



TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
CH-14 and [Join TSAC Meeting via Zoom here.](#)
January 12, 2023
4:00- 5:30 pm

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| I. Call to Order
Approval of December 8, 2022 Summary | Chair Krissy Oechslin |
| II. Public Comment | |
| III. Information Items:
A. Interim CEO Introduction
B. 2023 A Look Ahead
C. February Service Change
D. CTC Redevelopment | Brent Cagle
Jason Lawrence
Pamela White
Jason Lawrence |
| IV. Chair Report | Chair Krissy Oechslin |
| V. Service Issues | All |
| VI. Service Planning Report | Pamela White |

NEXT MONTH'S TSAC MEETING IS FEBRUARY 9, 2023

TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Summary

Thursday, December 8, 2022

TSAC Members Present: Krissy Oechslin, Charlotte
Jack Zovistoski, Huntersville
Leroy Fields, Charlotte
Sam Grundman, Charlotte
Jarrett Hurms, Charlotte
David Snyder, Cornelius
Timothy Spaulding, Charlotte
Linda Webb, Charlotte

CATS/City of Charlotte Staff: Jason Lawrence, Pamela White, Kelly Goforth, Rachel Gragg, 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

I. **Call to Order**

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

Approval of November 2022 Meeting Summary

Chair Krissy asked for a motion to approve the meeting summary from November 2022. Jarrett motion to approve the summary. Leroy seconded the motion. The November 2022 meeting summary was approved unanimously.

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

Bob Moran recently had a negative experience with a CATS bus. Bob was waiting for the 14 bus November 16th at 6:22pm in the uptown area and the bus never arrived. Had to wait a full hour for the 7:22pm bus instead. He had the chance to speak to another rider about his experience with the bus system and he had had problems with phantom bus service in the past. He suggested instead of using the CATS pass app to ride the system that Bob should purchase a ten-trip ticket book instead since the ticket readers are broken about twenty percent of the time and only has to pay to ride eighty percent of the time. This seems like a significant loss in revenue that should be addressed. If Charlotte truly valued bus service, this wouldn't be allowed to happen for too long. Charlotte is in the process of improving

the construction of the Silver Line Railway expansion the cost about \$8 billion dollars. Consider whether this is the most effective use of taxpayer dollars. Improving existing bus service would cost less money. One possibility would be dedicated bus only lanes on major roadways. If lanes were marked to smart traffic lights would allow for minimum wait time at red lights in those bus lanes average bus speeds would be much faster than automobiles. These smart traffic lights are commercially available and are currently highlighted on the city of charlotte website as being part of CATS future bus improvement plans. Finally bus service should increase every 15 minutes during rush hour. These improvements would help improve car traffic where people would switch to buses if they provided faster commutes than cars. He believes the total cost of improvements would be a fraction of the cost of \$8 billion dollar railway. In 2009 two economists from the University of Pennsylvania and Toronto decided to compare the amount of new roads and highways built in different us cities between 1980 and 2000 and the number of miles driven in those cities over the same period. Found a perfect one to one relationship in the miles of new roads created versus miles driven. New roads will create new drivers resulting in the intensity of traffic staying the same. Independence Boulevard is a real-world example of this induced demand. It has been widened several times, but traffic is just as bad as ever. There is no solution to traffic congestion except viable alternatives to driving.

III. **Action Item:**

A. 2023 Chair and Co-Chair Vote

Pamela went over the elections for Chair and Co-Chair. Brad Thomas commented that there are the rules of procedure for the TSAC. The TSAC rules of procedure have a provision for the officers. The TSAC Officers shall include a chairperson and vice chairperson elected annually by TSAC members at the November or December meeting to serve through the subsequent calendar year. TSAC Officers shall serve for a period of one year and may be reelected for a second term. An exception to this rule may be made on a case-by-case bases if there is a need for continuity or experience and that exception is made at the discretion of TSAC members. If the Officer, Chair or Vice Chair falls vacant then the remaining TSAC members shall elect a replacement for the unexpired term.

