



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OMNIBUS SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

JULY-AUGUST 2017

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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.

• JULY/AUGUST MEETINGS

The July meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on July 7, 2017, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm and will be a presentation by John LeBeau on Chicago buses

The August meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will be held on August 4, 2017, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm. Our program for the evening will be a slide presentation by Milwaukee native Tom Poliak.

Mayor Emanuel And CTA Announce Renovation Work To Begin At Historic Quincy Station

4/21/2017

The project will make the Loop 'L' station accessible and continues the Mayor's more than \$8 billion investment to modernize transit

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr today announced the start of a major project to renovate the historic Quincy Loop station and make the 120-year-old station fully wheelchair accessible, while preserving its renowned historic appearance.

"The renovation of the historic Quincy station is the next step on the path to ensuring every CTA station in Chicago is accessible to every resident of Chicago," said Mayor Emanuel. "In neighborhoods across the city we are reconstructing and reimagining the CTA with unprecedented new investments, and today we are undertaking another project that will benefit Chicagoans for generations to come."

Among the improvements, the Quincy station will receive two new elevators located on the inbound and outbound platforms to make the station accessible to customers with

disabilities. This upgrade will increase the number of Loop stations that are fully accessible to customers.

"Serving Chicago for more than 100 years, the Quincy 'L' station provides convenient access to and from Chicago's downtown Loop," said CTA President Dorval R. Carter. "By adding elevators and other enhancements, Quincy will be ready to serve 21st century riders while retaining its unique historical charm."

The accessibility improvements are another step in CTA's push toward 100 percent accessibility across CTA, a goal set by President Carter's All Stations Accessibility Program.

Additional improvements include stair replacement, painting and lighting upgrades. The mezzanine-level ceiling will be enhanced with new, historic-style aluminum panels, while new light fixtures will be installed to complement the station's original features. In keeping with the station's turn-of-the-century look, the elevator tower exteriors will feature a pattern referencing the one present on the station's historic railings.

Various elements of the original historic station, which opened when U.S. President William McKinley was in office, remain today—including pressed metal wreaths and fluted pilasters, or decorative columns, located on the stationhouse façade. Much of the station's appearance has been restored over the years while retaining its historical character. This includes the ticket agent's booth, which was faithfully replicated in the 1980s based on original 1897 plans and is still in use today.

The \$18.2 million project is the largest renovation in nearly 30 years for Quincy, which was built in 1897 and is one of CTA's oldest rail stations.

Last renovated in 1988, Quincy station serves more than 2.2 million riders annually via the Brown, Orange, Pink and Purple lines and is a major transfer point for 10 CTA bus routes, Union Station and the LaSalle Street Metra Station.

The project is the latest in a series of transit investments by Mayor Emanuel to improve transit in the downtown Loop, including:

Washington/Wabash, \$75M, opens Summer 2017

Union Station Transit Center, \$43M, opened 2016

Loop Link, \$32M, opened 2015

Harrison Station Renovation, \$10M, completed in 2014

Loop Track Renewal, \$53M, completed in 2013

The project is expected to be completed by the end of the year. For more information about Quincy station and this renovation project, please visit: <http://www.transitchicago.com/quincy/>.

Mayor Emanuel, Congressman Rush Join CTA to Announce Plans to Revitalize Cottage Grove Green Line Station

4/24/2017

Improvements will benefit planned commercial and residential development and reinvigorate the gateway to Woodlawn community

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and U.S. Congressman Bobby Rush today joined CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr. and Chicago Department of Transportation Commissioner (CDOT) Rebekah Scheinfeld to announce conceptual plans to revitalize and renovate the CTA's Cottage Grove Green Line station and the surrounding area.

The project is the latest investment on the Green Line by Mayor Emanuel and CTA, and complements the ongoing commercial and residential developments near the station, including the recently announced new 70-unit Woodlawn Station mixed use residential and commercial project next to the station.

"We are investing in the future of the CTA, and in the future of Woodlawn," said Mayor Emanuel. "Investments like this one strengthen communities, attract private investment and drive neighborhood growth."

The conceptual plan for Cottage Grove proposes visual, architectural and lighting treatments outside of the station to enhance the experience of both CTA customers and pedestrians. Options under consideration include architectural screening and community identifiers along sidewalks and on the 'L' structure. Changes to the station itself could include new canopies and reconfigured stairs.

"I am pleased that the historic CTA Green Line will get the attention it needs and deserves. Even as the Woodlawn community continues to enjoy a revitalization, its hardworking residents are deserving of a station that is attractive, modernized, and safe. I look forward to seeing these plans come to fruition," said Congressman Rush.

CTA and CDOT are working to develop a full project scope and estimated budget for the project. Details are expected to be finalized later this year.

"As with the Garfield Green Line station and the Belmont Blue Line station, here at Cottage Grove we see an opportunity to create an attractive community gateway that will serve as a hub for Woodlawn," said CTA President Carter.

Just minutes from the future home of the Obama Presidential Center, the Cottage Grove Green Line station is in the heart of the revitalizing Woodlawn neighborhood - steps from MetroSquash, a recreational and educational center, the Woodlawn Resource Center, a new residence hall for University of Chicago, five new POAH apartment buildings, the first market-rate

apartment development to be built in Woodlawn in decades, new dining options, coffee shops and more.

The Cottage Grove Green Line Station is also included in CDOT's upcoming federally funded Walk to Transit project to improve pedestrian safety and access to 10 CTA stations throughout Chicago. CDOT identified the Cottage Grove station for improvement based on crash history, recent neighborhood development, connectivity to other transit options, and neighborhood demand for improved walkability.

"Working with the CTA to improve access to transit is a priority for CDOT," CDOT Commissioner Scheinfeld said. "We want to encourage people to use the L, and we can accomplish this by making it safer and easier for people to get to and from their local CTA station."

The Cottage Grove station is one of the CTA's oldest, built in 1893 as part of the city's first elevated rail line—the South Side 'L' that served the World's Columbian Exposition. The original station was torn down and replaced with current station in 1991. The station serves more than 1,000 customers on an average weekday, with more than 372,000 riders in 2016.

