

Council approves \$7.5 million to complete final design, engineering for full-service Bus Rapid Transit — The Amp

The Amp, Nashville MTA's full-service Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project along West End that will connect East and West Nashville, continues to move forward.

On June 11, the Metro Nashville Council approved the Capital Improvement Budget's spending plan for the new fiscal year, which includes \$7.5 million to complete final design and engineering for The Amp.

Preliminary engineering and environmental review was completed in the spring and included a community meeting component where the consultants collected input from Nashvillians.

The Amp, formerly known as East-West Connector, is now in the third phase of a three-phase federal funding process. Later this fall, the project details will be submitted

continued on page 3

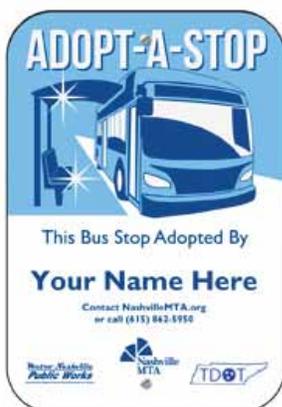


BRT stations will provide protection from weather, real-time transit information, self-serve ticket kiosks and bike racks.

Program encourages public to adopt an MTA bus stop

Area bus stops are now up for adoption and the only qualifications needed are a little elbow grease and community pride.

The Adopt-A-Stop project is a new initiative being implemented as a result of the Nashville MTA receiving a Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) Litter Grant. The purpose of the program, which is a joint effort between TDOT, MTA, Metro Public Works and Metro Beautification, is to



continued on page 3

Murfreesboro Pike gets BRT lite service

Traveling down Murfreesboro Pike on a Nashville MTA bus is now faster with fewer stops.

In April, the MTA implemented its second Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lite service on another of the city's busiest corridors. This new BRT lite service operates along Murfreesboro Pike from Music City Central to the Hickory Hollow area.

Patterned after the successful Gallatin Pike BRT lite service, passengers using this route experience fewer stops, more frequent buses and a greener attitude as they travel on 60-foot, articulated, fuel-efficient hybrid buses.

BRT lite creates a more convenient commute between downtown and southeast Nashville. The intersections along Murfreesboro Pike will soon have Green Light Extenders installed that allow the traffic signals to stay green

continued on page 2

MTA partners with CMA Music Festival Music City Circuit ridership up significantly during event

The Nashville MTA and Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) once again partnered with the CMA Music Festival planners for this year's June 6-9 event, and the partnership proved to be



another success.

During the four-day festival, ridership was up 13 percent on weekdays and 46 percent on Saturday for the Blue Circuit while the Green Circuit saw a 100 percent increase on weekdays and a 123 percent increase on Saturday.

Route 18 also saw ridership gains. Average weekday ridership was 401 passenger trips (about 15 over the average); Saturday was 264 passenger trips (more than 100 above average); and Sunday was 186 passenger trips (about 50 more than the average).

As part of the agreement, MTA was able to include 9,500 Route 18 Airport/Downtown Hotels bus schedules in the CMA mailer to those who purchased four-day passes. In addition, CMA inserted Music City Circuit flyers, produced by the Communications team, into the CMA registration bags that were distributed to approximately 40,000 people.

A promo graphic was created for placement on the MTA home page with a link to additional information regarding the CMA Music Festival, and they added a link on the CMA page to MTA's website.

New 60-foot hybrid buses added to MTA's fleet

The Nashville MTA fleet continues to become greener. Ten new 60-foot, articulated hybrid buses were placed into service this spring.

These buses operate with an alternate fuel system (diesel-electric) requiring fewer fill-ups, and have ample seating for 49 passengers with additional room for as many as 50 standing passengers. Doors are located on both sides for more boarding options, and wider aisles provide

a more spacious feel. The low-floor kneeling also makes boarding and exiting easier. Made by New Flyer, the new technology is ideal for regular routes and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) applications.

