

CATS statement
09/29/16

"We certainly are watching the level of canceled trips in recent weeks as we cope with the affects of the flood on our service. This is why we opted to cancel our LSU football Touchdown Express service — so we could devote the time and resources to our fixed route service. Our daily riders are our top concern.

While CATS played a critical role in flood response, evacuating around 7,000 residents, our team saw losses as well. Roughly 30 percent of our bus operators and nearly a dozen of our administrative staff members suffered major loss in the flood. We are allowing time in their work schedules to deal with the important, and time consuming, tasks of rebuilding, including meeting with contractors and inspectors, locating and moving to new housing and transitioning their children to new schools or day cares.

On a weekday, CATS makes 1,226 trips. While we are concerned about the number of reported cancelations, these are only a small percent of our overall trip schedule for the day. Yesterday, for example, cancellations totalled around 4 percent. Our solution for this problem is twofold — increasing the number of operators available to drive and improving our fleet.

Right now, we are improving the quality of our fleet while also training new drivers. This month we took possession of four new buses and have another eight on the way. We recently won funding for three new electric buses as well. Additionally, we have asked the Metro Council to approve our plans to cancel the Red Stick Trolley, which will free up not only operators, but also vehicles, as Trolleys can be used as backup when a bus is broken down."