

Laker Line BRT
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Small Starts Project Development
Information Prepared May 2015

The Interurban Transit Partnership (The Rapid) proposes to construct a 13.3-mile bus rapid transit (BRT) line between downtown Grand Rapids and the Grand Valley State University (GVSU) campus in Allendale via Fulton Street and Lake Michigan Drive. The project includes 11 stations, short segments of dedicated lane on the GVSU campus and in downtown Grand Rapids, transit signal priority, the purchase of 13 high-capacity compressed natural gas (CNG) buses, and construction of a new light maintenance facility. Service would operate every six to 15 minutes on weekdays when GVSU is in session, with less frequent service when GVSU is not in session and on weekends. The project's current estimated capital cost is \$73.7 million. The Rapid has not yet identified the amount of Small Starts funding it will seek for the Project.

The project would provide faster, higher-capacity transit service in a corridor that experiences crowding during peak times of day despite headways as short as six minutes. Anticipated population and employment growth in the corridor, as well as GVSU's plans to expand its student base and facilities, contribute to the need for higher-quality and more transit service. Rapid transit in the corridor would support local plans for higher-density, mixed-use and walkable development, including increased student and senior housing, and fit with a growing regional emphasis on multimodal transportation options. Finally, The Rapid anticipates that the frequent service provided by the Project would allow it to restructure its fixed-route service in downtown Grand Rapids for greater efficiency.

The Rapid completed an alternatives analysis for the Laker Line corridor in December 2014 that culminated in the selection of BRT as the locally preferred alternative (LPA). The LPA was adopted into the region's fiscally constrained long range transportation plan in May 2015. The Rapid expects to complete the environmental review process with a documented Categorical Exclusion in late 2015, followed by receipt of a Small Starts Grant Agreement in late 2016 and initiation of revenue operations in 2018.