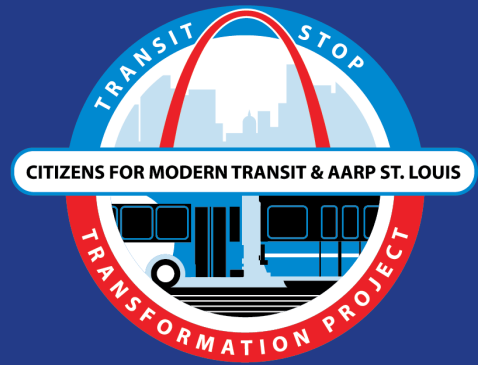


CASE STUDY

Transit Stop Transformation Project at the Belleville Transit Center



Impacting Communities through
Transformation of Transit Stops

CITIZENS FOR MODERN TRANSIT
www.cmt-stl.org

AARP IN ST. LOUIS
www.aarp.org/stlouis



Partners:

- St. Clair County Transit District
- Citizens for Modern Transit
- AARP in St. Louis
- City of Belleville
- Bi-State Development
- REALTOR® Association of Southwestern Illinois

Project Description

Citizens for Modern Transit and AARP in St. Louis teamed up with the St. Clair County Transit District (SCCTD) and Metro Transit to activate the space around the Belleville Transit Center in Belleville, Ill. This joint initiative focused on the area between the MetroBus bays, serving both Metro Transit and the SCCTD Flyer riders, and the entrance to MetroLink into a fun, artistic space that encourages active play, cultivates community and increases transit use. With the permission of Bi-State Development/Metro

Transit as the property owner, partners initiated the project in late-October 2021 with community engagement.

Recently this site has seen significant investment and development, including newly renovated parking lots, LED lighting installations, investment in the building onsite that serves both riders and community members. St. Clair County Transit District and Metro Transit will be responsible for maintenance of the project moving forward.

CMT & AARP IN ST. LOUIS PROJECT PROCESS

1. Public Engagement

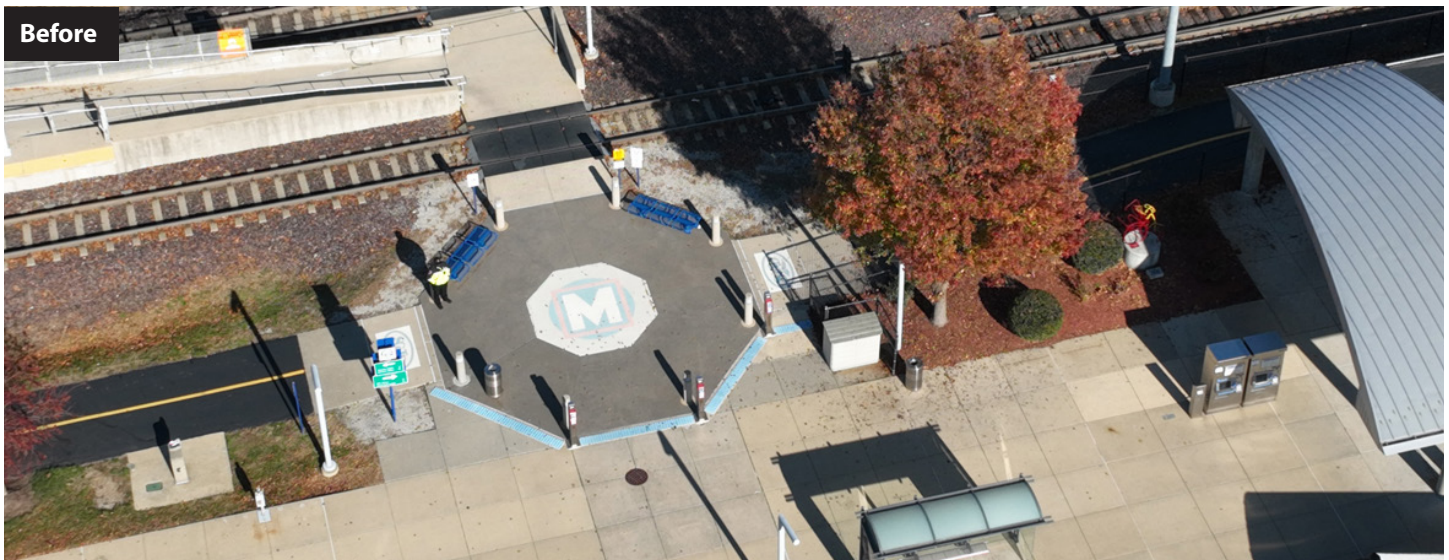
The first step in this process was the opportunity to garner public

engagement around the idea of placemaking around transit. In Winter 2022, utilizing a local consulting team, AARP in St. Louis and CMT engaged, with community members/residents, elected officials, stakeholders, transit riders, students, artists, transit operators, the transit agency and other interested parties in visioning events.

Events included onsite surveying of transit riders at the station, attendance at community events, significant social media outreach, engagement with operators at the bus garage in Illinois, engagement with residents adjacent to the station, outreach to students at Belleville East and West High Schools, engagement with the mayor and other elected officials in Belleville, community meetings via zoom, and an online survey to determine the following:



The Belleville transformation included a community plant day to engage residents, riders, and stakeholders to build ownership.



- Themes for the transformation
- Possible design elements
- Ideas for permanent art/installation at the site
- Amenities for riders

Ideas Generated:

- Importance of the Arts community
- New logo for City of Belleville
- Vibrant
- Safety
- Shelter
- Color
- Growing and blooming theme
- Creating a space that fits surrounding Belleville neighborhoods

Community engagement resulted in a vision around the theme, "Art Grows in Belleville."

2. Placemaking Installation Events

This project included a Community Plant Day, ribbon cutting celebration with food trucks and a music festival celebrating the opening of the transformation project in June 2022.

3. Put into Action.

The final step was the promotion of this new amenity to the community as well as the region as a whole. In addition, programming around the station was a top priority.

Coverage Included:

- Earned media
- Social media – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
- Blogs/websites
- Video

Funding Partners:

- St. Clair County Transit District
- CMT
- AARP in St. Louis
- City of Belleville
- REALTOR® Association of Southwestern Illinois

PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Opportunities:

1. Transit Stop Transformation Projects are Replicable. As evidenced by the growing number of transformations in the St. Louis region, placemaking transit projects can be implemented in a variety of different spaces and communities.

2. Public Partners. As is evident by the commitment and support of St. Clair County Transit District on this project, a strong public partner impacts the final outcome of the development. They provided capital assistance and agreed to maintain the site in partnership with Metro Transit. Maintenance can be a hurdle unless the local government or a local partner agrees to take on ongoing maintenance of the site.

3. Private Partners. AARP is a key, founding partner. The organization represents thousands of constituents in areas across the region. In addition, they are a respected organization which provides additional credibility to these efforts.

4. Additional Investment. Since the opening, an additional \$300,000 was invested to renovate the building on site with rider amenities and office space.

5. Additional Programming. Since the transformation, additional events are now being programmed for the site.

Challenges:

1. Funding. While these developments are not large-scale Transit Oriented Development sites, there are costs associated with developing a transit stop into a more permanent, substantial piece of the fabric of the community.

2. Finding a Local Artist. It was imperative to find an artist who understood the scope of project and importance of art to the community.

3. Project Oversight. There are many moving pieces including consultants which require project oversight from one or several organizations spearheading the project.

4. Additional Investment. Following this transformation, St. Clair County Transit District invested an additional \$300,000 to renovate the public building onsite.