



2023

MISSOURI PUBLIC  
TRANSIT ASSOCIATION  
**YEAR IN  
REVIEW**



# 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



**Taulby Roach**  
*President of the MPTA*



**Kimberly Cella**  
*Executive Director  
of the MPTA*

## **Advocacy. Research. Education.**

Fiscal Year 2023 was a historic year for public transit in Missouri. Record amounts of transit funding were made available at both the state and national levels. A second study to quantify the economic impact of public transit got underway, while work continued to address needs identified in the first report. Educational efforts were furthered, and plans were put in place for new, statewide programming – all while actively addressing the nationwide transit operator shortage plaguing Missouri.

Public transit delivers billions to the state's bottom line each year and ensures daily transportation accessibility to nearly everyone in every county. This has fueled the mission of the Missouri Public Transit Association (MPTA) for more than four decades. We serve as a unified voice for public and specialized transit providers, stakeholders, vendors and partners from across the state who are collectively working to raise awareness about the role of public transit and why it needs to be an investment priority.

### ***This year the association's board renewed its focus and will be prioritizing the goals:***

- \* Elevating the value of transit in Missouri.
- \* Building new coalitions to expand advocacy base.
- \* Promoting and supporting MPTA members.

As we continue to celebrate some significant wins, we must reinforce that challenges remain, especially as it relates to operator shortages and supply chain issues. The MPTA will be working tirelessly to help support the 32 transit providers in the state, while expanding its support base through other community organizations, employers and stakeholders impacted by public transit.

Public transit is delivering for Missouri. Get on board in 2024 and help us keep the momentum going.



# LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

## Big Wins Secured on State and Federal Fronts

The MPTA has a legislative advocacy program that monitors legislation affecting public transit and works to ensure the best interests of transit providers as it relates to funding, safety and more.

On the funding front, there were huge wins on both the federal and state levels. The MPTA supported the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) in November 2021, which provided a five-year, \$91 billion transit authorization as part of the \$1.2 trillion measure. This type of federal funding requires transit providers to come up with a 50:50 match for transit operations and an 80:20 match for capital programming, making financial support for transit at the state level crucial.

This summer, Governor Mike Parson signed HB4 into law, allocating \$11.7 million in state funding for public transit. This amount includes \$1,710,875 in State Transportation funds with \$10 million from General Revenue.



**\$11.7  
MILLION**  
in transit  
funding from  
the state

The money is being split amongst the 32 transit providers operating in the state.

While this was the second consecutive year Missouri witnessed a funding increase, prior to 2022 there had not been a substantive increase in transit investment in nearly two decades. This year's investment represented a 34% increase over 2022 and a more than 580% increase since 2021, making it a historic win for transit.



**+580%**  
funding  
increase  
over 2021

The leadership of Senator Brian Williams and Senator Lincoln Hough played a key role in getting this funding secured.

Work will continue to ensure that Missouri makes transit investment a priority, as despite these funding increases, Missouri still ranks in the bottom third in the nation for state investment, falling behind peer states. Transit providers are working diligently to fill in the gaps by identifying other funding sources through sales tax and private contracts, so they don't miss out on the opportunity to draw down the maximum amount of federal dollars through IIJA and other sources.

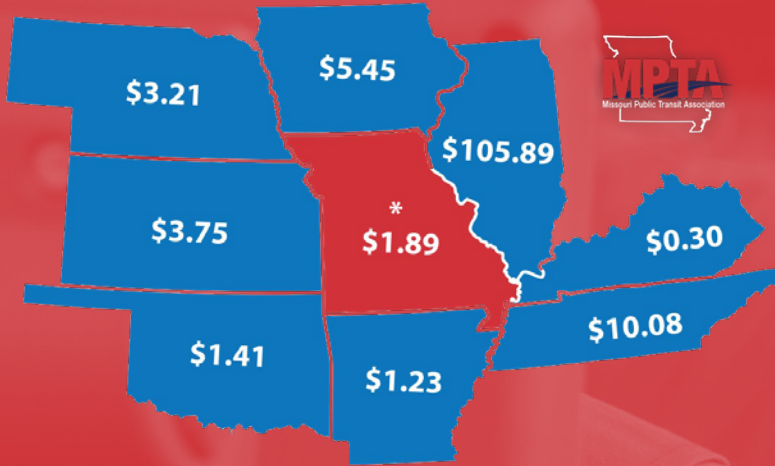


*"Investing in public transit is an investment in the future of our communities, our economy, and the success of our region. By supporting and expanding public transit, Missouri can not only address immediate transportation needs but also contribute to a more equitable, prosperous, and sustainable future for all citizens of our state."*

