

Why a Regional Transit Authority (10/4/16)

Based on many discussions, and the study completed in 2009, the topics below have been assembled (while not considered all inclusive) to help enable a discussion on why a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) should be considered.

Transit Supportive Land Use - The institution of a RTA could be the “forcing function” needed to spur transit supportive land development called for by both the City and County comprehensive plans that results in higher ridership, and less cars on City and County streets.

Missed Opportunities - CAT and JAUNT’s relationship is strong, but there will always be missed opportunities that result in higher costs and inefficiencies for residents.

County Accountability – Albemarle will invest more in transit if there is shared governance and decision making processes.

Cost Avoidance – Combined resources and service planning, as well as more purposeful land use planning will result in avoidance of high spending for services.

Socio-Economic Benefits - More affordable access to a wider range of better paying jobs is the single most important socio-economic benefit to having a RTA. Good paying jobs should not be limited to only residents with cars.

Quality of Life & Safety - Traffic congestion and reckless driving are increasing for both localities. Transit options can counter these trends.

Consistency of Communication – One single system can better coordinate the transparency and communication needed to fully inform decision makers, and help guide policy development.

Comprehensive Community Engagement – An RTA can better engage the public in the design and delivery of services, as well as be more inclusive when matching the types of mobility needed to the types of services offered.

Concurrent Study

MPO Transit Study – The MPO’s survey and study is an asset to the discussion of the merits and method for forming an RTA. It provides an initial assessment of coordination between JAUNT, CAT and UTS, as well as the City and County. The information can be used to help with a facilitated discussion on implementation.

Possible Next Steps

- Hold a facilitated joint city/county elected officials work session to focus on a discussion of the pros and cons of: a RTA; a better coordinated UTS, CAT, JAUNT system; or both with the RTA as the goal.
- Prepare elected officials with a presentation by Chip Boyles and TJPDC.
- Secure an excellent facilitator, such as Philip Shucet.
- Develop a work plan for city, county staffs in concert with TJPDC for review and inclusion in a joint city/county MOU.
- Strategize ways to involve the planning commissions and general public.