

**CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
(CARTA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
November 19, 2025
Meeting Notes**

A Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) Board of Directors meeting was held at the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) in the Barrett Lawrimore Conference Room located at 5790 Casper Padgett Way in North Charleston, SC at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 19, 2025.

MEMBERSHIP: Brad Belt; MaryBeth Berry; Joe Boykin; Mike Brown; Daniel Brownstein; Reggie Burgess; William Cogswell; Henry Darby; Dwayne Green; Will Haynie; Brandon Hudson; James Lewis; Craig Logan; Pat O'Neil; Christie Rainwater; Michael Seekings; Jimmy Ward; Robert Wehrman

MEMBERS PRESENT: Daniel Brownstein; Dwayne Green; Brandon Hudson; James Lewis; Craig Logan; Pat O'Neil; Michael Seekings; Jimmy Ward

PROXIES: Craig Harris for Mayor Belt; Carter McMillan for Councilman Boykin; Michael Mathis for Mayor Cogswell; Jerry Lahm for Councilman Daby; Chief Gebhardt for Mayor Rainwater; Doug Wurster for Councilman Wehrman

OTHERS PRESENT: Marissa Cottrell (WSP); Richard Mitchell (RATP Dev); Jacquelyn Spence (RATP Dev); Eric Adams (Charleston County); Elissa Smith (HDR); Abraham Champagne (WSP); Daniel Brock (HTNB); William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit)

STAFF PRESENT: Ron Mitchum; Andrea Kozloski; Robin Mitchum; Jeff Burns; John Cooper; Megan Ross; Matthew Spath; Sharon Hollis; Kim Coleman

1. Call to Order

Chairman Seekings called the CARTA Board of Directors Meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. followed by a moment of silence and a quorum determination. Chairman Seekings congratulated Mayor O'Neil and Mayor Haynie on their recent re-elections.

2. Consideration of Board Minutes: October 22, 2025 Meeting

*Mr. Logan made a motion to approve the October 22, 2025 Meeting Minutes as presented.
Mr. Lahm seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.*

3. Financial Status Report – Robin Mitchum

Robin Mitchum, Deputy Director of Finance and Administration, presented the financial status report for the month ending September 30, 2025. Ms. Mitchum stated that, overall, the agency remains in good shape and ended the month with unexpended funds of \$3,139,708. She noted that the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures as well as the Balance Sheet, and information for the OnDemand Program are included in the Board Meeting Agenda Packet. Ms. Mitchum provided a brief overview of the following activities for FY25 thus far:

Revenues:

- Farebox is the fares collected on the revenue vehicles.
- Passes & Mobile Ticketing are bus pass fares sold to customers.
- Local Contributions are funds received for shelter and bench construction.

- Federal Revenue includes operating for the year-to-date. Federal Revenue is recorded as eligible expenditures are incurred.
- Advertising is the advertising on the buses.
- Insurance proceeds are a result of accidents.
- Sale of Assets is the proceeds from the sale of a 1986 Chevrolet truck and a 2017 van.
- Miscellaneous Revenue is the sale of scrap metal.

Expenditures:

- Retiree Benefits include the cost of retiree insurance.
- Supplies include office, facility maintenance and rebranding supplies.
- Printing includes costs of printing passes and brochures.
- Automotive is the cost to service the 2018 Ford F-150.
- Postage is shipping costs.
- Dues/Membership are the Charleston Chamber and TASC memberships.
- Office Equipment Rental includes the monthly battery lease for the electric buses.
- Office Equipment Maintenance (OEM) includes GMV Sycromatics, GMV Digital Signage, Genfare Support, Swiftly real time passenger predictions, Swiftly GPS Playback, Swiftly on-time performance, Swiftly run-times, RCN NetCloud Essentials and NetCloud Advanced for mobile routers, Chargepoint for electric charges, and other IT services.
- Rent includes the Ashley Phosphate Park & Ride lot, Dorchester Village Shopping Center Park & Ride lot, Leeds Avenue lot lease from Dominion, and document storage.
- Communications is the cost of phone, internet and radio services at the facilities and on the buses.
- Utilities include electric and water at the SuperStop, Melnick Park & Ride lot, the Radio Shop at Leeds Avenue, Medcom Street, and the charging stations at Leeds Avenue.
- Auditing is the cost of the FY24 GASB 75 Actuary and the Annual Audit.
- Custodial Services are the cost of janitorial services at the Melnick Park & Ride lot location.
- OnDemand Program is customer transportation cost for same-day service through independent rideshare.
- Other Professional Services include bus wash inspection services, appraisal services and the fire extinguisher inspection at the SuperStop.
- Shared Contract Services (IGA & Management) is the extensive services the BCDCOG provides to CARTA.
- Fixed-Route Service is the cost of fixed and commuter service provided by National Express Shuttle and Transit.
- Money Transport is the cost of the armored guard service to transport cash deposits to the bank.
- Security Services is the contracted security service provided at the SuperStop by the City of North Charleston Police Department and by Extra Duty Solutions at the Mary Street bus stop.
- Vehicle Maintenance is the cost to maintain the fleet.
- Facility Repair & Maintenance is the cost to maintain facilities.
- Operating Fees & Licenses include credit card transaction fees and vehicle title and registration fees.
- Insurance includes the cost of liability insurance provided by the Insurance Reserve Fund.
- Paratransit is the cost of paratransit transportation provided by National Express Shuttle and Transit.
- Interest is the interest on the Melnick Park & Ride lot loan.

