

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



THE REASON *Why*
IS WHAT FUELS US



CITIZENS FOR
MODERN TRANSIT
MAKING TRANSIT A PRIORITY



“THE WHYS” OF PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVOCACY

The organization works to preserve and enhance existing neighborhoods, promote unity, achieve regional objectives, reinforce existing public and private investments, and provide improved public transit options for area residents, as well as those who visit the region.

OUR *Why*

Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) marked the anniversary of four decades of regional transit advocacy for Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT). We celebrated the milestone of our inception throughout the year while simultaneously launching a new campaign aimed at addressing the reasons or “The WHYs” behind our mission to champion, challenge and encourage the advancement of public transit.

We also reinforced the organization’s unwavering commitment to adhering to the criteria established in 1985 to help further public transit in our local communities. We supported the State of Missouri’s renewal of historic levels of funding for public transit, the progression of construction on the MetroLink expansion project in St. Clair County, Ill., and the renewed focus on the St. Louis MetroLink Green Line project in the Northside-Southside corridor. At the same time, we rolled out new programming to build ridership, transform spaces around transit stops and more. All these efforts are aimed at preserving and enhancing existing neighborhoods, promoting unity, achieving regional objectives, reinforcing existing public and private investments, and providing improved public transportation options for area residents, as well as all who visit the region.



D'ANDRE BRADDIX
Chair, CMT Board of Directors

CMT represents more than 22,000 constituents, including transit riders, major employers, academic institutions, and labor and community organizations. It 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.



KIMBERLY M. CELLA
Executive Director, CMT

This coming year, ridership numbers, lingering safety and security issues and capital funding needs will continue to be significant challenges for the local transit industry. In response, CMT will work to further three key areas of opportunity – increasing collaboration and financial support for transit at the regional and state levels, building back 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.

“The WHYs” are abundant when it comes to supporting public transit and CMT as we work to help deliver access, opportunity and equity for the region. Thank you for joining us for the ride.

D Braddix *Kimberly Cella*

SOLIDIFYING INVESTMENT. FURTHERING COLLABORATION.

During FY24, state funding for transit was secured at the same historic levels seen in 2023.

For the first time, Governor Parson included transit investment as part of his budget recommendations, and a total of \$11.7 million was approved. It included \$10 million in General Revenue, plus \$1.7 million from the State Transportation Fund for transit operations. This was a retention of funding levels from 2023, which marked a 34% increase over 2022 levels and a more than 580% increase since 2021. Additionally, the Missouri Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Assistance Program (MEHTAP) received \$5 million, and another \$6 million was allocated to non-profit providers to enable them to draw down federal capital funds for vehicles.

Numerous bills were also introduced to enable conceal and carry weapons on transit during the 2024 session, yet none moved forward. Much like Amtrak and airplanes – where guns are not allowed – the risk is unthinkable should there be a discharge in the confinement of closed spaces found on transit vehicles. CMT, the Missouri Public Transit Association (MPTA) and its partners were grateful to have helped successfully oppose legislation and extend thanks to all who helped advocate for gun safety.

CMT's statewide impact didn't end there. The organization continued to manage the work of the MPTA for the ninth consecutive year. In June 2024, the MPTA was recognized with the nationally coveted Community Transportation Association of America's (CTAA) State Leadership Award for its active role in helping to ensure the state's financial investment in transit. This honor was achieved, in part, for efforts made by MPTA to partner with CMT to release the 2023 Economic Impact Study of Transit in Missouri. This crucial report helped to quantify the economic impact of public transit services in the state. Findings included the fact that transit yields an overall economic impact of \$4.05 billion annually in Missouri, with a nearly \$2.8 billion annual impact in the St. Louis region. The MPTA's work also included hosting a four-state conference in Kansas City in September and quarterly



educational events and peer round tables to address trends, issues and opportunities facing the transit industry. The organization continued efforts to build its membership base, help secure funding and actively address Missouri's operator shortage.

In addition to CMT's work with MPTA, the organization continued to partner with St. Clair County Transit District (SCCTD) to build ridership programming and increase awareness around available public transportation options in Southwestern Illinois. Efforts promoted the benefits of utilizing the MetroLink, MetroBus, the Alternative Transportation System (ATS), micro transit services and the more than 30 miles of interconnecting trails and bike paths that are part of the MetroBikeLink System. Key highlights included the grand opening of the new Emerson Park Public Safety Center at the Emerson Park Transit Center in East St. Louis, completion of the "Transit Stop Transformation" project at the Fairview Heights Transit Center, construction commencing on the expansion of light rail to MidAmerica St. Louis Airport, a community-wide event to kick off the GO TRAILing program, the launch of Riding to Success and other initiatives aimed at strengthening ridership.

