**Mountain Line Talking Points for January 5th 2015**

Getting there is half the fun

*#RideTheLine*

Mountain Line has invited the media alongside local leaders to participate in the inaugural ride of Phase II improvements. This document serves as an outline for the event and as an aid to conversations with the media. Special Guests include Mayor John Engen, MDA Executive Director Linda McCarthy, United Way CEO Susan Hay Patrick, and 10 Spoon Winery Owner Andy Sponseller.

**General Mountain Line Talking Points**

* Mountain Line is our community bus system. They help students get to class, commuters get to work, and keep older folks and people with disabilities remain active and mobile.
* Mountain Line helps reduce congestion, mitigate parking problems and improve air quality which benefits us all.
* Mountain Line improves Missoula’s economic prosperity by supporting worker access to jobs, increasing property values, and attracting businesses.
* When Mountain Line implements Zero-fare community bus service at the same time as improvements from the 2014 mill levy, the total ridership increase is estimated to be a conservative 400,000 rides by the third year following implementation. That is a 45% ridership increase benefiting us all.

**Zero-fare**

* Mountain Line’s three-year Zero-fare demonstration project is made possible by the generous support of 14 different community partners. These partners are:
1. The University of Montana
2. ASUM Transportation
3. City of Missoula
4. Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization
5. Homeword Inc.
6. Missoula County Public Schools
7. Saint Patrick Hospital
8. Community Medical Center
9. Missoula Downtown Association
10. Missoula Aging Services
11. The Missoulian
12. Missoula County
13. Parking Commission
14. Southgate Mall
* Mountain Line’s partners support Zero-fare community bus service to substantially increase ridership, help our buses operate more efficiently, and make better use of transit dollars.
* Mountain Line is the 40th community in the nation to go Zero-fare. Our community bus system is a national example of what small urban transit can look like, which is something Missoula can be proud of.

**15 Minute Bolt! Service**

* With 15-minute Bolt! service on Route 2, folks no longer have to plan their day around the bus, the bus is planned around *your* schedule.
* Now with new Bolt! service, folks are connected to places like Downtown, Target, the Good Food Store and Southgate Mall all without having to use a schedule.

**Late Evening Service**

* New in 2015, Mountain Line will provide Late Evening service on Routes 1, 2, 6 & 7 which allows folks to navigate Missoula until nearly 10:00PM.
* By providing Late Evening service, Mountain Line ensures employees Downtown and at the Mall can get home while decreasing the risk of drunk drivers.

**Paratransit Service**

* Thanks to the voter supported mill levy in 2013, 6 additional hours of paratransit service is available Monday-Friday helping people with disabilities remain active and mobile.

**New Equipment and Technology**

* Mountain Line’s new busses are longer and wider to hold more passengers. These buses are designed to reflect Missoula’s active lifestyle.
* Mountain Line’s new mobile app allows passengers to see real time bus information, set notifications before a buses arrival and see rider alerts and route detours making the paper map a thing of the past.
* All of Mountain Line’s buses continue to have free Wi-Fi on board provided by Community Medical Center