

MTA purchases 7 electric buses

The Nashville MTA is taking another step forward in making its fleet greener. Seven new Proterra electric buses have been purchased and should be received later this year.

These buses will operate on the Music City Circuit routes throughout downtown Nashville. The funds for the zero-emission electric buses and the electric charging station are the result of MTA's successful application for a federal Clean Fuels grant and local matching funds from Metro.

"We are continuing to invest in transit improvements that reduce harmful emissions and improve fuel economy," MTA GM of Administration Robert Baulsir said. "By incorporating the Proterra buses into our fleet, we are moving in the right direction to ensure Nashville MTA's transit services benefit the environment for years to come."



Features of the Proterra electric buses include:

- Ability to operate up to 20 hours per day
- Easier and lower maintenance cost
- Zero emissions
- Quieter, safer and longer-lasting vehicles
- Fully charges in less than 10 minutes
- 300-plus miles per day, 26 miles per charge
- Seats 37, with room for 31 standing passengers

Staff promotes MTA to Women's Final Four fans

Nashville MTA staff promoted MTA services to fans attending the NCAA Women's Final Four by encouraging them to take public transit to and from the event.

MTA strategically placed its bus booth on level two in the baggage claim area at the

Nashville International Airport on April 4-5 to promote the 18 Airport/Downtown Hotels route and the Music City Circuit free downtown circulator. Customer Care, AccessRide and Communications staff worked the booth for eight hours each day.



Wendy Smith and Erin Collier assist Connecticut fans with information regarding MTA's 18 Airport/Downtown Hotels route.

Project team to examine redesign for part of Amp route

The Amp project team is examining a possible redesign of the Amp without dedicated lanes from Interstate 440 to White Bridge Road as well as the possibility of operating the Amp in mixed traffic near the Interstate 40 overpass downtown.

"Based on the project team's advice and my own desire to create an environment of compromise and collaboration, I am directing the Amp project team to consider these design changes, most significantly for the western-most portion to operate similarly to the 'BRT lite' system operating on Gallatin and Murfreesboro roads," Nashville Mayor Karl Dean said.

In addition, a 20-member Citizens Advisory Committee for the Amp has

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MTA/RTA celebrate Earth Day

Nashville residents and visitors celebrated the environment at Nashville Earth Day Festival activities on April 19 in Centennial Park.

One of MTA's new hybrid buses was on display during the event, and staff was present to promote the many benefits of public transportation in the Middle Tennessee region.

Festival attendees were encour-



Sharon Simmons and Alvin Barcouc at MTA/RTA Earth Day tent.

aged to take public transit to and from the event. MTA buses for

routes 3 West End/White Bridge, 5 West End/Bellevue, 21 University Connector and 25 Midtown all travel by or near Centennial Park.

The free, city-wide event featured different sections of the park representing different areas of the environment, such as air, water, recycling and sustainable living/land conservation. The local festival included family-friendly games, activities, food and live performances.

Ballard accepts President/CEO position in Fort Worth

Paul J. Ballard, former chief executive officer of the Nashville MTA and Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee, left the authority on March 31 to become president and CEO of the Fort Worth Transportation Authority.

"My recruitment by Fort Worth was an unexpected career opportunity with the challenge of starting a new commuter rail line while growing ridership on an already thriving transit system with dedicated funding," Ballard said. "The Dallas/ Fort Worth area is one of the largest urbanized areas in the U.S. and they are

initiating some significant changes in which I will enjoy participating."

Ballard said it was a tough decision to leave a growing and vibrant city such as Nashville with the tremendous progress that has been made.

"We have successfully changed the face and the operation of public transportation in Nashville, and I am extremely grateful for the strong support given me by the MTA and RTA Boards, Mayor Karl Dean, Mayor Bill Purcell, the Metro Council and the terrific transit employees whose professionalism, knowledge, and dedication to service have been ex-



traordinary and much appreciated," Ballard said.

Ed Oliphant has been named interim CEO for the MTA and RTA. He will serve in this role until a new CEO is hired later this year. The MTA Board of Directors has initiated a national search to replace Ballard.

Amp

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been created and will serve as a vehicle for the project team to share information about the Amp design and gather feedback. Mayor Dean appointed Bert Mathews, of the Mathews Company and Colliers International to serve as chairman.

The committee includes merchants, property owners, neighborhood representatives, business leaders and other stakeholders interested in improving mass transit options in Nashville.

In addition the committee will include ex-officio members repre-

senting the Tennessee Department of Transportation, Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Nashville MTA, Metro Public Works and Metro Planning departments.

The committee held their first meeting on April 29 and will meet the last Tuesday of every month for the next seven months.

Currently, the Amp's engineering team is working on final design. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) expects these types of revisions to occur during the environmental review process that is underway. Updated design plans are expected by the fall.