In Missouri, transit annually yields an overall economic impact of

\$4.05 BILLION

\$2.8 BILLION

Annual impact in the St. Louis Region



JUNE MCALLISTER FOWLER
Former CMT Board Chair

MY *Why*

"My 'why' started with the 90 Hampton bus. It served as my weekly after-school ride from my home to my family's business. The 16 City Limits bus took me to visit friends living in the Wells Goodfellow neighborhood. The 95 Kingshighway bus took a gaggle of us from Saturday games at Soldan High School to our teenage gathering spots. During college, the 97 Forsyth bus took me to my downtown job at WIL Radio, and the Central West End MetroLink stop became entry to my BJC HealthCare job for years. I have needed public transportation throughout my life, and it's been there for me."



BUILDING RIDERSHIP. ENHANCING EXPERIENCES.

CMT is continually looking for ways to reinforce the need for and importance of public transit in the St. Louis region, while actively helping to build ridership.

It has established several unique programs and initiatives to simplify and enhance rider experiences. These ever-evolving programs encourage area residents to take transit on a daily, weekly or even occasional basis to get where they need to go.

Highlights from FY2024 included:



CURRENT



THE PLAN

Activating Spaces Around Transit

CMT and AARP in St. Louis kicked off the year with a call for nominations to "Build a Better Bus Stop" in the City of St. Louis, resulting in 44 recommendations received. The MetroBus Stop #9045, located at 13th Street and Gravois Avenue near Soulard in the City of St. Louis, was selected from these nominations as the partnering organizations' next "Transit Stop Transformation" site. The project aims to transform the dilapidated corner stop into a fresh, vibrant space with seating, a bus shelter, paved walkways, landscaping and more. The second round of community engagement will soon be completed. From there, the design concept – featuring a "Nod to Soulard" – will be finalized by Acernus Architecture and construction will commence. The project is expected to be completed in early 2025.

Meanwhile, CMT, AARP in St. Louis, SCCTD, Metro Transit and the City of Fairview Heights celebrated the completion of the transformation of the Fairview Heights Transit Center in Fairview Heights, Ill., this summer.



THE PLAN

The design, developed by Gonzalez Companies in partnership with Design Lab 443, features a "Love Where You Live" theme with community seating areas, colorful banners that promote all Fairview Heights has to offer, shade, plantings and art.

Six "Transit Stop Transformation" projects have been completed to date. The goal of each is to transform places people typically pass through on their way to their next destination into a community amenity that improves safety and security, builds ridership and increases engagement around transit. Since the inception of this program, more than \$33 million in additional investment has been completed or is in the works near these renovated spaces.

This past year, CMT received several grants and financial support to further "Transit Stop Transformation" projects, including a \$20,000 Flagship Grant through the 2024 AARP Community Challenge grant program and sponsorships from SCCTD, AARP in St. Louis, Metro Transit, the City of Fairview Heights and St. Louis REALTORS®.



SEE MORE TRANSFORMATIONS ONLINE

Visit our website or Facebook page to see more of these six completed transformations!

Implementing Community Engagement

CMT partnered with Metro Transit, SCCTD, the Bureau of Transit Police, Metro Transit Public Safety and AARP in St. Louis to initiate quarterly community engagement events. Each event 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.

Each effort touted a timely and creative theme and are as follows:



Stay Toasty on Transit – As part of this holiday surprise-and-delight, event partners handed out branded scarves, reminding riders of the benefits of taking transit during the winter months and encouraging them to register for CMT's Guaranteed Ride Home program.



Get Back in the Groove – As students headed back to school and the workforce settled into more routine schedules, this effort provided new transit riders access to a "groovy deal" – a free monthly transit pass to give transit a try for their school or workday commute as part of CMT's Riding for Success program.



Match with Metro – This campaign encouraged solo drivers, who were new to the public transit scene, to get better acquainted with MetroLink and MetroBus by providing those who registered with a free monthly transit pass for their school or workday commute.



Transit is the Winning Way to Get to Game Day and a Touchdown for the Work Commute – This public awareness campaign with St. Louis’ own wide receiver Darrius Shepherd, held in conjunction with the Battlehawks football season, promoted transit as an ideal means to travel for work or play, while underscoring the availability of CMT’s Try & Ride program.



