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[CTA Updates Fleet with 150 Hybrid, 60-Foot Buses](#)

Reassigned Contract Allows CTA to Save \$60,000 per Bus More Fuel-Efficient Buses Will Save Money

The Chicago Transit Authority is moving ahead with plans to lease 150 articulated hybrid buses to replace buses purchased in 1991 and 1995. Today, the CTA finalized financing plans with Traxis Financial Group of New Haven, Connecticut. The terms of the agreement allow CTA to lease the buses for 12 years and retain ownership at the conclusion of the lease. CTA's lease cost will be approximately \$13.4 million per year. Leasing allows CTA to begin to take delivery of the buses later this year rather than waiting until sufficient capital funds are available to purchase.

In December, the Chicago Transit Board approved reassignment of a contract option from King County Metro, Seattle's public transit agency, for the 60-foot hybrid buses manufactured by New Flyer Industries.

Assuming the last option of Seattle's contract allowed the CTA to lock in savings of \$60,000 on the purchase price of each hybrid bus. In addition, CTA estimates that the hybrid technology will save the agency nearly \$7 million annually in maintenance, parts and labor costs over buses currently in service including more than \$900,000 annually in fuel costs.

"Older buses are costly to maintain and break down more frequently. This agreement provides a unique opportunity to fast forward improvements to our bus fleet and provide more reliable service, so we moved quickly to execute it," said CTA President Ron Huberman. "By working with Seattle and New Flyer, the CTA was able to lock in reduced pricing for these buses and will take delivery much faster than through a traditional order."

CTA's current fleet includes 378 buses that are 17 years old, and 385 buses that are 13 years old. The replacement buses are expected to begin delivery in August 2008 and CTA expects to have all 150 before summer 2009.

"The hybrids we have been testing have been performing well so we wanted to capitalize on the opportunity to pick up Seattle's contract option at a significant cost savings," said Chicago Transit Board Chairman Carole Brown. "The articulated buses will be able to accommodate more customers per bus while lessening the impact of our fleet on the environment – both benefits that are important to our customers."

The CTA has been testing 10 hybrid buses equipped with a parallel drive system, similar to a hybrid system found in a car. The 10 buses have recorded nearly 250,000 service miles since January 2007 and registered only one in-service failure. The 40-foot hybrid's average fuel consumption is 4.43 miles per gallon, a 77 percent improvement compared to the 1991 TMC buses they will be replacing. The 40-foot TMC buses average 2.5 miles per gallon.

Hybrid buses significantly reduce emissions compared with standard diesel buses and help CTA not only continue to meet but exceed the new emissions standard that became effective this year. Hybrid buses are quieter, cleaner and run more smoothly than conventional systems and new buses help to improve the reliability of CTA bus service for customers.