

CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING
300 WEST CROWELL STREET
MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA 28112
AUGUST 9, 2022 – 4:30 P.M.
AGENDA
www.monroenc.org

1. Monroe Road/US 74 Corridor Study and Survey Results Presentation by Union County
2. Monroe Aquatics and Fitness Center COVID-19 Impacts and Operations Update
3. Closed Session Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute Sections 143-318.11(a)(1) and 143-318.11(a)(3)

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- **Agenda** is tentative and is subject to change up to and including the time of the meeting.
 - At the discretion of City Council, **Agenda Items** listed above that are not discussed at the Strategic Planning Meeting or moved at the request of Council, may be carried forward to the City Council Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m. to be considered.
 - **Cell Phones/Pagers:** As a courtesy, please turn off cell phones and pagers while Meeting is in progress.



STAFF REPORT

TO: City Council

VIA: Brian Borne, City Manager

DATE: August 9, 2022

FROM: Lisa Stiwinter, Planning and Development Director

SUBJECT: Monroe Road-US 74 Transit Corridor Study Discussion.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The City Council is requested to consider the Monroe Road/US 74 Corridor Transit Study Public Inputs results and provide a recommendation.

REVIEW

Residents in Union County currently have access to public transportation options, including Union County Transportation's "dial-a-ride" service and the 74X/Union County Express bus service from Monroe and Indian Trail to uptown Charlotte. The 74X/Union County Express bus service is funded by Union County and operated by CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System). Union County has partnered with CATS for over 15 years to help provide the Union County Express (74X), a peak hour commuter service between Monroe, Indian Trail and Uptown Charlotte. Due to increasing costs, decreasing ridership, and changes in demand for service, Union County is seeking input from municipalities and the public regarding the future of public transportation services along the Monroe Road and U.S. 74 Corridor.

At its January 19 meeting, the Union County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) considered options for continuing the existing 74X express bus service or redirecting the funds spent towards that service for some other transit service. The Commissioners voted to continue the service through FY 23 and to initiate a study of transit service along the corridor to determine what kind of service would be feasible and make the best use of the annual funds currently spent on the 74X route. In addition to completing a study, the BOCC directed Union County staff to work towards a cost-sharing agreement with both Monroe and Indian Trail if 74X express bus service continues.

The Union County Transit Service Study began in March 2022 and included the following steps:

- A stakeholder's committee consisting of municipal representatives within the study area, which tentatively is considered to be Uptown Charlotte to Marshville has been established with meetings being held once a month.
- A transit service survey was created and released in May requesting residents help determine the best use of limited funds in a transit study. The survey was conducted in partnership with the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO) and CATS. The survey was available in English, Spanish and Russian. Individuals who did not have internet access was able to request a paper copy of the survey by calling Union County Senior Planner, Bjorn Hansen. The survey period ended on June 12, 2022.
- The responses of the transit survey are being presented to municipalities located within the study area to assess the transportation service needs and preferences, and to provide a recommendation to Union County going forward.

Bjorn Hansen, Senior Planner with Union County will present the transit survey results, answer any questions and request feedback on Monroe's transportation needs and preferences based on the transit survey responses.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends City Council consider, discuss and provide a recommendation on the Monroe Road/US 74 Corridor Transit Study to include Monroe's transportation needs and preferences and cost-sharing for transportation services in Union County.

Attachments:
Monroe Road/US 74 Corridor Transit Study Results

Monroe Road/ US 74 Corridor Transit Study Public Input Results

August 9, 2022



UNIONCOUNTY
north carolina

Union County Transit Study Overview

- Initiated due to increasing costs, decreasing ridership, and changes in demands for service
- Designed to better understand transportation service needs/ preferences and help determine the best use of limited funds
- Residents have access to two public transportation options:
 - Human Services Agency Transportation (UCT) Demand-Response “Dial-a-Ride” services
 - 74X/Union County Express bus service from Monroe and Indian Trail to uptown Charlotte
 - Funded by Union County. Operated by Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS)
- Surveys conducted May 16 – June 12 to obtain resident feedback and understand transportation issues important to the community

