

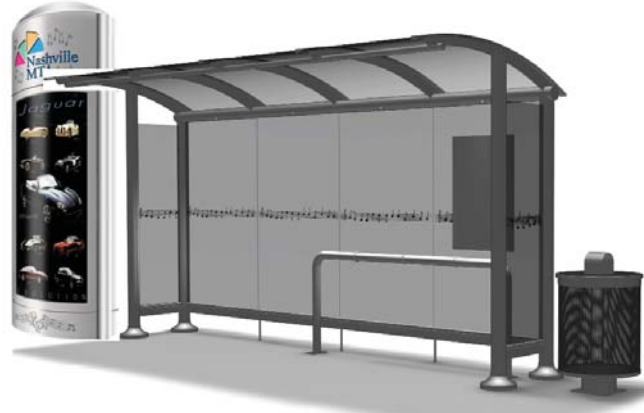
Passengers go more, stop less with new Gallatin Road BRT service Second phase to begin this spring and feature more customer amenities

Traveling down Gallatin Road on a Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) bus recently got faster with fewer stops.

On September 27, 2009, the MTA implemented the first phase of its new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service on the Gallatin Road corridor. Covering 12 miles, this new BRT service operates from Music City Central to the edge of Sumner County just north of RiverGate Mall.

Passengers experience fewer stops, more frequent buses and a greener attitude as they travel along one of Nashville's busiest corridors on all new 60-foot, articulated, fuel-efficient hybrid buses. BRT creates a more convenient commute between downtown and northeast Nashville.

"We are pleased with this first phase of our BRT project," MTA CEO Paul J. Ballard said. "Ridership is going well, and we will continue to monitor it closely. We wanted to begin this service on our busiest corridor and use it as a model before rolling



New bus shelters will be placed at the BRT stops along Gallatin Road. Passenger information displays also will be added this spring.

it out to other major corridors. Once fully implemented, these BRT routes will be the best candidates to convert to light rail in the future if funding is available."

The 14 stops along the route are placed approximately three-quarters of a mile apart. BRT buses stop at these designated stops marked with a green "BRT stop"

sign. On weekdays, buses operate every 15 minutes until 6:15 p.m. and every 30 minutes after 6:15 p.m. Saturday buses run every 30 minutes and Sunday/Holiday buses every 50 minutes.

During the second phase of BRT in spring 2010, more customer amenities will be added. For example, the intersections along Gallatin Road will have Green Light Extenders installed that allow traffic signals to stay green longer as a bus approaches. This will help buses travel even more quickly down Gallatin Road.

All of the BRT operations will be monitored from a central location by a dispatcher using a Global Positioning System (GPS) and adjusting the service schedule as necessary to accommodate any traffic delays or other problems. In addition, each station stop will feature new enhanced passenger shelters and digital displays indicating the arrival time of the next bus.

From the CEO's Desk



Paul J. Ballard

A tremendous amount of work is taking place throughout our organizations and within our community on behalf of public transit. We had one of our busiest and most successful years to date, and each day we continue to see the rewards of our efforts.

As we look back on 2009, we should all be very proud of the great progress we are making. For example, we:

- Assisted the Middle Tennessee legislative delegation and other transportation supporters with passing enabling

continued on page 2

New projects include routes for downtown, Vine Hill area

The Nashville MTA is considering proposed service improvements for two new projects within the Metro area and service improvements to five bus routes.

The new projects include a downtown circulator service, which is designed to help MTA customers, visitors and tourists in downtown Nashville reach their destinations more quickly, and a new route to 100 Oaks via the Vine Hill community.

Service improvements also are being



Above is artwork for the downtown circulator wrap for new hybrid vans. These vans, along with new hybrid buses (see photo on page 6), will be used for the new downtown service.

continued on page 6

MTA bus and advertisement play part in local couple's marriage proposal

Attorney Rachel Bell began advertising her business on MTA buses last February.

A supporter and rider of public transportation, her ads can be seen on 10 different city buses as they travel throughout Metro Nashville and Davidson County.

"A few of my friends who are lawyers ride the bus to work; it saves them money on gas and parking downtown," explained Bell, who has a law practice in Nashville. "And, a few of my clients have ridden the bus for meetings with me, as well as one of my paralegals and interns."

