

## CAT launches improved CAT Mobility online reservation service

CAT is pleased to announce that we have upgraded the recently launched online reservation request service for paratransit services, so that the redesigned reservation page is more attractive and easier to use for our CAT Mobility customers.

If you are not familiar with the recently launched service, the service allows CAT Mobility customers to submit reservation requests online at any time. (Requests must still be received by 4 p.m. for a next-day trip.)

To make your online reservation request, just go to CAT's website at [catchacat.org](http://catchacat.org).

The CAT Mobility paratransit service is comprised of a fleet of ADA accessible vans for people with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed-route buses for some or all of their transportation needs.

CAT Mobility customers can also continue to schedule or re-schedule an appointment by calling (912) 233-5767 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., seven days a week.

### Key points:

- Customers must already be certified in CAT's paratransit program to request a reservation
- Reservations can be submitted online 1-7 days in advance of the planned trip.
- Customers will receive a response immediately from CAT's website indicating receipt of the reservation request.
- A separate confirmation will be sent via email and made by phone once the schedule is completed.
- CAT is currently not allowing CAT Mobility customers to have companions during their trip due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but Personal Care Attendants and service animals are still permitted.
- Customers can call (912) 236-5767 for more information.



## CAT meeting calendar

All of the February meetings will be held remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The virtual meetings can be viewed live on CAT's YouTube page at: [YouTube.com/ChathamAreaTransit](https://www.youtube.com/ChathamAreaTransit).

### CAT Board Committee Meetings

Date: Feb. 9  
Strategic and Operational Planning: 10:30 a.m.  
Performance Monitoring/Audit: 1 p.m.  
External Stakeholder Relations: 2:30 p.m.

### CAT Governance Committee

Date: Feb. 16  
Time: 11 a.m.

### CAT Board Regular Meeting

Date: Feb. 23  
Time: 10 a.m.



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Text to phone# 41411  
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Message frequency may vary. Message and data rates may apply.  
Text STOP to cancel. Terms and privacy policy: [smstc.us/privacy-tm](http://smstc.us/privacy-tm).



## February 2021 edition

### A message from interim CEO Valerie Ragland



Dear CAT customers,

If you have not heard by now, the CAT Board of Directors recently made a difficult decision to terminate the employment of CAT's CEO, Bacarra Mauldin.

Following their vote, the Board placed their trust in me by appointing me interim CEO to lead the organization through this transition.

After about 34 years working with CAT, most recently at our Outreach Manager, I have been here for the many of the ups and downs experienced at this organization. I want to assure you that I take the responsibilities placed upon me seriously and we will get through this latest change in leadership. CAT is more than just one person. We are a team comprised of hundreds of men and women who are devoted to serving the community.

We recognize there are a lot of questions regarding the Board's decision, but because this is a personnel matter we are asking for your patience and understanding at this time.

With that said, I pledge to be as transparent and open as possible with regards to moving forward. Many of you who already know me, know I can be counted on for being straight forward. For those who do not know me, I promise you that our customers and employees will be foremost in my mind as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and seek ways to improve our services.

This is not a task I take lightly, but one in which I wholeheartedly believe can be achieved. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Valerie Ragland, interim CEO

## CAT expecting almost \$5.9M in federal relief funds

CAT expects to be able to fund operations at the current level until at least July, as a result of additional federal COVID-19 pandemic relief funding.

CAT is set to receive \$5,868,708 in support from the Federal Transit Administration, after Congress recently approved the \$900 billion Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA).

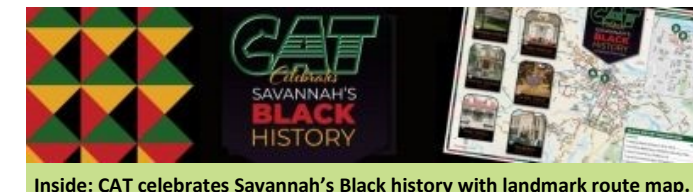
The funding is expected to cover CAT's costs through the current fiscal year, which runs through June, but additional funding may be necessary beyond then to continue operating without making cuts, said interim CEO Valerie Ragland.

"While the additional funding will help, we will still be forced to

tighten our belts as we start work on next year's budget," Ragland said. "We do not know when things will rebound from the pandemic and we must fiscally manage as if there will be no additional stimulus funding."

CAT has had to contend with various funding challenges caused by the pandemic, including decreased fare and tax revenue and increased expenses related to safety equipment and hazard pay.

Open this edition of CAT Outbound on your phone by scanning the QR code to the right with your phone's camera and clicking the link on the archive news page. Links to past issues are also available.



Inside: CAT celebrates Savannah's Black history with landmark route map.



## CAT now requiring customers to wear masks following federal order

On Tuesday, Feb. 2, Chatham Area Transit began requiring customers to wear masks while using CAT's bus, paratransit and ferry services.

