



# Meeting the Moment: Transforming CTA's Post-Pandemic Future



Newsletter #2: October 2022

## Message from the President

Autumn in Chicago brings cooler temperatures, the changing of nature's color palette and, for the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), continued progress and momentum towards improved bus and rail service-reliability. As an agency, we are intensely focused on moving our [Meeting the Moment action plan](#) forward by continuing to effectively implement our aggressive hiring and recruitment campaign, communicating effectively with customers and ensuring that we are delivering the best CTA travel experience possible as we grow and more effectively deploy resources currently at our disposal.

Over the past month, CTA has crossed a new post-pandemic ridership threshold, [providing more than 900,000 daily weekday rides](#) for the first time since February 2020. This is a very good sign for public transit in Chicago, with ridership growing across our bus and rail system. I am encouraged by this increase and we will continue our work to improve our customers' CTA travel experience during this time of growth.

The coming weeks promise to be an active and productive time for the CTA and we hope that you will not only use public transit for your travel needs, but that you will help spread the word about our initiatives or join us for a number of upcoming events we will be hosting. Please encourage your friends, family, employees and professional networks to visit us online to learn more about upcoming CTA activities and initiatives—like the successful job fair [held earlier this month](#) and our ['Ask CTA' neighborhood outreach events](#).

As always, I thank you for your support of the CTA and public transit. Our family of employees deeply appreciate the opportunity to serve you and recognize the privilege of providing this vital public good in a world-class city.

Dorval R. Carter, Jr.  
President



## **Pillar 1: Deliver reliable and consistent service**

### **Rail schedule changes result in service improvements along select routes**

Over the past two months, as part of our ongoing service optimization initiatives, we've made [temporary changes to rail schedules along select rail lines](#), resulting in more consistent and reliable service for our rail customers. These adjustments, which have been implemented to align more closely with our current rail operator staffing levels, immediately resulted in shorter or more consistent wait times between trains on the Blue and Red lines—CTA's busiest rail corridors. This adjustment is one of several that CTA will be making in the coming months to ensure that we provide the most reliable service possible and that it aligns more closely with our updated rail schedules.

### **CTA & ATU Local 241 host successful in-person career fair on October 1**

A key component of our aggressive *Meeting the Moment* action plan is to continue our ongoing, multifaceted hiring and recruitment efforts. On October 1, 2022, CTA and our bus union, the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 241, hosted an [on-site career fair](#) for applicants seeking Bus Operator and Bus Mechanic positions. These positions include generous starting salaries, paid training and benefits that include family medical and prescription plans.

The steady hiring progress we are making reflects our aggressive strategy to improve service reliability as quickly as possible. By the end of the month of October, we anticipate having brought aboard about 350 new, full-time bus operators in 2022. Additionally, forty-one new rail operators have gone into service since the beginning of the year and we have 32 more individuals currently advancing through our training process.



## **Pillar 2: Enhance safety and security for riders**

### **CTA sees great interest in CPD's Voluntary Special Employment Program after new agreement goes into effect**

The safety of our customers and employees is CTA's paramount concern. To supplement the daily law enforcement efforts of the Chicago Police Department's (CPD) Public Transit Unit, CTA entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Chicago to extend CPD's Voluntary Special Employment Program—a longstanding program that provides volunteer, off-duty CPD officers to patrol CTA properties. The extension makes officers available to CTA from 2022 until 2025 and includes pay increases to attract additional officer participation. These officers are supervised by full-time, dedicated CPD supervisors. CTA has seen a strong interest from officers in this program with more than 380 deployments on the system in August.

