

Transit Stories

Tuesday June 1, 2021

Rose Driscoll

Cleveland, OH

I love taking the bus. I love not having to worry about parking or pay for the upkeep of a car. I love putting on my headphones and using the time that I would spend driving to text my friends and family. But I also rely on the bus for transportation because I have brain injuries that make it very difficult for me to drive.

I got a concussion in June 2018 and after that my doctor suggested that I give up driving. If it wasn't for the RTA, I would not have been able to get to my classes and my clinical rotations on time so that I could become a nurse. I would not be able to get to work or see my family on the other side of town.

Catching a transfer is the most difficult part of using transit; I've been stuck in Public Square for more than half an hour before, sometimes late at night coming home to the west side from evening classes at Tri-C. As a student, that was really worrying because I'd have my laptop with me and I was nervous that I'd forget it or someone might try to take my backpack. I also look like a girl, so late at night men try to talk to you and you can't just get away from them or you'll miss your bus.

The decreased frequency of buses at night makes things really difficult, but worse is the weekend. Buses are so infrequent on the weekends that I have to ask friends for rides. I don't even bother trying to take a bus because it would take two hours to get from the east side to the west side.

There are buses to most of the places I need to go, but nothing that doesn't include a long transfer either in Public Square or at the Cedar/University RTA stop. I think a bus that went straight across town express, from somewhere like the clinic all the way to Lakewood would be a good idea -- the Cleveland State Line works really well.

I grew up in a rural area so I never take public transportation for granted. It has given me a level of independence that I thought I needed a car to achieve. The bus is so much safer and more affordable. I wish everyone could take the bus to get where they need to go, and that's why I think we should expand funding for public transportation.

transitjustice.org/transit-stories/rose-driscoll/

Every Tuesday, we will feature the first-hand experience of public transit riders from across the country in this short newsletter. From large cities to small towns, we will document the experiences of the millions of users of busses, trains, ferries and other forms of public transit in the US. Public transit is essential to our communities, to cooling the planet, to advancing equity. Transit is essential to our very lives.

This year there is a unique opportunity for the country to make an historic investment in public transit funding to help the country build back better. This story and all the others will be archived at transitjustice.org. For media inquiries, contact Doug Gordon, doug@upshiftstrategies.com.

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