

# 2026

## MISSOURI PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

# LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



- **Elevate the value of transit in Missouri.**
- **Build new coalitions to expand advocacy base.**
- **Promote and support MPTA members.**

Transit providers in every single county in Missouri are collectively delivering more than 37 million rides annually. For some, transit is the sole means by which they can gain access to work, school, healthcare facilities, pharmacies, grocery stores and other needed goods and services. Others have personal vehicles but like to use public transit because it offers a safer, more cost-effective and convenient means for getting to places for work or play.

Transit 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.

Transit yields an overall economic impact of \$4.05 billion annually, including \$481 million in spending by transit riders. Over the last five years, transit agencies spent an average of \$401 million annually on capital investments. The state government collects an estimated average of \$51 million in annual taxes because of the direct and multiplier effects of transit.

Transit is delivering on its promise to Missouri, but the impact could be even bigger, better and more profound especially in light of last year's cut to state investment. Currently, Missouri ranks in the lower third of U.S. states in terms of state investment in public transit funding. Restoration of the \$5 million cut from core last year will be imperative to building a stronger economy through transit access.



## FEDERAL

MPTA supported the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in November 2021, which provided a five-year, \$91 billion transit authorization as part of the \$1.2 trillion measure. Now is the time to support a multi-year reauthorization bill that includes federal investment in transit. MPTA will continue to advocate for the use of these available federal funds:

- Growth in the Highway Trust Fund's Mass Transit Account through increased transportation investment funding or potential new funding sources to avoid insolvency.
- Predictable, steady growth in key formula programs (Sections 5307, 5310, 5311 and 5339) throughout the reauthorization.

## STATE

Missouri saw a significant decrease in state investment by 42% compared to prior year with a cut of \$5 million in General Revenue. Transit investment now sits at \$6.7 million. This funding is critical for the non-federal or local match required to enable transit providers to draw down some of the \$91 billion in federal funds earmarked for transit. Federal funding support requires a 50:50 match for transit operations and an 80:20 match for capital programming.

## RESTORE



THE \$5 MILLION  
CUT LAST YEAR

### PRIORITY #1

Support the restoration of the core \$5 million in General Revenue which was cut last year to \$11.7 million for transit in the state of Missouri, which includes \$10 million from General Revenue and \$1.7 million from the State Transportation Fund to be divided among the state's 30 transit providers. Last year's cut in state transit funding led to reduced service and frequency and loss of jobs, widening the gap between demand and availability of rides.

## SUPPORT MEHTAP



### PRIORITY #2

Support the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission request of \$5 million in state investment in MEHTAP funding.

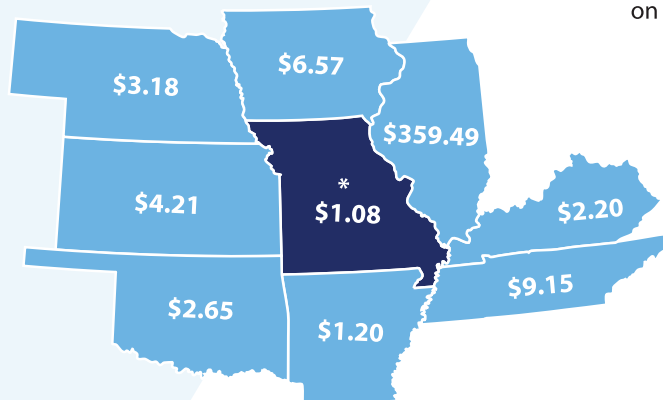
## OPPOSE

CONCEAL AND CARRY  
ON TRANSIT



### PRIORITY #3

Oppose any efforts to allow conceal and carry on transit and advocate for local law enforcement partnerships on transit. Allowing firearms on public transit may serve as a detriment to ridership and has not been proven to enhance safety and security of the system. As such MPTA and many Missouri transit providers have and will continue to oppose any legislation which would allow carrying concealed weapons (CCW) on transit.



**MO per capita spending on Transit compared to surrounding states, 2025 AASHTO Report**

\*Funding reflects 42% reduction in Missouri investment in 2025

## STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION:

- Educate on the impacts to service from the \$5 million reduction and unfunded project needs list for Missouri transit.
- Quantify the impact of Missouri transit providers on the state's economy.
- Raise awareness of the service gaps across Missouri and the impact of state investment to meet those needs.
- Partner with regional chambers, labor, healthcare, AARP, transit and other like-minded organizations to educate a broader audience about the benefits of transit.
- Localize the economic impact by linking legislators with MPTA member testimonials in their areas.
- Provide legislators in both rural and urban areas with metrics underscoring the very real impacts transit has on the state's economy.

## PARTNER

WITH ORGANIZATIONS  
TO EDUCATE ABOUT TRANSIT

