

Coast Transit poised to rebound in 2007

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Coast Transit Authority plans to implement an aggressive program of projects in 2007, consisting of replacement or rebuilding of damaged assets, improving existing services and providing new passenger waiting facilities and services that support the recovery and future growth of the Gulf Coast communities.



In 2006, CTA experienced an increase in ridership in the three long standing routes that serve Biloxi. Ridership increased 5 percent on Route 31 Biloxi, 62 percent on Route 34 Pass Road, and 99 percent on Route 24 Keesler.

A new route, Lucky 21, began providing service in March. To maintain growth in usage of the system, CTA will be improving passenger waiting facilities and route information displays on all route corridors beginning with the Pass Road route.

The new Biloxi Transit Center, which opened Feb. 13, is a modern intermodal facility that serves as the transfer hub for all CTA bus routes in and out of Biloxi. Greyhound Lines operates out of this facility, which is designed to accommodate future local and regional passenger rail service.

CTA has secured FEMA approval and funding to repair all storm damage at the main facility on DeBuys Road, demolish the remnants of the Beach Comfort Stations and replace destroyed bus stop benches and shelters along U.S. 90.

Plans are being finalized to construct replacement Beach Bus/Comfort Stations at the Lighthouse and Coliseum locations this year. CTA anticipates approval of a \$7.4 million request in federal funding to begin replacing and modernizing the bus fleet this year.

The Reviving the Renaissance report identified eight public transportation projects that should be put in place.



Construction workers apply make cosmetic improvements to the outside of the Downtown Transit Center, which offers connections to bus routes across the Coast through CTA and across the nation through Greyhound. The center, located on MLK Boulevard in downtown Biloxi, opened in February.

CTA is implementing two of those projects in 2007. CTA's new Coast Commuter work transportation program provides employers and employees with cost cutting, stress reducing work commute options such as vanpools, carpools and bus routes.

CTA provides a free consultation service to assist employers in developing services that meet their individual needs. This service is available now.

CTA's Park Once System went into effect in March. Plans are being finalized to improve service on the Lucky 21 route by adding two more buses. Visitors and residents will be able to travel about the busiest areas of town by catching a bus that operates every 15-20 minutes. The new service began with three new

buses with special graphics that will be replaced by Trolley buses as soon as they become available.

CTA will wrap up its Transit Development Plan in April with a presentation of the Final Report. CTA is looking out to the year 2030 to determine what type of public transportation services it needs to provide to maintain quality of life and support growth. Innovative new services such as bus rapid transit, historic streetcar and regional light rail systems are being considered.

For more information about CTA's current services, add your comments to the Transit Development Plan, or pre-register for hurricane evacuation transportation, call the CTA offices at 896-8080 or visit the website at www.coasttransit.com.

Comforting views for along the beachfront



Barring any elevation issues, these are renderings of the new comfort stations that will replace the Katrina-destroyed stations that dotted the beachfront along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Coast Transit has secured FEMA approval and funding to demolish the remnants of the Katrina-ravaged stations and replace destroyed bus stop benches and shelters along U.S. 90. Plans also are being finalized to construct replacement Beach Bus/Comfort Stations at the Lighthouse and Coliseum locations this year.

