

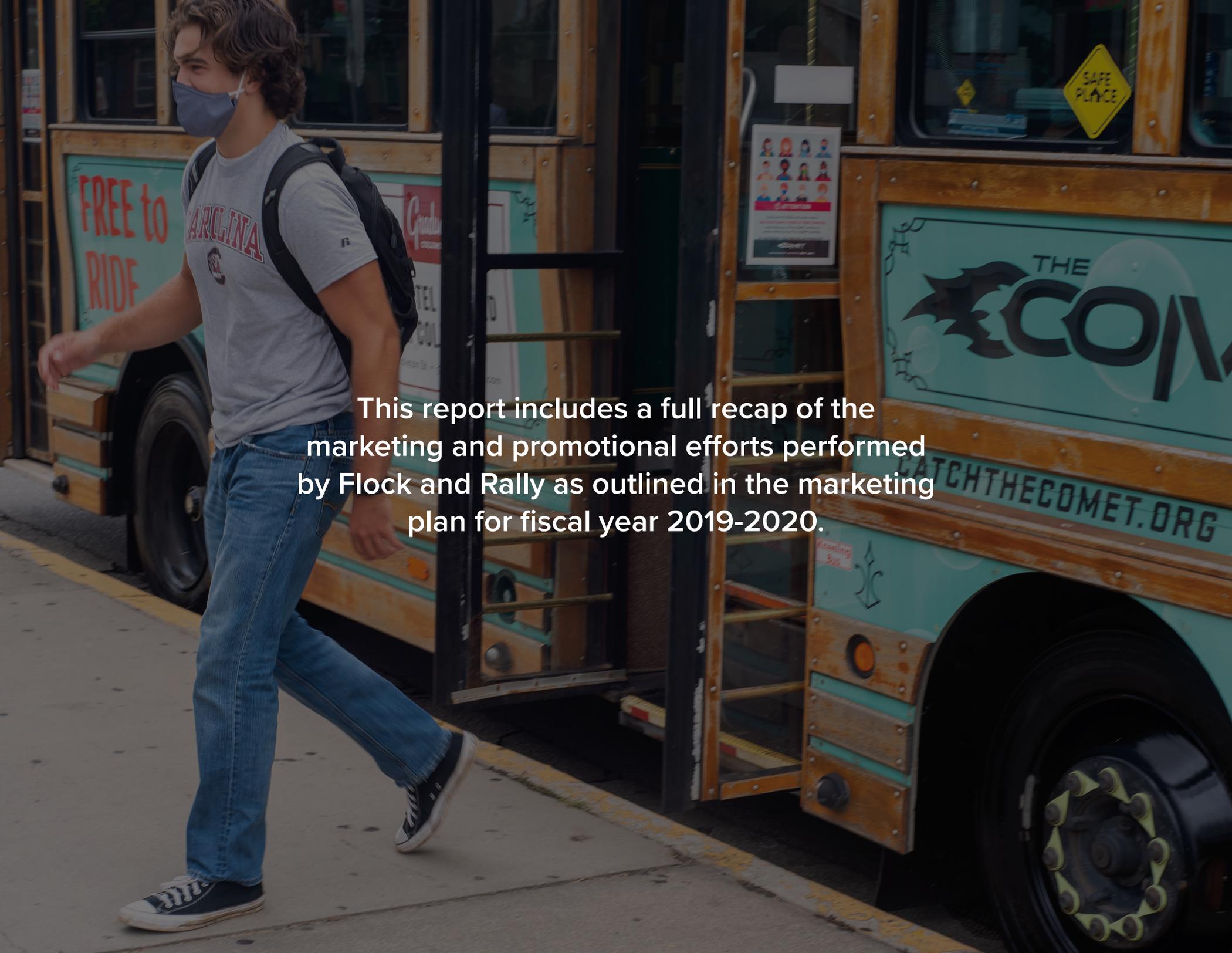
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# FINAL MARKETING REPORT

2019-2020

FLOCK AND RALLY  
August 2020



This report includes a full recap of the marketing and promotional efforts performed by Flock and Rally as outlined in the marketing plan for fiscal year 2019-2020.

# Contents

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# Marketing Plan Deliverables

The deliverables were completed in 2019-2020 as outlined by the marketing plan with the exception of a few items due to COVID-19. Even with a later start (the board officially approved the plan in late October 2019) the general awareness campaign, along with several key foundational tools, were created for The COMET. Below is a detailed list of every deliverable in the marketing plan.

## Tactics and Deliverables:

**Board of Directors Questionnaire** – complete

**Messaging exercise** – complete

**Messaging guidelines** – complete

**Email newsletters** – 3 complete

- Email newsletter template – complete
- NEW: print newsletter template – complete

### Graphics

- Complete/ongoing, all requests completed to date
- How to Ride – complete

### Internet presence

- One content audit of current/old site – complete
- Research to track The COMET – complete
- Social media profiles – complete
- Online audit – complete

» Wikipedia edit – complete

- Audit of new website – complete

### Social media

- Profile updates – complete
- Social media playbook – complete
  - » Social playbook training – complete
- Monthly content calendars with paid and organic content – complete/ongoing
- Manage and place paid ads – complete/ongoing

### Community events and collaterals

- Ideating session for annual events – complete
- Attendance and training at one event – not complete due to COVID-19.
- Recommend, design and order SWAG – complete
- 1-page FAQ for events – not complete due to COVID-19.

### Monthly reporting – complete

#### Advertising campaign

- \$104,650 approved by board in advertising – complete
  - Advertising outlets changed throughout the process of launching per requests by leadership.*

#### Advertising creative

- Design all ads – complete
- Commercials and video production w/ WIS TV – complete
- Photography – not complete (replaced budget item with Sarah Mae Flemming Getty Images purchase, leaving ~\$100 left. (see master budget spreadsheet)
- 4 radio spots – complete

**Brand stewardship** – complete

**Services**

**34 Fixed Bus Routes**

The COMET bus system is made up of 34 standard bus routes that run regularly, every day of the week. These routes cover the entirety of Richland and parts of Lexington counties, cross over into Newberry as well as Sumter. The regular COMET routes are accessible by fare or pass and most routes begin and end at COMET Central, located at Sumter and Laurel Streets.



**The Orbit**

The Soda Cap Connector Orbit is a downtown loop with stops every half an hour. The route is free and runs seven days a week. The route runs along Sumter, Blossom, Assembly and Richland streets with stops near the State House, the University of South Carolina, Prisma Health Baptist and the Richland County Library.



**Soda Cap Connector**

This is a free downtown shuttle intended for locals and tourists to hop from district to district in the urban core of Columbia. The Soda Cap Connector uses trolleys and buses to service its routes — traveling between Five Points, Main Street, The Vista and over the river into Cayce and West Columbia. The Soda Cap also runs seasonally to Segra Park, home of the single-A baseball team, the Columbia Fireflies, located within the Bulls/Breast District during home games.



**Paratransit (DART)**

DART is the complementary Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service for persons with disabilities unable to board The COMET buses or access a transit stop for any trip purpose. In order to use DART, customers must complete an ADA Certification Application. DART operates the same service hours as The COMET non-express fixed routes. Customers must board, travel and alight within 3/4 mile of an operating The COMET route. Please see the system map for DART service boundary.

**COMET on the Go!**

The COMET will pay up to \$5.00 for ridesharing trips that start and end in the COMET fixed route service area on Lyft and Uber through:

- ▶ The COMET at Night: Seven days a week between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m., apply the promo code that is posted inside the bus.
- ▶ The COMET to the Market: Seven days a week between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m., apply the promo code COMETMARKET18 on Lyft or Uber and your trip must start or end at a grocery store that sells fresh produce and meats.



**Blue Bike SC**

The Blue Bike SC program is intended to be an extension of a passenger's transit trip. Riders on the transit system can access a code from the bus that allows 45 free minutes of use on any Blue Bike, located at various stations within downtown Columbia. The Blue Bike SC partnership expands the "first mile/last mile" opportunities for The COMET users.



**ReFlex**

The ReFlex is a bus route that is flexible enough for the bus to make a detour to pick up a passenger not on an existing route or stop. Users must live within a certain radius of the bus route to use the service and access the service by calling in advance to schedule their pick-up. The five ReFlex routes serve Denry Terrace Lower Richland Boulevard, Eastover/Gadsden, Hopkins and Lexington/ Batesburg-Leesville.



**Vanpool**

The COMET Vanpool is designed to assist employees in forming vanpools for the home-to-work commute. A monthly subsidy of \$500 is available to help with the cost of the vanpool. Commute With Enterprise provides seven, 12 and 15 passenger vans. Vans must originate or end in Richland or Lexington Counties. A minimum of five people, including the primary driver is required for formation.



# Brand / Messaging Guidelines

**Primary Audiences**

**Transit-Dependent Riders**  
People who do not have access to transportation and rely on the COMET system of services.

- 1. **Students**
  - Elementary school
  - Middle school students
  - High school students
  - College students
- 2. **Seniors**
- 3. **Veterans**
- 4. **People coming back to the workforce**
- 5. **Healthcare, labor, construction and service industry workers**

**Characteristics**

- Lower income
- Unable to safely operate a vehicle
- Don't have money for financial reasons
- Students on financial aid
- People living at sheltered living facilities without shuttle services
- People living where receiving services is difficult
- Individuals recently released from prison

**Demographics**

- Birthday app — 60+
- Living in Richland and Lexington counties
- All ages and ethnicities

**This Audience's Concern**

Without access to their own vehicular transportation, they rely on public transit, services, family, taxi, Uber or Lyft to get them where they need to go. Since they are not fully in control of their transportation, they fear the risk of not being able to get somewhere they need to go.

**Messaging Strategy**

The COMET needs to position itself as the best choice for getting around the midlands region with the people who need it most.

**General Messaging Examples**

- The COMET is here to take you there.
- With 40 fixed bus routes and service throughout the Midlands and beyond, we'll take you where you need to be.
- The COMET is committed to taking you to your commitments — safety, reliability and on time.

**Brand Identity [Voice + Tone]**

**Voice**

**The COMET is NOT:**

- Complex
- It is simple and easy to ride
- Mysterious
- It is accessible and dependable
- Ordinary
- It is constantly evolving and improving to meet the needs of its riders.

**The COMET is:**

**THE BRAND**

- **Radical**  
bold, in your face design
- **Experimental**  
trying new things
- **Fun**  
colorful and bright
- **Savvy**  
the name, the marketing behind it and its
- **Energetic**  
bright colors, radical design, high-energy
- **Futuristic**  
using cutting-edge technology, forward

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**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL MIDLANDS TRANSIT

**BRAND GUIDELINES**

Prepared By:  
FLOCK AND RALLY  
Columbia, SC  
JANUARY 2020

**Brand Expression: Photography**

It is important to develop a consistent and distinct brand for the COMET. This includes a defined subject and style of photography to support the overall story of the brand.

When selecting photographs, always aim for high quality images incorporating diversity in both race and sex. Photos should feel authentic and depict people in active and engaged situations. Photos and renderings of buildings should be composed dynamically for more visual appeal.

**DO**

- Select photos that help tell a story, showing the benefits and amenities of The COMET.
- Choose images that depict The COMET in a positive way.

**DONT**

- Use black and white or sepia tones.
- Use images that look plain, sterile, fake or blended together.
- Select images with people that feel like models or strangers, or people that distract from the viewer's experience.

A library of approved photographs is available for use.

