

‘Transit Stop Transformation Project’ in East St. Louis opens to the public

At the grand opening event, the sixth “Transit Stop Transformation Project” site was announced for Fairview Heights; expected completion in 2024

Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT), AARP in St. Louis, St. Clair County Transit District and Metro Transit, in partnership with Bywater Development Group and Employment Connection, unveiled the “Transit Stop Transformation Project” on July 25 at the 5th & Missouri Transit Center, 150 N. 6th Street, East St. Louis, Ill.

Key representatives of the project and elected officials made formal remarks, cut the ribbon and invited those in attendance to explore the new, revitalized space.

The opening comes after a months-long process of getting input from transit riders, area residents, elected officials and stakeholders through a series of design workshops, surveys and community events – and completing construction.

“This is our fifth, and most extensive, project to date,” commented Kimberly Cella, executive director of Citizens for Modern Transit, who helped spearhead the transformation. “Our goal was to take a place that residents simply pass through in route to their next destination and turn it into an active, engaging corridor that further connects individuals and neighborhoods. This has been accomplished, and we are excited the community can enjoy this space for years to come.”

This project converted the large gray, concrete areas between the bus bays and MetroLink entrance into an interactive and engaging urban oasis, featuring hundreds of plants and bushes and a “City of Champions” theme. A large central shade structure, seating, a gathering space and art – with a nod to influential East St. Louisans throughout history – were also incorporated into the revitalized space.



The “Transit Stop Transformation” Project at the 5th & Missouri Transit Center was led by Citizens for Modern Transit, AARP in St. Louis, St. Clair County Transit District and Metro Transit. St. Louis-based architectural firm Trivers completed the planning and design, while Arbolope Studio did the landscape plan, and Added Dimension, LLC, oversaw community engagement.

The artwork was created by Design Lab 443. Other contractors and vendors involved in the project included Lake Contracting, Inc., Warning Lites of Southern Illinois, LLC, Anova Furnishings, Muralist Michael

Killeen, United Ink, Weiss Monument Works and Dintelmann’s Nursery. This project was funded by Citizens for Modern Transit’s Placemaking Pilot Funds Program, AARP in St. Louis, Bywater Development Group and Employment Connections.

Taulby Roach, Bi-State Development president and CEO, added, “We are delighted that this partnership is helping transform Metro Transit Centers into more vibrant spaces for our transit customers to enjoy while they wait for the bus or the train. In addition, the splash of colors are more welcoming to our neighbors

in the surrounding communities.” The 5th & Missouri Transit Center “Transit Stop Transformation Project” is the fifth – and most extensive – of its kind in the St. Louis region. Transformations have also been completed at the North Hanley Transit Center in unincorporated St. Louis County in October 2022; the Belleville Transit Center in Belleville, Ill., in June 2022; the Emerson Park Transit Center in East St. Louis, Ill., in August 2021; and at a MetroBus stop in Maplewood, Mo., in June 2020.

Each project showcases a deep understanding of and commitment to equitable development around transit, the possibility of play, the ability for creative interventions to produce a long-term impact for residents of all ages and the need for collaboration to succeed.

The partners work with stakeholders to build consensus and policies to move permanent development forward – and ultimately establish lasting developments at transit stops that are helping to improve safety and security, build ridership and increase activity around transit. Each project also reinforces the element of fun that comes with activating space and will be maintained via partner commitments to ensure sustainability for years to come.

As part of the grand opening event, the site for the sixth “Transit Stop Transformation Project” was announced. It will be at the Fairview Heights Transit Center in Fairview Heights, Ill., and is expected to be complete in 2024.

“It is fantastic to witness how these ‘Transit Stop Transformation Projects’ energize spaces,” commented Ken Sharkey, managing director of St. Clair County Transit District. “It is a privilege working alongside our partners to make these types of projects come to life at three stations in St. Clair County and cannot wait to see all that could be at the Fairview Heights Transit Center.” To learn more, visit online at www.cmt-stl.org.

• Photos courtesy Citizens for Modern Transit

1st MidAmerica Credit Union Granite City branch opens on Nameoki Road

1st MidAmerica Credit Union hosted a recent ribbon cutting ceremony at its new location in Granite City at 3830 Nameoki Road, where it is delivering greater financial access with state of the art technology and personalized service for the community.

The new location joins community investment and technology for 1st MidAmerica. The credit union purchased the stand-alone branch and made innovative updates that deliver convenience and financial accessibility for members. Features include a modern, full-service lobby, Interactive Teller Machines, one with 24-hour access, and a Go Live video banking station.

“Opening this new location reaffirms 1st MidAmerica’s investment in Granite City and our commitment to serving the community with a goal of helping people achieve financial well-being. We are here to provide members with access to the financial services they need,” said Alan Meyer, president and CEO of 1st MidAmerica Credit Union.

Lisa Reeves will continue to lead the Granite City team as branch manager. Reeves and her team are excited to be the first branch of 1st MidAmerica to introduce the Interactive Teller Ma-



1st MidAmerica board members, employees and members of the Granite City community cut the ribbon at the new branch located at 3830 Nameoki Road. (Photo courtesy 1st MidAmerica Credit Union)

chines. This new technology complements the in-person, exceptional service delivered by the credit union team. Onsite employees now spend more time working with members to help them achieve their financial goals, and less time on routine transactions that can be completed in just minutes.

Interactive Teller Machines allow quick transactions, such as deposits, withdrawals, and loan payments, and carry a variety of denominations for greater convenience, including \$1, \$5, \$20, and \$50. The Go Live sta-

tion also provides video access as an expanded service option for members who want to apply for home and consumer loans or open new accounts.

The new branch replaces the previous location, which was located in a strip mall on Fehling Road.

1st MidAmerica Credit Union is a not for profit, financial cooperative with a commitment to improving the financial well-being of its members and local communities. Additional information can be found at www.1stMidAmerica.org.