



Public Comment on Proposed Temporary Service Suspensions

January 11, 2022

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Notice & Method

A virtual public hearing was held on January 11, 2022 at 6:00 PM consistent with BCRTA policy and FTA regulation. The hearing was publicized on the BCRTA website, social media, and onboard BCRTA buses beginning December 31, 2021. Public comment was also received via telephone and webform.

The hearing began at 6:03 PM and concluded at 7:00 PM. All in attendance spoke or were provided the opportunity to speak.

Subject

This hearing was conducted to receive public comment regarding proposed temporary service suspensions to the R2 – Oxford and Middletown, R4 – Hamilton & Tri-County, and amendments to the R6 – Job Connector.

Summary of Public Comments

Public comment was received via webform and telephone in advance of the hearing, and orally during the public hearing. Individual comments can be found in Appendix A. Slides from the hearing can be found in Appendix B. A record of the hearing is available upon request.

No comments were received in support of the proposal. In general, comments addressed the need for these services and riders' independence. Many commenters noted these services as their only means of transportation.

The reduction of corresponding ADA service was also noted as an effect of the proposed suspension that would negatively impact riders.

No comments identified as pertaining to R6 addressed the actual stop amendments. Although some comment was received about potential areas on OH-4 and connection between Tri-County and Hamilton being eliminated as part of R4 suspension. However, the proposed R6 does retain Hamilton and Tri-county connections with an addition of some segments along OH-4 including Ohio Means Jobs and Kroger @ Grand Ave in the proposed amendment.

Comments by Position	
Supporting Proposal	0
Opposing Proposal	12*

*14 total comments were received, but three were identified as the same respondent.

Comment by Method	
Written	13
Oral	1
Email/Telephone	0

Comments by Service	
R2	8
R4	12
R6	9

APPENDIX A – Individual Comments

Oral Comments Received

Name	Service	Comments
Marcia Andrew	R2	Ms. Andrew stated that her adult child has a disability and relies on the R2 to travel to work between Middletown and

Written Comments Received

Name	Service	Comments
Whitney Harris	R6 Amendment;R4 suspension;	These suspensions would affect me greatly. When I cannot ride BGo, I ride the route buses, both the R4 and the R6. Cutting these routes would make my ADA card invalid. I cannot afford to pay \$5.00 per trip each time I ride BGo. I also take the R4 and the R6 to and front the hub from my place of employment in Hamilton, as I cannot walk that far because of my disability. BCRTA is my only way around. These route suspensions would literally, leave me stranded. I have to save as much money as I can, and while \$5.00 for BGo trips isn't much, it is enough to run out of money on my monthly budget. I suggest that if you have to suspend these route, to come up with a payment plan for those who cannot afford to pay for BGo trips. The nearest stop to my house on the R6 to my work would be Hanover and 14th, which is way too far for me to walk or roll in my wheelchair. These route suspensions would cause me to quit my job, be unemployed, and be even more tight on expenses than I already am. I understand that you are short on drivers, everyone is short on employees right now, but please, for the sake of me and other riders, these routes are vital to is getting around, saving money, and staying employed. I know everyone can find a way to make it work. Maybe only run the routes during peak hours? Please do anything you can to keep these routes running! I'm not trying to be rude, I'm just trying to say how much I depend on these routes along with BGo. Thank you and good luck!
Anonymous	R4 suspension;	The R4 is the ONLY route by my house. I have a contract with the BCDD and with the R4 being suspended that would invalidate my contact with them. BCDD provides me with that contact so I can get to and from work each day. My caregiver can't drive me often at all. This would leave me unemployed without as I cannot afford to pay the \$5.00 each way as we live on extremely fixed income. Please, keep everything the same,

otherwise I will be screwed. UTS majorly failed me before I started riding BCRTA, and with this cut, BCRTA will have failed me also. I cannot afford that.