**Style Guidelines**

**BUSES**

**BUSES**

**BUSES**

# Social Media Playbook

## Content Thread: People of The COMET

### Concept

Show the people behind the scenes of The COMET to humanize the brand. These photos should be posted after editing.



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### Examples

#### Drivers

EG: Our drivers are our guides to getting #TheCOMET across our service area - here's an introduction to one of our drivers. [post with live video at a community event].

#### Start

EG: This month's employee of the month is [insert name of employee] who [insert what they do and how long they've worked for The COMET]. [insert name] was recognized during Tuesday's board meeting. Congratulations and thank you for your service to #TheCOMET! [post with clear photo of employee holding plaque].

#### Riders

EG: For students, a post could read: Hey #UoSC students - #DYK that you can #CatchTheCOMET for free? All you need to do is swipe your #UoSCStudentCard. EG: The COMET is a part of the daily lives of many who live in #ColumbiaSC - are you one of them? Tell us your stories about how you use #TheCOMET each day.

#### Partners

EG: #DYK: @TheCOMET has partnered with #Uber + #Lyft to get you on the go! #TheCOMET will pay up to \$5 for trips with these ridesharing services that begin and end in our fixed route service areas. Find more details here >>> [insert web link].

### Audiences

- Transit-dependent riders
- Choice riders
- Community leaders
- Neighborhood leaders
- Elected officials
- Business leaders

## What is Facebook Live?

A Facebook Live post is a fun way to bring your followers to your platform in real time and showcase events and happenings as related to The COMET.

Here are the instructions if you choose to do a Facebook Live:

### How to create a Facebook Live

#### To go live:

- Tap (Live) at the top of your News Feed.
- You can select a broadcast type (example: Lip Sync Live, Create a Poll or tap to add an effect. You can also add an effect after you've started your broadcast.
- Tap Start Live Video.
- Tap Finish when you want to end your broadcast.
- Keep in mind that when you go live from your personal profile or a Page, your live broadcast will also appear in the stories section.
- You can also go live in a group or event by tapping (Live).

**Note:** To block viewers during a live broadcast, tap and hold the profile picture next to a viewer's comment, then tap Block.



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## Visual Identity

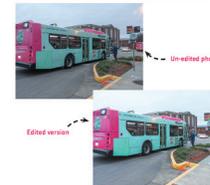
### Photo Editing 101

We suggest that all photos being used on social media go through a quick round of photo editing to produce the best possible image. Below are examples of photo editing tools that can be found in most free photo editing apps or on a desktop, along with their main purpose.

- Start with a clear, quality photo. Shoot the image in natural light and take several images to have choices.
- Exposure is the overall brightness of an image. The exposure tool can increase and decrease the amount of light in a photo. In some apps, this may be called the "brightness." Use this tool to add light to a photo or dim the photo.
- The structure is how crisp and detailed objects in an image look. The structure tool can be used to make objects in an image more defined. In some apps, this may be called "sharpen" or "clarity." Use this tool sparingly to make objects in a photo look more detailed and crisp.
- Vibrance is the overall color saturation of your image. The vibrance tool can enhance colors in an image. In some apps, this may be called "saturation." Use this tool to make photos look less dull and enhance colors to make the image pop.

### Photo Editing Tip

If you do not have time to edit a photo using a photo editor, some filters we suggest on Instagram are Lark and Clarendon.



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## Content Calendar

This is what an example social planning calendar might look like. It should include marked dates to post and the selected content thread for each date. Pro tip: color coordinate your content threads to have a visual representation of how your content is spread over the month.

Begin to plan content by gathering photos/videos and drafting copy after the social planning calendar is created. It's best to select the photo/video before drafting post copy. Reference back to the social planning calendar as you draft monthly content to make sure you're selecting photos and drafting material that matches the planning calendar.



### Example Content Calendar

- There will be two different content calendars created each month to outline the organic and paid content posts in concert with The COMET and Flock and Rally.
- The COMET will be responsible for posting all organic content on social media.
  - Flock and Rally will be responsible for all paid content on social media.

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Prepared By:  
FLOCK AND RALLY  
Columbia, SC  
MAY 2020

## Content Thread: Did You Know?

### Concept

Interesting facts and figures to share with the public to increase their understanding of the bus system and its importance within the community. These photos should be posted after editing.



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### Examples

- Number of riders, number of buses + routes.
- Pass and fare information.
- Other interesting facts that are relatively unknown.
- EG: #DYK: You can track your route + find out where you can #CatchTheCOMET with the FREE Transit app - the official tracking app of The COMET! Find out more here >>> [insert web link].
- EG: #DYK: All COMET buses are air-conditioned, have Wi-Fi and charging ports? They do! You can #CatchTheCOMET and be perfectly comfortable!

### Audiences

- Transit-dependent riders
- Choice riders
- Community leaders
- Neighborhood leaders
- Elected officials
- Business leaders

## Emoji Use

The COMET is the voice of mass transit in the Midlands and it's imperative to maintain a professional and informative tone across all digital platforms. However, you can use colorful + eye-catching emojis to draw riders in when applicable.

Here's the selected emojis that can be used for COMET social posts. Not every post will lend itself to emoji use, so use appropriately.



COMET

Bus

Oncoming Bus

Warning (for late routes or route changes)

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## Hashtags

The use of hashtags on social media is a great way to be a part of the conversation of the riders who will use social media to discuss The COMET's services in a variety of ways. These hashtags are specific for the COMET and the service area. When applicable, tag the location on social media (EG: #Cayce/Cayce).

#CatchTheCOMET  
#TheCOMET

### Additional Hashtags that can be used in posts by The COMET:

#ColumbiaSC  
#WestColumbiaSC  
#ForestAcresSC  
#CayceSC  
#ColumbiaSC  
#RealColumbiaSC

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## Best sizes for social media graphics and video (continued)

Twitter	Recommended Dimensions	Minimum Dimensions	Maximum Dimensions	Image Scale	Max File Size	Image Formats
Profile Photo	400 x 400	200 x 200	-	1:1	2MB	JPG, GIF, PNG
Header Photo	1500 x 500	-	-	3:1	5MB	JPG, GIF, PNG
In-Stream Photo	506 x 253	440 x 220	1024 x 512	2:1	5MB for Photos, 3 MB for GIFs	JPG, GIF, PNG

Instagram	Recommended Dimensions	Aspect Ratio	YouTube	Recommended Dimensions	Aspect Ratio
Profile Picture	110 x 110	-	Channel Profile Image	800 x 800	-
Photo Thumbnail	1080 x 1080	-	Channel Cover Art	2560 x 1440	-
Photo Size (Instagram App)	1080 x 1080 (square), 1080 x 1350 (4:5)	Between 1:1 and 4:5	Tablet	855 x 423	-
Instagram Stories	1080 x 1920	9:16	Mobile	1546 x 423	-
			TV	2560 x 1440	-
			Desktop	2560 x 423	-
			Video Uploads	Minimum HD 1280 x 720	16:9

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# Soda Cap Marketing Plan

(separate \$15k budget)

## Tactics and Deliverables:

Soda Cap keychains – complete

Table top signage/business cards for attractions – complete

Social media advertising – complete/ongoing

Website audit + recommendations – complete

Graphics – complete/ongoing

Project management – complete/ongoing

14.74 hours remaining (roll over due to COVID-19)



# Additional Campaigns

Flock and Rally executed three additional campaigns during 2019-2020 that were not originally planned at the request of The COMET. Full reports for each are on file.

- 1 | City of Cayce Soda Cap Connector Hospitality Tax Grant
- 2 | City of West Columbia Soda Cap Connector Hospitality Tax Grant
- 3 | Richland County Hospitality Tax Grant: Zoo Shuttle Promotions



**CATCH THE SODA CAP  
WEST COLUMBIA!**

803-255-7100

[CLICK HERE TO PLAN YOUR TRIP](#)



Take The COMET to the ZOO!

**RIDE**  
Take The COMET to the zoo from downtown Columbia or Dutch Square

**SAVE**  
\$3.00 off Zoo admission when you show your COMET bus pass\*

**EXPLORE**  
Members of Riverbanks Zoo ride FREE when they take route 84 to the Zoo

# Hours Report from 2019-2020

Marketing Plan Item	July/Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	TOTALS
Board of Directors Questionnaire	4.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>4.27</b>
Brand Stewardship	17.21	11.58	31.56	1.46	0.69	8.66	7.41	6.39	14.93	24.26	6.03	<b>130.18</b>
Advertising Creative	13.72	1.32	9.86	4.97	54.93	19.04	4.28	5.58	11.32	2.26	9.23	<b>136.51</b>
Internet Presence	0.63	0.00	1.34	3.14	2.15	1.42	0.39	0.43	10.88	19.12	35.67	<b>75.17</b>
Messaging Exercise	0.19	0.00	0.00	9.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>9.97</b>
Graphic Design	0.00	0.00	5.26	6.72	10.13	11.49	9.81	22.60	29.92	34.29	32.95	<b>163.17</b>
Social Media	1.12	0.02	8.50	17.34	27.03	35.61	18.48	18.42	24.80	29.68	29.52	<b>210.52</b>
Messaging Guidelines	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.75	23.53	2.72	1.20		0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>30.20</b>
Email Newsletters	0.00	0.00	0.66		7.66	15.02	0.70	12.23	0.80	5.05	2.70	<b>44.82</b>
Community Events / Collateral	2.98	0.00	6.14	2.67	12.25	0.22	0.14		0.67	0.00	0.00	<b>25.07</b>
Reporting	0.63	1.81	0.20	1.22	1.88	2.64	1.66	0.82	0.89	7.40	3.35	<b>22.50</b>
WECO plan							9.43	1.19	0.00			<b>10.62</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>40.75</b>	<b>14.73</b>	<b>63.52</b>	<b>50.05</b>	<b>140.25</b>	<b>96.82</b>	<b>53.50</b>	<b>67.66</b>	<b>94.21</b>	<b>122.06</b>	<b>119.45</b>	<b>863.00</b>

The marketing plan for The COMET allocated 863.00 hours for 2019-2020 for Flock and Rally and this amount was satisfied in this fiscal year.

# Budget Report 2019-2020

Marketing Plan Item	Marketing Plan	Actuals
Flock and Rally onboarding	\$ 11,748.55	\$ 11,748.55
Flock and Rally Marketing Plan fee	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Flock and Rally Hours	\$125,135	\$125,135
Paid Media	\$104,650	\$102,224.96*
Photography	\$1,000	\$ 893.00
Products/SWAG	\$5,100.00	\$ 5,100.00
4 radio spots	\$4,000	\$4,000
Soda Cap Marketing Plan	\$ 15,000.00	\$12,862.70
Richland County Zoo Route Grant	\$ 15,000.00	\$15,003.20
Cayce hospitality tax plan	\$ 6,000.00	\$6029.50
Out of scope	N/A	\$5,434.60

As of August 27, 2020, there are advertising invoices that remain unaccounted for despite attempts to secure them from the media outlets. In order to close the books for 2019-2020, these ad amounts will be moved to 2020-2021, therefore increasing the ad budget for 2020-2021 by the following amounts:

- **The Black News:** \$400
- **Daily Gamecock:** \$1,020
- **Glory Communications:** \$204
- **CRBR:** \$403.75
- **Carolina Panorama:** \$1,890

# Social Media Report

Flock and Rally started launching paid social media for The COMET in December 2019. Since beginning social media work for The COMET, Flock and Rally has helped grow the presence on its social media channels, as well as increase social media engagement across all platforms.

