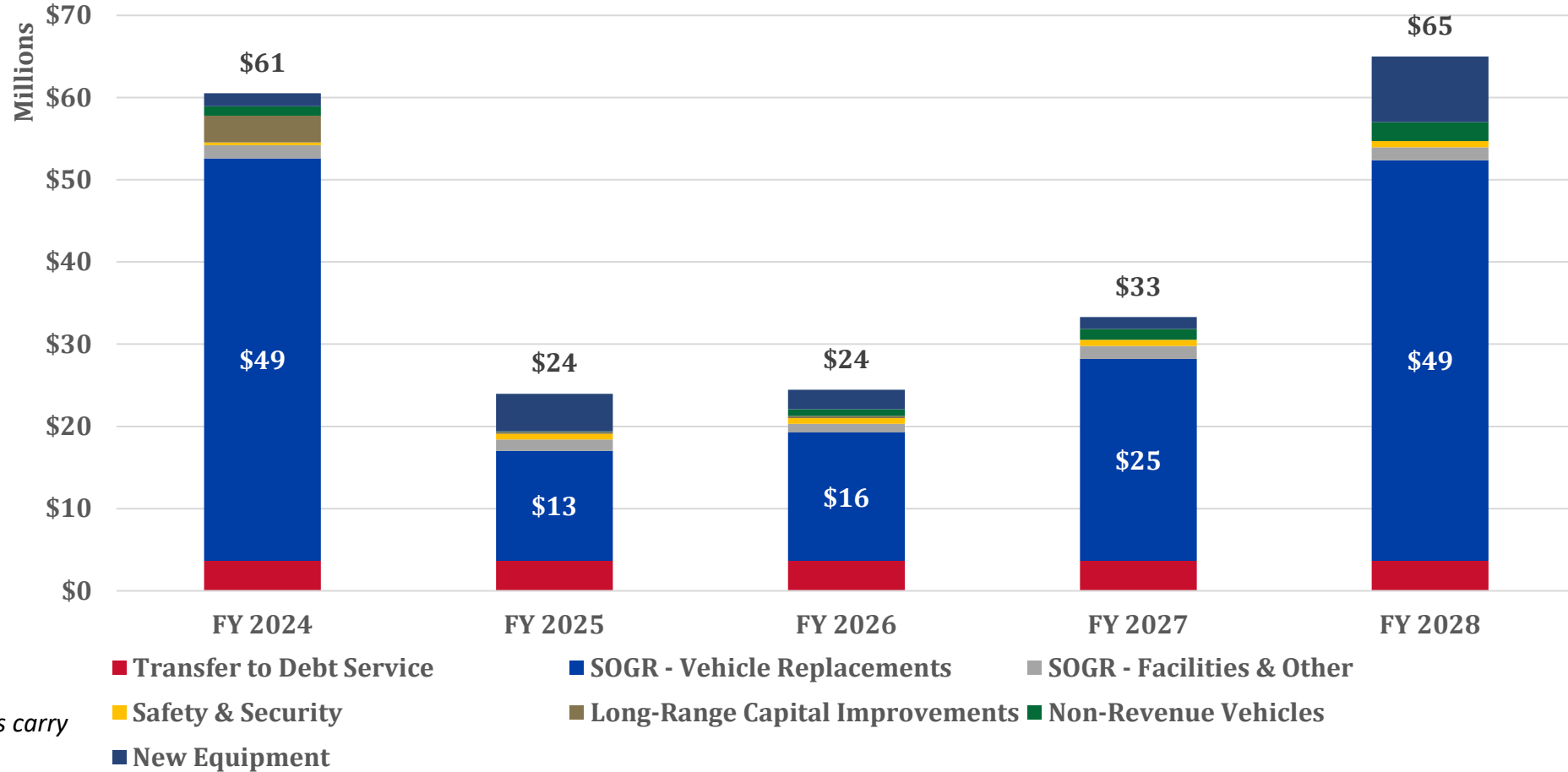
- ▶ No new debt issuance is programmed for FY 2024

# Preliminary Capital Investment Plan

# FY 2024 – FY 2028 CIP Expenditures

## FY 2024 Highlights

- ▶ 37 Replacement Buses
- ▶ 19 Replacement STS Vehicles
- ▶ Replacement Tow Truck
- ▶ Silverline
- ▶ ADA Improvements
- ▶ Security Improvements
- ▶ Continues prior-year initiatives