Public Outreach Activities

- Union County employee newsletter
- Media release, published by Monroe Enquirer Journal
- Facebook posts by Union County and others
- Emails to Union County 2050 committee members
- Emails to Union County municipalities
- Paper surveys for Union County Transportation (UCT) riders
- Paper surveys for clients at the Union County Human Services Agency

Results

- 844 responses
 - 768 Metroquest online surveys (757 English; 10 Spanish; 1 Russian)
 - 64 Union County Transportation (UCT) rider paper surveys
 - 12 Union County Human Services client paper surveys
- Approximately 500 completed all questions (66%) – this is normal for Metroquest surveys
- Survey closed June 12

Union County Transportation Survey Results

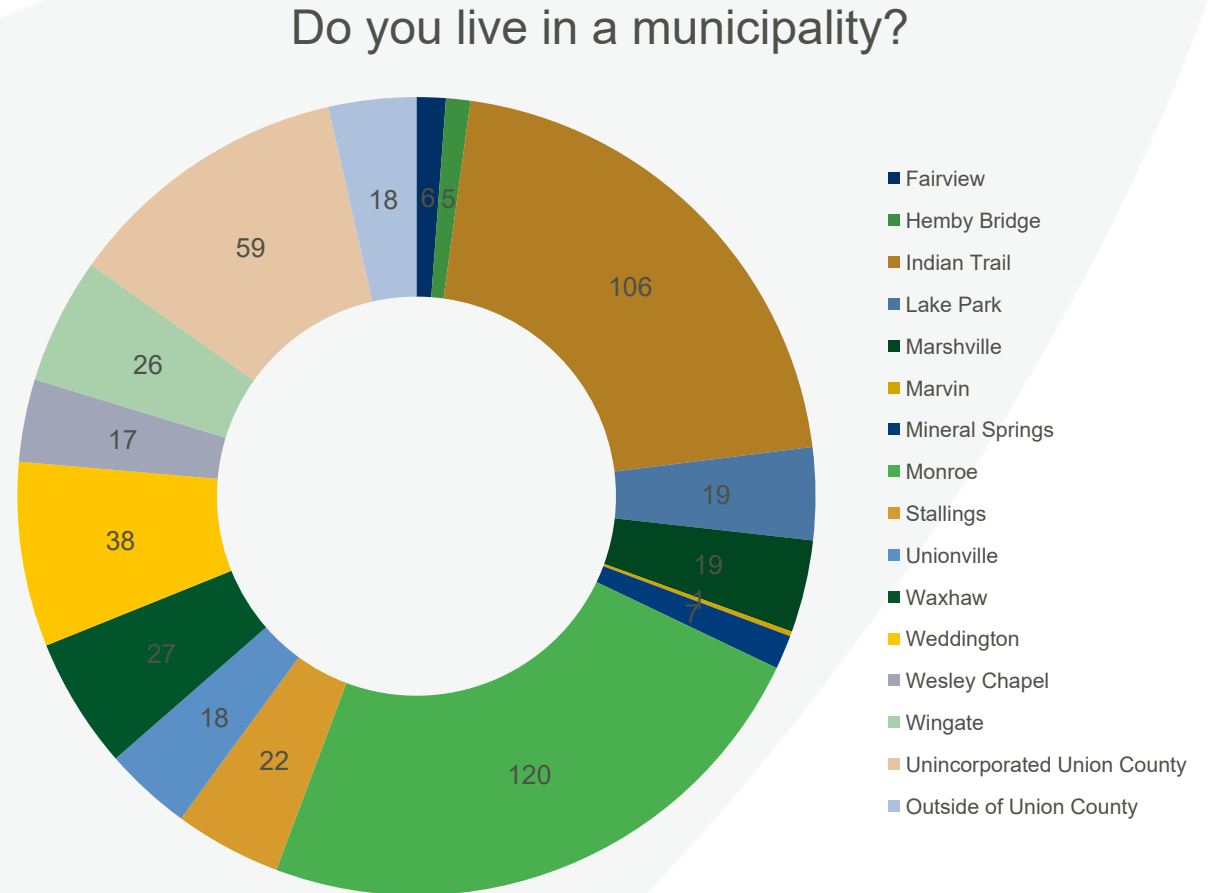
- 64 responses
 - Average age – 58
 - 58% female
- 36% are 65 or older, 4% are younger than 30
- 42% live in Monroe, 33% live in unincorporated Union County
- 81% like existing demand-response service
- 91% would like evening and/or weekend service as well
- 28% think mobility on demand service would help them
- 83% think local circulator could be useful

