



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OMNIBUS SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2014

RUN 06-14

Welcome to another issue of The Green Pennant Special, the official publication of The Omnibus Society of America.

Through this publication we hope to keep our readers informed of events happening in the transit industry in Chicago and other cities in the United States.

Visit the Omnibus Society of America website at osabus.org. At osabus.org we will be posting upcoming fan trips and meetings information, as well as membership information.

Please visit our site when you have a chance and give us your opinions and comments.

• NOV/DEC MEETINGS

The November meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on November 7, 2014, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital. The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

Our program will be a "Potpourri" presented by Mike Mullenback.

The December meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on December 5, 2014, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital. The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

Our program for the evening will be a presentation by long-time member Ed Montajano on the current Milwaukee transit scene.

ELECTION NOTICE

The director's positions of Melvin Bernero and William Shapotkin are up for election in December. At the October meeting Vince Allen, Melvin Bernero and Adam Kerman were nominated to run for the two positions. Ballots will be mailed out the first or second week of November and must be received by the beginning of the December meeting to be counted.

CTA Moves Ahead on Plan to Rebuild Rail Cars on Brown, Orange Lines

9/10/2014

Overhaul of CTA's 3200-series cars, built more than 20 years ago, will improve reliability and comfort for customers

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Board today approved the biggest component of a plan to completely overhaul the agency's second-oldest rail cars, the 3200-series, as part of the CTA's major modernization of its rail and bus fleets launched in 2012.

The Board unanimously approved a \$92 million contract for the materials necessary to substantially renovate all 257 of the 3200-series rail cars, originally purchased in 1992-1993. The overhauls will extend the life of the rail cars and improve their performance, efficiency and reliability by replacing or rebuilding many of the rail cars' major components, including:

Propulsion and power systems

Doors and door motors

Wheel trucks, axles and motors

Replacement of fluorescent lighting with new LED lighting

Last year, the CTA approved contracts for other components of the 3200-series overhaul work, including:

Replacing all existing heating and cooling units

Replacing all auxiliary power supply units

Installing new, color LED destination signs, similar to those found on the CTA's newest generation of rail cars, the 5000-series, which are on the Pink, Green, Yellow, Red and Purple lines.

In total, the CTA will invest more than \$166 million in the 3200-series fleet overhaul, which will improve reliability and lower repair and maintenance costs for the cars that currently run on the Brown and Orange lines. The CTA will perform the overhaul work in-house.

"These improvements to the 3200-series cars, combined with the new 5000-series cars we continue to introduce, will provide the CTA one of the most reliable rail fleets in years," said CTA President Forrest Claypool. "When overhaul work is complete in 2017, our new and overhauled rail cars will comprise 70 percent of the CTA's rail car fleet, providing our customers with an improved rail ride."

Since 2011, the CTA has made a huge investment in modernizing Chicago's transit system, including new and rehabbed trains and buses. In addition to the new 5000-series rail cars and the 3200-series overhauls, the CTA is also planning for the next generation of rail cars, the 7000-series. The CTA will seek bids from manufacturers for those cars this year.

The CTA has also purchased more than 400 new buses and is performing frame-up restorations of 1,030 buses, providing to CTA customers a nearly entirely new bus fleet.

Mayor Emanuel Breaks Ground on New 95th Street Bus, Red Line Terminal

9/22/2014

New South Side transit hub to create more than 700 jobs, promote economic development; New terminal will significantly increase safety and comfort for passengers

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today broke ground on a new 95th Street Terminal for the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), one of the largest station projects in CTA history. The \$240 million reconstruction project will replace the current facility, built in 1969, creating a signature transit hub that will serve CTA's busiest rail line and 1,000 buses each weekday, and become an anchor for economic opportunity on Chicago's South Side.



"Just one year after we rebuilt the entire Red Line south, we are continuing to upgrade transit for residents and neighborhoods on the South Side," said Mayor Emanuel. "From new technology to new terminals, we are building the 21st century transit system to serve every neighborhood in our 21st century city."

The 95th Street station features a train terminal and an integrated bus terminal, serving about 20,000 customers on an average weekday. The station is one of CTA's busiest, with 24-hour Red Line service and more than 1,000 CTA and Pace bus trips on a typical weekday. The buses connect roughly 300,000 people who live within walking distance of the CTA bus routes serving the 95th/Dan Ryan Terminal to the CTA rail network.

"Rebuilding the Red Line South was one of the top priorities in my capital construction program because it would revolutionize transportation on the south side of Chicago," Governor Quinn said. "This new station at 95th street will build on that progress by creating even more jobs and help to ensure a safe, modern and efficient transit system for people throughout Chicago and the region."

"Today, we break ground on what will become the crown jewel of this new Red Line – the 95th Street station. As one of the CTA's busiest terminals, this station is critical to the thousands of South Side residents who use it to get to work and travel throughout the city every day. Among other improvements, this project will relieve congestion for riders, widen customer waiting areas, and provide pickup and drop-off space for disabled pedestrian riders. Once complete, commuters will have a safe and modern station for decades to come," said

Senator Durbin said. "This work wouldn't have been possible without the determination and hard work of Mayor Emanuel or the federal investment made from the TIGER grant program. The competition for a \$20 million TIGER grant was fierce and I am proud we were able to bring those federal dollars home to the South Side of Chicago. I will continue to fight for opportunities to improve Chicago's mass transit infrastructure as we work to make it the most modern, safe and efficient system in the country."

The project, expected to generate more than 700 construction jobs, is the latest large-scale CTA improvement under Mayor Emanuel. It follows last year's on-time, on-budget reconstruction of the Red Line South between downtown and 95th Street, which has resulted in smoother, faster and more reliable rides for customers. Since taking office in May 2011, the Mayor has begun, completed or announced more than \$5 billion in projects to rebuild and modernize the CTA.

