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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **The Rapid Board of Directors and Amalgamated Transit Union Local 836 Reach Agreement**

*Collective bargaining agreement for bus operators and maintenance employees is approved*

**GRAND RAPIDS, MI** – The Rapid’s Board of Directors voted to approve a new three-year contract that will be effective from June 10, 2021, through June 9, 2024. This round of contract negotiations started in November 2020 with a tentative agreement reached on April 12 that was eventually ratified by the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 836 (ATU) on April 18.

The previous agreement was extended for one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The approved agreement includes increases for wages and retirement benefits over the next three years.

“We’re extremely pleased to have reached an agreement with the ATU that sets the agency up for success and provides stability for our workforce for the next three years,” said Steve Schipper, COO at The Rapid. “Both sides negotiated in good faith under difficult circumstances created by the pandemic, and this agreement is a great reminder that we’re all on the same team working to provide critical infrastructure and service to our community.”

Throughout the pandemic, service levels and safety regulations have been adjusted due to changing guidance and conditions in the community, but transit service continued to operate without interruption in order to support essential services and community needs.

“I am very proud of the leadership on both sides of the negotiating table,” said Deb Prato, CEO of The Rapid. “In true transit spirit, during an incredibly difficult year, The Rapid and ATU 836 came together negotiating a contract that keeps our community on the move; efficiently, reliably and safely.”

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**About The Rapid:** *The Rapid was established in 2000 and provides public transportation services for the Grand Rapids metro area and beyond. In 2019, The Rapid provided 10.5 million rides. Beyond its fixed routes, The Rapid also operates demand-response services for people with disabilities, rideshare programs, and other programs that keep West Michigan moving forward. Stay informed by following The Rapid at [ridetherapid.org](http://ridetherapid.org), [facebook.com/therapid](https://facebook.com/therapid), [twitter.com/therapid](https://twitter.com/therapid), and [Instagram.com/ridetherapid](https://Instagram.com/ridetherapid).*