GO TRAILING – To encourage residents to get outdoors and take advantage of the ever-evolving MetroBikeLink System, CMT partnered with SCCTD for this seasonal program that allows participants to track miles and earn prizes as they bike, walk, wheel, run, skate or skip along the system.



Go for the Gold – Late summer is traditionally known as the hottest stretch of summer and poses the greatest threat for poor air quality, so CMT and the Clean Air Partnership teamed up to encourage commuters to become a Clean Air Champion by taking transit throughout the duration of the 2024 Summer Olympics.



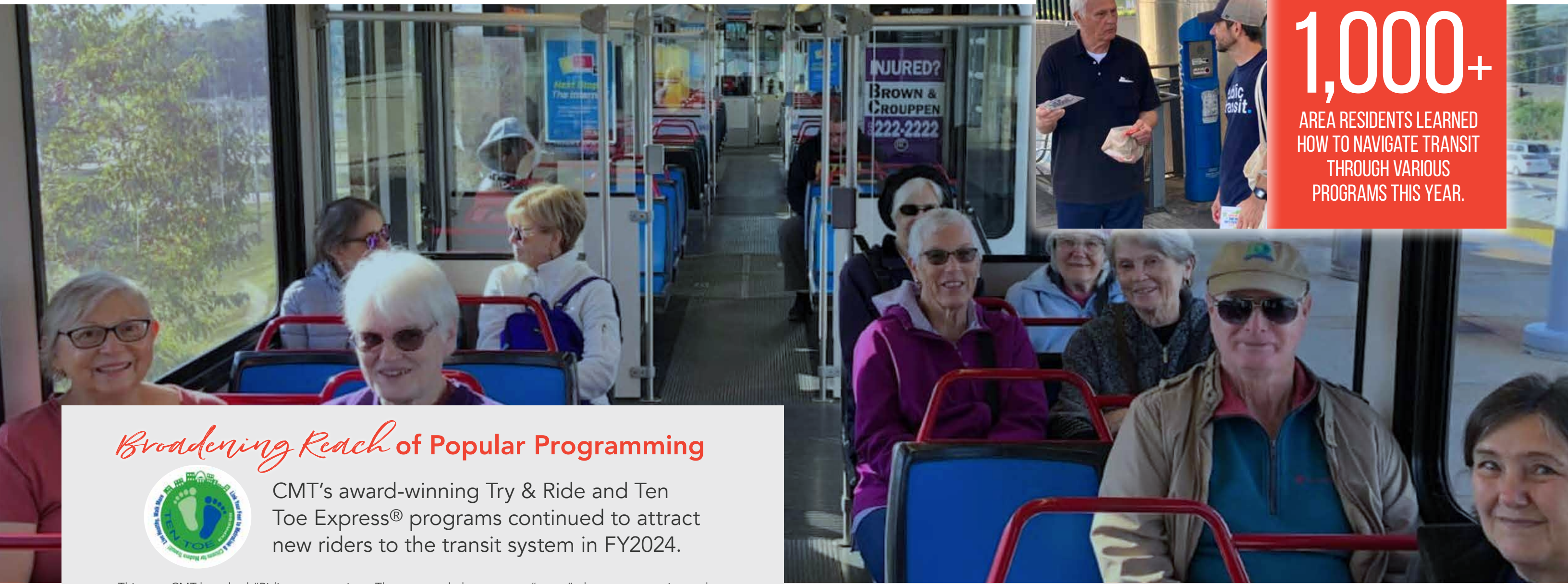
Dump the Pump – In conjunction with National Dump the Pump Day, this effort helped quantify the cost savings associated with public transit and encouraged drivers to give transit a try by registering for a free monthly pass.



CMT also hosted quarterly “Talking Transit” virtual events to keep members, elected officials, stakeholders, transit riders and others in the loop on issues and efforts influencing the local transit system. These educational gatherings feature guest speakers and panel discussions addressing a wide range of topics, including the trajectory of transit; opportunities surrounding transit-oriented development; and transit impacts on access, equity and health. Several “Conversations with Commuters” events were also held to proactively address Metro Transit service changes.

1,000+

AREA RESIDENTS LEARNED HOW TO NAVIGATE TRANSIT THROUGH VARIOUS PROGRAMS THIS YEAR.



Broadening 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 FY2024.

This year, CMT launched "Riding to Success," in conjunction with the Try & Ride program, by offering monthly passes to new riders through the *Match with Metro*, *Get Back in the Groove*, *Dump the Pump* and *Go for the Gold* campaigns. These efforts were credited with helping more than 500 area residents learn how to better navigate transit through an array of free resources like personalized transit routes, monthly passes and registration into the *Guaranteed Ride Home* program.

