



CTA President's Report
April 15, 2011

Thank you Chairman Peterson and members of the board.

Today's agenda includes an ordinance amending the capital budget with the addition of two FTA grants. CTA is receiving a \$2.2 million dollar grant for the purchase and testing of two electric buses, and a \$1.6 million dollar grant to conduct an Alternatives Analysis focusing on Bus Rapid Transit along Western Avenue.

Testing electric buses will help us determine if they are a good fit for our service --much like the process we followed when testing our hybrid buses. We are currently developing the scope and expect to procure the vehicles later this year.

The Alternatives Analysis will examine the feasibility of Bus Rapid Transit service along the Western Avenue corridor. The purpose of Bus Rapid Transit is to offer designated bus lanes, faster and more efficient travel times, and improved connection points.

These grants are excellent opportunities for CTA to complement and enhance its current service. I look forward to keeping you updated on the results of each of these projects.

I have positive news to report on ridership. During the first quarter of this year, overall ridership increased by 0.2%, or 300,000 rides across the system.

This is the first year-over-year quarterly growth we've seen on the system in two years.

Bus ridership dropped by 2.4%, or 1.8 million rides, compared to the first quarter of 2010. However, rail ridership increased by 4.3%, or 2.1 million rides.

Weekday ridership is relatively unchanged from a year ago, while weekend levels continue to be strong as a result of high rail growth.

The increase in weekend rail ridership is focused on the central area and near-downtown neighborhoods. This suggests that, despite the economy, some neighborhoods remain quite vibrant, and more residents are finding CTA to be an affordable option for their non-work activities.

Ridership growth is definitely encouraging and we will continue to provide service that is efficient and economical for our riders as they work their way through the current economic challenges.

I am also pleased to report that CTA has completed the majority of the renovation work at the Red Line Cermak-Chinatown station.

In June of last year, a newly built auxiliary entrance opened on Archer while construction was underway on the main entrance and stationhouse. Today, we are reopening the main entrance to our customers, and the entryway on Archer will now function as a secondary entrance and exit to the station.

This project also included the installation of an elevator, making Cermak-Chinatown the 92nd station, out of 144, accessible to customers with disabilities.

Other upgrades include: a new escalator and stairs, a new stationhouse at street level, brighter lighting, bike racks, and landscaping – all made possible with funding by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.

In recognition of Earth Day next Friday, CTA will participate in the City of Chicago's Earth Day celebration by featuring our EcoBus outside Daley Plaza. The EcoBus is one of our 40-foot hybrids with decals displaying the environmental benefits of these vehicles.

We will also be featuring Bus and Train Tracker, which the CTA developed as a means to provide riders with greater convenience through real-time bus and train arrival information.

The CTA's participation in Earth Day events serves to remind people that public transportation is a means to substitute hundreds of thousands of vehicles on our regional roads each day. We encourage all commuters to take public transportation on Earth Day and everyday to help reduce emissions.

As a participant in the City of Chicago's Green Office Challenge, CTA will also be educating and challenging employees to incorporate sustainability into their professional and personal lives.

Our efforts to provide quality and affordable transit service do not go unnoticed by our transit peers across the globe.

CTA recently received the first place award for "Best Metro Americas" during the MetroRail 2011 conference in Milan, Italy. The award recognizes transit agencies for outstanding achievements and innovation.

We were also the "runner up" for the "The Most Innovative Use of Technology Award," which is considered the agency's overall use of a range of technologies in operations.

Back home in the United States, the CTA received an award for exceptional engineering achievement in transportation from the American Council of Engineering Companies. We received this award for our track repair and replacement work in the Blue Line's Dearborn Subway. CTA was a co-recipient along with Parsons Brinkerhoff, the construction management firm on the project.

Receiving this honor from the National Council of Engineering Companies is a great accomplishment and recognizes CTA's continued efforts to improve the reliability of service for our customers. The

\$87.8 million dollar project was one of the first construction projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

That concludes my report. Thank you.