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Get Ready for Fun Events!

Bus Rodeo July 19-20

*Minnesota Public Transit Conference
October 19-21*

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President's Column



MPTA is busy participating in and planning impactful events that bring transit colleagues together and facilitate discussions on the future of transit.

In February, MPTA members participated in Transportation Day at the Capitol - a great opportunity to talk to transportation committee chairs and local legislators about the value of transit investments. We had a great group from around the state and our conversations led to opportunities to testify at committee hearings.

I had the opportunity to testify in both the House and Senate Capital Investment Committees regarding the need for capital funding for transit in a significant bonding bill this year. MPTA board member Chris Belden from DTA and I also testified at a Senate Transportation Committee hearing.

We greatly appreciate our partnership with OTAT and our participation in the TAC meetings and Spring Workshop. These events allow us to provide important information on action in St. Paul and Washington, D.C. impacting transit systems.

The big events that MPTA hosts are coming up quickly: the **Annual Bus Roadeo will be held July 19-20 in Carver, Minnesota**, in the south metro area. We want to thank SouthWest Transit for all of their assistance as well as the Roadeo Committee for all of the hard work that goes into this important training event each year!

Please visit our [website](https://www.mpta-transit.org/event/2026-mpta-bus-roadeo): <https://www.mpta-transit.org/event/2026-mpta-bus-roadeo> and register today! This is always a fun, family-friendly event that gives us a chance to give back to our bus operators.



This year's Annual Minnesota Public Transit Conference will be held in St. Cloud October 19-21. Our planning committee is working to develop a program you won't want to miss with important updates and tools that you can use in your system to improve service. There will also be plenty of time for enjoying time with friends and colleagues as manage uncertain times and prepare for the future. Thanks to St. Cloud Metro Bus for hosting us again!

In between our MPTA events, we will also be participating in the **Washington, D.C. Fly-In September 22-24, 2026.** With the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) set to expire at the end of September, this is an important year for connecting with members of Congress and letting them know our priorities for federal transit funding and policy.

At the very least, we need to make sure transit funding continues to be provided at current levels and we also have an opportunity to push for changes that will improve transit service.

The MPTA Board of Directors approved a Legislative Agenda for 2026 that addresses our recommendations at both the state and federal levels. I encourage you to check our state funding recommendations and new federal recommendations addressing issues such as regulatory reform, federal share of funding, spare ratios, CDL testing and volunteer driver reimbursement. The [2026 MPTA Legislative Agenda](#) is available on our website.

2026 is also an major election year. Many lawmakers at both the state and federal levels are leaving to either seek other offices or move on in their lives. MPTA will be working to educate candidates and new legislators about the valuable work we all do to support Minnesotans and their need for mobility in order to maintain productive, independent lives.

Thank you for your partnership!

Sincerely,

Brandon Nurmi
MPTA President

Legislative Report

Minnesota Legislative Update

The 2026 Legislative Session is winding down with very little activity when it comes to transit.

The good news: no further cuts to transit operating dollars and not enough support for proposals to cut funding for particular transit ways or transit routes or operators.

The not so good news: so far, no additional funding for needed transit services and projects.

You can make a difference! Send a quick email to your legislators and the governor by clicking on this link: [Action Alert](#)

Here are some of the topics that have been discussed:

Transit Worker Assault legislation – expands liability for assault to all transit workers, not just operators. This policy language passed in the House and Senate Transportation committees, but hasn't advanced further.

This bill broadens a gross misdemeanor offense for assault or transfer of bodily fluids onto a transit worker, to apply when a worker is engaged in their duties generally instead of just duties involving operation of a transit vehicle and explicitly includes contractors and volunteers.

High-subsidy transit routes received attention this session. The Metropolitan Council had been tasked with analyzing routes in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area to determine the level of subsidy. Some routes were determined to have a very high per passenger subsidy. Legislation was introduced to modify requirements related to transit and land use in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, which includes setting out transit performance measures, requiring a transit system investment framework, mandating alignment with the framework for road projects, and setting requirements on transit-oriented development.

Legislation was also introduced and discussed that would consolidate most transit service in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, including to make the Metropolitan Council the exclusive comprehensive transit provider beginning July 1, 2027 and require a study of transit service in areas currently served by the suburban transit providers. In the House Transportation Committee, this bill was heard and approved and passed to the Ways and Means Committee. No further hearings were scheduled.