Human Services Paper Survey Results

- 12 responses
 - Only half completed questions, so usefulness of results is limited
- Average age – 42
- 73% female
- 8% are 65 or older, 25% are younger than 30
- 43% live in Monroe, 29% live in Marshville
- General support for current and proposed services

Demographics (English- Online Results)

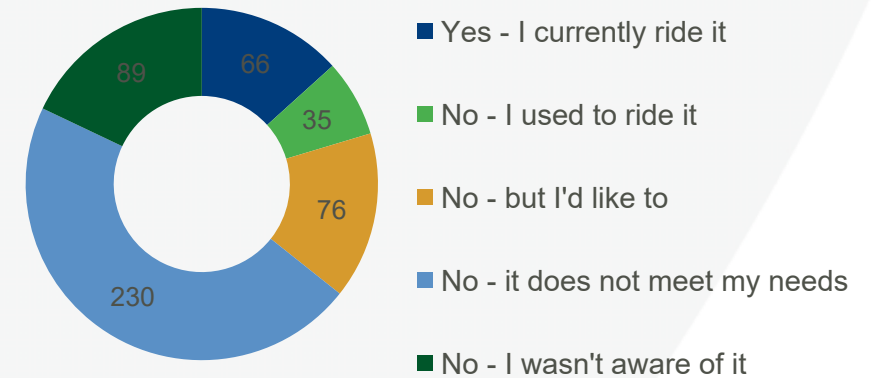
- Every municipality had responses
- 64% female
- 16% are 65 or older, 7% are younger than 30
- 41% have household income of \$100,000 or more, 22% have income of less than \$50,000



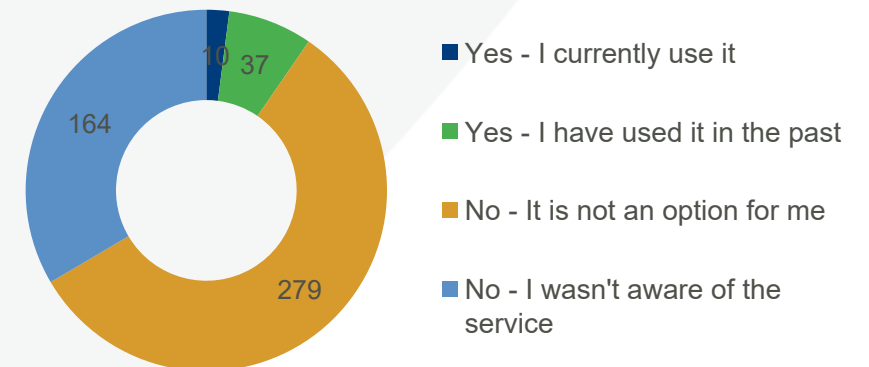
Transit Population (English - Online Results)

- 13% current **74X/Union County Express** riders
 - 22% used to ride or would like to use it
 - 18% were not aware of the 74X service
- 2%* current **Union County Transportation** riders
 - *(Excludes paper survey responses for UCT riders)
 - 8% used to ride
 - 33% were not aware of the service
- 2% of all respondents have a mobility disability and rely on others to complete trips

Have you ever used the 74X/ Union County Express?



Have you ever used Union County Transportation (UCT)?