"When the city, state and federal levels work together to improve the lives of everyday citizens we see results such as this," said Congressman Bobby Rush. "The 95th Street Terminal will relieve congestion, make for faster commutes and improve transportation routes for hundreds of Chicagoans. More importantly, this project will create jobs and expand the quality of life for this community."

"Expanding and overhauling the 95th Street Terminal will provide quicker and more convenient service for South Side passengers," Rep. Kelly said. "I'd like to thank Mayor Emanuel for undertaking this project, which will pave the way for extending the Red Line to the Roseland and Pullman neighborhoods, giving residents much-improved access to downtown."

"The 95th Street Terminal is one of the busiest access points to public transportation in the Chicago Metropolitan areas and its' renovation is a great example of Federal, State and Local units of government working together to benefit the people," said Congressman Danny Davis.

The new station design features contemporary architecture including glass and steel canopies and light-filled, glass-enclosed structures with expanded space and more shelter for customers. The station will have buildings both north and south of 95th Street, connected by an enclosed walkway over 95th Street, increasing safety for the thousands of adults and children who move through the station each day, and will include nearly three times the amount of retail concession space as the current station.

The new station will create a better, safer and more accessible pedestrian environment, with wider sidewalks and larger waiting areas for increased passenger comfort. Wider bus lanes and increased spacing between bus bays will reduce congestion and improve traffic flow.

The project will also incorporate artworks from internationally recognized, Chicago-based artist

Theaster Gates, and involve a program incorporating job creation, skills training and significant community engagement by the artist. Last year Gates held a series of community meetings to engage and promote dialogue among community residents, architects and designers about what kinds of artwork and community involvement might be possible for the project.

Construction is expected to continue into 2017. The station will remain open throughout the project.

Funding is provided through a variety of federal, state and local sources, including a Federal TIGER grant, TIFIA loan, Federal Bus Livability grant, Federal Formula funds, State of Illinois Jobs Now funds, and CTA bonds.

More information is available at transitchicago.com/95thTerminal.

City Seeks Construction Contract Bids on Three Major Loop Transit Infrastructure Projects

9/29/2014

Major Investment to Modernize Loop Transportation Infrastructure from Union Station to Millennium Park; \$150 Million in Improvements to Include Central Loop Bus Rapid Transit, Union Station Transit Center and Washington-Wabash CTA Station

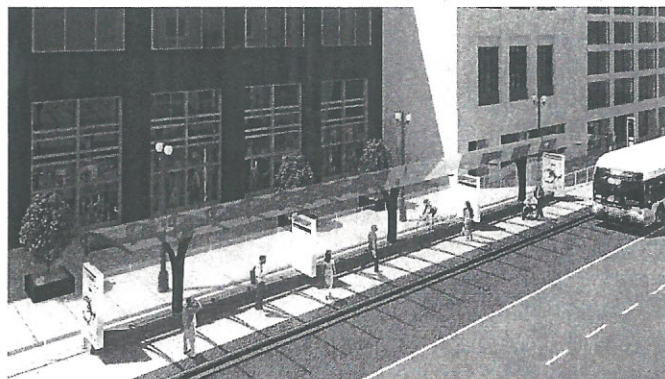
Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced today the City is soliciting bid proposals for the construction contracts on three major transit infrastructure projects in the Loop – the Washington-Wabash CTA station, the Central Loop Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project and the Union Station Transit Center. Combined, the projects represent a major redevelopment and modernization of transportation in downtown Chicago – from Union Station to Millennium Park – the benefits of which will be felt in neighborhoods throughout the city.

"This is a significant investment that will modernize transportation downtown, from Union Station to Millennium Park," said Mayor Emanuel. "This project isn't just about downtown, we're extending the reach of transit to Chicago neighborhoods to the entire region. The tens of thousands of residents who commute downtown for work each day by bus, train, bike or car will soon have a more modern, more reliable way to get where they need to go."

The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) will manage the construction of all three projects, which combined total \$150 million in infrastructure modernization investments. The City intends to award the construction contracts by the end of the year, so that construction can begin in the first quarter of 2015.

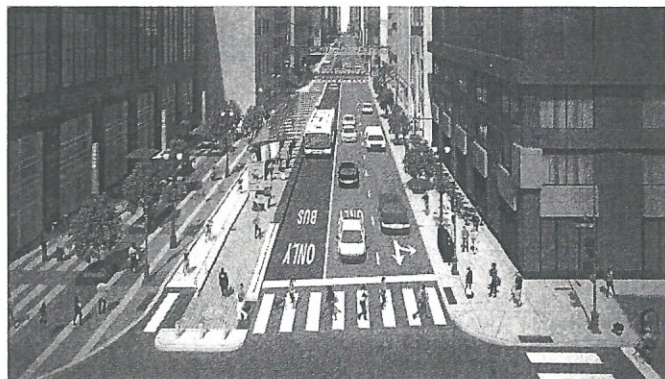
The Central Loop BRT plans include designated bus-priority lanes on two miles of streets: Madison, Washington, Canal and Clinton. The transit corridor serves Union Station, Ogilvie Transportation Center,

CTA subways and Navy Pier with more than 1,000 buses per day. Through careful planning and design, the lanes will provide a balanced separation of bus, bike and regular traffic lanes. The project is expected to be complete by the end of 2015.



BRT improvements designed to make bus travel more reliable and appealing to customers include: colored pavement markings and enhanced signage clearly delineating the bus lanes; level-boarding; queue jumps for buses at key intersections; distinct bus shelters; bus tracker digital displays; sidewalk improvements and protected bike lanes.

