

intransit

Winter 2015 Edition

Register for Transportation Day at the Capitol

Thursday, February 12, 2015

- Meet with your local legislators - MPTA staff will schedule the meetings for you!
- Network with transit professionals
 - See presentations on funding

To register, visit mpta-transit.org

Attend Minnesota's Transportation Conference in Bloomington

March 3-5, 2015

Sessions include:

- What's New in Transit
- Getting to and Around Greater MN
 - Transit System Buildout
- Effective Transit Planning for All

To register, visit

mntransportationconference.org

DTA's New Year's Eve Free Rides Campaign a Success

Contributed by HEATH HICKOK

This was the fourth year for the campaign but the first with Miller Lite as presenting sponsor. Service ran from 5:00 pm to 2:20 am and ridership increased from 1,758 last year to 2,004 this year.



Duluth Pack created a new custom fare box covers with interchangeable signage in to promote free ride campaigns.

President's Column

Marc Hall



It's the year for transportation! The Minnesota Public Transit Association is already hard at work advocating for increased transit funding. We have staff working at the Capitol and behind the scenes with other organizations to ensure that transit has a strong voice in the debate. We're here to represent you and do the kind of work that you don't have the capacity to do that impacts your system and allows for continued expansion of transit service.

We have seen bills introduced at the legislature, news shows focusing on transportation and more people speaking out about how important transit service is in their communities. Public pressure will be the key to success this year. Organizing people and advocating for transit does take resources. I want to thank all of the systems for maintaining membership in MPTA. Without your membership, we can't ensure a strong and consistent voice at the legislature that represents our interests.

With systems merging and budgets changing, our dues structure for MPTA has also had to change. Clearly, with fewer transit systems in the state that now have larger budgets, we need to increase dues to some of the larger systems in order to maintain our budget and existing contracts. We continue to ask for a modest investment, one that has paid off many times over with the passage of both the constitutional dedication of MVST and the passage of a major transportation bill in 2008. Thank you to all of our systems for recognizing the value that MPTA provides.

We have a huge opportunity in 2015 to not only increase transit funding but to expand and improve transit service for thousands of Minnesota residents. We know how important transit service is for our riders and we all strive to improve our service every day. Here are some things you can do to make a difference in the lives of riders and community members:

- **Be an advocate for Transit** – speak out and educate people regarding the importance of transit and the need for increased funding. We will make it easy for you:
 - ✓ **Attend Transportation Day at the Capitol February 12th** – we'll make appointments with legislators for you. Contact Laura at laura_eash@mpta-transit.org
 - ✓ **Send an email to your legislators** – we'll send sample messages and provide continual updates
 - ✓ **Meet with legislators and community leaders at home** – we'll help set up a community meeting at a coffee shop or at your office
 - ✓ **Ask volunteers and riders to contact legislators** – A letter or email message from people who rely on transit means a lot
 - ✓ **Read updates and alerts from MPTA**



- **Take advantage of great networking and training opportunities**

- ✓ **Participate in the Bus Roadeo** – it's an important event for improving safety and knowledge for drivers and staff.
- ✓ **Attend the Minnesota/Wisconsin Public Transit Conference in Duluth** – this year's conference will be a major event with folks from Wisconsin that will feature sessions and information you and your staff need.

Please contact me with any questions or comments or suggestions. MPTA is here as a resource for you and to advocate for the funding you need. You can always learn more and get the latest information at www.mpta-transit.org and on our Facebook page.

Together, we can make 2015 a successful year for transit in Minnesota.

Legislative Report

Margaret Donahoe

The 2015 Legislative Session started out with a bang for transportation. Shooting to the top of the priority list for Governor Dayton, and Senate and House leadership, transportation funding is positioned to be a major issue of the session. Everyone agrees that more investment is needed. As usual – one small problem: how to pay for it and how to distribute new funds. There is no clear consensus on a funding plan.

The first week of the session saw a flurry of activity: the House announced its transportation funding starting point – HF4, Move MN the campaign of advocates from across the state announced its vision for transportation funding and the Senate made clear that a major transportation funding plan was coming soon.

The Minnesota Public Transit Association is a member of Move MN and will be working hard this session to generate public support for increased funding for transit. The campaign is pushing for: a sales tax on fuel (\$390-420M), tab fee increase (\$60m/yr.), $\frac{3}{4}$ -cent metro sales tax increase (\$350m/yr.) for transit including a 10% set aside for bike and pedestrian planning and implementation, close MVST on leased loophole (\$32m/yr.) with split between suburban counties and Greater MN transit, and invest in an additional \$16m/yr. to bike/pedestrian planning and implementation in Greater MN. Recognizing the needs of city streets, Move MN supports exploration of state funding outside the constitutional formula and local tools to help cities meet these needs within Move MN Principles.

Legislative Report

(continued from page 3)



The new Transportation Committee Chair in the House, Tim Kelly (R-Red Wing) introduced a bill that is being called “a starting point” but its early introduction shows a strong commitment to the issue of transportation funding. Unfortunately, the bill does not increase transit funding as introduced. The bill provides an additional \$200 million in one-time general fund cash for local roads and bridges and requires MnDOT find additional funds from existing trunk highway dollars for highway construction.

