



Citizens for Modern Transit's Try & Ride Program DOUBLES two year goal in 16 months

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CITIZENS FOR MODERN TRANSIT

MAKING TRANSIT A PRIORITY

ST. LOUIS - Citizens for Modern Transit's (CMT) Try & Ride program has been on a fast-track to success since it launched in mid-June of 2014. In a mere 16 months, the transit advocacy organization doubled its two-year goal of helping 1,500 area residents "test drive" MetroLink and MetroBus to experience, first-hand, how easy and

advantageous the system can be for the workday commute. To date, CMT has assisted 3,000 area residents through this program and shows no signs of slowing down.

“Our goal from the onset was simple – to help local residents who shy away from using our local public transit system due to the fear of the unknown,” commented Kim Cella, executive director of Citizens for Modern Transit. “Ninety-seven percent of Try & Ride participants have indicated that that program has been effective in helping them learn how to use transit, with more than 68 percent reporting that they are continuing to use transit for their work commute beyond the two-month program commitment. So in short, people are trying transit, experiencing how great it is and sticking with it.”

Cella added that program participants have pointed to an array of benefits they didn’t realize were associated with transit use. “Participants say they are saving money; getting in extra physical activity walking to and from the stations, and experiencing a less stressful commute complete with fast, convenient and safe service from extremely nice drivers. They are also enjoying the extra time the ride provides to unwind, catch up on texts/emails/social media, listen to music, people watch and take care of responsibilities like balancing the checkbook.”

The Try & Ride program is open to any Missouri or Illinois resident who is new to the St. Louis region’s public transportation system. Upon registering, each program participant receives a packet in the mail with a personalized transit route for the work commute, a month of complimentary tickets, a journal to capture stories and write down reminders, and a list of tips and tricks for using transit. Registration also enrolls them in the Guaranteed Ride Home program, which provides the user with a cab ride home or rental car in the case of an emergency or unexpected schedule change at work. In turn, participants are required to travel to work via MetroLink or MetroBus three to four days per week over a two-month period, and take two, short surveys along the way so Citizens for Modern Transit can gain user insight and track the progression of the program.

There is no fee to participate in the Try & Ride Program. The only out-of-pocket expense is the cost of the second month of the participant’s fare. However, Citizens for Modern Transit reminds area workday commuters that many local businesses and organizations offer transit subsidies that pay for all, or a portion of, the cost to take transit.

Try & Ride participant, Ryan Klaas, is a busy father and husband who has learned to love commuting from Collinsville to his place of employment in Soulard. Adapting to the ease of the system, using both train and bus, Klaas speaks of his experience stating, “Until you try it, you don’t realize just how easy it is. I have learned how to use the system efficiently and how to accommodate when my schedule is different.”

Klaas urges other to try the program. “By providing the fares for the first month, the program literally took all the risk out of trying it,” stated Klaas. “Really, if someone is on the fence, there is no reason they shouldn’t give the Try & Ride program a go!”

Individuals region-wide are still able to register for CMT’s Try & Ride program. For more information, visit www.cmt-stl.org, call (314) 231-7272 or find them on Facebook or Twitter @cmt_stl.

Citizens for Modern Transit is a not-for-profit organization in St. Louis whose mission is to expand the light rail system in order to build more sustainable, accessible communities in the region.