Public Transit Agencies Go Above and Beyond During Coronavirus

WHILE “SHELTER IN PLACE” orders have been put into effect in many areas of the country, public transit remains an essential service to support those who still count on it during the coronavirus pandemic.

Delivering Food
Capital Metro, Austin, TX, has launched a partnership with H-E-B and the Central Texas Food Bank, delivering Help-at-Home kits to MetroAccess subscribers. MetroAccess is for those unable to use regular public transportation due to a disability or other limiting health condition. The agency has expanded this program beyond MetroAccess customers and is delivering kits to several senior-living communities in the Central Texas area. As of March 27, the agency has delivered more than 877 grocery boxes, which equates to more than 18,000 meals. “We are very thankful for our great partners at H-E-B and the Central Texas Food Bank as we get together to help the most vulnerable members of our community during this critical time,” said Chad Ballentine, VP of demand response at Capital Metro. “We want to make sure that those customers can stay at home to protect their health and safety and not worry about how they will get basic necessities. We have had an overwhelming response as we continue to hear stories of how these groceries are giving hope and comfort in a stressful time. We don’t know when this pandemic will end, but we plan to continue these deliveries for as long as there is a community need.” The Help-at-Home kits include shelf stable items, delivered to customers’ doorsteps. According to the agency, Capital Metro was the first public transit agency in the country to deliver this kind of service during the coronavirus emergency. Similarly, in St. Paul, MN, Metro Mobility and Transit Link are helping deliver groceries and household essentials to people who cannot leave their homes. The free service enables users to order items online from a store that has local pick up and have the items delivered by a Metro Mobility or Transit Link professional. “We put this service in place for the safety and well-being of our customers, who are particularly vulnerable and susceptible to the virus,” said Nick Ballentine, VP of demand response at Capital Metro. “We want to make sure that those customers can stay at home to protect their health and safety and not worry about how they will get basic necessities. We have had an overwhelming response as we continue to hear stories of how these groceries are giving hope and comfort in a stressful time. We don’t know when this pandemic will end, but we plan to continue these deliveries for as long as there is a community need.” The Help-at-Home kits include shelf stable items, delivered to customers’ doorsteps. According to the agency, Capital Metro was the first public transit agency in the country to deliver this kind of service during the coronavirus emergency. Similarly, in St. Paul, MN, Metro Mobility and Transit Link are helping deliver groceries and household essentials to people who cannot leave their homes. The free service enables users to order items online from a store that has local pick up and have the items delivered by a Metro Mobility or Transit Link professional. “We put this service in place for the safety and well-being of our customers, who are particularly vulnerable and susceptible to the virus,” said Nick Ballentine, VP of demand response at Capital Metro. “We want to make sure that those customers can stay at home to protect their health and safety and not worry about how they will get basic necessities. We have had an overwhelming response as we continue to hear stories of how these groceries are giving hope and comfort in a stressful time. We don’t know when this pandemic will end, but we plan to continue these deliveries for as long as there is a community need.”

INFRARED: Our industry has always adapted and persevered, meeting the most daunting challenges. The test we face today is formidable. But I am heartened by what our public transit systems are doing to get essential workers to hospitals, clinics, grocery stores, post offices and so many other critical workplaces while also keeping their employees safe.

— APTA Chair and General Manager/CEO, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, Nuria I. Fernandez

New Focus on Infrastructure Bill as Recovery Package

BOTH HOUSE DEMOCRATIC leaders and President Trump have called for passage of an Infrastructure bill in April to spur the economy in the wake of COVID-19. Earlier this week, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and President Trump separately announced that they want to move forward to renew investment in America’s infrastructure as part of the nation’s recovery in response to COVID-19.

The House of Representatives is expected to move ahead with an infrastructure package that calls for an investment of $489 billion over five years in surface transportation, including $105 billion for public transit and $5 billion for passenger rail. Pelosi and other House Democratic leaders, including House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-OR), spoke on a press call April 1 on plans to address America’s growing infrastructure needs, the Moving Forward Framework, first proposed in January.

