



Lowcountry Rapid Transit Receives \$1.2 Million Attainable Housing Planning Grant for Phase 3 of Transit Oriented Development Study

North Charleston, SC (April 3, 2024) – Lowcountry Rapid Transit (LCRT), a 21.3-mile bus rapid transit system and South Carolina’s first mass transit infrastructure project, has received a \$1.2 million Federal Transit Administration grant to advance Transit Oriented Development (TOD) planning by focusing on implementation of affordable housing strategies in the project corridor.

Phase 3 of the **LCRT TOD Study** will develop a strategic affordable housing blueprint along the LCRT line. The study will feature station area site plans, zoning and policy progression, neighborhood plans, and community outreach and education.

“Planning work in Phase 3 of the LCRT TOD Study will align regional attainable housing initiatives with bike, pedestrian and transit infrastructure to support multimodal connectivity and provide residents safe access to transit stations by foot or bike,” said CARTA Chairman and Charleston City Councilmember Mike Seekings.

The study will enable mixed use development in station areas where multimodal infrastructure supports it, and Phase 3 will expand collaboration with both public and private sector partners.

“LCRT is rapidly progressing and continues to enjoy the full support of the Federal government and local partners in its efforts to improve and connect our region,” said Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments Executive Director Ron Mitchum. BCDCOG is the project’s sponsor agency.

Nearly all the grant funding comes from FTA’s Pilot Program for TOD planning, which provides resources to local communities to integrate land use and transportation planning into new fixed guideway or core capacity expansion projects.

The LCRT award is part of \$17.6 million distributed to 20 projects in 16 states aimed at supporting community efforts to improve access to public transportation. The grants help organizations plan for transportation projects that connect communities and improve access to transit and affordable housing, per the FTA.

Phase 1 of the TOD study concluded that over half of the renters in the LCRT corridor are housing burdened, even more for low-income and minority populations, and set a target of 20% affordable housing units along the BRT line. Phase 2 TOD is advancing five strategies to support affordable housing implementation; however, as that work has advanced, more challenges and opportunities have been identified. Phase 3 will work to address this dynamic housing issue over an 18-month time period.

WHAT REGIONAL LEADERS ARE SAYING ...

“LCRT is a historic opportunity to strengthen connectivity throughout our region, so working to increase citizens’ access to attainable housing throughout the project area just makes sense,” said **Charleston County Council Chairman Herb Sass**. “Put simply, this project is about more than transportation – it’s about enhancing quality of life for residents of Charleston County and beyond, and this is an important step in that direction.”

“Lowcountry Rapid Transit is a transformational project for our region. This Phase 3 award is critical to the success of LCRT,” said **Wil Riley, CEO of the Charleston Trident Association of Realtors®**. “Attainable housing is needed throughout the region and placing housing near transit is a smart solution for our growing community.”

“Lowcountry Rapid Transit is a step forward for our community, creating opportunities for mobility and affordable housing solutions.” said **North Charleston Mayor Reggie Burgess**. “This project goes beyond transportation, establishing a platform for inclusive growth and prosperity across our region.”

“The marriage of transit and attainable housing will be a key factor in our region’s success for decades to come,” said **Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Bryan Derreberry**. “The Chamber and its membership look forward to continued collaboration with our public sector partners in this important work.”

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About Lowcountry Rapid Transit

The Lowcountry Rapid Transit (LCRT) project is a planned 21.3-mile Bus Rapid Transit project with over half of the line operating in center-running, dedicated bus lanes. The project will serve 20 stations and 3 park & rides every 10 minutes during peak hours with 60' battery electric buses, on-route charging and Transit Signal Priority (TSP). The project is currently in engineering with revenue service anticipated to start in 2029. For more information, visit the project website at LowcountryRapidTransit.com.

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