

Bus Riders Find Inconveniences "Nothing To Become Upset About!"

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By Lori Grier
Post Staff Writer

There used to be a time when the square was the gathering place in uptown Charlotte. Bus riders, who traveled near and far, could be seen anxiously awaiting the arrival of the buses from dawn to dusk on the square.

All that has changed with the construction of the Tryon Transit Mall Project.

Bus riders no longer have to tackle the cold wind on the square as they wait for their bus to pull to the curb. College and Church Streets are the newly designated bus routes.

We randomly selected five bus riders who depend upon the Charlotte Transit System to get them to their jobs. We asked them several questions about the Transit Mall and its effect on them as bus riders.

Ms. Nerfetti Ellis, 17, employed at T&M Grocery, 415 North Caldwell Street, has been a bus rider for three years. She approves of the Charlotte Transit System because, "It's transportation for those who don't have a car or any other means of getting around."

Ellis supports the Tryon Transit Mall Project. "I really think it's going to work out," she said. Although she couldn't think of a disadvantage in having the Mall, she felt that an advantage would be a better looking downtown.

The construction of the Mall has affected her because "I have to make a 10-minute walk from Church Street to College Street to catch the bus." The two- to three-block walk for a transfer has also offered her inconveniences. "I've missed the bus about three or four times already, and I had to wait 20 or 30 minutes for another bus," she explained.

Ellis makes special trips every week on Fridays and Saturdays to shop downtown, so the closing of street level stores has also affected her shopping. "Most people shop downtown, and they don't like walking from Church or College Streets to get downtown. I think this will affect the downtown businesses."

It took her one day to discover the new bus route with the help of her mother who is also a bus rider. It takes her a longer time to reach her destination, in fact, five minutes longer, and she is displeased with



Nerfetti Ellis



Joan Bullock



Tony Wells



Sanford Smith, Jr.

the new bus route. "They (constructors) haven't gotten it together yet. It's messed up."

Through all of the inconveniences, Ellis pointed out, "I think they (City Council) made an improvement for downtown Charlotte by building a Transit Mall. Charlotte will look more like a city now."

Anthony Wells, 22, employed as a cook at Hardees, Kings Drive, has been a bus rider for four or five years. He approves of the Charlotte Transit System, because "It's the cheapest, most economical way to get around. I don't have to worry about parking, especially downtown."

Wells hasn't kept up with the Tryon Transit Mall Project but is sure that "it will be a faster way to get to your destination." He couldn't think of a disadvantage in having the Mall, but he says that its advantage would be advancement in the city.

The construction of the Mall hasn't affected him, because "Now that I know where the new bus location is, I'm able to get to work on time." The two- to three-block walk for a transfer hasn't offered him any inconveniences either. "I usually get off work at 3 p.m.," he mentioned.

Wells makes special trips every other week on his payday, Wednesday, to shop downtown, so the closing of street level stores hasn't affected his shopping. "I also shop at the Outlet Square Mall."

It took him one day to discover the new bus route with the help of a bus driver. He knows that the two- to three-minute inconveniences he now has to reach his destination is nothing to get upset about, and he is pleased with the new bus route. "I know it will advance into something better, so I'll take the inconveniences for a while," said Wells.

Mrs. Alice Reed, 37, employed at Park View

Restaurant, has been a bus rider for approximately 18 years. She admits that she has to approve of the Charlotte Transit System, because "It's my only means of transportation."

Reed calls the Transit Mall Project "technology, and people can't stand in its way." She is another who couldn't think of any disadvantages in having the Mall and adds that its advantage will hopefully be quicker transportation for bus riders.

The construction of the Mall hasn't affected her, and she doesn't mind the two- to three-block walk for a transfer "as long as the buses continue to run and help me get to my job so that I can make money," were her reasons.

Reed shops downtown every week between her transfer period, so the closing of the street level stores hasn't affected her shopping. "I have to walk anyway to get to the stores," she responded.

It took her three days to discover the new bus route with the help of another bus rider, and it doesn't take her any longer to reach her destination. "The thing is knowing the bus schedule. Some don't know the sched-

ule, because they can't read." Reed is neither pleased nor displeased with the new bus route," she declared.

Sanford Smith, Jr., 20, employed as a loader at United Parcel Service, has been a bus rider for two months. He approves of the Charlotte Transit System, because "It saves you money in the long run."

Smith is confident that the Tryon Transit Mall Project is a good idea. "A lot of people complain about what they don't know about the system, but this project will help them learn what they need to know," he confirmed. He couldn't think of one disadvantage in having the Mall and counts on its expansion and more money being spent as its advantages.

The construction of the Mall and the two- to three-block walk for a transfer hasn't affected him. "Smith doesn't shop downtown until the Christmas holidays, so the closing of street level stores doesn't bother him. When he shops, it's between his transfer period.

He knew about the new bus route when it first came about with the help of

Mall hasn't affected her, because "I've always had to walk two or three blocks to catch the bus for the No. 3 Selwyn Avenue," she revealed. She doesn't mind the two- to three-block walk for a transfer.

Bullock makes special trips on the weekends to shop downtown, so the closing of street level stores hasn't affected her shopping. "I've always shopped downtown, and I still do."

It took her one day to discover the new bus route with the help of her bus riders, and it doesn't take her long to reach her destination. Bullock is pleased with the new bus route and voiced, "I think more people should try riding the buses, and I think they will after the

completion of the Tryon Transit Mall."

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