



CHAMPAIGN COUNTY  
REGIONAL PLANNING  
COMMISSION

## Champaign County Rural Transit Advisory Group (RTAG)

**Date:** Friday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

**Time:** 10:00 AM CST

**Place:** Zoom: <https://ccrpc.zoom.us/j/88568230842?pwd=SnowNWdxUEdwZDhJdzh0TlJaV3Ywdz09>

Meeting ID: 885 6823 0842

Passcode: 452499

Mobile access: +13126266799,,88568230842# US (Chicago)

**Chair:** Nathan Montgomery

**Members:** Aaron Esry, Mary Sleeth, Tawanna Nickens, Lori Larson, Rachel Voss, Rovee Fabi

### AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Audience Participation
- IV. Approval of Agenda
- V. Approval of Minutes from the RTAG meeting of August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- VI. New Business
  - A. Discussion of possible service contract agreement with Champaign Unit 4 School District
  - B. Presentation and Approval of C-CARTS Hourly Wage Increase

**Closed Session** pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) to consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline or performance of specific employees of the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission.
- VII. Announcements
- VIII. Adjournment

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Champaign-Urbana Urbanized Area Transportation Study  
A program of the Champaign County RPC

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## Champaign County Rural Transit Advisory Group (RTAG)

**Date:** Wednesday, August 11, 2021  
**Time:** 3:00 p.m.  
**Place:** John Dimit Conference Room  
 Brookens Administration Building  
 1776 E. Washington Street, Urbana

**Chair:** Aaron Esry  
**Members Present:** Mary Sleeth, Lori Larson, Rachel Voss, Twanna Nickens, Rovee Fabi  
**Members Absent:** Nathan Montgomery  
**Staff Present:** Samuel Stewart, Rita Morocoima-Black, Mimi Hutchinson, Debbie Peterik  
**Others Present:** Evan Alvarez

### MEETING MINUTES

Subject to Review and Approval

- I. Call to Order  
Mr. Esry called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.
- II. Roll Call  
**The roll was taken by written record and a quorum was declared present.**
- III. Audience Participation  
None
- IV. Approval of Agenda  
**Ms. Larson made a motion to approve the agenda as drafted. Ms. Nickens seconded. Upon vote, the motion unanimously carried.**
- V. Approval of Minutes  
**Ms. Sleeth made a motion to approve the RTAG minutes from the May 12, 2021 meeting. Ms. Larson seconded. Upon vote, the motion unanimously carried.**
- VI. New Business
  - A. Presentation and Approval of C-CARTS FY 21 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter (April - June) Service & Fiscal Reports  
Mr. Stewart provided the following highlights of the reports:
    - Mr. Stewart commented that the Fiscal Report was not available before the meeting and would be sent to the members by the end of the week.

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- Compared to FY 20, there was an 18 percent increase in ridership.
- Compared to last quarter, there was a seven percent increase.
- Daily average percent increased.
- There was a decrease in the percentage of lift use.
- Mr. Stewart presented a graph of C-CARTS ridership.
- There were 120 denied trips due to the time requested not being available.

Mr. Alvarez referenced the Service Comparison Chart:

In the middle of the fourth quarter (8,542 rides), employment trips are 39% of that number. When you are comparing with the FY 20 fourth quarter (7,210 rides), we are looking at April, May, and June of last year, which was the peak COVID time. Many of the factories had suspended working; they had not gotten a feel for essential services. This is why you see the improvement in percentage of employment trends increased from this time last year. In the third quarter, we do still see an increase, again partly because we are compensating for March. That is why the employment percentage is still pretty high.

All in all, around this time last year was when those factories started hiring aggressively. It is anticipated that in the next quarter, we are going to see a slight dip from where we were this time last year because the factories have hired more people, but you can see a lot of COVID response narratives in the report. Also, ridership has gone up because we were fare-free for all three of the quarters.

Mr. Esry commented that mileage and hours have gone down. Is it because we are more efficient or because of the increase in the number of riders on the fixed-route? Mr. Alvarez commented that all through COVID, we started with an extra vehicle on our busiest route. Initially, it was for social distancing so that we did not have 14 people on one of the small vans at once. Eventually, it did become capacity related where you would have six people on that first trip of the day. In general, any improved trips per mile or trips per hour can correspond almost directly to more trips in Rantoul, Mahomet, and Champaign-Urbana, just because they are the largest areas. That is where we can operate a little more efficiently. Champaign-Urbana riders are leaving the urban area, but it is normally for dialysis and employment trips.

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**Ms. Larson made a motion to approve the C-CARTS FY 21 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter (April – June) Service Reports. Ms. Fabi seconded. Upon vote, the motion unanimously carried.**

B. Presentation and Approval for REBUILD 2022 Grant

Mr. Stewart provided the following highlights:

- C-CARTS is applying for two replacement vehicles. This will be done in two different grants, priority one and priority two.
- Total of the two buses will be \$134,000. There is no local match required.
- The grant is due August 31.
- Approval is needed from both the Champaign County Highway & Transportation Committee and the Champaign County Board.

Ms. Morocoima-Black commented that the problem is that the timeline does not work with the two meetings, so staff will prepare the grant, submit it, and then ask the Champaign County Highway & Transportation Committee and the Champaign County Board for approval of the documents that need to be attached to the grant. We cannot wait to get the approval and submit the grant later because the grant would not be submitted by the due date.

**Ms. Nickens made a motion to approve the REBUILD 2022 Grant. Ms. Sleeth seconded. Upon vote, the motion unanimously carried.**

VII. Announcements

Ms. Morocoima-Black introduced Mimi Hutchinson who will be replacing Sam Stewart as HSTP Coordinator/PCOM.

Mr. Alvarez commented that C-CARTS will be resuming the collection of fares. Also, the conversation of renewing the contract with the Village of Rantoul for the fixed-route service will resume. The contract expires the end of October. Changes that might occur would be a cost-of-living adjustment to the contract amount and some small timing changes of the schedule.

VIII. Adjournment

**With there being no further business, Mr. Esry declared the meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.**

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# Rural Transit Advisory Group (RTAG) **Special Meeting**

Presenter: Evan Alvarez, Special Services Manager at MTD

Friday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021





# Champaign Unit 4 School District **Service Contract**

# Why does Champaign Unit 4 need C-CARTS's help?

- Since COVID-19, transit agencies nationwide have struggled to hire and retain bus operators.
- Champaign Unit 4 School District students living outside the Champaign-Urbana Urbanized Area currently lack bus service to school.

# What would the service look like?

- 2-3 hours per trip, 2 trips per day
- 14 students
- Morning pickup starts approximately 6:00 AM
- Morning drop-off at Franklin, Edison, Jefferson, Centennial, and Central, approximately 7:30 AM
- Afternoon pickup from schools, approximately 3:00 PM
- Afternoon drop-off ends approximately 4:30 PM
- Buses begin and park at MTD Maintenance Facility for morning and afternoon shifts



# What are the remaining steps?

- IDOT and FTA approval
- Champaign Unit 4 legal approval
- MTD approval
- RTAG approval
- County Board approval

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**Closed Session**



# C-CARTS Operator **Wage Increase**

# Overview

- C-CARTS operator starting rate would increase from \$12.47 to \$15.00 per hour

# Why should we raise C-CARTS operator wages?

- To stay competitive
  - MTD hourly wage starts at \$17.88 per hour after training
  - C-CARTS's wages are the lowest of all rural transit systems in Illinois
- To attract more operators
  - Would reduce trip denials
  - Would ensure better service for riders across Champaign County
- To improve operator retention rate
- To reduce C-CARTS operating costs

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Questions?