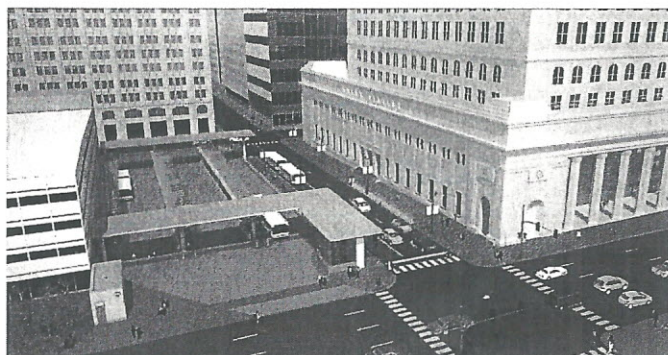
Under the plan, eastbound Washington will feature a colored bus-only lane that will be serviced with island bus-boarding platforms. Two general traffic lanes will remain for traffic through the Loop. A bike lane against the southern curb on Washington would be protected from auto traffic by the bus lane and boarding platforms. Madison Street would have similar lane configurations and bus-boarding platforms. The westbound protected bike lane would be relocated to Randolph Street.



"These transit improvements will provide faster and more reliable transportation service to connect people to jobs and major destinations across the Loop," said CDOT Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld. "There has been a need for these critical investments for many years, to reduce congestion, improve service and provide more transportation options for Chicagoans."

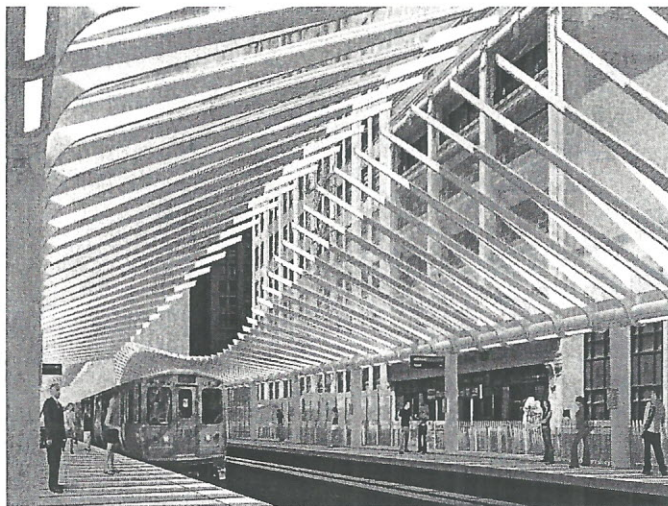
The Union Station Transit Center, a new off-street bus boarding center just south of Union Station, will provide key connections with other modes of transport to the BRT system. The transit center will be located south of Jackson between Canal and Clinton, and will provide sheltered staging areas for CTA buses and a vertical

connection to an existing Amtrak underground passageway, allowing commuters to access Union Station without crossing at street level. The transit center is scheduled to be open for service at the end of 2015.



The Washington-Wabash CTA station will replace two century-old stations at Madison and Randolph with one modern, fully accessible station with wider platforms and a beautiful architectural design. The new station will have updated platforms, a new mezzanine and feature several modern amenities including elevators, an escalator, real time train arrival information, and security monitoring equipment.

Materials for the undulating wave form of the station canopy have been chosen to allow visibility, reinforce the feeling of openness and to allow a visual connection to the historic Wabash corridor. The vibrant new facility will enhance passenger convenience, improve train speeds, decrease operating costs and provide accessibility for all riders. The new station will be open for service in 2016.



"These improvements are the latest efforts by Mayor Emanuel and the CTA to create a 21st century transit experience," said CTA President Forrest Claypool. "Over the last three years we've made unprecedented investments across the city to modernize bus and rail service to provide faster, more efficient service and improve the experience of our riders."

All three construction contracts are now open for bid. Responses for the Unions Station Transit Center are due October 21, the Central Loop BRT on October 28 and Washington Wabash Station on November 4.

These transit improvement projects have long been supported by a number of business and civic organizations and downtown stakeholders, including the Metropolitan Planning Council, the Active Transportation Alliance and the Chicago Loop Alliance.

"The Loop is the center of this city and the heart of our economy, and we need dependable transportation downtown to ensure our city continues to grow and thrive," said Michael Edwards, President and CEO of the Chicago Loop Alliance. "These critical transportation improvements will move people easily to and through the central business district – from the transportation hubs on the west side of the Loop, to the shopping and businesses on State Street and Michigan Avenue."

CTA, Metra and Pace Announce Mobile Ventra App

10/15/2014

First-ever app will allow users to pay for rides on all three systems, manage accounts from their smartphones

Transit users across Chicagoland will be able to fully access CTA, Metra and Pace from the smartphone in their pocket starting next year thanks to a first-ever Ventra mobile app that can be used to pay for rides on all three transit systems with a few taps on their mobile devices.

The Ventra mobile app, approved today by the CTA Board, will provide riders a "one-stop shopping" experience — allowing users to add transit value and load passes on their Ventra card, check account balances and receive real-time account alerts. The free app, which will be developed by the CTA, Metra and Pace, will be available for use on Apple and Android smartphones and tablets starting in 2015. The intergovernmental agreement with CTA and related agreements regarding the app are subject to Metra board approval.

The Ventra app will also allow Metra riders, for the first time, to purchase and display tickets on their smartphones using a Ventra account or personal credit or debit card.

"CTA, Metra and Pace have been working together closely to develop an app that will improve the customer experience and give transit riders new ways to pay fares that were impossible before the CTA implemented a modern, open-fare payment system," said CTA President Forrest Claypool. Claypool, along with Metra Board Chairman Martin Oberman and Metra Executive Director/CEO Don Orseno, appeared before the CTA Board Wednesday to discuss the mobile app.

"Essentially, this app will put a Ventra vending machine in your pocket, giving you the ability to manage your account from wherever it's most convenient for you, whether you ride CTA, Metra or Pace, or all of them," Claypool said.

"This new app is a major enhancement for Metra riders," Orseno said. "It not only will offer our customers a fast and easy way to buy and display Metra tickets on their smartphones, it will also give them the option of using a Ventra account to do it. We fully expect our riders to embrace this convenient new technology."

"We provide connections to CTA and Metra service at so many locations throughout our service area, so this is a major step forward for customers who transfer between our services," said Pace Executive Director T.J. Ross. "We're fortunate that the Ventra system provides the technology to offer more convenience to our shared customers than ever before."

