



Founded in 1975 the Minnesota Public Transit Association (MPTA) is the only statewide coalition of transit systems and transit advocates. MPTA speaks out for transit systems and transit riders across the State of Minnesota. MPTA advocates for high-quality transit service that is accessible and available to everyone. Our mission is to support transportation alternatives that improve the quality of life for people in communities large and small, urban, suburban, and rural and includes biking, walking, and rolling infrastructure.

The MPTA Board of Directors adopted the Legislative Agenda on January 27, 2022

2022 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Minnesota must support a comprehensive, multimodal transportation system that provides sufficient dedicated, stable and long-term resources for public transit systems throughout the state. MPTA supports comprehensive statewide public transit that considers the proper transit modes for geographic areas to improve access and mobility for all citizens; with an emphasis on expanding bus service. The efficient movement of people and freight is key to maintaining our economic competitiveness.

VOLUNTEER DRIVER FEDERAL INITIATIVE

- Volunteer Driver Reimbursement – authorize the IRS to set the charitable rate for driver volunteer at the same rate as the business mileage rate. The charitable rate has never changed and still 14 cents per mile reimbursement while business rate is 58.5 for 2022. This is a financial burden and disincentive to volunteer drivers.

POLICY

- Require MnDOT to prepare a report every two years, beginning in 2024 with the cost of meeting the needs by 2030 for Greater Minnesota transit operating and capital as referenced in MS174.24 (b) (5)
- *MnDOT Transit Grants Selection Process* –Require MnDOT to publish the awards and continue collaboration with OTAT on the transparent process for evaluating, ranking, selecting, and publishing information on financial awards for public transit in Greater Minnesota on the MnDOT website.
- Monitor the 5-Year Transit Systems Plan updates for each system in Greater Minnesota.
- Monitor legislative proposals modifying or creating new governance models for metropolitan area and/or Greater Minnesota transit planning or service delivery. An elected Metropolitan Council is expected to be discussed again this year.
- Monitor proposal to expand twin cities metro area taxing district. *Support for expansion is contingent on increasing funding for operations. The taxing district revenue is only for capital and communities will have expectation for service that otherwise can't be met without a loss of service somewhere else.*
- Supports the rights of suburban transit governing bodies to make operational decisions, including which buses to purchase to best serve its customers and provide more flexibility to suburban transit system to direct operations such as regional fare policies based on distance and service.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

- \$5 million Greater Minnesota transit facilities
- \$5 million for safe routes to school across the state
- \$12 million for active transportation across the state (\$10 million in bonds, \$2 million in cash)
- \$60 million for busway (BRT)
- \$16 million for passenger rail corridor to Duluth

FUNDING

Greater Minnesota Transit Funding Gap is \$20+million per year over the next 20 years (MnDOT Office of Transit)
Metropolitan Area Transit Funding Gap is \$300-500 million per year over the next 20 years (Transportation Policy Plan)

Support transit funding that is adequate, stable, and predictable across the state.

- Appropriate \$35 million for greater Minnesota transit this session to match federal funding for five years
- Change the statutory dedication of the sales tax on auto repair parts from a flat dollar amount, currently \$145.6 million per year to a full dedication in the same manner that the state dedicates the sales tax on leased vehicles and rental vehicles so that all the revenue is used for transportation purposes. 15% split of the entire fund to transit for Greater Minnesota and Metropolitan Area transit and 85% into the HUDF.
- Increase MVST rate to 6.875%. This matches the rate of the general sales tax. 40% of increased revenues will be deposited into the Transit Assistance Account. Greater MN could receive \$2 million/Metropolitan Area Transit \$18 million.
- With increased transit funding, increase MVST for suburban transit from 3.74%-6.25%
- Support reduction of the local match requirement for Greater Minnesota systems to allow less burdensome access to both operating and capital funding. Citizens in communities with low wealth are often disadvantaged in available transportation options.
- Provide adequate funding to serve the entire metropolitan area, including the build out the bus systems over the next 15 years including operations, technology, vehicles, and facilities; as well as BRT. Investment should be equitably targeted to local express service, reverse commute service and micro transit service.
- Fund Transit Signal Priority and programming to give transit a green light at intersections and painting bus lanes bolster transit in the urban and suburban areas.
- Support *dedicated, ongoing* funding mechanisms that include transit such as: fee on Transportation Network Companies of 4% of fare for transit; creation of statewide sales tax, authorizing increase in county sales tax, allows cities to implement ½ cent local option sales tax, increasing metro sales tax.