Pamela mentioned that Krissy is the sole person that expressed interest in being the Chair. Must take a vote that TSAC would like the ability for chair to serve in a fourth consecutive term and then take a vote on that and then can vote on co-chair.

Pamela asked TSAC members to take a vote to be able to allow the chair to serve for a fourth term. Jason commented that TSAC members need to vote whether or not to allow Krissy the ability to go for another term. Brad commented that there needs to be a motion.

Jack motioned to approve. Jared second. Pamela called all in favor. Majority voted yes with six votes.

Krissy appreciates the confidence that everyone has shown electing her for the past several years. Krissy has spent a lot of time attending MTC meetings and preparing remarks and she thinks it has gained TSAC some clout at MTC with the consistent attendance and the remarks she has shared. She has gotten a lot of positive feedback. Krissy does not want to be Chair the following year. It is a lot of work. She would like whoever becomes co-chair this year to share the responsibilities half and half as close as can.

Pamela called all in favor for Krissy serving as TSAC Chair for the 2023 year please indicate by raising hand. Krissy for Chair.

Pamela then asked for those that are interested in serving as co-chair to announce name for the board.

Jarret responded that he is interested in becoming Co-Chair for 2023.

Sam Grundman commented that he would like endorse Jarrett for Co-Chair.

Pamela asked if Jarrett would like to say something. Jarrett expressed that it has been great being able to serve this past year as well as his prior advocacy and conversations he has had with the community, people with CATS and elected officials. There is a road ahead of us thinking about the alleviations of any problems that either may exist or will exist. Problems may always arise and the responsibilities of the officer positions. Jarrett be willing to be able to have some form sharing half responsibilities including but not limited to within running of meetings, attending MTC meetings, and helping with the agenda. He does appreciate Sam's endorsement and hope to earn the votes tonight.

Pamela asked for a motion for Jarrett to serve as Co-Chair for the TSAC Committee for the 2023 year.

Sam motioned to approve. Leroy seconded the motion.

Pamela called for the vote. Majority vote. Congratulations Jarrett. Jarrett has been selected as Co-Chair and Chrissy as Chair.

IV. Information Item:

A. A Year in Review / A Look Ahead

Jason congratulated Krissy on another term and is looking forward to Jarrett being Co-Chair. There have been a lot of experiences over the past couple of years with the pandemic and Jason will use this last meeting to talk a little bit about the year that CATS has had and what CATS is looking towards. Jason will give a more formal presentation in January about the year ahead. Jason feels there will be quite a few things in the coming year that he will want to bring in front of TSAC.

Thinking about where CATS was this time last year still kind of right in the middle of the pandemic. The Omicron Variant might have been kind of rearing its head around this time and really impacting CATS ability to provide service. CATS felt like CATS was coming out of that but then experienced just like any transit agency a lot of issues with operator issues and supply chain issues originally impacting CATS ability to provide service. CATS did bring to TSAC service reductions in August through ridership-based methodology approach. CATS does hope to continue to look for ways to bring service back and that will be one of the focuses in the coming years like how does CATS bring frequency back to high capacity or high frequency corridors that was a part of Envision My Ride document but also how does CATS implement microtransit would be a big piece into the next year.

Look to convert village riders to on-demand services going to be doing service equity and fare equity analysis in the upcoming year. Silver Line which has been brought to TSAC numerous times and in the coming years continue to be advanced. Have an equitable TOD Study underway that could bring for updates and CATS will be selecting a consultant in partnership with the area MPOs and the Centralina Regional Council consultant to help CATS advance the Connect Beyond effort. That is the twelve county two state regional transit vision that was adopted by the Metropolitan Commission October of 2021. That will be a body of work that will continue as CATS continues to work towards the regional approach to multimodal planning.