But these days, she has become an even a bigger fan. On a recent Sunday afternoon in mid-November, an MTA bus played a special role in her life as part of her engagement to fiancée Rubin Cockrell.

"The bus playing a part in my engagement does top the scale," Bell said.

Cockrell, who admits liking to take "a without the box type of approach,"



Rachel Bell (left) and fiancée Rubin Cockrell pose by an MTA bus featuring Bell's advertisement.

planned an eight-hour day to celebrate their relationship.

The day began with a visit to the botanical gardens, lunch in the pineapple room and an exhibit. Cockrell then had a driver take them to Music City Central (MCC) where a bus with Bell's ad was

scheduled to arrive and a professional photographer was hired to capture the moment.

"She had no clue," Cockrell said. "When the bus pulled up, she had this big smile on her face."

Bell admitted that she was wondering why they were there and a guy was there taking pictures of them.

"I was surprised and wondered why it was so clean and no one was inside of it," Bell said. "Then, I figured it out that Rubin had made some kind of arrangement for a bus to be designated for us to take pictures by. ... It was very thoughtful."

Following the MCC visit, the couple went to Morton's for dinner. When the waitress appeared with the dessert tray, he proposed.

"Everything he does is over the top and exciting," Bell said of her fiancée and engagement day.

From the CEO

continued from page 1

- legislation to establish dedicated regional funding for public transit;
- Added six new 60-foot hybrid buses to the fleet;
- Began the initial phase of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Gallatin Road;
- Successfully hosted the Tennessee Public Transportation Association (TPTA) annual conference;
- Launched and expanded a new highly successful BusLink on-demand service in the Madison area;
- Started the first phase of our Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) project, which uses Global Positioning Systems (GPS) to help track vehicles in real time;
- Launched Google Transit on our Web site;
- Finished our Strategic Transit Master Plan, which sets guiding principles and policies for improving public transportation in Nashville-Davidson

County as well as identify actions and projects for the short, medium and long term;

- Completed our first year of successfully managing the Music City Star and other Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) services. Train ridership increased nearly 30 percent from December 2008 through October 2009;
- Implemented three new regional bus routes: 91X Franklin/Brentwood Express, 92X Gallatin/Hendersonville Express and 95X Spring Hill Express;
- Successfully completed three rounds of system changes that included a move of the student transfers from Nance Arena Landport to Music City Central;
- Raised a record \$18,000 for the Metro Employee Consolidated Charities Campaign;
- Took home a "Big Wheel Award" in the paratransit van division at the annual TPTA roadeo; and
- Won an American Public Transportation Association Certificate of Special

Achievement in bus safety.

Several new projects are in the works for 2010, which are part of our Strategic Transit Master Plan. These include:

- Beginning a downtown circulator, which is designed to serve downtown residents and workers as well as tourists and other downtown visitors needing to travel between sports venues, the convention center, downtown hotels and other attractions;
- Completing the second phase of the Gallatin Road BRT in spring 2010 by installing new enhanced passenger shelters and digital displays indicating the arrival time of the next bus; and
- Adding a second high-use corridor for BRT implementation and funding.

We have concluded another great year, and I want to thank each of you for your commitment to our customers and our company. I look forward to an even better 2010.

BusLink ridership averaging 103 passenger trips daily

Since debuting on March 30, 2009, the Nashville MTA's on-demand shuttle BusLink has been well received. Ridership continues to increase with approximately 103 passenger trips being recorded on a daily basis on the 14-seat BusLink van.

During the month of November, nearly 2,500 passenger trips were recorded with an average of 7.5 passengers per hour, the highest in the history of BusLink to date.

MTA expanded the BusLink demand zone last August in response to this growing demand. BusLink service in Madison now includes the area north of Old Hickory Boulevard to include Madison Towers and Riverwood Towers.



Passengers needing a ride in the Madison area simply call 862-LINK (5465) and give the scheduler their pick-up and drop-off

locations. The scheduler provides a pick-up window. Passengers then walk to their stop and wait for the BusLink van. For the return trip, passengers repeat the previous three steps.

