CMT has been and will continue to be committed to assisting with the development of both immediate improvements and a longer-term strategy to ensure the safety and security of the St. Louis region’s transit system. For more than a year, CMT and other area stakeholders – including the St. Louis Regional Chamber, Washington University, Organization for Black Struggle, SEIU Local 1, University of Missouri-St. Louis, East-West Gateway Council of Governments, ATO, St. Clair County Transit District, Metro and representatives from various local law enforcement jurisdictions and prosecutor’s offices – have been meeting as part of the Transit Advisory Working Group to move the dial on safety and security as it relates to transit. The group has taken significant and measurable steps to ensure the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement signed in May 2017 by regionally elected officials and Bi-State is being implemented to improve safety, restore public confidence and create a secure ridership experience.

Together, the following has been accomplished:

• Increased presence of law enforcement officers on the MetroLink system and a reduction in Metro customer service complaints. This includes the expansion of the MetroLink Unit from 40 to 68 police officers (a 70% increase).
• Formation of a Joint Task Force to delineate and educate law enforcement from three different jurisdictions, as well as the security staff from the Bi-State-operated Metro Public Safety Department, on the specific responsibilities and duties for each level of public safety.
• Implementation of an initiative by CMT that gives transit riders free, one-year access to the Smartphone safety app, Noonlight (formerly Safetrek).
• Initiation of an environmental design and security audit through East-West Gateway Council of Governments to lay the groundwork for determining the best technology to improve access control on the St. Louis system.
• Development of a pilot access control program, which will be implemented at strategically selected stations to increase safety and security.
• Passage of an Ordinance in the City of St. Louis to allow St. Clair County Sheriff’s Deputies to provide aid at stations within the City of St. Louis.

Transit safety and security is a priority for St. Louis. There is not one specific tool or answer to address the issues, but there are many stakeholders and groups, who are spending a significant amount of time and resources to make improvements. The goal is to provide a safe, secure ride for all users – whether they ride every day or just take transit downtown to a Cardinals game.
EXPANDING TRANSIT ACCESS

FY2018 was a historic year for transit in St. Louis. July 31 marked the 25th Anniversary of the arrival of MetroLink, and on that day, Metro and area stakeholders welcomed the new MetroLink Station at Cortex.

With support from Washington University, BJC HealthCare, Cortex Innovation Community and Great Rivers Greenway, CMT began working on the Cortex project in 2010 with a grant application to conduct a Central Corridor Feasibility Study for a potential new, in-fill MetroLink Station between the Central West End and Grand MetroLink Stations. Eight years and a lot of hard work later, a brand-new station is now open to the public. It serves as the first addition to the transit system since the opening of the Cross-County Extension in 2006 and is a shining example of what can be accomplished through collaboration.

“The St. Louis region is constantly growing. So are its transit needs. Today, people have different needs and different expectations when it comes to transportation. Through Metro Reimagined, we will be able to meet those new expectations by incorporating new technology and more service options to provide our customers with faster, more frequent and more convenient travel throughout the region.”

– Jessica Mefford-Miller, Interim Executive Director of Metro Transit

Last year, the region also undertook two large scale studies – the Northside-Southside MetroLink Corridor Study in the City of St. Louis and Metro Reimagined. The Northside Southside study kicked off in early 2017 and wrapped up in August of this year by making recommendations to the East-West Gateway Council of Board of Directors as it works to determine the next possible prioritized transit project for the region.

CMT kicked off its first year managing the Missouri Public Transit Association (MPTA) with new opportunities for education, advocacy and growth for its members. MPTA hosted the MPTA Educational Series with quarterly education events for members and transit stakeholders. MPTA membership revenue increased by four percent over the prior year and earned media coverage continued to climb.

MEET THE MANY FACES OF MISSOURI TRANSIT

The State Transportation Fund revenues remained at only $17 million, however, for the first time, MPTA witnessed the introduction of a multi-modal amendment sponsored by Missouri Rep. Kevin Corlew to provide funding for transit and other modes. Plus, the VTO Settlement included transit funding as a component in its mitigation plan, and the Missouri House of Representatives passed a plan to increase the state gas tax from 4.5 cents to 6.4 cents by a vote of 88-60, allowing a phased-in, 10-cent, motor fuel tax increase to be placed before Missourians for a vote in November 2018.

MEET THE MANY FACES OF MISSOURI TRANSIT

CMT salutes the transit agency, and every one of them, who worked to make this development a reality. We are honored to have played a key role in this project, particularly in its early stage … Well done St. Louis.”

