

2250 Florida Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802  
PHONE: 225.389.8920



## EXECUTIVE STAFF

**Bill Deville**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

**Darrell Brown**  
*Chief Administrative Officer*

**Dwana Williams**  
*Chief Operations Officer*

## EXECUTIVE REPORT

April 2019

Bill Deville and Executive Staff

### INTRODUCTION OF NEW HR MANAGER Jim Fight: *Bill Deville*

- Overview of vision for Human Resources

### OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE: *Dwana Williams*

- Operations now has 122 active Operators
- CATS currently has eight routes impacted by construction throughout the service area. See the attached system map and note the routes in red that are affected.
- See attached Performance Measures

### CEO NOTES: *Bill Deville*

- HNTB met with CATS board and staff to discuss the results of the Redefinition Study and next steps of the Plank-Nicholson BRT Corridor. Those steps include HNTB leading tasks to advance the project, including National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental documentation, conceptual design and development of an application to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) BUILD Transportation grants (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development instead of the FTA Small Starts Program). HNTB is working closely with City Parish, Redevelopment Authority, DOTD, and CATS regarding funding resources and what now appears to be a better and possibly lower cost option.
- CATS received word from Stephen Whitlow, of Merakey Gateway, noting that Kevin Roig, Deputy Chief of Staff of Communications at the office of Congressman Garret Graves, that the Congressman would like to continue the momentum on the paratransit/Uber on-demand model used in Boston and other areas, for CATS and Baton Rouge; a meeting is scheduled with MV on Wednesday afternoon for an update on their Dallas program as a possible template here as promised.
- Operations, Scheduling, and Planning continue to monitor the SIP and address opportunities and issues that arise.

### MICROTRANSIT PILOT PROJECT: *Bill Deville*

- CATS has partnered with TransLoc to determine best zone(s) in which to provide the pilot project.
- TransLoc met with CATS staff several times via conference call to determine potential zones and has presented a simulation of the City of Baker and the area surrounding Southern University and the Baton Rouge Airport.
- The study has presented options from two on-demand multi-passenger vehicles to six vehicles based on simulated trips.
- CATS has committed \$25,000 to TransLoc for the study.

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- The agency will have to undertake an RFP to solicit for a turnkey solution to lease the vehicles, maintain the vehicles, and operate the on-demand service.
- \$200,000 in grant funding has been identified for this project; these are grants that CATS must use and close.
- There is no plan at this point to operate the project beyond a six-month pilot period.

### **VANPOOL PROJECT: *Bill Deville***

- CRPC is conducting regional vanpool study as part of their three-year Travel Demand Management (TDM) project.
- This vanpool study is in its early stages and is spearheaded by CRPC.
- CRPC approached CATS to gauge our interest to be the operator/manager of the vanpool program.
- Based on the recent discussions, the vanpool study working group recommends a subsidy of \$400/month/van amounting to an annual subsidy of \$4,800/van. The cost is scalable to number of vans included in the program.
- CRPC and CATS are working on identifying funding sources for implementing vanpool program. CRPC's Urban System (STP>200K), CATS 5307, and other DOTD funds are some of the potential sources that are being considered.

### **PLANNING AND GRANTS: *Garrick Rose***

- Planning is preparing CATS FY19 grants applications and refining CATS Program of Projects.
- Grants staff is continuing to prepare information requested by the FTA for the Triennial Review Process.
- Planning met with the Downtown Development District staff to review the downtown trolley service and consider adjustments to the trolley route. DDD will assist in facilitating discussions for a downtown transit center.
- Planning is preparing a Three Year Program of Projects for inclusion in the June 2019 SIP/STIP.

### **FACILITIES PLANNING: *James Baker or Bill Deville***

#### **North Baton Rouge Transit Center:**

- CATS is anticipating FTA's approval of the 2018 formula funding.
- Legal counsel for CATS is working with LSU officials to complete certain legislative requirements prior to executing the purchase agreement.

#### **East Baton Rouge Transit Center – Cortana-Walmart Transit Center:**

- The contractor, The Kelly Construction Group, has submitted all required documentation to the Department of Public Works and is awaiting the construction permit.
- Current service at Cortana will relocate its operation to the mall side of Cortana Place; this is scheduled to begin at the end of the month subject to the contractor's construction schedule.
- Construction is scheduled to end by July 31<sup>st</sup>.

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- The anticipated total cost of the construction project is \$560,000; \$31,000 has been spent to date. This will be paid with local funds.
- The anticipated total cost of the entire project, including amenities, is \$768,000.
- A RFQ solicitation for custom shelters, signage, and an information kiosk for the transit center is currently underway.
- The anticipated cost of the shelters, signage and kiosk is estimated at \$300,000. Grant funds of \$240,000 have been identified, with a local match of \$60,000.

