



MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Nashville MTA Board of Directors looks ahead to 2020

Monthly meeting yields discussion on upcoming Metro budget realities, new projects

NASHVILLE – The Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nashville MTA) Board of Directors took on a robust agenda of discussion topics and action items at its January board meeting, looking at ways to improve the overall transit experience in 2020. However, WeGo CEO Steve Bland reminded the Board that capital investments are for naught unless Metro makes a commitment to investing in transit service operations.

Better Bus Service Project Update

WeGo staff has been working on a comprehensive operational analysis for improving bus service that would lead to a 31 percent increase in fixed-route service hours, extend paratransit service hours, and ultimately create more than 100 new jobs. The total cost over five years is approximately a \$25 million operating budget increase.

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Operating Budget

WeGo staff outlined their approach for the agency's upcoming Metro Budget request, following the recent practice of preparing a two-level operating budget proposal. To maintain current service, WeGo is recommending a \$1.5 million increase (three percent increase) in Metro's subsidy for FY2021. Not recognizing this increase will result in the need to consider further service reductions or fare increases. A secondary proposal would be to fund service expansions identified in Better Bus Service Project that do not require additional vehicles, as fleet acquisition through the Capital Spending Plan would be a necessary pre-requisite.

WeGo Public Transit Website Redesign

The Board recommended awarding a contract to American Eagle to redesign the WeGo Public Transit website. Providing a single point of entry for both the Nashville MTA and Regional Transportation Authority of Middle Tennessee services meets the nMotion principle of providing a seamless experience. The redesign is aimed at making WeGo's website accessible on mobile devices, which helps serve a population on the go and gives our Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) community a compliant platform to access information. It also will provide better navigation, usability, and bolster translation to languages other than English to accommodate non-native speakers in the region. Funding for this project comes from the FY2018 Capital Budget.

Nolensville Transit Stop Improvement Project

The Board recommended awarding a contract to SBW Construction for bus stop improvements at 18 transit stops along Nolensville Pike. This corridor is WeGo's third busiest, with an average monthly ridership of 58,000 riders. It accommodates multi-modal amenities for vehicles, buses, bicycles, and pedestrians. The project is in coordination with Tennessee Department of Transportation, Metro Public Works, and Metro Planning. The new stop designs update amenities, improve safety, facilitate service operation, are ADA compliant, and enhance access to transit. Funds for construction are from the State's IMPROVE Act, 5307 Federal formula funds, and local matching funds.

For more information about the specific topics discussed, check out the board meeting agenda on WeGoTransit.com. 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.