

## **City of Akron and METRO Team Up to Bring Two Free Downtown Bus Routes.**

Mayor Plusquellic also announced today the joint effort by METRO and the City of Akron to establish two new free downtown bus shuttles. Each shuttle will provide free downtown transportation from remote parking lots located at the edge of downtown to the heart of downtown. The remote parking lots will cost \$20/month, and the shuttle service will be free. Although some minor details such as the name of the shuttle and the exact routes and location of the bus stops has yet to be decided, the shuttle will start in July and will run for a minimum of 4 years.

“We have always wanted to provide inexpensive parking for our downtown workers but we have been hindered by the lack of space,” said Mayor Plusquellic. “By establishing these remote lots and providing free shuttle service, our downtown workers can park and ride for a very low cost. And, the shuttle will also pick up people who just want to go from one end of downtown to the other, also at no cost. This is just another way to make our downtown more user-friendly and accessible.”

There will be two remote lots, on the south and north periphery of downtown. The free bus shuttle to downtown will pick up riders every 10 minutes and will run from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

“METRO is enthusiastic about this shuttle and our continued partnership with the city,” said Bob Pfaff, Executive Director of METRO. “Public transportation is vital to the continued growth of downtown Akron and the people who commute to downtown for work.”

The remote parking option will also open up more land in the heart of downtown for development.

“This service will hopefully allow us to use more core downtown land for commercial development and job creation rather than expensive parking decks,” said Mayor Plusquellic. “It also allows us to implement the first part of the 2011 Downtown Connectivity Study that outlined numerous livability improvements for Downtown Akron, including a number of loop bus proposals. The City, AMATS, METRO, Downtown Akron Partnership, the University of Akron and the University Park Alliance collaborated on this study just last year. We are taking quick action to bring this desired service to our citizens.”

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