The CMT *Ten Toe Express* program attracted more than 7,000 older adults during its fall and spring

sessions. The program helps participants integrate walking with public transit use to get around town, while they exercise and connect with others in the community. New walk leaders were added this year, and a newsletter was rolled out to keep Ten Toe walkers up to date on events and Meet & Greet opportunities. This program is sponsored in part by AARP in St. Louis and the Centene Foundation.

CMT also expanded its reach in the business community through a partnership with the St. Louis Green Business Challenge to further integrate transit and transit benefit programs into

"green" plans, programming and information distributed through the St. Louis employer network. A grassroots awareness campaign was initiated to educate the general public about the benefits of transit through the placement of letters-to-the-editors and other opinion pieces authored by local transit advocates that appeared in a vast array of newspapers and online media outlets throughout the state. The organization also continued to build partnerships with NPR, Great Rivers Greenway, the Clean Air Partnership, local universities and others to increase awareness about the importance of transit accessibility.



JOANNE FRITZ
Transit Commuter

MY Why

"I moved back to St Louis two years ago from Arizona. We were coming out of the pandemic, and I decided to relocate to be near family. I had been away for 30 years. When I left there was no train system, and I never used the buses. Returning at the age of 80 and with mild glaucoma, I decided to give up my car. I'm a fan of transit now and my non-transit friends are tired of me singing it's praises! Please keep improving and expanding. Many people need transit and enjoy it."

SOLIDIFYING THE FOUNDATION. BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE.



Throughout FY24, CMT consistently worked to reinforce how crucial it is for public transit accessibility to evolve as we head into the future. This idea is rooted in the commitment, support and collaboration among stakeholders, influencers and the community at large.

This messaging was underscored by the willingness of the City of St. Louis, St. Louis County and St. Clair County, Ill., to financially support Metro Transit by committing millions to ensure the availability of public transportation throughout the bi-state region. At the state level, another \$11.7 million was approved for Missouri transit for the year, representing some of the local match money required for transit providers to secure federal funding.

The region also worked collaboratively to further important expansion projects.

The light rail expansion project to MidAmerica St. Louis Airport continued to take shape under the management of CMT member Gonzalez Companies. Meanwhile, project management consultant HNTB, which is also a CMT member, continued building a case for the St. Louis MetroLink Green Line project. The Board of Directors for the East-West Gateway Council of Governments adopted the project as the locally preferred alternative in February. The City of St. Louis laid the groundwork to have more pro transit-oriented development zoning in place within the corridor in anticipation of the project. CMT's members and those serving on our board and as part of our various committees were activated to testify in support of this project, while the organization hosted events to educate the community on this project and took members, stakeholders and elected officials

on tours of the proposed alignment route so they could visualize the possibilities associated with this important expansion project.

CMT also commissioned an economic impact study of the proposed St. Louis Green Line demonstrating more than \$2.9 Billion in returns during construction alone.



\$11.7 MILLION

APPROVED AT THE STATE LEVEL FOR MISSOURI TRANSIT



The light rail expansion project to MidAmerica St. Louis Airport continued to take shape under the management of CMT member Gonzalez Companies.

Significant strides were also taken this year to further the safety and security of the system.

Work completed by members of the Transit Advisory Working Group, which is chaired by CMT, included:

- **Raising awareness** about the negative impacts of allowing concealed-carry permit holders to lawfully bring firearms on public transportation in Missouri. Proposed bills were successfully opposed.
- **Creating talking points** to communicate safety and security messaging effectively and cohesively.
- **Initiating quarterly community engagement** efforts 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 that includes quarterly briefings with Metro Public Safety and Metro Transit staff to ensure that issues are addressed.

- **Supporting Metro Transit's comprehensive Secure Platform Plan** featuring new technologies – like the robust CCTV system and the new fare policy – while working to evaluate and enforce various plan components, including those associated with capital and maintenance costs and the possible inclusion of security entry systems as part of the system's physical design.
- **Hosting special security briefings** for CMT Board of Directors.



Highlighting the *Why.*

POSITIONING FOR SUCCESS.

CMT hosted its 39th Annual Meeting in September at the Marriott Grand Hotel in downtown St. Louis.

The event served as an opportunity for transit riders, employers, academic institutions, and labor and community organizations to witness all the organization had accomplished through a highlight video. Soon after, June McAllister Fowler, our past chair, delivered the keynote address that highlighted all the reasons transit mattered to her and encouraged those in attendance to determine their “WHY” – thus setting the stage for our 40th Anniversary theme.

