



EMBARC RAPID Media Kit

About RAPID – EMBARK’s Bus Rapid Transit System

According to the American Public Transportation Association, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) offers high-quality transit using rubber-tired vehicles. Often explained as a hybrid of fixed-route bus service and a light rail, BRT mirrors the rail in its fast and efficient operations but remains an attractive alternative to transit organizations due to its cost-effective and flexible strategies. Elements of a BRT include high performance through speed and reliability, ease of use, detail to aesthetics and comprehensive planning.¹

Bus Rapid Transit was born out of an initiative to reduce air pollution and improve transit options for residents around the globe. In October 2019, there were 10 U.S. cities with 12 BRT corridors and several BRT systems in various stages of development across the U.S., according to the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy.²

There are six major elements of a BRT line, according to the Federal Transit Administration’s Characteristics of a Bus Rapid Transit for Decision-Making³:

- Running Way
 - EMBARK’s RAPID will run as an existing mixed flow lane service.
- Stations
 - With enhanced stops that include level boarding for universal access and alighting as well as real-time arrival information, EMBARK’s RAPID will differentiate itself from its fixed-route bus system stops.
- Vehicles
 - RAPID vehicles are 40-feet long and run on natural gas. The seats will be upgraded for enhanced comfort and wi-fi will be available throughout the bus.
- Off-Board Fare Collection
 - Fare collection for EMBARK’s RAPID will be electronic via mobile app, Token Transit, or manual via kiosks on platform.
- Intelligent Transportation Systems
 - RAPID lines will implement priority signaling and real-time tracking.
- Service and Operations Plans
 - EMBARK’s first RAPID line plans to have vehicles at each stop approximately every 15 minutes during peak operating hours along the 9 1/2-mile corridor.

¹Diaz, Roderick and others. Characteristics of Bus Rapid Transit for Decision-Making. Federal Transit Administration and United States Department of Transportation. August 2004. Retrieved from: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/CBRT.pdf>

²FAQ- Getting to BRT: An Implementation Guide for U.S. Cities. Institution for Transportation and Development Policy. October 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.itdp.org/2019/10/04/faq-getting-to-brt-for-u-s-cities/#:~:text=Ten%20U.S.%20cities%20have%20implemented%2012%20BRT%20corridors.>

³Diaz, Roderick and others. Characteristics of Bus Rapid Transit for Decision-Making. Federal Transit Administration and United States Department of Transportation. August 2004. Retrieved from: <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/CBRT.pdf>



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Funding

- EMBARK was awarded almost a 50% local match of funding, with a [\\$14 million BUILD Grant](#) for construction with the rest of the \$28 million in cost coming from federal and local funds.
 - A BUILD Grant, or Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development grant program, is the opportunity for the U.S. Department of Transportation to invest in transit projects that achieve national objectives with a significant local or regional impact.
- Operational funding will come from the City of Oklahoma City’s general fund.
 - City money includes municipal General Obligation (G.O.) bond funds primarily, plus funds raised through a special temporary sales tax for infrastructure.

RAPID Lines

- The first RAPID line is planned to connect downtown OKC to the Northwest Corridor of the city. This line originates at the EMBARK Transit Center and travels through one of the region’s most job-dense and traffic plagued areas, connecting downtown OKC to Classen Boulevard and Northwest Expressway.
 - More than 20% of the region’s jobs are located within a half-mile of the system’s first route, covering an estimated 40,000 residents and 91,000 jobs.
 - The RAPID BRT system is a hybrid of a fixed-route bus and rail line, available to transport thousands of OKC residents and employees to areas of interest between NW Oklahoma City and the urban core.
- The overall goal of the Northwest RAPID line is to expand local and regional mobility options, improve job access, support transit-oriented development (TOD), help improve community health and enhance livability along the corridor.
- Potential expansion opportunities include additional corridors and routes in the greater Oklahoma City area.

Project Timeline

- The [2005 Fixed Guideway Plan](#) identified potential transportation solutions to improve connections and mobility within the OKC metropolitan area and establish what transit could look like for the region by 2030.
 - A Bus Rapid Transit line was identified and included in this study.
- A complete timeline of events with EMBARK’s RAPID line is as follows:
 - Completion of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process: July 9, 2019
 - Preliminary Design: 2020
 - Final Design: 2021-2022
 - Construction: 2022-2023
 - Revenue Service Begin: 2023



How to Ride

- Customers can drive and park or walk to a RAPID platform to then board a bus rapid transit vehicle.
 - The 32-stops planned along the first route will provide ample opportunity to board and priority traffic signaling ensures those riding will arrive on time and within a 15-minute time frame.
 - Real-time tracking at the platform and from desktop and mobile devices will provide customers with bus arrival times.
 - Customers can pay via mobile app or on the boarding platform.

Park & Ride

- An option for those who may not live within walking distance to a RAPID platform, Park & Ride lots offer customers to park at a lot and then board the RAPID line to work.
 - Two potential Park & Ride locations have been identified:
 - OKC Water Utilities Trust (OCWUT)
 - NW Expressway and N. Penn Ave.
 - Coordination will be required with both locations. Dedicated striping and signing will indicate park-and-ride customers where to park.
 - A Park & Ride option is still in the works and not a planned feature.