The team also will analyze the potential impact of design changes on the Amp's cost-effectiveness, as well as the potential reduction in its speed, efficiency and predictability. Any revisions to the design and function of the Amp must be acceptable under the National Environmental Policy Act to maintain the project's eligibility for federal funding.

In March, the Amp bus rapid transit project was awarded \$27 million in President Barack Obama's proposed FY 2015 budget. The balance of the full \$75 million requested is expected to be awarded in multiple, consecutive fiscal years.

News & Notes

APTA Roadeo

Bus operator Chris Vick will compete in the 40-foot bus division at the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) 39th International Bus Roadeo in St. Louis, Mo. in May. Last year, he placed ninth in the 35-foot bus competition. In October, he brought home the "Big Wheel Award" for his victory in the 40-foot bus division at the TPTA Roadeo.

The mechanic team of Troy Willis, Kyle Kruk and Alvin Fite also will compete. At the 2013 state road-eo, Willis won the bus division as well as the bragging rights medal and Kruk finished first in the van division.

Mayor's Field Day

The Nashville MTA will once again offer free bus rides on all bus routes from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. on May 3 for individuals who participate in the Third Annual Mayor's Field Day with the Tennessee Titans at LP Field. Passengers must inform the bus operator that they are a Field Day participant to qualify for the free fare. More information regarding the event can be found at <http://www.mayorsfieldday.com>. Last year, approximately 150 participants rode the bus to the event.



MTA Myatt Drive facility

Myatt facility

MTA's Myatt facility has been LEED certified. MTA received 45 points for the project, which means the MTA Headquarters Building on Myatt Drive has received the Certified level.

Transit week now month

Transit Now Nashville hosted an inaugural Transit Month in April in partnership with several organizations including the Nashville Civic Design Center, Nashville Junior Chamber, Nashville Farmers' Market, Nashville MTA, Amp Coalition and Transit Alliance of Middle Tennessee.

The month of public events and outreach was

designed around four themes: environment, riders, transit/land use and technology. Transit Now's mission is to encourage ridership and raise awareness about the many benefits of transit in Nashville.

CMA Music Festival

The Nashville MTA and Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee (RTA) are partnering with CMA Music Festival planners for this year's June 5-8 event.

As part of the agreement, MTA was able to include Music City Circuit flyers, which were produced by the Communications team, in the CMA mailer to those who purchased four-day passes.

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.



CMA Music City Circuit web graphic

Social media

MTA has more than 1,200 people following us on Twitter. If you have not checked out MTA's "tweets" yet, you may do so @Nashville_MTA. Almost 370 are following RTA @MiddleTN_RTAs for our regional bus and Music City Star tweets.

NECAT Board

Cary Foust Street, MTA communications and marketing specialist, has been appointed treasurer and board member to the Nashville Education, Community and Arts Television Network (NECAT) by Nashville Mayor Karl Dean. NECAT is the not-for-profit organization that operates Music City Arts 9, iQTV10 and Access Nashville 19 on Comcast cable in Davidson County. Street was officially presented to the Metro Council on April 15.



Mayor Karl Dean and Cary Foust Street



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



MTA participates in Metro School's transition program

Students learning life skills for the future

Thanks to the Nashville MTA, a group of Metro school students is learning life skills that will benefit them long into the future, as well as work in public transportation.

"This is an opportunity for us to reach out in a different way to our community," MTA Board Chair Jeffrey P. Yarbrow said. "Not only do these students provide a necessary service for MTA, but we can assist in their continuing education and transition into the working world."

MTA is participating in the Metro Nashville Schools Community Based Transition Program (CBTP) which "provides a continuum of transition services to students with disabilities," according to their webpage.

Students ages 18 to 22 with intellectual and physical disabilities continue their education through this program that teaches job skills, as well as life skills. They work with various organizations and companies in non-paid internship positions performing various duties. In addition, students attend classes where lessons are taught in life skills, such as balancing a checkbook, how to introduce oneself, and professional behavior in the work environment.

Kathryn Deitzer is the transition coach and business and community liaison for the program through Metro schools. MTA Lead Dispatcher Robert Greene supervises up to six students who are enrolled in the program.

"These students are filling an everyday need here at MTA such as sorting our bus schedules for the drivers. They provide a great service to us, and in my assessment, this is a win-win situation," Greene said.

Prior to beginning their work day at MTA, students

attend class in the morning to prepare them for their work duties that day. They then are taken to the jobsite where they work until lunch or early afternoon. From there, it's back to the classroom where they continue lessons in life skills.

In addition to Nashville MTA, other Metro agencies that are participating in the program by providing either classroom space and/or internships include Metro Water Services, Parks and Recreation, the Davidson Criminal Justice Center, and the downtown library.

"This is a great program, and we are excited to have these students interning at MTA," Yarbrow said. "It's worthwhile for everyone involved."



Students prepare bus schedules for distribution.



A CBTP student sorts MTA bus schedules.