



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 30, 2013

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

CTA

Tammy Chase

312.681.2820

tchase@transitchicago.com

CTA RIDERSHIP REACHES HIGHEST LEVEL IN 22 YEARS

More than 13 million additional rides in 2012

CTA ridership in 2012 grew to its highest annual total in the last 22 years, rising 2.4 percent to 545.6 million rides for the year, as Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the CTA continued a historic level of investment in the nation's second-largest bus and rail system. Ridership performance in 2012 follows an increase of 2.9 percent in 2011, making this one of the strongest two-year periods in CTA's history.

Rail ridership for the year increased to its highest level in 50 years, increasing by 9.5 million rides, or 4.2 percent, to 231.1 million rides. Bus ridership in 2012 increased by 4.05 million rides, or 1.1 percent, to 314.4 million rides, the third-highest annual total since 1994.

"Public transportation plays a vital economic role in the Chicago region, and this historic growth reflects the need for continued investments across the system," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "As we continue to heavily invest in the transit system as a whole, these trends will continue, creating jobs throughout Chicago and improving the prospects of Chicagoans from every neighborhood."

The positive results in ridership come as CTA continues to replace aging rail cars with its newest generation of rail cars, the 5000 series, and has an aggressive plan under way to replace or overhaul its entire bus fleet.

Ridership has seen some of its sharpest increases during the tenure of Mayor Emanuel. From June 2011-December 2012, ridership rose 4.6 percent, about 37 million rides, compared to the same

time period in 2009-2010.

Improved slow zones, customer information, station renewals and more concessions have added value and convenience to the rail system. The Blue and Orange Lines posted ridership growth of 6.9 percent and 7.2 percent, respectively, for the year. Bus routes that showed improvement included the express routes on Lake Shore Drive, which combined as a group increased 2.6 percent.

“The CTA has more than \$4 billion in projects under way or planned that will improve safety, enhance the customer experience and boost overall reliability of the bus and rail system – and we’re doing this while providing 1.7 million rides each weekday,” said CTA President Forrest Claypool. “We believe that the affordability and convenience of CTA service combined with the visible improvements we have made to our system is attracting people to take transit and will continue to do so in the future.”

Upcoming major projects include the \$425 million rebuild of the Red Line South branch between 22nd and 95th streets beginning in May that will increase commute speeds; a \$66 million rehabilitation planned for this spring of the elevated Ravenswood Connector between Armitage and the Merchandise Mart that will increase safety and reliable; a \$203 million rebuild of the Wilson Red Line stop into a modern transfer station that will spur local economic development and a continuing overhaul of CTA’s rail and bus fleets, among others; and slow zone remediation work that will eliminate 70 percent of current slow zones by the end of 2015, providing relief to 85 percent of affected rail riders.

Projects in 2012 nearing completion or now complete include CTA’s 100 station renewal projects; the Red North Station Interim Improvements project; the Loop Track Renewal project; and ongoing track work to eliminate slow zones.

#