Flock and Rally also created a social media playbook to be used as a training manual for The COMET staff to learn about social media best practices, audiences, content threads and more. FaR also updated the social media about statements for all platforms and created Instagram highlight covers to improve the look of The COMET's Instagram profile page.

## Goals:



Started with 1,168 likes  
**Goal to increase to 1,226**



Started with 900 followers  
**Goal to increase to 945**



Started with 414 followers  
**Goal to increase to 435**



Started with 5 video uploads  
**Goal to increase to 6**



Started with 19 followers  
**Goal to increase to 20**

In May 2019, The COMET set a key performance indicator for Flock and Rally to increase social media by 5% by June 30, 2020.

# Social Media Stats

Stats related to the KPI's on page 9 are from May 2019 – June 2020.  
Paid Facebook stats are from December 1, 2019 - June 26, 2020.

**Results:** Flock and Rally surpassed the 5% KPI for each category in 2019-2020.



**1,773**  
Likes

51.79% increase in page likes



**1,011**  
Followers

in June 2020. Up from 900 followers in May 2019, a 12% increase.



**30**  
Video uploads

Since May 2019.  
This includes the upload of committee meetings. Without counting these uploads, The COMET has uploaded 10 videos to YouTube.



**906**  
Followers

118% increase in followers



**42**  
Followers

121% increase in followers

## Facebook paid advertising stats

**421,257**  
Paid post impressions

The number of times the ads were on a screen

**111,943**  
Paid post reach

The number of people who saw your ads at least once

**1,145**  
Total link clicks

**16,074**  
Paid post engagement

Number of people who engaged with ads by liking, sharing or commenting when the objective was set as "post engagement." The COMET ran 47 post engagement campaigns from Dec. 2019 to June 2020.

# Advertising Report

The general awareness advertising campaign launched in February of 2020. All ads in the plan ran and impressions for digital placements exceeded expectations and planned performance.

In addition, the following advertisements were added in the fiscal year that were not planned at the beginning:

- **COLAToday**
- **Twin City News**
- **The Black News**
- **Twin-City News**
- **Columbia Business Monthly**
- **Sara Mae Flemming Campaign:**
  - » The State Media Company
  - » Columbia Regional Business Report
  - » COLAToday - highlight + banner ad
  - » Imara Woman Magazine
  - » Carolina Panorama
  - » Millennium Magazine
- **Lamar Outdoor additional boards due to COVID-19**

## Originally Booked and Executed:

**TOTAL RADIO SPOTS:** 1,336

(+56k impressions on streaming radio w/ WCOS)

**TOTAL POSTER BILLBOARDS:** 18

**TOTAL DIGITAL BILLBOARD LOCATIONS:** 8

**TOTAL PRINT ADS:** 23

## DIGITAL MEDIA:

### The Black News:

- 4 months of banner ads, February 21 – March 21

### WISTV digital strategies:

- 1,037,500 WIS Display impressions
- 312,000 Targeted Video impressions
- 325,000 Targeted Mobile Banner impressions

### Actual results:

- Ads Viewed: 1,764,526
- Site visits by potential customers: 2,515
- Click Through Rate: .14%

### WLTX.com

- Banner ads = 42,781 impressions/month = 213,905 impressions total

### The Free Times

- Banner ads on free-times.com
- 50,000 impressions per month for four months = 200,000 impressions total

### Dailygamecock.com, gandbmagazine.com, garnetmedia.org

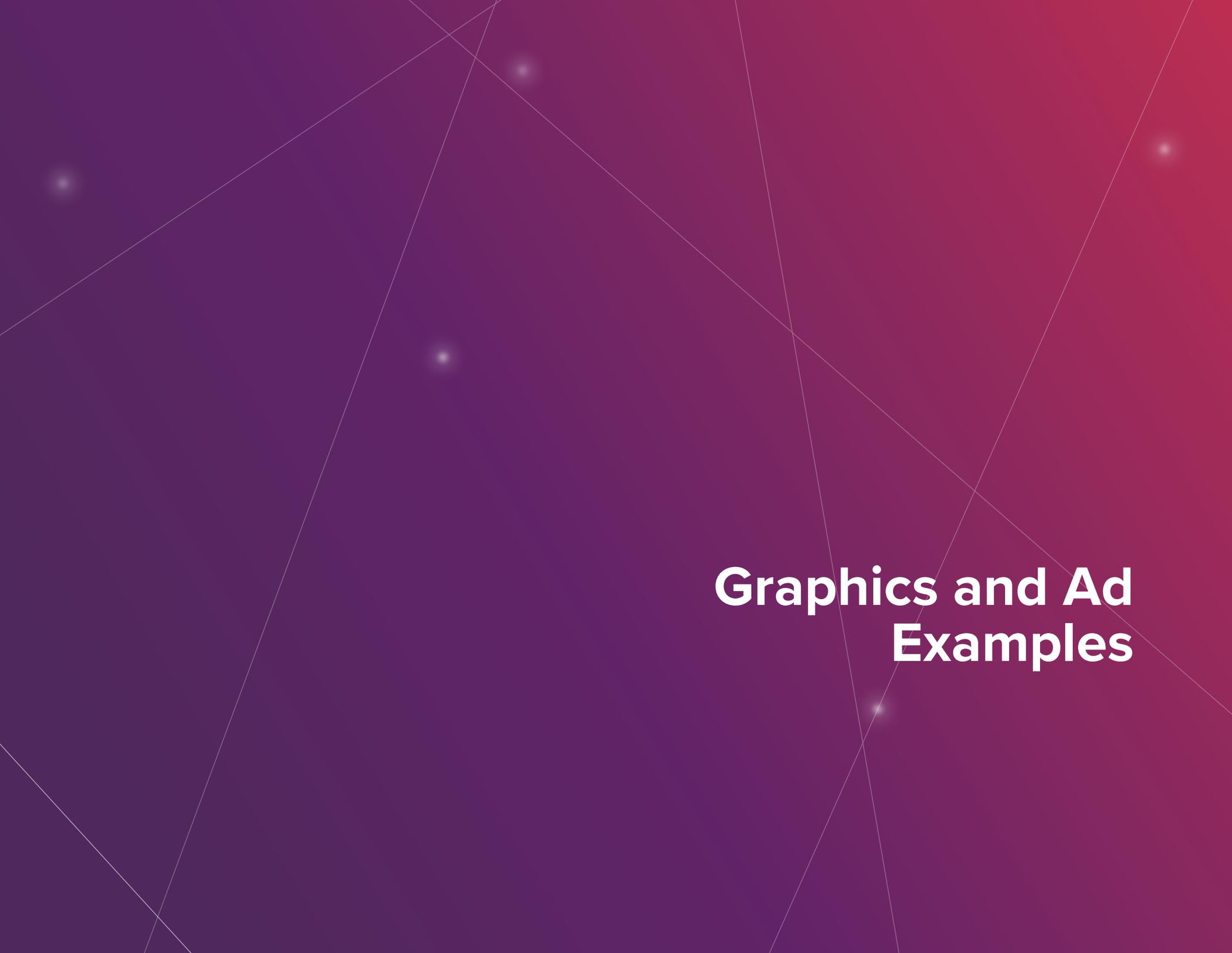
- Leaderboard weekly banner ads, top of page, 7 weeks total

### Display ads

- Planned and purchased: Desktop, tablet and mobile display ads = 807,500 impressions for 5 months

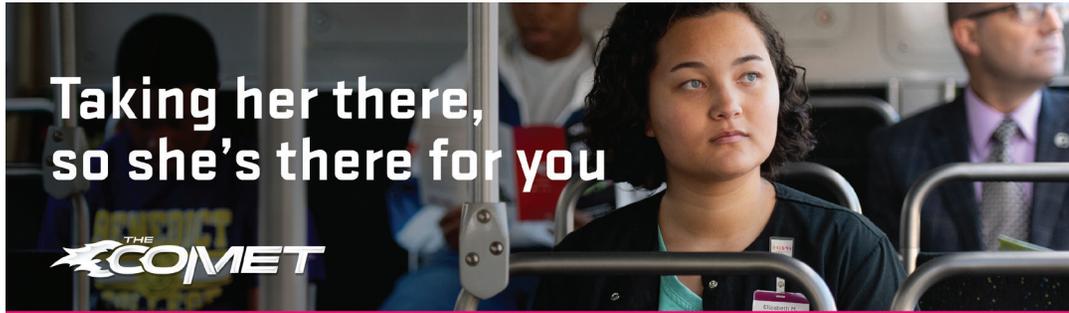
### Actual results:

- 811,724 impressions
- 2,664 clicks
- 0.33% ctr
- 4.69 x the national avg (.07%)
- 0.33% total engagement rate



# Graphics and Ad Examples

# Awareness Campaign



Taking her there,  
so she's there for you

**THE COMET**

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803.255.7100



Getting them  
everywhere  
they need to go

**THE COMET**

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803.255.7100



Getting him  
to work  
comfortably

**THE COMET**

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803.255.7123

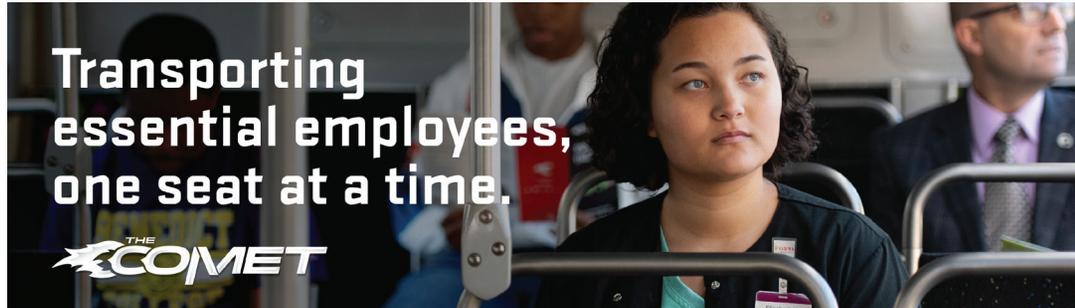


Taking him  
to his future

**THE COMET**

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803.255.7100

# Awareness Campaign: COVID-19 Adaptation



Transporting essential employees, one seat at a time.

**THE COMET**

WE ARE HERE FOR OUR COMMUNITY | [CATCHTHECOMET.ORG](https://catchthecomet.org) | 803.255.7100



Keeping the Midlands moving in times of crisis.

We are here for our community.

**THE COMET**

[CATCHTHECOMET.ORG](https://catchthecomet.org) | 803.255.7100



Keeping the Midlands moving in times of crisis.

**THE COMET**

WE ARE HERE FOR OUR COMMUNITY | [CATCHTHECOMET.ORG](https://catchthecomet.org) | 803.255.7100



Taking him there, so he can help you.

**THE COMET**

[CATCHTHECOMET.ORG](https://catchthecomet.org)  
803.255.7100

## Free Times: Annual Manual



### Taking you to your favorite experiences in the Midlands

The COMET now runs shuttles to Columbia's events - with a list that is growing each year. Why worry about driving or parking when you can take an easy shuttle to and from a great time?

The COMET partners with the following events and is adding more for 2020.

- ▶ Columbia Fireflies games
- ▶ Famously Hot New Year
- ▶ Fireflies experience at Congaree National Park
- ▶ Gervais Street Bridge Dinner
- ▶ Light up NOMA
- ▶ Rosewood Crawfish Festival
- ▶ The South Carolina State Fair
- ▶ UofSC Football games
- ... and more!



CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 | [f](#) [t](#) [@](#) [v](#) [i](#) [n](#)

## Free Times: St. Pat's Ad

### Recharge and Connect with The Soda Cap Connector at St. Pat's in Five Points



**SATURDAY  
MARCH 21**  
Catch The COMET to the festival and wave at us in the parade!

### Visit the Soda Cap Lounge during during the 38th annual St. Pat's in Five Points festival.

The Soda Cap Connector will be stationed inside the gates so you can RECHARGE and RELAX. Enjoy free WIFI, charging stations, giveaways, activities + a comfortable place to take a break from the festival.

The Soda Cap will also running shuttles to St. Pat's all day. More info at: [stpatsinfivepoints.com](http://stpatsinfivepoints.com)



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# Living Here Ad

The COMET can get you where you want to go in Central Midlands and Columbia

38 Fixed Bus Routes

Blue Bike Free Rides

Uber/Lyft Free Rides

Soda Cap Connector  
Free Downtown Shuttle

DART Service

**THE COMET**

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803.255.7100 | | DOWNLOAD OUR APP!

# Richland One Ad

**R1**

**RICHLAND ONE**  
ENGAGE • EDUCATE • EMPOWER

STUDENTS & EMPLOYEES RIDE THE COMET FOR FREE

Catch **THE COMET**

Call (803) 255-7100 or visit [www.CatchtheComet.org](http://www.CatchtheComet.org) for more details

|

# Twin City News



**The COMET is coming**  
...to Batesburg-Leesville!

January 23, 2020 operating every Thursday

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803.255.7100 |      | DOWNLOAD OUR APP!   

# Twin City News

## Catch the new Route 97 today!



The COMET has a new rural flex route, which runs every Thursday, connecting Batesburg-Leesville, Red Bank Crossing, Lexington County Administration Center and West Columbia with connections to Columbia. The buses feature wi-fi, security cameras, cell phone chargers and bicycle racks on buses.

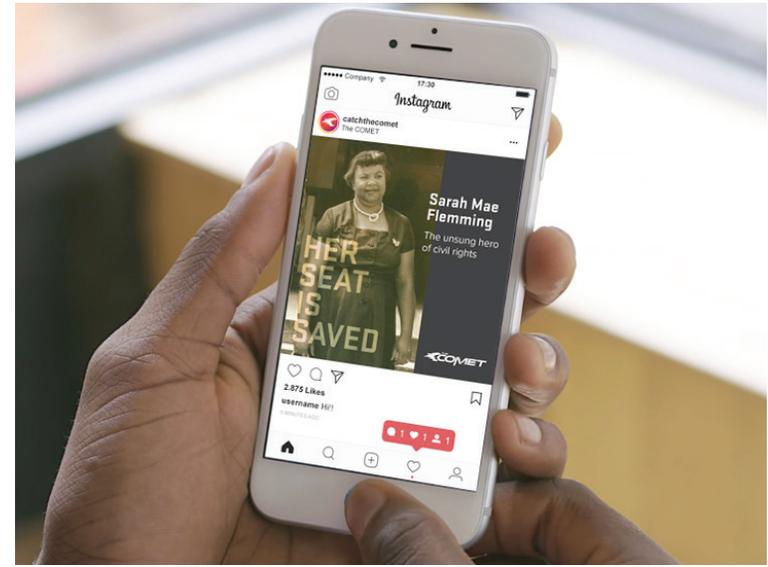
The fare for Route 97 is \$2.00 one way, \$4.00 for a day pass, \$14.00 for a 7-day pass and \$40.00 for a 31-day pass.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Please call (803) 255-7100,  
visit [www.CatchTheCOMET.org](http://www.CatchTheCOMET.org)  
or email [info@CatchTheCOMET.org](mailto:info@CatchTheCOMET.org).



# Sarah Mae Flemming Campaign



# DART Brochure Updates

## Flex Services (ReFlex)

The COMET offers flex route service on ReFlex Routes 31, 46, 47, 62 and 97. These flexible type services combine ADA paratransit and general public transit into one service operating over a large zone connecting customers to other The COMET routes at specific transfer points.

Call us for details.

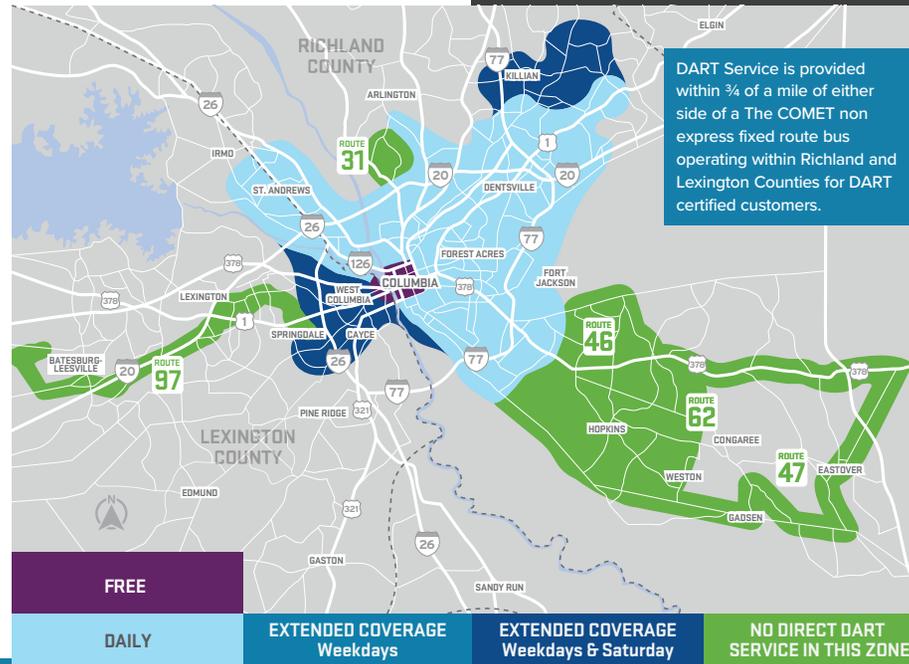
## Tips for Riding

- DART is an origin to destination demand response paratransit service. Operators may assist customers to the front door as long as they are within the line of sight of their vehicle. DART vehicles cannot be left unattended.
- Any other additional assistance will require the use of a personal care attendant (PCA).
- Space is limited, so limit yourself to five (5) packages, that you can carry.
- Just like the bus, DART operate on a schedule. **Your 30 minute window is 15 minutes before or after the time requested for pick up.** DART operators will only wait five (5) minutes if the customer is not ready.
- **Subscription Service**—For customers that have a regular travel pattern, subscription service is available on a limited basis. This puts customers on a regular schedule, so you do not need to request every trip individually. DART can only accommodate a limited number of subscription requests. Please call us for more details on this service.
- Customers with service animals or traveling with a respirator or portable oxygen supply are welcome on DART.

- All customers are strongly encouraged to wear seatbelts. Customers who use wheelchairs will wear a lap belt. Child car seats are not provided, customers must provide their own child car seats. DART operators can assist up to 25 pounds.
- Remember—DART is a shared ride experience. You may have other customers on the same bus as you.



A service of The COMET operated through a contract with RATP Dev USA, Inc. of Fort Worth, Texas.



## Call Us...We Will Be Around!

For comments, concerns, questions or suggestions regarding The COMET and DART services please contact us by calling: (803) 255-7100, fax to: (803) 255-7113, writing to: The COMET, 3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201 or by emailing: [info@TheCOMETSC.gov](mailto:info@TheCOMETSC.gov).



## DART Informational Brochure

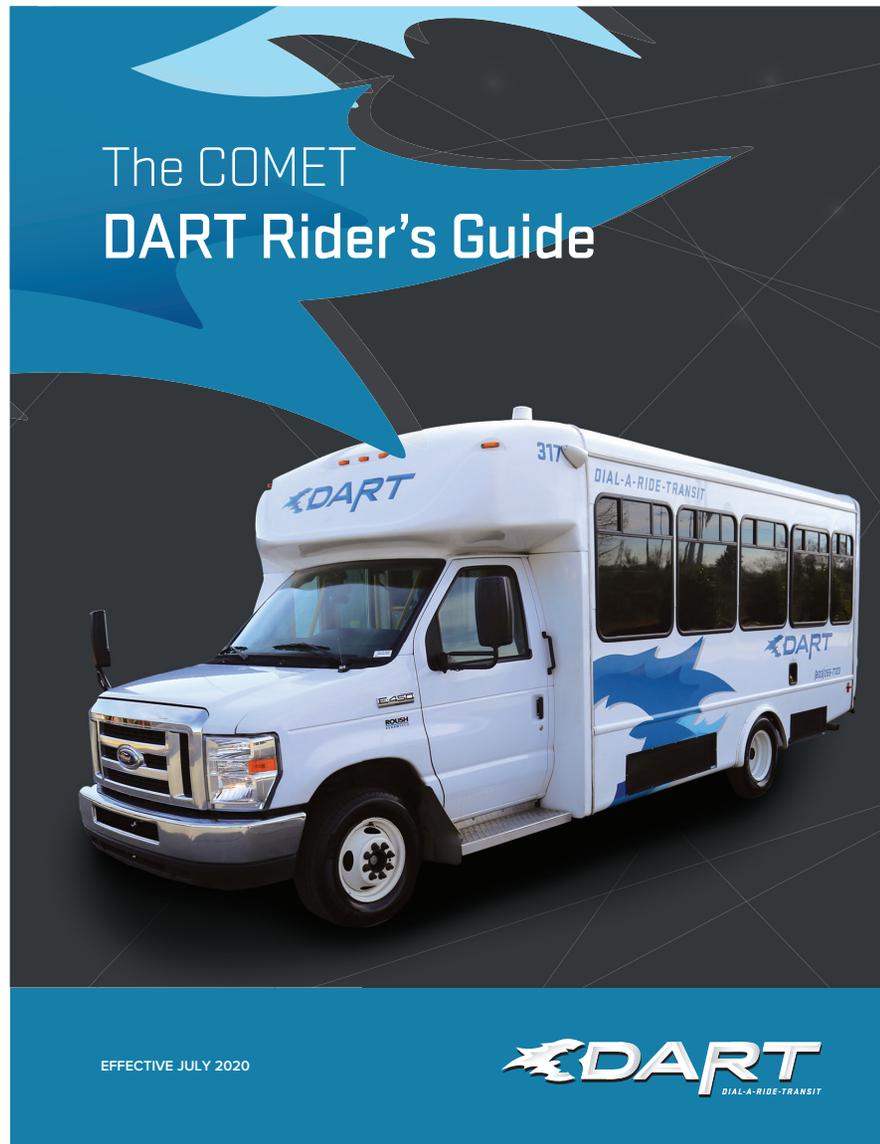


Demand Response ADA Complementary Paratransit Service in Richland and Lexington Counties

Telephone: (803) 255-7123  
TDD/TTY: 711  
[www.CatchTheCOMETsc.gov](http://www.CatchTheCOMETsc.gov)

Effective July 2020

# DART Guide Updates



## Section 1: Eligibility and Certification

### Eligibility

Individuals interested in paratransit services through The COMET must first be determined eligible for the service using Dial-A-Ride Transit (DART). The eligibility review considers each person's functional ability to use the fixed-route buses. A person's age, the distance to bus stops, weather, and environmental barriers do not, alone, establish eligibility.

