

MetroLINK to debut Illinois' first public transit Proterra battery-electric bus fleet

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Moline, IL, - On Monday, April 16, 2018, at 2 p.m., the Rock Island County Metropolitan Mass Transit District (MetroLINK) will officially debut their battery-electric bus fleet at a ribbon cutting ceremony at SouthPark Mall (JCPenney parking lot). Demo rides on the battery-electric bus fleet will also be available. The three (3) 40 – foot buses, manufactured by Proterra, the leading innovator in electric transportation, will help achieve MetroLINK's continuing vision in developing a sustainable Quad Cities through voluntary efforts in reducing vehicle emissions, building efficient and sustainable infrastructure, and communicating transit's environmental benefits to the community. The battery-electric bus project was supported primarily with funds provided through the Illinois Department of Transportation's award of a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Clean Fuels grant and an additional FTA 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities grant. "The Illinois Department of Transportation is proud to work with our partners at MetroLINK in upgrading its fleet," Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn said. "These buses will improve the quality of life for area residents in so many ways. By working with our federal and local partners, we are reducing operating costs and helping the environment by cutting down on harmful emissions, all while providing riders with a safer, more pleasurable experience."

In 2002 MetroLINK began a clean air initiative with the introduction of clean-burning compressed natural gas buses. With 80% of the fleet currently running on compressed natural gas, the introduction of battery-electric buses is the next step in environmentally sustainable fleet technology. In addition to zero emissions, each battery-electric bus results in additional operational cost savings over the lifetime of the bus. Quieter than any other transit bus on the market, the electric buses offer a state of the art wheelchair securement system manufactured by QStraint, Nine (9) Apollo security cameras including all new 4K technology and a 360 degree camera system, and an electronic infotainment system manufactured by Luminator. Fueled with electricity provided by MidAmerican Energy, the buses have 30% fewer parts, with no liquid fuel or oil changes, thus reducing maintenance labor costs. "MidAmerican Energy is proud to power MetroLINK's new electric buses in the Quad Cities," Kathryn Kunert, vice president of economic connections and integration, said. "This is one more way we can partner with the communities we serve to support environmentally friendly practices."

"It's an exciting time for us as we take this next step in environmentally friendly technology", says Jennifer Hirsch, Manager of Administration for MetroLINK. "We are the first public transit system in Illinois to introduce purpose built battery-electric buses to our fleet, which speaks to the innovation and forward thinking of our leadership team. We want to continue to provide our riders and community with eco-friendly transit options, as well as the most modern experience. We are beyond excited to introduce the Proterra battery-electric buses to the Quad Cities community, and can't wait for Quad Citizens to take a ride on the future of public transportation".

"We're excited to support MetroLINK as the agency redefines what it means to move the masses, solidifying its reputation as transit leader and speeding into a cleaner mobility future," said Ryan Popple, CEO of Proterra. "With MetroLINK and other progressive agencies serving as models, the Midwest is

committing to more sustainable transit solutions that simply make more sense, and we're proud to enable this change."

The public debut of the battery-electric buses comes on the heels of a recent award of \$3.165 million in Federal Transportation Administration 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities funds to MetroLINK for the purchase of 5 additional Proterra battery-electric buses and charging equipment. Through the help of Senator Durbin, Senator Duckworth, and Congresswoman Bustos, MetroLINK will be able to purchase these next round of buses to have in place by 2019. <https://bustos.house.gov/bustos-durbin-duckworth-announce-more-than-3-million-in-department-of-transportation-funding-for-rock-island-county-mass-transit/>

The 3.5 million rides a year taken on MetroLINK services (Metro bus service, Channel Cat Water Taxi, and ADA Paratransit) provide a vital connection to jobs, education, healthcare, and retail, supporting our local economy and creating a vibrant quality of life. The battery-electric buses will operate specifically on Metro's Route 20, providing service from downtown Moline's Centre Station to SouthPark Mall and the Quad City International Airport. Photos and video clips can be found at www.MetroQC.com/electricbus. Learn more about MetroLINK's services at MetroQC.com or by calling customer service at 309-788-3360.

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