



# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Advocacy in Action:  
Transit is Essential



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## ADVOCACY IN ACTION

While Fiscal Year 2020 saw dramatic changes to daily life due to the pandemic and social unrest, there are a few things that remained unchanged – including the essentialness of public transit access. Local transit agencies, as well as those across the state and nationwide, worked tirelessly to provide as much service as possible, while focusing on keeping operators and passengers safe.

This historic year demonstrated that public transit goes well beyond the ride. It provides access to jobs, education, healthcare and goods and services. It promotes social equality, positions the region for growth and provides economic return. These deliverables have fueled the mission of Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT) for the past 36 years and will continue to motivate the organization to move transit forward in the years to come.

Since CMT's establishment in 1985, it has grown to represent more than 22,000 constituents, including transit riders, major employers, academic institutions and labor and community organizations. CMT serves as a strong and effective voice on transit-related matters and is continually working to establish, support and enhance programming and initiatives to help further public transportation. The organization's vision, tenacity and extraordinary leadership continues to play a fundamental role in maintaining a safe, integrated and affordable transportation system for the St. Louis region.

Throughout FY2020, CMT's advocacy moved into action. Transit stayed at the center of many regional discussions. Safety and security took significant steps forward, and expansion plans for light rail in Illinois began to come together. Critical federal funding was secured for transit, and workforce development partnerships were formed to provide job access. And for the first time, CMT established permanent placemaking through the Maplewood Transit Stop Transformation Project.



As we head into FY2021, we know the days and weeks ahead will be faced with continued uncertainties and changes, yet CMT will remain steadfast in its commitment to furthering three key areas of opportunity for transit. This includes increasing collaboration and support for transit at both the regional and state levels, rebuilding ridership numbers and maintaining the organization's financial stability. We also look forward to working alongside regional leaders as they prepare to make important decisions tied to the future of transit.

Be a part of the action. Join us.



**JUNE MCALLISTER FOWLER**  
CHAIR, CMT BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**KIMBERLY M. CELLA**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CMT





## HELP ST. LOUIS THRIVE.

We've established and expanded several unique programs and initiatives to encourage residents regionwide to utilize the system on a daily, weekly or even occasional basis to get where they need to go.



## INCREASING RIDERSHIP

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 ridership on the system. We've established and expanded several unique programs and initiatives to encourage residents regionwide to utilize the system on a daily, weekly or even occasional basis to get where they need to go. CMT was also committed to ensuring riders feel safe, know they are appreciated and have access to resources that help simplify the commute. In turn, ridership was on the rise before the pandemic hit.





## MAPLEWOOD TRANSIT STOP TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

CMT and AARP in St. Louis worked to activate the Maplewood MetroBus Stop – located at the southwest corner of Manchester Rd. and Marshall Ave. – in partnership with the City of Maplewood, Citizens National Bank and KABOOM!. The permanent placemaking effort, known as the “Maplewood Transit Stop Transformation Project,” opened to the public in June and encourages active play, cultivates community and increases transit use.

The transformed, ADA-accessible, Maplewood MetroBus Stop boasts vibrant colors and green spaces. New shelters, a glider and bench have been installed, and lighting and better sight lines have been incorporated to improve visibility, safety and security. There is also more waiting space, better access to the parklet and surrounding green spaces, and a hopscotch game that incorporates an interactive play element to the design. In addition, an art installation featuring a Maplewood sign that graphically depicts landmarks in Maplewood was created by award-winning painter and mixed media artist Genevieve Esson, of Maplewood.

The design for the overall “Maplewood Transit Stop Transformation Project” was led by BlackArc Design with input from residents. The project serves as an extension to CMT and AARP in St. Louis’ ongoing efforts to raise awareness about “placemaking” around transit. This pilot will serve as a framework for additional projects moving forward.



