



January 30, 2015

Mayor Emanuel Announces Deal with T-Mobile, AT&T, Sprint and Verizon to Bring a Fast 4G Network to the Chicago Transit Authority's Subway

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Chicago will be the Largest Public Transit System in the U.S. with 4G Coverage in all Subway Stations and Tunnels; Targeted to be Completed by the End of 2015
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Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced a \$32.5 million deal, brokered by the Chicago Infrastructure Trust, with America's four major wireless providers – T-Mobile, AT&T, Verizon, and Sprint – to finance a network modernization project for the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) to upgrade the wireless network in the City's subway system. T-Mobile, AT&T, Verizon, and Sprint have collectively agreed to fund the entire upgrade related to the design and construction of a next-generation Distributed Antenna System (DAS) capable of supporting the latest 4G wireless networks and mobile devices.

"By adding 4G wireless service all throughout the CTA, we are bringing 21st century technology to every rider on every line of our 21st century transit system," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "This is another way that we are investing in a modern CTA to encourage ridership, make Chicago more economically competitive, and open up more economic opportunities to more residents throughout the city."

The network upgrade, which began earlier this month, will help improve first responder communications throughout the tunnel system, while also giving the millions of Chicago subway riders the opportunity to have a faster mobile experience throughout their commutes. The design and installation of the system will create approximately 50 jobs.

"The current wireless technology in Chicago's subway system dates back ten years, predating most smartphones and many mobile devices," said Neville Ray, Chief Technology Officer, T-Mobile, the project's lead wireless provider. "On behalf of the four national wireless providers, we, along with the CTA, the City of Chicago, and the Chicago Infrastructure Trust, are thrilled to bring the millions of Chicago subway riders the benefits of an improved wireless experience and we are committed to a strong partnership and successful implementation."

Upon completion of the network upgrade, which is expected by the end of 2015, the City of Chicago will be the largest city in North America to have a subway system with full 4G wireless coverage across its entire system of subway stations and tunnels. Specifically, there will be continuous 4G coverage crossing 22 miles from O'Hare airport through the underground tunnels and platforms of the Red and Blue Lines, the CTA's two busiest rail lines.

"The network modernization project not only improves our commuters' experience by offering faster and more robust wireless services that supports today's tablets and smartphones, but it also increases system safety measures by providing more reliable communication between CTA personnel and emergency responders," said CTA President Forrest Claypool.

This initiative is one of several efforts by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and CTA President Claypool to modernize the City's infrastructure and further improve Chicago's world-class transit system. Over the past three years, several technology improvements have been implemented across Chicago's transit system, including expansion of Train Tracker and Bus Tracker functionality, digital information and train tracker screens at rail stations, and a dramatically expanded security camera network.

About the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)

The CTA operates the nation's second largest public transportation system and covers the City of Chicago and 35 surrounding suburbs. On an average weekday, approximately 1.7 million rides are taken on the CTA.

About the Chicago Infrastructure Trust

The Chicago Infrastructure Trust was created in April 2012 by executive order of Mayor Emanuel and City Council resolution. The Trust's purpose is to assist the people of the City of Chicago, the City government and its sister agencies in providing alternative financing and project delivery options for transformative infrastructure projects. Visit the Trust's website at www.shapechicago.org.

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