Capital Expenditures:

- Rolling Stock is the purchase of the Hometown Trolley Villager and two Ford Escapes.
- Bus Facilities/Charging Stations are the Leeds Avenue parking lot repairs and charging infrastructure.
- Bus Shelter Construction/Bench Install is the installation of shelters and benches.
- Security/Cameras & Equipment is the purchase of cameras, radios, access control equipment and AVL equipment.
- Facilities Construction is Shipwatch Square engineering.
- Capital (IT, Facility Repairs, Maint.) is the purchase of bike racks, a Genfare vault, Genfare controller modules and the SuperStop HVAC replacement.

The Board of Directors received the Financial Status Report and the OnDemand Program Activity Report as information.

4. Charleston County Transportation Sales Tax – Presentation – Eric Adams, Charleston County

Chairman Seekings introduced Eric Adams with Charleston County. Mr. Adams delivered a presentation regarding the Charleston County Transportation Sales Tax. He noted that over the past 20 years, Charleston County voters have twice approved a half-penny sales tax, leading to billions of dollars for community infrastructure investments that are vital to Charleston County. The current half-cent is expiring in 2027; therefore, on September 25th, the newly formed Transportation Sales Tax (TST) Special Committee voted to begin a transparent, public-listening and input process to guide a possible extension of the TST. Mr. Adams discussed the 2004 and 2026 allocations regarding the Greenbelt Program, Infrastructure and Public Transit. He noted that there were \$1.2 billion in matching funds and explained that the previously approved half-cent TSTs will deliver \$3.4 billion for infrastructure and, combined with an additional \$1.2 billion in matching funds, will total \$4.56 billion. Mr. Adams stated that nearly 50 cents of every TST dollar comes from visitors and other sources outside of Charleston County. He reviewed the projects that the half-penny has helped fund: 895 miles of resurfacing, rural roads and local paving; 49 miles of bike, pedestrian and multi-use paths; 69 intersections have been improved. Mr. Adams discussed the Greenbelt Program, noting that currently 49% of Charleston County's total acreage (which is more than 284,000 acres) is protected greenspace. He also discussed Public Transit noting that CARTA has made many improvements and advancements regarding bus fleet upgrades, bus stop improvements and the Lowcountry Rapid Transit (LCRT). Mr. Adams discussed the surging population of 33.1% since 2004 from 333,122 residents to 443,357 residents. As a result, vehicle registrations in Charleston County have increased 41.5% since 2008. The Charleston County population is projected to increase by more than 42,000 in the next decade which will result in more vehicles. Mr. Adams discussed the Referendum Roadmap beginning in September 2025 through the Spring of 2026 noting that after gathering additional public input on the draft proposal, County Council will determine whether to proceed with pursuing a future TST. He noted that the potential investment categories are Greenbelt Program, Bike & Pedestrian, Public Transit and Roadways. In the coming months, Council will engage the community with openness and transparency to shape decisions for today and the future. He discussed the methods of public engagement and the QR code for the questionnaire. Mr. Adams addressed questions and comments. Chairman Seekings thanked Mr. Adams for his informative presentation and encouraged participation with the questionnaire. The Board of Directors received the Charleston County Transportation Sales Tax presentation as information.