For those needing to travel outside of the zone, they can transfer to Route 26 Gallatin Road or Route 56 Gallatin Road Bus Rapid Transit. BusLink has a scheduled connection in front of the Kroger at Gallatin Road and Old Hickory Boulevard.

The service is available from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and costs the same as regular bus fare. All MTA ticket media are honored on BusLink, including multi-ride tickets and passes.

MTA partners with Google Transit

The Nashville MTA has formed a partnership with Google Transit, a public transit trip planning feature of Google Maps, which makes planning a trip on the city's bus system even easier.

Customers are now able to quickly and simply:

- Customize their route;
- Get walking directions to the nearest transit stop;
- Access information on mobile phones;
- Use a business name instead of having to know a specific address;
- Get street views of locations; and
- Calculate the fare for their trip.

In addition, Google Maps supports 12 foreign languages so it is easy to find directions and information in many languages and also is compatible with screen readers for the visually-impaired.

"This partnership helps our customers plan their trips with ease, and it is a great tool to build more awareness of public transit in our city and across the nation," MTA CEO Paul J. Ballard said.

Riders can plan their route by entering the date and time that they would like to arrive at their destination or begin their trip. The trip planner will provide three options with the travel time and number of transfers. Google Maps provides walking directions to assist users in reaching their destination once they get off of the bus and has street views to help passengers find the closest transit stop and become familiar with their destination before they get there.

"As part of Google's commitment to develop useful public-private partnerships, we are pleased to welcome the Nashville MTA to Google Transit," said Jessica Wei, Strategic Partner Development Manager at Google. "This partnership shows the Nashville MTA's commitment to innovating, serving their riders and attracting new riders."

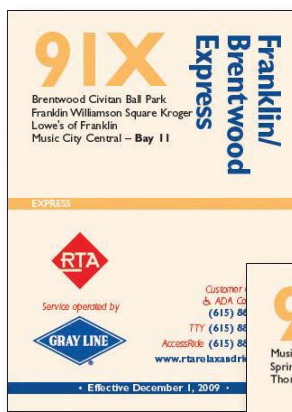
RTA adds bus routes to Williamson, other nearby counties

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has expanded its regional bus service with the addition of new bus routes that operate into Williamson and other nearby counties.

Both routes went into effect on December 1, 2009, and are part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding RTA received for new regional bus service to Franklin and Spring Hill. The routes operate during peak times and are similar to existing service to Gallatin and Murfreesboro.

Operated by Gray Line, buses for these routes can hold up to 56 passengers. Customers experience a more productive, less stressful commute while saving money on gas and helping the environment. Cost is \$3.50 per ride or \$60 for a 20-Ride pass.

Route 91X Franklin/Brentwood Express runs from Franklin to downtown Nashville with two trips to downtown in the morning and two trips in the afternoon.



The first trip departs from the Williamson Square Kroger at 6:30 a.m., with the second bus leaving at 7:00 a.m. Buses stop at the Cool Springs Lowe's and Brentwood Civitan Ball Park before arriving downtown. Afternoon trips depart from Music City Central (MCC) at 4:20 p.m. and 4:45 p.m.

Route 95X Spring Hill runs from Spring Hill to downtown Nashville. It departs from the Kroger on Port Royal at 6:25 a.m., stops at Thompson's Station Baptist Church at 6:36 a.m. and arrives at MCC at 7:20 a.m. The return trip in the afternoon departs MCC at 4:10 p.m., stops at Thompson's Station Baptist Church at 4:57 p.m. and arrives at the Kroger on Port Royal at 5:13 p.m.



Public hearings were held on the proposed routes prior to implementation.

MTA, RTA successfully host annual TPTA Conference, Rodeo Five DTO employees receive awards during banquet

The Nashville MTA and Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) hosted the Tennessee Public Transportation Association (TPTA) Annual Conference and Rodeo Oct. 27-30, 2009, at the Loews Vanderbilt Hotel.

The TPTA conference featured the theme – Go Green, Go Transit – and brought together more than 200 transportation officials, state transportation and environmental officials, legislators, city and county government leaders, transit board members and a number of other transit-related businesses. American Public Transportation Association President William Millar served as the keynote speaker.

