



Transportation Update

June 10, 2022



Pupil Bus Transportation Overview – Where We Are Now (by the numbers)

At “Best” Since the March 2020 School Closures (spring 2022):

- 16 Pupil Drivers
- 6 CAT Drivers Assisting
- 22 Routes

**24 is the absolute minimum required to address the demand for school bus transportation
(with pre-COVID very crowded buses)**

As of June 1st:

- 2 Pupil Drivers are retiring
- 2 Pupil Drivers resigned, giving 2 weeks notice on 6/1
- 1 CAT Driver who has been helping is retiring
- 2 CAT Drivers have expressed they will not drive for Pupil next school year
- 2 Additional Pupil resignations were rumored/pending as of 6/1

As of the close of the 21-22 school year, only ~10 drivers remaining/identified for Pupil

10 is the same number of buses/routes in the September 3, 2020 Board update presentation



Pupil Transportation – What We Know Now

The following actions have been taken to improve CDL-S driver recruitment & retention:

- Advertising/Recruiting budget increased 10x+
- Base driver wages increased by over 12%
- \$2,400 retention bonus
- Full time benefits eligible at 24 hours per week
- Paid for 40 hours at the 24 hour minimum (making the effective hourly rate much higher than the publicized pay rate)
- Overtime pay for driving athletics, etc. because drivers reluctant to work hours beyond the minimum required for full-time wages and benefits. (Payment for 40 hours at the 24 hour minimum ends this month)

As we continue monitoring our own situation and learning from the CDL (and CDL-S) shortage situation across the state and nation, several things have become apparent:

- Just giving more money to drivers does not provide a sustainable solution.
- A combination of significant societal forces have come together to create this situation, and schools can't solve it alone
 - The work to solve this problem requires a comprehensive community effort
- We (the City and Schools) need to look at what other cities have done to address this problem, even prior to the pandemic

September 2020 presentation slide summary: “Again, we seek the ‘least imperfect’ solution set.”

June 2022: Can we move forward as a community committed to a new set of solutions?



Ideas to Move Forward from Other Localities

Some Virginia Localities:

- [Fairfax](#)
- [Arlington](#)

Smaller Cities/College Towns Outside Virginia:

- [Berkeley \(CA\)](#)
- [Burlington \(VT\)](#)
- [Cambridge \(MA\)](#)
- [E. Lansing \(MI\)](#)
- [Oshkosh \(WI\)](#)

**Customized Solutions
Consider Both
Infrastructure & Student Needs**



Policy Brief 2014

Beyond the Yellow Bus
Promising Practices for Maximizing Access to Opportunity
Through Innovations in Student Transportation

Ideas to Move Forward - Walk Zones

Other Public Schools Comparative Information (all numbers below are pre-COVID):

Waynesboro City – 1 mile for all students

Richmond City – 1 mile for elementary / 1.5 miles for all other

Fairfax County – 1 mile elementary / 1.5 miles all other

Manassas City – 1 mile for all students

Alexandria City – 1 mile elementary & middle / 1.5 miles high school

Loudoun County – 1 mile elementary / 1.25 miles all other

Arlington County – 1 mile elementary / 1.5 miles all other

Charlottesville City:

- **.3 miles for K-4**
- **.5 miles for Walker & Buford**
- **.7 miles for CHS**

RECOMMENDATION: .75 Elementary / 1.5 Secondary



Ideas to Move Forward - Bike Programs

Expanded & Enhanced Programming for:

- Free Bikes
- Free Helmets

Existing Resource:

- Charlottesville Community Bikes
- PE Classes - Bike Safety
- Safe Routes To School Program



Safe Routes to School



Walk to School

- Walking School Buses

A walking school bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults



Bike to School

- Bike Trains

A variation on the walking school bus is the bicycle train, in which adults supervise children riding their bikes to school



Safe Routes to School programs get kids physically active and take cars off the road. In the last 40 years, we have seen students walking and bicycling to school decline from 48% (1969) to 13% (2009). (source: Fairfax County Public Schools, Transportation website)