CATS feels that on the ridership side that things are looking a little bit better. On the rail side, right around the 60 to 65% recovery on ridership and continue to see improvements month to month. Bus has stabilized but CATS has seen a couple of percent increases since making the August change. Still having some issues here and there but CATS is continuing to strive to fix those. In the coming year, CATS will be talking a lot about reliability bringing back trust to the network, the regional transit plan, the advancement of vision plan but also microtransit will be a really big push for next year as CATS comes to how to create a more modernized transit network to support initiatives.

V. Chair Report

Krissy reported that the last MTC meeting was very short. There was a presentation on the feedback that CATS has gotten about the CTC redevelopment. MTC is very interested in what TSAC has to say. Krissy was thinking that this is just for consideration for the January agenda that TSAC might consider doing a straw vote on which Silver Line alignment people might prefer and which of the CTC redevelopment options people might prefer. It is not binding. Krissy knows at MTC very interested in what TSAC thinks and Krissy can't speak to MTC about what everyone's opinion is on TSAC and what choice members prefer.

Jason responded that CATS will be taking CTC for action in January.

Krissy commented that TSAC will meet before MTC will vote. Krissy speaks at the beginning of MTC meetings and Krissy knows that MTC defiantly wants to know what TSAC members think. Krissy suggested having a joint meeting with CTAG once or twice a year. CTAG reviews the budget for CATS and vote on it. Get a readout but TSAC does not vote and interests are aligned. Personally speaking Krissy thinks longer term bigger picture an idea for someone else to deal with would be possibly combining them because the budget is everything. It pays for everything TSAC talks about. It would be great to have a one big committee and a budget subcommittee. Krissy thinks some coordination with CTAG and some connection with CTAG would be great. CTC Redevelopment is such a combination of transit and land use that might be an interesting conversation so just more ideas for more collaboration in the coming year. Want to explore ideas on how to get some of the things that TSAC is advocating for without passing a tax or finding some new pot of money and how to get more bus stop benches and shelters from the existing budget. How to maybe extend the platforms on existing Blue Line stations that are not three cars to be three cars. These are not things that necessarily require passing a sales tax for. Krissy feels that it is lower hanging fruit and if CATS can explore on how to get some of those things done that would be great.

Service Issues

Jarrett wanted to thank Jack for his year of service as Co-Chair. Jarrett has slowly been getting some of his neighbors to ride transit 9 or 17. One of his neighbors that is newer to Charlotte was confused. The number 9 the eastern or outbound terminus at the Dolores Rose Park and Ride but the neighbor noticed that inbound towards uptown is Lawyers Road Park and Ride. Jarrett was taking the Statesville Avenue bus going back to uptown and some of the overhead signs said number eleven north Tryon. That was either a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday three weeks ago.

Pamela responded that currently have signs when the driver presses the button to put them in it will say "To Uptown" and then the sign will say to "Park and Ride." Pamela will work that group to make sure that the driver is tunneling between those two to say "to" and "from."

Jason commented that one thing CATS wants to do in the new year is to give TSAC tools to report that more, so TSAC members does not have to wait until the meeting to do that. Working through google form or some kind of online through mobile app or something. Roll that out next year.

Jarrett responded that he is very excited for the 2023 calendar year.

Sam commented that he agrees that there has been a problem with the head signs saying the wrong directions. If there a way to automate that somehow geofencing that would be amazing. Sam noticed a problem with the gutter at CTC light rail Blue Rail station over the walkway to the Epicenter. It has a big leak in it from the

Blue Line platform to the Epicenter the gutter over it would drain water right down onto the ramp. The drain connecting the platform down to the rest of CDC there is a drain there that often gets clogged. It is the walkway from the Blue Line platform down to the pavilion that takes you down to where you get the stairs. There have been concerns about women riding the Blue Line trains especially on the weekends or at night when the train is not so crowded so something that CATS might want to take into consideration.

Linda Webb mentioned that she sent an email this week regarding some of the lights being out on 3rd street on the light rail. The lights probably need bulbs replaced on the platform side.