5. Comprehensive Operational Analysis – Presentation – Megan Ross

Megan Ross, Transit Planner, delivered a presentation regarding the Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA). She noted that the Short-Range Transit Development Plan (SRTDP) will identify potential service change opportunities that can immediately improve service reliability and boost ridership. It will also identify

temporary service and bus stop changes needed during LCRT construction and will define a 5-year transit network post-LCRT construction that integrates LCRT service with the CARTA network. Ms. Ross discussed the Regional Transit Framework Plan (RTFP) noting that it will confirm candidate priority transit corridors and will determine potential capital and operational improvements in each corridor needed to provide frequency and reliable service. It will also assess costs and potential funding sources. Ms. Ross discussed the project timeline and engagement opportunities. She reviewed the state of the system content and the state of the current system. Ms. Ross discussed service reliability noting that on-time has been defined as 1-minute early to 10-minutes late. On-time performance tends to worsen throughout the day and systemwide on-time performance does not improve during weekends. She discussed the demand for transit noting factors that influence the demands (population densities/population demographics/employment densities). CARTA service generally aligns with areas where there is demand for transit. Transit supportive areas currently not served include Summerville, Ladson and Goose Creek. Ms. Ross reviewed the regional and CARTA travel patterns regarding daily travel to/from Downtown Charleston as well as regional and CARTA daily travel to/from North Charleston. She reviewed operator feedback regarding scheduling, frequency and span, new service areas, transfers and regional network. Ms. Ross announced upcoming engagement activities including the Transit Riders Advisory Committee, public meetings throughout the service area, a virtual public meeting as well as pop-ups at bus stops and the online survey. It was noted that a handout was distributed at the start of today's Board of Directors Meeting which contains Open House information. The Board of Directors received the Comprehensive Operational Analysis presentation as information.

6. Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Update – Request for Approval – Jeff Burns

Jeff Burns, Grants and Contracts Compliance Administrator, presented the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Update. He noted that safety is a core value of CARTA, and managing safety is a core business function of the Agency. CARTA is committed to developing, implementing, maintaining and continuously improving processes to ensure the safety of its customers, employees and the community. The CARTA Safety Committee annually reviews the PTASP, as required, to ensure transit safety and to remain in compliance with FTA requirements. Safety management, as a systematic and comprehensive approach to identifying safety hazards and risks associated with transit system operations and related maintenance activities, has been achieved. A Safety Management Systems (SMS) framework, as an element of the Agency's responsibility, has been adopted by establishing a safety policy, identifying hazards and controlling risks, goal-setting, and measuring performance. SMS is a means to foster agency-wide support for transit safety by maintaining and continuously improving a culture of safety. Every employee is responsible for safety, where management is held accountable for the safety of all employees in the organization who take an active role in transit safety. To ensure transit safety and to comply with FTA requirements, CARTA staff has reviewed and adopted the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP). The plan complies with FTA regulations established under 49 U.S.C § 5329. This annual update establishes safety performance metrics and an update to the individuals assigned to administer the Plan for CARTA. The PTASP Accountable Executive, the Board of Directors, and the CARTA Safety Committee, have reviewed the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, 49 U.S.C. § 5329, and certifies that the content has met the requirements through the establishment of a comprehensive SMS framework. CARTA is compliant with 49 CFR Part 673. Mr. Burns encouraged Board Members to contact him if they have any questions, concerns or comments regarding the Plan's updates.

Mr. Mathis made a motion to approve the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Update as presented. Mr. Logan seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

7. Low Floor Cutaway Procurement – Request for Approval

Ron Mitchum, Executive Director, discussed the Low Floor Cutaway Procurement request. He noted that staff is requesting approval to purchase three 27ft. ARBOC Spirit of Freedom low floor buses from Model 1

Commercial Vehicles, Inc. utilizing the State of Georgia Department of Administrative Services cooperative purchasing contract 99999-SPD-SPD0000212-0005 for Public Mass Transit Vehicles and Related Options, Equipment and Accessories. The ARBOC Spirit of Freedom is a low-floor, ADA-compliant shuttle bus constructed on the Ford-E 450 chassis. The vehicle provides seating for up to 18 passengers and can be configured to accommodate up to three wheelchair positions. The price per vehicle shall not exceed \$185,000 and will take approximately twelve months to receive. Mr. Mitchum addressed questions and comments.

Mr. Mathis made a motion to approve the Low Floor Cutaway Procurement request as presented. Chief Gebhardt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

8. Resolution Authorizing and Approving Exercise of Eminent Domain – Request for Approval

Chairman Seekings deferred action on this agenda item to take place following Executive Session.

