

**September 2006**

## **Smart Moves and Your Community**

(See column 4)

**RTA**

## **Transit Calendar – 2006**

**September 17-19:** RTA co-sponsors a panel discussion on regional public transit at the Leadership Exchange trip in Minneapolis

**October 18:** RTA participates in the KCK Chamber of Commerce Business to Business Expo

**October/November:** Dedication of the renovated historic Kansas City PC streetcar-see [www.kctransit.org](http://www.kctransit.org) for final details.

**RTA**

## **RTA Speakers Bureau**

The RTA continues to speak with organizations concerning the Regional Investment Fund and **Smart Moves**. This regional transit issue is important to the whole community.

Please contact Greg Lever at [www.kctransit.org](http://www.kctransit.org) or 816-471-6808 to organize a speaker for your group. Be sure to get us on your calendar.

Additionally, please contact Greg if you are interested in joining the Speakers Bureau.

Major RTA Corporate Sponsors:

**Heros: Commerce Bank**  
**Partners: Kansas City Power & Light; HNTB;**  
**TranSystems; Stinson Morrison Hecker;**  
**YRC Worldwide**

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## **Transit Oriented Development in Blue Springs**

Kevin Klinkenberg of 180 Degrees Design Studio informed us they are doing a master plan for Blue Springs' downtown, and they are going to tie heavily into the future commuter rail corridor from a planning standpoint. They have met with Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) already about it, and they are quite excited at the potential. He might even bill this as the first Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in Kansas City, or at least purposely-planned TOD, as it will involve significant redevelopment in and around the rail stop.

Blue Springs Councilwomen Mary Potter and Councilman Jeff Quibell are working closely with the planners. "The possibility of Blue Springs having a commuter rail connection in our downtown area is an exciting prospect. Such a development will certainly add to the energy that we are experiencing in our downtown development efforts!" said Quibell.

MARC Assistant Director of Transportation Thomas Gerend said, "It is evident by the development of Blue Springs' master planning initiative that they recognize the importance of incorporating transit into their local planning efforts. Our hope would be that other communities across the region recognize this same opportunity and use the City of Blue Springs as a model for localizing and maximizing the benefits of Transit Oriented Development."

**RTA**

## **Focus on New RTA Board Members**

**David Doyle**-David is an environmental engineer with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency where he specializes in the reuse/redevelopment of formerly contaminated properties. He is also a charter member of the Kansas City Transportation Action Team, which is a local grassroots public advocacy group. He represents Jackson County, Mo.

**Mike Kelley**-Mike is Vice President of Government Relations for YRC Worldwide. He is responsible for the overall advocacy efforts of the company. Mike also oversees

the corporate philanthropic contributions and community activities of the company. Mike is a lifelong Kansas City area resident and represents Johnson County, Kan.

**Mike Boehm**-Mike is in the fourth year of his first term as Lenexa's Mayor. He was nominated to the RTA board from the Johnson and Wyandotte Counties Council of Mayors.

**Joe Reardon**-Joe is continuing a family tradition in public service. His father Jack was a three-term mayor of Kansas City, Kansas in the 1970's and 1980's.

Joe was elected to the Unified Government Board of Commissioners, District 2 in 2003. As Commissioner, he served on the Neighborhood & Community Development Standing Committee and the Public Works & Safety Standing Committee. He was elected Mayor in April 2005.

**RTA**

## **On the Buses with Parks & Rec**

"We can take the bus to Union Station!" was the buzz at three Kansas City, Missouri Parks and Recreation August summer youth camps. The program directors at Hillcrest, Southeast, and Marlborough Community Centers worked with the Kansas City Transit Action Team of the Regional Transit Alliance for arrangements. In addition to fun, these directors provide every day, practical, everyday living opportunities for the youngsters in their program. Learning to take the bus fits this category of lessons. They learn to use less fuel, spend less money, create less pollution, lower their stress levels and reduce dependence on parents. Members of the Action Team planned the route to take and met with the kids before the day of their trip to practice using a bus schedule, how to board and disembark, and how to behave at the bus stop and on the bus. We even practiced giving up one's seat for the elderly, disabled, or person heavily laden with shopping bags. The best part was joining each group as they spent the day seeing Kansas City by bus!

Kathy Arndt and Margie Richcreek

## Smart Moves and Your Community

*Smart Moves* is the proposed Kansas City regional public transit system. A draft service plan has been created to show connections between destinations and how transit services and centers will interact. This draft plan is subject to change as needs are further evaluated. Following are examples of potential new services.

### Liberty, MO

*Smart Moves* includes proposed high-level *Freeway Flyer* commuter service on M-291 & I-35. Commuters may be able to return to the park and ride lots during the middle of the day using the *Local Link*.

Additionally, a flexible *Local Link Circulator*, similar to the current service in Lee's Summit, would pick up and deliver passengers curb to curb.

*Local Link* and *Rapid Rider* services would link Liberty to Kansas City, MO.

Transit centers will link Liberty, MO to the region.

### Prairie Village, KS

Regional and *Local Link* Connectors are proposed to connect Prairie Village to Rapid Rider services in Overland Park and Mission.

Additionally, a flexible *Local Link Circulator*, similar to the current service in Lee's Summit, would pick up and deliver passengers curb to curb.

Planned *Local Link* and other regional connector services would link Prairie Village, KS to the greater Kansas City region.

## October Newsletter:

Does your company subsidize your monthly bus pass? Learn some of the best companies in the area for transit users.

Newsletter Editor: Janet Rogers

## The Men Who Loved Trains by Rush Loving Jr.

Rush Loving Jr., a former associate editor of *Fortune Magazine*, has written a new book, *The Men Who Loved Trains*. He discusses how the Nixon and Ford Administrations put aside their laissez-faire ideology and along with Congress created a totally independent body to deal with the Northeast freight-rail crisis and established Conrail. These were men of unique vision that put duty ahead of political philosophy. He thinks something similar would work for Amtrak.

In a recent Boston Daily Herald article he discusses the jammed transportation system that is already causing serious damage to the economy. The Texas Transportation Institute estimates that traffic congestion in the United States grew by 469% between 1982 and 2003. Every major delay inflates the cost of goods carried by trucks. Employers lose man-hours, pushing up prices further.

Since building more highways just brings more traffic, Mr. Loving makes the case for using more railroads. Truckers are already moving more containers traveling over 300 miles to trains. Every fully loaded container train takes 280 trucks off the highways.

Mr. Loving also wants to see more people use rail. High gasoline prices and the hassles of flying make train service a viable alternative.

Whatever the solution, he states "federal and state governments must appropriate the necessary rail-operating subsidies and make long-term capital commitments. State governments should join forces to create the grassroots political pressure that would force Congress to do its part."

Kansas City has already seen an increase in rail traffic and an improvement in rail facilities and increased employment due to the increase in rail traffic.

# TRANSIT NEWS

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