



MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 9, 2020

WeGo clarifies recently announced \$55.1 million CARES Act Grant ***USDOT announced funding WeGo anticipated to alleviate FY2021 budget strains***

NASHVILLE – The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) officially announced that it has approved WeGo Public Transit’s application for \$55.1 million in federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act relief funding.

Anticipation of this funding was factored into the agency’s budget for FY2020-2021 when the CARES Act was passed in late March and reflected in Nashville Mayor Cooper’s recommended appropriation to the agency as part of Metro’s overall proposed operating budget, currently being considered by Metro Council.

That proposed budget reduces WeGo’s overall Metro subsidy by \$22.8 million (45%) in an effort to alleviate the financial strain on the city’s General Fund. The CARES Act funding will allow WeGo Public Transit to sustain current fare and service levels without a negative impact on customers through June 2021, even with the 45% funding reduction from Metro Nashville.

As covered in the [Metro Council Budget & Finance Committee presentation](#) on May 20, 2020, funding under the CARES Act will be used to:

- replace lost operating revenue from passenger fares;
- increased operating expenses associated with efforts like enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of WeGo Public Transit vehicles and facilities;
- capital projects designed to enhance the agency’s future response to similar events; and,
- funds to help relieve pressure on Metro Nashville during the economic downturn resulting from the pandemic.

This funding is only available once and is programmed to support the agency during the region’s recovery from economic impacts of COVID-19, which could last into 2022.

“We are grateful to our partners at the United States Department of Transportation for this grant award,” said WeGo Public Transit Chief Executive Officer Steve Bland. “Funds provided under the CARES Act will allow WeGo Public Transit to sustain essential public transit services in Nashville while simultaneously providing budget relief to the City of Nashville as it addresses many key priorities during the current economic downturn.”

As WeGo awaits Metro Council’s final budget, the agency continues to move forward in its efforts to responsively adjust service as ridership increases while maintaining cleaning and disinfecting practices to ensure the health and safety of our customers and operators.

Members of the public are encouraged to sign up for WeGo’s newsletter, follow them on social media, and visit WeGoTransit.com for continuous updates.

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Editor's Note: To request this info in an alternative format, call 615-862-5950 for the ADA Coordinator.