Regular R4 and R6 Rider	R4 suspension;R6 Amendment;	During my rides on the R4, I've noticed MANY people using it to connect to the Metro buses and vice versa. Without the R4, they would be stranded. With the amended R6 route, it would no longer go past enterprise park, meaning many people would not have access to their appointments their. I would be one of these people. The community needs access to medical care, grocery stores, and employment. The R4 and R6 provides the community with all of these things, and would put thousands of people in a bind if it was taken away, even temporarily. And it may or may not help the BGo situation. As these temporary cuts are considered, the board needs to consider: is this the right thing for the Butler County Community even with the extenuating circumstances? How would it affect daily lives of riders of those routes? How would it affect the community as a whole? How would it affect BCRTA as a whole?
Jack Howarth	R2 suspension;	Holding the hearing on suspension of the R2 route during the Winter Term (Jan 2nd to 22nd) at Miami University is a tad underhanded as most of the classes are held remotely at that time and those employees/students who will need the R2 service for the Spring Semester (starting on Jan 24th) will be blindsided by this change. Also, having spoken with at least one of the R2 drivers, I was surprised to find that they were upset that the route wasn't going to be available to bid on. So there are in fact drivers for this route and the 'lack of drivers' excuse seems more like camouflage for the real reason of just achieving cost reductions.
Melanie Sharp	R2 suspension;R4 suspension;R6 Amendment;	I am not very familiar with the numbers of the routes. My concern is that we have a number of people who report to Probation and Pretrial Services who live in Middletown as well as those who live in Hamilton County. The Hamilton County residents who report takes the transit bus in Cincy to TRI County and the transfers to your bus in order to get to Hamilton to report as ordered by the Courts. Many Middletown residents depends on the bus system in order to report as ordered by the Courts to Probation, Pretrial Services as well as their Court appearances. I understand the difficulty with the pandemic and struggles being short staffed. Hopefully there can be some type of accomodations to help those in need of your services. Thank you for your time.

Student	R4 suspension;R2 suspension;R6 Amendment;	I am a newly admitted student at Miami University and the suspension of these routes, even temporarily, would make getting to my classes between the main campus in Oxford and the two regional ones in Middletown and Hamilton, along with my job in Fairfield, virtually impossible. I know there are staffing shortages, they are everywhere, but please, even though these routes are not highly-traveled, they sometimes are, (there are days recently when I've seen the R6 and the R4 with close to no or NO seats at all left), and people depend on these routes, especially if you are a student who is tight on money. If people are leaving because of pay, consider raising the pay rate, offering more benefits, etc. Suspending or cutting routes is the last thing we need, especially when all of us have been struggling so much these past couple of years- it would just put another blow in our lives that we don't need. Please, do whatever you can to keep these routes up and running! The community depends on them!
Hamilton Resident	R4 suspension;R6 Amendment;	PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE do not cut these routes. These routes are now I get to work, how I feed my family, how I keep the lights on, how I pay the bills. Without these routes, we will be homeless, living on the streets, starving, without healthcare, and I will be out of work. I know you are struggling, but we are too, and without these routes, we will be struggling even more. THESE ROUTES ARE NEEDED!!! CUTTING THESE ROUTES WILL HURT NOT HELP!!! PLEASE KEEP THESE ROUTES THE WAY THEY ARE, RUNNING. WE NEED THEM!!!!

**Whitney
Harris**

R6
Amendment;R4
suspension;R2
suspension;

I understand that you are suffering from a staffing shortage, but that staffing shortage is not out of the norm right now. My work is short handed, my mom's work is short-handed, my aunt's work in another state is short handed, and just about every business/company that comes to mind right now is short handed. All of us in the nation, and possibly around the world, are working harder than we ever have in our lives. It is exhausting, and sometimes, drastic measures do have to be taken, but I believe suspending routes is too drastic. The R6 Job Connector Route was created in 2016 to allow people to get to and from work in many well-know businesses around this area. The amended route that is proposed would no longer make it the job connector. The new route skips over many of the business people work at. Sure, there aren't many people that get picked up or dropped off at those stops these days, but that is because of the pandemic. A lot of people have quit their jobs, for one reason or another, just like what is going on at Butler County RTA. For the ones that still work, like me, however, these routes are absolutely essential for everyday life. Without them, we have no other way to get to work. And those like me with disabilities cannot walk that far to get to and from the stops, and some stops are too dangerous for those who are older, have disabilities and cannot move that fast, or for those who are riding with kids. In my opinion, the R4 is the real job connector route, as that allows those who live in Butler County and work in downtown Cincinnati to connect to the Metro buses at the Forest Park Park and Ride. Without the R4, these people would not be able to get to work. Even if the suspension is only short term, it would be devastating, as the people who depend on the R4 to get to the Metro buses may be terminated from their jobs for not having transportation, making the staffing shortage even worse than it already is. People do not need to get fired because they don't have transportation. The same thing could potentially happen with the amended R6 route. People depend on these routes to get to and from work each day. Most of these people cannot get another ride. More than half of these people do not own a car, are riding the bus because their car broke down and they cannot afford a new one, or don't have a driver's license. It would be devastating for them to lose their bus service at a time when nearly everyone (if not everyone) is already struggling to survive. If you will allow me to, I would like to put myself in the position of a Board Member, analyze and evaluate this situation, and state what I would make as my final decision.

