

ANNUAL REPORT 2022





Transit Advocacy Moves into Action

In Fiscal Year 2022, transit advocacy moved into action through the ongoing work of Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT). This year, the organization celebrated the historic transit investment made by the State of Missouri; placed renewed focus on raising awareness about transit expansion, microtransit service availability and first-last mile solutions; and worked to further and/or complete “Transit Stop Transformation Projects” at Metro Transit Centers. The impact of these efforts extended well beyond ridership access and are playing a key role in furthering equity, opportunity and growth in local communities.

Such outcomes have fueled the mission of Citizens for Modern Transit for the past 38 years and will continue to motivate the organization as we move into the future.

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 transit access. The organization’s vision, tenacity and extraordinary leadership plays a fundamental role in maintaining a safe, integrated and affordable transportation system for the St. Louis region.

Throughout FY2022, CMT’s advocacy efforts helped bring the region together, build support and prompt change. That said, there continue to be challenges for transit as it relates to building back ridership and addressing supply chain issues and labor shortages. This coming year, CMT will work to further three key areas of opportunity. These include increasing community collaboration and support for transit at 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.

Public transit is moving in the right direction.
Join us for the ride.

Hart Nelson Chair
CMT Board of Directors

Kimberly M. Cella
Executive Director, CMT



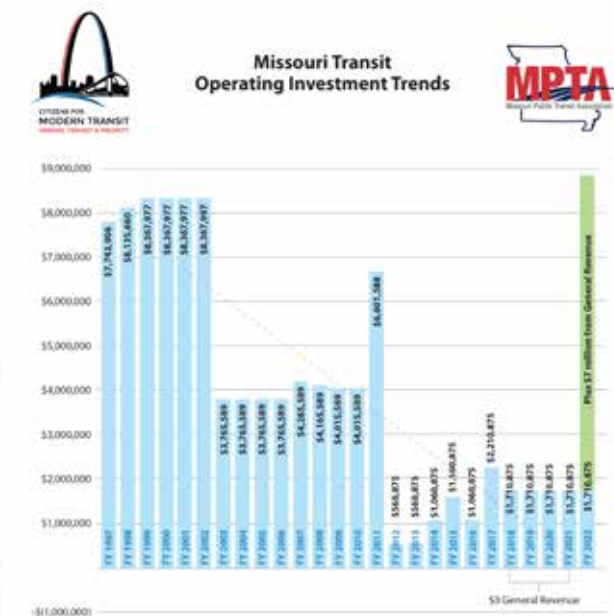
Increasing Investment. Addressing Issues.

Fiscal Year 2022 marked a historic change in state investment in public transit. For the first time in two decades, Missouri is set to invest \$8.7 million in transit – a sum that will be split among the 34 transit providers operating in the state.

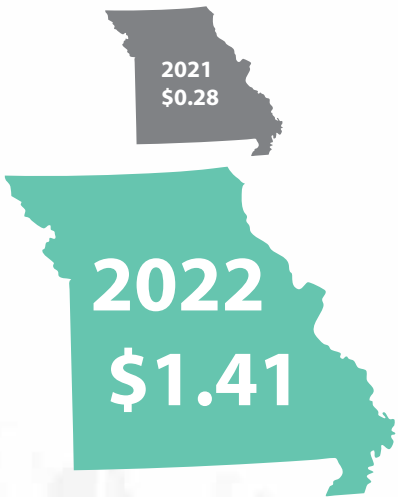
This increase was critically needed – considering Missouri is ranked 45th in the nation for transit investment and had allocated only \$1.7 million each of the last four consecutive years – but it will go so much further when considering federal matches. This funding will help provide the non-federal or local match required to enable transit providers to draw funding from the historic \$91 billion in federal funds earmarked for transit as part of the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) passed this fiscal year.

Lobbyist Michael Winter, LLC, represented CMT and transit at the state level. CMT also worked for months to raise awareness about this issue and encourage transit riders and the community at-large to reach out to state legislature in support of this funding via meetings, a letter writing campaign, partner building, blog posts and placement of several letters-to-the-editor in various media outlets across Missouri.