Three MTA bus operators received honors for their performance in the state championship “rodeo” competition held during the TPTA Conference.

Chris Ward brought home the “Big Wheel Award” for his victory in the paratransit van division. Adrell Stringer finished second in the 35-foot bus division. Mark Johnson took third place in the 40-foot bus division.

In addition, two others were recognized for their achievements and presented with awards by their peers at the annual TPTA Honors Banquet held Oct. 29.

Lora Baulsir, MTA Director of Customer Care and RTA Chief Administrative Officer, was named Urban Executive of the Year and



Lora Baulsir, Charles Mitchell, Mark Johnson, Adrell Stringer and Chris Ward received awards at the annual TPTA Honors Banquet.

Charles Mitchell, operations supervisor, was named Urban Employee of the Year.

Kudos...

I would like to thank the City of Nashville and the MTA. ... An MTA driver aided us in getting to Opry Mills mall and the Opryland Hotel. Your service was very friendly and helpful...He explained how the system worked and made sure we did get to stop 10 (he must of gotten off work for he walked up to us and made sure we were in the correct seats waiting). THANK you for making our trip wonderful.

*Debra & Tana Polovich
Avon, Ohio*

I rode the new route 56 BRT bus today. I loved how the route works, and it will be even better once the spring 2010 upgrades go into place. It looked like it confused a few of the other riders, but I think it will be a big success once everyone is used to the change. I am looking forward to seeing more BRT routes. Thanks, as this is a big step in the right direction for mass transit.

Jeffrey Moritz Jr.

From an email to Director of Planning Jim McAteer

I'm writing to let you know how fantastic MTA's partnership with Google Transit is. It helps that I have a phone with

Google's operating system, but any phone that can access Google Maps can access the data. And then the other day I noticed all MTA stops laid out within Google Maps, now. I just wanted to say good job! I try and ride the bus as often as I can – usually two or more trips a week – and I try to encourage my friends to do the same. And now that they can look up bus routes and times on the fly, I think it's a lot less intimidating for them!

*Thanks again,
Heydn Ericson*

From an email to Mayor Karl Dean:

We'd like to thank you for adding hybrid buses to the MTA fleet. They produce noticeably cleaner exhaust than do conventional buses; since we live along the Gallatin Pike corridor and have two asthma sufferers in our family, we really appreciate that improvement in air quality. As taxpayers, we also appreciate that the buses reduce Metro's fuel costs. Thanks again for taking a meaningful step toward making Nashville a “green” city. We hope you'll continue to improve our public transit system so that it will become a feasible alternative to cars.

*Antony Boshier and Kathryn Royster
Nashville*

Staff Promotions

| | | |
|---------------------|--|----------|
| Mark Kupetz | Apprentice Mechanic to "A" Mechanic | 6/7/09 |
| Pat Hall-Easley | Vehicle Operator to Operations Supervisor/Dispatcher | 6/21/09 |
| Jerome Bryant | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 6/28/09 |
| Joseph Weekes | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 6/28/09 |
| Michael Bastin | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 6/28/09 |
| Christina Hull | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 6/28/09 |
| Joseph Hofman | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 6/28/09 |
| Marshon Lyons | "B" Mechanic to "A" Mechanic | 7/6/09 |
| D'Nese Nicolosi | Vehicle Operator to Operations Supervisor/Dispatcher | 8/9/09 |
| Sam Stewart | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 8/23/09 |
| Julius Harrison | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 8/23/09 |
| Carl Kerr | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 8/23/09 |
| Robert Butler | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 8/23/09 |
| Michael Featherston | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 8/23/09 |
| Donald Belcher | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 8/30/09 |
| Jemond Smith | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/1/09 |
| Wayne Peach | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/1/09 |
| Nelson Mendez | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/1/09 |
| James Coggin | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/1/09 |
| Robert Watson | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/1/09 |
| Rachael McBride | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/15/09 |
| Troy Beddingfield | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/15/09 |
| David Wilson | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/15/09 |
| Prentice Creasy III | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/15/09 |
| Jeffrey Strader | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/15/09 |
| Shelly Knight | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 11/22/09 |
| Greg Beckham | Vehicle Operator to Operations Supervisor/Dispatcher | 11/29/09 |
| Demetrious Woods | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 12/6/09 |
| Gregory Martin | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 12/6/09 |
| Abdelouahad Guiaa | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 12/6/09 |
| Joseph Gregal | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 12/6/09 |
| Timothy Cable | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 12/6/09 |
| Pamela Young | Operator Trainee to Vehicle Operator | 12/6/09 |
| Angelo Carruthers | Vehicle Operator to Operations Supervisor/Dispatcher | 12/6/09 |

