



2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Adopted by the Board of Directors on January 31, 2025

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.

Public Transit is important to many of our citizens' daily lives, providing access to jobs, housing, food, education and health care. 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.

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

- **\$10 million for Greater Minnesota Transit**
- \$1 million for safe routes to school across the state
- \$1 million for active transportation across the state
- \$75 million for Bus Rapid Transit/Busway capital improvements

FUNDING

- Provide adequate funding to serve Greater Minnesota communities who provide a variety of services that meet their community's needs, including Dial-A-Ride, Fixed route, volunteer drivers and contracted services; electrification of vehicles and facilities, provide for technology and marketing.
- Provide adequate funding to serve the entire metropolitan area, including suburban communities for the build out the bus systems and bus rapid transit including operations, technology, vehicles, and facilities. Investment should be equitably targeted to local express service, reverse commute service and micro transit service in suburban communities.
- Provide a reduced local match requirement for Greater Minnesota rural transit systems of 10% and for Greater Minnesota small urban systems of 15% for the biennium, thereby allowing less burdensome access to operating funding. (An increase from the 5% match provided for both rural and small urban systems the last biennium.)

POLICY

- Monitor Dynamic Transportation Options to ensure that any new services are not paid for from existing budgets for current transit service.
- Expand statute to allow 3rd Party testing for CDL licensure of greater Minnesota transit drivers. A transit operator that is a third-party testing program and owns or operates transit buses may enter into an agreement with other transit operators to test the other transit operators' transit bus driver employees
- Allow use of state funds for transit facility improvements to protect rolling stock investment, regardless of original building funding.
- Support MnDOT report to the legislature every two years, identifying the biennial cost of meeting the Greater Minnesota transit operating and capital needs by 2030; as referenced in MS174.24 (b) (5)
- Monitor proposals 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 expectations for service that otherwise can't be met without a loss of service somewhere else.

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 just increased to 70 cents per mile, January 2025. This low reimbursement rate is a financial burden and disincentive to volunteer drivers.
- MPTA will continue to co-chair the Volunteer Driver Coalition which is working to expand support across the nation.

For more information please contact:

Ryan Daniel: rdaniel@stcloudmtc.com
Sherry Munyon: smunyon@capitolaccess.us or 612-723-4245