*Thank you* TO THESE COMMUNITY PARTNERS







## RIDERSHIP PROGRAMMING

CMT's award-winning Try & Ride and Ten Toe Express programs continued to attract new riders to the transit system in FY2020. Try & Ride has been credited with helping more than 6,500 workday commuters learn how to navigate transit by providing an array of free resources like personalized transit routes, tips, tickets and Guaranteed Ride Home registration. This past year, the program proved particularly helpful in providing access to workforce training opportunities thanks to newly established partnerships with CyberUp and Mission: St. Louis. Meanwhile, the Ten Toe Express program continued to attract more than 300 seniors during both the fall and spring sessions. Participants experienced how easy it is to integrate walking with public transit use to get around town, while exercising and connecting with others in the community. While the spring session was truncated due to COVID-19, new outside destinations were identified, a how to walk on your own video was created and several Facebook Live walks were broadcast, allowing those who couldn't attend to participate from home. Since its inception, Ten Toe Express has introduced more than 8,000 seniors to the system.





# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



CMT partnered with Metro Transit, St. Clair County Transit District, the MetroLink Police Unit, AARP in St. Louis and the University of Missouri – St. Louis to initiate quarterly community engagement events. Each was centered around a theme that helped to highlight the benefits of transit, build relationships between riders and the law enforcement patrolling the system, and surprise and delight Metro Transit customers. These events included Stay Toasty on Transit: Pop-up Coat Exchange, Crushing on Transit: The 2020 Bus Crush and STL Transit Passport: Board, Explore & Win.





## EXPANDING TRANSIT ACCESS AND EDUCATION

Access is key to any successful, integrated public transportation system. As such, work is always being done to help broaden, and in some cases streamline, its size and scope to meet rider demands and further its reach. Throughout this process, education has also been essential. In FY2020, efforts to expand transit access and education included the:

- St. Clair County Transit District advancing the \$96 million expansion of MetroLink from the Shiloh-Scott Station to MidAmerica St. Louis Airport.
- Official request made by the City of St. Louis to utilize \$1.4 million from the Transit Fund portion of the Economic Development Tax passed in 2017 to conduct an alternative analysis in the Northside/Southside corridor. The goal is to provide a thorough analysis of revenue sources (current study shows a \$250 million capital gap and \$20-25 million operating gap annually) and technologies. The City of St. Louis' budget was approved in late-June. The City will manage the consultant selection through BPS with Metro Transit leading the project after selection.
- Expansion of CMT's Try & Ride program to remove the transportation barrier for workforce development through unique partnerships with CyberUp and Mission: St. Louis.





- Launch of St. Clair County Transit District's Transit Vision 2020 Network Plan to improve MetroBus service and access in Southwestern Illinois. This plan included the launch of the first microtransit service in the region – the SCCTD Flyer – which offers service in East St. Louis and Fairmont City, Ill.
- Release of the 2019 Economic Impact of Public Transit Services in the State of Missouri Study, completed in partnership CMT, the Missouri Public Transit Association and AARP in St. Louis to quantify the impact public transportation has on urban, suburban and rural communities statewide.
- Implementation of five CMT "Talking Transit" events to raise awareness among the general public about these, and other, efforts underway to advance transit. Each featured industry experts, project managers and regional leaders able to present and discuss the specifics of these initiatives and the impact they will have on the St. Louis region.
- Expansion of CMT's reach in the business community through a partnership with the St. Louis Green Business Challenge. The partnership was designed to further integrate transit and transit benefit programs into "green" plans, programming and information through this St. Louis employer network.
- Recognition of transit agencies and operators as everyday heroes. During the nationwide stay-at-home orders issued in response to COVID-19, CMT spearheaded a Thank You Campaign to salute these individuals for providing as much service as possible while focusing on the health and safety of operators and passengers. This allowed a number of community partners – including the St. Louis Regional Chamber, Civic Progress, East-West Gateway Council of Governments, Washington University, Saint Louis University, University of Missouri–St. Louis, the City of St. Louis, St. Clair County and St. Louis County – to collectively express their gratitude and appreciation through an advertising and social media campaign.



# THANK YOU

## To Our Transit Agencies and Operators!

As the bi-state St. Louis region unites amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, public transportation providers are working tirelessly to provide as much service as possible, while focusing on keeping operators and passengers safe.

