

Music City Star Passenger Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When will the Music City Star start service?

A: The first day of passenger operations is September 18, 2006.

Q: When will tickets go on sale?

A: Tickets go on sale Wednesday, August 30, 2006. At this time, monthly tickets only are available at the following outlets: Mt. Juliet City Hall, Lebanon City Hall and on line at www.nashvillemta.org. Beginning Monday, September 11th, monthly tickets will be available at the Regional Transportation Authority office from 11am to 2pm. The office is located at 501 Union Street on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Union Street on the sixth floor. Tickets at the RTA office may be purchased with checks, money orders or mobility checks only.

Q: How can commuters purchase single tickets and 10 Ride Tickets?

A: During the month of September, single tickets can be purchased on the platforms at the stations. These tickets can be purchased at the pre-purchased rate for the station at which the tickets are purchased for September only. The 10 Ride Tickets will go on sale in October and will be available at the above outlets.

Q: Will commuters be able to purchase monthly passes in advance?

A: Yes. October monthly passes will be available for purchase the last week of September. Going forward, monthly passes will be available two weeks prior to the beginning of the calendar month.

Q: How will passengers get to their workplace once they arrive at Riverfront Station?

A: There will be two timed, dedicated shuttles, Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), buses. Shuttle #93 will go up Broadway, West End and over to the Vanderbilt area. Shuttle #94 will make a loop through downtown. Passengers will use their Music City Star ticket to board the shuttles.

Passengers, who work in other areas of the city, can catch the downtown shuttle and exit at the 4th & Deaderick MTA depot to catch a bus to their final destination. Commuters who have a monthly Music City Star pass will also receive a MTA proximity card, at no additional cost to the customer, to pay for the MTA bus to get them to their workplace. Commuters who do not have a Music City Star monthly pass will have to pay for their ride on a MTA bus other than the dedicated shuttle.

Q: What route will the RTA-sponsored shuttles take?

A: The routes are posted on the web site at www.musiccitystar.org. The shuttles will be timed to meet the trains as they arrive at Riverfront Station.

The shuttles will follow the same routes—in reverse—in the afternoon in order to get passengers back to Riverfront Station to catch the train home.

Q: How can I find where the stations are located?

A: Maps to each station can be found on line on the Music City Star web site at www.musiccitystar.org.

Q: How long will it take commuters to get to work using the train?

A: The ride on the train is not impacted by weather or traffic, so passengers will arrive at work on time every time. It will take approximately 50 minutes from Lebanon to Downtown; 40 minutes from Martha; 30 minutes from Mt. Juliet; 20 minutes from Hermitage and 15 minutes from Donelson. Time on the train commute can be spent reading, relaxing or even taking a nap.

Q: Where will passengers park their cars?

A: Each of the outlying stations, Lebanon, Martha, Mt. Juliet, Hermitage and Donelson will have Park and Ride lots. There is no charge for passengers to use the lots. The lots are paved and security patrolled.

Q: How many parking spaces do the Park and Ride lots have? Will there be spaces for the mobility impaired?

A: Lebanon – 186 spaces, with 6 ADA spaces; Martha – 73 spaces, with 2 ADA spaces; Mt. Juliet 168 spaces, with 6 ADA spaces, Hermitage – 240 spaces, with 8 ADA spaces; Donelson – 218 spaces, with 10 ADA spaces.

Q: Are there restrooms on the trains?

A: There are no restrooms on the trains. The Riverfront Station is equipped with restrooms.

Q: Are the trains equipped for the mobility impaired?

A: Yes. Each rail car is ADA compatible. There are spaces for wheelchairs in each car and the conductor will use a manual bridge plate with a mini-high platform to assist those using wheelchairs in boarding and exiting the train.

Q: Why is the cost of the Music City Star more expensive than public rail systems in other cities?

A: Typically, inner city systems are either light rail or subway/heavy rail. These systems are lower in cost because they carry passengers over shorter distances. Commuter rail, however, carries passengers longer distances, thereby requiring more fuel.

The Music City Star average fare is \$3.61, based on where people ride and the monthly discount. This is less than the national average for commuter rail fares of \$3.79.

Additionally, each Music City Star ticket includes a ride on one of two RTA timed shuttles to get passengers to work. Fares on inner city rail systems do not typically include a linked fare.

Q : Why isn't there more service to the Lebanon Station?

A: The reason the first train in the afternoon and the second train in the morning do not go out to the Lebanon Station is because of equipment and track restraints. The rail line is a single track with only one passing track. That passing track is in Donelson. Because of this, only one train can make the entire trip of the corridor.

The Regional Transportation Authority is working to develop a commuter rail system that meets the needs of as many potential riders as possible.

Q: How will Music City Star passengers get home if they have an emergency during the day?

A: The Regional Transportation Authority has an Emergency Ride Home Program (ERH) that is designed to provide regular users of the train with a way home in the case of an emergency.

In order to utilize the ERH, commuters must be registered in the program and they have to take the Music City Star at least 15 times per month. Commuters will receive eight vouchers per calendar year that can be used in the case of an emergency only.

Emergencies are described as sickness, an emergency concerning a family member or having to work unscheduled overtime. For more information on the ERH program, go to www.musiccitystar.org.

The RTA is also making available a midday Shadow Bus that will be available beginning at midday to take commuters back to the Park & Ride lots (each station will be included) for non-emergency trips home. A route and schedule of the Shadow Bus can be found on line at www.musiccitystar.org.

Q: Will there be an evening and weekend schedule for passengers to go to dinner and entertainment events in Nashville?

A: The primary purpose of commuter rail is to get commuters to and from work. The goal of the RTA and the Music City Star is to get commuters along the East Corridor to and from their jobs, while reducing congestion on the roadways and limiting air pollution during the peak morning and afternoon hours.

There are no plans at this time to regularly run the Music City Star in the evenings/weekends and to entertainment events. However, there will be times that the RTA will run special event or charter trains to entertainment events.

Q: Will there be room on the train for passengers to bring aboard their bicycles?

A: Yes. Passengers can bring their bikes aboard the Music City Star. Each car will have an area for bikes.

Q: What is Commuter Rail?

A: Commuter rail typically uses existing freight track and links a suburban area to the inner city, making fewer stops at stations along the corridor. Commuter rail uses diesel fuel. Commuter rail is unlike light rail or subway rail systems that carry passengers over shorter distances and make fewer stops. Those systems also typically are powered by electricity.

Q: What is the next area in Middle Tennessee to get commuter rail?

A: The research for other corridors is being conducted by the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). In fact, in July, the MPO held several public meetings regarding the Southeast Corridor that would connect Rutherford County to the City of Nashville. However, the research includes not only rail, but also other modes of transportation. At this point, a decision has not been made on the best form of transit for this corridor.

The MPO will also begin research into the Northeast Corridor that would link Sumner County to Nashville. This research will also take into consideration other forms of transportation, along with commuter rail.

While research is under way, commuters should note that it took 10 years for the East Corridor to move from research, planning, construction to passenger service. And it will likely take several years for other corridors to move along the process.

Currently, the Southeast and Northeast Corridors are the only areas under study for commuter rail or other modes of alternative forms of transportation. If you are a commuter and would like to get out of your single occupancy vehicle and rideshare to work, visit www.rta-ride.org for information on vanpools and Relax & Ride commuter buses.

Q: Will smoking be allowed on the Music City Star?

A: No. The Music City Star is a smoke-free environment.