The ADA eligibility certification criteria will be based on the following:

- A. A person with a disability who is unable to navigate the transit system without the assistance of another individual.
- B. Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device and is able, with such assistance, to board, ride, and disembark from any vehicle which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities if the individual wants to travel on a route on the system during the hours of operation of the system at a time, or within a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route.
- C. Any person with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition, which prevents him/her from traveling to or from a bus stop.

### Types of Eligibility

The COMET will assign categories of eligibility based on an individual's functional ability. The types of eligibility for DART are as follows:

#### Unconditional eligibility

The customer is unable to use the fixed-route service under any conditions. This eligibility is valid for five (5) years from certification.

#### Conditional eligibility

The customer can use the fixed-route service in specific situations, such as a fixed route with a close and accessible stop. However, if a stop is too far or is inaccessible, this customer may qualify for paratransit. It is important that the conditions of his/her eligibility be clearly defined and understood by both the customer and the reservationists/schedulers and dispatchers. Typically, eligibility extends for three (3) years from certification.

#### Temporary eligibility

The customer has a health condition or disability that temporarily prevents one from using the fixed-route service (can be either conditional or unconditional). (Example: An individual's condition may improve over time or may be aided by travel training.) This eligibility is usually valid for up to one (1) year from certification.

# DART Rack Card: COVID-19



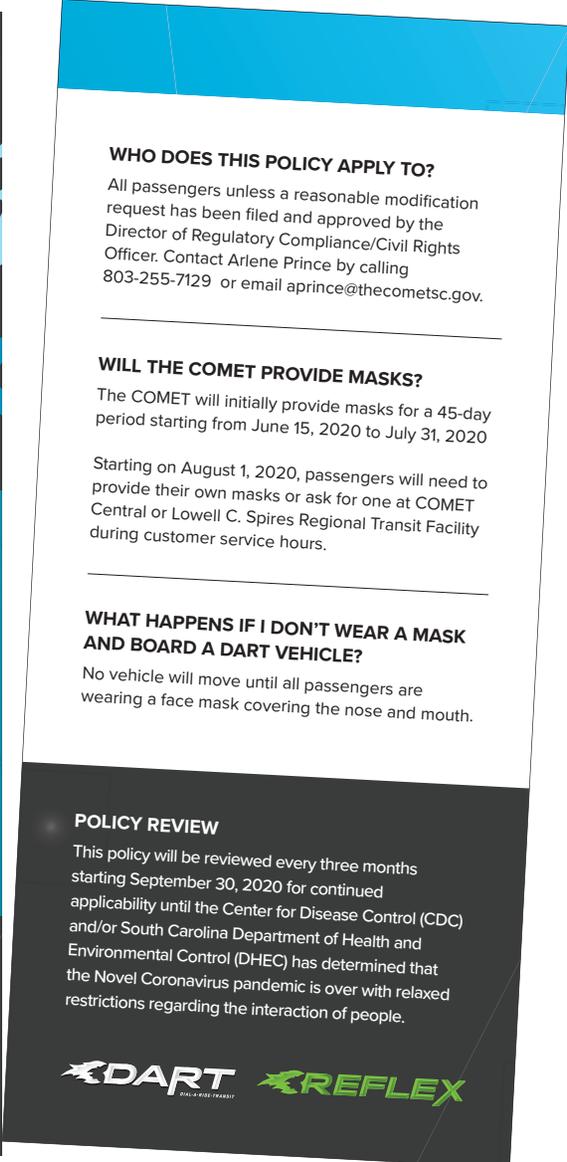
**DART**  
DIAL-A-RIDE-TRANSIT

## COVID-19 Operational Policy

Effective June 15, 2020,  
**all riders will be required to wear face masks covering the nose and mouth** when riding DART or ReFlex vehicles.



For more information:  
[CATCHTHECOMET.ORG](http://CATCHTHECOMET.ORG)  
803-255-7100



**WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO?**  
All passengers unless a reasonable modification request has been filed and approved by the Director of Regulatory Compliance/Civil Rights Officer. Contact Arlene Prince by calling 803-255-7129 or email [aprince@thecometsc.gov](mailto:aprince@thecometsc.gov).

**WILL THE COMET PROVIDE MASKS?**  
The COMET will initially provide masks for a 45-day period starting from June 15, 2020 to July 31, 2020

Starting on August 1, 2020, passengers will need to provide their own masks or ask for one at COMET Central or Lowell C. Spires Regional Transit Facility during customer service hours.

**WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T WEAR A MASK AND BOARD A DART VEHICLE?**  
No vehicle will move until all passengers are wearing a face mask covering the nose and mouth.

**POLICY REVIEW**  
This policy will be reviewed every three months starting September 30, 2020 for continued applicability until the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and/or South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) has determined that the Novel Coronavirus pandemic is over with relaxed restrictions regarding the interaction of people.

**DART** **REFLEX**  
DIAL-A-RIDE-TRANSIT

# COVID-19 Restroom Decals



# Driver Appreciation



**Always here,  
so you can get there.**

Thank your driver today

Transit Driver Appreciation Day, Wednesday, March 18  
Visit our website for thank you cards and more.



CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 | [f](#) [t](#) [@](#) [v](#) [i](#)n



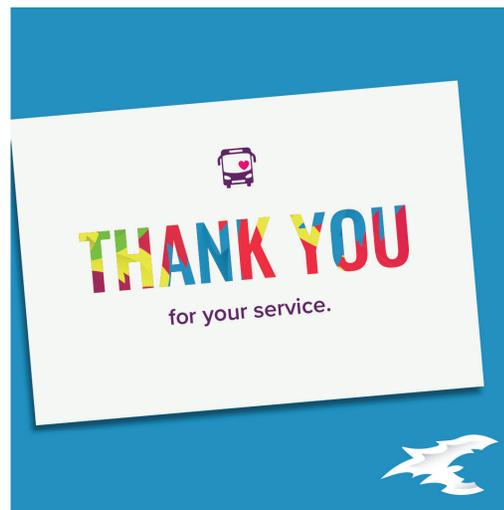
**Always here,  
so you can get there.**

Thank your driver today

Transit Driver Appreciation Day is observed on March 18 each year, but we are acknowledging our wonderful drivers every day for getting our people where they need to go—whether in crisis or in calm. For this, we thank you.

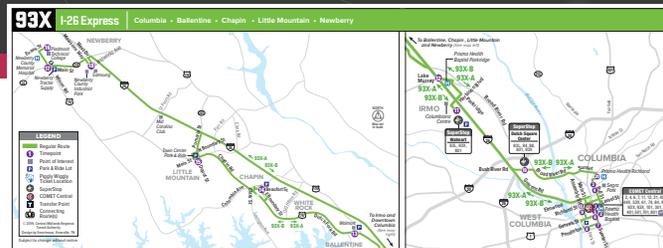


CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 | [f](#) [t](#) [@](#) [v](#) [i](#)n



# Chapin Route Flyer

Chapin High School students, faculty & staff can ride The COMET for **FREE!**



All rides are **FREE** of charge with Chapin High School identification card.

Go to school, work, after-school events, or anywhere in the Central Midlands any day of the week.

For more information call us or visit our website.

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 |     

# Job Flyer

**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL MIDLANDS TRANSIT

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG

POSITION OF

**Planning and Development Specialist**

- Developing the Transit Service Plan by identifying transit service needs, prioritize improvements and determine resources required for implementing modified or new service.
- Managing program areas such as system performance measurement, route evaluation, and bus stop inventory database.
- Representing The COMET on cooperative special projects with external agencies.
- Scheduling any mandated outreach programs associated with grants, and route planning including, but not limited to, Title VI analysis and major services changes requiring a public hearing.
- Developing private-public partnerships, including transit-oriented development

### IDEAL CANDIDATE

- Communicates clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing; persuade, justify, and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.
- Takes initiative, reason logically, and be creative in developing and introducing new ideas.
- Prepares and presents clear, concise and comprehensive oral and written reports.
- Builds effective interpersonal working relationships with staff, peers, Board, public, and financial counterparts.
- Develops policies and procedures to improve the operations and functions of The COMET.
- Communicates and work effectively with and provide support to staff, managers, elected and appointed government officials, business and community organizations, and various interest groups in the pursuit of The COMET's goals and mission.

### PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AND REQUIREMENTS

- Bachelor's Degree in Urban Planning, Transportation Planning/Engineering, or related field. Master's Degree preferred.
- One (1) year professional experience in transportation planning, urban planning, or transportation engineering experience, preferably in a public transit.
- Excellent writing skills are essential to successful performance in this position. Work requires independent and professional judgment. The employee uses written and oral communication skills; reads and interprets data, information and documents; analyzes and solves problems; uses math and mathematical reasoning; performs highly detailed work; deals with multiple concurrent tasks; and interacts with others encountered in the course of work. Experience with word processing, spreadsheets, Internet software, email and/or database software preferred. Microsoft Office, Trapeze and ArcGIS skills are required. A valid Class C driver license and safe driving record is required at the time of application and at the time of appointment and must be maintained throughout employment.



### Compensation + Benefits

The starting salary for this position will depend on the candidate's qualifications. The annual salary range is \$ 45,000 – \$61,660 annually. The FLSA status is exempt with a pay grade of 11. This position will report directly to the executive director/CEO. The COMET offers an extensive benefits package that includes the following:

#### Retirement

Participation in the South Carolina State Retirement System (SCRS) is compulsory for all COMET full-time employees. The COMET shall withhold both the employee and employer contribution to be forwarded to the South Carolina State Retirement System (SCRS) at a rate of 14.56% The COMET and 9% Employee. Contribution is pre-taxed.

#### Social Security

All The COMET employees pay into the Social Security system as required as part of participation in SCRC. The employee and the employer shall contribute the mandatory 6.2% each.

# How to Ride Collateral

**THE COMET** is here to take you there

The COMET provides safe, reliable and accessible transportation for everyone.

### How to Catch The COMET

**PLAN YOUR TRIP**  
Download our Catch The COMET mobile app or view our system map at [catchthecometsc.gov/routes](http://catchthecometsc.gov/routes).

**FIND YOUR STOP**  
Transit stop signs list the routes that serve each stop and will coincide with the numbers on the bus.

**BUY YOUR BUS PASS**  
Buy your bus pass at COMET Central, through our Catch The COMET mobile app, or on the bus.

**CATCH YOUR BUS**  
Check the destination sign on the front, curbside or rear of the bus to ensure you board the correct route.

### Track Your Bus in Real Time

**3 EASY WAYS:**

1. View the system map at [thecomet.transloc.com](http://thecomet.transloc.com).
2. Download our Catch The COMET mobile app.
3. Text the word "COMET" and the bus stop number on the sign where you are boarding to 41411.

Need help planning your trip or locating your route?  
Call 803-255-7100.

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | [f](https://www.facebook.com/catchthecometsc) [i](https://www.instagram.com/catchthecometsc) [y](https://www.youtube.com/catchthecometsc) [in](https://www.linkedin.com/catchthecometsc)

## HOW TO RIDE THE FREE Soda Cap CONNECTOR

The Soda Cap Connector connects you to major downtown Columbia destinations.

The steps to ride the Soda Cap Connector are the same as The COMET bus, except it's FREE! Look for the Soda Cap stop signs and wrapped buses and trolleys for free travel between destinations.

