

C3's Suggested Feedback: CAT's 10-Year Transit Strategic Plan Draft



C3 encourages Charlottesville and Albemarle residents to **provide feedback** on Charlottesville Area Transit (CAT)'s Transit Strategic Plan (TSP) draft, which outlines the agency's planned next steps for its service improvements over the next decade. Below, we've identified both key highlights and areas for improvement from the TSP that you can draw from in submitting feedback.

Our key elements of the TSP are broad in focus. We *strongly* encourage community members to both [review the plan](#) and [register to attend the upcoming virtual stakeholder meeting on Tuesday, May 22, at 12pm](#) in order to get a more in-depth sense of how the plan will affect your local bus route.

Talking Points

Key highlights:

- 🚗 Starting in FY2027, it is expected that CAT will no longer purchase any diesel buses. This means that from July 1, 2026, CAT plans to begin the transition to a 100% zero-emission bus (ZEB) fleet!
- 🕒 Service on all routes is slated to increase to every 30 minutes at a minimum, with select services on high-volume routes increasing to every 15 minutes!
- 🏡 The plan advocates for mixed-use planning, which is foundational for a successful public transit network! C3 supports Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and smart growth for Charlottesville.
- 🌞 CAT is ramping up its pursuit of regional collaboration on transit planning under the Regional Transit Vision Plan - a plan that has been in the works since 2006. This is aligned with the priorities identified by Albemarle and Charlottesville residents, and will streamline transit across the county!

Advocacy needs:

- 1. There is no mention of bus occupancy within the TSP.** C3 considers occupancy to be of the utmost importance in reducing greenhouse gas emissions within an efficient, climate-forward transit system. High occupancy—which is not precisely the same as high ridership—requires specific strategies that should be assessed on their own merits.
- 2. The reintroduction of fares on July 1, 2026, would reduce ridership by 10%.** This finding raises serious equity concerns with climate justice implications, particularly for those who find fares to be a barrier to accessing public transit. Anticipating this, CAT should at a *minimum* plan to adopt a means-based program to allow these passengers to travel fare-free. C3 supports the continuation of fare-free travel on CAT buses.
- 3. CAT should ensure public engagement processes are better advertised in the future.** With only 523 responses from the online survey posted throughout July 2023, the public's responses were not used to influence any decision-making. With a higher response rate attained through proactive engagement processes, public opinion should carry weight in shaping decisions around public transit.

Share your feedback!

Visit <https://www.charlottesville.gov/1666/Transit-Strategic-Plan-TSP> or call 434-970-3649 (selecting option 3) to leave feedback by the **deadline on Friday, May 31st, 2024.**

Connect with us to share your ideas!

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