For many essential workers - healthcare personnel, first responders, grocery store employees and more – public transit is a vital connection to their jobs. Many others depend on public transit to access food, medicine and other necessities.

Enhanced safety precautions remain paramount as transit operators work to protect public health and safety while ensuring critical access. We salute our region's transit agencies and the operators on the front lines for their commitment to keeping our region moving, and for the role transit plays as an economic engine moving our region forward.

Please join us in thanking Metro Transit, St. Clair County Transit District, Madison County Transit, and the operators from the Amalgamated Transit Union and the teams behind them. They are among our everyday heroes.

### With Gratitude From,



Kimberly Cella  
Executive Director  
Citizens for Modern Transit



Sam Page  
County Executive  
St. Louis County



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St. Clair County



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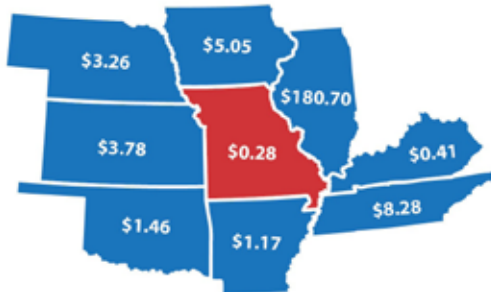
Bi-State Development alone, which operates Metro Transit, had a direct and indirect economic impact on the St. Louis economy that exceeds \$2.7 billion, while supporting more than 21,000 jobs.  
Source: Citizens for Modern Transit's Study - 2019 Economic Impact Study of Transit

#TransitIsEssential



Missouri transit providers received more than \$248 million from the CARES Act to help fill the gap from reduced fare and sales tax revenues due to the pandemic.

2018 MO per capita spending on Transit compared to surrounding states, 2020 AASHTO Report



## ADVOCATING FOR TRANSIT IN MISSOURI AND ILLINOIS

CMT kicked off its fifth year managing the work of the Missouri Public Transit Association (MPTA). Highlights included hosting quarterly educational events geared toward members and other transit stakeholders, hitting record levels for membership and engagement, securing hundreds of millions of dollars in critical federal funding for transit, and releasing the results of the 2019 *Economic Impact Study of Missouri Public Transit*, in collaboration with AARP in St. Louis.

MPTA's statewide member transit providers worked closely during COVID-19 to share lessons learned, protocols and safety updates. The Missouri Department of Transportation was the first agency in the country to complete its CARES Act agreement for \$61 million in funding for all rural providers in the state. In total, Missouri transit providers received more than \$248 million from the CARES Act to help fill the gap from reduced fare and sales tax revenues due to the pandemic. The state's current funding of \$.28 per capita is one of the lowest in the United States. However, Missouri providers were able to hold on to the State Transportation Fund revenues, which totaled \$1.7 million, for another year even though state legislators had to reduce the state budget by more than \$700 million due to COVID-19.

In addition to CMT's work with MPTA, the organization partnered with St. Clair County Transit District in Illinois to build ridership programs. Efforts were designed to promote the benefits of utilizing the MetroLink, MetroBus, MetroBikeLink and the Alternative Transportation System (ATS). CMT also assisted with the development of the Transit Vision 2020 Network Plan and associated MetroBus route changes that went into effect in June; the establishment and expansion of the SCCTD Flyer service; and the opening of the new, 3.5-mile Fairview Heights Trail that runs from the Fairview Heights MetroLink Station to the Memorial MetroLink Station where it connects to the existing 11.5-mile MetroBikeLink System for a total of 14 miles of continuous paved trails running adjacent to the MetroLink System.



## FURTHERING SAFETY AND SECURITY

The safety and security of the transit system has been a top priority for CMT for the past four years. The organization continues to assist regional leadership with the development of both immediate improvements and a longer-term strategy through its leadership of the Transit Advisory Working Group (TAWG).