Other features include:

- Improved filters for cleaner emissions;
- Energy efficient LED lighting provides better illumination;

- ADA-compliant and equipped with bike racks;
- Reduced noise pollution and quieter interior;
- Cummins ISL 330 engine with hybrid drive system features the latest in parallel drive technology.

These hybrid buses are operating primarily on Route 55 Murfreesboro Pike BRT lite and Route 56 Gallatin Pike BRT lite.

Murfreesboro Pike BRT

continued from page 1

longer as a bus approaches, which helps buses travel even more quickly down Murfreesboro Pike.

"After a very successful pilot of this rapid transit service on Gallatin Pike, we were able to expand the service to another busy corridor in our city," former MTA Board Chair Thomas F. "Freddie" O'Connell said. "Passengers ride in comfort as they experience the service without having to worry about driving and parking."

The 16 stops along the route have been placed approximately three-quarters of a mile apart. BRT



A billboard promoting the service is located at Bell Road and Murfreesboro Pike.

lite buses operate every 15 minutes until 6:15 p.m. on weekdays and every 30 minutes after 6:15 p.m. Sat-

urday buses run every 30 minutes. These buses only stop at BRT lite designated stops.

Adopt-A-Stop

continued from page 1

obtain the assistance of residential and community organizations to help the MTA generate public participation and maintain a litter-free area at all MTA bus stops.

“We are excited about this program and getting the community involved in another area of litter education and abatement,” MTA General Manager of Operations and Maintenance Dawn Distler said. “This program provides a unique way to help public transit in Nashville, as well as give something back to the community.”

The volunteer program asks that groups adopt a bus stop and keep it clean with scheduled litter pick-ups once a week. Training and supplies are provided by MTA and Metro Pub-



The Titans' sign was unveiled on May 25. Pictured from left to right are Randy Lovett, Public Works Acting Director; Don MacLachlan, Executive Vice President of Administration and Facilities of the Tennessee Titans; Nashville Mayor Karl Dean; Dawn Distler, MTA General Manager of Operations and Maintenance; and Walter Overton, General Manager of LP Field.

lic Works, and recognition signage is placed at the bus stop.

As part of the program, a safety presentation and recognition program have been created. A soft opening took place on May 25 at LP Field with the

Tennessee Titans adopting the first bus stop, located on Woodland Street near South 1st Street.

Information on how to Adopt-A-Stop is available online at nashvillemta.org or by calling (615) 862-5950.

The Amp

continued from page 1

to the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) to apply for funding that could cover a substantial portion of the cost which will be necessary to build the new rapid system.

A summary presentation to the MTA Board last spring included updated ridership projections, proposed streetscape and station design, and a look at how the dedicated bus lanes will function alongside travel lanes for passenger vehicles.

“The goal of the project is to change the way people in Nashville use mass transit by making it a real alternative to a car,” MTA/RTA CEO Paul J. Ballard said. “If we can make the first full-service BRT line with dedicated lanes successful, then we can expand this concept to other areas, and that is

our ultimate goal. We see The Amp as the first of several full-service BRT lines to really change the way people move around our city.”

The Amp is a full-service 7.1 mile rapid transit project that is being



The Amp, a 7.1 mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service, is planned for the busy Broadway/West End corridor.

planned for one of Metro Nashville's major corridors, Broadway and West End. It will connect East and West Nashville and will begin at Five Points

in East Nashville and extend to the Saint Thomas hospital area in West Nashville. Rapid vehicles will travel through the heart of the city in dedicated lanes and will not get stuck in traffic like cars. The rapid transit vehicles will stop along the route at attractive stations that have real-time arrival information and self-service fare collection kiosks.

It will operate similar to light rail with off-board ticketing, real-time travel information. The BRT vehicles will have double doors that open at level with station platforms to allow multiple passengers to board at once.

Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee is assisting the MTA with community outreach by holding transit talks in the community. A new video on the project can be viewed online at nashvilleamp.org

MTA well represented at APTA International Bus Roadeo

Bus operator Chris Vick finished ninth in the 35-foot bus competition at APTA's 38th International Bus Roadeo in Indianapolis, Indiana in May. Vick

completed the obstacle course in 5 minutes and 54 seconds, which was the best time in the competition. Competitors in this year's Bus Roadeo represented

28 states and three Canadian provinces. Our team of mechanics (Bobby Kerce, Kyle Kruk and Troy Willis) also competed in the APTA Roadeo.



Representing Team MTA: Roadeo competitors Chris Vick, Kyle Kruk Troy Willis and Bobby Kerce.



Chris Vick maneuvers through the course at APTA's International Bus Roadeo in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Our team of mechanics showcase their troubleshooting and repair skills at the competition.

News & Notes

DTO Employee on "Nashville"

In late April, Communications and Marketing Specialist Cary Street was a background actor in the role of a CMA Guest for the ABC television series "Nashville." Following a two-hour wardrobe fitting in which Cary ended up wearing her own clothes, she spent a 13-hour day on the set filming scenes for the season finale. Approximately 50 people appeared as background actors, and more than 200 were volunteer extras for this final episode of season one.



Cary Foust Street

Metro @ 50 Celebration

The Nashville MTA hosted a "Metro @ 50" Celebration in March in the Community Room at Music City Central. This event was planned to celebrate the historical formation of Metropolitan Government in Nashville/Davidson County.



MTA took a look back at transit in and around 1962-63

and heard from several retirees from that era during a panel discussion. A transit pictorial was also on display. Former MTA Board Chair Freddie O'Connell and Nashville Mayor Karl Dean provided brief remarks.

Call Center Challenge

Customer Care Representative Patrick Duffy represented MTA/RTA in the finals of the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) Call Center Challenge earlier this year. The competition took place in front of a live audience during the 2013 Marketing & Communications Workshop.



Patrick Duffy

Social Media Update

MTA has more than 800 (827) followers on Twitter. If you have not checked out MTA's "tweets" yet, you may do so @Nashville_MTA. More than 250 (253) are following RTA @MiddleTN_RTAs for our regional bus and Music City Star information.

MTA, DTO take on workplace wellness challenge

The Nashville MTA and Davidson Transit Organization employees are taking a few extra steps to become a healthier workplace. Literally.

A 12-week wellness challenge named “Change Your Weigh with MTA” is being offered to help employees achieve a healthier lifestyle. From June 3 to August 30, registered employees are striving to be active, eat better, and lose weight while competing as a team of four and/or individually.

Participants have been provided with a resourceful tool kit to encourage healthy behaviors. The kit includes a pedometer to monitor daily steps, a portion plate, and a book titled Eat Right for Life. During the challenge, professional trainers from Marathon Fitness, who have worked with organizations such as the Tennessee Titans, will be on site weekly to offer training tips and classes.

The wellness program is organized by Inspire Health, a wellness company focused on employee benefits. Inspire



Health was hired last June by the MTA to provide a class on the “7 Habits of Healthy People.” This class was offered in order to encourage healthy lifestyles among employees and, as an added incentive, participation in the program offset an increase in employees’ health insurance premiums for 2013. After seeing employees’ interest in the class, a committee of employees decided to take the program a step further and begin a wellness challenge.

“The program has already created a lot of excitement and healthy competition among our employees.

We are eager to see the improvements made in the participants’ overall health,” DTO Human Resources Manager Cheri Burr said.

Throughout the competition, Inspire Health is monitoring three key measurements: total pounds lost, highest percentage of body weight lost, and the number of actual steps taken by participants. Prizes ranging from \$10 to \$400 will be awarded to teams and individuals. At the end of the 12 weeks, Inspire Health will crown the winners and celebrate everyone’s achievements together.

Kudos...

I've been taking the bus five to six days a week for the last month due to car issues. In the past five to six years I've sporadically taken MTA and always enjoyed my experience. In the last month, I have continued to experience great service and kindness from MTA drivers. They have much responsibility on their shoulders for ensuring their passengers/customers arrive safely at their destinations.

