

THE NO COST BENEFIT TO BOTH EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS

Metro Bus and Rail's Advantage Plan is a rarity in the realm of employee benefits. It saves money for both employees and employers. Easy to implement and easy to use, it's no surprise that Metro Advantage is Metro's fastest growing pass program.



With Metro Advantage employees buy Metro Passes - through their employer - using pre-tax dollars. Employees can save approximately 35 percent on their public transportation costs. Employers can reduce their obligations to federal and state income tax, some unemployment taxes, and FICA. There is no cost to participate, and no added fees or shipping charges. Metro Advantage is an employee benefit that lowers payroll costs while saving money for each participating employee.

Through Metro Advantage, a \$66 All Zone Metro Pass purchased with pre-tax dollars has a real cost of only \$41. Employers save more and more with each participant. For every \$1,000 deducted from taxable payroll, an employer saves \$76.50.

Using Metro Advantage is convenient. Employees inform their employers that they would like to enroll in the program. Employers place orders with Metro, then deduct the cost of the passes from paychecks before income taxes are withheld. Metro sends the passes to the employers, usually the Human Resources or Payroll department for distribution. Getting started means a phone call or a visit www.nfta.com. Metro will

assist in every aspect of putting a program together and help maintain it going forward. There is no minimum number necessary for participation.

Metro Advantage is your advantage. For more information on how to participate check NFTA.com or call (716) 855-7211, (TDD 855-7650.)

INSTANT UPDATE SERVICE

Visit NFTA.com and sign up for e-mail or text messages about Metro bus and rail service, flights at the Buffalo Niagara International Airport, job postings and other useful NFTA information.



A free service, the Instant Update program lets users choose exactly what information they want, and how they want to receive it. Status changes of departing or arriving flights at the BNIA, changes in the status of airport parking lots, route-specific Metro Bus and Rail rider alerts, general Metro news, employment postings, Paratransit information, EEO announcements and NFTA press releases are just some of the subscriptions available. Any update can be sent by e-mail or as a text message right to a phone or PDA.

Subscribing is easy. Log on to NFTA.com, and click the Instant Updates button. Decide what kind of information you want and how you would like it delivered, and you're done. There's no charge and no limit. Subscribe to as many topics as you need.

30 DAY PASS VS. MONTHLY PASS

While not exactly a contest, Metro's 30 Day Pass and Monthly Pass compete for the same riders. Each has its own benefits, so in the end, it's the customers that win.

A Monthly Pass is valid from the first day of a month to the last. They are available in Metro's ticket machines and at participating Tops, Wilson Farms, Budwey's and Dash's Market.

With Metro's 30 Day Pass it doesn't matter what month it is. The pass is good for 30 days, starting on the day of purchase. If you buy a pass on the 15th of one month, it's valid until the 14th of the next month. 30 Day Passes are available from Metro ticket vending machines.

Both passes are priced the same: One Zone, \$55; All Zone, \$66. Ticket vending machines selling either pass are located in every Metro Rail station, both Transit Centers in Niagara County and the Metropolitan Transportation Center (the bus station in downtown Buffalo.) Day Passes (\$3.50) and Weekend Passes (\$6 Sat. - Sun.) are also available for purchase on the bus.

HISTORICAL PHOTO

Buffalo had zero-emission transit back in 1950. Clean-running electric streetcars ran on Main St. by North Division (as seen here) until June 18th of that year.

(photo from "Buffalo's History Street Cars and Buses", D. David Bregger, Arcadia Publishing. Available at local bookstores.)



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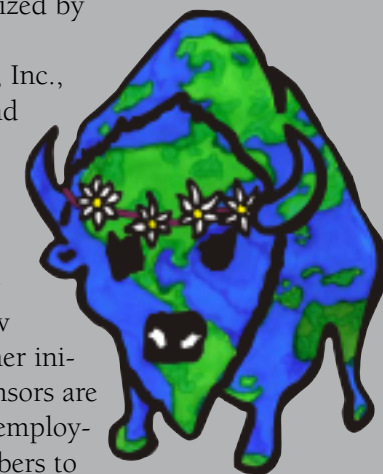
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THE METRO Reporter

NFTA-Metro Rider News

WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING?

Earth Day is Tuesday April 22, and this year the NFTA is working with partners across Buffalo Niagara to improve our environment. Organized by Ecology and Environment, Inc., companies and organizations throughout the Niagara Frontier are using the day to launch new cleaner, greener initiatives. Sponsors are encouraging employees and members to carpool, bike, walk and of course, use public transportation.



High gas prices and climbing global temperatures are two of the newest reasons to take notice of one's carbon footprint. The NFTA has long been a leader in efficient transportation. Metro Rail is powered by 100 percent renewable energy. Metro bus continues to add electric hybrid vehicles to a fleet that is already better for the air than cars and trucks with just one or two occupants.