“For a strong recovery, we must invest in smarter, safer infrastructure that is made to last. We can create millions of good-paying jobs, strengthening commerce and reducing air pollution that harms public health,” they said in a press release.

“Increased investment in infrastructure creates jobs and strengthens local economies, and that is exactly what America needs right now,” said APTA President and CEO Paul Skoutelas. “As the nation moves forward and works to address the effects of the

Connect to What’s Next At APTA EXPO 2020

The World’s Largest Public Transportation Showcase

MORE THAN 15,000 ATTENDEES and more than 800 exhibiting companies from around the globe—representing public transit systems, manufacturers, suppliers and consultants—are expected to convene in Anaheim, CA, for APTA EXPO 2020, the industry’s premier tradeshow and showcase of technology, products and services, Oct. 12-14. APTA EXPO 2020 is held concurrently with APTA’s TRANSform Conference Oct. 11-14.

APTA’s triennial EXPO brings together all sectors of the industry under one roof to connect, share and discover the most innovative public transportation solutions. More than 94 percent of the show floor is already sold out (see a directory of current exhibitors starting on page 6), so prospective exhibitors are encouraged to sign up now at www.aptaexpo.com. This year’s exhibitors represent more than 20 countries, with first-time exhibitors accounting for approximately 153 of the total number. APTA’s TRANSform Conference & EXPO 2020 has the most comprehensive marketplace of innovative products and services for public transportation worldwide. EXPO show floor highlights will include full-size rail and streetcars and more than 60 buses. First-time attendees can attend an orientation session to help them make the most of their time. Sign-up information and full details will be included in the registration link. A special Appreciation Day for students and young professionals, scheduled for Oct. 12, will offer enhanced learning and networking opportunities, including guided tours of the show floor.
Leadership APTA Builds the Next Generation of Visionary Public Transit Senior and Executive Leaders

Leadership APTA, the association’s year-long senior and executive leadership program, cultivates the next generation of public transit industry leaders. This visionary program shapes participants to bring innovative, forward-looking and ethical leadership to both the public and private sectors.

O UR INDUSTRY FACES NUMEROUS challenges, including workforce capacity constraints—which reduces the pool of individuals who are available to lead—and limited funding. These challenges make Leadership APTA a more important program than ever for public transportation industry professionals. The program develops the best and brightest and equips them to step up, ensuring far-sightedness that advances our communities’ mobility needs and provides educated voices that are critical to helping Congress understand the need for public transportation funding.

The program is a crucial leadership pipeline for APTA, as well. Class members often are called on to provide their perspectives on strategic planning and related association initiatives. After completing the program, class members frequently go on to active engagement in the association’s committees, task forces, work groups, Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

More than 550 members have graduated from Leadership APTA since the first Class of 1998. Twenty-one graduates currently serve on the APTA Board of Directors, and many others have done so previously. Graduates’ leadership training and their commitment to giving back are a lifeline for an association as well.

**Broad Skillsets for Successful Leadership**

Senior and executive leaders need strong technical skills. Leadership APTA provides a broad understanding of industry best practices, from designing and providing service to negotiating contracts, developing great marketing programs and funding projects. But great leaders are not made by technical skills alone. Recognizing this, Leadership APTA focuses on the whole person, instilling self-awareness that helps graduates build on their strengths, shore up their weaknesses and create their ideal work-life balance.

Graduates continue the program understanding not just the black-and-white industry issues, but also the gray-area issues like diversity and inclusion and interpersonal skills, which require a different mix of abilities for success. Leadership APTA helps participants tap into this industry knowledge and equips them to step up, ensuring far-sightedness that advances our communities’ mobility needs and provides educated voices that are critical to helping Congress understand the need for public transportation funding.

The program develops the best and brightest and equips them to step up, ensuring far-sightedness that advances our communities’ mobility needs and provides educated voices that are critical to helping Congress understand the need for public transportation funding.

