

METRA Dial-A-Ride  
Premium Service  
Expansion &  
Status Update:  
9-12-2023



# Dial-A-Ride Premium Service - Update

## Regulatory Requirements

- **Per ADA Regulations:** Providing premium service an additional  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile **must not** negatively impact METRA's ability to deliver ADA-compliant paratransit service within the required  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile corridor.
- **Per ADA Regulations:** The process of expanding a service area should be done in consultation with the community (e.g., citizens, organizations, advocates, etc.) prior to implementation.
- Independent study needed to determine the costs for materials, equipment, vehicles, personnel, and other resources to implement a service expansion in compliance with federal regulations.

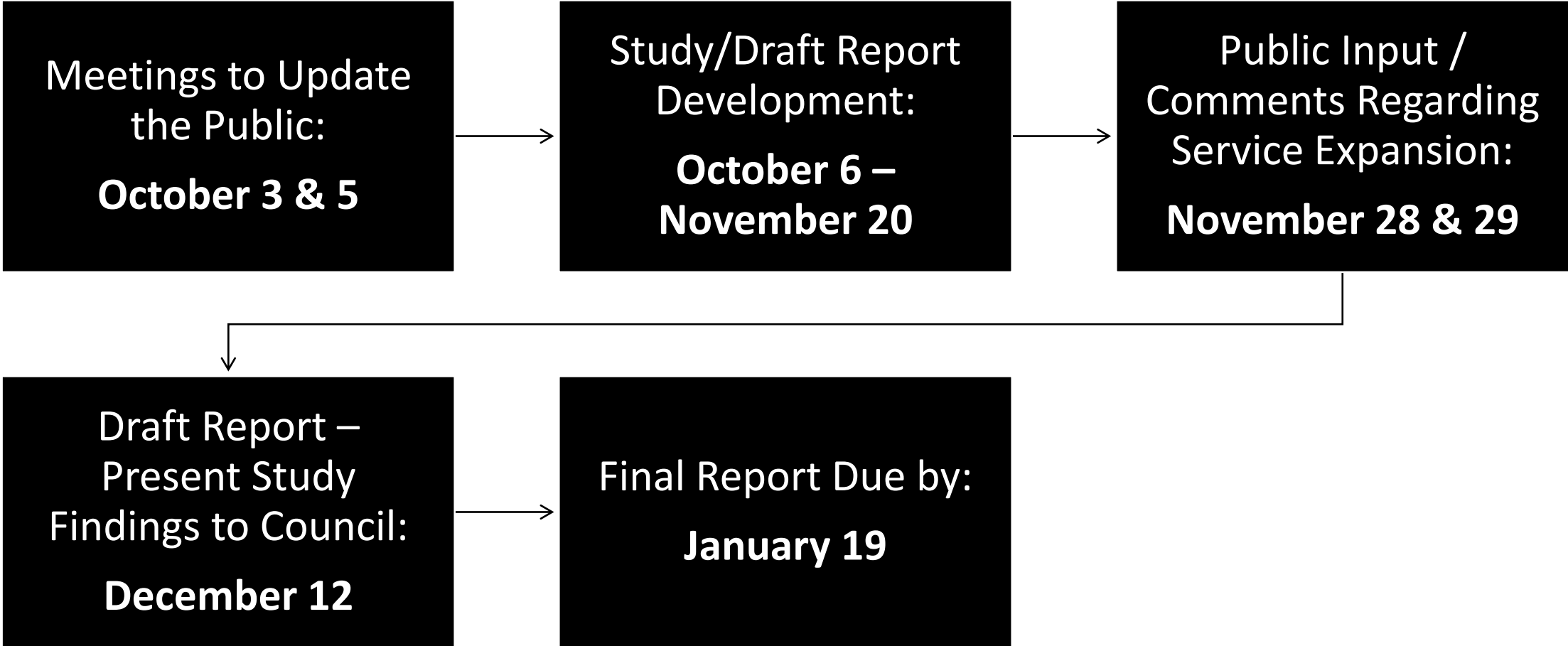
Additional  $\frac{3}{4}$  Mile Premium Service (aka "Premium Dial-A-Ride Service") – 1.5 Miles Total

$\frac{3}{4}$  Mile ADA Paratransit (**Required**) – Existing Dial-A-Ride Service Operates Within this Area

METRA Fixed Bus Routes

# Dial-A-Ride Premium Service - Update

## Consultant's Timeline



# On-Demand / Microtransit - Update

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- Discussion began 1 year ago for providing On-Demand Microtransit Service in Muscogee County (like Lyft or Uber). At the time, METRA was down 22 Fixed Route Bus Operators and was struggling to provide core services (Fixed Route & ADA Paratransit).
- Staff conducted research with other agencies in Georgia providing this service. We found that:
  - Service is **very costly to operate** and is labor intensive.
  - Demand exceeds ability to provide service.
  - Long wait times, Capacity Constraints, Vehicle Shortages.
  - The other agencies had only this service as a mode of transportation and/or they discontinued their fixed route service due to a decrease in ridership.
- METRA applied for \$2.6 million in federal grant funding in fall of 2022. This request was recently denied in May 2023.
- A Consultant study is recommended to determine the type of on-demand / microtransit service that could be provided in compliance with federal regulations given METRA's current ability to provide existing services.

# METRA's Current Status - Update

- Currently down 8 Fixed Route Bus Operators.
- Still running a reduced Saturday schedule for Fixed Route service due to staffing shortages.
- T-SPLOST & Federal Grant Funding already allocated, with \$15 million towards pay study increase alone.
- **Main Goal**: Get our “heads above water” with providing the core services that METRA is obligated to provide (Fixed Route & ADA Paratransit). We are making good progress since the pay increase.





# METRA's Current Status - Update

- Despite this adversity and with guidance by Council, METRA is planning on expanding and providing convenient and innovative premium services to Columbus.
- On August 22, 2023, Council voted to extend the Dial-A-Ride service area to one and one-half miles.
- The Uptown Golf Cart Shuttle Service ("Roll with US") is tentatively scheduled to launch in December (delays occurred due to supply chain issues).

Download the App for FREE to Schedule a Trip!  
For more information, please visit: [www.columbusga.gov/metra/rollwithus](http://www.columbusga.gov/metra/rollwithus)



**SERVICE AREA MAP**  
COLUMBUS, GA



Questions