**PLAN YOUR TRIP** **FIND YOUR STOP** **CATCH YOUR BUS OR TROLLEY**

### ROUTES

**ROUTE 1: MAIN ST. TO THE VISTA AND WEST COLUMBIA/CAYCE**  
Stops: The South Carolina State Museum, the Convention Center, the West Columbia Riverwalk and more.

**ROUTE 2: MAIN ST. TO FIVE POINTS AND UOFSC**  
Stops: Benedict College, Allen University, COMET Central and more.

**ROUTE 3: MAIN ST. TO SEGRA PARK**  
Stops: Columbia Fireflies game days only, running every 25-30 minutes.

### OPERATES:

SUN.-WED.: Every 30 minutes 9 a.m.-7 p.m.  
THU.-SAT.: Every 30 minutes 9 a.m.-midnight

**THE COMET** is here to take you there

The COMET propels our community forward through providing safe, reliable and accessible transportation for everyone.

### How to Catch The COMET

**PLAN YOUR TRIP**  
Download our Catch The COMET mobile app or view our system map at [catchthecometsc.gov/routes](http://catchthecometsc.gov/routes).

**FIND YOUR STOP**  
Transit stop signs list the routes that serve each stop and will coincide with the numbers on the bus.

**BUY YOUR BUS PASS**  
Buy your bus pass at COMET Central, through our Catch The COMET mobile app, or on the bus.

**CATCH YOUR BUS**  
Check the destination sign on the front, curbside or rear of the bus to ensure you board the correct route.

### Track Your Bus in Real Time

**3 EASY WAYS:**

1. View the system map at [thecomet.transloc.com](http://thecomet.transloc.com).
2. Download our Catch The COMET mobile app.
3. Text the word "COMET" and the bus stop number on the sign where you are boarding to 41411.

## HOW TO RIDE Soda Cap CONNECTOR

The Soda Cap Connector connects you to major downtown Columbia destinations.

The steps to ride the Soda Cap Connector are the same as The COMET bus, except it's FREE! Look for the Soda Cap stop signs and wrapped buses and trolleys for free travel between destinations.

**CATCH YOUR BUS OR TROLLEY**

## FREE ROUTES

The Soda Cap Connector connects you to major downtown Columbia destinations. The route is free and runs 7 days a week.

**PLAN YOUR TRIP** **FIND YOUR STOP** **CATCH YOUR BUS OR TROLLEY**

Look for the Soda Cap stop signs and wrapped buses and trolleys for free travel between destinations!

### SODA CAP CONNECTOR ROUTES

**ROUTE 1: MAIN ST. TO THE VISTA AND WEST COLUMBIA/CAYCE**  
Stops: The South Carolina State Museum, the Convention Center, the West Columbia Riverwalk and more.

**ROUTE 2: MAIN ST. TO FIVE POINTS AND UOFSC**  
Stops: Benedict College, Allen University, COMET Central and more.

**ROUTE 3: MAIN ST. TO SEGRA PARK**  
Stops: Columbia Fireflies game days only, running every 25-30 minutes.

### OPERATES:

SUN.-WED.: Every 30 minutes 9 a.m.-7 p.m.  
THU.-SAT.: Every 30 minutes 9 a.m.-midnight

### The Orbit

The Soda Cap Connector Orbit is a downtown loop with stops every half an hour. The route is free and runs 7 days a week. Mon.-Fri. 7:15 a.m.-7:35 p.m., and Sat.-Sun. 9:15 a.m.-6:35 p.m.

The route runs along Sumter, Blossom, Assembly and Richland Streets with stops near the State House, the University of South Carolina, Prisma Health Baptist and the Richland Library.

Plan your trip, find your stop and catch your bus or trolley.

## FIRST MILE, LAST MILE

connections to get you where you need to be.

### COMET on the Go! with Lyft

The COMET will pay up to \$5 for Lyft ridesharing trips that start and end in the COMET fixed route service area through:

- **The COMET @ Night:** 7 days a week 9 p.m.-3 a.m., apply the promo code that is available on board the inside of The COMET buses.
- **The COMET to the Market:** 7 days a week 6 a.m.-8 p.m. using promo code COMETMARKET20. This promo code can only be used twice a week per passenger. Your trip must start or end at a fresh food market within a food desert area.

If you do not have a smartphone or require mobility device access, please call 803-255-7124 to request service.

**COMET** **Lyft**

## How to Catch The COMET

A guide to all of the services the Midlands' reliable transit system has to offer.

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG  
803-255-7100

[f](https://www.facebook.com/catchthecometsc) [i](https://www.instagram.com/catchthecometsc) [y](https://www.youtube.com/catchthecometsc) [in](https://www.linkedin.com/catchthecometsc)

### Blue Bike SC

The Blue Bike SC bikeshare program is intended to be an extension of a passenger's transit trip, making it easy to rent a bicycle and get to where you need to be. Riders on The COMET can access a code from the bus that allows 45 free minutes of use on any Blue Bike, located at various stations within downtown Columbia.

To locate Blue Bike rental stations, visit [bluebikesc.com](http://bluebikesc.com).

# The COMET Fact Sheet



## About The COMET

The Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (The COMET) is a regional transportation authority formed by Richland County, City of Columbia and Lexington County on April 24, 2000, by the Central Midlands Council of Governments. The COMET consists of an intergovernmental agreement signed by Richland County, City of Columbia, City of Forest Acres and Lexington County to fund, operate and maintain public transit services in the Central Midlands area.

The COMET is also the brand name of the transit services provided. The COMET provides countywide public transit services on 34 fixed routes, four ReFlex services and DART ADA complementary paratransit service throughout Richland and western Lexington Counties. The COMET transports more than 2.8 million passengers annually on a fleet of more than 80 buses, vans and trolleys.

The COMET also supports and provides opportunities for additional mobility through partnerships with attractions, neighborhoods and events, Uber, Lyft and Blue Bike of S.C.

## Services

### 34 Fixed Bus Routes

The COMET bus system is made up of 34 standard bus routes that run regularly, every day of the week. These routes cover the entirety of Richland and parts of Lexington counties, cross over into Newberry as well as Sumter. The regular The COMET routes are accessible by fare or pass and most routes begin and end at COMET Central, located at Sumter and Laurel Streets.



### The Orbit

The Soda Cap Connector Orbit is a downtown loop with stops every half an hour. The route is free and runs seven days a week. The route runs along Sumter, Blossom, Assembly and Richland streets with stops near the State House, the University of South Carolina, Prisma Health Baptist and the Richland County Library.



### Soda Cap Connector

This is a free downtown shuttle intended for locals and tourists to hop from district to district in the urban core of Columbia. The Soda Cap Connector uses trolleys and buses to service its routes – traveling between Five Points, Main Street, The Vista and over the river into Cayce and West Columbia. The Soda Cap also runs seasonally to Segra Park, home of the single-A baseball team, the Columbia Fireflies, located within the BullStreet District during home games.



### Paratransit (DART)

DART is the complementary Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service for persons with disabilities unable to board The COMET buses or access a transit stop for any trip purpose. In order to use DART, customers must complete an ADA Certification Application. DART operates the same service hours as The COMET non-express fixed routes. Customers must board, travel and alight within 3/4 mile of an operating The COMET route. Please see the system map for DART service boundary.



CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 | INFO@CATCHTHECOMET.ORG |



### on the Go!

pay up to \$5.00 for ridesharing trips that start in the COMET fixed route service area on Lyft and



### Blue Bike SC

The Blue Bike SC program is intended to be an extension of a passenger's transit trip. Riders on the transit system can access a code from the bus that allows 45 free minutes of use on any Blue Bike, located at various stations within downtown Columbia. The Blue Bike SC partnership expands the "first mile/last mile" opportunities for The COMET users.



@ Night: Seven days a week between 9 p.m. apply the promo code that is posted on the bus.

@ the Market: Seven days a week between 9 a.m. apply the promo code COMETMARKET18 and your trip must start or end at a grocery store selling fresh produce and meats.



### Vanpool

Vanpool is a flexible service that is flexible enough for the bus to pick up a passenger not on an existing route within a certain radius of the bus route. The five ReFlex routes serve Denny Street, Boulevard, Eastover/Gadsden, Hopkins and Leesville.

The COMET Vanpool is designed to assist employees in forming vanpools for the home-to-work commute. A monthly subsidy of \$500 is available to help with the cost of the vanpool. Commute With Enterprise provides seven, 12 and 15 passenger vans. Vans must originate or end in Richland or Lexington Counties. A minimum of five people, including the primary driver is required for formation.



CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 | INFO@CATCHTHECOMET.ORG |



# Feonix Flyer

**BOOK A RIDE  
TO AND FROM  
THE BUS STOP**



**ACCESS MULTIPLE  
DRIVERS WITH  
ONE CLICK.**

**[aarp.org/ridecolumbia](http://aarp.org/ridecolumbia)  
888-851-2131**



**Download the  
Feonix app today!**

RIDE@50+<sup>SM</sup>



Uber



AARP membership is not required.

Apple and Apple logo are registered trademarks of Apple Inc.  
Google Play and the Google Play logo are trademarks of Google LLC.

# Mask Reminder Poster



**! ATTENTION**

As of June 15, 2020 until further notice,  
**you must wear a mask or face covering**  
while riding any of The COMET vehicles or before entering any of The COMET facilities.

**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL MIDLAND TRANSIT

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG  
803-255-7100  
f t i y i n



**! ATTENTION**

As of June 15, 2020 until further notice,  
**you must wear a mask or face covering**  
while riding any of The COMET vehicles or before entering any of The COMET facilities.

**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL MIDLAND TRANSIT

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 | f t i y i n

# Mask Reminder Public Service Announcements

As of June 15, 2020, anyone using The COMET buses and facilities **MUST WEAR FACE MASKS OR COVERINGS.**

For more information or to talk to a COMET staff member:

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG  
803-255-7100

f t i y in





As of June 15, 2020, anyone using The COMET buses and facilities **MUST WEAR FACE MASKS OR COVERINGS.**

For more information or to talk to a COMET staff member:

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG  
803-255-7100

f t i y in




As of June 15, 2020, anyone using The COMET buses and facilities **MUST WEAR FACE MASKS OR COVERINGS.**

For more information or to talk to a COMET staff member:

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG  
803-255-7100

f t i y in



As of June 15, 2020, anyone using The COMET buses and facilities **MUST WEAR FACE MASKS OR COVERINGS.**

For more information or to talk to a COMET staff member:

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG  
803-255-7100

f t i y in



# Promotional Materials



# Reimagine The COMET



**REIMAGINE THE COMET**

**Reimagine The COMET is the ongoing study to redesign the agency's bus network, and you can be part of it.**

This 18-month study will look at the strengths and challenges in the existing bus system to redesign a bus network that reflects the values of the communities in Richland and Lexington counties.

**Goals:**

- Analyze the existing network
- Design a new network that reflects the needs and values of the community we serve

**Reimagine The COMET will...**

Hear from existing riders and potential riders in Richland and Lexington Counties.	Build on what is working well today and identify ways to improve.
Understand existing operational and ridership conditions for each route and system-wide.	Do a "blank slate" plan to come up with a network designed for the people and places of today.
Determine how The COMET should allocate resources and measure success.	Improve reliability and connections within the network.

**The COMET?**

Richland and Lexington Counties specific bus routes have been in place for decades. The current design of the network has not kept pace with growth. Small tweaks and the lack of a comprehensive study have led to an increasingly complex system that does not serve the community adequately.