**Alignment with Strategic Goals and Industry Issues**

Along with APTA staff, a member oversight committee recommends and helps design Leadership APTA program curricula, speakers and class projects. This process ensures alignment with the association’s strategic goals, which include advocating for increased public transportation funding, serving as a preferred source for reliable public transportation industry information and providing professional and career development. Understanding these goals—and learning how to support and engage in them—helps Leadership APTA graduates advance and improve public transportation.

APTA keeps its finger on the pulse of what’s relevant and trending in the public transportation industry, and staff and the oversight committee tap into this industry knowledge to require the challenges facing the transportation industry. Leadership APTA presents a valuable opportunity to share, foster dialogue with other industry professionals and build one’s network.”

APTA is very proud of the demonstrated leadership, accomplishments and contributions of our Leadership APTA graduates. They continue to develop and leverage their strengths, creativity, and ongoing commitment to support the resiliency, vitality and impact of our industry.
The Federal Transit Administration thanks our nation’s public transit workforce for continuing to provide critical transportation services to first responders, healthcare workers and people who rely on transit for healthcare and other essential needs every day. On March 27, the President signed into law the historic CARES Act, providing $25 billion dollars in funding to the transit industry to prevent, prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency within communities across the country. Transit agencies will now have the ability to pay the salaries of operating staff furloughed or working part time. Thank you to the frontline workforce for keeping America moving.

— FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams

To help the community, particularly senior citizens, during the coronavirus crisis, the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada has expanded service on its Silver STAR routes and partnered with community food bank Three Square to deliver groceries to homebound individuals.

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is taking every measure to protect its frontline workers, including recently securing 75,000 masks. The supply will be distributed to workers at New York City Transit, MTA Bus Co., Long Island Rail Road, Metro-North Railroad and MTA Bridges and Tunnels.

Enactment of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act will deliver $25 billion to public transit agencies and the businesses that support our industry. This emergency funding—the largest appropriation in the history of public transportation—shows that the public and public officials recognize how essential public transit is to peoples’ lives and the economy.

— APTA President and CEO Paul R. Skoutelas

New CEOs Named

Lattuca, GoTriangle

THE RESEARCH TRIANGLE REGIONAL PUBLIC Transportation Authority (GoTriangle), Research Triangle Park, NC, has named Charles E. Lattuca president and CEO. Lattuca is a transportation executive with extensive leadership and government administration experience. Most recently, he was leading a $5.6 billion project to build a 16.2-mile light-rail transit system in the Baltimore-Washington metro area, expected to open in 2023. Lattuca also served as the rapid transit system development manager for the Montgomery County DOT, where he was responsible for planning and engineering studies on the Maryland County’s 102-mile BRT plan. He is a member of APTA’s Innovative Funding, Finance and P3 Committee.

Allen, Proterra

PROTERRA IN BURLINGAME, CA, HAS NAMED CURRENT chairman, Jack Allen, as chairman and CEO. As CEO, Allen will guide Proterra’s continuing growth, including scaling operations and supply chain and manufacturing capability to meet growing demand for zero-emission vehicles. Before joining Proterra as chairman in 2017, Allen spent more than 30 years at global truck and bus company Navistar International, where he most recently served as CEO.
Big Blue Bus Selects Stantec to Lead Electric Bus Charging Strategy

BIG BLUE BUS HAS SELECTED design firm Stantec to help the agency transition to a zero-emission bus (ZEB) fleet. Big Blue Bus serves Santa Monica and the Westside of Los Angeles, one of the most densely populated areas in L.A. County. Stantec will assist in designing an electric vehicle charging strategy as Big Blue Bus switches its fleet of 195 buses by 2030. The agency’s implementation date is a decade ahead of a statewide mandate.

The charging infrastructure project, set for completion in March 2021, starts with an in-depth review of route modeling for Big Blue Bus to determine if battery electric buses or hydrogen fuel-cell electric buses are the best fit for the community. Big Blue Bus received its first prototype battery electric bus from Gillig in 2019. The bus is powered by six onboard batteries and can be fully charged in less than four hours.

