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‘New fareboxes will help modernize bus travel in Greater Des Moines’

Residents of Greater Des Moines will be able to use “smart cards” in the near future to get around the metro by bus, thanks to a \$3 million grant for the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority to purchase new fareboxes.

The grant from the Federal Transit Administration’s State of Good Repair Program was announced late Wednesday by Congressman Leonard Boswell.

“As more and more Des Moines area residents are relying on public transportation during tough economic times, it is vital that we keep our public transit systems up-to-date and increase efficiencies to serve our communities,” Boswell said.

“Smart cards” will let users load as much or as little currency on the cards as they need, tailoring the amount of fare they pay to the extent of their travel plans, rather than having to purchase a pass for an entire week or month. In addition, the smart cards can be used whenever – they don’t expire like weekly or monthly passes.

“These new fareboxes will help modernize bus travel in Greater Des Moines,” said Steve Van Oort, Mayor of Ankeny and the Chairman of the DART Commission. “One of the top requests we get from customers is for these kinds of ‘smart cards,’ which is why new fareboxes have been a priority for DART for years. This is great news.”

The technology is already in use in other cities with major transit systems, but the antiquated fareboxes on DART’s buses prohibited DART from implementing the technology here. It will take approximately two years for the fareboxes to be purchased, delivered and installed.

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority is the public transportation provider that serves Polk County. DART operates a family of transportation services that makes getting around the Greater Des Moines area easier and more convenient. For more information about DART services, schedules, route changes, or directions to the nearest DART stop, visit our website at www.ridedart.com or call 515.283.8100.