The mask requirement was recently mandated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as part of President Joe Biden's executive order promoting COVID-19 safety in travel. The requirement is to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and support state and local officials in their efforts to keep passengers, employees, and communities safe. The order exempts children under 2 years old and people with a disability that makes it unsafe to wear a mask.

CAT was previously limited in its ability to enforce mask usage due to the lack of a state or federal mandate.

"CAT fully supports the Biden Administration's mandate to require our riders to wear masks on all our vehicles," said interim CAT Chief Executive Officer Valerie Ragland. "It's simply the right thing to do as the requirement not only helps to further protect our riders and employees against COVID, but also assists CAT in enforcement efforts. Our number one priority dur-

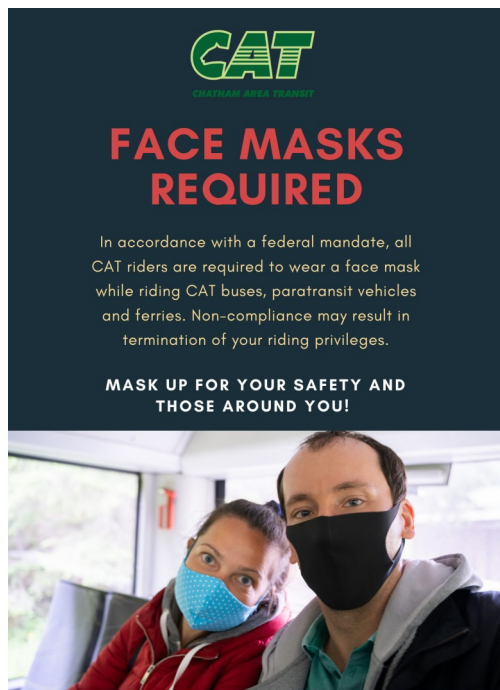
ing the pandemic has been to ensure the health and safety of our riders and employees."

Customers who do not comply with the CDC's mask mandate will be subject to suspension of CAT services. CAT operators will have masks available to hand out to any customer who needs one.

The mask requirement is the latest safety measure implemented by CAT since the start of the pandemic to protect customers and employees. Additional measures include the installation of operator safety shields, reduced vehicle capacity levels, daily employee health screenings and enhanced cleaning of vehicles and facilities.

Due to the reduced capacity, customers are encouraged to use CAT services only for essential trips, such as getting to work, medical appointments or grocery shopping.

For more information on the order or to view frequently asked questions, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/masks/mask-travel-guidance.html>.



## CAT Route 3 West Chatham schedule adjusted with new test stop



CAT is testing out a new bus stop along the 3 West Chatham route to serve FedEx Ground and other employers at Morgan Lakes Industrial Park off of Morgan Lakes Industrial Boulevard and Jimmy DeLoach Parkway. As a result of this pilot project, route 3 West Chatham's service schedule on weekdays has been adjusted slightly to accommodate the extra stop. The change means that the bus now departs/arrives 10 minutes later during the day at some locations.

Customers are encouraged to check the modified schedule online at [www.catchacat.org/current-schedules/current-schedule-reduced-evening-hours/](http://www.catchacat.org/current-schedules/current-schedule-reduced-evening-hours/). Printed copies can also be obtained at the ticket window at the Joe Murray Rivers, Jr. Intermodal Transit Center, 610 West Oglethorpe Avenue. The test stop is expected to be in place until early summer and potentially be installed permanently, depending on usage.

# No Cash. No Cards. No Contact.

Mobile Ticketing Coming Soon!

## CAT celebrates Savannah's Black History with landmark route map



See Chief Communications Officer Nikki Frenney describe CAT's Black History Month campaign in a video at [Youtube.com/ChathamAreaTransit](https://www.youtube.com/ChathamAreaTransit)

As one of the oldest cities in the US, Savannah is well known for its rich vibrant history and its many historical landmarks. This Black History Month, CAT is promoting education and the exploration of the many contributions African Americans have made in the city with the release of the first CAT Black History Landmark Tour Map.

CAT has produced a custom-designed bus route map featuring six historical landmarks in Chatham County that are significant to Black history and culture. The six locations featured on the map are the First African Baptist Church, the Laurel Grove Cemetery, the King-Tisdell Cottage, the Beach Institute, the Savannah African Art Museum and the Owens-Thomas House and Slave Quarters.

"This campaign — a celebration of Savannah's rich Black history — is in line with CAT's goal to be a community leader that positively contributes to the overall success of community. It helps demonstrate our ability to be seen as more than

just a transportation provider," said interim CEO Valerie Ragland. "We consider ourselves fortunate to be in a position to help raise awareness of these important local institutions and of the significant contributions of African Americans in our community's development. I think our riders and the community at large will be as excited about this campaign as I am."

Ragland says the map was designed, in part, to encourage the community at large and especially those who do not regularly ride the bus, to hop on board to explore the city.

"CAT bus service is one of the most affordable ways to see our beautiful city and to explore all the historical sites we are lucky enough to live, work and play among," Ragland said. "We are always looking to create opportunities to promote education and exploration on our buses."

