

**April 2007**

### **RTA First Annual Golf Classic and the Annual Meeting** (See columns 1 and 3)

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## **RTA Transit Calendar – 2006**

**April 7: RTA** exhibits at the 7th Annual Earth Fair at Shawnee Mission East High School

**April 21: RTA** sponsorship and participation in Earth Day at Theatre in the Park, Shawnee Mission Park.

**May 3: RTA** sponsors a lunch meeting with new KC Mayor and Council

**May 16: RTA** Annual Meeting

**May 22: RTA** First Annual Golf Classic

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## **RTA Please join us for the First Annual RTA Golf Tournament**

The RTA hosts its First Annual Golf Tournament on Tuesday, May 22 with a 9:00 a.m. shotgun start at Swope Memorial Golf Course. The entry fee is \$500.00 per team, or \$150.00 per player. The entry fee includes lunch, 18 holes, cart and prizes for the top three places in two flights.

Registration and sponsorship opportunities can be found on the RTA website at [www.kctransit.org](http://www.kctransit.org). The deadline for sponsorship is May 1 and player registration deadline is May 8. For more information, please contact Greg Lever at the RTA office.

## **RTA Position on Light Rail in Kansas City, Missouri**

Kansas Citizens want light rail, and the RTA supports light rail as part of an improved regional transit system.

The Clay Chastain initiative approved by the voters simply will not work. We must overhaul it. Otherwise, Kansas City will likely find itself with no light rail and no viable bus system.

We must fund both a light rail starter line and our bus system at the same time.

Any substantial light rail plan depends upon federal funding. The Federal Transit Administration will not fund light rail for any city that does not maintain its bus system. The present Chastain funding plan takes away 40% of all bus funding on April 1, 2009. We cannot allow this to happen.

The first phase of light rail should run from the Plaza to the Northland. At present, distance and lack of density appear to preclude a KCI connection. Someday, we hope. An initial line of 8-11 miles is most feasible. As other cities have shown, successful starter lines will spur additional lines and funding.

The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority is moving forward on light rail by undertaking the federally mandated planning process. Without this process, which can take up to two and a half years, there is no possibility of federally funded light rail in Kansas City.

There needs to be a vigorous debate on light rail in Kansas City, one that does not wait on the outcome of the federally-mandated planning process, but rather informs it. Kansas City needs to adopt a revised, feasible public transit plan that integrates both light rail and buses by August, 2008 at the very latest. The sooner we have this debate and reach consensus, the better. Time is of the essence.

## **RTA Annual Meeting to focus on Light Rail issue**

The RTA Annual Membership Meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 16, 2007 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Imperial Ballroom at the Muehlebach Tower of the Marriott Hotel at 12th and Wyandotte. A social hour with a cash bar begins at 5:30 p.m. followed by a panel discussing this year's theme, "Building Light Rail in Kansas City." The panel, which consists of experts from Kansas City and other communities that have developed light rail, will be moderated by Steve Kraske of The Kansas City Star and KCUR's "Up to Date" radio show.

The site of this year's Annual Meeting is served by MAX and Bus Routes 12, 25, 47 and 51. Please note that you can use the ATA's trip planner at [www.kcata.org](http://www.kcata.org), or call at 816-221-0660 for help in planning your trip.

This event is free to dues paying members of the **RTA**, \$5 for non-**RTA** members in advance/\$10 at the door. Registration forms can be found on the **RTA** website at [www.kctransit.org](http://www.kctransit.org), or call the **RTA** office at 816-471-6808 for more information.

We'd like to see you there and look forward to your participation in shaping this vital ongoing debate about the future of light rail in Kansas City.

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## **RTA Americans take more than 10 billion trips on public transportation for first time in almost 50 years**

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) reports that Americans took 10.1 billion transit trips in 2006, the most in 49 years. That was up 2.9 percent over 2005, and up 30 percent since 1995. Transit ridership over the past 10 years has grown more than twice as fast as population (up 12 percent), and even faster than travel by private cars and trucks (up 24 percent). For perspective, last year's 10.1 billion transit trips outnumbered domestic airline trips by 15 to one.

## Your turn to help shape future of Metcalf Avenue

Three hours of your time could make a difference over the next 30 years. Governing Body members want to hear from you about the future development of Metcalf Avenue, a major thoroughfare that once served as a military highway.

From I-35 to 123rd Street, the City Council authorized a study that will help shape the long-term future of this vital corridor.

The 16-month, \$1.1 million study, called Vision Metcalf, was launched in January and is taking the next vital step: The inclusion of you, whether you are a resident, business operator or property owner. The goal is to receive feedback from 6,000 people.

Six public meetings have been scheduled to begin May 8 and conclude May 24.

The two and a half hour meetings are set up by sectors along Metcalf. You can attend the sector you have the most interest in or be at all of the meetings. All meetings are from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Meeting dates, sectors and locations are:

- Tuesday, May 8, I-35 to 71st, at the Holiday Inn, 8787 Reeder (87th and U.S. 69 Highway);
- Wednesday, May 9, 71st to 87th St., Holiday Inn, 8787 Reeder;
- Thursday, May 10, 87th St. to 101st, Holiday Inn, 8787 Reeder;
- Tuesday, May 15, 101st to I-435, Sheraton Overland Park Hotel, 6100 College Boulevard (College and Lamar);
- Wednesday, May 16, I-435 to 123rd St., Sheraton Overland Park Hotel; and
- Thursday, May 24, entire corridor, Sheraton Overland Park Hotel.

“Our goal has been to invite and include as many people

as possible to participate. This dialogue with residents, business owners and others provides value and better insight to opportunities in the future,” said Mayor Carl Gerlach.

Metcalf Avenue discussions may include ideas like a series of small villages; places for kids and young adults so they don’t have to go elsewhere; people helping the environment by using public transportation, including a trolley; expanding bike/hike pathways; and a more urban and vertical appearance that is up to date and pedestrian-oriented.

For more information, contact Assistant City Manager Matt Jordan at 913/895-6110, or send him an email at [matt.jordan@opkansas.org](mailto:matt.jordan@opkansas.org)

Submitted by the City of Overland Park

*(RTA supports increased public participation in Vision Metcalf and appreciates the opportunity to work with Mayor Gerlach.)*

## New travel options to St. Louis

“Public transit” travel options between Kansas City and St. Louis improved on April 2 when discount bus line Megabus launched service. Tickets must be purchased online – [www.megabus.com](http://www.megabus.com) – and cost as little as \$1 if you purchase far enough ahead. Megabus departs from the ATA’s 10th and Main Transit Center at 12:15 pm and 8:30 pm.

Greyhound has four daily departures (12:40 am, 7:15 am, 11:25 am, and 8:40 pm) from its 11th and Troost depot, and Amtrak has two daily departures (12:30 pm and 4:30 pm) from Union Station.

## May Newsletter:

What is happening with Smart Moves and the Regional Investment Fund 6 months after the KC vote on light rail?

Newsletter Editor: Janet Rogers

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A L L I A N C E

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