



MARTA *Rapid* Summerhill Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) FAQ

General

Where are we in the overall project timeline?

The MARTA *Rapid* Summerhill project is in the Construction phase. Construction is scheduled to take place from Fall 2023 through summer 2025 with the start of revenue service in late 2025.

How many stops will there be and how was that number determined?

There are 14 stops planned as part of the Summerhill BRT. These stops are approximately 0.3 miles apart, which was determined to provide the proper balance between accessibility and route travel time during the project's planning phase.

Additionally, Summerhill BRT will connect to three MARTA rail stations (Georgia State Station, Five Points Station, and Garnett Station), and various other MARTA bus routes. Stops at these locations are critical to support transfers to the rest of the MARTA system.

How was the route alignment to South Downtown and Five Points determined?

The MARTA Board adopted the final alignment based on public and stakeholder input to serve South Downtown and Five Points, to connect to the North/South and East/West rail lines, to leverage ridership from major employment locations including Federal, State, and Local government, and to connect to future redevelopment sites in South Downtown and along the Atlanta Beltline. The direct connection to Five Points and the North/South rail line was identified as a critical link by stakeholders and the public.

What kind of security/law enforcement is planned? Has there been coordination with the Atlanta Police Department?

The MARTA Police Department and Atlanta Police Department are in constant communication and coordination during day-to-day operations of the MARTA transit system. This same coordination will apply to MARTA *Rapid* system to maintain patrols and enforcement of the dedicated bus only lane.

What are the operating hours? Will they complement MARTA bus or rail hours?

Service along the Summerhill BRT route will be coordinated with MARTA rail service hours. Operating hours are currently planned for 5:00 AM to 1:00 AM daily. These operating hours represent an improvement over current bus service and are similar to that of current MARTA rail service outside of areas served by multiple lines.

How long will I have to wait for the BRT at each stop? How does that differ for daytime and nighttime operating hours?

At this time, weekday service is scheduled to arrive every 10 minutes during the daytime peak, every 15 minutes in the evening, and every 20 minutes during the late-night hours. Weekend service is scheduled to arrive every 20 minutes in the morning, every 15 minutes midday through the evening, and every 20 minutes during the late-night hours.

What is the ridership forecast for Summerhill BRT?

The average weekday ridership is forecasted to be 2,350 in 2025 (opening year) and 3,450 in 2040 (horizon year).



What type of transit vehicle will be used?

The transit vehicle for the BRT will be a 60-foot articulated electric vehicle. While the specific vehicles have yet to be purchased and branded, the vehicle is comparable to other articulated buses currently operating as part of MARTA’s bus fleet.

Where will the future rapid projects be located?

Additionally planned MARTA Rapid projects are the Campbellton Corridor BRT, Southlake BRT, and State Route 54 BRT. For more information about these projects please visit: <https://www.itsmarta.com/brt>

Fare Collection

What is the fare structure for MARTA *Rapid* trips?

The fare structure for BRT trips will be the standard MARTA fare of \$2.50 per trip with free transfers. Monthly passes, trip passes, and special fare passes will provide a lower per trip price. Visit <https://www.itsmarta.com/fare-programs.aspx> for more information.

How will fares be collected for MARTA *Rapid* trips?

Fare collection will occur prior to boarding the vehicle. Off-board fare collection specifics are still being finalized in coordination with MARTA’s next generation fare collection project “MARTA Automated Fare Collection 2.0.”

How will MARTA enforce fare collection?

Ticketing will be taken care of by either purchasing entry via a MARTA Breeze product at the station terminal, purchasing ticket online, or using tap to pay with your phone. Once the bus arrives and passengers board, they will tap their chosen form of payment (phone or card) and there will be no change option available. Access to station is not precluded by a pay feature. Fare collection enforcement is under discussion with the MARTA Operations, MARTA Legal, and MARTA Police Department.

Connectivity

Will the BRT line connect to MARTA bus or rail? How will transfers between MARTA *Rapid* and MARTA bus or MARTA rail operate?

