



NEWS RELEASE

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Bus and train ridership rapidly increasing in Middle Tennessee *95X Spring Hill Express up more than 140 percent*

NASHVILLE – Regional public transit service in Middle Tennessee is growing at impressive rates.

In Williamson County, where two new regional bus routes to Nashville began six months ago, ridership has increased 143 percent on the Route 95X Spring Hill Express and 62 percent on Route 91X Franklin/Brentwood Express through April 2010.

The Spring Hill Express had 938 passenger trips in April 2010 compared to 386 in December 2009, and 1,657 were recorded on the Franklin/Brentwood Express compared to 1,026.

“We are very pleased with the growth of these two regional bus routes in Williamson County,” said Rogers Anderson, Williamson County Mayor and Chair of the Regional Transportation Authority. “We think this is a very positive sign for the continuing development of public transit in the region.”

Ridership has increased on other modes of public transit as well.

The Music City Star, the train service that runs from Lebanon in Wilson County to downtown Nashville, has seen its average daily ridership increase 43 percent; 841 passenger trips were recorded daily in April 2010, compared to 588 riders during April 2009.

“Earlier this year, we added a third car to accommodate the increase in ridership. This was a request from our customers and contractor that we were very happy to make,” said Lebanon Mayor and RTA Marketing Committee Chair Philip Craighead.

Two other RTA bus routes in the region also have seen increased ridership.

Route 96X Nashville/Murfreesboro Relax & Ride Express experienced a ridership increase of 13 percent in April 2010 compared to the same period a year ago, while ridership on Route 92X Gallatin/Hendersonville Express is up five percent.

More than 6,700 (6,717) trips were taken on the Route 96X in April 2010 compared to 5,950 trips the same period a year ago, and 1,914 trips were taken on Route 92X Gallatin/Hendersonville Express in Sumner County versus 1,823 trips comparing the same April time periods.

“The fact that nearly all of our regional transit routes are up solid double-digits is significant. More people are seeing the great value of public transit and this is very encouraging,” Anderson added.

Customers riding public transportation buses and trains are able to use their commute time for work or leisure, save money on gas, and help the environment by reducing traffic congestion and auto emissions.

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"It is great to be able to sit back and relax and have someone else deal with the stress of the daily commute," bus rider Tami Giles said.

The two newer RTA routes, 91X Franklin/Brentwood Express and 95X Spring Hill Express are funded with federal dollars through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

To ride the regional buses, the cost is \$3.50 per ride or \$60 for a 20-ride pass.

Single-trip tickets for the Music City Star cost \$5 and can be purchased at Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) located at all Music City Star stations. Pre-purchased tickets are available for purchase at Lebanon City Hall, Mt. Juliet City Hall, and select Kroger stores in Donelson, Hermitage, Mt. Juliet and Lebanon. The Kroger stores only sell tickets for departures from stations located in their local communities.

The cost of pre-purchased, one-way tickets ranges from \$1.60 to \$5 depending on the station of departure. Tickets are also available for purchase at Riverfront Station on weekdays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 6 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Friday and 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

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