**Senator Brian Williams**  
District 14 – St. Louis County

## MO Per Capita Spending on Transit Compared To Surrounding States 2023 AASHTO Report

• Funding reflects 34% increase in Missouri investment in 2023



**OPPOSE  
CONCEAL AND CARRY ON TRANSIT**



Over the course of the year, the MPTA was also able to rally support to help defeat the various bills proposed on the topic of conceal and carry on transit by testifying at the State Capitol and in local districts, expanding its base and reaching out to legislators on a regular basis.

Through a contract with Michael Winter, LLC, the MPTA was able to have representation at the State Capitol each day of the 2023 legislative session.

## Federal Grants Secured for Several Providers

This year, more than \$260 million in competitive federal grants were also secured, helping to meet specific needs for several providers across the state, including:

- **\$220 million** for Bi-State Development/Metro Transit to replace 48 aging light rail cars (**\$96 million**) and to repair damage sustained during the historic flooding in St. Louis in 2022 (**\$27 million**).
- **\$23.1 million** for the City of Columbia (GoCOMO) to upgrade bus stops along current routes, remodel the transit maintenance and parking facility, and add an upgraded time point at its Opportunity Center.

- The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) received **\$6 million** to study and implement a fast and frequent transit solution along the 39th Street and Linwood Corridors connecting the KU Health System Campus and Eastern Jackson County.



- **\$10,388,000** for KCATA to upgrade a 45-year-old bus facility with electrical infrastructure upgrades, solar panels, and fire and life safety detection systems.



*“Public transportation is the lifeblood of our communities throughout Missouri. Urban or rural, large or small, we all serve those who provide essential services or who need those essential services.”*

**Frank White, III**

*President & CEO of the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA)*

# RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT



## Needs Identified and Actively Addressed

The MPTA partnered with Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT), the St. Louis regional transit advocacy organization, in August to commission a 2023 Economic Impact of Public Transit Services in the State of Missouri study. The goal is to help quantify the impact public transit access plays on the economic viability of urban, suburban and rural communities throughout the state – which, in turn, plays a critical role in securing state and federal funding for transit. The results will be available in early 2024.

In partnership with MoDOT, the MPTA also continued working towards the goals identified in the 2022 Statewide Transit Needs Assessment Study. This study identified service gaps and operational needs, prioritized investments, created policies to better deliver transit service to customers and communities and established short-term, mid-term and long-term recommendations – with the goal of being accomplished in one to five years, six to 10 years and more than 10 years, respectively. Short-term goals included increasing state investment and an expansion of the role of the Missouri RTAP, both of which were achieved in 2023.

Addressing the labor shortage remained a top priority for the MPTA and its membership base this year. As such, the association created an online resource to highlight operator job opportunities across the state and continued to look at avenues for helping to develop a Transit Operator Apprentice program with statewide standardization. This was particularly appealing to many of the providers as this type of education and training would enable operators to assist in both urban and rural areas, while providing access to a more diverse student population. The association will continue this work in 2024.

# 29,000

jobs are directly or indirectly supported by public transit



*“Transit trips have changed for OATS. People want to be picked up, taken to their appointment, picked up and sent home. We’re seeing that shift and trying to accommodate that. No longer is medical our number one trip purpose. It’s employment.”*

**Dorothy Yeager**

Executive Director, OATS Transit



# EDUCATION & OUTREACH

## Awareness Spread and Engagement Increased

The MPTA provided its members, partners and the community at-large with educational and networking opportunities, as well as the ability to stay informed about the issues influencing public transit in Missouri.

The association increased the number of “Educational Series” and “Peer Round Table Discussion” events hosted in 2023 targeting members, elected officials, stakeholders, transit riders and others, depending on the topic. These online events featured industry and subject matter experts, guest speakers and panelists addressing the state of transit in Missouri, succession planning, recruitment and retention strategies, drug and alcohol testing policies and procedures following the statewide legalization of marijuana, vehicle maintenance and more. The MPTA also launched a new online resource page that houses all reports, materials and presentations from these events.

