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MCT SERVICES SUPPORT “LOGISTICS VALLEY” EMPLOYEES

Shuttles, Express Routes, Vanpools, and a New Transfer Station Provide Transportation Options for Employees in Madison County’s Growing Warehouse Districts

PONTOON BEACH, ILL., August 9, 2022... For more than 15 years, Madison County Transit (MCT) has offered a comprehensive array of transportation services to the more than 10,000 employees in the “Logistics Valley” corridor of Madison County, Illinois. Thanks to a recently awarded Rebuild Illinois grant, that service will soon be enhanced even further. Located along IL-111 near I-270 and I-255, “Logistics Valley” is comprised of three warehouse districts, Gateway Commerce Center, Gateway TradePort, and Lakeview Commerce Center, and is home to dozens of employers, including Amazon, World Wide Technology, Geodis, Menasha, Dial, Proctor & Gamble, and many more.

MCT Bus Service

To meet the Valley’s transportation needs, MCT currently operates six bus routes from various parts of Madison County as well as a route from the Emerson Park MetroLink Station. Because many of the employers operate 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, MCT has expanded the frequency, the destinations, and the number of trips operated throughout the week. Shift times also vary among the employers, and change throughout the year, so MCT works closely with the employers to adjust accordingly and to offer service when the greatest demand exists. Over the course of the last year, MCT picked up more than 57,000 passengers in Gateway Commerce Center alone. Recent employee surveys revealed that 47% of the workforce in Logistics Valley live in Madison County, 24% in St. Clair County, 12.5% in St. Louis County, 4% in St. Louis City, and the remainder from other parts of the region.

New MCT Logistics Valley Transfer Station

With the recent award of a \$4.2 million Rebuild Illinois grant, MCT is in the process of acquiring land and developing a new Logistics Valley Transfer Station. This new facility will not only provide Logistics Valley workers with a safe, covered, climate-controlled waiting area, public restrooms, and vending facilities, but will also improve efficiencies for MCT by eliminating route duplication.

“The new MCT Logistics Valley Station will create a place for buses from all over the region to arrive at a central location, like spokes of a wheel, and make timed transfers to high frequency inner-park shuttles,” said MCT Managing Director SJ Morrison. “It’s not only an improvement for the passengers and for MCT, but this represents another way that we’re making Madison County employers more competitive in the region and really the Midwest.”

In addition to a 2,000 square foot building, multiple bus bays, and a covered canopy, the new facility will also house a police substation with an office for law enforcement or security.

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RideFinders Vanpools Offer Another Solution

In addition to public bus service, MCT also operates the regional commuter rideshare program known as RideFinders—an easy and affordable way for workers to find a carpool or vanpool. Vanpools offer direct, customized service from specific areas to and from the worksite and are driven by one of the employees. The cost of the vanpool is covered by the employees, with, in some cases, support from the employer. In July, MCT helped to start its first vanpool to Logistics Valley (St. Louis to World Wide Technology). In partnership with the St. Patrick Center, which helped to find the employees, and World Wide Technology, employees in the vanpool have a direct commute which operates at the start and end of their shifts. “The RideFinders Vanpool program offers a low-cost solution for bringing residents to jobs, and allows us to target specific shift times,” said RideFinders Outreach Manager Kym Brown. “We’re always willing to meet with employers to discuss our services and speak directly to their employees at on-site events.” Registered RideFinders carpools and vanpoolers are also eligible for the “Guaranteed Ride Home,” four free taxi, Uber or Lyft rides home per year per employee, in the event of an emergency. “The most important asset to Gateway Commerce Center is the availability of workers,” said TriStar’s Founding Partner, Rod Thomas. “The fluidity of workers across the state boundary is increasingly important to maintain the world class development Gateway Commerce Center has become. The vanpool program offered by RideFinders and the bus service provided by MCT keeps this area moving forward and allows for employers to continue to add more workers.”

A Regional Approach

Many commuters who utilize transit make transfers between both MCT and Metro in order to reach Logistics Valley employers. MCT serves Emerson Park MetroLink station between the hours of 4 a.m. and 1 a.m. the next morning. Making connections to the MetroLink and MetroBus routes are essential for employees traveling from Missouri to Logistics Valley for work.

“There is a spirit of cooperation among the region’s transportation providers, municipalities, and businesses to maximize options that connect workers with jobs and employers with resources,” said Taulby Roach, President & CEO of Bi-State Development. “The businesses along the I-270 corridor in Madison County represent some of the region’s fastest growing industrial parks, including Gateway Commerce Center, Lakeview, and Gateway TradePort. Workforce availability is key to business retention and expansion, and Madison County Transit’s efforts support our region’s workforce and provides a competitive edge for all industries in the bi-state area.”

Logistics Valley is one of Madison County’s fastest growing employment centers. MCT is committed to providing affordable and efficient service for Madison County residents as well as assisting those in St. Clair County and in Missouri access jobs through RideFinders and connections with Metro. To learn more about MCT or RideFinders, visit www.mct.org, call **(618) 797-4636**, or e-mail info@mct.org.

Madison County Transit (MCT) provides multi-modal transportation services for Madison County, Illinois. MCT operates a fixed-route bus service, connecting to MetroLink; express weekday commuter service directly to and from downtown St. Louis; and seasonal express service to the Muny. For elderly and disabled residents who are unable to use the fixed-route buses, MCT provides complementary door to door service. MCT is also responsible for the construction and maintenance of more than 137 miles of bikeways that comprise the MCT Trails system, as well as overseeing RideFinders, the St. Louis region’s FREE carpooling and vanpooling program.

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