– Jane McAlister Fowler, Chair, CMT Board of Directors

ADVOCATING FOR TRANSIT ADVANCEMENT

In addition to its work with MPTA, CMT formed a new partnership in 2018 with the St. Clair County Transit District (SCCTD). CMT will be working collaboratively with SCCTD to build membership programs and promote the benefits of transit in St. Clair County, Ill., by using MetroLink, Metrolink, MetroBikeLink and the Alternative Transportation System (ATS).
GUARANTEED RIDE HOME
In 2018, CMT expanded its Guaranteed Ride Home Program to make it easier than ever for commuters who use public transit, ride their bikes or walk to work to gain access to more immediate transportation options if a personal need arises. Individuals are now able to utilize ride-hailing services, like Lyft, in the case of a personal emergency, sickness or unscheduled overtime. CMT subsidizes the cost of 80 percent of these types of rides, up to $60 per ride, for those eligible.

OTHER EFFORTS
CMT also facilitated the statewide expansion of its Transit Crush campaign, encouraging Missourians to express their love for transit on social media, and work to begin developing a new, smartphone app to help quantify the benefits of transit use.

TEN TOE EXPRESS
CMT created the Ten Toe Express program to inspire St. Louis area seniors, as well as any other interested individuals, to see how easy it is to integrate walking with public transit use to get around town, while also promoting the health and well-being benefits of this commuting option. The program further expanded in 2018 through a partnership with AARP St. Louis that included new walking groups, destinations and participants. Saturday mornings featured the AARP Breakfast Brunch walking group, and a new partnership with the St. Louis Food Policy Coalition assisted CMT in adding exciting new special walks to the lineup. Currently, more than 350 individuals participate in this program per session.

“Transit is reliable and cost-effective. Plus riders are able to avoid parking hassles and fees. If you haven’t tried it – check it out. CMT is a great resource for you to navigate the local system.” – Former St. Louis Outfielder Tommy Pham

CMT is continually looking for ways to reinforce the need and importance of public transit in the St. Louis region, while also actively helping to build interest in the system. Over the last several years, CMT has established and expanded several unique programs and initiatives to encourage people to try transit and discover its many benefits. Highlights from FY2018 include...

SAFETREK APP
In response to its ongoing commitment to addressing the safety issues surrounding the region’s public transit system and helping to build confidence in a safe and secure ride, CMT announced the launch of a program with the smartphone application, SafeTrek (now known as Noonlight). Through this initiative, CMT members and registered transit users were able to gain complimentary, one- year access to the personal safety app. It enables individuals who feel unsafe, to notify law enforcement officials without having to call 911 or knowing their precise locations – both of which can prove tricky when traveling on a bus or train. The app can be downloaded at www.safetrekapp.com/cmt.

TRY & RIDE
Since CMT first launched its Try & Ride program in the summer of 2014, the initiative has helped more than 5,800 workday commuters learn how to navigate the St. Louis transit system and experience the many benefits of using MetroLink and MetroBus. In 2018, CMT expanded the promotion of the program through partnerships with the Green Business Challenge and former St. Louis Outfielder Tommy Pham.

NORTH HANLEY METRO MARKET
CMT and AARP St. Louis teamed up to host a CMT Metro Market at the North Hanley Station in October with the help of an AARP Community Challenge Grant. The event temporarily transformed a portion of the expansive parking lot into an active space that connected people to products, services and green spaces. The goal was to showcase how areas around transit stations can become focal points for activity and enhance livability with the hope of making some of these concepts a reality.
Positioning the Organization for Continued Success

As part of its 33rd Annual Meeting, CMT celebrated the incredible efforts of a local non-profit and a group of elected officials for their exemplary commitment to championing transit in the St. Louis area.

More specifically, AARP in St. Louis was recognized with the 2017 New Initiatives Award for partnering with CMT for the Great Race and to further the reach of the Ten Toe Express Program. St. Clair County Chairman Mark Kern, St. Louis City Mayor Lyda Krewson and St. Louis County Executive Steve Stenger were the recipients of the 2017 Chairman’s Award for their collaboration in actively addressing safety and security concerns on the MetroLink system.

Recognizing Efforts to Further Transit

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BUILDING UPON CMT's FINANCIAL FOUNDATION

Each year, CMT strives to diversify its funding sources to ensure the fiscal stability of the organization for years to come. CMT was named a recipient of the first-ever AARP Community Challenge Grant program in October 2017. Through this program, AARP invested $780,000 in 89 different community projects nationwide to help create change and improve the quality of life for people of all ages. CMT was the only recipient in Missouri to be awarded with this grant and used the funds to host a free, pop-up Metro Market at the North Hanley MetroLink Station.

CMT was also the recipient of a two-year Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program grant to build ridership on the system and a one-year contract with the St. Clair County Transit District. CMT continued its contract for the management of the Missouri Public Transit Association.

Membership revenues topped $110,000 in 2018.