Similar efforts were utilized by CMT, MPTA and other collective partners to oppose state legislation that would have allowed the carrying of concealed weapons on transit if it had passed.



Per Capita Funding for Missouri



“I want to congratulate CMT on your outstanding year, most recently including the historic funding that was secured from the state of Missouri for public transit and preventing legislation allowing concealed weapons from being carried on transit buses, vans, and trains. CMT benefits our region through its advocacy of forward-thinking transit policy that will help, among other things, support a more productive and equitable future for our workforce, a top priority for RBC.”

Kathy Osborn, President & CEO, The Regional Business Council

Expanding Efforts. Furthering Impact.

In Fiscal Year 22, CMT successfully secured a three-year management contract and kicked off its seventh year managing the work of the Missouri Public Transit Association (MPTA). Ongoing efforts included hosting quarterly educational events geared toward members and other transit stakeholders, launching peer round tables for transit professionals, hitting record levels for membership and engagement, helping to secure critical federal funding for transit through COVID relief funding and the historic IIJA Bill, releasing a Statewide Transit Needs Assessment Study in conjunction with Missouri Department of Transportation and addressing operator and supply chain shortages.

In addition to CMT’s work with MPTA, the organization partnered with the St. Clair County Transit District (SCCTD) in Illinois to build ridership programming and increase awareness about the benefits of utilizing the MetroLink, MetroBus, MetroBikeLink and Alternative Transportation System (ATS). Key accomplishments included helping SCCTD secure a \$9.975 million ReBuild Illinois Grant to bring new development and associated jobs to the Emerson Park Transit Center in East St. Louis; transforming the Belleville Transit Center as part of the “Transit Stop Transformation” Project; introducing microtransit to Scott Air Force Base, and creating community events like the Passport to Music on Metro, designed to promote community and encourage ridership.



Increasing Ridership. Providing Access to Opportunity.

CMT is continually looking for ways to reinforce the need for and importance of public transit in the St. Louis region, while also actively helping to build ridership on the system. The organization has 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 has also been committed to ensuring riders feel safe and appreciated, while having access to resources to help simplify their commutes. In turn, post-pandemic ridership has started to slowly increase.

Highlights from FY2022 include the following:

Building Engaging Spaces Around Transit

CMT and AARP in St. Louis expanded their work in the placemaking space in FY2022, working to revamp the spaces surrounding the Belleville Transit Center in Illinois and the North Hanley Transit Center in Missouri. This is a concept that transforms places people simply pass through in route to their next destination – like Metro Transit Centers – into active, engaging corridors that connect individuals and neighborhoods by offering access to products, services, activities and green space.

The “Transit Stop Transformation” Project at the Belleville Transit Center was completed in partnership with the St. Clair County Transit District, Metro Transit and the City of Belleville. The permanent placemaking effort was completed in late June 2022. It encourages active play, cultivates community, gives a nod to the arts community in Belleville and increases transit use.

The design – developed by the St. Louis-based transportation engineering and planning firm CBB – converted the concrete area between the bus bays and MetroLink entrance into an interactive, playful and engaging space, boasting a vibrant-colored “Art Grows in Belleville” theme. The revitalized space features new custom bike racks, shade structures, a Belleville city logo sign, benches, planters and elevated window artwork by artist Genevieve Esson. It was inspired by design concepts that were submitted by Belleville East and West high school students in conjunction with Added Dimension, LLC. This project was funded by St. Clair County Transit District, Citizens for Modern Transit’s Pilot Funds Program, AARP in St. Louis, the City of Belleville and the REALTOR® Association of Southwestern Illinois.

CMT and AARP in St. Louis also launched a “Transit Stop Transformation” Project at the North Hanley Transit Center in October, 2021 in partnership with Metro Transit. A final design concept was revealed in August boasting the theme “Transit: We All Ride Together.” The transformed site is expected to open in late fall 2022.