“The Big Blue Bus zero-emission goals are the next step in the agency’s long history as an industry leader in sustainable and environmentally friendly practices,” said Patrick M. McKelvey, Stantec senior principal. “We are excited to continue working with Big Blue Bus to provide exceptional—and clean energy—service to transit riders in western L.A. County.”

APTA Publishes Fourth Quarter 2019 Public Transit Ridership Figures

APTA HAS RELEASED ITS quarterly “Transit Ridership Report,” which reveals that ridership increased by 0.90 percent in the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2019, compared to the same period in 2018. These figures were achieved prior to the coronavirus outbreak.

Riders took 22 million more trips in Q4 2019 compared to Q4 2018. This includes a rise of 5.5 percent for heavy rail, 3.3 percent for commuter rail and 2.1 percent for trolleybus service.

This was the third quarter in a row with an increase. The last three consecutive quarters with an increase were Q2–Q4 2014.

Nationally, ridership increased by 0.30 percent for the year, compared to 2018. A total of 9,945 billion unlinked trips were taken on U.S. public transportation systems in 2019, 29 million more trips than in 2018. Read more at www.apta.com/ridership-report.

EXPO 2020 CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and focused sessions.

The EXPO4Grown feature Learning Zones, with free educational sessions on a variety of topics including procurement, innovations and solutions, international and more.

As this issue of Passenger Transport went to press, registration for both EXPO and APTA’s TRANSform Conference, as well as hotel reservations, was set to open within the next two weeks. Be sure to check your inbox for upcoming announcements. APTA’s TRANSform Conference & EXPO plays a pivotal role in connecting the industry to what’s now and what’s next in public transportation. Visit www.aptaexpo.com to learn more.

Social Media Contest
You could win a trip to APTA’s TRANSform Conference & EXPO 2020 in Anaheim plus a 2020 conference registration, simply by taking a photo of yourself (or a group photo with your colleagues, once it is safe to do so) wearing your EXPO visor. (If you do not have an EXPO visor, email a request with your address and the amount requested to social@aptaexpo.com.) Upload your photograph(s) via social media by July 31. If you do not have a Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter account, email a JPEG of your picture(s) to social@aptaexpo.com. Winners, including the grand prize winner, will be selected by Aug. 31. Visit www.aptaexpo.com for full information and rules.

Beware of Unofficial Solicitors
It has come to our attention that unauthorized companies have been contacting APTA attendees and exhibitors and identifying themselves as having access to attendee lists. APTA does not sell its attendee lists, and any vendors attempting to sell this information should be considered fraudulent.

FINDING ARE RESOURCES PROVIDED BY FTA AND USDOT regarding coronavirus. For more information visit www.transit.dot.gov/coronavirus.

• FTA Emergency Relief Docket
• Frequently Asked Questions from FTA Grantees Regarding Coronavirus
• USDOT Deadline Extension for FTA Competitive Grant Programs
• USDOT Increased Flexibility to Help Transit Agencies Respond to Coronavirus
• USDOT Blog: Making Public Transit Safer During COVID-19 Outbreak

In Memoriam
LaPlante, Former APTA Board Member

JOHN LAPLANTE, the first Chicago DOT commissioner (acting) and former T.Y. Lin engineering manager, died March 22 in Evanston, IL, at the age of 80 from complications of COVID-19 contracted on a personal trip to Egypt in February. He was an active member of the APTA Board of Directors, Complete Streets Coalition and Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE).

LaPlante served Chicago for 30 years in transportation engineering positions, starting as an intern at the then-department of public works in 1962. As chief traffic engineer in 1982, he helped redesign and straighten out a notorious z-shaped curve on Chicago’s Lake Shore Drive at Wacker Drive downtown. After leaving the department, LaPlante began a long career in the Chicago office of engineering services firm T.Y. Lin International. He retired in 2015 as director of traffic engineering.

