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STA UNVEILS FIRST OF 10 CITY LINE BATTERY ELECTRIC BUSES

Agency Outlines Initial Fleet Electrification Plans

SPOKANE, WA – Today the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) released images and video of the agency's first ever zero-emission Battery Electric Bus (BEB). The 60-foot, 5-door Xcelsior CHARGE™, manufactured by New Flyer in St. Cloud, Minnesota, features two axles powered by electric motors for enhanced performance, and a 320 kilowatt-hour energy storage system that enables about 120 miles of range before requiring recharge. The new bus arrived in Spokane in late December and has since undergone acceptance testing, and enabled further agency planning to ensure a successful City Line launch in 2022*.

The City Line, for which stations and roadway improvements are currently under construction, will combine transit service frequency and efficiency into a modern streetcar-like experience along the region's first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route between Browne's Addition and Spokane Community College via downtown Spokane and the University District, including Gonzaga University. Project information, including construction locations and schedules, is available at cityline-construction.com.

The first of 10 Xcelsior CHARGE™ BEB's that will operate along the new BRT route, City Line buses feature a modern black and bright lilac branding scheme to distinguish its higher level of service apart from STA's regular service buses that showcase the Expo '74 inspired brand colors blue, green and white. The transitioning color design effects from black to bright lilac along the side of the vehicle represent rapid forward progress – a symbolic nod toward the committed embrace of battery-electric technology and the agency's measured plan to transition the entire bus fleet over time.

"More than a decade of community planning and hard work have paved the way for this exciting vehicle introduction, both in terms of the upcoming City Line service and the even bigger vision of electrifying STA's fleet," said Pam Haley, STA's Board Chair and City of Spokane Valley council member. "The bus manufacturing industry is producing high-quality and reliable zero-emission vehicles, and battery technology is continually advancing. With additional state and federal funding support to help offset higher capital costs, STA will be able to advance fleet electrification at a faster pace, which is an important environmental priority."

A 2019 study by the Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE), an industry leader in planning and implementing zero-emission buses and infrastructure, validated STA's need for its first 18 BEB's. In addition to the 10 Xcelsior CHARGE™ BEB's for the City Line, STA will eventually utilize an

additional eight 40-foot BEB's for Route 4 operating about 12 miles between the South Hill's Moran Station Park & Ride and the 5-Mile Park & Ride in north Spokane.

"CTE has been an important partner as we look to the future of zero-emission BEB's," said E. Susan Meyer, STA's CEO. "They have applied our specific regional characteristics like climate, topography, route distance and passenger loads, to industry cost and performance data to help STA develop an informed fleet electrification plan. This is not an experiment, we are now implementing the next generation of vehicle propulsion technology."

Beyond having its first 18 BEB's in service by 2023, STA is considering state and federal funding strategies that would accelerate fleet electrification without consuming the increased cost of BEB's from its current bus replacement fund, and would aid in funding additional electric charging infrastructure. With the additional infrastructure, STA would have the capacity in its Boone Northwest Garage, constructed to accommodate STA's initial transition to battery electric technology, for 20 more BEB's, or 38 total.

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About Spokane Transit

STA provides public transportation services through fixed route (bus) service, paratransit operations and vanpool to the cities of Airway Heights, Cheney, Liberty Lake, Medical Lake, Millwood, Spokane and Spokane Valley and parts of the unincorporated County. The organization employs more than 600 people and is overseen by a regional board: nine voting elected officials from Spokane County and cities in the Public Transportation Benefit Area, three non-voting elected officials from area small cities, and a non-voting labor member. For more information about STA, please visit www.SpokaneTransit.com.

**The completion date for City Line was revised to July 2023 on October 6, 2021.*