Social Channels and Online

- EMBARK RAPID Website: rapidbrt.com
 - EMBARK RAPID Facebook: @rapidbrt
 - EMBARK RAPID Twitter: @rapidbrt
 - EMBARK RAPID Instagram: @rapidbrt



EMBARC System Rundown

Fixed-Route Bus

Oklahoma City's first public transit option, EMBARK's award-winning bus system, which consists of 23-routes, offering service to customers seven days a week. Riders can commute, shop or just enjoy the sights and sounds of Oklahoma City on the bus route. EMBARK also operates Norman's fixed-route bus system. For more information about the fixed-route bus system, visit <https://embarkok.com/>.

Paratransit and Mobility Management Services

Safe and convenient transportation geared towards our seniors in Norman and OKC wanting to maintain mobility and independence or those with a disabling condition that may prevent them from using our fixed-route service. Learn more at: <https://embarkok.com/special-services>.

OKC Streetcar

Launched in late 2018, this modern streetcar system has two loops depositing residents within walking distance of every downtown OKC district. Part of a \$135-million modern transit initiative, OKC voters said "Yes" to a penny tax via MAPS 3 in 2009, which provided funding for the project. The OKC Streetcar uses priority signaling technology and real-time tracking platforms, similar to the upcoming BRT line. Learn more at <https://okcstreetcar.com/>.

Spokies

Oklahoma City's only bike share program, Spokies offer a downtown transportation option with eight bike stations and flexible pricing. It's easy to get around downtown OKC using Spokies bikes with many stations connecting directly to OKC Streetcar routes or fixed-route bus stops. Learn more at <https://spokiesokc.com/>.

Oklahoma River Cruises

Located just south of downtown OKC, the ferry transit offers service along a 7-mile stretch along the Oklahoma River. With access to Historic Stockyards City, the Meridian Corridor, Boathouse District and a new dock near the First Americans Museum coming soon, you can park, cruise the river and connect to other downtown amenities through public transit near the docks. For more information, visit <https://okrivercruises.com/>.

Parking

With five parking garages, four parking surface lots, and over 1,300 metered on-street parking spots location around downtown OKC, EMBARK offers public parking near additional public transit options like Spokies and the OKC Streetcar for customers to park and then ride to their favorite downtown OKC amenities. Learn more <https://parkingokc.com/>.

RAPID Bus Rapid Transit

A fixed-route bus system with 32 stops, covering 9 1/2-miles each way, EMBARK' RAPID system aims to offer transportation to downtown OKC in around 20 minutes with priority signaling and real-time tracking technology for customers. The Northwest RAPID is planned to launch in 2023 with more corridors to come. For more information about RAPID visit: <https://embarkok.com/brt>.



EMBARC Mission and Vision

Mission

EMBARC's mission is to be a self-sustaining transportation network that removes barriers of location and socioeconomic status, while elevating the status and use of public transportation, so all of central Oklahoma can safely and quickly reach their destination.

Vision

EMBARC will be world-class transportation that is accessible to all, and all want to access it.



EMBARC Leadership

Jason Ferbrache, Director/Administrator

Jason Ferbrache (pronounced Fair-brush) was appointed Administrator of the Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority (COTPA, dba EMBARK) and Director of the City of Oklahoma City's Public Transportation and Parking Department in February 2014. He is also currently serving as the Interim Executive Director for the Regional Transportation Authority of Central Oklahoma.

Ferbrache began his career with the City of Oklahoma City in 2005 as a Budget Analyst. He was promoted to Management and Budget Specialist in 2007, followed by a promotion to Deputy Budget Director in 2011. He was named Assistant Public Transportation and Parking Director in 2013.

Ferbrache earned a bachelor's degree and Master's in Business Administration from Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford. He is a member of National Center for Civic Innovation's Government Trailblazer program and tutors reading to Oklahoma City Public School children.

Jesse Rush, Assistant Director of Operations

Jesse Rush joined the City of Oklahoma City in 2014 as a Project Manager in the Metropolitan Area Projects (MAPS) department. In 2016, Rush transitioned to the operations side of the OKC Streetcar joining the Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority (COTPA, dba EMBARK), to become the City's first Streetcar Manager.

Because of Rush's success as the OKC Streetcar Manager, he also was named as the project manager for Oklahoma City's new Bus Rapid Transit project, currently in preliminary design, and set to open in 2023. As Assistant Director of Operations, Rush provides oversight of all transportation modes as well as fleet and facilities maintenance.

Suzanne Wickenkamp, Assistant Director of Administration

Suzanne Wickenkamp began her career in public service in 2015 with the City of Oklahoma City in the Office of Management and Budget as a Management and Budget Analyst. Wickenkamp promoted to a Management Specialist in the City's Public Information Department in 2016 where she led the department's Administrative functions and supervised an operations section. In 2018, she was promoted to the Administrative Services Manager role at EMBARK where she successfully led the work of various administrative divisions and EMBARK's mobility management program, was responsible for overseeing agenda management for two different boards and led labor relations.

As Assistant Director of Administration, Wickenkamp oversees areas such as Human Resources, Finance, Strategic Planning and board support for both the Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority (COTPA, dba EMBARK) Trust and Regional Transit Authority (RTA).