

MISSOURI PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW



2024

YEAR IN REVIEW

Advocacy. Research. Education.

Public transit delivers billions to the state's bottom line each year and ensures nearly everyone in every county has public transit accessibility every day.

This has fueled the mission of the Missouri Public Transit Association (MPTA) for more than four decades. We serve as a unified voice for transit providers, stakeholders, vendors and other partners from across the state. This diverse membership collectively works to raise awareness about the role of public transit and why it needs to be an investment priority. As a result of these collaborative efforts, the state has witnessed significant wins for its 32 transit providers.

Fiscal Year 2024 was historic for public transit in Missouri. Record amounts of transit funding were granted by the state legislature for the second consecutive year. The MPTA's second study to quantify the economic impact of public transit was completed, while work continued to address the 39 million missing trips identified in the 2022 Transit Needs Assessment report. The association succeeded at elevating the value of transit in Missouri, building new coalitions to expand its advocacy base. It also furthered educational efforts and secured additional operating assistance.

Moving forward, we will continue to build upon these successes. We will also be mindful of the fact that challenges remain, especially as it relates to federal matching funds, operator/mechanic shortages and mobility management. The MPTA will be working tirelessly to support transit providers and expand the state's support base for public transit by engaging additional community organizations, employers and stakeholders involved.

Public transit is delivering for Missouri. Get on board in 2025 and help us keep the momentum going.



Taulby Roach
President of the MPTA

Kimberly Cella
Executive Director of the MPTA

This is a retention of the funding levels from 2023, marking a 34% increase over 2022 levels and a more than 580% increase since 2021.

LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

Big Win Secured at the State Level for Third Year

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 significant wins on both the federal and state levels. The MPTA continues to support the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which authorized the largest federal investment in public transportation in the nation's history, with **\$91 million earmarked for transit of the \$1.2 trillion in funds available nationwide from its passage in 2021 through FFY 2026**. The ability to secure 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.



\$91 MILLION

Earmarked for Transit on the Federal Level

\$5 MILLION

Awarded for Missouri Elderly & Handicapped Transportation Assistance

For the first time, Governor Mike Parson recommended an investment level of **\$11.7 million for transit as part of the state's core budget**. Months later, he signed HB 2004, which included **\$10 million in General Revenue plus \$1.7 million from the State Transportation Fund** for transit operations. This is a retention of the funding levels from 2023, marking a 34% increase over 2022 levels and a more than 580% increase since 2021.

The funding will be crucial in helping to provide the non-federal or local match required to enable transit providers to draw down some federal funds available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Missouri state senators Brian Williams and Lincoln Hough are both to be commended for playing a key role in getting this funding secured.

Other transit investment wins at the state level in 2024 included **\$5 million in Missouri Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Assistance Program (MEHTAP) funding**; and passage of HB20, which secured **\$6 million at the state level for non-profit transit providers** for the 20% match required to bring home to Missouri up to **\$24 million in federal funding** in the 5310 Capital program for transportation of the elderly and individuals with disabilities.

LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

(CONT.)

It is important to note, that despite these funding increases, Missouri still ranks in the bottom third in the nation for state investment, falling behind peer states. Transit providers are forced 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 the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and other sources. If we want transit providers to succeed, we must continue to make public transit investment a priority for the state.



A **\$10 million grant** was awarded to Bi-State Development/Metro Transit in St. Louis that enabled the agency to replace older diesel buses that have exceeded the useful life span with new, low-emission diesel-electric hybrid buses. This investment will help the agency lower emissions and provide riders a safer, more efficient means of transportation.



Formula-based grant programs include funding for transit systems in both urbanized and rural areas, grants for buses and bus facilities, transit designed for seniors and people with disabilities, planning funds and support to improve the condition of transit assets. Urbanized area formula funding secured in Missouri included **\$29.4 million** in Kansas City, MO-KS; **\$77 million** in St. Louis, MO-IL; and **\$4.5 million** in Springfield.



Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) received a **\$4.8 million grant award** under the Low and No Emissions Buses Replacement and Support Infrastructure program, as well as an additional \$10,388,000 to upgrade a 45-year-old bus facility with electrical infrastructure, solar panels, and fire and life safety detection systems.