9. Project Updates – Andrea Kozloski

Andrea Kozloski, Deputy Director of Operations and Support, delivered a presentation regarding upcoming events and activities noting the following: November 4th (Election Day-Free Rides to the Polls); November 10th (Emergency Warming Shelter Transportation); November 11th (Veterans' Day-Free Ride for Veterans and Active Military); November 19th (Charleston County Resilience and Sustainability Symposium); November 19th (TriCounty Link COA Open House); November 20th (ParaTRAC and TRAC meetings); November 24th (Day of Thanks and Giving). Ms. Kozloski discussed the upcoming Holiday Parades for the City of North Charleston, the City of Charleston and the Town of Mt. Pleasant. She noted that the bike giveaway will take place on December 17th and will be pushed on social media. Additional Free Ride days are Friday, December 19th and Christmas Day (Thursday, December 25th). Ms. Kozloski stated that the Beach Reach Ad Hoc Committee will hold a meeting following today's Board of Directors meeting. Councilman Brownstein is Chairman and Mr. Lahm, Mayor O'Neil and Councilman Ward serve on the committee. She noted that any Board Member is welcome to join the committee. Ms. Kozloski then discussed CARTA Amenities, noting the shelters and benches in progress and stating that three new shelters have been installed, 178 bus stop-mounted solar lights have been installed and 75 shelter-mounted solar lights have been installed. She noted that 144 newly branded signs have been installed (there are 900 total stops). Ms. Kozloski also discussed the benches in progress. She highlighted Darin Townsend, Parts Specialist. Mr. Townsend has been the Parts Specialist for two years. He plays a major role in keeping operations running by ensuring that parts and products needed to repair buses are ordered and received in a timely manner. Ms. Kozloski delivered information regarding the Transit App, noting that 892 new CARTA riders were welcomed aboard as they downloaded the app for the first time. A total of 8,690 riders have opened the Transit App this month and riders planned 69,980 trips this month. She noted that 11,642 GO trips were started by riders to receive step-by-step navigation while helping to improve real-time vehicle locations. Ms. Kozloski stated that users purchased 5,514 tickets during the month of October, which valued \$12,124. Ms. Kozloski noted that the Project Updates report was included in the Board Meeting Agenda Packet regarding the following projects: Service Planning Initiatives (noting that staff continues to work with SPARE and WeDriveU regarding software improvements; staff participated in Route 203 monitoring due to ongoing operational suggestions/concerns with timing on traffic signals); Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA); US 52 BRT Study; CARTA OnDemand; Shelter Improvement Program; Shipwatch Square Transit Center; LCRT (noting that Ms. Hollis will be available following today's meeting if anyone has any questions, comments or concerns regarding LCRT); Dorchester Transit Signal Priority (TSP) Project; Mt. Pleasant Street Park & Ride; Fairgrounds Park & Ride; O&M Facility – LCRT; and Mobile Ticketing Sales and Use. The Board of Directors received the Project Updates and the Upcoming Activities & Events Report as information.

10. Ridership Report – Megan Ross

Ms. Ross presented the Ridership Reports for October 2025. She noted that, for the fixed-route ridership trends, passenger trips totaled 281,788 and there were 14.9 customers per service hour. Missed service hours totaled 386.77, which was a decrease of 4.5% from last month. Ms. Ross reviewed safety trends for October 2025 noting that there were 4 preventable accidents (rear end) which were on fixed-route vehicles. There were also 10 non-preventable accidents. She discussed complaints and commendations regarding Customer Service for the month of October noting that there were 8 complaints (unsafe driving behaviors) and there were two commendations. Ms. Ross reviewed On-Time Performance noting that the fixed-route on-time performance for the month of October was 70.7% and the on-time performance for paratransit was 90%. She discussed paratransit services in detail for the month of October regarding the breakdown of total passengers, which was 4,940. There were 260 no-shows and 1,633 cancellations. The average ride length was 29.81 minutes and the average ride distance was 9.49 miles. The on-time performance was 90.0%. She then discussed OnDemand trips for October 2025, noting that the ridership for the month was 4,559 passengers between both Uber and Lyft. The trip cost averaged \$10.06, which was higher than September's average of \$9.72. Ms. Ross stated that 45% of the overall rides were from Tel-A-Ride passengers. The Board of Directors received the Ridership Report as information.

11. Executive Director's Report – Ron Mitchum

Mr. Mitchum updated Board Members regarding the COA for CARTA and TriCounty Link and the TSP on Dorchester Road. The Board of Directors received the Executive Director's Update as information.

12. Other Business, If Any

There was no further business to discuss.

13. Public Comments, If Any

There was one Public Comment noted for the record:

- William Hamilton (Best Friends of Lowcountry Transit): Mr. Hamilton thanked the Board of Directors for their efforts and leadership regarding public transit. He stated that his organization is beginning to plan the Transit Equity Day to be held in conjunction with Rosa Parks' birthday on February 4th.

14. Executive Session – Legal and Contractual Matters

Mr. Logan made a motion that the Board of Directors convene into Executive Session.

Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Non-Board Members, Guests and Non-Essential Staff Members were excused.

Mr. Green made a motion to reconvene the Board of Directors meeting.

Mayor O'Neil seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairman Seekings reconvened the Board of Directors meeting noting that no action was taken related to legal/contractual matters discussed during Executive Session.

15. Resolution Authorizing and Approving Exercise of Eminent Domain – Request for Approval

A CHARLESTON AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ("CARTA") RESOLUTION SUPPORTING AND REAFFIRMING ITS ELECTION TO EXERCISE EMINENT DOMAIN PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE EXCHANGE CLUB FAIR OF CHARLESTON, INC. ("ECFC") PURSUANT TO SECTION 58-25-50(d) OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS ANNOTATED, 1976, AS AMENDED.

WHEREAS, CARTA has committed more than a decade of time, money, resources, and effort into the planning, design, and development of the Lowcountry Rapid Transit Project ("LCRT"), a modern bus rapid transit system that will provide a safe, reliable, low-cost and new mobility alternative to residents and visitors of the region; and

WHEREAS, CARTA, by and through its agents and consultants, identified certain real estate owned by ECFC, commonly known as the Ladson Fairgrounds, with such property bearing Charleston County TMS No. 393-00-00-028 (the "Fairgrounds"), as a suitable site or location of a park and ride bus facility for LCRT; and

WHEREAS, CARTA attempted to negotiate in good faith a voluntary sale, lease or similar acquisition of a portion of the Fairgrounds for use as a park and ride facility from ECFC but was unable to come to any sort of agreement; and

WHEREAS, CARTA having been satisfied by the requisite studies, data and other technical information obtained and provided by its agents and consultants made an informed and unanimous decision to condemn a certain Six (6.0) Acre portion of the Fairgrounds for use as a park and ride for LCRT ("Condemnation Parcel", with such property being more accurately identified in the Condemnation Notice, as defined below, and accompanied survey) pursuant to Section 58-25-50(d) of the South Carolina Code of Laws Annotated 1976, as amended; and

WHEREAS, ECFC subsequently filed a lawsuit challenging CARTA's authority to exercise eminent domain on the Condemnation Parcel, and further alleging that the election to condemn was arbitrary, done in bad faith, and/or constituted a clear abuse of discretion, amongst other deficiencies; and

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED BY CARTA, ACTING BY AND THROUGH ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS, that:

- The election to exercise eminent domain and serve upon the ECFC a Notice of Condemnation and Tender of Payment dated August 5, 2024 ("Condemnation Notice") are hereby unanimously and unequivocally reaffirmed to the extent CARTA meeting minutes do not reflect a consistent level of support for such prior authorized actions.
- The decision to exercise eminent domain and acquire the Condemnation Parcel in conjunction with LCRT was and remains in the public interest and for the public's use and benefit.
- The decision to exercise eminent domain and acquire the Condemnation Parcel was based on established project factors and supported by studies, data and other technical information provided to CARTA at the time service of the Condemnation Notice, which continues to be the case as of the date of this Resolution.
- The decision to exercise eminent domain and acquire the Condemnation Parcel for development into a park and ride facility has been determined a necessary piece of LCRT and ECFC's insistence that it would not sell or lease the Condemnation Parcel, preferring CARTA use a separate portion of the Fairgrounds or move the park and ride facility off-site entirely, in addition to never providing a counteroffer to CARTA's offer of just compensation dated May 8, 2024, made formal condemnation proceedings necessary and CARTA's only viable option to procure the approved Condemnation Parcel.
- Should any portion of this Resolution be deemed unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such determination should not affect the remaining terms and provisions of this resolution, all of which are hereby deemed separable.
- All orders, resolutions and enactments of CARTA inconsistent herewith are to the extent of such inconsistency only, hereby repealed, revoked and rescinded.
- This Resolution shall take effect and be in full force and effect immediately.

Mr. Logan made a motion to approve the Resolution Authorizing and Approving Exercise of Eminent Domain as presented. Mr. Harris seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

16. Board Comments, If Any

Discussion was held regarding flooding/drainage issues and the Charleston County Transportation Sales Tax referendum. Mr. Lahm encouraged a Yes vote for the sales tax referendum.

17. Adjourn

Chairman Seekings announced that the next CARTA Board of Directors meeting will be held in January but to keep an eye out on emails in case a December meeting is needed. He thanked Board Members for their continued dedicated service to the CARTA Board of Directors and the communities they serve. Chairman Seekings commended staff on their dedicated work. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday Season. There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Seekings adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Coleman