The Black History Landmark Tour Map, which features information about each site on the back, will be distributed to riders and made available to CAT's partners for dissemination. It can also be downloaded from CAT's website at [catchacat.org](http://catchacat.org). In addition, interior signs have been installed inside CAT's buses to highlight the locations identified on the map.

For those who prefer to use cell phones or tablets to access the Black History Landmark Tour Map, CAT has published an interactive map on our website and on our CAT Facebook page.

Other significant locations, in addition to those included on the map, will also be promoted in CAT's community newsletter, the CAT Outbound, and on various social media sites, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



### Celebrate SAVANNAH'S BLACK HISTORY

**SAVANNAH AFRICAN ART MUSEUM**  
201 E 37th St.  
Savannah, Georgia, 31401

CAT Routes 11 and 14

The Savannah African Art Museum holds a collection of over 1,000 objects that hail from West and Central Africa. Founded in 1986, this collection was formed over the last 30 years by a social collector and entrepreneur. The museum's private collection showcases a range of ceremonial and spiritual objects from the 18th and 20th centuries made from ceramics, metal and wood. These powerful objects hold origins throughout West and Central Africa, representing 28 countries and over 150 individual cultures and ethnic groups. The diverse range of objects represented depicts the entire continent of Africa, spanning as far west as Guinea and as far east as Tanzania.

The Savannah African Art Museum's mission is to provide an engaging experience and to start conversations about the power, diversity, and spirituality of African art to all audiences.

**OWENS-THOMAS HOUSE**  
124 Abercorn St.  
Savannah, GA 31401

CAT Routes 11 and 14

Built as a beautiful Regency-style mansion in 1819, the Owens-Thomas House, along with its adjacent gardens, carriage house, and slave quarters, allows visitors to explore the complicated relationships between the most and least powerful people in the city of Savannah in the early 19th century.

Visitors on guided tours explore period rooms full of exquisite decorative arts, interactive exhibits for all ages, and historic spaces filled with stories, all while learning about the people, both free and enslaved, who lived and worked on the site 200 years ago.

**KING-TISDELL COTTAGE**  
514 E Huntington St.  
Savannah, GA 31401

CAT Routes 11, 28 and 31

Built in 1861, the King-Tisdell Cottage is an African American heritage museum named for its African American owners, Sarah King and Robert Tisdell. Both King and Tisdell were prominent members of Savannah's vibrant African American entrepreneurial class at the turn of the century. This Victorian-style cottage is now a museum dedicated to preserving the history and culture of African Americans in Savannah and the Sea Islands. The museum is owned and operated by the King-Tisdell Cottage Foundation, which also owns and operates the Negro Heritage Trail Tours and the beach institute on the corner of Price and Harris Streets. Visit today to explore historical artifacts and maps of Savannah's rich history.

**FIRST AFRICAN BAPTIST CHURCH**  
23 Montgomery St.  
Savannah, GA 31401

CAT Routes 11, 14 and 31

The First African Baptist Church is the oldest black church in North America. Organized in 1773 under the leadership of Reverend George Latta, the church is older than the United States, which was founded in 1776. In 1782, rather than risk re-enslavement, Pastor Latta left with the British when Savannah was evacuated and migrated to Jamaica.

Under the leadership of the third pastor, Reverend Andrew C. Marshall, the congregation obtained the property where the present sanctuary stands. Reverend Marshall also organized the first black Sunday school in North America and changed the name of the church from "First Colored Baptist" to "First African Baptist." The sanctuary was completed in 1859 under the direction of the 4th pastor, Reverend William J. Campbell. The sanctuary still contains many of the historical elements, including the stained-glass windows, light fixtures, baptismal pool, balcony and pipe organ.

**LAUREL GROVE SOUTH CEMETERY**  
2101 Kollock St.  
Savannah, GA 31415

Laurel Grove South Cemetery is located on the west side of Savannah on a portion of the former Springfield Plantation. Named after the native laurel oak trees, which once inhabited the site, the cemetery was developed in 1850 as the Old Cemetery (Colonial Park Cemetery), the Old Jewish Cemetery, Potter's Field, and the Old Negro Cemetery approached capacity. Although there are dozens of African American cemeteries in Chatham County, Laurel Grove South is the most significant final resting place for African Americans who died in the 18th and 20th centuries. While slavery was legal, more free African Americans were interred in Laurel Grove South than any other cemetery in the Southeast. The cemetery serves as a culturally and historically significant site for African American religion, education, civil rights, and business. Consisting of 90 acres, the cemetery is a public park-like open space with massive cypress trees towering from its wetlands.

**THE BEACH INSTITUTE**  
502 E Harris St.  
Savannah, GA 31401

CAT Routes 10, 28 and 31

The Beach Institute was founded in 1865 during Reconstruction as the first official school for African Americans in Savannah, GA. Today, the original historic building is home to the Beach Institute African American Cultural Center, Savannah's flagship organization for African American arts, history, and historic preservation.