"We are pleased that the CTA, Metra and Pace have joined together to provide Northeastern Illinois with a regional fare payment system," said RTA Acting Executive Director Leanne Redden. "We believe the proposal put forth today is in line with what the law envisions and more. We look forward to the positive impact a mobile app will have on improving the travel experience in our region."

The mobile app will be rolled out in phases, starting in the first half of 2015. The first phase will allow users to:

- Add transit value and passes

- Check account balances

- Manage funding sources

- View transaction history

- Sign up for customizable account notifications and alerts for account balance, low balance, expiring passes

Use Metra mobile ticketing, using a Ventra account or personal credit/debit card. This will be visual proof of payment—showing a ticket/pass on a mobile screen instead of presenting a paper ticket/pass to a Metra conductor.

Later phases to come in 2015 will provide additional account management features (e.g. card ordering, replacing a lost/stolen card), multiagency transit tracking features, and an integrated regional trip planner with service information for CTA, Metra and Pace that allows customers to navigate the region from door to door using all three transit systems.

By early 2016, the app will allow customers to download a virtual Ventra card onto their Near Field Communications-compatible mobile devices, which will allow them to access their Ventra transit accounts to pay for rides on trains and buses directly from the Ventra app by touching the phone or device to a Ventra reader.

Specific timetables for each phase of the rollout are still being finalized. Customer feedback and insights will be used to help guide the development process.

The app development cost is budgeted at \$2.5 million, to be split among the three transit agencies. The app and supporting system are being provided through a partnership of Cubic Transportation Systems, the operator of the Ventra fare payment system, and

GlobeSherpa, an industry leader in mobile app development and mobile ticketing platforms for transit. GlobeSherpa has previously developed transit apps for Portland's TriMet transit system, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation and the Virginia Railway Express, among others.

Mayor Emanuel, Chicago Transit Authority Begin Search for Manufacturer to Build New, Modern Rail Cars and Create New Jobs

10/16/2014

Thanks To Historic Partnership With Labor Leaders, Bid Solicitation Includes First-Ever U.S. Employment Provision To Promote Job Creation

As part of a commitment to encourage the creation of good-paying U.S. manufacturing jobs, Mayor Emanuel and CTA President Forrest Claypool today announced that the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) has officially kicked off the search process for a manufacturer to make the CTA's next generation of rail cars as part of the agency's modernization of its rail fleet.

The new bid solicitation also is the first in CTA history to include a ground-breaking provision that asks bidders to provide the number and type of new jobs they will create related to the production of the new rail cars, an agreement reach by the Mayor, CTA and the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL) in July 2014. The provision will also ask bidders to outline their job recruitment and workforce training plans.

"Today we move closer to two important goals: offering Chicagoans a better commute on modern trains and creating potentially hundreds of new, good-paying jobs that contribute to economic growth and prosperity," said Mayor Emanuel. "This process will increase competition among bidders and produce a high-quality product that helps us continue to build a world-class transit system."

"We commend Mayor Emanuel and the Chicago Transit Authority for leading the way to good U.S. manufacturing jobs by including tools for jobs disclosure and evaluation as part of this new solicitation for bids," said Jorge Ramirez, President of the Chicago Federation of Labor. "Using the language from the U.S. Employment Plan ensures we are working to not only improve Chicago's transit system, but to help our tax dollars go further and create good jobs in the region and across the country."

The CTA today issued a new Request for Proposals for bids from manufacturers for the 7000-series. Bid submissions will be evaluated on a number of criteria, with their plan for job creation factoring into the evaluation of bids received. The initial base order will seek 400 rail cars, with the ability to purchase as many as 846 new cars. Earlier this year, the CTA opted to seek new bids in an effort to encourage a wider range of bids from rail-car manufacturers around the world after a

2013 Request for Proposals generated only two bid submissions.

In addition to the new job-creation provision, the new bid solicitation removes a previous requirement that the 7000-series be compatible with current CTA cars. Other changes from the first bid solicitation include:

Adding two exterior cameras on each rail car and nine interior cameras, including two interior cameras in the operating cab

Consideration of alternative technologies or configurations for car systems like doors, brakes and HVAC

Increasing the base order to 400 cars, up from 100

The new 7000-series rail cars will replace CTA's oldest rail cars, which are more than 28 years old. The estimated total cost for the rail cars is \$2 billion, funded through a combination of federal and local funds. When the new cars are in service, expected as early as 2018, the CTA will have one of the youngest fleets of any U.S. transit agency.

The Mayor, President Claypool and other CTA officials earlier this year met with CFL representatives to discuss the rail-car procurement and its job creation opportunities. CTA has tailored its plan for its procurement, drawing on the experience of Amtrak and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, both of which included U.S. employment provisions for their purchases of trains and buses.

The 7000-series procurement is just the latest effort by the Mayor and CTA to promote job creation. Several recent large-scale construction projects have generated jobs in construction, engineering and other building trades, including the 95th Street Terminal, construction on which began this fall; the Wilson station reconstruction, which will begin this fall; the ongoing Your New Blue project to upgrade stations and tracks along the Blue Line's O'Hare Branch and the Red Line South reconstruction in 2013—which not only created about 1,000 construction-related jobs but also more than 400 bus operator positions.