“The transformation at the Belleville Transit Center is really remarkable. Aside from being visually appealing, it is helping to further foster community,” said Herb Simmons, Chair of St. Clair County Transit District’s Board of Trustees.



Executing Community Engagement Efforts

CMT partnered with Metro Transit, St. Clair County Transit District, Bureau of Transit Police, Metro Transit Public Safety, AARP in St. Louis and the University of Missouri – St. Louis to initiate quarterly community engagement events. Each provided a valuable opportunity for the partnering organizations to interact with riders, strengthen relationships and reinforce their collective commitment to a safe, world-class, customer-focused transit experience.

These included:



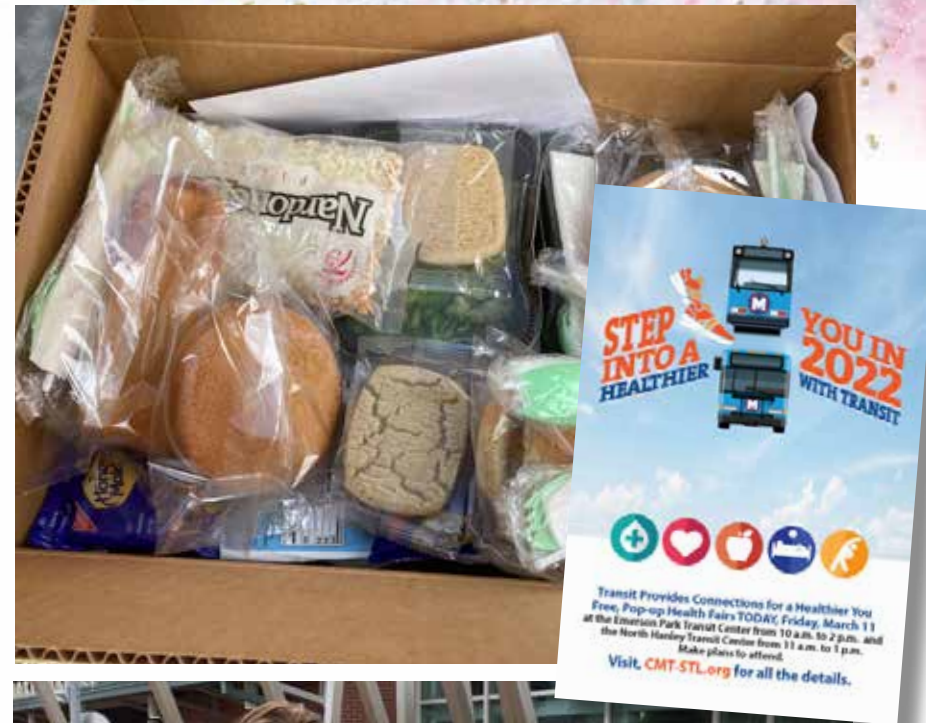
Crushing on Transit

Partners hosted a Valentine's Day campaign, encouraging transit riders to take a selfie at a Transit Center or on board MetroLink, MetroBus or Metro Call-A-Ride on February 14 and post it to Instagram, Facebook or Twitter. The first 200 transit users who posted a selfie with #CrushingonTransit and #CMTSTL received a free \$5 Metro Day Pass good for use on a future transit trip.



Transit is a Home Run

Partners distributed bags of Cracker Jack® snacks to transit riders headed to Busch Stadium for a Cardinals game. Each bag was affixed with a sticker underscoring that transit is also a great option for the work commute and promoting CMT's Try & Ride Program.



Step into a Healthier You in 2022 with Transit

Partners teamed up to host FREE, pop-up health fairs at the Emerson Park and North Hanley Transit Centers. These events encouraged transit riders, and the community at large, to "Step into a Healthier You in 2022 with Transit" by providing access to an array of health and wellness resources and reinforcing how the region's interconnected public transit system gets residents where they need to go – including doctors' offices, hospitals, pharmacies, dentists, workout facilities, grocery stores and other establishments that promote health and wellness.



