

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **The Rapid Continues Measures to Fight the Spread of the COVID-19 Virus**

**Tuesday, March 17, 2020 - Grand Rapids, MI** - Health and safety are of the utmost importance to The Rapid in our efforts to provide public transportation services to the Greater Grand Rapids area. With the everchanging information regarding the mitigation of COVID-19 (coronavirus), we understand there is much concern regarding the safety of public transit.

The Rapid is actively coordinating with the Kent County Public Health Department and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations for responsiveness to this pandemic. We have proactively taken steps to minimize exposure to customers and employees. Providing a safe transit journey requires a partnership with our community.

We are continuously evaluating and updating cleaning procedures. We are implementing enhanced cleaning and disinfection measures on all of our vehicles and facilities. These facilities include Rapid Central Station and platform, Kentwood Station, the Ellsworth Administration Building, and the Wealthy Operations Center.

Nightly steam cleaning of vehicles is achieved with an approved antiseptic agent on all surfaces throughout the entire vehicle interior. The temperature for this cleaning is 300 degrees Fahrenheit. A disinfectant is applied to the interior of the bus, then steam cleaning occurs. Additional cleaning of buses during service (between runs) occurs at Rapid Central Station and Kentwood Station from 6:00am to 10:00am and from 2:00pm to 6:00pm (peak times). Cleaning personnel at the station locations focus disinfectant wiping on all high-contact surfaces.

It's important to keep in mind that the surfaces where people touch – bars or doors – should never be considered sanitized. These surfaces are only clean until someone touches it or coughs/sneezes nearby. Due to this fact, The Rapid is discouraging non-essential travel on all buses, as well as our carpooling and vanpooling services, in line with [Governor Whitmer's recent announcement](https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90499_90640-521763-.00.html). ([https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90499\\_90640-521763-.00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90499_90640-521763-.00.html))

Lessening the impact of COVID-19 is a community effort and The Rapid is working to do its part. As this health crisis continues, we will monitor developments closely and make plans to accommodate the needs of our customers and our employees accordingly. The Rapid is working to keep you informed and minimize the potential risk on all of our buses and in our facilities.

**The Rapid is taking the following measures:**

- Activated an internal COVID-19 Task Force that meets 7 days per week to manage and maintain operations as this situation develops
- Activated an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) onsite which is staffed daily
- Following CDC and WHO guidelines for preventative practices
- Remaining in contact with Kent County Health Department and Emergency Operations Center, the City of Grand Rapids Emergency Operations Center, and emergency personnel in East Grand Rapids, Grandville, Kentwood, Walker and Wyoming
- Procuring additional cleaning supplies and equipment and adapting cleaning procedures
- Canceling all public-facing events for three weeks, aligning with mandated school closures by the State of Michigan
- Producing and sharing CDC guidelines for preventative practices on The Rapid's vehicles, as well as overhead announcements in both Spanish and English

The Rapid continues to plan and assess operations on a daily and hourly basis as the situation develops. More comprehensive information and updates will continue to be available at [ridetherapid.org/coronavirus](http://ridetherapid.org/coronavirus).

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**High res images & b-roll:** [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/z9o5227nr2mne8y/AADz885O\\_HQh6HHJSwZ\\_fRm2a?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/z9o5227nr2mne8y/AADz885O_HQh6HHJSwZ_fRm2a?dl=0)

#### ***About The Rapid***

*The Rapid provides public transportation and mobility services for the Grand Rapids metro area. Beyond its fixed routes, The Rapid also operates demand-response services for people with disabilities, and car and vanpooling programs. Stay informed by following The Rapid at [ridetherapid.org](http://ridetherapid.org), [facebook.com/therapid](https://www.facebook.com/therapid), [twitter.com/therapid](https://twitter.com/therapid), and [Instagram.com/ridetherapid](https://www.instagram.com/ridetherapid).*