From using the system, the COMET will do a "blank slate" plan to redesign the network. It is designed for the people and will take a fresh look at the entire network, including alternatives for a new network and expansion of the transit system.



Public outreach event dates will be posted on the website as they become available.

Surveys will be conducted during both public outreach phases. Visit the website below for details.



# Rider Alert: CDC Guidelines

**!**

## Stay healthy

aboard The COMET with these rules from the CDC.

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG  
803-255-7100  
f t i y i n

**WASH**  
hands for 20 seconds

**USE**  
hand sanitizer

**AVOID**  
people who may be ill

**COVER**  
coughs + sneezes

**CLEAN**

Stay at **HOME** if you're sick.

Keep dirty hands from eyes & nose

**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL MIDLANDS TRANSIT

The infographic features a dark grey sidebar on the left with a white exclamation mark icon, the title 'Stay healthy', a subtitle 'aboard The COMET with these rules from the CDC.', contact information, and social media icons. The main content area has a red background with white text and icons. It lists seven CDC guidelines: 'WASH hands for 20 seconds' (hands being washed), 'USE hand sanitizer' (hand sanitizer bottle), 'AVOID people who may be ill' (person wearing a face mask), 'COVER coughs + sneezes' (person sneezing into a tissue), 'CLEAN' (spray bottle labeled 'CLEAN'), 'Stay at HOME if you're sick.' (person in bed), and 'Keep dirty hands from eyes & nose' (hand near eye with a 'no' symbol). The 'THE COMET CENTRAL MIDLANDS TRANSIT' logo is at the bottom right.

# Rider Alert: COVID-19 Guidelines

## What is doing to keep you safe:

- Daily cleaning and disinfecting buses
- Fare-free rides for essential travel
- Rear boarding and skip a seat to promote social distancing
- One-way travel with mandatory deboarding at end of line
- Hand sanitizers on the buses
- Drivers and staff are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering
- Cleaning and sanitizing bus stops

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 |

## Passenger responsibilities:

- Strongly encouraged to wear a face covering
- Skip a seat - give each other space for COVID-19 safety
- Stay at home when possible
- Wash hands
- Keep dirt, nose
- Ride The COMET for essential travel
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Use hand sanitizer
- Avoid people
- Stand 6 feet apart

## Board Rear Door

NO FARE REQUIRED

Mobility devices and strollers board front door.



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## Skip a Seat

Give each other space for COVID-19 safety.



CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 |

# Rider Alert: COVID-19 Guidelines



All Fixed Routes are one way only for essential travel.

IN ADHERENCE WITH THE GOVERNOR'S "STAY HOME/STAY AT WORK" ORDER FOR ESSENTIAL TRAVEL:

ONE WAY

You will be asked to board and deboard at the same line. Be sure you are in the correct direction for your destination when boarding.

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 | [f](#) [t](#) [@](#) [v](#) [i](#)n

## Board Rear Door

NO FARE REQUIRED

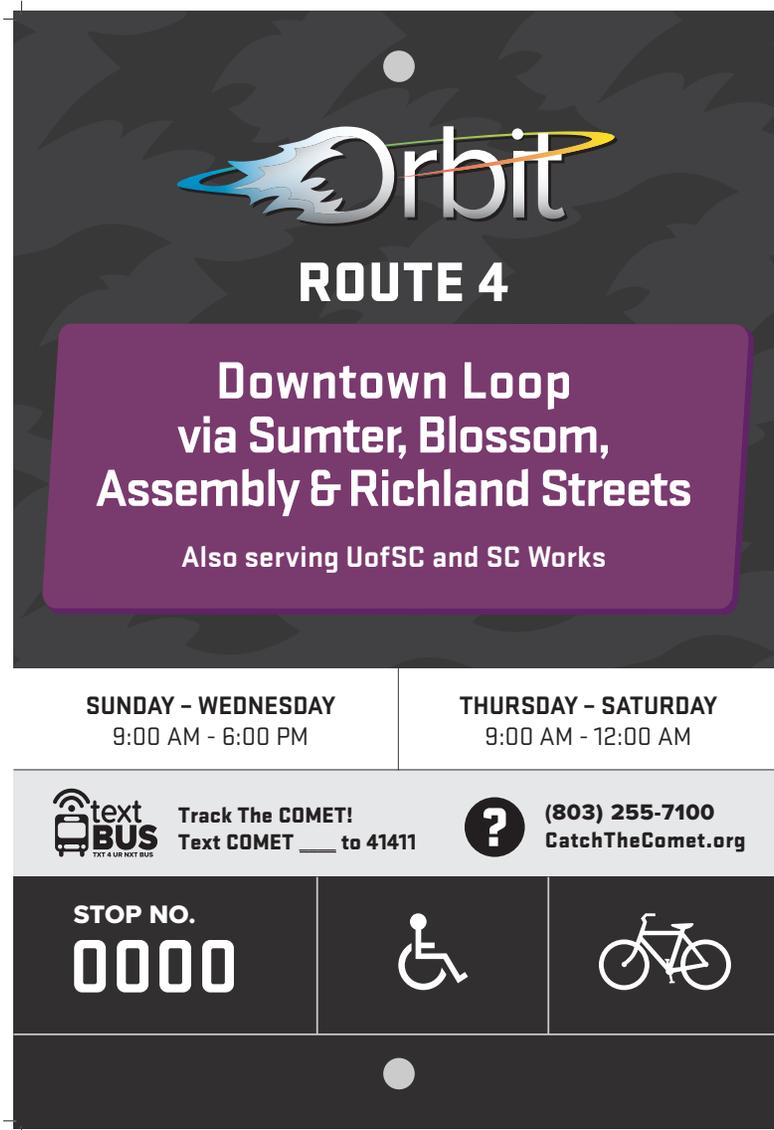
Seniors, mobility devices and strollers board front door.



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# Orbit Stop Signage



The image shows a vertical bus stop sign for Orbit Route 4. At the top is the Orbit logo, which features a stylized comet tail and the word "Orbit" in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the logo, "ROUTE 4" is written in large, white, bold letters. A purple rounded rectangle in the center contains the text "Downtown Loop via Sumter, Blossom, Assembly & Richland Streets" and "Also serving UofSC and SC Works" in white. Below this, there are two columns of text: "SUNDAY - WEDNESDAY 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM" and "THURSDAY - SATURDAY 9:00 AM - 12:00 AM". A grey horizontal band contains the "text BUS" logo, the text "Track The COMET! Text COMET \_\_\_ to 41411", a question mark icon, and the text "(803) 255-7100 CatchTheComet.org". At the bottom, there are three boxes: "STOP NO. 0000", a wheelchair accessibility icon, and a bicycle icon. A small white dot is centered at the very bottom of the sign.

**Orbit**  
**ROUTE 4**

**Downtown Loop  
via Sumter, Blossom,  
Assembly & Richland Streets**

Also serving UofSC and SC Works

**SUNDAY - WEDNESDAY**  
9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

**THURSDAY - SATURDAY**  
9:00 AM - 12:00 AM

**text BUS** Track The COMET!  
Text COMET \_\_\_ to 41411

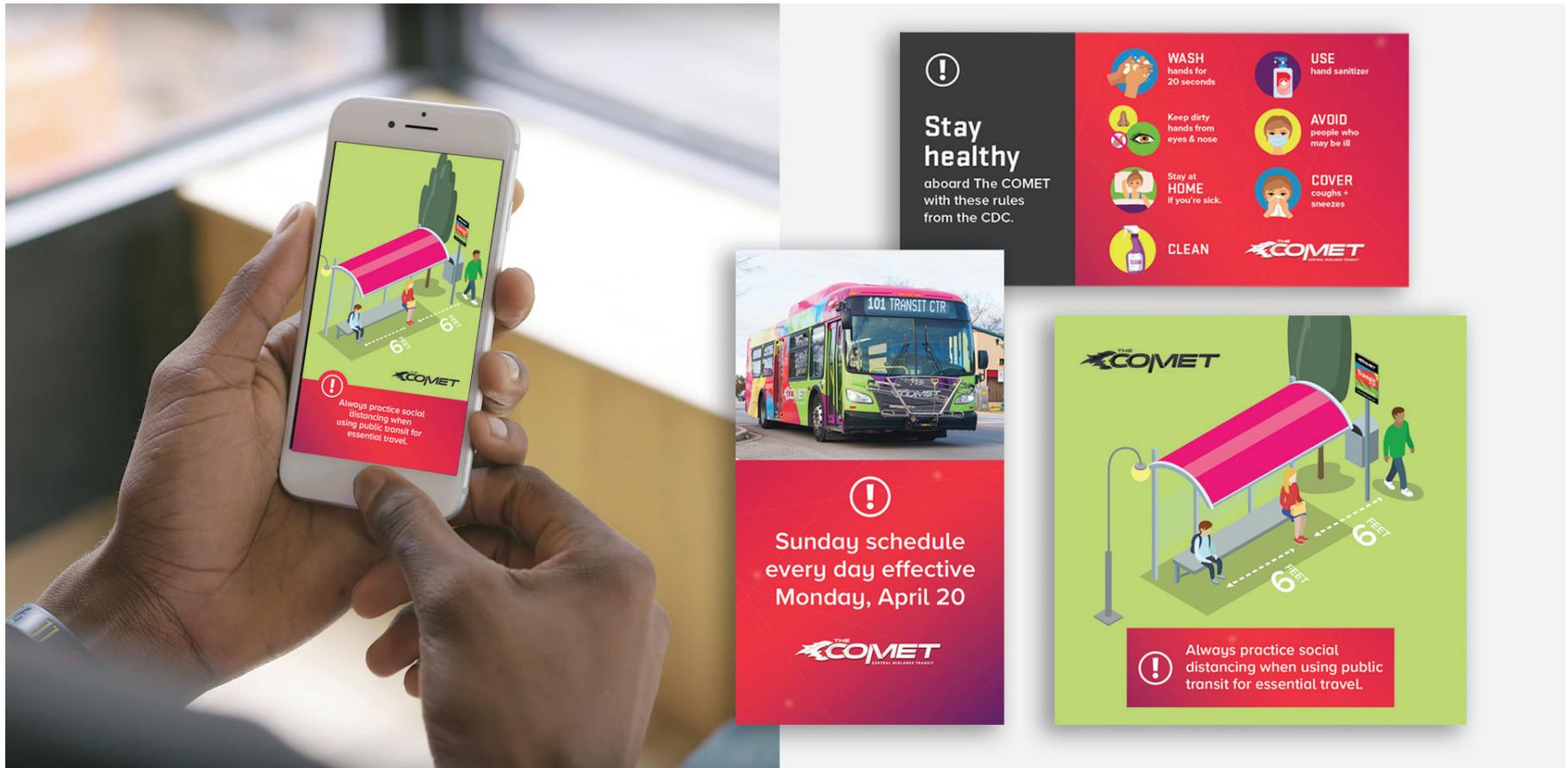
**?** (803) 255-7100  
CatchTheComet.org

**STOP NO.**  
**0000**





# Social Graphics



# Soda Cap Connector: West Columbia Routes



## THE Soda Cap CONNECTOR

**CATCH THE SODA CAP TO WEST COLUMBIA!**

803-255-7100

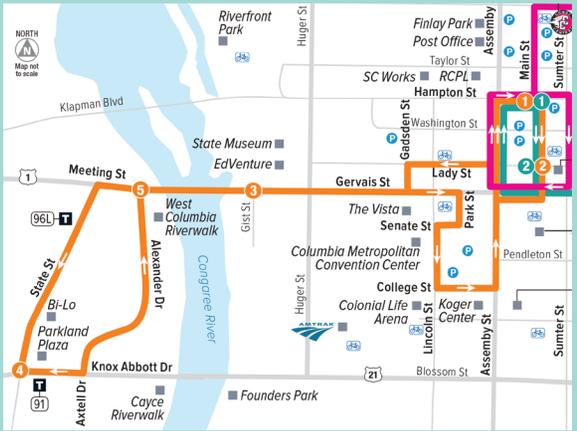
[CLICK HERE TO PLAN YOUR TRIP](#)



**NOW COMES TO Cayce and West Columbia!**

**Catch the FREE Soda Cap Connector in Cayce and West Columbia to all the places in downtown Columbia you want to go.**

The Soda Cap stops in the Vista, Main Street and in Five Points. Grab your free downtown shuttle at either the State Street and Knox Abbott Drive stop or the Alexander Street and Meeting Street stop.



