



Regional Transit Authority
2817 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119-6301

504.827.8300

www.norta.com

RESOLUTION NO. 21-012

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF ORLEANS

**AUTHORIZATION TO SELECT BASIN STREET AT CANAL STREET AS THE FUTURE
SITE OF THE DOWNTOWN REGIONAL TRANSIT CENTER
AND ALLOW STAFF TO BEGIN LAND ACQUISITION, PURSUE PROJECT FUNDING,
AND PREPARE FOR THE PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT PHASE**

Introduced by Commissioner Neal,
seconded by Commissioner Tillery.

WHEREAS, the New Orleans Central Business District (CBD) serves as the focal point for transit services in the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (RTA) bus routes, RTA's streetcar network, and various routes operated by Jefferson Parish Transit (JeT) converge on the CBD.

WHEREAS, the CBD is the region's largest employment and activity center; correspondingly, it is the largest destination for transit riders. Because so many routes and lines converge there, the CBD also functions as the system's primary transfer location; and

WHEREAS, nearly routes in the regional system end in the CBD which then turn around to serve the outbound portion of the trip. There are few instances of interlined routes; that is, two segments that are linked in the CBD allowing buses to travel from one end of town to another without requiring a transfer; and



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WHEREAS, there is no consolidated transfer location or facility in the CBD. Various routes and lines converge at different locations, mostly focused on or near Canal Street, to facilitate transfers to and from the Canal and Rampart streetcar lines, which are among the most heavily used transit lines in the region; and

WHEREAS, the most significant area of concentration is at Elk Place and Canal Street. Passenger amenities at Elk Place and other prominent transfer points are minimal. Seating and protection from the elements are in short supply; and

WHEREAS, many passengers walk several blocks to transfer from one route or line to another. These conditions have been recognized by RTA and stakeholders as a significant deficiency and prompted the initiation of the Downtown Regional Transit Center Alternatives Analysis (AA) in 2015; and

WHEREAS, an in-depth Existing Conditions assessment was conducted at the outset of the project to identify in detail; and

1. Demographic and socio-economic conditions of the study area
2. RTA bus routes and streetcar lines, including alignments and stops
3. RTA rider travel patterns, including bus stop and transfer activity
4. Passenger facilities

WHEREAS, a two-step identification and evaluation of transit center sites was conducted; and

1. Twelve sites, a “universe of alternatives”, were identified by consultant and RTA staff. The alternatives, included major current bus stops and transfer locations, sites previously identified in earlier and related planning initiatives, and additional locations that exhibited potential. The locations were screened by RTA staff and the consultant team using a scoring process based on a set of evaluation criteria. This step resulted in the identification of four primary alternative sites and several potential satellite locations.



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- a. Basin Street
 - b. Rampart Street
 - c. Canal Street Neutral Ground
 - d. Duncan Plaza
 - e. Union passenger Terminal (UPT)
 - f. Canal Ferry Terminal
 - g. Galvez at Medical
 - h. Broad at Washington
2. A more in-depth evaluation of the four primary alternative sites was conducted, including the development and refinement of potential layouts and bus system operational plans. A detailed set of evaluation criteria was designed to lead to the identification of a locally Preferred alternative (LPA).
- a. Basin Street
 - b. Rampart Street
 - c. Rampart-Basin Hybrid (replaced the Canal Street Neutral Ground)
 - d. Duncan Plaza

WHEREAS, the AA was paused in 2016 because the RTA launched a planning process that led to the development of the Strategic Mobility Plan (SMP). The SMP, adopted in 2018, provides an in-depth analysis of existing conditions, current service, and community goals and vision for the regional transit system; and

WHEREAS, with the completion of the SMP and comprehensive operational analysis (COA) New Links, the AA was able to resume with reliable data and information from a diverse set of community stakeholders to establish a screening evaluation criteria for Tier 2 that is the basis on which to complete the selection process and identify the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).



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WHEREAS, prior to committing the agency to any financial obligations the staff will notify the Board, and request approval where required; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) that the Chairman of the Board, or his designee, authorize Basin Street at Canal Street be selected as the new Downtown Transit Center and allow RTA staff to begin land acquisition, pursue project funding, and prepare for the preliminary engineering and assessment phase.

THE FOREGOING WAS READ IN FULL, THE ROLL WAS CALLED ON THE ADOPTION THEREOF AND RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS:	<u>8</u>
NAYS:	<u>0</u>
ABSTAIN:	<u>0</u>
ABSENT:	<u>0</u>

AND THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED ON THE 23rd DAY OF MARCH, 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Flozell Daniels Jr." in a cursive script.

**FLOZELL DANIELS
CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**