Visit www.goodgoingwny.com for more information.

SPRING 2008 METRO SERVICE CHANGE SUMMARY

New bus schedules go into effect March 23. Minor schedule adjustments were made to a few trips on the following routes - 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12,14, 16, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 40, 44, 51, 203, 204, 216. Please consult specific timeta- bles. Other notable changes (including some made in December to Niagara Falls routes).

6 - Sycamore Outbound trips will only operate into the Amtrak Station in Depew on demand. Passengers should inform the operator. All inbound trips to down- town Buffalo will continue to pull into the station to pick up prospective passengers.

50 - Main-Niagara. A combination of for- mer Routes 50 and 53, the Main-Niagara provides direct service between Lewiston and the NFTC through the Portage Road Transportation Center and downtown Niagara Falls.

51 - Military-Summit. Previously called Military-North, this route serves the LaSalle neighborhood, and Summit Business Park, operating between Niagara University and The Summit with all trips going through the NFTC.

52 - Hyde Park. This route serves the Center Court neighborhood, extending over Niagara Falls Blvd., to the NFTC. It also serves the Portage Road Transportation Center, retail along Military Rd., the Our Lady of Peace and Mount St. Mary’s Hospital.

53 - Niagara. This route is now part of Route 50 Main-Niagara.

54 - Military. All trips operate through the NFTC, including Sunday service.

55 - Pine Avenue. All trips operate through the NFTC, with service to the Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, NCCC, BOCES, the Niagara Falls International Airport, downtown Niagara Falls and additional trips to Lockport.

56 - River Road. This route operates between North Tonawanda and the NFTC, over Payne Ave. and River Rd., with stops at The Summit.

60 - Niagara Falls Express. This route provides service between the Portage Road Transportation Center and down- town Buffalo, via Grand Island. **Metro has added two new "A" trips serving the new NFTC, leaving downtown Buffalo at 12:50 p.m. and 5:15 p.m.**

New routing at The Summit, now serves the Main entrance in front, continuing on to the Transit Center in back.

METRO BOARDINGS JUMP BY 8.3 PERCENT

Metro Bus and Rail saw an increase in boardings of 1.9 million in 2007 over 2006. Representing an 8.3 percent increase, it is one of the most significant single-year increases in the last 25 years and continues a four year growth trend.

Nationally, transit rider- ship was up 1.7 percent through the first nine- months of 2007, a rate far below Metro’s. The statistic discounts the idea that high gas prices alone are fueling the move to buses and trains.



“There are number of factors involved,” said Commissioner Eunice A. Lewin, chair of the Surface Transportation Committee. “Gas prices certainly play a part, but Metro has done a fantastic job reaching out to the community and proving public transit is a competitive alternative to the car.”

Last year Metro added Erie Community College’s 3,000 City Campus students to its College/University Unlimited Access program. Through this program schools provide Metro passes to their student body. The downtown ECC campus, the fifth school to participate, is well served by mass transit as evidenced by the fact that from October-December ECC students made 118,636 trips on Metro buses, demonstrating the need for the program.

In the fall of 2007, Metro conducted several meetings in Erie and Niagara Counties with local employers touting Metro’s Advantage Plan. Business leaders were informed about pre-tax arrangements allowing employees and employers to save money on transit

passes. The program saw growth right alongside Metro’s general ridership.

Metro also continues to make route adjust- ments in response to needs and desires of the community. In Niagara County, Metro opened a \$6.4 million transit center, which

serves as a focal point for improvements to every route serving Niagara County.

“The end result of all of these efforts is more riders, but Metro measures its success on

how well it serves everyone in the region. More riders mean fewer cars on the road, less traffic congestion and better air quality,” Lewin added.

WHAT’S NFTA.COM IN ARABIC?

Actually, NFTA.com is pretty much the same in any language, but the rest can be really different. Check it out for yourself at the Web site. The NFTA now offers quick and cost-free translation of any page in our fami- ly of sites into Spanish, French, German, Japanese, traditional Chinese and Arabic.

New technology from Google makes the translation possible without any cost to the Authority. Just a few years ago the same service may have had a price tag of several thousand dollars. The specific languages were chosen based on input from the community and local tourism groups. The feature should help make the NFTA’s Web site more user friendly to visitors and area residents for whom English is not native.

BIJOU CAFÉ AT THE NFTC

Metro has never offered anything quite like it. For breakfast, lunch or snacks the Bijou Café is right inside the Niagara Falls Transportation Center. Open Monday through Friday, with a menu that includes soups, hot and cold sandwiches, breakfast specialties and treats fresh from the bakery and a superb coffee selection, it is the perfect way to start, or finish, the day.



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RIDER REMINDER

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