New Employees

As the MTA continues to grow, we would like to welcome our new employees.

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| James Kerce | Apprentice Mechanic | 6/17/09 |
| Kymethia Shelton | MCC Custodian | 7/13/09 |
| Andrew Harvey | Apprentice Mechanic | 8/16/09 |
| Robert Ladd | Human Resources Manager | 8/17/09 |
| Steven Schulthers | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 10/21/09 |
| Bryce Leonard | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 10/21/09 |
| Rapheal Chandler | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 10/21/09 |
| Eric Rager | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 10/21/09 |
| Lauriena Rager | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 10/21/09 |
| Levoy Green | MCC Custodian | 10/21/09 |
| Bobby Booker | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 11/11/09 |
| Calvin Moss | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 11/11/09 |
| Valerie Baily | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 11/11/09 |
| Chad Martin | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 11/11/09 |
| Richard McDonnell | Checker | 11/30/09 |
| Kristy Llamas | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 12/3/09 |
| David Martinez | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 12/3/09 |
| Terri Malloy | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 12/3/09 |
| Bill Cox | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 12/3/09 |
| Fred Echols | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 12/3/09 |
| Jesse Baker III | Vehicle Operator Trainee | 12/3/09 |

Gone Fishing: MTA Retirees

The following employees have recently retired from the MTA. They are going to be missed, and we would like to extend them our best wishes.

| | | |
|---------------|--|---------|
| Joe Bilbrey | Mechanic (30 years of service) | 5/1/09 |
| Wayne Bruce | Vehicle Operator (33 years of service) | 8/1/09 |
| Woodrow Sales | Transit Stop Repairman (17 years of service) | 8/1/09 |
| Charles Goad | Vehicle Operator (18 years of service) | 9/1/09 |
| Larry Binkley | Vehicle Operator (24 years of service) | 10/1/09 |

News & Notes

DTO employees raise record \$18,000 for 2010 MECCC

Davidson Transit Organization (DTO) employees raised a record \$18,000 for the 2010 Metro Employees Consolidated Charities Campaign (MECCC).

Donations collected at the Employee Family Fun Day, MEGA raffle, DTO bake sale, and through pledge forms generated this outstanding total. This is a great accomplishment as DTO wanted to raise more money than last year since so many in the community need more services because of the recession.

All of the contributions will benefit more than 200 charities including Community Health Charities, Community Shares and the United Way of Metro Nashville.

Congratulations to the MEGA Raffle winners. Operations Supervisor David Eyler took home the 42-inch plasma television, and bus operator Janice Vick won the 17-inch laptop computer. David Harris (administrative), Robert Steger (maintenance) and Carl Kerr and Kelly Miller (operations) won the "Day off."

Local rodeo champions named

Five champions were named at the annual Nashville MTA "Rodeo" competition held on Sept. 19, 2009, at the MTA facility at 130 Nestor St.

Fifteen employees competed in the event with several drivers participating in all three bus categories.

For the third time in the last four years, Mark Johnson won the 40-foot bus division. He also claimed victory in the 35-foot bus division. Fellow competitor Adrell Stringer took second place in both categories. Deloris Roberts finished first in the Paratransit Van competition.

Mechanics competed in team events in the maintenance rodeo with the team of Andrew Harvey, Ronnie Rhoads and Wade Scott taking first place. Gloria Ewing won the bus cleaning competition.

After the rodeo, an Employee Family Fun Day took place. The event included activities such as bingo, karaoke and face painting.