The Cottage Grove Green Line project is the latest in more than \$8 billion of transit investment by Mayor Emanuel and CTA since 2011, including numerous investments on the South Side.

Mayor Emanuel, CTA Continue Major Bus Fleet Modernization Program by Announcing Plans to Overhaul More than 200 Hybrid Articulated Buses

5/10/2017

Upon completion of work, 94 percent of CTA's bus fleet will be new or like new. Bus overhaul program will create 100 new local jobs

As part of Mayor Emanuel's ongoing commitment to modernize the nation's second largest public transit agency, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) today announced a \$54 million plan to overhaul 208 hybrid articulated buses – the longest buses in its fleet serving many of the busiest bus routes in the city. The overhaul program will provide CTA customers with cleaner, greener and more reliable buses while also creating 100 new jobs.

Since 2011, the CTA has acquired an almost entirely new bus fleet, providing customers with safe, reliable and more comfortable transportation. This includes purchasing more than 500 new buses and overhauling more than 1,000 buses to make them like new and extend their lifespans.

With the overhaul or "gut rehab" of another 208 buses, 94 percent of the CTA's bus fleet will be new or like new. These 208 buses currently serve some of the busiest bus routes in the city, including: #J14 Jeffery Jump, #22 Clark, #26 South Shore Express, #36 Broadway, #X49

Western Express and nearly all express routes that travel along Lake Shore Drive.

"A world-class city needs the world-class infrastructure that helps millions of Chicagoans commute on a modern, reliable transit system, and I'm pleased that we have continued to make progress on our commitment to invest in transit and grow economic opportunity in our city," said Mayor Emanuel. "When I took office six years ago, CTA was operating a rapidly aging fleet and we've turned that around with new trains and buses that are creating a transit system ready to meet the needs of the 21st Century."

"Over the last six years, these buses have served as the workhorses of CTA's bus fleet – often assigned to the most heavily traveled routes in our system," said CTA President Dorval R. Carter. "With an average of nearly 260,000 miles, this overhaul project will extend the life of these buses by an additional six years and provide riders with safer, more reliable like new buses that will consume less fuel than when they were originally manufactured."

By performing these overhauls now, CTA is expected to see a 20% reduction in hours needed for repairs – ultimately saving millions of dollars in deferred maintenance costs. A complete bus overhaul will take approximately one month to complete and will include:

- Rebuilt engines and suspension systems
- New hybrid batteries with increased capacity
- Rehabilitated heating and air conditioning systems
- New cooling systems with electric fans for improved fuel efficiency
- New seat inserts
- External body repairs and painting as needed

Project work is expected to begin later this year and continue through 2019. Similar to the overhaul of CTA's 40-foot buses in 2013-2015, upgrades will be made at three Illinois-based facilities. Funding for the project is a mix of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds and RTA and CTA sales-tax dollars.

CTA's bus and rail fleet modernization efforts under Mayor Emanuel since 2011 have included:

- Purchase of more than 520 new, clean-diesel and diesel-electric hybrid buses;
- Addition of two all-electric buses, with plans to purchase up to 20 more;
- Overhaul of more than 1,220 buses, including those announced today;
- Receipt of more than 700 new 5000-series rail cars to service and overhauling existing rail cars; and
- Purchase of next generation of CTA rail cars, the 7000-series

Buses provide more than half of all rides taken on the CTA each year (52% in 2016) and serve all of Chicago and 35 surrounding suburbs.

CTA to Pilot Weekend Bus Service on the #39 Pershing Route

5/26/2017

Pilot will help customers make connections to new Mariano's, White Sox games and more

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) is launching a pilot of weekend bus service on the #39 Pershing route. The service follows a series of enhancements launched under CTA President Dorval R. Carter Jr. to improve bus service system wide.

Beginning on Sunday, June 18, CTA will be operating buses on both Saturday and Sunday from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. The pilot service will test demand for east-west bus service on Pershing Road, following a series of new, local developments including a new Mariano's at Pershing and King Drive.

The #39 route connects Lake Park Avenue on the east with St. Louis Avenue on the west along Pershing Road, with connections to the Indiana Green Line station, Sox-35th Red Line station and Guaranteed Rate Field as well as the 35th-Archer Orange Line station.

The route also makes key connections to several of CTA's busiest north-south routes including the #49 Western, #9 Ashland, #8 Halsted, #29 State, #4 Cottage Grove, #39 Michigan, #50 Damen and #62 Archer.

The pilot follows a number of other CTA bus service improvements made in recent years, including:

Loop Link

Ashland and Western express service

Enhancements to several South and Far South Side bus routes

Piloting extended service on the #11 Lincoln route and new #31 service on 31st Street.

CTA has worked closely with the local aldermen and community members in developing the pilot. The pilot will run for six months and then CTA will examine whether to extend or alter the pilot, conclude it or make the service permanent.

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.transitchicago.com/bus/39/>.

Mayor Emanuel , Chicago Transit Authority Celebrate 125 Years of Historic 'L' Service

6/6/2017

Vintage railcars to provide rides on historic Loop 'L'

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Chicago Transit Board Chairman Terry Peterson and CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr. today marked the 125th

anniversary of Chicago's historic 'L' train system—known around the world as one of the city's most iconic symbols.

Back in 1892, the first trains began running on the city's first elevated railway, the 'L'—short for "elevated." Known as the "Alley 'L'," the line ran from a modest terminal at 39th Street just east of State Street north to Congress Street. The first trains consisted of four wooden passenger cars pulled by a small, coal-burning, steam locomotive.

"Few inventions have had such an impact on Chicago as the historic 'L'," Mayor Emanuel said. "Our transit system is the city's heartbeat that moves us forward. The story of the 'L' is the story of Chicago's innovation and ingenuity."

