

Downtown stop impacted by sidewalk project



SERVICE ALERT



CAT will be unable to pick up or drop off customers at the inbound bus stop located at Oglethorpe and Barnard for three to four months as a result of a sidewalk construction project at the location. The closest alternative stops to catch the bus are at Oglethorpe and Bull Street or the transit center.

The following routes will be impacted: 10, 14, 27, 28, 31.

Growing number of CAT customers embrace mobile ticketing

Since CAT launched the Token Transit mobile ticketing service in March, over 900 customers have used the app to purchase more than 5,400 bus passes. If you didn't know, the Token Transit app lets customers purchase electronic tickets using their smartphones. Customers can then simply show their digital ticket to board the bus or paratransit vehicle.



Among the app's users is Jie Qin, a local university professor. When she lived in China, cashless options such as the Token Transit app were much more common and she missed such apps when she first arrived in the United States, Qin said.

"To be honest, it took me a while to get used to using cash again," Qin said. "When I saw the ad of the app in the bus, I decided to take it immediately."

Try it for yourself and experience the benefits. Just download the Token Transit app in the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store.

Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to download the Token Transit mobile ticketing app and start saving today!



Coastal Regional Commission launches transit survey



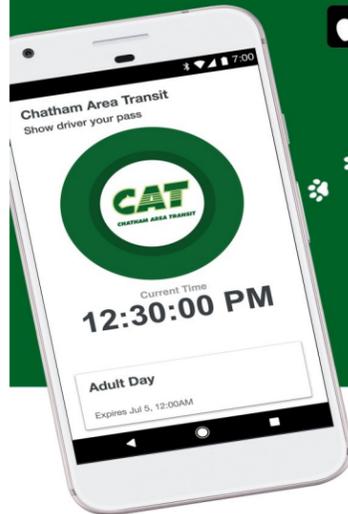
The Coastal Regional Commission of Georgia is conducting a survey for residents and transit riders of the Coastal Georgia region, which includes Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, and Screven counties. This survey is regarding public transit service within these counties. Even if you do not use public transit or do not have an interest in transit service, your opinion is still valuable.

Scan the QR code with your smartphone's camera to take the Coastal Georgia Transit Survey.



Never overpay for riding the bus!

Download the Token Transit App



Outbound

Community Newsletter

August 2021 edition

CAT openings provide opportunity to keep people, economy moving



CAT operator Earl Mason

Chatham Area Transit operator Earl Mason calls out to a CAT customer he recognizes at downtown's Joe Murray Rivers Jr., Intermodal Transit Center. Shortly after, another CAT customer greets Mason as he walks towards the 14 Abercorn bus.

After 27 years behind the wheel, Mason has gotten to know a lot of riders. He takes pride in the job he and his coworkers perform on a daily basis.

"CAT is a pillar in the community," he said. "When people count on you to get to and from their destination that means a lot."

Opportunities now abound for residents looking for such meaningful work.

CAT is hiring operators for its fixed-route bus service, as well as its CAT Mobility paratransit service for customers with disabilities who are unable to use the bus. Pay rates are competitive, benefits are generous and the job can be a rewarding one for the right person.

But being an operator is about more than driving a bus. People skills come in handy, Mason said.

"I just genuinely love people and I love to talk also," he said. "That makes a difference."

Story continued on page 3

Mask mandates reinstated, vaccinations urged as COVID-19 spreads

On July 26, Mayor Van Johnson signed an emergency order requiring face coverings or masks be worn in the city of Savannah due to increasing COVID-19 cases and transmission. The mandate applies to government buildings, hospitals, early childhood centers, guide tours and public transit.

"I know the question will come - are we effectively punishing those who did the right thing and took the vaccine? And the answer is yes, we probably are," Johnson said. "The minority is being punished because of the inaction of the majority. We have the ability to determine our own fate, our own destiny, by doing what we can to improve our vaccination rates. As for me, the short and long-term health effects associated with COVID-19 are too high, so I chose vaccination. And I hope you will, too."

Chatham County and the Savannah-Chatham County School System quickly followed suit with similar mask mandates. Meanwhile, CAT's mask mandate has remained in place at the

direction of the Transportation Security Administration and we expect passengers will be required to wear masks until at least mid-September. CAT vehicles also remain at half capacity to allow for customers to spread out.

Health officials say that such mandates and safety measures would not be necessary if more people were getting vaccinated, but the hesitancy to get the shot, along with the arrival of the Delta variant, has unfortunately led to COVID-19 cases increasing again. While no vaccine is 100% effective, health officials say that those who are vaccinated are less likely to contract the Delta variant and that for those who do, the symptoms are mild and the chance of hospitalization is low.

For more information about the COVID vaccine or to make an appointment, go to covid19.gachd.org or scan the QR code to the right.



CAT Board approves CEO search firm

On July 27, the CAT Board of Directors unanimously approved a \$34,500 contract with Colin Baenziger & Associates to conduct executive recruitment services for CAT's new CEO. The executive recruitment firm is expected to begin the search process in late August and take about 90 days to complete, said Director Michael O'Halloran.