Support for Transit

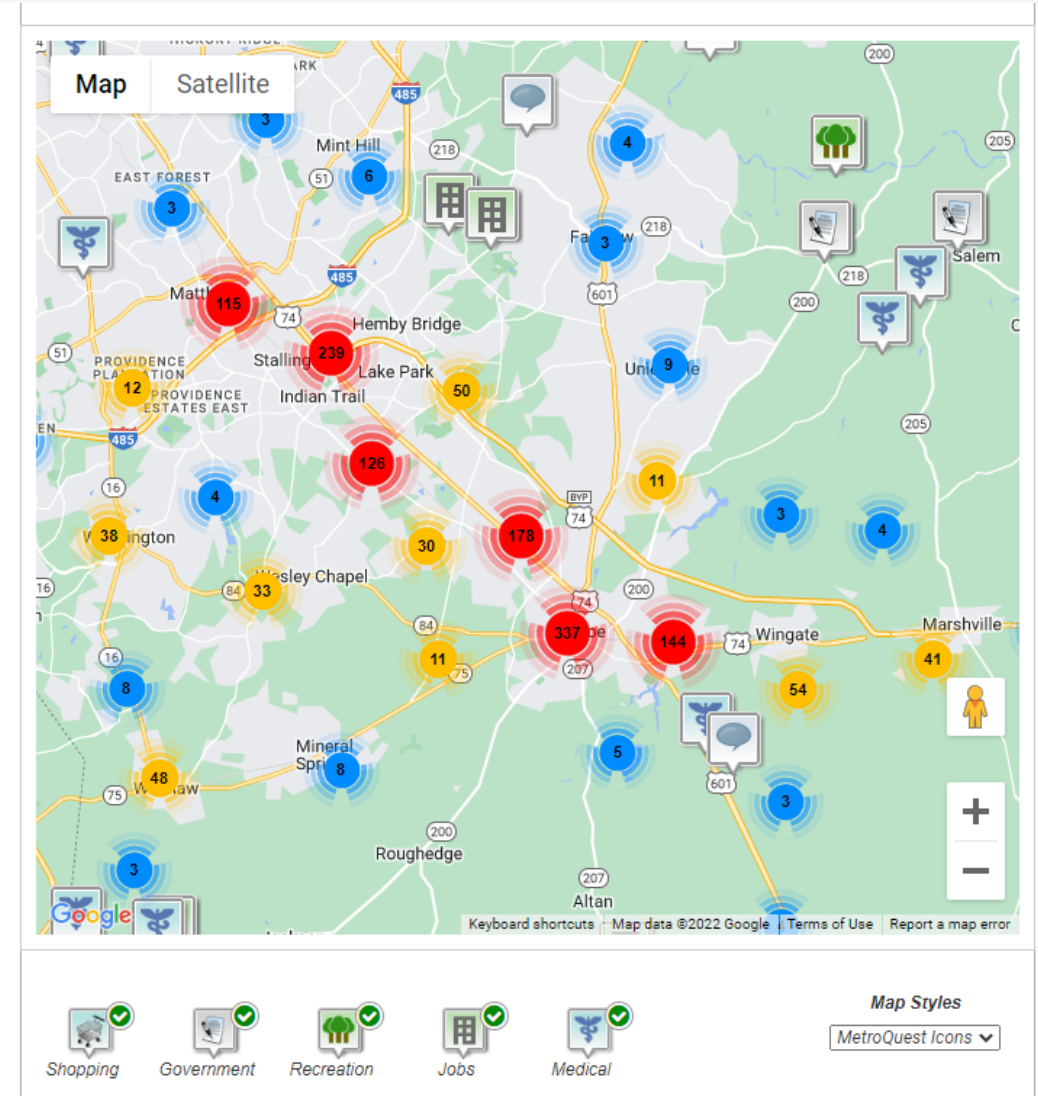
- Demand- Response: 72% support keeping service the way it is, however...
 - 67% of those saying keep the service the way it is also support adding weekend and/or evening service
 - 78% of all respondents support adding weekend and/or evening service
 - Rough split on prioritizing one over the other, but both are supported
- Local Service
 - 59% support an Uber/Lyft Microtransit service, but very different responses online versus paper surveys
 - 61% support online versus 33% support from UCT/Social Services responses
 - 80% feel a local circulator service could be useful
 - Split on whether to focus on high demand areas or connect as many communities as possible
 - 65% also want service to Charlotte

Support for Transit

- Current express bus: 75% support keeping service
 - 45% support adding mid-day service
 - 64% support Union County providing the service versus CATS
- Among current, prior or interested express bus riders (125 responses)
 - 76% support keeping service, 14% say cancel the service
 - 57% support adding mid-day service
 - 71% support Union County providing the service versus CATS
- 63% support running the service to Matthews
 - 59% support Union County providing the service versus CATS