-The R2 has only approximately 1,000 riders per month.

-The R4 has approximately 7,000 riders per month, which is only 2,000 less than what it was before the pandemic, which means it is started to rebound. With this statistic, it is a bad time to consider suspending this route, much less actually suspend it.

-The R6 is needed for those who work at Thyssen Krupp, Koch Foods, Fin-Pin, and other businesses that are along the R6 route. It is also vital for those who need it to get to and from doctor's appointments at Bethesda

Butler Tri Health Hospital on Hamilton Mason Road.
 -if the R6 is amended, it would no longer stop at Thyssen Krupp, Koch, Foods, Fin-Pan, or Hamilton Enterprise Park where Bethesda Butler is. This would cause people not to be able to get to work, and to not be able to get to their doctor’s appointments, which may result in unwanted health issues, and a decline in health, which is the last thing anyone wants or needs during this pandemic (or at any time, for that matter).
 -If the R4 is suspended, and the R6 is amended, neither bus would stop at grocery stores such as Meijer on South Gilmore Road or Kroger on Erie Blvd.

<p>Whitney Harris</p>	<p>R2 suspension;R4 suspension;R6 Amendment;</p>	<p>Sure, people could ride to the hub and transfer to the R1 or the R3, but a majority of people would rather not do that, as they would see it as “too much trouble”. Some people also might not have enough to take two buses each way just to go to the store. This might cause some people to go hungry because they are unable to get to and from the grocery store because the bus route there was cut and the alternative does not work for them.</p> <p>-Suspending the R4 and amending the R6 will not help BGo services in the long run. With the R4 suspended, and the R6 amended, more people would have to utilize BGo, resulting in availability still being very hard to come by. There are a lot of people in the community, including myself, who cannot afford to pay their \$5.00 each way for BGo trips, especially if they take the bus multiple times per day. Those who have an ADA card would not be able to use it, and would have to find a way to pay the \$5.00 fare, resulting in them being left without transportation anyway because they cannot afford to pay it.</p> <p>-What I would do is suspend the R2, and keep the R4 and R6 routes the way they are, as the R2 has the least ridership of all the routes being considered for suspension. That would free up two drivers, and that would</p>
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at least help some. If I were driving the R2, driving that bus around all day, and just driving around in a circle not picking anyone up or dropping anyone off, I would be much more at ease knowing that I would be driving a bus knowing that I would be picking up and dropping off passengers.

- With the R2 suspended, I would have signs notifying passengers of this at each R2 stop, so they aren't waiting for a bus that doesn't come, as not everyone uses social media, follows the internet, or has email.
- Before considering suspending any routes, I would talk to all of the drivers, and get their opinion on how it would affect them, the passengers they drive each and every day, the community, and BCRTA as a whole.
- Bottom line, the R4 and the R6 are essential, and the community cannot afford to lose them. There will be a whole lot of complaints coming in if these routes are suspended or amended, because people depend on them. I would most likely be forced to quit my job, because the closet bus stop to my work off of Central Avenue in Hamilton would be nearly a mile away, and with my disability, I cannot go that far, and that is not the safest community to be out in, especially at night. I have been a BGo rider for 4 years now, and I have not had any issues with availability. I schedule two weeks ahead of time, I call the day before, or sooner for ADA trips. I always get spots. I have never experienced a missed trip. 99.9% of the time, they arrive on time, or even early. (The other day leaving for work the bus arrived 30 minutes BEFORE my pickup window even started, and it caught me totally off guard.) The only reason I have experience a missed trip is because the bus broke down. That day, I just took the fixed route bus instead. The only reason I wasn't able to get spots is because my account was messed up for a time, but that has all been resolved. I don't mind being on the bus for an hour and half, it's been like that from the first day I started riding, I go with the flow, I can't drive. I just read a book, do homework, listen to music, watch a movie on my phone, or all of the above. I would like to let everyone know that get trips guaranteed, book them two weeks, or the day before if you have an ADA card. Do not try to pull same day trips, because there is a very low chance that you will get them, and if you do, it puts all the drivers behind because they have to move everyone around. Cancel at least an hour before your windows starts. Not at the door when the bus comes. Don't be marked a no show. This is what makes the buses late, and dispatch having to call people and cancel rides. This irritates the drivers, as well as the passengers. BGo is a wonderful service, and I