The big goal for the 2026 Session is for transit capital funding in a major bonding bill. MPTA is fighting for **\$5 million for Greater Minnesota Transit Facilities**. MPTA President Brandon Nurmi testified in both the House and Senate Capital Investments Committees in support of the association's bonding requests.

MPTA also supports \$75 million for Bus Rapid Transit/Busway capital improvements; \$1 million for active transportation across the state and \$1 million for safe routes to school across the state.



Legislative Report

Federal Update

The Waiting Game on Reauthorization

As we look toward the expiration of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) at the end of September, concerns are growing about the lack of activity in Congress toward a new five-year surface transportation authorization.

A few weeks ago, there were reports that the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee would hold a hearing to mark up their proposal for reauthorization. That hearing was never scheduled.

With so many other pressing issues and the fact that members of Congress want to spend as much time as they can back home campaigning for the November elections, uncertainty over the future of transportation funding is growing.

As with any legislative request, we know that being organized and being persistent is important. MPTA will continue to meet with the Minnesota Congressional delegation and staff to push for timely passage of a new surface transportation authorization with increased funding for transit.

The MPTA Board of Directors approved a federal legislative platform this year in anticipation of debates over the IIJA replacement legislation.

MPTA strongly advocates that the upcoming surface transportation authorization continues to fund public transit through the Highway Trust Fund's Mass Transit Account. This support is vital for passengers and public transit systems across the entire United States, from urban centers to rural communities. We urge increased funding levels for both formula-based and discretionary core public transit grant programs to keep pace with inflation.

The federal share for all projects financed with FTA formula-based public transit funds should be consistent at 80 percent, regardless of whether a specific project is for "operating" or "capital" purposes. This change will not affect the federal transit spending bottom line and allow decisions to be made by states and urban transit agencies in recognition of state and local laws, needs and circumstances.

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 72.5 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.

FHWA STBG Flex Funding - Continue to allow flexing of FHWA funding.

Spare Ratio - Post Covid many systems ended up with excess stock due to constraints from budgets, ridership levels, and workforce shortages that resulted in service reductions.

Spare Ratio Formula should be removed and reasonableness based on local standards implemented.

Increase system applicability from greater than 50 to less than 75/100.



Legislative Report

Federal Update - MPTA Recommendations

Regulatory Reform

- State-managed transit programs should comply with either state or federal regulations, not both.
- Whenever possible, FTA should defer to states' laws, rules and policies in the oversight of state-managed transit programs. FTA should accept states' standard certifications and assurances as evidence of compliance with applicable federal regulations.
- Streamline NTD reporting for smaller agencies and limit the scope of data review inquiries.
- FTA should allow urban transit systems with as many as 100 vehicles in maximum service- instead of 30- to be NTD "reduced reporters," and should identify ways to reduce the burdens placed on these reduced reporters so that they do not need to follow a 188-page manual when submitting their data eliminating unnecessary reporting requirements for hundreds of smaller urban, rural and tribal transit providers.
- All proceeds from the sale of transit vehicles where there is no federal financial interest should remain with the transit agency for future capital program use
- Currently, Transit agencies may retain no more than \$10,000 of sale proceeds from disposing of vehicles that no longer have any federal financial interest, allowing reinvestment back into transit system capital programs, including local match for purchase of a new or replacement vehicle. Current guidance discourages transit agencies from disposing of old transit vehicles that have reached the need of their useful life and have no remaining federal financial interest.
- FTA should pre-certify Buy America compliance of commonly purchased vehicles
- Simplify all forms of procurement for smaller transit agencies through templates, checklists, and threshold changes
- Allow for NEPA certification to occur after the purchase of land, similar to FHWA rules
- Transit agencies can acquire the property they need for their facilities in ways that align with other DOT agencies and save taxpayers' time and dollars while still assuring compliance with NEPA and other requirements.

5339 Formula

- The current ratio of discretionary funding in Section 5339 (b) and (c) ensures that the nation's mid-size, small-urban, tribal and rural transit systems have ample opportunity to compete for vital bus replacement and facility investment. Efforts to shift these funds to a formula (i.e. the Section 5307 formula) would dramatically reduce the amounts of Section 5339 (b) and (c) for the nation's smaller transit providers.
- In urban areas of 200,000+ population, 7.6 percent of their FTA formula-based public transit funds are allocated on the basis of performance. Currently only 3 percent of formula-based transit funds are allocated to urban areas with populations less than 200,000 on the basis of performance. This share, under the "Small Transit Intensive Cities" formula should be increased to 5 percent.
- Under current law, each state receives \$4 million per year in formula-based Section 5339 (a) funds for bus and bus facility projects that can be used in rural or in urban areas at the discretion of the state. Even if every state were successful at receiving Sec. 5339 (b) competitive grants from FTA for their statewide bus procurements, the 15 percent of that program's funds reserved for rural projects is inadequate to the total need for timely replacement of existing buses, renovation and construction of bus facilities, and needed expansion of many rural transit fleets. The amount provided to states through the "national distribution" of Section 5339 (a) funds should be increased to \$8 million per state and \$2 million per territory at minimum.