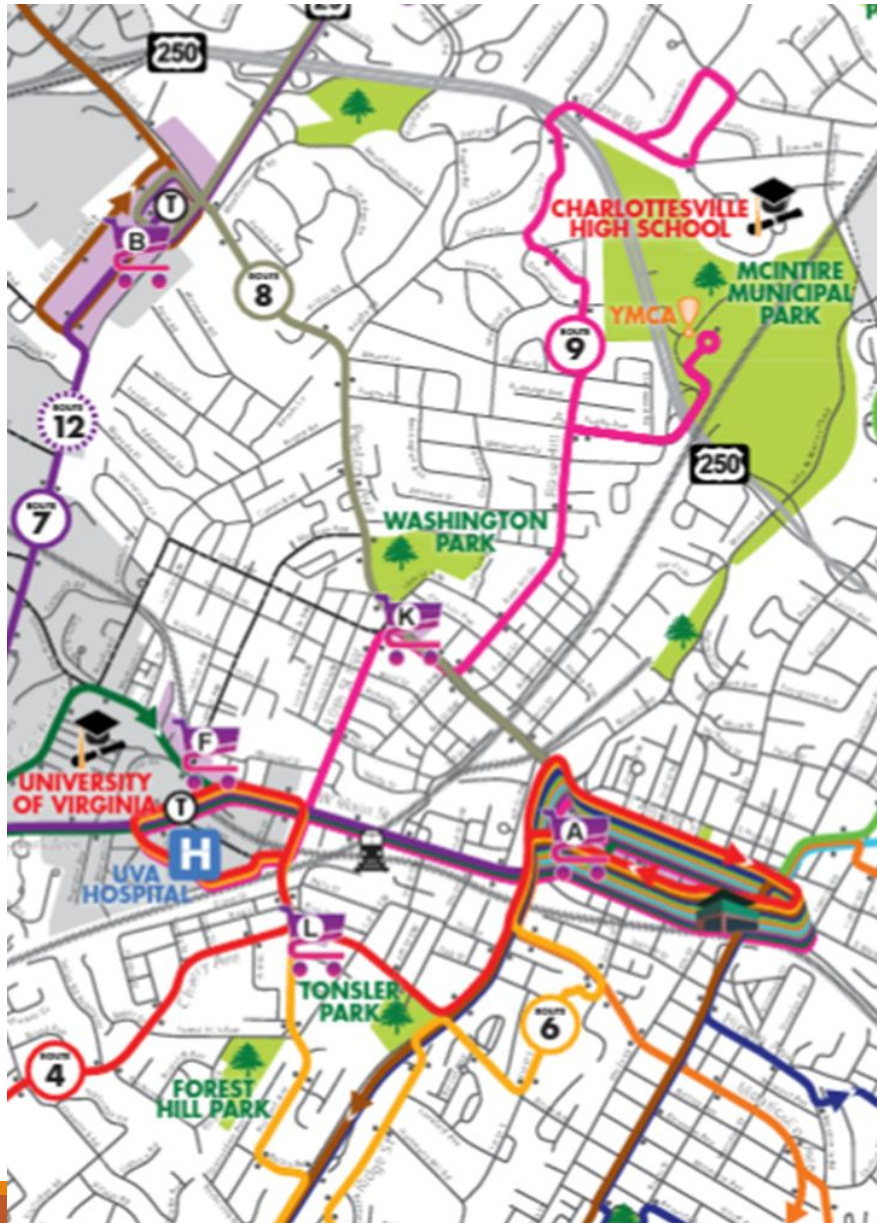
Infrastructure Improvements

- Adding and/or Relocating Crossing Guards
- Photo Traffic Enforcement
- Additional Bike Parking/Racks at Schools
- Improving and Adding Off-Street Trails
- Crossing Improvements
- New/Temporary Sidewalks and Walkways



****All improvements are proposed****

Ideas to Move Forward - Public Transportation (Catch the CAT)



All schools zones are served by existing CAT routes except Greenbrier:

- CHS is on Route 9 (pink)
- Buford has close stops on Route 4 and 6 (red & yellow)

CAT has continued operating FARE-FREE since the pandemic. Free and/or subsidized passes would need to be funded for students when/if FARE-FREE ends.

Opportunity to support expansion and enhancement of the system while developing students at public transit users



Ideas to Move Forward - Type A Buses

- ❖ Critical component to reduce dependency on scarce CDL-S Drivers
- ❖ Supports future transition for CCS to manage all pupil transportation, and Transit focus exclusively on improving public transportation for all of Charlottesville (including CCS students & families)
- ❖ Additional earnings opportunity for CCS staff
- ❖ Additional opportunity to build relationships with smaller groups of students, and more drivers will have existing relationships with the students
- ❖ Electric option helps advance City climate goals
- ❖ Opportunity for a more cost effective way to transport students



Ideas to Move Forward - Summary



What is the Vision? What is the Timing? - Many Considerations:

Staffing

- Crossing Guards
- Type A Bus Drivers
- Extended Hours or Staggered Schedules
(support for multiple runs)

Infrastructure

- Type A Buses
- Bikes & Helmets
- Other...

Program Planning

- New Routes
- Driver Selection, Training, Compensation
- School Schedules
- Incentives

“Things like the current bus issues are among many examples of costs of our prevailing transportation system that don't often factor into budgetary decisions about transportation per se. They also give the lie to the cultural notion that wheels and a motor equal freedom. Sometimes they equal dependence.”

strongtowns.org

The School Bus Driver Shortage is a Problem We Didn't Have to Have