To celebrate the 125th anniversary, the CTA will offer rides on trains featuring vintage railcars from CTA's Heritage Fleet: the 4000-series, built in 1923, and the 2400-series, built in 1976-78. The rides will take place on the historic Loop 'L' tracks in downtown Chicago.

"The CTA is a critical part of daily life in Chicago, providing access to work and education opportunities for Chicagoans across our city," said Chicago Transit Board Chairman Peterson. "We look forward to continuing to serve this great city for another 125 years."

Since 2011, Mayor Emanuel has completed, begun or announced more than \$8 billion in projects and programs to modernize the CTA, including more than 40 new and renovated stations, miles of track repair and upgrades, and hundreds of new buses and rail cars.

"We are excited to celebrate with our customers today and thank them for their patronage over the last 125 years," said CTA President Carter. "As important as it is to celebrate our history, we are equally excited about our future, and the investments the Mayor is making to provide a 21st Century transit system."

The beginning of 'L' service in 1892 led the way for many of the rail lines Chicagoans are familiar with today, including the Lake Street "L" in 1893 (today's Green Line Lake street branch), the Metropolitan West Side "L" line in 1895 (parts of today's Blue and Pink lines), the "Union Loop" beginning in 1895 and finished in 1897 (marking today's Loop tracks) as well as the Northwestern "L" beginning in 1900 (parts of which make up today's Red, Brown and Purple lines).

2017 also marks another special milestone for Chicago, the CTA's 70th anniversary. The CTA was

created by the Illinois Legislature to unify multiple, private rail agencies and began operations on October 1, 1947.

Throughout 2017, the CTA has planned a series of events and activities, including tours, ridership promotions, contests and giveaways, to celebrate its anniversary. CTA's Heritage Fleet—consisting of vintage trains and buses—will make a number of public appearances as part of the celebration. The CTA earlier this year launched a new Instagram account --@ChicagoCTA--to showcase rarely seen historical photos, which has attracted nearly 3,000 followers.

More information on the 70th anniversary celebration is available at transitchicago.com/cta70.

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Fun facts about 1892

- Ellis Island opened its doors to immigrants
- Thomas Edison patented the two-way telegraph
- The first game of basketball was played
- Benjamin Harrison was president
- The Coca-Cola Company was incorporated in Atlanta, GA
- "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" was published
- Dedication ceremonies for the Chicago World's Fair were held

CTA Moves Forward on Historic Red and Purple Modernization Program Phase One

6/9/2017

Agency to seek qualified firms to build transformational RPM project and will seek participation by DBE, minority firms; Project expected to create 5,700 construction jobs

The Chicago Transit Authority today is taking the next major step in Mayor Rahm Emanuel's transformational Red and Purple Modernization Program (RPM) by seeking the most qualified firms in the industry to design and build the first phase of the project, which will significantly modernize, improve and increase rail service in Chicago for decades to come.

The first phase of RPM will rebuild four of the oldest Red Line stations (Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn and Bryn Mawr) and make them fully accessible to people with disabilities and completely reconstruct 1.3 miles of adjacent track structure. RPM Phase One also includes the construction of a rail bypass to unclog a 100-year-old junction where Red, Purple and Brown Line trains currently intersect—allowing CTA to significantly

increase the number of trains it can run along the Red Line to reduce overcrowding and meet growing demand for transit service.

"In Chicago, the strategic and extensive investments we are making in our city's infrastructure are investments in our residents, our neighborhoods and in our economic future," said Mayor Emanuel. "As the CTA 'L' turns 125 years old this week, we're always looking to the future by modernizing to create a world-class transit system that will better serve Chicagoans today and for decades to come."

As part of a two-step procurement process, the CTA announced it today will issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select a pool of the most qualified contracting teams that can demonstrate the ability to design and build RPM Phase One.

"Today we move closer to providing Chicagoans an improved commute on the Red Line, our busiest line, by beginning the process of seeking qualified firms to build this important project," said CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr. "By securing earlier this year a historic funding agreement for the first phase of our plan to rebuild the Red and Purple Lines, we are now able to take the next step in what is one of the biggest modernization projects in CTA history and follow through with the promise we made to our customers to improve train service and increase station accessibility."

The entire RPM plan, to be completed in multiple phases, will rebuild part of CTA's Red and Purple lines, sections of which are more than a century old. The tracks, structures and stations are well past their useful lifespan, and can no longer handle additional trains to meet the increasing demands of growing ridership – which is up 40 percent during the rush hours since 2008.

The RPM project is among more than \$8 billion of transit investment announced, under way or completed by Mayor Emanuel since 2011, including the mayor's "Red Ahead" program, a series of projects to improve the Red Line.

Once a pool of candidates is finalized, expected later this year, CTA will then invite the potential bidders to submit proposals on how they propose designing and building RPM Phase One when the agency issues its Request for Proposals (RFP) in 2018. The proposals will be considered on a variety of criteria, including experience, price and other factors.

The first phase of RPM is expected to create 5,700 construction jobs. CTA will host numerous outreach events to encourage participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)-certified firms and other minority owned firms that wish to participate in the project. Additionally, the project RFP will include a community-based workforce development component.

For more on this project, visit transitchicago.com/rpmproject.

CTA's 125-Year-Old Garfield Green Stationhouse to Become Washington Park Neighborhood Community Showcase and Small Business Incubator

6/14/2017

CTA board approves lease agreement with the University of Chicago to create welcome center to promote local community and small business owners

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) today announced that its original historic Garfield stationhouse, one of the oldest rapid transit stations in the U.S., will be transformed into a welcome center, community space and small business incubator in the heart of the Washington Park neighborhood. This plan is the latest step in the ambitious Garfield Gateway Project announced by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr., earlier this year.

The Chicago Transit Board today approved a contract with Lake Park Associates, Inc., a subsidiary of the University of Chicago, under which the University, working with its affiliates, will invest \$219,000 towards renovations of the original Garfield stationhouse. This stationhouse is located across the street from the Garfield Green station that has been in operation since 2001.