"So hopefully within three months we'll be interviewing and hiring a new CEO," O'Halloran said.

The Board's selection came after procurement staff contacted a number of executive search agencies with experience in recruiting senior executive level professionals. The proposals were transmitted to the Board's ad-hoc search committee for review. Director O'Halloran, the ad-hoc committee chair, requested a

meeting of ad-hoc members and each firm to present their proposal for consideration. The ad-hoc committee members, procurement staff, and legal counsel met with three search firms on June 22 and June 23, prior to recommending the selected firm.

July's meeting can be viewed on CAT's YouTube channel at <https://bit.ly/2EsR4kH>. The vote and discussion regarding the search firm takes place at about the 19:30 minute mark of the meeting (Part 1).

Go to CAT's YouTube channel by scanning the QR code with your phone's camera.



CAT Board August meeting calendar

All of the August CAT Board/Committee meetings can be viewed live on CAT's YouTube page at: [YouTube.com/ChathamAreaTransit](https://www.youtube.com/ChathamAreaTransit).

CAT Board Committee Meetings

Date: Aug. 10
Strategic and Operational Planning: 10:30 a.m.
Performance Monitoring/Audit: 1 p.m.
External Stakeholder Relations: 2:30 p.m.

CAT Governance Committee

Date: Aug. 17
Time: 11 a.m.

CAT Board Regular Meeting

Date: Aug. 24
Time: 10 a.m.



Hurricane Preparation time is here



CAT helps residents get home after 2019's Hurricane Dorian

Last month's Tropical Storm Elsa was a good reminder that it's time to plan what you and your family will do if a hurricane hits,

if you have not already.

We were fortunate with Elsa, but if an evacuation is required during this hurricane season it is good to be prepared. If an evacuation is required (like it was for Hurricane Dorian in 2019), CAT will run regular routes for as long as possible while also stopping at the staging area, the Civic Center, on each trip to accommodate those without their own form of transportation for evacuation.

You can learn more about preparing for hurricanes and other emergencies at [chathamemergency.org](https://www.chathamemergency.org) or by scanning the QR code to the right.



CAT openings (continued from page 1)



Long-time CAT customer Lennard Young

Operators such as Mason help keep the local economy humming by ensuring residents can get to work.

"Public transportation is critical, especially in this tight labor market," said Bill Hubbard, president and CEO of the Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce and Visit Savannah. "Our workforce needs CAT to get to work, and our employers need all the great employees they can find."

One of CAT's regular customers, Lennard Young, shares Mason's and Hubbard's enthusiasm for what CAT employees do. Young, 42, has been riding CAT since his mother took him on the bus when he was a baby. These days he uses it to get home

in the morning after working the nightshift as a CNA at St. Joseph's/Candler Hospital. He finds the ride to not only be convenient after a long night of work, but a welcoming one due to the bus operators he has come to know.

"I love riding CAT," Young said. "The drivers are awesome."

Join the team: CAT is hiring

Looking your next career opportunity? CAT is hiring operators for our fixed-route and paratransit services. In addition, we are hiring Savannah Belles Ferry captains to transport passengers along the Savannah River.

These employees, which we consider "ambassadors of goodwill", help residents and visitors meet their daily needs by getting them to work, school, health appointments and grocery stores.

Starting hourly rates range from \$12.45 to \$26 per hour. Interested? Find info about the openings and other opportunities at www.catchacat.org/about-cat/cat-careers/.

Scan the QR code with your smartphone's camera to learn about the career opportunities at Chatham Area Transit.



Letters to CAT: Former news anchor, state rep offers words of support

On July 30, Sonny Dixon submitted a letter expressing his appreciation for our operators. Below, you'll find his words of support.

Letter from Sonny Dixon: Quick note to drivers on the Savannah Mall routes, specifically those who trek Apache at Shawnee every early morning. I'm the old fella who picks up trash just after dawn - in and around Hidden Lake Townhomes, where I live - and waves at all the bus drivers.

Please pass along to them my gratitude for the jobs they do. I am a longtime ardent supporter of mass transit, serving on Garden City Council years ago, through five terms in the Georgia House of Representatives, and 18 years as a news anchor / reporter at WTOG.

We who GET IT often defended transit against ridership critics who don't understand the ebb and flow of riders along the routes and/or tightwad taxpayers who simply cannot or will not recognize the general benefit of mass transit.

But, here, one issue that plagues other communities has never been a major issue - drivers maintaining courtesy and timeliness, day in - day out. So, professional bus and commuter train jockeys have my utmost respect.

While much of my time dealing with transit issues in the legislature was spent on MARTA, as I often stated, one thing some have that we don't - driver complaints.

So I wave at personal heroes who put up with idiots in four wheelers yet safely traverse the streets of Savannah - Chatham, almost unnoticed. That's because problems are very seldom related to them. So - I'll keep walking and waving.

Please pass along my compliments. Tell 'em I'll see 'em along the trail, fumbling with my bucket n' grabber so I can throw up a big ol' mornin' wave.

All the best— Sonny Dixon