

RTA breaks ground on two new facilities

A downtown transit center

A new \$6.4 million transit center at Cleveland State University will be named in honor of the late Congresswoman, Stephanie Tubbs Jones. She was a strong supporter of transit.

The facility, RTA's first downtown bus hub, is expected to open in late 2010. It is on the south side of Prospect Avenue, just east of the Wolstein Center.

The new transit center will resemble an airport passenger terminal and waiting area. It will:

- Improve downtown bus services. More than 100 buses operate in the area during rush hours.
- Eliminate the need for on-street bus layovers.
- Increase pedestrian access to the transit center.
- Provide an effective way for customers to travel and connect seamlessly, through local, loop, intercommunity, regional and downtown transit-oriented services.

100 percent of the work is being done with federal funds, and 87 percent of the construction work is being funded by stimulus dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

A new Rapid station at East 55th Street

RTA is building a new \$8.5 million Rapid Transit station on East 55th St., at the east end of I-490.

The new station will continue to serve both light rail and heavy rail. It is served by routes #2 and #16, and should be completed in fall 2011. It will be a landmark in the community, and encourage further economic development.

About 87 percent of the work is being paid with federal funds, including stimulus money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The new station will have more convenient access, and be ADA-compliant, with stairs and an elevator tower at track level, and an enclosed pedestrian bridge to link the headhouse to the tower.

RTA helps Dobama Theater celebrate 50 years here

RTA is helping the Dobama Theater celebrate its 50th anniversary, and you can benefit.

RTA Night is Thursday, Oct. 15, at 7:30 p.m., when the theater season opens with the world premiere comedy, *10 More Minutes From Cleveland*, in Dobama's new home, 2340 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, part of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library complex.

To obtain a \$5 ticket discount for the Oct. 15 performance only, bring your RTA pass or receipt for Oct. 15 to the box office when you buy your ticket.

To reach Dobama by bus, ride the #40.

10 More Minutes from Cleveland is a new comedy from Cleveland Heights resident and playwright Eric Coble. Explore both sides of the river while laughing all the way. If you think you know Cleveland – think again.

For more info, call 216-932-3396, or go to dobama.org.

Please register to vote

Oct. 5 at 9 p.m. is the deadline to register to vote.

Nov. 3 is the general election. Polls are open from 6:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m. Absentee ballots will be accepted through Nov. 2.

If you would like to be a poll worker on Nov. 3, call 216-443-3277.

For more information:

- Contact the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, 216-443-3200, or Boe.cuyahogacounty.us
- Contact the League of Women Voters, 216-781-8375, or lwvcef.org



Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority
rideRTA.com

Rider's Digest



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REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

RTA: follow the \$\$

When you pay \$2.25 to take a bus to work, that fare pays for your ride, right? Wrong.

Every ride you take, on every public transit in the nation, is subsidized by taxpayers. The fare you pay only covers a portion of the actual cost of providing the ride.

That means that every transit system in the nation actually **loses** money on every customer.

The average fare collected by RTA is closer to \$1.00, because of senior discounts, and multiple uses of the All-Day Pass and Monthly Pass.

Welcome to transit economics 101, which is vastly different than the principles used to operate a retail store.

At RTA, the farebox covers only about 20 percent of the total cost of providing each trip.

Here are some facts that you need to know.

Where does operating money come from?

- 65 percent from the local sales tax. In Cuyahoga County, for every dollar you spend, a penny of the sales tax goes to RTA.
- 20 percent from passenger fares
- 15 percent from federal and state grants

(continued inside)

MONEY (continued from front)

Where does RTA spend its operating money?

- 65 percent for operators & support labor
- 7 percent for fuel and utilities
- 18 percent for parts and supplies
- 10 percent for debt service, capital improvements and insurance

What caused the financial challenges at RTA?

- An \$18.5 million drop in sales tax revenue, from \$173.5 million in 2008 to \$155 million in 2009. This was caused by the deepest national recession in the last 70 years, and was completely outside RTA's control.
- State of Ohio funding cuts of 33 percent

Capital vs. operating

RTA receives federal funding that can only be used on capital projects, such as buying buses and rebuilding rail stations. Federal funds cannot be used to cover operating costs. This year, most of the federal stimulus funds were in this category.

For more information, go to www.rideRTA.com/budgetchallenges

Ride RTA to many special events

RTA provides convenient transportation to many special events. Free parking is provided at most rail stations. Buying a \$5 All-Day Pass is the most convenient way to travel.

For **Browns Stadium**, Ride any rail line to Tower City. Then, ride the Waterfront Line to the West Third Street Station, next to Browns Stadium.

For **Quicken Loans Arena** Ride any rail line to Tower City. Use the Walkway to reach Quicken Loans Arena.

For more information, visit rideRTA.com, or call 216-621-9500.

RTA proposes new weekly bus service to start in January

RTA is proposing a Weekly Shopper Service to help customers who formerly rode Community Circulators. The one-year pilot project would begin in January 2010, and be evaluated after several months.

This proposal is in response to comments from customers of the Circulator service, which was eliminated on Sept. 20, as RTA works to overcome an \$18 million shortfall in revenue from the sales tax.

"We think that this jointly funded proposal is innovative and will be responsive to the needs of many," says Joe Calabrese, RTA General Manager. "This service will be valuable to those with limited options, while also limiting RTA's financial exposure. It can be a great model for jointly funding projects going forward."

The proposal

RTA will work with elected officials and Community Development Corporations in the 12 communities where Circulator service previously existed, to determine interest in the weekly service, and to find joint financial sponsors. The service is

designed predominately, but not exclusively, for senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

This service will operate one day per week, for about 6 hours daily, to shuttle customers from major residential complexes and high-density areas to shopping and medical facilities.

Pick-up locations will be developed through a public involvement process, so that a regular schedule can be developed and distributed.

RTA will provide the vehicles and 50 percent of the operating costs, if sponsors can be identified to fund the balance. The estimated cost for each party is \$15,000 annually. Fares will be charged to help offset vehicle maintenance and fuel costs. If all 12 communities participate in this pilot, RTA's annual financial commitment will be approximately \$180,000, much lower than the \$5 million annual cost to operate the Circulators.

If there is interest in such a service, planning and budgeting will take place in October and November. The service can be promoted in December and begin operation in January 2010.

RTA adds 17 more 'buses that bend'

RTA has added 17 articulated buses to its fleet. These replace standard 40-foot vehicles that had outlived their useful life. They are being used on two high-ridership routes, #22 and #26.

Articulated vehicles are often called "buses that bend." Clevelanders were introduced to the articulated vehicles in October 2008, when the HealthLine began operating on Euclid Avenue. Since then, many riders have encouraged RTA to offer these vehicles on other high-ridership routes.

The new buses have 3 doors on the curb side. They are 22 feet longer than a standard bus, use ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel, and can handle up to 20 more passengers than a standard bus.

RTA offers discount to circus at Arena

Everybody loves a circus, and everybody loves a discount. Now you can have both.

RTA riders can obtain a \$3 discount on up to 6 tickets to see performances of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus on Oct. 22, 23, 25 and 26 at 7:30 p.m. at Quicken Loans Arena.

When ordering tickets, use the code **RIDERS139**. The discount is not valid on CC, FR and VIP tickets. No double discounts will be offered.

To use the discount when you order ticket, go to ticketmaster.com, or call 1-800-745-3000.

To ride RTA to the circus, park free at many Rapid stations. Ride any Rapid line to Tower City, and use the Walkway to reach Quicken Loans Arena.