I have particularly noticed Driver #1293 exhibit much kindness not only to me but other passengers and customers. ... I will continue to submit feedback on occasion.

Thank you for all that you do for Nashville and those who depend on MTA.

*Lawson Patten
Madison*

This bus driver (#1390) is awesome! He is a real people person and an asset to MTA and Nashville. He drove the bus and connected with people on an individual basis. He welcomed everyone and had everyone laughing on the bus and having a good time. He had to do a detour due to a train crossing, and he treated the detour as if it was a Music City tour of the historic Nashville Cemetery, Fort Negley and the Sounds Stadium.

He encouraged the men to give a seat to the ladies each time a woman got on the bus. He has a great deal of charisma and made the ride very enjoyable.

This man should be training all bus drivers on etiquette and on how to engage your riders and make the trip fun.

*Michael Hullett
Nashville*



NASHVILLE MTA/DTO IS A
DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE





430 Myatt Drive
Nashville, TN 37115

Phone (615) 862-5969
Fax (615) 862-6208

ADA Inquiry and
Customer Care
(615) 862-5950

Check our website at
nashvillemta.org

Karl Dean
Mayor

Board of Directors
Jeffery P Yarbro
Chair

Marian T. Ott
Vice Chair

Gail Carr Williams
Member

Lewis Lavine
Member

**Thomas F. "Freddie"
O'Connell**
Member

Paul J. Ballard
Chief Executive Officer

Newsletter Editorial Staff

Editor-in-Chief
Patricia Harris-Morehead

Managing Editor/Writer
Wendy Smith

Graphic Designer
Wade Perry

Contributing Writers
Brooke Abercrombie
Cary Foust Street

Photography
Brooke Abercrombie
Dawn Distler
Gary Layda
Wade Perry

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

MTA improves bus service to Nashville airport

Route serves new Music City Center, downtown hotels

Visitors and residents have more options when traveling to and from the Nashville International Airport to downtown Nashville.

The Nashville MTA now offers improved bus service to the Nashville airport at the economical price of \$1.70 or less each way. Earlier and late night trips have been added to the schedule and buses now serve the new Music City Center convention center and more of the downtown hotels.

MTA/RTA CEO Paul J. Ballard rode the service to and from the airport for a trip to Washington, D.C. earlier this year and tweeted to MTA customers about the experience.

“The expanded schedule for airport passengers is another positive step forward for our community and our public transportation system,” Ballard said. “Visitors not only have easier access to downtown hotels but also to the new Music City Center convention center.”

The bus stop at the airport is located on Level 1 in the ground transportation area. For trips to the airport, customers may board at Music City Central Bay 18 on the lower level, the new Music City Center or other convenient stops close to hotels in the downtown area.

MTA buses that serve the airport are fitted with luggage bins to accommodate travelers.



New all-electric vehicles added to pool car fleet

While continuing to reduce its carbon footprint by promoting and providing cleaner and greener public transit, the Nashville MTA is taking a further step to help the environment by adding two new all-electric vehicles to its non-revenue fleet.

The Nissan Leaf boasts a 100-mile range and zero emissions through the use of its lithium-ion battery. The extended range Chevy Volt has a gasoline generator, which

tive-fuel vehicles for MTA’s corporate fleet.

“With these new vehicles added to our fleet, existing hybrid buses, and our new LEED headquarters, MTA is continuing to promote a positive environmental workplace,” MTA General Manager of Administration Bob Baulsir said.

Now when MTA administrative staff are unable to ride the bus, they have access to a Nissan Leaf and Chevy Volt for travel to and from business meetings. These vehicles are currently undergoing field-tests to weigh the benefits of each and to help the management team decide if additional vehicles of this type should be acquired when it is time to replace the current hybrid vehicles in the fleet.



Nissan Leaf

produces electricity to charge its battery while in use.

After MTA received a federal grant to purchase zero emission buses, the MTA Board of Directors encouraged the management team to explore purchasing alterna-



Chevrolet Volt