In partnership with United Way of Southeast Missouri (UWSEMO) and the City of Cape Girardeau, the Cape Girardeau County Transit Authority (CTA) was awarded a **\$75,000 Thriving Communities Grant** from the U.S. Department of Transportation. Cape Girardeau is one of 52 communities in 35 states to receive the funding. The funding will help support UWSEMO's United We Work transportation program, which provides free, then reduced transportation to entry-level employees.

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 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 2024 legislative session.



RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Economic Impact of Transit Underscored



22,000

jobs are directly or indirectly supported by public transit



Public transit yields an overall economic impact in Missouri of \$4.05 billion annually, including \$481 million in spending by transit riders. It gets thousands of Missourians to and from their places of employment every day. It also directly employs more than 3,800 individuals – with an annual average salary of \$86,400 – and indirectly adds more than 22,000 jobs to the state each year. Over the last five years, transit agencies have spent an average of \$401 million annually on capital investments. The state government collects an estimated \$51 million in annual taxes because of the direct and multiplier effects of transit. These are just a few of the quantitative results found through the 2023 Economic Impact of Public Transit Services in the State of Missouri study – released in January 2024 by the MPTA in partnership with the St. Louis regional transit advocacy organization Citizens for Modern Transit.

The report reinforces that transit is delivering on its promise to Missouri, but the impact could be even bigger, better and more profound if the state invested more.

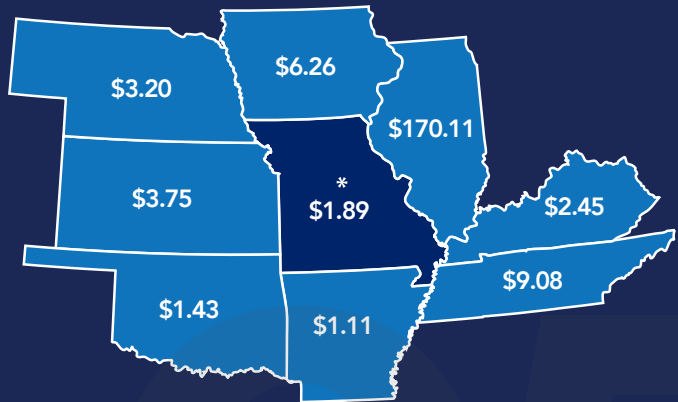
On the development front, MPTA partnered with MoDOT to continue working towards the goals identified in the 2022 Statewide Transit Needs Assessment study. This study identified service gaps and operational needs, prioritized investments, created policies to better deliver transit service to customers and communities, and established short-term (one to five years), mid-term (six to 10 years) and long-term (10+ years) recommendations.

Some of the short-term goals have already been accomplished, with the addition of \$6 million in matching funds for non-profits for vehicle acquisitions through HB20 and the expansion of the role of the Missouri RTAP and creation of a Missouri transit data repository in 2024.

Addressing the labor shortage also 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 2025.

MO per capita spending on transit compared to surrounding states, 2024 AASHTO Report

* Funding reflects a 580% increase in Missouri investment since 2021.



EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Built Awareness at State and Local Levels

The MPTA provided its members, partners and the community at-large with educational and networking opportunities and kept them informed about the issues influencing public transit in Missouri.

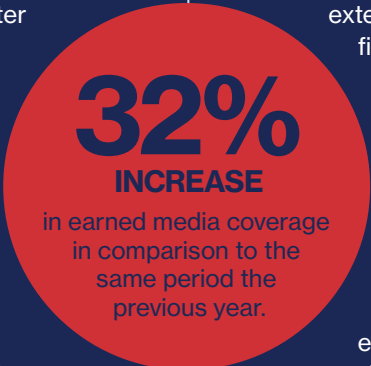
The association increased the number of “Education Series” and “Peer Round Table Discussion” events hosted in 2024, targeting members, elected officials, stakeholders, transit riders and others, depending on the topic. These online events featured industry and subject matter experts, guest speakers and panelists who addressed the state of transit in Missouri; provided transit agency updates; and discussed how transit impacts the economy, public health and drug and alcohol training. During these discussions, transit leaders, mobility management and more also provide insight on lessons learned.

This year, the MPTA hosted the Missouri Transit Conference in St. Louis in early September in conjunction with host provider Metro Transit. A sold-out crowd of more than 200 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 MPTA to recognize the 2024 Transit Operator Champions. Each of the 25 honorees were nominated by their respective agencies for going above and beyond the call of duty and serving as frontline

heroes. The 2025 Midwest Transit Conference and Expo is set for September 3 to 5 in Kansas City at the Kansas City Marriott Downtown.