MARTA *Rapid* will connect to three MARTA rail stations (Georgia State Station, Five Points Station, and Garnett Station), four MARTA local bus routes in the Summerhill and Peoplestown neighborhoods (Routes 49, 55, 155, 832), and various other bus routes in Downtown. Transfers will operate the same as local bus to local bus transfers, or local bus to rail transfer, with the tap of a fare card within a three hour period.

How will this project impact existing service for Route 55?

The Route 55 will be evaluated as part of the bus network redesign prior to the start of the BRT service. For more information, visit <https://www.marta2040nextgenbus.com/>



How will the BRT line connect to the South Atlanta neighborhoods, the BeltLine Southside Trail, and Carver High School?

The southern terminus of the route (Carver Station) is located on Hank Aaron Drive near Ridge Avenue, just north of the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks and the intersection of Hank Aaron Drive, University Avenue, and McDonough Boulevard.

The City of Atlanta and the Atlanta BeltLine are working with the adjacent private developers to create a connection on the north side of the railroad tracks to the Atlanta BeltLine. This access would allow pedestrians to use the Atlanta BeltLine tunnel for access to Carver Station. Additionally, the bus network redesign program will be evaluating local bus service to Carver High School and South Atlanta.

MARTA will continue to coordinate with Georgia DOT, the City of Atlanta DOT, and Norfolk Southern for all matters related to the at-grade railroad crossing and is committed to working with these partners to identify solutions.

Dedicated Lanes

How much of the corridor will have dedicated bus only lanes?

Approximately 85% of the corridor will have dedicated bus only lanes.

Based on comments received from multiple stakeholders related to dedicated lanes as part of the 60% design phase in Fall 2021, MARTA and the project team conducted additional analysis to determine if any of the planned shared lanes within the South Downtown area could be redesigned as bus only lanes. After additional investigation and discussions with the City of Atlanta Department of Transportation, the Georgia Department of Transportation, and the Georgia Building Authority / Georgia State Properties Commission, who have jurisdiction within these segments, it was determined that additional bus only lanes are not feasible or critical at this time.

However, once the BRT is operational, MARTA will evaluate the performance of the system to determine if additional bus only lanes would provide further efficiencies, or otherwise improve service, and can be coordinated with other planned and potential Downtown improvements. Our partners at the City of Atlanta Department of Transportation and the Georgia Department of Transportation have committed to supporting future operational assessments when requested by MARTA.

How does that amount of dedicated bus only lanes compare to other BRT systems in the United States?

The Summerhill BRT project is fortunate to have 85% dedicated lanes, which is unusual for BRT systems in the United States. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) considers Fixed Guideway BRT to be any system operating with more than 50% dedicated lanes.

How will the dedicated bus only lanes be enforced?

Bus only lanes are a new community feature that will require additional attention and effort to educate motorists on how they are to be utilized.

Is there a physical barrier that separates the BRT lane from other drive lanes?

No, there is no physical barrier separating BRT lanes from other drive lanes, except for the dedicated lane section on Washington St. from Trinity Ave. to Memorial Dr. Lanes dedicated to the route will be marked as "Bus Only."

Have protective barriers for the bus only lanes been considered?

Due to limited curb to curb width along the corridor, vertical protective barriers for the bus only lanes are not feasible. Most arterial BRT systems, particularly in developed communities, operate without physical separation of the bus only lanes.

Will cars be able to turn right from the bus only lanes at intersections or to access a driveway?

Vehicles will be allowed to turn right from the bus only lane at driveways or intersections after yielding to transit vehicles in the bus only lane.

Bicycles

Will bicycles be allowed to share the dedicated bus only lanes?

To achieve the desired safety and operational standards, the bus only lane is intended for transit vehicles only. Bicycles will not be allowed to share the dedicated bus only lanes as it would present safety challenges for MARTA bus operators and could negatively impact operations of the BRT service.