Krissy's coworker takes the 77X and she lives in Mooresville and Krissy wanted to share that she described the bus as life changing not having to drive on 77 in the morning.

Krissy thanked Jack for serving as Co-Chair this year. Krissy really appreciates it.

Linda asked when the light rail is full is there a way that passengers cannot get on the light rail? People are squished together, and the driver stops at every location and people still get on.

Jason responded that in the next TSAC meeting he can show what CATS service standards are and show some of the loads that CATS is witnessing on the light rail and certainly in the peak time that CATS is seeing an increased load on all of the trains throughout the week. Jason is working with rail group to look at when CATS can bring back 15-minute frequency because right now the frequency is at 20 minutes and try to focus on the peak. Don't have a timeline for that but that would be something that CATS could mitigate the crowding. Look at if there is a certain time of day that this is happening more than others.

Operation Planning Report

Pamela took the time during the Operating Planning Report to address and answer some of the things that came up in the TSAC November meeting. One thing is that some drivers are changing the head signs before the drivers get to destinations because the interlining with another route, so the drivers change the head signs in advance to get ready for next trip. Pamela will work with bus operations division to ensure that the drivers are doing that at the location where they are.

One of the other things that was mentioned is some of the CATS buses are announcing trips and announcing transfers that are no longer occurring right now. Pamela was able to speak to CATS Bus Operations Division. It would be helpful when Pamela hears those things to have the bus number. CATS has two types of announcements. CATS has DDR (digital recorders) and the announcements on vehicles that are equipped with DDR have to be changed by the touching of the bus. Someone from maintenance has to go out and actually get on the bus and

touch the bus. CATS has a second technology that CATS is migrating to which is Trapeze which can be done wirelessly. During the change of a service change which is when CATS maintenance touches all buses. Sometimes the bus may have been sent away for maintenance so that it wasn't changed that that time because it was gone doing something else. It is a slow process getting those addressed, they will be addressed. One of the times that is normally addressed is when there is a large service change and touching every bus. Recently CATS service changes have been extremely small where CATS is not touching all of CATS buses. That is one of the reasons that several buses may still be announcing things that CATS has changed since then.

As part of the February service change CATS is going to be addressing some of running time issues and one of the bus routes that was mentioned was the 77X. The 77X is actually on that list to have some running time adjustments. Patrick is CATS head scheduler, and he would like to reach out to David. Pamela will get Patrick and David connected because Patrick wants to understand exactly what the challenge is with these particular trips.

As it relates to paying fare and the 77X not reading the cards, CATS drivers are instructed to report issues as the vehicles are brought into the shop and the issues are addressed at that time. The bus doesn't go back out until the fare box has been rectified. CATS will look into that as well.

During the February service change, CATS has some displays on bus stops individually. The displays are the white strip there and it provides information on what time the bus leaves the last time point. CATS is going to be removing those in the upcoming service change and looking at other ways to be able to provide that information. In the meantime, CATS has the app that customers will be able to use. CATS customers that don't have the capability can call the customer service number on the bus stop and speak to someone in customer service to ask where the bus is or what time the next bus arrives. What CATS found was those particular eye level displays because of Covid and how CATS was unable to adjust the way that CATS was previously making the adjustments. Just as CATS reinstated frequency and then had to change, CATS just needs to circle the wagon and make sure that CATS has most correct updated information in order to improve service for CATS passengers.

Krissy responded that there was the trial on route 9 with the QR codes. Are those going to go up everywhere or is that the interim to take the old signs down?

Jason commented that it is a pretty meaty topic. Jason suggested coming to present what eye level displays are and what the current condition is the QR Code Pilot that CATS has done. Can also call in to 336-Ride and put in the bus stop ID and will tell you when the bus is coming. There are multiple ways and there is an education process that CATS would like to reinstitute with the change of eye levels.

Action Items:

Person Responsible	Action Item/Comments

The meeting was concluded and adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY January 12, 2023