During the event, CMT presented the **2023 Service Award** to longtime CMT volunteer and Ten Toe Express Walk Leader Dan O’Connor; the **2023 New Initiatives Award** to AARP in St. Louis for its commitment to the “Transit Stop Transformation” projects; and the **2023 Chairman’s Award** to Illinois Governor JB Pritzker for the ReBuild IL Program, and Missouri Senators Lincoln Hough and Brian Williams for their leadership in Missouri’s financial investment in transit.



MY *Why*

“Through the years, CMT members and staff have been active advocates for our region’s transit system. They’re champions for the value that transit brings to St. Louis.”



ADELLA D. JONES
Chief of Staff at
University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Cynthia Crim of Commerce Bank, **Adam Kazda** of Greater St. Louis, Inc., **Travis Pfeiffer** of HNTB and **Sal Martinez** of Employment Connection were also elected as the newest members of CMT’s Board of Directors. Each will each serve a three-year term. CMT extended the appointment of current board members **Len Toenjes**, **Aaron Burnett** and **Mark Grossenbacher** for another three-year term.

The following officers were also elected: Chair – **D’Andre Braddix** of St. Louis Community College; Vice Chairs – **Robert Blaine** of Washington University

in St. Louis, **Nancy E. Cross** of the City of St. Louis and **Sheila Holm** of AARP in St. Louis; Secretary – **Ellie Glenn Harmon** of BJC HealthCare; Treasurer – **Brandon Flinn** of Missouri and Kansas Laborers District Council; Past Chair – **Hart Nelson** of St. Louis Community College; and At-Large – **Adella D. Jones** of the University of Missouri–St. Louis.

In October, CMT welcomed **Karen Troxell** as its new membership and program manager, and in February, it hosted a development workshop for its Board of Directors to ensure the organization stays on track.



40th Anniversary

The organization also capped off its **40th Anniversary** with an event in downtown St. Louis in June to celebrate all that has been accomplished and to set the stage for decades to come.



SENATOR BRIAN WILLIAMS
District 14 – St. Louis County

"Congratulations

on 40 years of literally moving our community forward. Citizens for Modern Transit helps us safely get to work, feed our families and access health care. I salute CMT for continuously crafting solutions to issues and ensuring everyone has a ride to upward mobility."

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 celebrated its 40th Anniversary with record level sponsorships and continued financial support of "Transit Stop Transformation" projects.

CMT also received the previously mentioned Community Challenge Grant Award from AARP, as well as a grant from St. Louis REALTORS®, two Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality grants and other local grants.

Membership revenues topped \$145,000 in 2024.

Thank you 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.

OUR Why



TAULBY ROACH
President & CEO, Bi-State Development

"Citizens for Modern Transit is like a valuable sibling, who works with us and challenges us. They are a great champion and advocate for transit and a prime leader in making St. Louis a better place."



TINA SIEBERT
2023 President-Elect of St. Louis REALTORS®

"We need to ensure the St Louis area is connected everywhere through transit. It's one of the biggest economic drivers to enable employees to get to work and utilize services and healthcare. Plus gets all us fans to the games to support our teams!"

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Marc Scheessele, *Saint Louis University*

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Austin Walker, *The Regional Business Council*

Well done

"I wanted to take a second to tip my cap to CMT for all they make happen. The past couple of weeks alone are a truly great reflection of your highly effective work and commitment. This includes the 40th Anniversary event, a very strong 'Talking Transit' panel discussion on TOD, the tour of the route/potential stops on the new Green Line with community leaders and policy-makers, advocating for and engaging the community in the City's TOD zoning changes for the Green Line, the great news that the Green Line is now 'in the hopper' for federal funding, weighing in with St. Louis County in support of the University Crossing TOD and its needed rezoning, and providing public comments encouraging affordable housing development funding be better aligned with transit ensuring new affordable housing developments have connections to public transportation... and this is just what I am personally aware of. It's very impressive. Well done!"



AARON BURNETT
Bywater Development Group
(June 2024)

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GOLD DONORS



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JOYCE A COLLINS-CATLING
Transit Commuter

MY *Why*

“Not everyone has access to their own personal transportation, so having available and reliable transit options is important. Transit allows people to come and go as they please and provides them with feelings of freedom and independence. Supporting organizations like Citizens for Modern Transit helps promote transit accessibility and serves as a voice for people’s needs.”

Join us on our mission to ensure **TRANSIT** continues to deliver in the region.

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