2 men charged with train graffiti had CTA keys, uniforms: Police

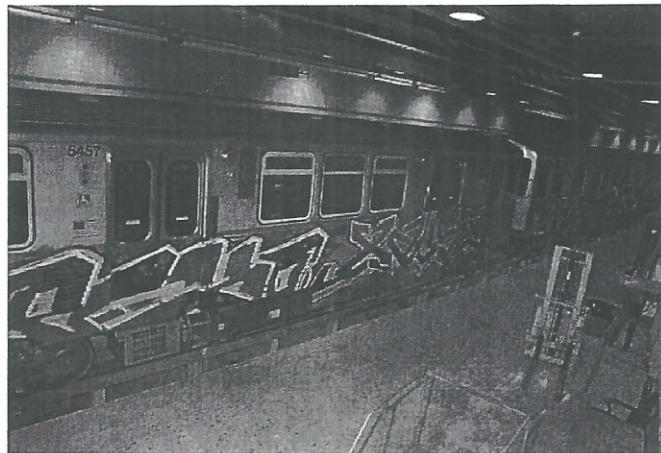
By Tracy Swartz, [@tracyswartzRedEye](#)

6:18 p.m. CDT, October 21, 2014

Wilmette police are investigating how two Chicago men wearing CTA uniforms and carrying CTA keys allegedly broke into a rail yard to spray paint three CTA rail cars.

Officers said they were responding to a report of three people who may have been involved in a drug deal and stopped a car with two men matching the description near the CTA Linden stop about 5 p.m.

As the men were being questioned by police during that stop, a CTA employee in the rail yard notified Wilmette police about new graffiti on some train cars. When they



Skokie Police photo

are out of service, Purple Line train cars sit in a rail yard near the Linden station, the northern end of the Purple Line.

Police said they searched the men's car and found more than 30 cans of spray paint, CTA maps, gloves and pictures.

The men were wearing CTA shirts, hats and traffic vests and carrying a set of keys that allowed them to access to restricted CTA areas, police said.

The men have not been employed by the CTA, Wilmette Police Sgt. Solveig Gehrken said.

"We don't know how they obtained the keys," Gehrken said.

CTA spokeswoman Tammy Chase said she could not comment on a pending investigation and referred calls to Wilmette Police.

Miguel Carrasquillo, 40, of 5811 W. Walton St., and Jose Godinez, 29, of 1946 S. Racine Ave., were charged with felony criminal damage to property in the Thursday incident.

Both men have been previously arrested for vandalism, Cook County court records show. Gehrken said the department is looking into whether they were involved in other graffiti cases at the rail yard.

Carrasquillo was ordered held on \$50,000 bond while Godinez was ordered held on \$5,000 bond in hearings last week. Both are scheduled to appear in Skokie court Oct. 30.

A new Rapid Transit Station (Boston Globe)

State officials announced plans Tuesday for a \$25 million transit station at the old rail yard in Allston that will allow commuters to take the train from the neighborhood to the Back Bay, South Station, and possibly Kendall Square.

The tentatively titled West Station is meant to help overhaul the huge swath of land near the Allston-Brighton tolls on the Massachusetts Turnpike, and

potentially bring dramatic changes to the transportation landscape of the region. Allston residents, who have long clamored for a commuter rail station, called the plans a transformative change for the neighborhood.

The construction of the station goes hand in hand with the state's \$260 million project to straighten out the Massachusetts Turnpike near the tolls. That massive undertaking is scheduled to begin construction in 2017.

Governor Deval Patrick said Tuesday that the new transit hub will be a way to make "the very best use of this new space, this new land, and the abutting neighborhoods."

The station, which is expected to open in 2020, initially will serve as a new stop along the Worcester/Framingham commuter rail line, which runs a few times an hour to and from downtown Boston during the morning and evening commutes, but sporadically at other times.

Eventually, though, state officials said, the station could host what are known as **"diesel multiple units" — nimble, self-propelled cars** that would mimic trolley or subway service and could connect Allston to Cambridge and North Station. There is currently no timeline for the fast service.

"It's a great opportunity," Patrick said. The straightening of the Pike, a project that will also add electronic tolls, will open up nearly 50 acres for development in and around the old rail yard.

The project has led transit advocates and others to create a wish list of requests for the freed-up space, including bike and walking paths and new housing units.

West Station will be built on part of what is known as the Beacon Park Yard, on 22 acres now owned by Harvard University.

As recently as May, plans for the station seemed to be off the table when a MassDOT spokesman said no funding was dedicated to the construction of a new transit station in Allston, disappointing residents and transportation advocates.

But on Tuesday, officials announced that Harvard University had agreed to pay for one-third of the project, while the state will pay for another third. State Transportation Secretary Richard A. Davey said negotiations were continuing with another party to pay the remainder of the station's costs.

Kevin Casey, associate vice president for public affairs at Harvard University, spoke of the university's contribution: "I think being part of a public-private partnership for something that's going to be a benefit to so many sectors is a responsible thing to do."

The funding partnership is similar to another transportation project in the works: in nearby Brighton, New Balance has announced its intentions to pay for a commuter rail station, scheduled to open in 2016.

That station will also be on the Worcester/Framingham commuter rail line.

The planned Allston transit hub, hailed as a victory for public transportation advocates, has the potential to affect the development of the neighborhood and transportation within the region.

On Tuesday, Davey stressed that the project will bring benefits to the neighborhood's residents.

"This is not about a multimodal station, it's not about just commuter rail and bus service," he said. "It's about a neighborhood."

Mayor Martin J. Walsh said the announcement foreshadowed a big change for the unused land. "We're going to have bicyclists; we're going to have walkers; we're going to have pedestrians; we're going to have cars — all to be able to coexist on roadways that we're able to . . . make safe," Walsh said.

Advocates had long been pushing for the massive highway project near the Allston tolls to include a wider scope that could help improve public transit and safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

Matthew Danish, an Allston resident who attended the Tuesday press conference at the rail yard in the rain, called the development thrilling.

Danish, who was part of a 49-member task force for the Allston Interstate 90 Interchange Improvement Project, said he wants to see the station get frequent train service.

"Running the trains and stopping them here is another thing, and we have to make sure it happens frequently enough to be useful for people who want to use it every day," Danish said.

Jessica Robertson, an Allston resident and a member of the task force, said the construction of a new station will change the neighborhood.

The North Allston area has few options for rapid transit service, and residents need to take a bus to the Red Line and have no direct buses downtown, she said.

"Certainly, it would be a huge improvement for transit service for the North Allston neighborhood," Robertson said.