The MPTA’s work also highlighted the exciting transit-related efforts underway across the state, including the City Utilities Connect SGF Study and resulting route/fare changes; KC Streetcar Mainstreet and Riverfront Extensions construction; Metro Transit’s proposed St. Louis MetroLink Green Line light rail extension; KCATA’s inFOCUS five-year Strategic Plan Release; Joplin’s study for the development of regional transit plan; and GO COMO’s Comprehensive Transit Study.

Education and outreach efforts 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 issues impacting transit accessibility. Earned media through October 2024 topped \$700,000, which was more than a 32% increase over this same time the year prior. The MPTA also issued monthly eblasts and a year-end report, hosted bi-monthly statewide calls with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), made regular website updates and continually shared content with social media followers on Facebook, X and LinkedIn, resulting in increased engagement and awareness of transit related information.



LEADERSHIP ESTABLISHMENT

New Leaders Looking to Future of Transit in Missouri

Fiscal year 2024 underscored the importance of transit leaders in Missouri. Over the course of the year, many transit agencies and organizations in Missouri experienced leadership changes, including the following:

- City of Joplin appointed **Gina Thompson** as transportation coordinator.
- SERVE, Inc. in Fulton appointed **Stephanie Rademan** as chief executive officer.
- Southeast Missouri Transportation Service appointed **Tracy Jones** as executive director.
- Cape Girardeau County Transit Authority appointed **Ginny Smith** as executive director.
- Scott County Transit Systems appointed **Macy Todt** as executive director.

In addition, the FTA Region VII welcomed **Carrie Butler** as the new administrator, and the Missouri Department of Transportation named **Ed Hassinger** as the new director.

The MPTA was awarded a 2024 Community Transportation Award for State Leadership from the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA). The association was among six distinguished recipients of awards presented in varying categories at the annual CTAA EXPO in West Palm Beach, Fla., in mid-June.

The MPTA also appointed new Board of Directors members. Among those named to the board in 2024 were **Gina Thompson**, a transportation coordinator with the City of Joplin; **Ginny Smith**, executive director of the Cape Girardeau County Transit Authority (CGCTA); **Lukas Yanni**,

a senior planner at the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC); **Stephanie Rademan**, the CEO of SERVE, Inc. in Fulton, and **Tracy Jones**, the executive director of Southeast Missouri Transportation Service (SMTS). In addition, MPTA extended the appointment of several current board members, including **Cindy Baker** and **Terri Barr-Moore**, both of the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority; **Matt Crawford** with City Utilities; **David Johnson** with the Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance; **Taulby Roach** of Bi-State Development; **Ed Thomas** of Camden County Developmental Disability Resources; and **Dorothy Yeager** of OATS Transit. Each will serve an additional two-year term.

The association also appointed the following six officers 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; Secretary – **Cindy Baker**, vice president of communications for the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority; Treasurer – **Janine Clampitt**, 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 of OATS.

As it relates to membership, MPTA was proud to welcome **Parking Company of America**, **TripMaster** and **AMF Bruns of America** as new members in 2024.



NEXT STEPS

Forging into 2025 with a Mission

The MPTA will remain on mission in 2025, urging members, providers, the state legislature, transit riders and the community at-large to support the following priorities:

- Increasing operational assistance for public transit providers
- Increasing local/state capital funding assistance to ensure ability to draw down federal funds
- Identifying additional collaborations/partnerships
- Developing a statewide Transit Operator Apprenticeship Program
- Continuing to oppose Conceal and Carry on Transit



Missouri's \$11.7 million transit allocation for each of the last two years is such an incredible win. It represents a more than 580% increase in state funding since 2021. Statewide funding increases like this are not happenstance. They are a result of the hard work of organizations like the MPTA, a recent recipient of the 2024 Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)'s State Leadership Award. The MPTA has a tremendous ground-level game. It works tirelessly to explain what transit service means to all Missourians, how it plays a role in statewide economics, and why state and federal funds work in tandem. It's also the voice of transit-related issues – and communicates those in ways decision-makers can easily digest. Increased state investment in public transit is vital to Missouri and other states. More agencies and organizations need to take note of the work of the MPTA, as the nation heads into the home stretch of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law."

- Scott Bogren

executive director of the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)

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.