<p>Whitney Harris</p>	<p>R2 suspension;R6 Amendment;R4 suspension;</p>	<p>Along with several others I know who ride BGo, are extremely worried that if these proposed suspensions are approved, that it will not be the wonderful service that it is now. I know a lot are also worried about the fact the fixed routes they depend on every day might be going away. The word "might" is enough to make us worry, or even panic. The word "might" is enough to make those of us who ride BGo worry or panic. If I cannot ride the route buses (which I only do sometimes, and the ones I depend on the most are the R4 and the R6), and I cannot ride BGo, I</p>
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cannot work, I cannot go to school, I cannot leave my house because I have no transportation. BCRTA is my ONLY way around. Things are starting to look up everywhere you go, if these routes are suspended, things will no longer be looking up for a lot of people....a lot of people depend on BCRTA. People cannot afford to be stranded. Please, BCRTA, don't leave me, or anyone else, stranded, because while you are struggling, so are we. We have to be able to work, go to the store, go to doctor's appointments....We can't afford not to be able to do any of those things, not to be able to live our lives as normally as possible....

I would like to again put myself in the shoes of a board member, and suggest that when an employee quits, you should do an analysis of why. Is it for better pay? Is it for better benefits? Is it because they don't like the passengers? Is it because they don't like sitting and driving all day? Is it because they are retiring? Is it because they have been injured somehow, and can no longer work? Is it something else? At a recent meeting I attending, I learned about something called an Exit Survey. When someone leaves the company, that person is asked why they are leaving. Their response is then analyzed and put into a percentage chart. The end result is a percentage chart that shows the highest percentage of why people are leaving for another job. If BCRTA isn't doing this survey already, I strongly suggest the company looks into doing it, or one like it, as part of both the short range and long range planning studies.

To close, the way to keep BCRTA the way it is, and to keep passengers, BCRTA employees, and the community happy, is to keep the routes that are the most needed, which are the R4 and the R6, and eliminate or suspend the ones that hardly have any ridership at all, which would be the R2. Stops could be added to the R3, or the R1 to compensate for the R2 not being there. It might not be know just how essential the R4 and the R6 are, and how devastating suspending the R4, and amending the R6 would be to not only the community, but to drivers. It might even cause more drivers to leave. It might cause the BGo drivers to work harder. This is a time where we need to pull together, and team up, to make things work, and keep these essential routes on the road. I would hate to see BCRTA undergo such a drastic change, even temporarily, and I know I'm not the only one who feels this way.

Thank you for taking time to read this very long comment, I thought it was necessary on behalf of myself, BCRTA, those whom I'm friends with, and the rest of the community.

Remember, "We're all in this, together", and always will be.

#savetheR4 #savetheR6 #nopassengerleftstranded #wereallinthistogether #ohioneedstransit

V	R2 suspension;R4 suspension;R6 Amendment;	So say you suspend these routes and drivers still leave....that still doesn't help things....
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Stephen	R4 suspension;	I hope you can figure out a way not to suspend the R4 route. I know a lot of people who depend on the R4 as it connects busy areas between Hamilton and Tri-County. Jodie and Sandra have been great and always very helpful. Thanks for the BCRTA.
Parent of disabled adult	R4 suspension;R6 Amendment;R2 suspension;	If this happens, my kid would not be able to use their ADA card. We cannot just “pick up and move” to another ADA area. I would have to quit my job just to get them where they need to go, which will quickly get costly. The other option is my child would have to quit their job and I would have to find someone to watch them during the day while I am at work. We will run the risk of running out of money. We cannot afford to pay \$5.00 each way for BGo trips. In our area, it is not safe for someone who is disabled and of color to ride the route buses. My kid cannot work even close to full time; they only work two hours per day, three days a week at the most, at minimum wage. That is not nearly enough for all of us in the household to live on, it is not nearly enough to for even one person to live off of. There has to be another solution. I cannot afford to quit my job. My kid cannot afford to lose their transportation. I cannot afford to lose my job. We CANNOT AFFORD to lose these routes. I ride these routes to get to and from work myself, and to run errands, when when it is too expensive to drive. There has to be another way, there has to be. This isn't fare to me, isn't fair to my child, and is not fair to anyone else either. How would you feel if you had your only lifeline swept away from under your feet. I'm asking you, please, keep these routes running!!!

APPENDIX B – Slides from Public Hearing



Butler County Regional Transit Authority BCRTA



PLEASE NOTE:
Today's hearing will be recorded.