LaPlante received ITE’s Theodore M. Matson Memorial Award in 2010 for outstanding contributions in the field of traffic engineering and was principal author of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Pedestrian Guide.

INFRÁSTRUCTURA BILL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ongoing COVID-19 crisis, renewed investment in public transportation infrastructure will provide a solid economic foundation for recovery.”

“APTA applauds House leaders and the President for jumpstarting the infrastructure conversation, and we look forward to working with the House and Senate on bipartisan, bicameral legislation that will repair, maintain and improve our public transit and passenger rail systems today and in the future,” continued Skoutelas.

APTA has emphatically urged lawmakers that now is the time to invest more in the nation’s public transportation infrastructure to help communities provide critical public transit services and economic opportunities.

APTA has proposed $178 billion over six years to restore the nation’s public transit and passenger rail systems to a state of good repair and meet the mobility demands of growing communities. This $178 billion investment will generate a 5-to-1 return of more than $890 billion in economic activity. Americans know that investing in public transportation infrastructure will lead to benefits that repay the investment multiple times over, as the nation emerges from the coronavirus pandemic and builds for the future. The House package includes the following key points that affect public transportation:

• Increasing funding for transit agencies to add new routes and provide more reliable service;

• Streamlining project delivery so that the investments get shovels in the ground more quickly by reforming the Capital Investment Grant program;

• Expanding the passenger rail network, including to regions that lack frequent or affordable airport service;

• Modernizing infrastructure with new funding for addressing the most impactful projects and bottlenecks that affect local regions and the national transportation network;

• Delivering better roads and bridges faster, by prioritizing fixing the existing broken, outdated infrastructure; and

• Investing in Amtrak stations, facilities, services and modernization of its rail cars.
Inside this box is decades of thinking about sustainable U.S. transportation. From safety and reliability to the latest in green energy innovation, Siemens Mobility has redefined urban infrastructure. In fact, 1 out of every 3 LRVs in American cities are manufactured by us. From brake-power energy storage to digitally-connected vehicles. That’s Siemens Mobility – Thinking. Inside the Box.

Light Rail that is Light-Years Ahead

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usa.siemens.com/mobility
MAGGIE WALSH HAS SERVED AS CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF WTS International since May 2018. She is a vice president and strategic clients and pursuits leader for the Transportation Business Group at HDR, an engineering, architecture, environmental and construction services consulting company.

WTS International is dedicated to building the future of transportation through the global advancement of women. With more than 8,000 members (including men as well as women), WTS is turning the glass ceiling into a career portal through its professional programs, networking opportunities and unparalleled access to industry and government leaders.

Passenger Transport (PT) recently interviewed Walsh to mark Women’s History Month (March).

PT: As Chair of WTS, what is your vision for the organization, and how you would like to see it evolve in the future?

Walsh: WTS has been in my life since 1997. I have been mentored and prepped by the best over the past 23 years. When I became chair of the board two years ago, I knew what needed to evolve for a dynamic and awesome future. WTS was in need of a brand refresh, an upgraded database system and functional website. We are very close to launching a beautiful, refreshed brand that communicates the promise we make, the experience and value we deliver, and the image we project. Our database and new website will come online soon. This will give our chapters the tools and mechanisms they need to carry out their WTS business more effectively and efficiently.

As a former chapter president, I had first-hand experience of how important these elements are in running a great chapter. It is a rewarding feeling to know that this vision will be realized prior to passing the baton to the next chair.

PT: How have APTA and WTS partnered over the years to promote women professionals in transportation, and what can we do to make an even bigger impact?

Walsh: WTS and APTA have a living and dynamic Memorandum of Understanding where we are furthering the participation, opportunities, advancement and recognition of women in the transportation infrastructure sector. To make an even bigger impact, we would like to see every woman in our industry have the opportunities to gain access to and awareness of our professional development and career opportunities in our respective organizations.

WTS has a permanent seat on APTA’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, and APTA has a seat at the WTS Industry Partner Forums held in January and May. Together, we are working to close the workforce gap with particular attention to women—an instrumental force for the success of the industry.

