



Date: March 1, 2013

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Through: Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager
From: Mark D. Ahrendsen, Transportation Director
Subject: Citizens' Matters – Response to Mr. James Chavis, Jr.

One of the recommendations of the Designing Better Bus Service plan was to combine the service that used to run hourly on Liberty Street (Route 16), with the service every 30 minutes on Holloway Street (Route 3), to provide 15 minute service on Holloway Street between downtown and the Village Shopping Center (aka Wellons Village). This is the most heavily used transit corridor in the city. The Designing Better Bus Service Plan calls for increasing frequencies to every 15 minutes during weekdays on four other corridors in the next few years. In making this transition, we had to choose between the two streets (Liberty and Holloway) to operate the service, and selected Holloway because it has better, though not great, sidewalk continuity, and it had more customer boardings. One effect of this is removing the stop that was directly in front of the Sav-A-Lot. The nearest stop is 2 blocks north on Holloway Street. Alston Avenue does not have a sidewalk on the west side between Sav-A-Lot and the stop on Holloway Street. Customers can either cross Alston at Liberty, and then back again at Holloway, or they can use the lightly travelled stretch of Elm Street. Either way is about two-tenths of a mile walk, or about five minutes. While the change in bus stop location is not as convenient for customers of Sav-A-Lot, they have much more freedom to choose their travel time because the service runs every 15 minutes 2 blocks north on Holloway Street. That is a trade-off that received a lot of attention during our more than 70 public input events, and was one that received a lot of support.

We've pulled some boarding stats for the year before Sav-A-Lot opened on Sept. 29, between the opening and the route change (Jan.5), and for the period since the route change. Though there is typically seasonal variation that isn't well-controlled for in these data points, it appears that there were about 10 additional people (10 on and 10 off) using the stops at the Sav-A-Lot during the period between Sept. 29 and January 4.

As we review how the customers have responded to the changes and how the services are performing, we will be looking at the routing and scheduling of Routes 3 and 16 to consider this issue along with others that we've observed. The City Council adopted a process for making changes to DATA services in 2011. We would follow this process if we have any recommendations for changes. The timing would likely be evaluation, including public input, through April; recommendations to the City in May; implementation in October.