This group consists of representatives from CMT, the St. Louis Regional Chamber, Washington University in St. Louis, the Organization for Black Struggle, SEIU Local 1, University of Missouri-St. Louis, East-West Gateway Council of Governments, Saint Louis University, Centene, St. Louis Community Colleges, ATU, Metro Transit and various local law enforcement jurisdictions, local government representatives, and prosecutors' offices. Together, they ensured the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed in May 2017 by regional leaders, continues to be implemented according to its terms. Along the way, tremendous progress has been made in changing the paradigm of how safety and security is approached on the transit system. It has a more friendly and customer-based focus. Over the past year, TWAG has also been credited with helping to:



- Complete Phase II of the MetroLink Security Assessment, which included the initiation of quarterly Metro Security Score Cards to assess progress against six categories identified in Phase I of the assessment that was led by East-West Gateway Council of Governments and its consultant WSP.



- Establish new security leadership at Metro Transit.
- Appoint new contracted security G4S on April 1, touting a very different deployment role through a layered security approach.
- Disarm Transportation Security Specialists, shifting the focus on customer service.
- Initiate quarterly community engagement efforts along the alignment to reinforce the new customer focus and benefits of transit.
- Adopt a Ride and Abide Policy at the agency level.

- Unify law enforcement and Metro Public Safety through JTF.

Safety and security efforts will continue to evolve thanks to the creation of the Bi-State Development Board of Commissioners' Security Sub-Committee, which is further elevating transit safety within the agency.

CMT looks forward to its ongoing collaboration with regional leaders in the shared pursuit of an even safer, more secure system.

## RECOGNIZING EFFORTS TO FURTHER TRANSIT

As part of its 35th Annual Meeting, which was held in September of last year, CMT celebrated the incredible efforts of several individuals and organizations for their exemplary commitment to championing transit in the St. Louis area. During the event, CMT presented the 2019 Chairman's Award to six Illinois legislators for securing financing for the extension of MetroLink to MidAmerica St. Louis Airport, the 2019 New Initiatives Award to St. Clair County Transit District for the establishment of a rider ambassador program, and the 2019 Service Award to long-time CMT board members Len Toenjes and Jim Fredericks.



The University of Missouri–St. Louis was also recognized for winning the 2019 College Transit Challenge.

In February, CMT was honored with a 2020 Arcus Award by the St. Louis Regional Chamber. CMT won in the Achievement in Transportation and Infrastructure category, which recognized organizations demonstrating leadership and creativity to innovate programs relative to transportation and infrastructure in the St. Louis region. CMT Executive Director Kim Cella, along with CMT Board members Chris Beard, Nancy Cross, D'Andre Braddix and Sheila Holm, accepted the award at the event. CMT was also recognized by the Bi-State Board of Commissioners for the organization's 35 years of transit advocacy and leadership at its December Board Meeting.



*"We were honored and thrilled to receive the 2020 Arcus Award from the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Rubin Brown. CMT's accomplishments are credited to the hard work and tenacity of MANY – including our Board of Directors, our community partners and our 22,000 members and constituents. As the region's transit advocacy organization, we don't own or operate the transit system. However, we work daily to champion, challenge, encourage and advocate for it. Whether you use transit or not, the St. Louis region needs this world-class system," said Kimberly Cella, executive director of CMT.*





## 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. In partnership with St. Clair County Transit District, CMT was selected to help build ridership in Illinois thanks to a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Grant awarded by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). CMT also received a \$50,000 grant award from AARP in St. Louis to initiate permanent placemaking efforts around transit and was granted a contract to continue the management of the MPTA through the end of 2020.

Membership revenues topped \$134,000 in 2020.



## POSITIONING CMT FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS

CMT elected two new members to its Board of Directors in September 2019. Marc Scheessele of Saint Louis University and Glyn Ramage of the Southwestern Illinois Laborers District Council will each serve a three-year term. The organization also extended the appointments of Taulby Roach of Bi-State Development Agency, Patricia Hagen of T-REX and Carlo Sanfilippo of Integral Wealth for a second, three-year term. In February, Mark Grossenbacher with HNTB was elected to a two-year term.



Marc Scheessele



Glyn Ramage



Taulby Roach



Patricia Hagen



Carlo Sanfilippo



Carlo Sanfilippo

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