

Lowcountry Rapid Transit Project

Charleston, South Carolina

New Starts Project Development

Information Prepared September 2019

The Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Government (BCDCOG) proposes to implement a 26-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along US 78 and US 52 between Summerville and Charleston, South Carolina. The project would begin in Summerville and run along either US78 or I-26 to the Trident Medical Center and the VA Hospital and to the vicinity of the recently opened Rivers Avenue Park & Ride in North Charleston, before continuing south primarily along US52 (Rivers Avenue). The route would continue past the new North Charleston Intermodal Transportation Center and into Charleston, serving the Mount Pleasant park and ride, the hospital district at MUSC, and downtown Charleston. The project includes upgrades to the existing maintenance and storage facilities, 22 BRT stations, parking at three stations, and 24 60-foot articulated electric vehicles. The Project's capital cost estimate is \$387.5 million. The BCDCOG is still determining the amount of New Starts program funds it will seek.

The BCDCOG believes the purpose of the project is to improve connectivity and mobility, and provide additional transit alternatives in the congested corridor. The project would also support local land use plans that call for the expansion of transit services in the absence of the ability to increase capacity on local roadways.

The BCDCOG plans to select a locally preferred alternative in August 2020 and get it adopted into the fiscally constrained long range plan by January 2021. The BCDCOG expects to complete the Documented Categorical Exclusion by September 2020 and subsequently enter engineering by mid-2021. A New Starts grant agreement is anticipated in late 2023. The project is expected to begin revenue service in late 2025.