

Let RTA take you there

For service information, visit the new RTA Web site, rideRTA.com. If you need even more details, call the RTAnswerline, 216-621-9500.

At Quicken Loans Arena

Cavaliers basketball game

- Feb. 1, 4, 11, 13, 21, 24, 27

Barons ice hockey

- Feb. 3, 4, 9, 10, 15, 16

Other events

- Feb. 17-18, U.S. Monster Truck Jam

- Feb. 25-26, World's Toughest Bulls & Broncs Rodeo

Park free at any rail station. Buy a \$3 All-Day Pass.

Ride any rail line to Tower City and take the Walkway

to Gateway. Online info at theqarena.com

At CSU's Wolstein Center, 2000 Prospect Ave.

CSU Men's Basketball

- Feb. 11, 22, 25

CSU Women's Basketball

- Feb. 2, 4, 9, 13, 18

Other events

- Feb. 3, Martina Bride, country music, "Timeless"

- Feb. 8, O.A.R., with special guest Stephen Kellogg & the Sixers

Park free at any rail station. Buy a \$3 All-Day Pass,

ride any rail line to Tower City. Ride bus routes #8,

#14, #25, #33, #32X, #247 Loop. Online info at

wolsteincenter.com

At Crocker Park, Westlake

- Feb. 8, Q104 at Barnes & Noble. Meet the cast from *Rent*, being performed at Playhouse Square

Ride the #46, #55F, #808 or #822 Community Circulators. Online info at crockerpark.com/events

At the Great Lakes Science Center, 601 Erieside Ave.

- Through May, *Lego Mindstorms*

Park free at any rail station. Buy a \$3 All-Day Pass,

ride any rail line to Tower City, and ride the

Waterfront Line to the North Coast Harbor Station

on E. Ninth St. Online info at greatscience.com

Key RTA phone numbers

RTAnswerline (automated 24/7)

216-621-9500

TDD for hearing impaired

216-781-4271

Customer Service

216-566-5227

TDD for hearing impaired

216-781-4757

Paratransit

216-781-1110

TDD for hearing impaired

216-781-6148

Transit Police Dispatch (on duty 24/7)

216-566-5163

Elevator Status Hotline

216-566-5170

Main Office Building

216-566-5100

RTA offers e-news

RTA is introducing an e-newsletter to keep riders more informed and up-to-date with the latest service changes and transit news. To subscribe, just send your e-mail address to webmaster@gcrta.org



Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority
rideRTA.com

Rider's Digest



A PUBLICATION OF THE GREATER CLEVELAND
REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Updated RTA Web site includes trip planner

Once again, customers spoke and RTA responded. This time, the result is a smoother "ride" on the RTA Web site, rideRTA.com.

"Based on feedback from our customers, we redesigned the Web site to make it easier to find key information," says Steve Bitto, Director of Marketing and Communications. "We also studied other Web sites from transit agencies around the country. Our new site looks cleaner and less cluttered. It offers streamlined navigation and fewer content sections."

Bitto says RTA wanted to help first-time users, so the revised site includes a detailed how-to-ride section, and simplified route and schedule information.

A major component of the site is RTA's new trip planner, which operates similar to MapQuest® and other software programs.

"RTA is attracting new riders every day," Bitto says. "The new site allows our new customers to get the information they need, and helps existing customers learn more about routes and services they might not be utilizing."

Customers are encouraged to check out the new Web site. Comments and suggestions can be sent to webmaster@gcrta.org.

Personalized trip planning will still be offered on the RTAnswerline, 216-621-9500, but the Web site now offers a similar service 24/7.

Gold Line gains gold buses

RTA has unveiled a new fleet of metallic gold-colored buses for the Gold Line #55 Flyer, to more clearly brand Express bus service for commuters in the Northwest Corridor.

The line incorporates elements of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in order to achieve express bus service along a street corridor, instead of through a freeway or interstate.

The #55F follows three different routes from Avon Lake, Bay Village and Westlake at Crocker Park to downtown, with evening returns. The Gold Line cuts commute time through limited stops at dedicated stations, similar to a transit line.

“Combining the best of rail and bus service is the concept behind BRT,” says RTA General Manager Joe Calabrese. “The Gold Line offers a service that is closer to rail than our traditional bus flyer service, and better addresses the transportation needs of those living along the Northwest Corridor. We see great growth potential for this line.”

Providing enhanced work trip service to residents living along the Northwest Corridor has been a major priority at RTA. Initially, the idea was to create a bus flyer line that would enter I-90 at various points. But after holding community meetings last year and receiving feedback from residents recommending the line follow Lake and Detroit Avenues and Clifton Boulevard, RTA decided to create a different kind of express bus service.

The introduction of the gold bus fleet is the final piece for the Gold Line. Since August, the line has been operating under the route designation 55F. RTA has recorded a steady 10 percent increase in ridership on the line each month.

On President’s Day, Monday, Feb. 20, RTA will operate regular weekday service. The Main Office Building, 1240 W. Sixth St., and the Customer Service Center at Tower City will be closed.

All RTA meetings are open

RTA’s Board of Trustees hosts several meetings each month that are open to the public. These meetings are held at RTA Main Office Building, 1240 W. Sixth St.

- Tuesday, Feb. 7, 9 a.m., Committee meeting.
 - Tuesday, Feb. 21, 9 a.m., Regular Board meeting
- The 20-member volunteer Citizen’s Advisory Board meets at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 9.

RTA ridership increases for third straight year

For the first time in more than 25 years, RTA has three straight years of continued ridership growth.

RTA ended 2005 with 57 million riders, a 3 percent growth, or 1.6 million riders, over 2004. The last time ridership grew for three straight years was 1977-80, just after the 1975 birth of RTA.

For the last 10 quarters, ridership has also increased, when compared to the same quarter the previous year.

The big winners in 2005 were RTA’s Paratransit customers. RTA introduced a new software program that allows more efficient trip scheduling. That system allowed Paratransit ridership to jump to 445,300 customers, a 24.5 percent increase.

Other increases:

- Heavy rail (Red Line) – 8 percent
- Light rail (Blue, Green & Waterfront lines) – 1.1 percent
- Total Rapid Transit – 5.6 percent
- Circulators: 4.2 percent
- Total bus fleet – 2.4 percent

In December, more than 4.4 million customers rode on RTA – the best December since 1999.

RTA holds Feb. 15 public meetings to introduce improved downtown service

RTA will unveil two new downtown loop routes and trolley service in two community meetings on Wednesday, Feb. 15.

The meetings will be held from noon-1 p.m., and 5-6 p.m. in the first-floor Board Room of RTA’s Main Office Building, 1240 W. Sixth St. The site is served by the #147 loop bus and is accessible to people with disabilities.

Vehicles that resemble historic-looking trolleys will be introduced on RTA downtown loop routes as part of the spring service change. RTA bought 11 low-floor trolley buses for \$3.5 million to replace aged loop buses that have exceeded their useful life.

The trolleys operate on ultra-low-sulfur “clean” diesel fuel. Each trolley has 30 seats and space for two wheelchairs.

The trolleys are part of a plan to beef up downtown service. The plan includes:

- Two new trolley routes to connect a variety of downtown destinations.
- A service frequency of 10 minutes from approximately 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays
- Specially trained “ambassadors” to serve as operators.

The routes are:

- Warehouse District to Cleveland State University and Cuyahoga Community College.
- Public Square to Lakeside Ave. and E. 12th St., near the Galleria at Erieview.

RTA will continue to serve the Municipal Parking Lot with regular buses.