The agreement will complement a renaissance that is occurring along Garfield Boulevard that includes the University of Chicago's Arts + Public Life initiative's Arts Block project, led by renowned Chicago artist Theaster Gates. The Arts Block project aims to boost Garfield Boulevard through cultural, civic and commercial spaces and programs, and the new welcome center will serve as a community gateway to the Arts Block and the neighborhood.

"By investing in transit, we are making investments in our neighborhoods, as evidenced by the positive changes happening in the Washington Park community," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "The Garfield Gateway project will complement the larger neighborhood redevelopment that is already under way while improving the overall commuter experience."

"It is truly a win for the Washington Park community to have this historic gem restored and repurposed as investment in transit is paired with investment in local communities," said CTA President Carter. "I thank the University of Chicago for its partnership in what is an exciting transformation occurring along Garfield and in the Washington Park neighborhood."

"The Garfield Gateway project and University of Chicago's investment in the Washington Park neighborhood support our goal of revitalizing this great community," said Ald. Patricia Dowell (3rd Ward). "The new welcome center and small business incubator will showcase the best of our community as it also serves our residents."

In addition, the upgrades and beautification plans for the station support the larger community's revitalization efforts to spur economic growth and improve quality of life for nearby residents.

The historic Garfield station will serve many purposes in Washington Park:

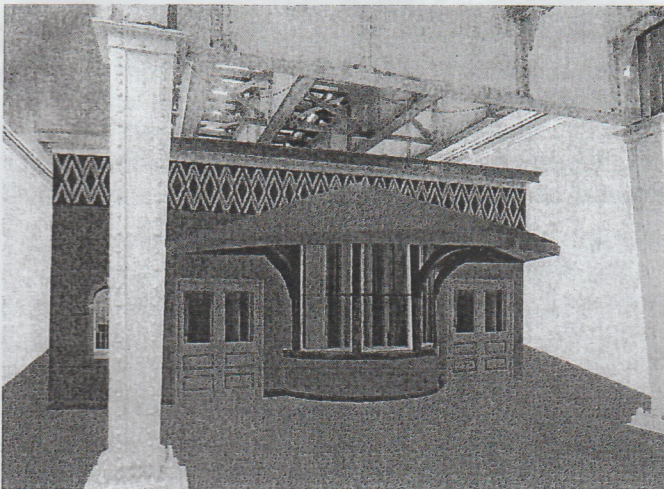
Neighborhood improvement and promotion. The welcome center will be a platform for artists, entrepreneurs and local groups to create public programming, and will devote permanent space to promote events and provide historic information about the neighborhood. The University of Chicago will work with numerous civic and business partners in creating local programming.

Business incubator. The center will serve as an incubator for small, local businesses, including providing small business training (office space, financial and accounting skills, marketing assistance, etc.) and access to University and financial networks.

Visual markers/community partnership. Visual markers will be created on or next to the welcome center that celebrate Washington Park history.

The welcome center is expected to open by the end of 2018.

"The renovation and reimagining of the historic Green Line CTA station will be an important component of the Arts Block, which aims to transform a surrounding stretch of East Garfield Boulevard into a major arts and culture corridor in Washington Park," said Derek Douglas, the University of Chicago's Vice President for Civic Engagement and External Affairs. "Leasing the station to extend its use underscores the University's commitment to supporting vibrant mid-South Side neighborhoods and to finding new ways to engage with local residents and visitors to the South Side. We look forward to engaging the community to consider future uses for the space."



Following a competitive procurement process, the University submitted the highest bid and will have a 10-year lease agreement with the CTA with an option to renew the lease for an additional 10 years.

The welcome center is the latest development for the \$50 million Garfield Gateway project announced by Mayor Emanuel in January 2017. The Garfield Gateway project will benefit transit riders, bicyclists and pedestrians, while supporting and promoting ongoing revitalization of Washington Park. The project includes extensive improvements to the Garfield Green station in operation today, including upgrading platforms, improving elevators and escalators; and installing public art and landscaping.

In coordination with the Chicago Department of Transportation, the Garfield Gateway project will also include streetscape enhancements next to the station to better integrate the variety of existing transportation uses and create a stronger community centerpiece.

CTA to Launch Faster Bus Boarding Pilots at 69th Red Line Station, Inner LSD/Belmont

6/15/2017

As part of CTA's ongoing efforts to enhance bus service, agency will pilot program to increase bus boarding speed and efficiency at busy transit location

Continuing its commitment to improved bus service for customers, the CTA today announced it will test prepaid bus boarding to allow customers to prepay their fares ahead of boarding buses for two bus routes at the 69th Red Line Station and two bus routes on Inner Lake Shore Drive at Belmont beginning Monday, June 26.

"Mayor Emanuel and I are always looking for ways to improve service for CTA customers and one of the ways to accomplish that is to reduce the time it takes for our customers to board buses, allowing the bus to get on its way more quickly," said CTA President Dorval Carter. "By piloting prepaid boarding at select locations, customers can pay fares in advance and board buses much like they do boarding the 'L' – which gets customers to their destinations more efficiently and reduces delays that occur during busy rush periods."

Since 2016, CTA has tested prepaid bus boarding at select locations to allow customers to prepay their fares and board buses more quickly with the goal of providing faster, more reliable and efficient service to customers. Piloting prepaid boarding will determine benefits for customers as well as future viability.

69th Red Line

CTA will offer customers of the westbound #67 67th/69th/71st and southbound #29 State routes the ability to prepay fares during the evening rush period only, between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Customers will pay their fares to a CTA staffer who will have a mobile Ventra reader, ahead of boarding a bus from the designated boarding area on the bus bridge located on the south side of the 69th Red Line station.

Inner Lake Shore Drive/Belmont

CTA will offer customers of the southbound #146 Inner Drive/Michigan Express and #135 Clarendon/LaSalle Express routes the ability to pay their fares before boarding buses during the morning rush period only, between 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Monday through Friday.

CTA expects to run the pilots at least four months to allow ample time to collect and analyze data on boarding times before and during the pilot to determine effectiveness and future viability.