Funded in part by Cayce Hospitality Tax Funds 

[CatchTheCOMET.org](http://CatchTheCOMET.org) |   



## THE Soda Cap CONNECTOR NOW SERVING WEST COLUMBIA!

The Soda Cap Connector now provides free rides for those living and working in West Columbia to access downtown Columbia via two stops. This new connection also allows people in downtown Columbia to access the West Columbia Riverwalk and visit the thriving State Street.



Catch the Soda Cap Connector from  
 SUNDAY - WEDNESDAY | 9 AM - 6 PM  
 THURSDAY - SATURDAY | 9 AM - MIDNIGHT

[CATCHTHECOMET.ORG](http://CATCHTHECOMET.ORG) | 803-255-7100 |    



# Soda Cap Connector: Fireflies Ad



**Catch The COMET!**  
...all season long.

- » Game days only
- » Runs every 25-30 minutes

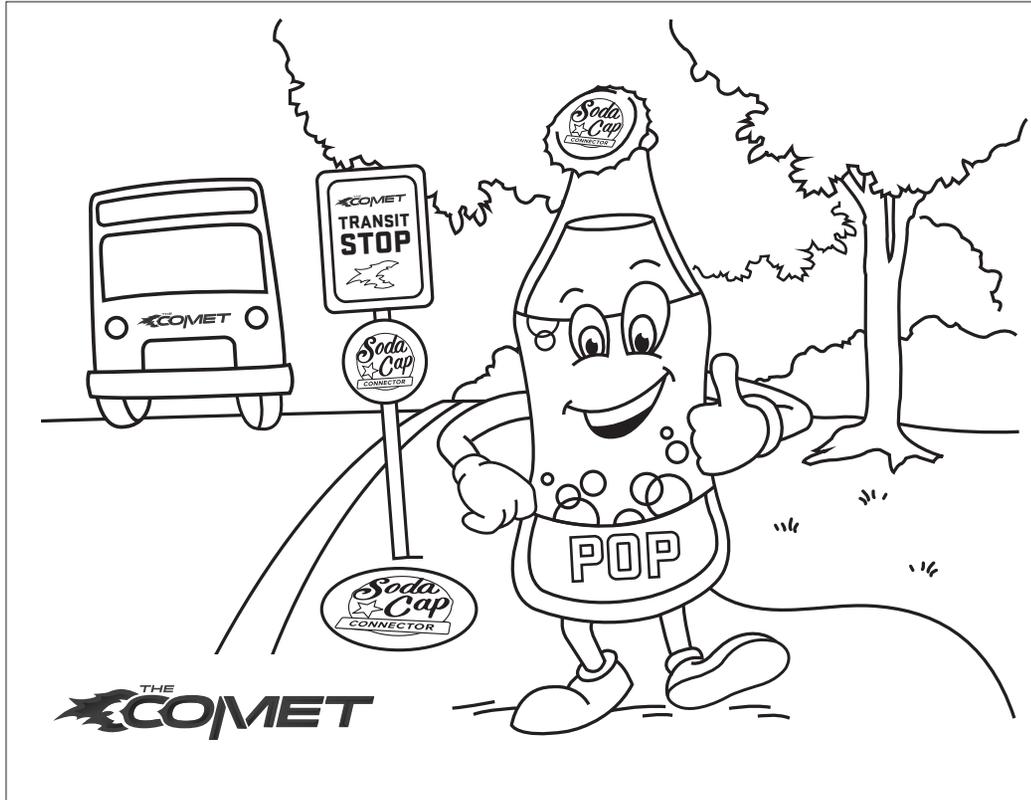
**THE COMET**  
CATCHTHECOMET.ORG

Don't worry about parking or driving when you can take the **FREE** Soda Cap Connector to and from every Fireflies game this season.

Grab the Soda Cap Connector Route 3 at Main and Hampton Streets and ride for **FREE** to Segra Park.

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 |     

# Soda Cap Connector: POP Activity Sheet



## SEARCH

K J O B I Q I T  
 E W M P I P L  
 E Y C R S O A  
 J R I W L I X  
 M D V K S N H  
 E T H G S T E  
 O X R X I A S J  
 K K N T F P G S  
 O F T V S M G J  
 J F E R K A Y S  
 X S E M R F E F L S I A U B Q  
 R T R O T C E N N O C E V F P  
 C A Y C E U T R E Z C C I E T  
 O Z M B J P L C I V M G M O L  
 N J Y Z F A E V C F R U R R V

Route	Connector	UofSC
Trolley	Vista	Fireflies
Bus	Five Points	WestCola
Ride	Cayce	Columbia
Pass	Main Street	Travel

## DOT-TO-DOT



CATCHTHECOMET.ORG

# Soda Cap Connector Rack Card

**FREE RIDES ON THE**



**CONNECTOR**

The **COMET Soda Cap Connector** is a simple system of dedicated routes that connect you to major Columbia destinations, including the **S.C. State Museum, the Vista, the Main Street District, the State House, Five Points, Allen University, Benedict College, West Columbia, Cayce, the Convention Center, UofSC and Segra Park.**

Look for Soda Cap signs and wrapped trolleys and buses for **FREE** travel between destinations. The route names appear on trolley and bus displays above the driver, and on the sides of vehicles. Service operates every 30 minutes on three routes, Sunday-Wednesday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Thursday-Saturday 9:00 a.m. to Midnight.




**THE COMET**

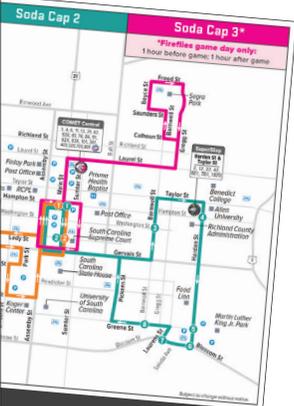
Catch the Soda Cap Connector from

SUNDAY - WEDNESDAY | 9 AM - 6 PM  
THURSDAY - SATURDAY | 9 AM - MIDNIGHT



Tax Funds 

CatchTheCOMET.org |   



**Soda Cap 2**      **Soda Cap 3\***

\*Free/Free game day only: 1 hour before game; 1 hour after game.

**Weekend Service**

**WEDNESDAY**  
9 AM - 6 PM

**- SATURDAY**  
9 AM - 12 MIDNIGHT

**ROUTE 1**  
**WEST COLUMBIA & CAYCE**  
to the Vista and West Cayce

**ROUTE 2**  
**FIVE POINTS & UofSC**  
to Allen University • Benedict College • Main Street & UofSC

**ROUTE 3**  
**SEGRA PARK**  
to Allen University • Benedict College • Main Street & UofSC

# Transit App Advertising

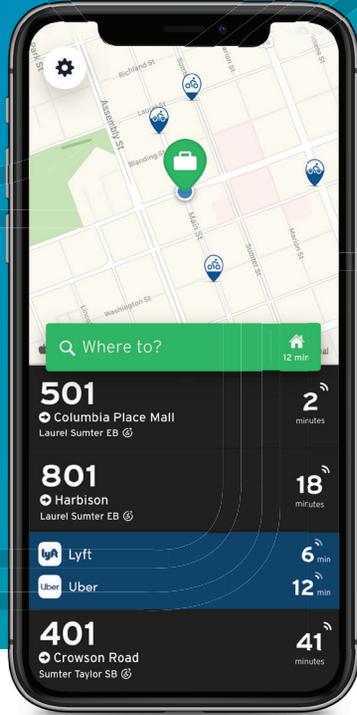


**Make the switch - download  transit today**

Plan your route, track your bus in real time, find Blue Bikes, order Lyft and Uber rides, and more!

**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL MIDLANDS TRANSIT

is proud to work in partnership with Transit

**Get Mobile, Download Transit**

Track your bus and plan your trip with ease

**Catch the new transit app**

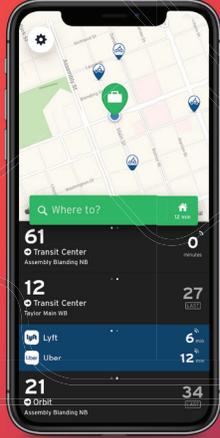
...und Columbia ...t easier.

...e new Transit ...our bus in real ...ur route, find ...rder Lyft and ...and more!

...e to track their bus in ...ansport app in North ...subscribers using the ...sit and begin using it ...he Transit app can be ...or Google Play.

...visit COMET Central, ...t (803) 255-7100.

...COMET.org |     



**transit**  
The Official App of

**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL MIDLANDS TRANSIT

- Real-time information
- Alerts and service updates
- Directions in your pocket
- Find Blue Bikes and order Lyft and Uber rides!

GET IT ON  

# Newsletter Trifolds



# Zoo Shuttle Collateral

Take The COMET to the ZOO!

**Hop on**

**ROUTE 84**

**for access to Riverbanks Zoo and Garden**

- Get \$3 off Zoo admission when you show your COMET pass
- Members ride FREE

Pick up/drop off at COMET Central, Park and Elmwood, Dutch Square, Greystone and Stoneridge and Colonial Life.

Call **803.255.7100** (711 through relay service) at least one hour before the time you want to take the shuttle to request pick-up from the nearest bus stop on the route.

**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL BUSINESS MARKET

CATCHTHECOMET.ORG | 803-255-7100 | [f](#) [t](#) [@](#) [v](#) [in](#)

Take The COMET to the ZOO!

**RIDE**  
Take The COMET to the zoo from downtown Columbia or Dutch Square

**SAVE**  
\$3.00 off Zoo admission when you show your COMET bus pass\*

**EXPLORE**  
Members of Riverbanks Zoo ride FREE when they take route 84 to the Zoo

**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL BUSINESS MARKET

**RIVERBANKS ZOO & GARDEN**

Hop on

**ROUTE 84**

for access to Riverbanks Zoo and Garden

**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL BUSINESS MARKET

Take The COMET to the ZOO!

**THE COMET**  
CENTRAL BUSINESS MARKET

# UofSC Transit





PLEASE DIRECT QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS REPORT TO:

**FLOCK AND RALLY**

Merritt McNeely

[merritt@flockandrally.com](mailto:merritt@flockandrally.com)

[info@flockandrally.com](mailto:info@flockandrally.com)

803.269.0001

**THE COMET**

Pamela A. Bynoe-Reed

[pbynoe-reed@thecometsc.gov](mailto:pbynoe-reed@thecometsc.gov)

803.255.7139