2026 Bus Rodeo - July 17-18 Carver, Minnesota



[Sign Up Today!](#)

39th Annual Minnesota Statewide Bus Rodeo, hosted by the Minnesota Public Transit Association (MPTA) and the Southwest Transit.

Join us in Carver for the 2026 Bus Rodeo featuring:

- Training on critical skills
- Updates
- Competition
- Great Food and Fun



Opportunities to support our great bus operators!

Event Hotel: Mystic Lake Casino



Office of Transit and Active Transportation Update



Hello Transit Friends and Partners,

One of the most meaningful parts of our work at OTAT is the opportunity to connect directly with you — the people operating, managing, and sustaining transit service in communities across Greater Minnesota. Whether we're talking through challenges, celebrating successes, or shaping future programs together, the strength of our transit network comes from the relationships built in these shared spaces.



Over the past several months, those connections have been especially present through the Greater Minnesota Transit Advisory Committee (GMTAC) meetings. These gatherings continue to remind us how valuable it is to have candid, collaborative conversations with the systems we serve. GMTAC provides a space where transit agencies can share real-time challenges, on-the-ground insights, and opportunities for improvement — feedback that helps us refine our work and ensure that our decisions truly reflect the realities you're experiencing.

As one provider shared, these meetings create “an opportunity for transit systems to communicate, collaborate, and stay connected,” building comfort in asking questions and seeking support. They also help strengthen professional networks and reinforce shared purpose. OTAT staff feel that same value deeply — and we are sincerely grateful for the time and thoughtfulness you bring to these conversations.

At our most recent TAC meeting, systems offered helpful questions and feedback across a range of topics including vehicle replacement timelines, BlackCat upgrades, and funding formula next steps. Your engagement directly shapes how we move forward, and we want to extend our thanks for the honesty, curiosity, and partnership you bring each time we gather. Below are several follow-ups and updates shared during our latest TAC meeting, as well as other important information from OTAT.

Vehicle Replacement Process

At the TAC, we talked through the goals of the proposed vehicle replacement process revisions — namely, reducing the gap between the start of the replacement cycle and actual vehicle ordering, ensuring the use of the most current vehicle data, and simplifying the overall workflow. We know that change can bring uncertainty, so we want to reiterate that this plan originated directly from concerns raised by systems about the long delays in the current process.

Office of Transit and Active Transportation Update



The revised process aims to reduce that lag by using the most up-to-date data possible at the time of ranking and award decisions. More current data means the replacement list more accurately reflects real-time fleet conditions across the state. It also removes unnecessary administrative steps, making the entire workflow simpler and more predictable for systems.

We believe the revised approach will help improve timeliness and decision-making and will work closely with you as adjustments roll out. Harinee Iyengar and Sean Upshaw will be visiting Regional Meetings this April to answer your questions, and you can always connect with your Transit Project Manager for more details. Thank you for your willingness to collaborate with us as we refine a process that benefits all systems.

BlackCat Upgrade

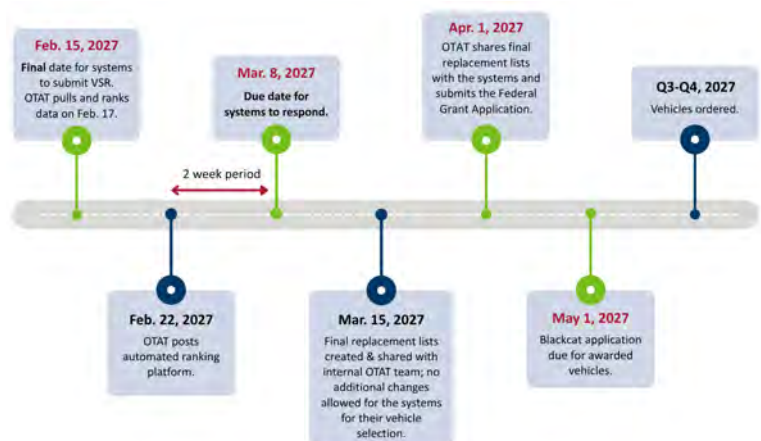
We are beginning the process of upgrading the BlackCat grants management program. Before any changes are implemented for your systems, we will run a full data cutover and testing process. Our goal is to ensure a smooth transition and provide a more intuitive user experience. More details, including training and rollout information, will be shared later this year.

