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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Rapid Announces Wave Cardholder Appreciation Event

Wave card users will ride for free from June 20 to June 30

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – Rapid riders that show a Wave card when boarding the bus will ride for free from Sunday, June 20 through Wednesday, June 30 as part of an appreciation event for Wave cardholders.

The event leads up to changes in how the Wave card will operate for riders beginning on Thursday, July 1, 2021.

On March 24, The Rapid’s Board of Directors approved changes to the Wave card, following staff analysis and public outreach. The main changes to the Wave card are as follows:

- “Fare capping,” the system that allows Wave card users to earn a daily or monthly pass as opposed to paying for the full cost of the pass upfront, will transition from a “rolling” system to align with the standard monthly calendar.
 - All fare capping for Wave card users will reset on the first day of every month starting on July 1.
- The 7-day fare capping option will be eliminated.
 - Historically, riders have been able to earn a 1-Day, 7-day, or 31-day cap via fare capping; as of July 1, only a 1-day and monthly cap will be available.
- Wave cards will no longer be allowed to go into a negative balance.
 - Historically, if a Wave card user had at least \$ 0.01 on their Wave card, they could tap their card, ride the bus, and their Wave card would be allowed to carry a negative balance. With this change, if a Wave card does not have enough funds for at least one ride, the customer will not be permitted to board the bus, and their Wave card will not be allowed to carry a negative balance.

“These changes are intended to simplify and improve the riding experience for our customers,” said Brittany Schlacter, acting communications manager at The Rapid. “They were informed by feedback from customers, as well as industry-standard best practices.”

After introducing these proposed changes to the Board of Directors in January, The Rapid team conducted three virtual public meetings and posted information on buses, at Rapid Central Station, and to all digital channels to spread the word and gather additional feedback.

“In addition to all of the service adjustments made due to the pandemic, our customers have been wonderful through many other changes to the Wave card and fare payment in the last

couple years, so this is a chance to show our appreciation as an agency by rewarding that resilience with free rides for all Wave cardholders from June 20 to June 30,” Schlacter continued.

Rapid riders that have a Wave card will simply need to show their card to the bus operator upon boarding during the appreciation event, and they will be allowed to board for free.

Customers who do not currently have a Wave card can purchase one at Rapid Central Station, a local retail outlet, or online. A list of retail locations and online purchases are available at wave.ridetherapid.org.

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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, facebook.com/therapid, twitter.com/therapid, and Instagram.com/ridetherapid.*