Be Merry on Metro

Partners worked to spread holiday cheer through a host of seasonal surprises at Metro Transit Centers and aboard MetroLink, MetroBus and Metro Call-A-Ride vehicles. The effort kicked off with a morning commute event where "Be Merry and Metro" branded sock hats – along with candy canes and a calendar showcasing all the fun planned for the month of December – were distributed to transit riders. All "Be Merry on Metro" activities were tied to weekly themes, including: Music & Lights, Santa & Surprises, and Opportunities and Appreciations. "Gifts of Transit" were also placed throughout the system surprising and delighting dozens of riders.



WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS



Don't Pollute. Switch Up Your Commute

Partners – along with the St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership, Commute with Enterprise, St. Clair County Transit District, Madison County Transit District, Metro Transit, the Missouri Department of Transportation and RideFinders – joined forces to inform people that the way they choose to travel impacts the quality of air St. Louis area residents breathe, while motivating them to modify commuting behaviors as often as they are able.

Area residents could go to www.SwitchUpYourCommute.com to download the color-coded air quality forecast, which provides daily updates via email or text stating if the forecast for the following day is a GREEN (good), YELLOW (moderate), ORANGE (unhealthy for sensitive groups) or RED (unhealthy) air quality day. The first 200 people to download the forecast received a free, STL-STYLE campaign T-shirt. From there, individuals were encouraged to show they care about clean air by taking transit, carpooling, vanpooling, walking, biking or telecommuting. The site provides detailed information about all transportation options available on both sides of the Mississippi River – and links to associated schedules, pricing, programs, ride matching services, incentives and more.

When an ORANGE or RED air quality day was forecasted, those who have registered for the daily air quality forecast received a text message asking them if they plan to modify their commute the following day – and if so – how. These respondents – along with those who post a picture to Instagram, Facebook or Twitter showing themselves taking transit, carpooling, vanpooling or telecommuting on a poor air quality day and including #SwitchUpYourCommute in the post – were entered to win a variety of prizes throughout the air quality forecasting season.

In addition to quarterly events, CMT worked to host other efforts as well. These included:



Dump the Pump with Transit

As prices at the pump continued to rise, CMT encouraged area residents to consider utilizing public transit in recognition of National Dump the Pump Day on Friday, June 17, 2022. Those who registered for the Try & Ride program on that day were entered into a prize drawing for free transit passes for one year.



Summer Riding Program

CMT partnered with St. Clair County Transit District to encourage people of all ages to participate in the annual Summer Riding Program. The program allows participants to track miles and earn prizes as they bike, walk, wheel, run, skate or skip along the MetroBikeLink System, which boasts 14 miles of continuous trails and bike paths adjacent to the MetroLink alignment in Southwestern Illinois.



Passport to Music on Metro

CMT partnered with the St. Clair County Transit District, AARP in St. Louis and Metro Transit to host a free music festival at both the Belleville and Emerson Park Transit Centers. The event featured four musical acts, two at each venue, and was designed to promote community, encourage ridership and showcase the new amenities offered as part of "Transit Stop Transformation" efforts. The music event is free and open to the public. Food trucks were onsite for food and drink purchases.



Talking Transit

CMT hosted Talking Transit events quarterly via Zoom. Each featured panel discussions with leaders in the transit industry and succeeded at educating hundreds of members, elected officials, stakeholders, transit riders and others about transit expansion efforts, safety and security plans, the link between transit and equity and more.

Broadened Reach of Popular Programming

CMT's award-winning Try & Ride and Ten Toe Express programs continued to attract new riders to the transit system in Fiscal Year 2022. Try & Ride was credited with helping more than 8,000 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.

Meanwhile, the Ten Toe Express program attracted more than 600 seniors during both the fall and spring sessions, a significant increase over prior year. CMT also secured an America Walks grant to expand the reach of the Ten Toe and attract new participants. 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.



Looking to the Future of Public Transit

While safety and security of the transit system has been a top priority for CMT for the past six years, the organization refocused its efforts to the future of public transit during fiscal year 2022. CMT kicked off discussions at the 2021 Annual Meeting with a keynote from local elected officials City of St. Louis Mayor Tishaura O. Jones, St. Louis County Executive Dr. Sam Page and East-West Gateway Council of Governments Executive Director Jim Wild talking about the need for regional transit projects and pledging their support for the Northside-Southside project in Missouri.