Officials said they expect construction to begin in 2017, after an environmental assessment and request for bids. Construction on the highway straightening project is also scheduled to begin in 2017 and is projected to be completed three years later.

Cleveland State Univ. buys naming rights for new RTA bus line

Cleveland State University has secured naming rights for a new Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) bus-rapid transit (BRT) line connecting CSU to West Shore communities. Service is slated to begin in November, RTA and CSU announced today.

The new route will offer commuters an upgraded ride on new, specially-designed vehicles fully branded for CSU.

Stations connect commuters traveling from the downtown campus through Cleveland's West Side along Clifton Boulevard and with branch routes connecting multiple West Shore communities.

The Cleveland State Line will provide these students and all passengers a faster and more reliable commute. The line will replace RTA's Route 55 family of services with specially designed, 60-foot articulated buses and increased travel speeds. This will double the line's ridership capacity. During rush hour, riders will wait no more than 10 minutes for a bus at any stop on the line.

The Cleveland State Line incorporates many of the convenience features of RTA's first bus-rapid transit service, the HealthLine, which travels along Euclid Avenue from Public Square to the Louis Stokes Station at Windermere in East Cleveland, including consolidated stops, a dedicated transit lane, an enhanced streetscape and a new traffic signal system.

"We are excited to be part of this new transportation route to the West Side," said CSU President Ronald Berkman. "More than 14,000 CSU students receive the U-Pass each semester, and collectively they've already taken a half million trips this year. A significant number of them commute from west of downtown Cleveland. This new transportation option will provide a fast, comfortable and convenient way to get to campus, while serving the larger transportation needs of West Shore commuters."

The Cleveland State Line will serve customers along Clifton Boulevard with 19 new stations, and will also feature special CSU-branded stops in Bay Village, Westlake, Rocky River, Fairview Park, Lakewood and Cleveland.

The contract calls for CSU sponsorship of a total vehicle graphic package on 16 custom-designed buses to be used on all trips. The CSU logo is woven in the fabric for the approximate 950 seat backs on all vehicles, and CSU identification will be prominently displayed at the 32 new bus stations or stops on Clifton Boulevard. CSU branding will be featured at 243 stops and shelters along the route and in related materials.

"RTA and CSU have collaborated for years and continue to expand on an ideal partnership," said RTA CEO and General Manager Joe Calabrese. "Starting with the U-Pass program for CSU students and extending to the trolley network, sponsorship of two HealthLine stations, the completion of the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Transit Center and a lease with Megabus, this collaboration showcases how public entities can work together to benefit students and the Greater Cleveland community."

Since 2008, RTA has initiated several other public-private partnerships with Cleveland organizations to sponsor new or enhanced services, including the HealthLine and the free Downtown Trolleys. "Now that

CSU has secured the naming rights, we are advancing the revitalization of Cleveland's transit landscape into suburban communities. Through these partnerships, together we are investing in the future of Cleveland and Northeast Ohio," Calabrese said.

John Hall's Alaska puts luxurious new 2014 J4500 to tough task

DES PLAINES, IL — September 8, 2014 — As the 49th State's provider of authentic, personalized, wild-life and land tours, John Hall's Alaska has high requirements for its motor coaches. First, they must be built to withstand Alaska's oftentimes difficult roads. Second, they must offer luxury. The company's newest coach, a "loaded" MCI J4500 delivered in May, fits both bills admirably, according to Joe Hall, vice president of operations of the company started by his father, John Hall Sr.



The 2014 MCI J4500 arrived with a spacious 46-passenger seating configuration featuring leather-boxed seats, each with a 110-volt outlet for charging personal electronic devices. It also has Wi-Fi and a custom galley complete with a Keurig beverage dispenser. Wood trim completes the elegant, upscale presentation.

But the ultimate pampering touch may just be the ride. "The J4500s have always been very attractive, but what we're seeing is the ride quality," says Hall, noting that the company has purchased six J4500s over about nine years. "With the new (2014 wide-ride/Koni shock) suspension, the coach is much more stable, especially with the roads we contend with up here."

Hall also appreciated MCI's ability to deliver the coach within a tight time frame, an important consideration given Alaska's short tour season. "MCI made it happen. They take care of us."

Headquartered in Lake City, Minnesota, John Hall's Alaska currently operates three MCI coaches and specializes in longer multi-day tours of Alaska, the Yukon and British Columbia as well as land/cruise packages. Some of its land tours exceed two weeks. The John Hall travel legacy got its start in 1976 when John Hall Sr. purchased the Anderson House hotel in Wabasha, Minnesota. In 1983, Hall purchased his first

motor coach and ran tours under the Anderson House name. The company's website is www.kissalaska.com.

United Coach and Tours refreshes fleet with six MCI® J4500s

DES PLAINES, IL — September 10, 2014 — Believing that a new, uniform fleet helps pave the way to tour and charter success, United Coach and Tours, Morgantown, Kentucky, has taken delivery of six new MCI J4500s. The coaches replace five 2009 J4500s and comprise the company's entire fleet.



UCT's newest coaches are arguably the company's sharpest yet, with chrome mirrors that set off the sparkling black-and-white exterior motif. Inside, the coaches offer 110-volt outlets and curtains for passenger privacy; UCT added its own Wi-Fi and satellite DirecTV system.

"We love the way the J4500 looks, and we've gotten a lot of compliments," said owner Don Williams. Williams believes that replacing all of his coaches at once gives him a leg up with customers. In addition to being able to offer top-of-the-line equipment, it eliminates the potential for disappointment should a customer request the company's newest vehicles when they've already been allocated to another group.

Williams has learned his lessons over 50-plus years in the transportation industry, with a career that started in 1962 when he moved from his native Indiana to Chicago to take a job with Delta Airlines. He learned the tour-and-charter ropes at a small travel agency, and in 1992 he bought United Coaches from Vandalia in St. Louis. He purchased his first new coach, an MCI D4500, in 1994. A string of D-Series coaches, E4500s and J4500s followed.