PT: What are some of the WTS programs you are most proud of?

Walsh: WTS is widely recognized for its professional development, networking and knowledge-sharing programs and has become a powerful voice in the transportation industry. I’m proud of our Signature Leadership Training programs for women striving to be in executive positions and for women navigating their professional journeys mid-career. This program has been specifically designed to turn leadership theory into practical and impactful skills for women who are passionate about influencing the future of transportation.

I often say women are star performers in self-improvement. We don’t sit still. We invest the time to learn and get smarter every day. We help, support and encourage one another. We are making a difference.

PT: What are some factors in the growth of WTS over the past few years?

Walsh: Leaders and members at the international, region council and chapter levels are driven by the passion that stems from fully embracing the concept that you gain more when you come in from the sidelines, roll up your sleeves and sincerely get involved.
Uniquely positioned to deliver a full range of hardware and software, as well as integration and support services, Luminator provides tangible benefits to transportation operators and passengers:

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Learn more about how Luminator is bringing intelligence, safety and efficiency to transit by visiting: www.luminator.com

Go to www.futureoftransit.com/davos for more about Luminator’s contribution to the World Economic Forum and technology that drives smart cities.
Directory of Exhibitors at APTA’s EXPO 2020

HUNDREDS OF BUSINESSES that serve the public transportation industry have already signed up for APTA’s EXPO 2020. As of March 30, 2020, they include the following:

A

A Customer’s Point of View, Inc.
ABB Inc.
ABB Power Grids
ABC Companies
AbilTrax
Abley Security, Inc.
Access IS
Acro Industries Incorporated
Acrosser USA
ACT by Proair
ACTIA Corp.
Activu
Acustrip
Adams & Westlake, Ltd.
Advanced Interconnect Mfg.
Advanced Transit Manufacturing
Advantech B+B SmartWorx
AeroClave, LLC
Aerodyne Systems LLC
Aesys Inc.
A Customer’s Point of View, Inc.
ABB Inc.
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P


Q

Q’Straint/Sure-Lok Quester Tangent Corporation Quinte Plastics Ltd.

R


S


T


U

UUTP UKM Transit Products Unipart Rail United States Seating Universal Plastics Urban Engineers Urban Solar Urban Transportation Associates UTC/RAS

V


W

Wabtec Corporation WAGO Corporation WaySiene LLC WBA Research Webb Wheel Products Wendel Westermo Data Communications, Inc. Western Sierras Inc. Westmatic Corporation Whiting Corporation Whiting Door Manufacturing Corp. Wi-Tronix Woolin IS America, Inc. WorkPartners Worthington Industries, Inc. WSP USA Wurth Electronics ICS

X

Xybix Systems, Inc.

Z

Zephr S.P.A. ZF Friedrichshafen AG Zonar Systems Zoppas Industries Heating Element Technologies

* These exhibitors were current as of March 30.
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**At** Autonomy  **Id** Independence  **Fr** Freedom

**Tc** Technology  **Rf** Rear-Facing  **Wc** Wheelchair  **Oc** Occupant

**Sp** Support  **Sv** Service  **Sc** 25 Seconds  **Ss** Self-Securement

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PT: What have you valued the most from your own participation in WTS and what keeps you attracted to spend your valuable volunteer time on WTS?

Walsch: As a promoter, I am at my best when I pull forces together, bridge differences, respond to needs and blend abilities into productive efforts. As WTS grows, it requires leaders to be dynamic, agile and patient. I have relied on these qualities over the years, leading large and diverse groups to capture ideas, generate solutions to complex problems and gain consensus. It has been a privilege to serve the WTS community as chair of the board. It's an honor to be cherished forever.

PT: In light of your own very successful career in transportation, what advice would you give women who are following in your footsteps?

Walsch: A balanced number of women and men at "every table" creates diverse and inclusive teams who put in more effort, stay longer and demonstrate more commitment to their agency or company. Let's make this happen!
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