



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **WeGo Star to see improvements over next year** *New equipment and technology for more convenience, long-term reliability*

**NASHVILLE** – This week, WeGo begins the first of many upcoming upgrades and improvements WeGo Star customers can expect to see over the next year as the agency works to ensure a smoother, more comfortable, and more reliable ride on Middle Tennessee’s commuter train.

“I’m very excited about the upcoming changes to the WeGo Star, which are designed to ensure not only to passengers’ safety but also comfort,” Wilson County Mayor and Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee Board Chair Randall Hutto said. “I appreciate the hard work of the RTA to make these changes a reality. The Star has proven itself time and time again, and I believe these improvements will only enhance that service for years to come.”

The full list of anticipated improvements to the WeGo Star before the end of 2020 is as follows:

- **Track Work** – Effective September 17 through December 21, 2019, this work will target certain sections of track, replacing jointed rail with welded rail, and replacing approximately 1,600 ties to lessen the herky-jerky areas along the Star’s route to ensure a smoother, more comfortable ride. Minor delays are to be expected while this work is being conducted.
- **Overhauled Locomotives** – Four locomotives are being overhauled, with the first being put into service before the end of September 2019. The overhaul process includes bringing existing engine and systems equipment to a like-new condition, as well as new wheels and brakes, and will extend the locomotives’ service life an estimated 15 years.
- **Mt. Juliet Park & Ride Expansion** – As the highest ridership train station along the route, Mt. Juliet’s Park & Ride is in the process of undergoing a parking lot expansion. Work will begin in 2020 to expand the lot by an additional 100 parking spaces, as well as increased site lighting, bicycle parking, landscaping, and a multi-use path for pedestrian safety and use.
- **New Passenger Cars** – With a vote by the RTA Board of Directors expected this fall, WeGo anticipates the purchase of new passenger cars for the Star. Like our current equipment, these cars were originally used by the Metra Commuter Rail system in Chicago and have recently been refurbished by a railroad in Michigan. These cars would provide more amenities for passengers, including new seating and increased safety features. If the purchase is approved, the cars would be expected to go into service late summer or early fall 2020.
- **New Fare Payment System** – By the end of 2020, WeGo customers system-wide will be able to use our new fare payment system. This system will feature reloadable smart cards, account-based fare management, and mobile ticketing so that customers can use their smartphones to pay and reload passes, all from the palm of their hands.

“As the only commuter rail service in the region, the Star is exemplary of how public transit can provide effective and reliable service to improve regional mobility and quality of life for our area’s commuters,” WeGo Public Transit CEO Steve Bland said. “In its 13 years of service, the Star has become an institution all its own between Davidson and Wilson Counties, and we’re excited for these upcoming projects to ensure the convenience and reliability of the train for passengers for years to come.”

Members of the public are encouraged to sign up for WeGo’s newsletter, follow them on social media, and visit WeGoTransit.com to get updates on exciting initiatives, community events, updates, and general information.

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Editor's Note: To request this info in an alternative format, call 615-862-5950 for the ADA Coordinator.