The prepaid bus boarding pilot follows a number of bus service improvements that Mayor Emanuel and CTA President Carter have implemented for customers including:

Reinstatement of Ashland and Western Express routes

Expanded bus service on several South Side routes

Launch of Loop Link

Piloted additional service on the #11 Lincoln and #39 Pershing routes, and new #31 service on 31st Street.

For more information about CTA's prepaid boarding initiatives, visit transitchicago.com/prepaidboarding.

Metra, Arroyo break ground on Healy Station renovation

(May 8, 2017) -

Metra Executive Director/CEO Don Orseno joined State Rep. Luis Arroyo, Illinois Lt. Gov. Evelyn Sanguinetti, Illinois House Speaker Michael J. Madigan, Ald. Milly Santiago (31st) and other officials today to break ground on a \$7.3 million renovation of the Healy Station on the Milwaukee North Line.

"We're happy to be able to invest in this community and create a modern, appealing and comfortable station that will better serve existing customers and attract new ones," said Metra Executive Director/CEO Don Orseno. "I would like to thank Representative Arroyo for being a tireless and passionate advocate for the renovation of this facility."



"One of my top priorities is to bring job opportunities to our community and improve access to public transportation," Arroyo said. "This renovation project will not only expand economic opportunity in our

neighborhood but it will also provide a safe and revamped train station that will better serve riders and improve access to other services like the CTA."

"This renovation project for the Healy Metra Station is a clear example that when we work together with other elected officials in different branches of government, positive results can be accomplished on common issues that we share with the people that we represent," Santiago said. "I want to thank State Representative Luis Arroyo for his leadership in making this renovation project a reality. This will ensure that our riders will not only be better served but will also feel safer at all times."

The project includes the removal of the existing platforms, shelters, structural steel, ramps, stairs and railings and the construction of new platforms, shelters with on-demand heat, canopies, retaining walls, ramps (including a ramp to the outbound platform), stairs, LED lighting, gutters and storm sewer system. It also includes painting and waterproofing the adjoining rail bridge over Fullerton Avenue. The station will be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The work, which is being funded by Metra's share of proceeds from the state bond program, is expected to take about one year to complete. The station will remain open during construction. The contract for the work was awarded to John Burns Construction Company of Orland Park, the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

The Healy Station, at 4014 W. Fullerton, is used by about 325 passengers each weekday. It is served by 24 inbound and 24 outbound trains each weekday.

Romeoville breaks ground on new Metra station

(May 16, 2017) -

Romeoville Mayor John Noak, U.S. Congressman Dan Lipinski, Will County Executive Larry Walsh and Metra Executive Director/CEO Don Orseno officially broke ground today on the Romeoville Metra Station, a new stop along the Heritage Corridor Line.

"Getting a Metra stop has been a village goal for a long time, so we're very excited to break ground today," Noak said. "Having another transportation link to the city will be a great benefit for residents as well as businesses."

Located near the intersection of 135th Street and New Avenue, the Romeoville Station will be the first new stop on the Heritage Corridor since Metra's creation in 1984 and the first new stop on any Chicagoland Metra line since 2011. Construction is scheduled to be completed in the fall of this year, giving Romeoville residents a direct connection to downtown Chicago just in time for the holiday season.

The Heritage Corridor Line runs between Joliet and Chicago Union Station.

"Once completed, this new station will mean more people in Romeoville and the surrounding area will be able to spend less of their valuable time each day driving

on congested roads or traveling to less convenient Metra stations," Lipinski said. "As the most senior member from Illinois on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and co-chair of the Congressional Public Transit Caucus, I would like to thank Mayor John Noak, the village of Romeoville, Will County Executive Larry Walsh and Metra for their hard work on this important project."

The project is estimated to cost \$4.9 million, with more than \$3.9 million of the funding coming through CMAP's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Grant program. The village of Romeoville was also fortunate to receive a supplemental grant from the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) for pedestrian access from 135th Street to the station.

Metra Board approves \$3 million contract to renovate Hazel Crest Station

(May 24, 2017) -

The Metra Board of Directors today approved a \$3 million contract to renovate the Hazel Crest Station on the Metra Electric Line.

The Bowa Group Inc. of Chicago was the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for the contracted work, which will include construction of a new street-level depot complete with vendor space and restrooms, as well as the replacement of the station's stairways. The project will also include the addition of an elevator on the north end of the station, which will make the station fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Bowa Group Inc. has committed to ensuring that 20 percent of the contracted work will be performed by disadvantaged business enterprise firms.

"This is a crucial step in one of the most significant station renovation projects in Metra's 2017 construction program," said Metra Executive Director/CEO Don Orseno. "We look forward to giving customers an updated station that will serve as a welcoming gateway to the community for years to come."

The Hazel Crest Station, at Park Avenue and 170th Street, serves more than 330 customers each weekday. The work, which is being funded by Metra's share of proceeds from the state bond program, will begin this summer and take about one year to complete. The station will remain open during construction.

"The village of Hazel Crest is pleased to hear Metra is moving forward on the renovation of the Hazel Crest Station," said Hazel Crest Village President Vernard L. Alsberry Jr. "The new station will be a part of the overall redevelopment of the east part of our community and a flagship station for the Southland."

The \$3 million Hazel Crest Station renovation project is part of Metra's 2017 construction program, which includes approximately \$216 million in infrastructure improvements to 29 stations, 21 bridges and 29 road

crossings and the replacement of 57,000 railroad ties to ensure safe and reliable service and maintain a state of good repair systemwide.

Metra OKs \$48.2 million in UP North Line work

(May 24, 2017) -

The Metra Board of Directors today approved three contracts totaling \$48.2 million to replace or repair several bridges along the Union Pacific North Line on the North Side of Chicago and build the new inbound half of the Ravenswood Station.

"These projects represent a major investment in the infrastructure along the UP North Line, which is essential to maintaining safe, reliable service," said Metra Executive Director/CEO Don Orseno. "Together, these improvements will have a lasting impact that our customers will benefit from for many years to come."