Funding Formula Update

The new operating funding formula remains one of the most important topics raised at TAC, and we appreciate your willingness to engage deeply with these discussions. The formula is designed to incorporate a diverse mix of system characteristics to create a more equitable and data-driven foundation for distributing operating assistance across Greater Minnesota.

The formula incorporates factors such as service efficiency, productivity, vehicle revenue hours and miles, and transit access. A central feature of the formula is the volatility control — the floor and ceiling thresholds that ensure stable year-to-year funding changes for providers. These controls help mitigate dramatic fluctuations that could otherwise strain budgets or require sudden service adjustments.

We know how critical predictability is for your planning processes, and we encourage you to schedule a one-on-one meeting with Ben Tomhave (ben.tomhave@state.mn.us) to review projections. Final formula numbers will be available mid-April, assuming on-time reports from all systems. Your feedback continues to shape this work, and we encourage early outreach if you have concerns.



Office of Transit and Active Transportation

Update



Mobility as a Service (MaaS)

Many of you have expressed confusion about the Mobility as a Service (MaaS) initiative — what it is, how it works, and what is expected of your system. We hear you, and we are actively developing a complete suite of resources to make this project clearer and easier to navigate. You can look forward to the first of these resources coming to you at the Spring Transit Workshop. If you won't be at the workshop, we'll also be sending it your way by email.

These resources will include a high-level overview of the goals of the project, the benefits to you, and what we're asking of you plus better guidance on what features are available (and what prerequisites you'll need to use some of those features). The goal is to take a project that can feel complex and break it down into understandable, actionable steps.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, please reach out — we are here to support you.

Kathy Schultz kathy.schultz@state.mn.us: 651-366-4176

Kristina Heggedal kristina.heggedal@state.mn.us: 651-366-3009

Greater Minnesota Transit Plan

The Greater Minnesota Transit Plan (GMTP) is nearing final draft approval and is expected to be released for public comment this June. The plan updates MnDOT's transit policies, evaluates current and future mobility needs, and outlines coordinated, equitable, and innovative strategies for the decade ahead.

Throughout 2025, we gathered widespread feedback from transit providers, riders, local governments, and community organizations. That input influenced every component of the plan — from defining policy goals to shaping strategies designed to increase mobility and access in both rural and small urban areas.

The plan addresses emerging trends such as shifting workforce travel patterns, demographic changes, technology advancements, and the need for more coordinated transportation across counties and regions. It also identifies clear metrics for tracking progress, ensuring that systems can understand how their work fits into broader statewide goals.

Once released, public comments will be accepted online, and MnDOT will host a virtual public hearing. We also plan additional feedback sessions with advisory committees and community organizations. Your help in sharing the plan with your communities will be essential to ensuring a strong public engagement process. You can share the [feedback page](#) with your communities to ensure their voices are heard.

Current Solicitations

A few key solicitations are underway or opening soon, including:

- Greater Minnesota EV Charging Project (site solicitation expected late April)
- 5310 Transit Program (RTCC solicitation under review)
- Greater Minnesota Tribal Transit Vehicle Grant (opens August 1)
- Transit Operating Grant (opening May 1)

Links to current opportunities are available via MnDOT's [Funding & Grants page](#).

From Pilot to Performance: Duluth's Electric Bus Evolution



by Katrina Wood, Duluth Transit Authority
April 15, 2026

Cold Climate Pilot Testing

In 2015, the DTA received a federal grant to acquire seven Proterra battery-electric transit buses (BEBs). At the time, enthusiasm for EVs was high, and BEBs were still in their infancy. Only one manufacturer had completed federally mandated testing. Fewer than 100 of the buses were in service nationwide – with most operating in warmer climates

across the southern United States. Duluth, built on a hillside at the tip of Lake Superior, presented a uniquely demanding environment that would push the limits of the fledgling platform.

When the seven Proterra Catalyst E2s entered service in 2018, the DTA became the first transit agency in Minnesota to operate BEBs in fixed-route service – comprising 10% of the fleet. However, that milestone quickly proved to be as challenging as it was historic. Being an early adopter wasn't easy, and chronic parts shortages – compounded by COVID and Proterra's bankruptcy – complicated efforts to keep the buses on the street. Duluth's steep inclines made for an even greater uphill battle, especially in winter conditions.