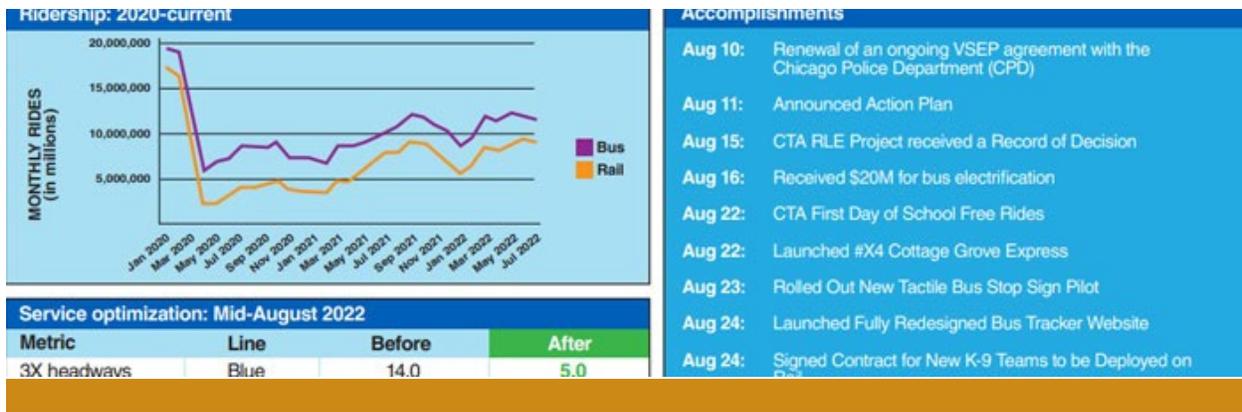
### **CTA continues deployment of K-9 teams across rail system**

CTA continues to work with our K-9 security contractor to deploy new, two-person K-9 teams into our rail system, each week. We continue to make significant progress towards our goal of 50 deployed K-9 units and anticipate full deployment in the coming months. CTA also continues to strategically deploy unarmed security guards on the rail system and coordinate with CPD to address code of conduct violations and other crime on the system.



## **Pillar 3: Improve the customer experience at our facilities**

CTA continues to make progress on *Refresh and Renew* station improvement and modernization projects. Over the past year, despite the lingering effects of the pandemic on CTA's ridership and workforce, our staff has worked diligently to continue to upgrade our rail stations as part of our comprehensive plan to improve the CTA travel experience for our customers. We will soon provide an update regarding this annual station maintenance program, detailing work that has been completed thus far in 2022 and advising the public on our progress towards our goal of improving 92 stations this year.



## Pillar 4: Upgrade our digital tools to improve rider communication

### Meeting the Moment action plan scorecard

CTA recently unveiled its new [Meeting the Moment scorecard](#), a tracking tool that allows the public to follow the progress we are making in key areas of the action plan. The scorecard is a comprehensive tool that allows the general public to follow our accomplishments and remain apprised of the steps we are taking to improve CTA travel across several vital areas, like ridership and bus and rail service reliability trends. It tracks areas including bus operator hiring, tactile bus stop sign installs, progress on Refresh and Renew station improvement projects, “Ask CTA” events and employee investments.

The scorecard, which is updated monthly, also highlights our accomplishments chronologically, making it easier for users to track our improvements. This is another tool we are using to ensure our stakeholders, especially our customers, are informed about the work we are doing on their behalf.



## Pillar 5: Invest in our employees

### New video screens installed at all rail station employee kiosks

Several weeks ago, [CTA completed installation of 173 new security camera monitors](#) in customer assistant kiosks across all 146 rail stations so that our personnel are better able to monitor activity taking place in the station. This will allow employees to make faster, better-informed, real-time decisions when disturbances of any sort occur at their work location.



### CTA recognizes outstanding Bus and Rail Operations employees

At the September 2022 meeting of the Chicago Transit Board, it was my great pleasure to recognize 11 outstanding CTA employees, including nine bus operators and two rail customer service representatives, for outstanding service to our customers. Each of these employees received three or more customer commendations since March 2020, through the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic—a testament to their stellar customer service and commitment to our agency.

During the recognition ceremony, CTA Chairman Lester Barclay and our Board of Directors joined me in thanking these valued employees for their service and dedication to CTA. The honorees were recognized individually and provided certificates in recognition of their professional excellence.



## Customer Engagement

### **“Ask CTA” outreach events continue valuable interactions with customers**

Our “Ask CTA” community engagement events have proven popular with our customers and remain in-demand. We have completed 18 events at select stations around the city and will continue to explore additional ways in which we can engage our riders regularly. We look forward to new opportunities to speak with our customers, make them aware that CTA is hiring, and to hear their suggestions and concerns.

### **Customers join CTA to celebrates agency’s 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

CTA is [celebrating a significant milestone](#) in 2022—its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! On October 1, CTA hosted the public at a Diamond Jubilee Celebration in downtown Chicago’s Daley Plaza! The event included fun and informative activities that celebrated the heritage of the nation’s second largest transit agency.