The Board approved a \$17.2 million contract with Judlau Contracting Inc. of Lisle to replace the bridges that carry the inbound UP North Line tracks over 11 streets from Grace to Balmoral. The bridges are more than 100 years old and can no longer be economically repaired and maintained. Construction of bridges for the outbound tracks over the same 11 streets was completed in 2015. The new bridges will last for more than 100 years.

Kenny Construction Company of Northbrook was awarded a \$15.5 million contract to rehabilitate the bridges that carry the UP North Line over Webster Avenue and the North Branch of the Chicago River just north of Webster (known as the Deering Bridge).

Finally, IHC Construction Companies of Elgin was awarded a \$15.5 million contract to build the new inbound half of the Ravenswood Station, the busiest station on the line outside of downtown. The work will mirror that of the outbound half of the new station, which was completed in 2015.

The station will have longer, covered platforms, warming shelters, new lighting, ramps, stairs, new landscaping and a vendor space. Once the work is complete, the station will be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Customers will continue to use the temporary inbound platform until the new station and bridge project are complete.

Work on all three projects is expected to begin in July. The work on the Deering and Roscoe bridges will take about a year, while the work on the other bridges and Ravenswood Station will take about 30 months. Construction could result in minor delays to off-peak trains.

These projects are part of Metra's 2017 construction program, which includes approximately \$216 million in infrastructure improvements to 29 stations, 21 bridges and 29 road crossings and the replacement of 57,000 railroad ties to ensure safe and reliable service and maintain a state of good repair systemwide.

Metra proposes revised Metra Electric schedule

(May 24, 2017) -

Metra has proposed a revision to its Metra Electric Line schedule that adjusts service to better reflect ridership demands and anticipated development in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood, where more than 1,700 residential units have been planned or recently constructed.

Metra has prepared a number of documents to inform customers about the proposal, including the news release below. The information also includes:

The proposed new inbound weekday schedule

The proposed new outbound weekday schedule

The proposed new inbound weekend schedule

The proposed new outbound weekend schedule

The current Metra Electric Schedule

Questions and answers about the proposed new schedule

Alternative service for the South Chicago Branch Line

Alternative service for the Blue Island Branch Line

Copies of the proposed new schedule also are being distributed on Metra Electric trains and downtown stations. In addition, Metra will hold meetings to present the schedule changes, answer questions about alternative transportation options and gather feedback about the proposed new schedule from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on the following schedule:

June 19 – South Shore Cultural Center, 7059 S. South Shore Drive

June 20 – Flossmoor Village Hall, 2800 Flossmoor Rd.

June 21 – Blue Island City Hall, 2434 Vermont St.

June 22 – Polsky Exchange, University of Chicago, 1452 E. 53rd St., 2nd Floor

Comments may also be sent to medschedulerevisions@metrarr.com. Metra will consider all comments before finalizing the schedule, with a goal of implementing the new schedule later this summer.

The proposed schedule will generally provide train service every 20 minutes or less between Millennium Station and all three Hyde Park stations (51st/53rd Street, 55th/56th/57th Street and 59th Street) until 7 p.m. on weekdays. Recent data indicates that ridership at these three Hyde Park stations has increased 7.6 percent over the past three years.

The goal of the proposed schedule revisions is to improve service and attract more customers without increasing Metra's costs. Ridership on the Metra Electric Line has declined nearly 14 percent over the past six years, down 1.4 million passenger trips or 61 percent of the total decline in ridership systemwide since 2011.

"We need to do something to stem the loss of ridership on the Metra Electric Line, which has been declining for years despite the fact that the line has the newest cars and most scheduled trains on our system," said Metra Executive Director/CEO Don Orseno. "This new schedule is an effort to make the best use of our existing resources by scheduling our trains in a more efficient way and enhancing service without impacting our budget."

The proposed schedule maintains nearly all rush-hour train service on the Metra Electric mainline and improves midday service to hourly from every two hours at stations on the South Side of Chicago between 63rd and Kensington, including the newly rehabilitated 111th St./Pullman Station near the Pullman National Monument. Other proposed changes address gaps in service and simplify the schedule and stop patterns. The new schedule also eliminates or combines lightly used trains, mostly on the Blue Island and South Chicago branches, which have seen ridership decline 17.5 and 11.2 percent, respectively, over the past three years.

"My community has been advocating for increased service on the Metra Electric Line for years," said State Rep. Barbara Flynn Currie (25th District). "This is a good first step toward increasing Metra Electric ridership."

"Convenient and reliable public transportation options are critical for faculty, staff, students, and visitors traveling to our campus for work, class, and arts and culture offerings, as well as to our offices and other facilities," said University of Chicago Vice President for Civic Engagement and External Affairs Derek Douglas. "We appreciate the consideration Metra has taken in revising and enhancing its schedule, which will help meet the need for more frequent transportation as the mid-South Side continues to grow as a destination."

Some of the major changes under the proposed schedule include:

- **Improved midday service to Hyde Park** – The three Hyde Park stations would now be served by 18 inbound trains (up from as few as nine trains) and 18 outbound trains (up from as few as seven trains) during the midday period between 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Inbound trains would arrive at those stations every 20 minutes (down from as many as 60 minutes) and outbound trains from downtown to Hyde Park would depart every 20 minutes (down from as many as 60 minutes).
- **Improved midday service to mainline stops from 75th to 111th streets** – Those stations would now see six inbound trains and six outbound trains during the midday hours, up from three. Trains would arrive every hour, instead of every two hours.
- **Elimination of a gap in inbound service on the mainline** – The current schedule has a nearly one-hour gap between Train 742, which leaves University Park at 5:48 a.m., and train

700, which leaves University Park at 6:40 a.m.. Train 106, which now leaves University Park at 6:34 a.m., would be inserted between those two trains and would instead depart University Park at 6:12 a.m. Schedules of others trains would be adjusted to accommodate customers using Train 106's current schedule.

