



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Thursday, May 6, 2021**

## **Schenectady Greenmarket and CDTA Announce Free Trolley Service**

### ***Trolley to Provide Transportation to Residents in Hamilton Hill, Mont Pleasant and Eastern Avenue Neighborhoods***

**Schenectady, NY** - Schenectady Greenmarket announced today the launch of a free pilot trolley service in partnership with CDTA to start Sunday, May 16 for this year's outdoor market season outside Schenectady City Hall. The free trolley will provide transportation to residents to and from the market in the Hamilton Hill, Mont Pleasant, and Eastern Avenue neighborhoods as well as on Union Street.

A press conference was held on Thursday, May 6 outside the Hillside View Apartments on Craig Street in Hamilton Hill, one of the trolley route stops. Those in attendance included Schenectady Greenmarket board members and volunteers, CDTA board members and representatives, city and county leaders, and community members, stakeholders, and supporters.

The free trolley service will run on an approximately 25-minute loop with a total of 15 stops during the duration of the market – market hours are 10am-2pm and the trolley will run from 9:30am-2:30pm. The pick up and drop off location of the trolley at the market will be on Clinton and Liberty streets. The loop includes two routes to allow for the trolley to stop at the market twice so riders do not have to stay on the trolley for the duration of the loop to get to their destination. (See draft trolley route map attached).

"Schenectady Greenmarket is proud to serve as a year-round farmers market for residents in Schenectady and across the Capital Region, with our continued operation throughout the COVID-19 pandemic as an essential business providing fresh, local and healthy food," **said Haley Viccaro, Schenectady Greenmarket Board Chair.** "With the expansion of our market footprint around City Hall and more than 80 vendors this outdoor market season, we're excited to launch this free pilot trolley service in partnership with CDTA to increase access to our market for individuals and families living in the Hamilton Hill, Mont Pleasant and Eastern Avenue neighborhoods. A large part of our mission is to help tackle issues of food insecurity and food deserts in our community, and our goal with this trolley service is to provide transportation and benefits to customers and residents who need it the most. I want to thank CDTA, the City of Schenectady, and Highmark BlueShield for their continued support working together to help benefit our city and residents for years to come."

"This partnership highlights who CDTA is at our core." **said CDTA CEO, Carm Basile.** "We are part of the communities we serve beyond just the buses you see on the streets and the Schenectady Greenmarket Trolley is proof of that. In Schenectady we connect residents through nearly 10 fixed-route lines, offer rapid transit service, seasonal trolleys and multiple CDPHP *Cycle!* bike share hubs, and soon electric scooters. CDTA continues to connect the community to resources and opportunities that have a positive, lasting impact on the entire region."

Schenectady Greenmarket ~ P.O. Box 954 Schenectady, NY 12301 ~ [www.schenectadygreenmarket.com](http://www.schenectadygreenmarket.com)



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Schenectady Greenmarket proposed this initiative and partnered with CDTA to reach Schenectady communities designated by HUD as NRSA areas (Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas), including the Hamilton Hill, Mont Pleasant (including the Craig Street and Crane Street triangle) and Eastern Avenue neighborhoods. A recent NRSA study determined that only 40% of residents in these NRSA communities have access to vehicles, therefore heavily relying on public transportation, including CDTA.

A large part of Schenectady Greenmarket's mission is to increase access to all, promote diversity, and provide benefits to lower income individuals and families. Schenectady Greenmarket has successfully worked with New York State to take advantage of state programs that help tackle issues of food insecurity and food deserts. Schenectady Greenmarket has recognized that transportation is an obstacle for many, and therefore reached out to CDTA about the possibility of tackling this common hurdle that prevents many Schenectady residents from taking advantage of healthy food access provided by the market.

"Community Fathers, Inc. is excited to join Schenectady Greenmarket this outdoor market season by introducing Cornerstone Bakery from our Occupations Instead of Incarceration Earn to Learn project to share goods with market customers and residents," **said Walter Simpkins, Executive Director of Community Fathers.** "We are even more excited now with this new free pilot trolley program to provide access and inclusion for more residents and increased community participation."

"We know the key to a healthy, vibrant community is providing access and opportunity for all residents and that is exactly what this partnership does." **said Jayme Lahut, Executive Director of Schenectady Metroplex and CDTA Board Chairman.** "We are thrilled to see the Schenectady Greenmarket trolley become a reality to connect residents with fresh, local, and healthy food options."

With the support of CDTA and the City of Schenectady, the goal of the free trolley pilot program is to increase access to fresh, local and healthy food, boost and diversify Schenectady Greenmarket's customer base, and benefit other nearby businesses, including on Jay Street Marketplace and downtown.

"The free trolley service will support EBT/SNAP customers in accessing the many financial incentive programs the market participates in including the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), FreshConnect Checks (FCC), and Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB). Supporting EBT/SNAP customers in accessing these programs that increase the purchasing power of low-income community members, furthers Schenectady Greenmarket's mission to make fresh, local food more affordable and accessible for everyone," **said Cheryl Whilby, Schenectady Greenmarket's Market Manager.** For instance, for every \$5 in EBT tokens that a customer spends at Schenectady Greenmarket, they receive an additional \$2 Fresh Connect check that can be used to purchase food from qualifying local food vendors at participating farmers' markets.

"At a time when many working families are struggling with basic household costs and food insecurity, this is an exciting new collaboration between the City, CDTA, and the Schenectady Greenmarket to improve

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access to transportation and local, healthy food options for our community. I thank CDTA, Schenectady Greenmarket, and Highmark Blueshield for their partnership on behalf of our residents to help tackle these challenges,” **said Gary R. McCarthy, Mayor of Schenectady.**

“On behalf of the Schenectady County Legislature, I’d like to thank CDTA and the Schenectady Greenmarket for partnering on this important initiative,” **said Schenectady County Legislator Philip Fields.** “This new trolley service will not only give residents access to fresh, local food, it also increases access to COVID-19 vaccines, two things that can help keep our families healthy during the pandemic and beyond.”

“As presenting sponsor of Schenectady Greenmarket, Highmark Blue Shield of Northeastern New York is proud to partner with the Capital District Transportation Authority to increase accessibility to fresh, local foods for our community,” **said Nicky Chlopecki, Community Relations Manager, Highmark Blue Shield of Northeastern New York.** “As a community- based, not-for-profit health plan, we’re proud to support local initiatives that strengthen and enrich our region.”

More background on Schenectady Greenmarket and a full list of route stops can be found at: <https://www.schenectadygreenmarket.com/>

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*Schenectady Greenmarket connects farm and city to create a responsible, sustainable food-system right in the heart of downtown Schenectady. Each Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., vendors, shoppers, and friends attend to purchase fresh, local produce and artisan goods in a festive community marketplace. Schenectady Greenmarket is a 501(c)3 non-profit run by a board of volunteers. Visit [schenectadygreenmarket.com](https://www.schenectadygreenmarket.com) for weekly updates and information about vendors, events, parking and more.*

*CDTA is the premier mobility provider in the Capital Region of New York State, providing local, express, commuter and bus rapid transit services across its four-county, 2300 square-mile service area. CDTA also operates the regional bike-share program, CDPHP Cycle!. CDTA owns and operates the Rensselaer Rail and Saratoga Springs Train Stations. CDTA was named the 2017 Best Mid-Sized Transportation System in North America by the American Public Transportation Association*

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