



Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority
Palmetto Breeze & The Breeze
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bluffton Breeze to Launch New Okatie Transit Route Pilot Route Starts Monday, October 2; All Passengers Ride Free Through March 31

Bluffton, SC – September 25, 2023 – The Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority (LRTA), operators of Palmetto Breeze Transit, the Breeze Trolley, and the Bluffton Breeze, are testing a new Bluffton Breeze route offering a new transportation option for residents and businesses in the Okatie, Sun City, and New River Crossing areas west of Bluffton. With the launch of the new route, which will connect its passengers to the existing Bluffton Breeze route, all rides will be fare-free for six months (through March 31, 2024). The Bluffton Breeze operates hourly service Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., with stops across the Town of Bluffton and the surrounding areas.

“We have received requests for several years to expand our service west of Bluffton to offer new mobility alternatives to residents in the Okatie and Sun City areas,” said Mary Lou Franzoni, Executive Director of the LRTA. “The route we are testing with this pilot project is designed to make it easier and safer for residents and visitors to go shopping, get to medical appointments, visit the weekly farmers markets in Bluffton, and to experience all that the Bluffton area has to offer,” she added.

If the test of the new Okatie route is deemed a success by the passengers it serves, and the LRTA and its Board of Directors, LRTA staff plan to implement it as a permanent route in April 2024.

The Bluffton Breeze features more than 60 published bus stops, including bus stop signage to assist passengers in locating their nearest pick-up locations, as well as wheelchair lift-equipped buses, air-conditioning, comfortable seating, and two mobile apps (“CatchTheBreeze” to track the buses, and “BreezePass” to pre-pay fares when they are re-implemented). The service is complemented by the LRTA’s “Easy Breeze” ADA paratransit services for eligible passengers who travel within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of the published routes and who are not able to ride the fixed-route service.

Key destinations along the new route include: the Okatie Food Lion and Okatie Village, Legacy Medical Center, Publix at New River Crossing, the Walmart Supercenter in Hardeeville, Berkeley



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Place, Lowcountry Fresh Market & Café at Washington Square, Vineyard Assisted Living & Memory Care, Buckwalter Place, and numerous residential neighborhoods.

About the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority

The LRTA provides a wide variety of public transportation services in Beaufort, Jasper, Allendale, Colleton, and Hampton counties, including Palmetto Breeze Transit which transports workers from locations across the Lowcountry to work in the Hilton Head, Bluffton, and Beaufort areas. The LRTA also operates The Breeze seasonal public trolley service on Hilton Head Island, which connects visitors and residents to destinations along the Island's busiest corridors. The LRTA is also the operator of the Walterboro Works circulating transit service in Walterboro, SC and a variety of other shuttle and on-demand services. For more information, visit www.breezebluffton.com and www.palmettbreezetransit.com.

Updated Service Map and Route Times:

OKATIE ROUTE

Buckwalter Place	Legacy Medical Center	Okatie Food Lion*	Public New River	Walmart Supercenter	Okatie Food Lion*	Berkley Place	Koger Marketplace	Buckwalter Place
9:10 AM	9:24 AM	9:27 AM	9:34 AM	9:37 AM	9:44 AM	9:51 AM	9:55 AM	9:57 AM
10:10 AM	10:24 AM	10:27 AM	10:34 AM	10:37 AM	10:44 AM	10:51 AM	10:55 AM	10:57 AM
BUSSES CONTINUE OPERATING ON SAME SCHEDULE ARRIVING AT EACH STOP APPROXIMATELY EVERY 60 MINUTES								
3:10 PM	3:24 PM	3:27 PM	3:34 PM	3:37 PM	3:44 PM	3:51 PM	3:55 PM	3:57 PM
4:10 PM	4:24 PM	4:27 PM	4:34 PM	4:37 PM	4:44 PM	4:51 PM	4:55 PM	4:57 PM
5:10 PM	5:24 PM	5:27 PM	—	—	—	—	—	—

*This route serves the Okatie Food Lion / Okatie Village Commons in both directions.

APPROXIMATE ROUTE TIMES: MONDAY-FRIDAY (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

BLUFFTON BREEZE ROUTE – WESTBOUND (TOWARD BUCKWALTER)

Marshalls	Target 2	Hilton Head by Resort	Target 1	Bluestone Apartments	Walmart / Sam's	Old Town Bluffton	Township Bluffton	Simmons Affordable	Buck Island Public	Edgewater Place
8:00 AM	8:03 AM	8:08 AM	8:10 AM	8:12 AM	8:19 AM	8:29 AM	8:30 AM	8:35 AM	8:41 AM	8:50 AM
9:00 AM	9:03 AM	9:08 AM	9:10 AM	9:12 AM	9:19 AM	9:29 AM	9:30 AM	9:35 AM	9:41 AM	9:50 AM
10:00 AM	10:03 AM	10:08 AM	10:10 AM	10:12 AM	10:19 AM	10:29 AM	10:30 AM	10:35 AM	10:41 AM	10:50 AM
BUSSES CONTINUE OPERATING ON SAME SCHEDULE ARRIVING AT EACH STOP APPROXIMATELY EVERY 60 MINUTES										
4:00 PM	4:03 PM	4:08 PM	4:10 PM	4:12 PM	4:19 PM	4:29 PM	4:30 PM	4:35 PM	4:41 PM	4:50 PM
5:00 PM	5:03 PM	5:08 PM	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

BLUFFTON BREEZE ROUTE – EASTBOUND (TOWARD TANGER)

Buckwalter Place	Buck Island Public	Simmons Affordable	Old Town Bluffton	Bluffton Town Hall	Walmart / Sam's	Bridgepointe Apartments	Target 1	Lowe's at Mulhous	Marshalls & Target 2
8:10 AM	8:19 AM	8:25 AM	8:34 AM	8:35 AM	8:44 AM	8:50 AM	8:53 AM	8:55 AM	9:00 AM
9:10 AM	9:19 AM	9:25 AM	9:34 AM	9:35 AM	9:44 AM	9:50 AM	9:53 AM	9:55 AM	10:00 AM
10:10 AM	10:19 AM	10:25 AM	10:34 AM	10:35 AM	10:44 AM	10:50 AM	10:53 AM	10:55 AM	11:00 AM
BUSSES CONTINUE OPERATING ON SAME SCHEDULE ARRIVING AT EACH STOP APPROXIMATELY EVERY 60 MINUTES									
4:10 PM	4:19 PM	4:25 PM	4:34 PM	4:35 PM	4:44 PM	4:50 PM	4:53 PM	4:55 PM	5:00 PM
5:10 PM	5:19 PM	5:25 PM	5:34 PM	5:35 PM	—	—	—	—	—

NOTE: Times on this schedule are tentative and may vary due to weather conditions, traffic, and variance in passenger loads. Timetables effective October 2, 2023.