- **Elimination of lightly used trains on the branch lines** – Lightly used trains on the branch lines, mostly early morning and late evening trains, would be eliminated, including Blue Island Branch Trains 200, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, and 251 and South Chicago Branch Trains 300, 330, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351 and 353. Many of these trains carry only one to two customers per day. Taken together, these trains carry an average of fewer than 10 passengers per day.

Alternative public transportation options to serve the South Chicago and Blue Island branch line stations and eliminated trains include a variety of CTA and Pace buses. In addition, Metra's Rock Island Line is an alternative for some Blue Island Branch customers.

Trains 331 and 604 will also be eliminated, though Trains 329 and 504 can serve those passengers seven minutes earlier and four minutes later, respectively.

- **Combining two trains on the mainline into one train** – Inbound mainline Trains 738 and 758, which have similar schedules but serve different stations, would be combined into one Train 738 and serve all stations formerly served by the two trains. Similarly, outbound mainline Trains 739 and 759 would be combined into one Train 739.
- **Adjustment of Saturday service** – Saturday service would be scaled back to better match demand. However, the line would continue to have more Saturday trains than any other Metra line. On the mainline, the number of trains would drop to 40 from 46, while on the South Chicago Branch, the number of trains would drop to 32 from 48. By comparison, the BNSF Line, Metra's busiest, has 28 Saturday trains. The proposed revisions will keep the same level of Sunday service on the Metra Electric Line, though some train times may be adjusted. The Blue Island Branch currently has no Sunday service.
- **Elimination of Saturday service on the Blue Island Branch** – Metra would no longer offer service on the Blue Island Branch on Saturdays. The Blue Island Branch currently operates 16 inbound trains on Saturday, accommodating fewer than 100 total passengers from Blue Island Branch stations for the entire day, or an average of about six passengers per train.

Alternative public transportation options to serve the Blue Island Branch include a variety of CTA and Pace

buses. In addition, Metra's Rock Island Line is an alternative for some Blue Island Branch customers.

Metra will host a series of community meetings to present the schedule changes, answer questions about alternative transportation options and gather feedback about the proposed new schedule. The meetings, which will be from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., will be held at:

June 19 – South Shore Cultural Center, 7059 S. South Shore Drive

- June 20 – Flossmoor Village Hall, 2800 Flossmoor Rd.
- June 21 – Blue Island City Hall, 2434 Vermont St.
- June 22 – Polsky Exchange, University of Chicago, 1452 E. 53rd St., 2nd Floor

Comments may also be sent to medschedulerevisions@metrarr.com. Metra will consider all comments before finalizing the schedule, with a goal of implementing the new schedule later this summer. Metra will continue to refine the Metra Electric Line schedule in the years to come based on changing demand in the service area.

All Metra Electric Line customers are asked to review the proposal to learn if their trains would be affected.

Pace and IDOT partner to offer Bus on Shoulder on Edens (I-94)

Pace and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) will again partner to improve commutes and reduce congestion in the Chicagoland area. We are pleased to announce a 2-year demonstration of bus-on-shoulder service on the 13-mile stretch of the Edens Expressway (I-94) from Foster Avenue to Lake Cook Road.

Since Pace introduced shoulder riding on I-55 in late 2011, on time performance for routes on the corridor has improved dramatically, from about 65% to over 90%. Ridership has more than quadrupled in the corridor, proving that reliability plays a significant role in attracting and retaining riders. While ridership may not increase at those levels on the Edens, Pace does expect to see ridership growth and improved schedule reliability.

Pace will kick-off bus on shoulders operations on the Edens with existing routes 620 (connects the CTA Dempster Station in Skokie and Allstate's Northbrook campus) and 626 (connects the CTA Dempster Station in Skokie and various commercial and business centers in Northbrook, Deerfield, Riverwoods, Buffalo Grove, and Lincolnshire).

"We've seen unprecedented ridership growth along the I-55 corridor thanks to the bus on shoulder service," said Pace Chairman Richard Kwasneski. "Since bus on shoulder operations began, ridership in the corridor has grown by almost five times. When there's congestion on the roadway, bus on shoulder service is faster and more

reliable than driving. Commuters see that and choose our service over their cars. We believe they will do the same in the Lake-Cook region and are excited to partner with IDOT on this project."

Additional routes that could utilize the I-94 service in the future are in the planning stages. Preliminary concepts aim to provide connections from the Jefferson Park Transit Center and the CTA Kimball Brown Line Station to the Lake Cook Corridor. Service expansion is based on the availability of funding and equipment and is subject to change.

In coordination with IDOT and the Illinois State Police, safety focused operating rules similar to those in use on I-55 will be employed. Buses will use the outside shoulder lanes when general traffic slows to below 35 mph. While using the shoulders, the bus will not exceed the speed of regular traffic by more than 15 mph and the maximum speed for buses traveling on the shoulder is 35 mph. If the shoulder is unavailable due to an accident, law enforcement activity, or emergency response vehicles, Pace will merge back into the regular lanes.

"This minor modification to our infrastructure will have far-reaching benefits for commuters and the environment," said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. "Expanding the success of this convenient, innovative program to the Edens provides travelers in the region one more option to get to where they need to go, while reducing congestion and building more reliability into their trips."

Construction has already begun on the Edens Expressway (Interstate 94) and includes resurfacing the outside shoulders and some travel lanes, adding new signage, and modifying rumble strips. Nightly lane closures will take place in both directions between Foster Avenue and Lake Cook Road. The expressway at times will be reduced to one lane in each direction during the overnight hours. Expressway entrance and exit ramp closures also may be required.

Metra to purchase new, modern seats

(June 21, 2017) -

After a yearlong pilot program to test a new style of seats with armrests, built-in cup holders and better head, neck and lumbar support, Metra today announced plans to purchase and install the new, modern seats on an ongoing basis as it rehabilitates its fleet of railcars. The new seats will also be included in future railcar purchases and will become the standard for Metra's fleet moving forward.