Feedback on Stops for Fixed-Route Transit

- Top Locations
 - Downtown Monroe
 - Atrium Union Hospital
 - Union West Hospital
 - Downtown Indian Trail
 - Sun Valley
 - Monroe Mall
 - Wingate
- Downtown Matthews and Uptown Charlotte also frequently mentioned
- Shopping is #1 destination data point (32% of all points)



Policy Direction (Metroquest Results)

- Funding:
 - 20% support reducing or eliminating transit funding
 - 41% support doubling transit funding
 - 39% support existing funding levels
 - Similar two to one ratio of support for doubling fixed-route service versus eliminating service
 - 60-65% agree with requiring municipal financial support to help pay for service in their community
- Express bus service: three to one support of service, even though it takes workers to Charlotte
- 60% support merging system with CATS for planning and efficiency benefits
- 72% support building light rail

Monroe Responses

- 123 Metroquest and 19 paper responses
- 23 current Union County Express riders (slightly higher than overall rate), and 18 who would like to ride
- 21 current or former UCT riders (slightly higher share than overall respondent usage)
- 72% feel municipalities should help pay for service in their communities (slightly higher than overall results)
- 46% support doubling transit funding (higher than overall results)
- 65% support merging systems with CATS for planning and efficiency benefits (same as overall results)
- 69% support building light rail (slightly lower than overall results)

Indian Trail and Stallings Responses

- 117 Metroquest responses and one paper response
- 14 current Union County Express riders (same as overall results), and 19 who would like to ride
- 9 current or former UCT riders (lower than overall results)
- 62% feel municipalities should help pay for service in their communities (same as overall results)
- 36% support doubling transit funding (slightly lower than overall results)
- 62% support merging systems with CATS for planning and efficiency benefits (same as overall results)
- 79% support building light rail (higher than overall results)

Questions



STAFF REPORT

TO: City Council

VIA: Brian Borne, City Manager

DATE: August 9, 2022

FROM: Ryan Jones, Parks & Recreation Director

PREPARED BY: Ryan Jones, Parks & Recreation Director

SUBJECT: Monroe Aquatics and Fitness Center Covid-19 Impacts/Operations Update

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Monroe Aquatics and Fitness Center has experienced substantial impacts to both operations and revenues due to the Covid-19 pandemic. A presentation has been prepared to provide an update to City Council in regards to the facility's current status and progress.

REVIEW

In March of 2020, due to the rapid spread of the Covid-19 virus an Executive Order was issued by the Governor that restricted certain activities and business operations in an effort to protect the health and safety of the residents of North Carolina. All operations at the Monroe Aquatics and Fitness Center closed on March 17, 2020. This facility remained closed until June 15, 2020 when both the Water Park and Summer Day Camp Program reopened with limited capacities and modifications. On September 28, 2020, the Fitness Room and Group Fitness classes resumed with capacity restrictions and operational modifications. Currently, all amenities are available to members. Mask requirements remained in place until February 21, 2022 when the mask requirement was updated to optional.

A presentation has been prepared to share information on our current operating status as well as the current and future approaches to the operation and marketing of the facility. Information will also be provided relevant to the facilities financial trend from 2019 until the end of FY22.

RECOMMENDATION

No action required. Provided for informational purposes only.



STAFF REPORT

TO: City Council

VIA: Brian J. Borne, City Manager

DATE: August 9, 2022

FROM: S. Mujeeb Shah-Khan, City Attorney

PREPARED BY: S. Mujeeb Shah-Khan, City Attorney

SUBJECT: Closed Session Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute Sections 143-318.11(a)(1) and 143-318.11(a)(3)

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Council is asked to approve a motion to go into Closed Session to discuss the handling of claims against the City and to provide instructions concerning handling of the claims.

REVIEW

In accordance with North Carolina General Statute (N.C.G.S.) Sections 143-318.11 (a) (1) and (a)(3), Council is allowed go into Closed Session to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes; to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the City's attorneys and the City Council and to consider and give instructions to the City's attorneys concerning the handling of claims.

RECOMMENDATION

Council approve a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(1) and N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3).