### **Downtown Transit Center:**

- Recent discussions with DOTD officials and DPW officials continue in an effort to identify suitable downtown sites to accommodate the transit center's operations.
- DDD will assist in facilitating discussions for smaller downtown transit center sites. The downtown transit center will likely not be a large hub but rather three small stop locations.

### **BUS RAPID TRANSIT:**

#### **Plank Road BRT, Phase One:**

- The design and engineering phase is being conducted by the SJB Group and began November 1, 2018.
- The cost to date is \$67,400 in local funds.
- The construction phase has not been bid.
- The anticipated cost of the construction phase is \$1,700,000. The grant funds allocation is \$1,360,000; the required local match is \$340,000.
- The design/engineering and construction phases are expected to be completed between end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2019 and the first quarter of 2020, depending on NEPA progress (environmental work expected to be of the "categorical exclusion" type).
- The acquisition of custom shelters and enhanced amenities is grouped with the amenities process mentioned earlier in this report.
- The total project expected to cost around \$900,000. \$720,000 in grant funds has been identified with a local match requirement of \$180,000.

#### **Plank-Nicholson BRT:**

- A preliminary assessment of the BRT stations has been completed by SJB. The assessment focused on right-of-way limitations, ADA compliance, site evaluations and development of conceptual design plans. The assessment has confirmed the suitability and acceptability of the BRT station locations and allows the design phase to advance to the utility phase. The sites deemed unacceptable because of traffic issues, ADA compliance, space limitations, etc. have been replaced with alternative sites.
- CATS and the City-Parish are currently in discussions to review additional costs requests to cover the NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) study for

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the Plank Phase One and Plank-Nicholson Phase Two projects. The NEPA process is necessary as part of the Small Start submittal process.

- Once additional funding has been approved, CATS and HNTB will prepare support documentation to secure environmental clearance for the Plank (Phase 1) and Plank-Nicholson (Phase 2) projects. A Categorical Exclusion is anticipated permitting both phases to proceed.
- HNTB has generated renderings illustrating the BRT station design proposed at Chippewa and LSU. Though preliminary, these renderings illustrate the context and setting for these planned transit improvements.
- The local funds allocated to the project to this point are \$440,000; CATS and the City-Parish have split the cost at \$220,000 each.
- The City-Parish is competing for Capital Improvement Grant (CIG), BUILD grant, and other competitive grants for the project.

### City of Baker:

#### Baker Transportation Center Project


- The Baker Transportation Center, a bus layover facility and a park-and-ride, is a collaborative project among CATS, the City of Baker, and CRPC. CRPC is spearheading this project.
- The first step this project is feasibility / Site planning and design concept study.
- CRPC solicited a planning service contract to begin a site planning and design concepts study. The study is expected to be completed before end of the calendar year 2019.
- The goal of the site design study will be to:
  - Identify a feasible location along Plank Road that has the synergy to support implementation of a Park and Ride, building a Transportation Center, and possible Transit Oriented Development (TOD).
  - Design a transit facility site plan (Phase One) with complimentary mixed-use/transit supportive development (Phase Two) for the identified location.
  - Develop detailed cost estimates for various project phases and alternate site designs (if any).
  - Obtain environmental clearance to allow for the purchase of the property.
- If the project is feasible, following are some of the anticipated next steps include:
  - Acquisition of property by City of Baker following the necessary federal process
  - Identify funds for implementation of Phase One
  - Complete detailed design and obtain environmental clearance for construction, Phase One
  - Construct Phase One

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- Identify and implement transit service improvements to complement the new transit center
- Implementation of Phase Two by City of Baker
- Project Funding

We are here 

Project Phase	Funding Amount (\$)	Funding Source	CATS Responsibility
Feasibility Study	60,000	FTA 5303 (MPO Transit Planning Funds)	\$12K (20% Local Match)
Property Acquisition	TDB	City of Baker	None
Phase I Design, Environmental Clearance, Construction	TDB	MPO STP>200K, Property acquisition amount as local match	If the cost of the property is not enough to match the federal dollars, City of Baker and CATS could cost share the remainder of the needed match
Phase II Design, Environmental, Construction	TDB	City of Baker	None

- There is an MOU/CEA/agreement in place between CATS, CRPC and DOTD that codifies the roles and responsibilities of each entity regarding regional transit planning. Projects such as vanpool study, Baker Park and Ride, etc. fall under the purview of this agreement.