"We've been very fortunate," said Williams. "We've had a great marriage with MCI."

UCT serves the Kentucky and Tennessee area with transportation to local events, convention shuttle, and charters for schools and universities. The company has seen significant growth in its tour business, which includes wholesale and retail multi-day trips across the U.S. and Canada. "For a small company, we've been to the West Coast more times than I can count," said Williams, adding that many of his 2015 trips are already sold out. "Business has been expanding."

Williams also give credit for his company's success to his office staff and drivers, some of whom have been with him since the beginning. Says Williams, "I'd put my staff and drivers up against any." The company's website is www.unitedcoachandtour.com.

Arrow Stage Lines takes MCI's 7000th coach off the J4500 line, built for safety, comfort and reliability with new ZF and Bendix Systems

DES PLAINES, IL — October 7, 2014 — Known for offering its passengers the latest advances in safety and comfort, Arrow Stage Lines has taken delivery of two new MCI J4500s, including the 7000th model to roll off the E/J line at the MCI's Winnipeg facility



With this delivery, the Omaha, Nebraska-based charter coach company is the first to own MCI® J4500s with the new ZF axle system with independent front- and tag-axle suspension and a Bendix braking system that complements the model's recently added MCI Dynamic Suspension System (MDSS).

"We couldn't be prouder to be such an integral part of the Arrow's fleet of coaches and to share our 7000th J4500 landmark with them," said Patricia Ziska, MCI Vice President of New Coach Sales. "Arrow constantly raises the bar, setting a new standard in service and their consistent growth demonstrates that customers are responding and embracing a new level of motor coach travel."

These technology upgrades now give the industry's best-selling coach car-like braking and a significantly tighter turning radius of 40 feet, 11 inches compared to a previous 47 feet.

Arrow's newest J4500s also come equipped with the latest Detroit Diesel engines offering better fuel economy and standard safety features including Electronic Stability Control, tire pressure monitoring and Amerex fire suppression. Inside the cabin, passengers will enjoy three-point passenger seatbelts, power outlets at each seat and Wi-Fi connectivity.

"We are very excited to take delivery of the new MCI J4500 with the ZF and Bendix systems," said Luke Busskohl, Chief Operating Officer Arrow Stage Lines, and fourth-generation family member to lead Arrow. "The J coach has always been a very good motor coach for our company. However, now with the new ZF suspension it takes the J to a whole new level."

"We've been identified as one of the top innovators in the industry," said Brandon Osborn, Arrow's Vice President of Marketing. "Our priorities have always been to provide our passengers with the latest technologies in safety and performance. It's great to be first to offer our riders and our drivers the advances offered by MCI."

In addition to its latest two MCI J4500 coaches, Arrow added two Setra S 417 models purchased through MCI, bringing its total MCI-associated fleet to 61 J4500s, 16 other MCI models and 59 Setra coaches. "We appreciate Arrow's loyalty to both the MCI and Setra brands," continued Ziska. "We are dedicated to providing superior aftermarket support, allowing Arrow to stay focused on the qualities that has driven their success."

Founded in 1928, Arrow continues to grow as a major U.S. charter company working for customers including corporations, schools, travel agencies, sports teams, conventions and churches. Based in Omaha, the company runs its distinctive arrow-emblazoned coaches from 10 other locations around the country including Kansas City, Missouri, Denver, Las Vegas, Phoenix and surrounding states.

Every 6,000 miles, Arrow's charter coaches go through intensive inspections from brake, suspension and drivetrain systems, to heating and air-conditioning. The work is done at Arrow's own shops, replacing critical parts long before necessary, adhering to its dedication to passenger safety and comfort in every mile Arrow drives.

Arrow is one of the largest privately held charter companies in the United States, ranked the 9th-largest motor coach company in North America by Metro Magazine. The company also recently gained Transportation Safety Exchange (TSX) approval for best-in-class safety practices — TSX is an independent rating organization that inspects, monitors and reports on the safety performance of motor carriers.

To learn more, visit www.arrowstagelines.com.

Onondaga admires design of its new MCI® J4500

DES PLAINES, IL — October 22, 2014 — Looks and passenger comforts are important, but there's something about a coach that's well-designed and reliably serviced. That's what brought Mike Oster and Onondaga Coach back to Motor Coach Industries for their newest J4500.

"All of our fleet has Detroit Diesel engines, which we like and can get serviced only 20 miles away," said Oster, whose Auburn, New York-based tour and charter



company was founded in 1953. "But we also rely on wheelchair lifts, which in the wrong coach can create space problems. [The J4500] is designed not to lose any baggage space while accommodating wheelchairs and that makes a big difference."

Besides the wheelchair lift and Detroit Diesel 401-horsepower engine, Onondaga's 2014 J4500 features an Allison B500 transmission, Amerex engine fire suppression and the SmarWave® tire pressure monitoring system. The 56-seat coach also features a state-of-the-art entertainment system, LED lighting throughout the cabin, and Amaya seating three-point passenger seatbelts.

Oster's family has been in the coach business since his grandfather started a bus company in central New York. The family purchased Onondaga Coach in the 1960s. The company's fleet stands at 13 coaches today and operates departure locations from Auburn, Syracuse and Cortland.

Oster became the third generation in the business in 1981 and his son James joined the company in 2006. "What keeps me in the business is the customers and the knowledge that it's a business you can take anywhere there's business. With most businesses, you can't. With a bus business, you can always move to where the customers are," he said.