This year, the MPTA co-hosted the four-state, Midwest Transit Conference in Kansas City, from September 6 to 8, in conjunction with the host provider, KCATA, and public transit associations in Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas. More than 420 individuals attended mobile workshops and planning sessions, and listened to several keynote addresses over the two-day period. The event also served as a platform for us to recognize the 2023 Transit Operator Champions. Each was nominated by their respective agencies for going above and beyond the call of duty and serving as frontline heroes. The 2024 Missouri Public Transit Conference & Expo has been set for September 3 to 5 in St. Louis at the Westin St. Louis at the Ballpark.

Education and outreach efforts also included securing media coverage across the state in the form of articles, photos and captions, and letters-to-the-editor that highlighted the work of the MPTA, honored transit operators and raised awareness about the issues impacting transit accessibility. Earned media through October 2023 topped \$528,000, which was a 27% increase over this same time the year prior. The MPTA also issued monthly eblasts and a year-end report, hosted statewide calls with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), made regular website updates and continually posted social media content via Facebook, Twitter/X and LinkedIn, resulting in increased engagement.

*“What a wonderful year for public transit! I want to thank the MPTA staff, my fellow MPTA Board members, MoDOT, and our community partners in their efforts to secure historic levels of funding for public transit in Missouri! However, our work is far from over! We must continue to advocate for more funding and enhanced service opportunities that are so critical for Missouri citizens with disabilities to be able to access their communities. I see the daily struggles my agency's clients have in accessing their communities due to a lack of transportation services. In many cases, public transit is the only option they have to achieve the highest level of community inclusion, and my fellow MPTA Board members and I will continue to advocate for more funding, assistive resources, and service options. While we have made significant steps this year, there is a lot we still need to accomplish. Let's work together to convince our local, state, and federal decision makers to continue to invest in public transit and show them how important public transit services are to Missourians with disabilities!”*

### Ed Thomas

Executive Director of Camden County  
Developmental Disability Resources

# LEADERSHIP ESTABLISHMENT

## Base Remains Strong Thanks to Diverse Representation



The MPTA kicked off the year by hosting a board retreat in January 2023 to ensure the association was on the right track, while building excitement and momentum around its goals and vision.

The MPTA later elected **Jonathan Feverston** of the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), **Shannon Hemenway** of Go COMO, **David Knaut** of the Ozark Transportation Organization (OTO), **Gerry Stegeman** of the Jefferson City Transit Division (JEFFTRAN) and **Kelley Watson** of the Cape Girardeau County Transit Authority (CTA) as the newest members of its Board of Directors. All five members were

elected during MPTA's annual meeting at the 2023 Midwest Transit Conference. Each will serve a two-year term. During the conference, we also extended the appointment of current board members **Janine Clappitt** of Ray County Transit, **Sheila Holm** of AARP in St. Louis, **Denny Ward** of Southeast Missouri Transportation Service (SMTS) and **Chance Gallagher** of City of St. Joseph. Each will serve an additional two-year term.

The following six officers were appointed to one-year terms: President – **Taulby Roach**, President and Chief Executive Officer of Bi-State Development; Vice President – **Matt Crawford**, Director of Transit at City Utilities of Springfield; Secretary – **Cindy Baker**, Vice President of Communications for the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority; Treasurer – **Janine Clappitt**, Director of Ray County Transit; Past-President – **Chance Gallagher**, Deputy Director of Public Works and Transportation at the City of St. Joseph; and At-Large – **Dorothy Yeager**, Executive Director at OATS, Inc.

As it relates to membership, MPTA was proud to welcome Metavante Corporation, Jefferson Franklin Community Action Agency, Missouri Association of County Developmental Disabilities Services and the Kansas City Streetcar Authority as new members in 2023.



# MPTA 2024 Officers



**Taulby Roach**  
*President*



**Matt Crawford**  
*Vice President*



**Cindy Baker**  
*Secretary*



**Janine Clampitt**  
*Treasurer*



**Chance Gallagher**  
*Past President*



**Dorothy Yeager**  
*At-Large*

## NEXT STEPS

### Forging into 2024 with a Mission

The MPTA will remain on mission in 2024, urging members, providers, the state legislature, transit riders and the community at-large to support the following priorities:

- Increased operational assistance for public transit providers
- Identification of additional collaborations/partnerships
- Development of statewide Transit Operator Apprentice Program
- Continued opposition to Conceal and Carry on Transit

## MISSOURI PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

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*The MPTA, through its network of members, stakeholders and constituents is committed to improving transit for all in Missouri.*