Agenda

1. Rules & Procedures for this Public Hearing
2. Outcomes of this Public Hearing
3. Subject of this Public Hearing
4. Overview of Proposed Temporary Service Suspensions
5. Opportunity for Comment
6. Adjourn

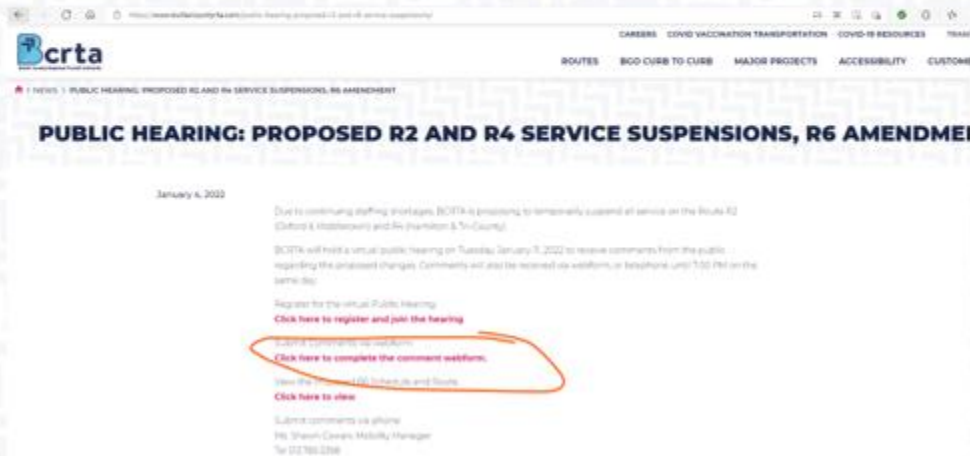


Rules & Procedures

1. Speakers must identify themselves and clearly state the hearing subject item(s) they wish to address.
2. Speakers will be given three (3) minutes to speak and the BCRTA will make no response or reply to the speaker. Speakers are encouraged to put their thoughts in writing and submit a copy to the BCRTA for inclusion in the minutes (cowans@butlercountyrta.com).
3. Any individual or group may be heard concerning the subject of this hearing. Questions are to be directed to the BCRTA as a whole and may not be put to any individual member of the Board or the administrative staff.
4. Speakers will be directed to speak during their turn. Anyone speaking out of turn may be ejected from the hearing without notice.
5. No person shall present orally a complaint against an individual employee of the BCRTA. Such charge or complaint shall be presented to the Board in writing and shall be signed by the person(s) making the charge or complaint.

Submit Your Comments in Writing

<https://www.butlercountyrta.com/public-hearing-proposed-r2-and-r4-service-suspensions/>



Outcomes of this Hearing

No decision will be made during this hearing. This hearing will be summarized, and comments made available to the BCRTA Board of Trustees and the public.

The BCRTA Board of Trustees may elect to act on the subject proposal at any future public meeting of the Board. The Board may also elect to take no action, take partial action, or delegate action to the staff and management of the BCRTA.

Subject of this Public Hearing

BCRTA proposes to temporarily suspend all service on the *R2 – Middletown & Oxford Route* and the *R4 – Hamilton & Tri-County Route*. Amendments to the *R6* are also being proposed to mitigate the loss of *R4*.

This change is being proposed to address a staffing shortage by reducing staffing needs and reallocating resources to higher productivity services operated by BCRTA.

Data

Route/Service	Jan – Nov 2019 Total Trips	Jan – Nov 2021 Total Trips	Change
R2	9,663	1,504	-84%
R4	9,005	7,650	-15%
BGo	17,732	34,155	+93%



R4 Stop Analysis

Top Ten R4 Stops by Ridership	Boardings % of Total	Alightings % of Total	Status
Market Street Station - Area B	15.2%	12.8%	Retained on R6
Fairfield Crossing Park & Ride EB	14.4%	13.4%	Proposed to add to R6
Tri-County Mall	9.2%	8.1%	Retained on R6
Dixie Hwy. & Jungle Jim NB	4.4%	2.9%	Suspended
Fairfield Crossing Park & Ride WB	3.1%	2.5%	Proposed to add to R6
Dixie Hwy. & Bobmeyer SB	3.0%	0.3%	Suspended
Dixie Hwy. & Boehm SB	2.8%	3.0%	Suspended
Forest Park Park & Ride Westbound	2.8%	0.8%	Suspended
Hanover & East EB	2.6%	0.5%	Suspended
Kemper & Hanover WB	2.5%	0.0%	Suspended