Early Evolution

Duluth's extreme conditions quickly overwhelmed the early Proterras, prompting manufacturer support. Heating systems left passengers and drivers shivering, and defrosters had to be revamped to keep windows from fogging up. Electric heating systems competed with propulsion motors for limited battery capacity, further reduced in extreme cold temperatures. Opportunities to recover range in-route through regenerative braking disappeared when snow created slippery conditions, contributing to range losses that could exceed 50%.

DTA staff worked with the manufacturer to increase available battery capacity and to allow fuel-fired heaters to be used as a primary heat source on cold days – a practice that would be widely adopted by other cold-weather transit properties across the U.S. But Duluth's terrain – where grades can exceed 10% – posed another operational hurdle that would be more meaningfully addressed when the next generation of BEBs arrived.

Next-Generation Electric Buses

By the time the DTA ordered two additional BEBs in late 2024, the industry had matured significantly. A decade of experience and enthusiasm for EVs had reshaped the market, and more manufacturers offered 40-foot BEBs than traditional diesels. Even so, early experiences made staff skeptical. Skepticism shifted toward cautious optimism in fall of 2025, when GILLIG brought a demonstration bus to Duluth to give staff a preview of the new buses.

The advancements were immediately apparent on the hills. During testing on Cody Street – I recall asking the driver, "Is this as fast as it goes?" He responded flatly: "No ma'am, but there is a speed limit." The bus climbed Thompson Hill and merged onto I-35 S with ease – where our earlier buses had struggled. In downtown Duluth, repeated stops on Lake Avenue were handled smoothly.

As of this writing, two new 40-foot GILLIG battery-electric buses have arrived in Duluth, with one placed into service earlier today. These next-generation buses are certified for service on steep grades and reflect years of progress since the DTA first began its battery-electric journey. We look forward to the road ahead.

Arrowhead Transit Launches New Rider App and Transit Technology Across 10-County Rural System

Arrowhead Transit is officially launching its new rider app and transit management software system, marking a significant shift in how northeastern Minnesota's public transportation network schedules trips, communicates with drivers, and serves riders across a region that covers more than 20,000 square miles. A public celebration and ribbon cutting was held at the Arrowhead Transit facility in Hibbing.



Arrowhead Transit serves ten counties, providing more than 500,000 rides annually with a fleet of more than 120 vehicles and a workforce of more than 150 staff, including union employees and professional positions. It is the largest rural public transit system in Minnesota and one of the largest in the United States.

The new Arrowhead Transit app, available on the App Store and Google Play, allows riders to book trips from their phone, schedule rides in advance, track their bus in real time, and receive trip notifications and updates. Riders who prefer the phone can still schedule by calling 1-800-862-0175. More information and app download links are available at arrowheadtransit.com/app.

The app is powered through Arrowhead Transit's partnership with The Routing Company and the Pingo platform, which also supports the agency's internal scheduling and dispatch operations.

On the operations side, the new system gives dispatchers and drivers better tools for scheduling and routing, improves communication across the network, and helps the agency collect more detailed data on how riders move through the region. That data will be used to report service information to MnDOT and to guide future decisions about routes, timing, and coverage based on real travel patterns.

"This is about improving how people access transportation in rural communities and making our system easier to use in everyday life. We serve a large region, and we know transportation is not optional for many of our riders. It is how people get to work, appointments, school, and stay connected to their communities." -- **Brandon Nurmi, Director, Arrowhead Transit**

Rural transit operates differently than metro transit. Urban systems are often built around fixed routes and high-density corridors. Rural transit has to be built around people, distance, and access -- matching service to communities spread across hundreds of miles, where a missed ride can mean a missed appointment or a lost shift. Arrowhead Transit's new system is designed to help the agency do that more effectively, making service more responsive to how riders actually use it.

Youngsters can ride buses free this summer St. Cloud Metro Bus

Youngsters 17 and younger will be able to ride any Metro buses free in the Greater St. Cloud area starting June 1 through Aug. 31.

It's known as the "U-Go Free Summer Youth Program."

Older students, if they appear to bus drivers to be over the age of 17, will be asked to provide an ID with the date of birth on it. Students will be able to show a school ID, a digital ID, other types of photo IDs or a Metro Bus U-Go Free ID card.

