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MTS has a long-standing history of having one of the nation's cleanest transit fleets. We were the first U.S. city to have a modern electric light rail system. We've eliminated almost all diesel-operated buses and have replaced them with significantly cleaner burning CNG, and we're moving our minibus fleet to eco-friendly propane gas. We also completed the East County Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility last fall, which earned a LEED Silver designation.

Thanks to all these changes, our fleet is already operating with near-zero emissions. However, we're continuing to push towards a greener future. The next step? Zero-emission buses! In October, our Board of Directors approved a pilot program to test electric and/or hydrogen-powered buses.

It's not just the environment that could benefit from a zero-emission bus fleet, it may also result in lower maintenance costs, noise reduction and better performance than our current fleet. There are still a lot of unknowns regarding the feasibility for our system, but the pilot would help us answer some questions regarding costs, performance and infrastructure.

MTS staff are currently assessing the system to analyze:

- Which bus routes would be best for the pilot?
- Where should electric bus charging stations be – both en-route and at our various bus yards?

We'll know more in the coming months, so stay tuned to hear if you'll be doing the electric slide (er, we mean ride).

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