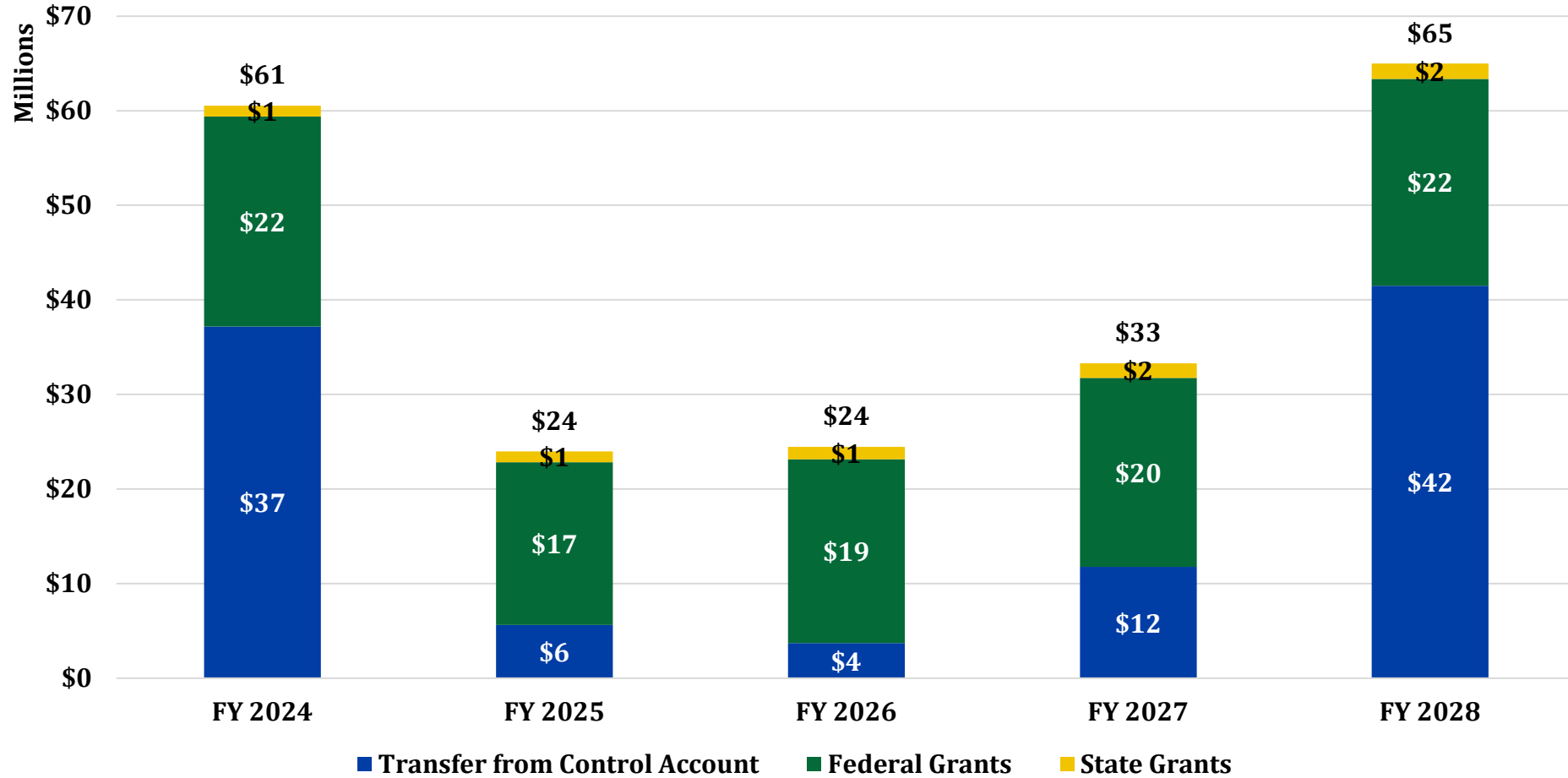


Notes:  
 1. FY2024 Preliminary Capital Budget excludes carry over amounts  
 2. Excludes Grant-Funded Operating Projects

# FY 2024 – FY 2028 CIP Sources of Funds

## FY 2024 Highlights

- ▶ Utilizes ~\$27 million in reserve funds to increase bus purchases
- ▶ Working with City Finance to develop a long-term funding strategy for future revenue vehicle purchases





# Pending Items & Budget Schedule

# Pending Items

## ▶ General

- Financial Performance Objectives
- Realign projects between operating & capital budgets

## ▶ Revenue

- Continue to refine projected sales tax growth & trendline
- Finalize federal & state funding
- Finalize ridership projections & passenger fares

## ▶ Operating

- Finalize & prioritize enhancements
- Refine City cost allocation plan (CAP)
- Refine internal service providers (ISP)

## ▶ Debt Service

- Final payment schedule from City Finance

## ▶ Capital Program

- Refine FY 2024 requests
- Develop long-range funding / financing plan for revenue vehicle purchases





# Proposed Budget Schedule

- ▶ Jan 31 – Metropolitan Transit Commission
- ▶ Feb 2 – Presentation To City Manager
- ▶ Feb 21 – Citizen Transit Advisory Group
- ▶ Feb 22 – Metropolitan Transit Commission
- ▶ Mar 22 – Metropolitan Transit Commission
- ▶ Apr 3 – Budget Committee
- ▶ Apr 6 – Budget Workshop
- ▶ Apr 18 – Citizen Transit Advisory Group Recommendation
- ▶ Apr 26 – Metropolitan Transit Commission Approval
- ▶ Jun 12 – City Council Budget Adoption



An aerial photograph of a city skyline, likely Atlanta, Georgia, featuring several prominent skyscrapers. In the foreground, a multi-lane highway interchange is visible, with a grassy embankment and a curved road. The sky is filled with dramatic, grey clouds. The word "Questions" is overlaid in white text in the center of the image.

# Questions