

A Resolution Supporting Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Buford Highway in DeKalb County, Georgia

WHEREAS, DeKalb County is committed to improving its public transportation system to enhance mobility, reduce traffic congestion, and promote environmental sustainability; and,

WHEREAS, Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) is a planned component of MARTA's public transportation strategy for several high-volume corridors in DeKalb County, including Buford Highway; and,

WHEREAS, extensive studies and assessments conducted by MARTA, transit planners, and independent consultants have demonstrated that the implementation of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) would better meet the county's long-term mobility needs, providing faster, more reliable, and higher-capacity transit service; and,

WHEREAS, BRT systems offer dedicated lanes, unobstructed by traffic, off-board fare collection, priority at traffic signals, and other features that allow for rapid and consistent transit service, making it a more efficient and attractive mode of public transportation for residents and visitors; and,

WHEREAS, BRT is better for those living with disabilities as it has level boarding and pulls right up to riders; and,

WHEREAS, a BRT system aligns with the county's goals for environmental sustainability by reducing greenhouse gas emissions through the promotion of public transportation over private car use, as well as through the potential use of electric or hybrid buses; and,

WHEREAS, BRT will contribute to economic growth by providing greater access to commercial areas, employment centers, and educational institutions, while improving the overall connectivity of neighborhoods, specifically along Route 39, Buford Highway, which has the highest ridership out of MARTA's 116 routes; and,

WHEREAS, In the 2022 DeKalb County Transportation Plan, the public was asked which transportation corridor should be prioritized for major transit investments and Buford Highway was ranked as the highest priority corridor in this poll; and,

WHEREAS, BRT will make Buford Highway safer by providing a dedicated lane for the bus, shorter pedestrian traffic crossings, and improved pedestrian infrastructure such as extended sidewalks, larger crosswalks and center median refuge islands.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that DeKalb County, through its partner MARTA, formally commits to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) as the primary mode of urban transit infrastructure for Buford Highway; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MARTA shall undertake the following actions:

1. **Planning and Design:** Initiate the planning and design phases for the implementation of BRT, including route optimization, station design, and technology integration to ensure seamless service.

2. **Public Engagement and Outreach:** Launch a comprehensive public engagement and communication campaign to inform and involve residents, local businesses, and community stakeholders about the benefits and timeline of the transition to BRT.

3. **Funding and Partnerships:** Seek federal, state, and regional funding opportunities, as well as partnerships with private and non-governmental organizations, to finance the development and operation of the BRT system.

4. **Environmental Review:** Complete any necessary environmental impact assessments, ensuring that the transition to BRT adheres to local, state, and federal environmental regulations.

5. **Operational Transition:** Develop a phased implementation plan for the ART-to-BRT transition, ensuring minimal disruption to current transit services while constructing and deploying the new BRT system.

6. **Technology and Infrastructure Upgrades:** Invest in necessary infrastructure improvements, including dedicated BRT lanes, modernized bus stations, and real-time passenger information systems.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that DeKalb County will monitor the progress of the BRT implementation and make any necessary adjustments to ensure that it meets the community's transportation needs, offering regular updates to the public and stakeholders on the system's performance and benefits.

ADOPTED by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this ___ day of _____, 2024.

MEREDA DAVIS JOHNSON

Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer of DeKalb County, this ___ day of _____, 2024.

MICHAEL L. THURMOND
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

ATTEST:

BARBARA H. SANDERS-NORWOOD, CCC
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners and
Chief Executive Officer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED AS TO SUBSTANCE:

VIVIANE H. ERNSTES
County Attorney

ZACHARY L. WILLIAMS
Chief Operating Officer