Forward movement took place in Illinois as well. Governor JB Pritzker announced a \$9.975 million Rebuild Illinois grant for the St. Clair County Transit District to bring infrastructure and services to the Emerson Park Transit Center. In addition, the 5.2-mile MetroLink expansion from Scott Air Force Base to MidAmerica St. Louis Airport project continued to move forward. Plus, new microtransit service – known as SCCTD Flyer - was launched to meet the changing needs of the ridership base in Illinois.

At the same time, Bi-State Development, the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County re-engaged on the expansion of the Northside-Southside corridor. CMT member AECOM was charged with updating the Northside-Southside MetroLink Study, which has made significant progress over the last several months to examine an affordable and achievable plan, backed by political will and the needed financing to get it done quickly and realistically. This proposed, simplified alignment that is currently being studied is straightforward, cost-considerate and accomplishes goals to address historical inequities, move into neighborhoods of divestment, leverage comparable investments like NGA and provide direct access to the new Major League Soccer Stadium and all that is being invested in on Jefferson Avenue at Market Street. The St. Louis City portion of the extension would go from Natural Bridge to the north – down Jefferson Avenue – all the way to Chippewa Street to the south. It would include a transfer station, providing critical access to downtown St. Louis and to existing Red and Blue MetroLink lines.

Efforts continued to ensure the safety of all riders and to continue to build strategies to bring riders back to the system. This year was no exception as significant strides were made to further the safety and security of the system. Highlights of the work completed by members of Transit Advisory Working Group (TAWG), chaired by CMT, included:

- Appointing new leadership over the Bureau of Transit Police.
- Working to raise awareness about the negative impacts of allowing concealed-carry permit holders to lawfully bring firearms on public transportation in Missouri in response to a proposed bill that was successfully opposed.
- Expanding a mental health pilot program that allowed mental health advisors from Chestnut Health Systems™ to work in both Missouri and Illinois to mitigate the number of behavioral incidences on the transit system.
- Hosting community events to raise awareness about transit public safety and security efforts.
- Initiating quarterly community engagement efforts along the alignment to reinforce the benefits of transit and a customer-focused strategy.
- Enabling riders to weigh in on what they see and experience on the system through an expanded CMT Metro Monitor Program.
- Supporting the Metro Transit's \$52 million Secure Platform Plan, which will work to install new fare gates and perimeter fencing at all 38 MetroLink stations, including 68 entrance gates and 81 exit gates and safety infrastructure around the tracks, stations and platforms; a fare purchasing system with vending machines and card readers that integrate with mobile devices; and an update of the transit system's closed-circuit camera program with a real-time camera system.

Safety and security efforts will remain the key area of focus for CMT and TAWG moving forward, however with these and other improvements in place, work to re-engage the community and increase ridership for both work and play will also be a priority.



Streamlining Services. Furthering Accessibility.

During the pandemic, ridership sharply declined as people sheltered in place, yet the transit system kept moving, providing access to essential workers and services. Since then, riders have been slowly returning to the system, underscoring the need to adapt, broaden and even streamline the size and scope of service options to meet ever-evolving needs and demands, while dealing with new challenges of operator shortages and supply chain issues. A key part of this process was raising awareness about changes, updates and opportunities.

In FY2021, these efforts included the:

- Release of the Statewide Transit Needs Assessment Study, sponsored by Missouri Public Transit Association and the Missouri Department of Transportation, to quantify the gaps in public transportation access throughout urban, suburban and rural communities statewide.
- Establishment of a partnership with CMT and the St. Louis Midtown Development Corporation to commission a ULI Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to look at the possibilities for development around the Grand MetroLink Station, particularly the area directly south of the station. The TAP, composed of local experts on land use, policy, and development, spent one day analyzing the opportunities for the study area, interviewing stakeholders and developing a plan to help spur development in this area and improve access for transit riders and pedestrians.
- Expansion of CMT’s reach in the business community as part of a partnership with the St. Louis Green Business Challenge, designed to further integrate transit and transit benefit programs into “green” plans, programming and information distributed through the St. Louis employer network.
- Initiation of a grassroots awareness campaign to educate the general public about the benefits of transit. This was accomplished by helping local transit advocates write letters-to-the editor and other opinion pieces and get them placed in publications throughout the state, securing record levels of earned media placements.