At this time, MARTA has identified on-road and off-road bicycle accommodations that can be implemented as part of the MARTA *Rapid* Summerhill project between Georgia Avenue and Capitol Square/Trinity Avenue. We continue to coordinate with the City of Atlanta Department of Transportation to identify safe facilities along and adjacent to the Summerhill BRT route for bicycles and scooters, which may include on-street and/or off-street accommodations.

Will you be able to take bikes on the BRT vehicles?

The 60-foot articulated electric bus design by MARTA allow bicycles to be brought on-board the BRT vehicle.

Will there be bike lockers or racks at the Southern Terminus and other stops?

Yes, bike racks will be included at each stop. Additional bike racks are being considered for the Southern Terminus (Carver Station), which is adjacent to the Atlanta BeltLine.

Sidewalks and Pedestrian Experience

Will the pedestrian experience between the BRT stops and the MARTA rail stations be improved?

MARTA and the project team conducted a site visit to inventory pedestrian needs and improvements on Forsyth Street and Broad Street between MLK Jr. Drive and MARTA's Five Points station, Piedmont Avenue between MLK Jr. Drive and MARTA's Georgia State station, and Broad Street between Mitchell Street and MARTA's Garnett station.

Several possible improvements have been identified and MARTA is working to determine which partner organization is responsible as well as jointly identify potential funding. MARTA is committed to working with the City of Atlanta and Central Atlanta Progress to create safe and pleasant pedestrian access in these areas.

Are the sidewalks along the corridor and within walking distance to the stops being improved?

MARTA has committed to making numerous multimodal safety improvements along the BRT corridor including accessible curb ramps, traffic signal improvements, clear delineation of on-street parking, updated signs, and pavement markings. MARTA coordinated with the City of Atlanta to ensure that each stop will be accessible and meet ADA guidelines. Each stop will have access to pedestrian sidewalks.

New sidewalks or major sidewalk improvements along the corridor are not included in the scope of this project. MARTA is coordinating with the City of Atlanta Department of Transportation to identify additional pedestrian needs along the corridor and between the BRT stops and MARTA rail stations to facilitate convenient and comfortable transfers.

Will the stations take up the entire sidewalk along the route? Will non-riders be able to pass around the station?

No, at no point will the stations block pedestrian traffic. Non-riders will be able to pass around the station area.

Pedestrians will have the option to use the pass around sidewalk at all 5 of the downtown stations, and at 4 stations on Hank Aaron Dr. Pedestrians will have to utilize the shared passthrough sidewalk at the remaining 5 stations.

Miscellaneous

Will the BRT line run during downtown sporting/entertainment events? How will this relate to City of Atlanta traffic plans for special events?

BRT operations will continue and potentially increase during special events at nearby Downtown Atlanta and Summerhill sports and civic venues. MARTA will work with City of Atlanta Department of Transportation traffic operations staff to ensure minimal BRT delay during special events through the combination of flush traffic plans and transit signal priority. More information will be provided to the community prior to BRT service operation.

How will MARTA adjust BRT operations in coordination with or response to any film permits or street closures?

MARTA continues to coordinate with the City of Atlanta to identify strategies that will minimize and mitigate any impacts on BRT service, including film permits. BRT service offers great flexibility when temporary rerouting is needed due to emergency roadway or utility repairs.

How will the BRT affect the plans to convert Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Mitchell Street from one-way to two-way streets?

The Summerhill BRT is being designed with flexibility in mind, including potential to react to future roadway changes. Proposals to convert Martin Luther King Jr. Drive from one-way to two-way will continue to be considered with final design so that such alterations are not precluded due to the BRT. Additionally, MARTA will continue to work with the City of Atlanta Department of Transportation and Central Atlanta Progress to ensure that any operational changes to these streets maintain safe and efficient Summerhill BRT operations.

Will the streets along the corridor be resurfaced?

MARTA, in coordination with the city of Atlanta, will mill and resurface the majority of the route corridors.