As part of the pilot program, Metra used a survey to gather input from customers about what they liked and didn't like about the new seats and the older seats. While the new seats were not favored by everyone, Metra believes there are strong economic reasons for choosing the new style and the design will be further enhanced based on the feedback received from customers.

"This was not an easy choice to make because we know that many of our customers like the older, bench-style seats," said Metra Executive Director/CEO Don Orseno. "But we received some great input from our customers that we will incorporate into the next design that will make the new seats even more comfortable."

Survey respondents who had an opinion about the headrests and armrests on the older seats indicated that they were unsatisfied with these features. The armrests on the new seats fared better, but customers requested that an armrest be added to the seats on the aisle. As a result, the additional armrest will be added to the new seat design.

The majority of respondents who had an opinion about the new seats agreed that the seats were easy to get in and out of and that they were attractive. However, Metra received some comments stating that the aisles were too narrow. Therefore, the seats will be modified slightly to widen the aisles to their original width.

The survey responses indicated that the cup holders were useful, but some respondents indicated that they were too small to hold a large-sized drink. In response, the new design will feature enlarged cup holders.

Most respondents indicated they were unsatisfied with the direction the new seats face (the stationary design means that half of seats face backwards), however, the majority of customers who had an opinion about the new seats were satisfied with both their comfort and size.

In addition, Metra will continue to install USB ports and power outlets in its railcars to allow customers to charge their phones and mobile devices while onboard.

The new seats cost about the same as the older seats, but there are more manufacturers of this style in the rail industry, which is expected to keep the prices competitive and drive down future procurement costs. Further, replacing the new seats in future rehabilitations will cost about 50 percent less than replacing the old ones because parts can be reused.

Metra is not spending any extra money on the new seats; they are being installed in cars whose seats need replacement anyway, and rather than replace them with the older style the agency is replacing them with the new style. The agency also hopes that the new, stationary design will help prevent injuries to customers and employees who pinch their fingers and strain muscles flipping the older seats back and forth.

"The reality is that these new seats have become the standard for the vast majority of commuter railroads," Orseno added. "We are excited to take this step forward with railcars that feature a more modern seat design."

BREWSTER CHOOSES MCI AND 20 NEW J4500 COACHES TO TRAVEL THE ROCKIES THIS SUMMER

DES PLAINES, ILLINOIS, MAY 12, 2017: (TSX:NFI) (TSX:NFI.DB.U) Motor Coach Industries ("MCI"), a subsidiary of New Flyer Industries Inc. (the "Company"), the largest bus

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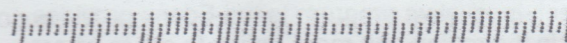


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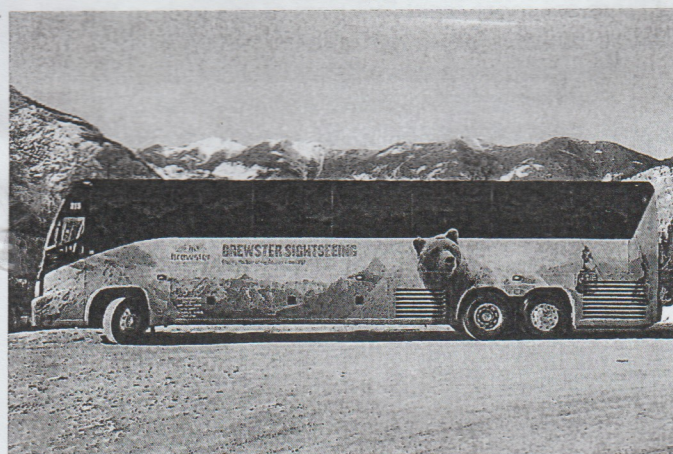
P.O. Box 8258

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and motor coach manufacturer and parts supplier in North America, noted that seeing the Canadian Rockies by motor coach is just one of the world's greatest travel experiences, and Brewster recently chose 20 new MCI® J4500 coaches to deliver it to its passengers in luxury.



Banff-based Brewster — one of the oldest and most respected names in Canadian tourism with satellite offices in Canmore, Lake Louise, Jasper and Calgary — recently took delivery of nine MCI J4500s adding to the 11 Brewster put into service during 2016.

They've arrived just in time. "May kicks off our busy travel season," noted Devon Dadalt, Brewster's Transportation Revenue Manager. The newest MCI coaches will serve Brewster's full-day sightseeing tour business, which carry passengers for 6-10 hours at a time. Comfort is paramount, says Dadalt: "It's a good looking coach and our passengers like the many amenities."

And what amenities — each of Brewster's new MCI J4500s include plush leather seating for 52 passengers and custom galleys in the back with cold-water stations. Other high-end elements include wood-like flooring, 110-volt power outlets at every seat and Wi-Fi.

Brewster's passion is to provide guests with unforgettable, world-class experiences, accommodations, and transportation throughout Western Canada. Its parent Pursuit, which operates a portfolio of luxury travel brands, also supports Glacier Park, Inc., the Alaska Collection and FlyOver Canada. Pursuit offers world travelers and adventure seekers one-of-a-kind experiences available at the Banff Gondola, Banff Lake Cruise, Glacier Skywalk, Glacier Adventure and Maligne Lake Cruise.

Brewster dates its history back to 1892 when it was founded by Jim and Bill Brewster, just 10 and 12 years old at the time. The children were trained by the First Nations People to serve as guides for the historic Banff Springs Hotel. As they grew, the Brewster brothers became true tourism pioneers and in 1916 replaced some 70 horse-drawn carriages with five motor buses to carry Banff tourists, home to Canada's first national park.

Brewster and MCI also share a bit of history — both were subsidiaries of former MCI owner Greyhound Dial Co. during the 1980s.

"We're honored that Brewster has selected the MCI J4500," said Pat Ziska, Vice President of New Coach Sales. "We have so much respect for the way they care for their equipment and passengers alike. These new MCI J4500 coaches feature the latest engine technology that supports Brewster's special connection to the outdoors and their leadership in Canadian heritage, community and in environmental responsibility."