



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KATS reducing service due to driver shortage

Beginning December 6, the Kingsport Area Transit Service is reducing its services temporarily due to a shortage in the number of drivers.

Current routes 5 and 6 will be temporarily discontinued beginning Tuesday. A hybrid route of 5 and 6 will be offered in their place to continue serving the most frequented destinations. These modifications will maximize the system's reliability and efficiency while minimizing missed trips.

According to the American Public Transportation Association, 92% of public transit agencies report having difficulty hiring new employees, especially bus operators.

"KATS is dedicated to providing the best and most reliable service possible, regardless of limited personnel," said KATS Manager Chris Campbell. "We apologize for this disruption and are working hard to return the two routes to normal as soon as possible."

For bus route information, passengers need to check the KATS website at www.kingsporttransit.org, the Ride Systems app, or they may call 423-224-2613 for further information.

About Kingsport Area Transit System

The Kingsport Area Transit System (KATS) provides outstanding mobility service to the City of Kingsport community. KATS operates 6 fixed-routes and The Dial A Ride ADA on demand response van service, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM. These services are vital in helping individuals maintain and/or gain self-sufficiency by taking passengers to various places such as grocery stores, doctor's appointments, work, and various other desired locations. The Transit Center is located downtown at 900 East Main St. and functions as the main hub of the system. For more information, please visit <http://www.kingsporttransit.org/>.

About the City of Kingsport

Founded in 1917, the [City of Kingsport](http://www.cityofkingsport.com) (pop. 55,400) is located on the Tennessee-Virginia border at the crossroads of I-81 and I-26 near the geographic center of the eastern U.S. The city is widely known as a planned community, designed by renowned city planner John Nolen and wrapping around the foot of Bays Mountain – a 3,750-acre park, nature preserve, planetarium and observatory. Kingsport is recognized as an International Safe Community by the National Safety Council, a Healthier Tennessee community, and won the 2009 Harvard Innovations in American Government Award for its higher education initiatives. While many city names are duplicated throughout the U.S., there's only one Kingsport – a fact that invokes community pride, known locally as the "Kingsport Spirit."