“My view of public transit falls into two major bundles. First, of course, how do we address disparities and inequities in our region, and how do we make sure everyone has access to healthcare, a job or healthy food options? Public transit has a real role there. But also, for those of us in the County, it is also an important economic development tool. Public transit is how people get to work. And if we want our businesses to be able to operate and provide vital services in our communities — we need to make sure that folks who work there, can get there. Public transit is an important part of that.”

St. Louis County Executive
Dr. Sam Page

Recognizing Efforts. Positioning the Organization for Success.

Citizens for Modern Transit hosted its 37th Annual Meeting virtually in September 2021. The event served as an opportunity for transit riders, major employers, academic institutions, and labor and community organizations to witness all CMT has accomplished this past year as it worked to champion, challenge, encourage and advocate for public transit in an effort to drive economic growth and improve the quality of life in the St. Louis region. CMT presented the 2021 Service Award to St. Louis-area transit operators; the 2021 Chairman’s Award to the St. Louis Senate Delegation; the 2021 New Initiatives Award to St. Clair County Transit District; and the 2021 Champion Award to June McAllister Fowler.

CMT also elected several members to its Board of Directors, including Ryan Arnold of Ameren Missouri, Felicia Clayton of ATU Local 788 and Joel Fuoss of Trivers. Each will serve a three-year term. CMT appointed the following officers: Chair – Hart Nelson of St. Louis Community College; Vice Chairs –Sheila Holm of AARP in St. Louis, D’Andre Braddix of University of Missouri–St. Louis and Nancy E. Cross; Secretary – Robert Blaine of Washington University in St. Louis; Treasurer – Carlo P. Sanfilippo of Integral Wealth; Past Chair – June McAllister Fowler of BJC HealthCare; and At-Large – Adella D. Jones of Centene Corp. The organization also extended the appointments of seven current board members for additional three-year terms. These individuals include Chris Beard of Lochmueller Group, Robert Blaine of Washington University in St. Louis, Brandon Flinn of the Missouri and Kansas Laborers District Council, Robert Goltermann, DCM Management Group, Charlie Hinderliter of St. Louis Realtors, Adella Jones of Centene and Austin Walker of the Regional Business Council.

In Summer 2022, CMT named Mackenzie Menn Program and Social Media Associate.

In November 2021, CMT was pleased to announce it was the recipient of an East-West Gateway Council of Governments’ Outstanding Local Government Achievement (OLGA) award in the Leadership in Planning and Design Innovation category. The award was presented to CMT and AARP in St. Louis – during East-West Gateway Council of Governments’ 56th Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony – in recognition of the organizations’ “Transit Stop Transformation” projects.



Securing Funds. Strengthening its Base.

Each year, CMT strives to diversify its funding sources to ensure the fiscal stability of the organization for years to come. This fiscal year, CMT was awarded more than \$3 million in grant funding, including several multi-year Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality grants, to move ridership on the system. Two of the grants received in Illinois were made possible through a partnership with the St. Clair County Transit District. CMT also received a 2022 Community Challenge Grant Award from AARP for the “Transit Stop Transformation” Project at the North Hanley Transit Center, an APTA Local Coalition Grant and an America Walks grant. In December, CMT was awarded a three-year contract to continue the management of the MPTA through the end of 2024.

Membership revenues topped \$142,000 in 2022.

Thanks to the CMT members, supporters and stakeholders for moving our advocacy into action. The role of transit advocacy will continue to grow as the region moves through recovery. Join us on our mission to ensure transit continues to deliver in the region.

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