Student transfers move to MCC

Metro Nashville magnet school students successfully made the transfer from the Nance Arena Landport to Music City Central last August.

The student transfer location moved since the land where the Nance Arena Landport is located will likely be sold to make room for the proposed convention center. MTA officials wanted to avoid a disruption later in the school year for students and coordinated this change with the start of the new school year.



130 Nestor Street
Nashville, TN 37210-2124

Phone 615-862-5969
Fax 615-862-6208

ADA Inquiry and
Customer Care
862-5950
880-3286 (TTY)

Check our Web site at
www.nashvillemta.org

Karl Dean
Mayor

Board of Directors
Gail Carr Williams
Chair

**Thomas F. "Freddie"
O'Connell**
Vice Chair

Lewis Lavine
Member

Marian T. Ott
Member

Jeffrey Yarbrow
Member

Paul J. Ballard
Chief Executive Officer

Newsletter Editorial Staff

Editor-in-Chief/Writer
Patricia Harris-Morehead

Managing Editor/Writer
Wendy Smith

Graphic Designer
Richard Martin

Contributing Writer
Paul J. Ballard

Editorial Assistance
Ellen Davis
Jim McAteer

Photography
Robert Bauls
Joey James
Gary Layda
Amber Thompson

If you have suggestions for future articles, please submit them to the MTA communications office.



MTA completes Strategic Transit Master Plan

The Nashville MTA recently completed its Strategic Transit Master Plan, a document that sets guiding principles and policies for improving public transportation in Nashville-Davidson County as well as identify actions and projects for the short, medium and long term.

This plan includes coordination with the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) and land-use objectives.

Current conditions and future trends in Nashville and MTA performance and its trends were studied extensively.

As a result, five priority areas were established regarding a service delivery policy:

- Increased bus frequency
- Faster transit trips
- Service to new areas
- Easier use of service
- Improved transit image

Short-, medium- and long-term actions were determined.

Short-term (2009-2015)

- Adopt a service delivery policy
- Work with regional partners toward dedicated funding for transit
- Implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

- Implement a downtown circulator
- Increase frequencies on 11 routes; and
- Promote service to new areas which are not currently served.

Mid-term (2016-2025)

- Extend Gallatin Road BRT to West End/Vanderbilt
- Expand BRT service to other major corridors such as Murfreesboro Road, Nolensville Road and Dickerson Road
- Improve night service; instituting mini-hubs on Clarksville Pike and Gallatin Road; and
- Expand park-n-ride locations to include more regional services to neighboring counties.

Long-term (2026-2035)

- Extend Route 23 Dickerson Road
- Extend Route 6 Lebanon Road
- Improve transit capacity between downtown Nashville and West End with transit infrastructure such as queue jump lanes
- Expand transit service to provide high-capacity options to region and neighboring counties; and
- Provide more mini-hub locations.

New projects

continued from page 1

considered for the following routes: 3 West End (two additional evening trips); 7 Hillsboro (extended evening service); 20 Scott (extend route to connect to Inglewood Library BRT stop); 33X Hickory Hollow Mall/Old Hickory Express (add park-n-ride at Walmart and extend route to Lenox Village); and 37X Tusculum/McMurray Express (add park-n-ride at Hickory Plaza and add one a.m. and one p.m. trip.)



This new hybrid bus is one of six vehicles that will be used for the new downtown circulator this spring.

The downtown circulator will offer service every 12-14 minutes and operate from early morning until late evening. It is designed to serve commuters trying to get to work as well as tourists and other downtown visitors needing to travel between sports venues, the convention center, downtown hotels and other attractions.

It is being modeled after the Hartford (Connecticut) Star Shuttle, which operates a one-way loop connecting the convention center with other attractions, including restaurants.

The new route to 100 Oaks via the Vine Hill community would reinstate some service to Vine Hill Towers, Adventure Science Center and Vanderbilt Health One Hundred Oaks. Buses will operate every 50-60 minutes during peak times in the morning and in the afternoon.

Two public hearings were held in January on the proposed improvements. The meetings were well attended, and the Planning Department has received positive feedback on the proposed improvements. Any changes will go into effect with the biannual system changes on March 28, 2010.