



## **CARTA Receives \$1.46 Million TDOT Investment to Shape Chattanooga's Transit Future**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

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**Chattanooga, TN**— The Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) has been awarded \$1.46 million through the Tennessee Department of Transportation's (TDOT) IMPROVE Transit Investment Grant program for State Fiscal Year 2026.

The grants awarded will accelerate the development of mobility hubs, enhance driver safety, and advance critical infrastructure improvements that will shape the future of mobility in the Chattanooga region.

"These strategic investments from Governor Lee and TDOT demonstrate the state's commitment to connect communities and support economic development through public transit," said Charles D. Frazier, CEO of CARTA.

"This funding allows us to make transformative improvements that directly impact both our operators' safety and our riders' experience. From protecting our drivers with safety barriers to designing a network of mobility hubs that will seamlessly connect neighborhoods to opportunities, these grants position CARTA to shape the future of mobility in Southeast Tennessee."

The awarded projects include:

- **\$317,244** to design up to 33 mobility hub locations throughout the CARTA network, creating seamless connections between transportation modes
- **\$400,000** to install protective barriers in all revenue vehicles, prioritizing the safety of CARTA's dedicated drivers
- **\$240,000** for a state-of-the-art bus simulator that will revolutionize driver training, allowing operators to safely practice route navigation and weather condition responses
- **\$500,000** for critical HVAC upgrades at CARTA's Wilcox Boulevard facility, ensuring operational reliability and employee welfare

"We are grateful to Governor Lee and Commissioner Reid at TDOT for their vision and support of public transportation across Tennessee," Frazier added. "These investments

will help CARTA continue to drive Chattanooga's progress by ensuring our transit system remains safe, reliable, and responsive to our community's evolving needs."

The mobility hub initiative represents a particularly transformative investment, as these locations will serve as connection points where various transportation options converge, making it easier for residents to access employment, education, healthcare, and other essential services. The driver safety barriers and training simulator directly address CARTA's commitment to maintaining the highest safety standards for both operators and passengers.

TDOT's IMPROVE program allocated \$21 million statewide for transit investments, with CARTA receiving the second-highest IMPROVE Act award amount among Tennessee transit agencies, reflecting the organization's strong grant applications and strategic vision for regional mobility.

## **About CARTA**

The Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) is Chattanooga's public transit system, founded in 1973. As the driving force behind the city's mobility, CARTA connects communities and empowers lives through a comprehensive range of services, including fixed-route buses, paratransit services (Care-a-van), microtransit (CARTA Go), the iconic Lookout Mountain Incline Railway, and the free downtown electric shuttle system. CARTA is also responsible for managing the Chattanooga Parking Authority, overseeing a network of garages, parking lots, and on-street parking. By shaping the future of mobility, CARTA fuels Chattanooga's economic growth, enhances accessibility, and drives the city's progress forward.

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