R6 Stop Analysis

Top Ten R6 Stops by Ridership	Boardings % of Total	Alightings % of Total	Status
Market Street Station - Area B	22.9%	17.1%	Retained
Tri-County Mall	18.2%	16.1%	Retained
Hanover & East EB	7.7%	1.0%	Retained
Fin-Pan	4.8%	1.2%	Retained
Washington & 2nd WB	4.2%	2.6%	Retained
Port Union & Seward WB	3.1%	0.4%	Retained
Kroger Hamilton/Grand WB	2.5%	1.5%	Retained
Front & Chestnut NB	2.0%	0.8%	Retained
Chesterdale and Valdosa	1.8%	0.1%	Retained
Vora Technology Park Northbound	1.8%	1.0%	Retained

R6 Stops Eliminated

Eliminated R6 Stops	% of Total	% of Total	Status
Hamilton Enterprise Park/Bethesda WB	1.1%	0.2%	Eliminated
Gateway and Pleasant View	0.6%	0.1%	Eliminated
Gateway and Stillwater	0.2%	0.2%	Eliminated
Gateway and Shadow Creek	0.2%	0.2%	Eliminated
Gateway and Wildbranch N	0.2%	0.0%	Eliminated

Public Comments

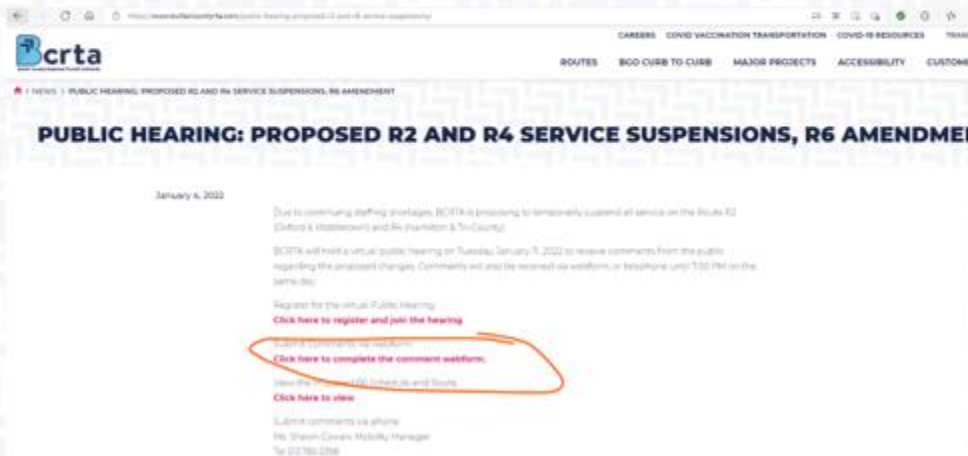
Please clearly state:

1. Your name
2. Subject of your comments:
 1. R2
 2. R4
 3. R6 Amendments
3. Your Comments (3 minutes)



Submit Your Comments in Writing

<https://www.butlercountyrta.com/public-hearing-proposed-r2-and-r4-service-suspensions/>



**Thank you for your
comments. We value your
input and look forward to
serving you better!**



need resources?

- butlercountyrta.com
- buztrkr.com
- Transitapp.com
- [download BGO for iOS or Android](#)
- call 513.785.5237 or 1.855.44.bcrta
- request@butlercountyrta.com



APPENDIX C – Public Hearing Information

Attendance Record

Total Number of Participants	5
Meeting Title	Public Hearing: R2 and R4 Suspensions, R6 Amendments
Meeting Start Time	1/11/2022, 5:49:25 PM
Meeting End Time	1/11/2022, 7:00:38 PM
Meeting Id	8f68731e-0c98-42ab-af54-5b67bac3743e

Full Name	Join Time	Leave Time	Duration	Role
Matthew Dutkevicz	1/11/2022, 5:49:25 PM	1/11/2022, 7:00:32 PM	1h 11m	Organizer
Luke Morgan	1/11/2022, 5:50:51 PM	1/11/2022, 7:00:34 PM	1h 9m	Presenter
Dee Weidner	1/11/2022, 5:57:51 PM	1/11/2022, 7:00:38 PM	1h 2m	Attendee
Marcia Andrew	1/11/2022, 6:01:42 PM	1/11/2022, 6:22:05 PM	20m 22s	Attendee
513-879-7384	1/11/2022, 6:14:05 PM	1/11/2022, 6:25:54 PM	11m 48s	Attendee