Many of the fixed routes of Metro buses have youth-friendly facilities within them, such as parks, splash pads, the YMCA and more. The buses can carry up to two bicycles per passenger.

Metro Bus also offers a "Travel Training" course for anyone who wants to learn how best to navigate the Metro Bus system.

Metro Bus provides service for St. Cloud, Sartell, Sauk Rapids and Waite Park. But youth on the "U-Go Free Summer Program" need not be residences of those cities to ride the buses free.

To learn more about the free bus rides, visit the following website, which will be online starting May 5: ridemetrobus.com/ugofree/

U-GO!
FREE!
WITH ID



METRO BUS

New bus stop signs with QR codes to be tested this spring



As part of a pilot, signage at about two dozen bus stops this spring will receive specific QR codes to connect customers with real-time information about arrivals, locations and destination options on their smartphones.



Transit agencies around the country are adding the codes, which are especially helpful for riders who aren't proficient in English and for riders with visual impairments who use assistive technologies.

Metro Transit last year collected feedback about the types of information customers want to see at the more than 600 high ridership bus stops without shelters. These bus stop signs currently display route number (including branches), travel direction and destinations and a simplified route map.

Other sign updates being tested include:

- Reintroducing frequency information that became difficult to maintain during the pandemic as well as displaying simplified frequency ranges by time of day rather than specific times.
 - Prominently displaying the bus stop name on signs to reduce confusion and support digital and trip-planning tools like NexTrip.
- Lowering the threshold for signage locations (currently at 10 average boardings a day) and Better Bus Stops where shelter installation is limited by space constraints or where shelter upgrades aren't planned currently.
 - Rider engagement with the updated signs will be evaluated by looking at QR code visits compared to ridership. The pilot will also test the internal workflow required to support it. For that reason, the pilot will be conducted at locations with scheduled quarterly service changes in 2026.

Spring sports!

There is no reason to deal with parking or traffic woes on your way to the game. Let Metro Transit get you there!



The Twins are back and the home opener is tomorrow (April 3)! Meanwhile, the minor league Saints move forward with more baseball in St. Paul, and are Timberwolves basketball and MN Wild bouncing/skating toward the playoffs?!, and the MN United season keeps kicking.

Consider using the METRO Orange, C, D, or E lines to reach downtown Minneapolis, as well as the METRO Gold and B lines for downtown St. Paul—both convenient options for getting close to the venues. As always, our [All-Day Pass](#) is a great option to purchase before you head to the game!

Burnsville Bus Garage Modernization Completed, MVTA Marks Milestone with Ribbon Cutting

The Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) officially unveiled its newly modernized Burnsville Bus Garage this week, celebrating the completion of a major multi-year project aimed at improving transit operations, workforce development, and long-term service capacity across the south metro.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony, held April 9 in Burnsville, drew approximately 150 community leaders, transit advocates, and public officials to mark the \$15 million investment into the regional transit system.



Originally built in 1977 as a manufacturing plant and later converted for transit use, the Burnsville Bus Garage on Rupp Drive had long been identified as outdated and in need of significant upgrades. According to MVTA officials, the modernization project was designed to transform the facility into a more efficient, scalable, and workforce-focused hub.

MVTA CEO Luther Wynder emphasized the broader impact of the investment.

"This facility is more than infrastructure," Wynder said. "It supports jobs. It improves operational efficiency. And most importantly, it enhances the rider experience."

The project added approximately 25,000 square feet to the existing facility and introduced a wide range of improvements, including:

- Expanded maintenance capacity with additional service bays
- A new bus wash facility and indoor fueling systems
- Upgraded parking, circulation, and heavy-duty pavement
- Enhanced utilities, stormwater filtration, and site infrastructure
- Modern lighting, security systems, and landscaping

One of the most notable additions is a workforce development and training component, including a virtual-reality driving simulator designed to prepare future transit operators and technicians.

MVTA Board Chair Jay Whiting noted the project was driven in part by findings from a 2018 regional study, which identified the Burnsville facility as being in the poorest condition among metro-area transit garages.

"That finding helped galvanize action," Whiting said. "Today, we're celebrating the results of that action."

MPTA

MINNESOTA PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

In-Transit

May, 2026 Edition

Upcoming Events:



MN Rodeo
July 17 & 18
Carver, MN



**Minnesota Public
Transit Conference**
October 19-21
St. Cloud, MN



Minnesota Public Transit Conference 2026

Building Partnerships – Delivering Solutions

October 19-21, 2026

St. Cloud - River's Edge Convention Center

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