

Euclid is Open for Business

Transforming Euclid Avenue through the opening of the nation's first federally funded BRT line is expected to spur \$2.3 billion in redevelopment and create thousands of new jobs. As with any major construction project, however, the challenge is how to minimize disruption to residents, businesses and merchants while the orange barrels are in place.

In December, RTA launched the "Euclid is Open for Business" advertising campaign to support local merchants and businesses during construction. The goal is to build awareness to the fact that great stores are in the construction zones, and getting to them is still possible. A variety of communication mediums were utilized to deliver this message. They include interior bus cards, electronic reader boards at rail stations, and promotions on the Downtown Trolley.

The Rider's Digest will feature different merchants each month as well. Merchants at Trinity Commons, which include Ten Thousand Villages, Café Ah-Roma, and Sacred Path Books & Art, were featured last month. They have already noticed an impact from the mentions, which means RTA riders responded.

Look for other great retailers to be highlighted each month in 2007.

Don't Forget...

...To take your hat, gloves, and other personal belongs with you when departing the train or bus. But if you do leave something behind, don't worry, just call the RTA Lost & Found, 216-566-5272. The Lost & Found is located in the Tower City Center Station.

Save More This Year

Many Northeast Ohio employers participate in RTA's Commuter Advantage program. It allows their employees to purchase fare passes using pretax dollars, further reducing the cost of commuting to work. If you are interested in learning more about this program, or want to know if your employer participates in Commuter Advantage, call RTA at 216-781-4764.

Nominations Sought

Do you know an RTA employee who went "above and beyond" to provide exceptional customer service in 2006?

If so, you still have time to nominate that employee for the General Manager's Customer Service Award. The deadline has been extended to Jan. 26. Nomination forms are available at the RTA Main Office, 1240 W. Sixth St.; the Customer Service Center at the Tower City Station; at www.rideRTA.com or by calling 216-566-5283.

RTA to be Smoke-Free

Effective Feb. 1, 2007, all RTA property will be smoke-free.

This includes all indoor and outdoor areas open to the public, such as rail stations, transit centers, Park-N-Ride facilities and bus shelters on RTA property, as well as buses and trains.

RTA asks for your cooperation in following this new rule. Transit Police will enforce the rule and issue tickets when necessary.

Rider's Digest

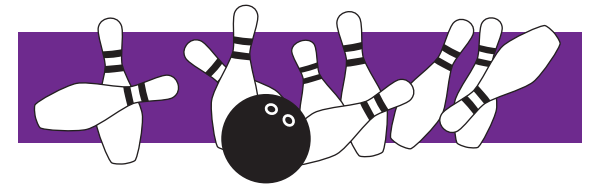


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Downtown Trolleys Score a Perfect Game

RTA's Downtown Trolleys will remain free to ride in 2007 thanks to a promotional sponsorship by The Corner Alley and 4th Street Bar & Grill.

Owners of the new East 4th entertainment complex have agreed to sponsor both the E-Line and B-Line Trolleys now through June of 2007. This ensures a fun and functional way for office workers, residents, and tourists to get to downtown restaurants, clubs, and venues. It also delivers a solid strike towards the continued comeback of downtown entertainment.



Transformation continues throughout the downtown area -- from new trendy restaurants in the Warehouse District and unique shopping at the Old Arcade, to improvements at Playhouse Square and a planned makeover of the Flats. The Entertainment District at East 4th has seen the most dramatic changes of late, and The Corner Alley will make it an even hotter hot spot area.

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Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority
rideRTA.com

Trolleys Continued From Front

The new venue has the right hook to be a big hit. Bowling and Cleveland are a natural match. But you'll find much more than just slick wooden lanes and two-toned leather shoes at The Corner Alley. It also has a martini bar and 100-seat restaurant. The interior is as unique as the concept. Walls were removed to connect three buildings together, with architectural features of each structure maintained to create an interesting eclectic decor.

New late-night hours on the E-Line Trolley will make it easy to bowl a few games after work. The E-Line Trolley now operates from 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. weekdays. It arrives every 10 minutes at stops along its route on Euclid Avenue from East 21st to Public Square, connecting to the Warehouse District.

Ridership on the Trolleys has steadily increased since being introduced in the spring of 2006. Currently, the nostalgic green and gold vehicles, complete with cowcatchers, wooden rails, and brass bells, carry more than 2700 passengers daily. Financial support from the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Greater Cleveland allowed riders to hop on for free with a smile in 2006. The partnership with The Corner Alley continues the free service, which RTA hopes to offer indefinitely.

Bowl A Game

The Corner Alley is open from 11 a.m. – 2 a.m. Seven Days a Week
4th Street Bar & Grill is open from 11 a.m. – 10 p.m. Seven Days a Week
Call 216-298-4070 or go to www.thecorneralley.com for more information.

MLK Day Service

RTA trains and buses will operate on a regular weekday schedule on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, January 15.

Hip to Be Square

Looking for a relaxing place to enjoy a good book and a great cup of coffee? How about brisk walk along a nature trail, or lunch at a fantastic Sushi restaurant? If these departures from everyday stresses sound appealing, then RTA's newest Community Circulator may be for you.

In December, service began on the #823 Coventry-Shaker Square Community Circulator. The new route follows a north/south path, linking Coventry Village in Cleveland Heights to Shaker Square. In between are popular stops such as the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and unique shopping at Larchmere.

With the introduction of the #823 comes a reroute of the #821 University Circle/Heights Area Community Circulator. The #821 now travels a west/east path, primarily along Euclid Heights Boulevard, from University Circle to Severance Town Center. This change offers residents, college students, visitors, and employees working in the University Circle area a convenient link to the shops at Severance.

The new #823 and the modified #821 Community Circulators make short work of canvassing the heights areas. Both operate on half hour frequencies, with weekday service from early morning to early evening, and Saturday service from mid-morning to 6 p.m. Go to www.rideRTA.com for schedules with exact times.

For those interested in breaking away and enjoying the many cultural treasures and retail offerings in University Circle, Coventry, Shaker Heights, and Severance Town Center, the #821 and #823 are easily accessible by rail from downtown. The #821 can be picked up at the University Circle Station on the Red Line Rapid, while the #823 intersects with the Blue and Green Lines at Shaker Square.

Goodwill Delivered

For the thousands of RTA riders who donated toys or cash at Park-N-Rides for the Toys for Tots campaign, thank you. As a result of your generosity, the 3rd Battalion 25th Marines were able to make the holidays brighter for more than 20,000 area children.

Totals from the Euclid, North Olmsted, Strongsville, and Westlake Park-N-Rides, as well as efforts at the Tower City Center Station during the Old Time Christmas celebration, were 500 toys, and \$3,000 in cash.

Clevelanders are known for giving. And the Marines are dedicated to their mission. Together good things happen – evident from the happiness provided from this past year's collection.

Strongsville Expands

RTA riders commuting downtown via the Strongsville Park-N-Ride won't have to get up early to secure a prime parking space. That's because the facility grew in December with the creation of 186 additional spaces.

The Park-N-Ride lot expansion is the first of three planned by RTA. In 2007, 176 and 200 spaces will be added to the Park-N-Rides in North Olmsted and Westlake, respectively. All three facilities were at, or near, capacity in 2006. The Ohio Department of Transportation will cover 80 percent of the cost for the expansions.

Skyrocketing gas prices and rising parking fees have made the Park-N-Rides an attractive alternative to driving downtown. And with expected traffic delays caused by upcoming Innerbelt construction, more Northeast Ohio commuters are expected to make the switch from driving to riding.