To learn more visit www.onondagacoach.com

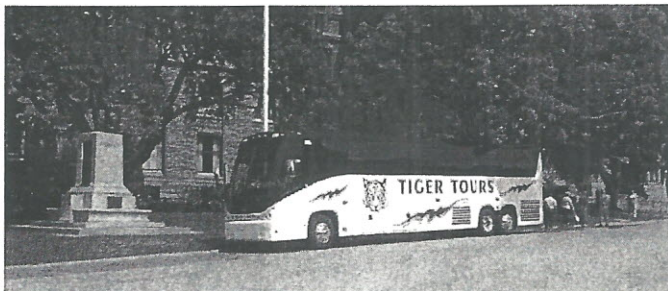
Tiger Tours roars ahead with new high-spec MCI® J4500

DES PLAINES, IL — October 22, 2014 — Tiger Tours, Olyphant, Pennsylvania, has taken delivery of a decked-out MCI J4500, building on a business that is earning its stripes every day. The new J4500 features such upscale extras as 110-volt outlets at every seat, chrome mirrors with cameras, wood-grain trim and magazine racks.

"We're really happy with it," says Bob Johnson, who owns the company with partner Carl Straka.

"It's got great curb appeal. This is the most amenity-filled coach we've purchased." The J4500 also offers a reputation for great handling and reliability. Standard features on the MCI J4500, the industry's top seller, include three-point passenger seatbelts, Electronic

Stability Control, tire monitoring and a fire detection and suppression system. Combining luxury and hard-working practicality is something that Johnson knows a bit about — a car buff, he's been known to drive up in his Rolls Royce, only to hop out and wash a bus.



Tiger Tours, which is named for the owners' appreciation of the Bengal tiger, got its start in 1989, when Johnson and Straka, both of whom had driven for other companies, decided to use their experience to start a door-to-door van service for local bingo halls. Thanks in large part to the owners' attention to detail and customer service, it didn't take long for the young company to attract other clients, and in 2004 began building a motorcoach fleet.

By 2010, the company had grown enough for the owners to build a 6,400-square-foot garage and maintenance facility with four service bays. Currently, the company has six coaches, one school bus, about 15 employees and a thriving charter business serving area colleges and other clients with trips to New York City, area casinos and other attractions.

TCS expands fleet with two 2014 Van Hool TX45's

"It's been almost two years since I bought the company, and if you'll pardon the pun, it's been quite a ride," says Terry Fischer, owner of Orange, California based Transportation Charter Services (<http://tcsbus.com/>). "It was a fine company at that time, and with a combination of new market opportunities and my personal experience, we've launched into several new directions." When Fischer bought the 20 bus operation (now expanded to 25) it had a fine reputation in Southern California, doing mostly local charters, specializing in serving school and religious groups. His management skills were developed over a career that began with pulling wrenches in the garage of the family bus business and driving coaches while in college, and eventually included everything from maintenance through operations and sales.

"We're enhancing TCS's repertoire" he points out. "We're now doing long distance charters, luxury tours, and collegiate athletics as well as some other market segments that were not part of the TCS book of business. The previous owners had offered fine quality customer service, and what I've tried to do is use my 28 years of motorcoach experience to improve utilization. We've refined preventative maintenance, and worked hard at adding services to our loyal customer base,



performing convention services and transfers, as well as offering repair service to other companies." Perhaps the most exciting part for Fischer has been watching TCS's corporate culture embrace the growth. "We have a great team and they love the new directions. It's a fun and exciting place to work, and our customers sense that."

TCS's Mission Statement says they want "to offer an exceptional customer experience through providing clean, safe and reliable transportation with outstanding customer service." To that end they recently took delivery of two 2014 Van Hool TX45s.

The 56 passenger luxury touring coaches are powered by Detroit D13 engines and Allison B500 G5 transmissions, and feature REI Elite Entertainment Systems with 15.4" monitors, 110 volt outlets and WiFi. Both coaches are equipped with a Saucon TDS GPS integrated system that monitors coach performance, safety features and location. One coach is configured with two passenger entrance doors and a traditional European center restroom. Both have safety equipment now standard on Van Hool coaches, including Kidde fire suppression, 3 point seatbelts, Smartwave tire monitoring, automatic traction control, lane departure warning, back-up camera and UN ECE-RU66 rollover certification.

ABC Companies is Van Hool's exclusive US distributor, and their Senior Account Manager, Charlie Walser, said "It's exciting for all of us at ABC to work with TCS. Terry has taken a really good company and made it extraordinary.

"The Van Hool is a proven product that our passengers and drivers love. ABC considered my background as an asset, and really worked with me in all sorts of ways to assist in our growth. It would have been difficult to have made so much progress without ABC's help," says Terry.

MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY EXERCISES AN OPTION FOR 60 XCELSIOR TRANSIT BUSES

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada – August 27, 2014: (TSX: NFI) (TSX: NFI.DB.U) New Flyer Industries Inc. ("New Flyer" or the "Company"), the leading manufacturer of

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heavy-duty transit buses in the United States and Canada, announced today that Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority ("MBTA") has exercised options for the purchase of 60 40-foot heavy-duty Xcelsior® buses powered by clean diesel-electric BAE hybrid drives.

Over the last 15 years, New Flyer has built and delivered 352 heavy-duty transit buses for MBTA in 40-foot and 60-foot lengths, and with propulsion systems ranging from diesel to diesel-hybrid and natural gas. These exercised options were assigned from an existing contract with another US State transit agency.

"We're thrilled to continue to build on our relationship with MBTA and the opportunity to provide them with our best-in-class Xcelsior bus for the very first time," said

Paul Soubry, New Flyer President and Chief Executive Officer. "MBTA is a first class transit agency in a very challenging and demanding operating environment, and we are confident that the Xcelsior will be an excellent addition to MBTA's fleet."

"BAE Systems is proud to be chosen as the hybrid propulsion supplier for MBTA," said Steve Trichka, vice president and general manager of HybriDrive Solutions for BAE Systems, which has nearly 4,500 HybriDrive propulsion systems powering buses around the world. "MBTA will be receiving Series-E, our latest low emission, efficient, fuel-saving system. With Series-E, passengers experience clean and quiet boarding with new anti-idling technology deployed at bus stops."

The 60 buses will be manufactured starting in the third quarter of 2014 with all buses being delivered in the first quarter of 2015.