



Serving Kansas, Missouri and Illinois
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Breaking the cycle of poverty by providing hope, resources and a plan.

February 6, 2020

Robbie Makinen
Kansas City Area Transportation Authority

Re: Zero Fare

Mr Makinen,

Connections to Success (CtS) supports the Zero Fare initiative recently approved by the Kansas City, MO City Council. CtS is a nonprofit organization that provides a comprehensive network of holistic services and lifelong support to individuals from situations such as generational poverty, homelessness, incarceration, and domestic violence in Missouri, Kansas and Illinois. Our vision is to be the leader in empowering individuals in their transformation to economic stability. This is accomplished through a mission of inspiring individuals to realize their dreams and achieve economic stability by providing hope, resources and a plan. Our model, Pathways to Success, with lifelong mentoring at its core, delivers evidence-based results and impacts all areas of a person's life to help people living in poverty become economically self-sufficient.

In the Kansas City region, CtS serves over 400 adults and their families annually through our Pathways to Success program. Over 80% do not have access to reliable transportation and depend upon the city bus system to get to job interviews and other critical appointments, while further depending on public transportation to get them to their jobs daily once they obtain employment. In order to address this challenge, CtS purchases single-use bus passes to get them to our workforce training, interviews and appointments. In 2019, we spent \$2800 to purchase bus passes, and while they did help our participants, we were unable to provide near as many as were requested. **The recently adopted Zero Fare Transit in Kansas City would help to alleviate this challenge as participants will not have to rely on single-use bus passes to get to and from training or work and will provide a critical resource to move families to economic independence.** In addition, this would allow CtS to redirect resources into other high need areas for the families that we serve, including emergency assistance, work essentials and more.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Brandi Jahnke', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Brandi Jahnke
Regional Executive Director