One of our challenges this year will be to stress that transit is not just a Twin Cities metropolitan area issue but a statewide issue that impacts all Minnesotans.

Senate Transportation Committee Chair Scott Dibble (DFL-Minneapolis) introduced a comprehensive funding bill – [SF87](#) – that includes a number of funding increases for transit:

- Metro Sales tax increase of $\frac{3}{4}$ cent to a full 1 penny in all 7 counties: \$350M, each county receives $\frac{1}{8}$ of tax revenue and can flex that $\frac{1}{8}\%$ for road purposes with a transit/transit-oriented development nexus except for Hennepin County which must use revenue only for transit.
Sales tax proceeds can be used for transitway development, Metro transit operations, bike-ped grant dollars (for infrastructure and planning), expansion and operations of metro transit and suburban opt-outs, grants awarded by GEARS and joint powers board.
- Dedication of 100% of sales tax on leased motor vehicles: \$32M split 50/50 between 5 collar counties and Greater MN transit.
Increase in general fund appropriation for Greater MN transit of \$16M per year for FY2016/17
- Establishes a minimum of \$16 M in currently allocated federal funds be used for bike/ped infrastructure and planning in Greater Minnesota
- Requires input from Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee to Met Council concerning proposed procurements of transit vehicles

Governor Dayton is expected to announce his transportation funding plan before the end of January. We expect the plan to basically mirror the Senate proposal but there will be some differences.

There is also some discussion of a capital bonding bill under consideration during the 2015 Session. Although this is the budget year and not the traditional bonding year, the legislature tends to pass at least a smaller bonding bill in the off-years. Talk of a greatly abbreviated session in 2016 due to the construction work on the state capitol is putting more pressure on the legislature to pass a bonding bill this year. The governor has said that he will recommend a bonding plan of around \$850 million depending on the February budget forecast. This may provide another opportunity for transit capital funding.

2015 is a critical year for transportation! Please stay engaged and involved. Plans and policies will be changing weekly so please open the email messages and alerts sent by MPTA. You can make a difference just by sending messages to your legislators. MPTA will keep you informed and let you know how you can work with us to increase funding for transit statewide.

*Mark MPTA's 2015 events on
your calendar today!*

Minnesota Bus Rodeo

July 17th and 18th

St. Cloud

Annual Conference—with Wisconsin this year!

October 19th to 21st

Duluth

Metro Bus Hosts Successful Food Drive

Contributed by BERTA HARTIG

St. Cloud Metro Bus teamed up with Townsquare Media and Royal Tire to collect more than 2,500 pounds and over \$1,500 for local food shelves during its fourth annual “Fill the Flyer” food drive in December. The cash portion will be matched by a local grant from the Skalicky Foundation.

The stuff-the-bus style food drive is mobile, each day moving to a different grocery store for three hours. The drive is named for New Flyer, who manufactured the current Metro Bus fleet. Because of the New Flyer plant in St. Cloud, the name is known in the community.

Metro Bus also hosts a one-day “Fill the Flyer” food drive in the summer at Summertime by George, a local music festival. Since 2011, Metro Bus has collected nearly 20,000 pounds and over \$7,400 during the summer and winter food drives.



St. Cloud Metro Bus Executive Director Ryan Daniel (left) and Marketing & Communications Manager Berta Hartig (right) delivered more than 2,500 pounds and over \$1,500 to the St. Cloud Salvation Army and the Catholic Charities Emergency Services food shelves.

Metro Bus has partnered with Townsquare Media to host the drive at local grocery stores since 2011.

Pictured from left: Jim Mullenbach, St. Cloud Salvation Army; Pete Hanson, Townsquare Media; Ryan Daniel, Metro Bus; Steve Williams, Metro Bus; John Uran, Townsquare Media; Tom Cruikshank, Metro Bus.

MnRTAP Calendar of Events

Date(s)	Event	Location	Registration Deadline
February 19, 2015	Creating a Website	MnDOT Training Center 3725 12th St N St Cloud, MN 56303	Registration closed
April 7, 2015	5310 Workshop	MnDOT 2151 Bassett Drive Mankato, MN 56001	Monday, March 9th
April 14, 2015	5310 Workshop	7694 Industrial Park Road Baxter, MN 56425	Monday, March 16th
April 21, 2015	5310 Workshop	MnDOT Training Center 1900 County Road I West Shoreview, MN 55126	Monday, March 23rd
May 5 - 8, 2015	Spring Workshop	MnDOT Training Center St Cloud	Wednesday, April 8th
August 12, 2015	FTA Drug and Alcohol One Day Seminar	MnDOT Training Center Shoreview	More information coming
Tentative: March	Five Year Plan Service Planning	TO BE DETERMINED	TO BE DETERMINED
Tentative: June	Call Taking-Optimal Scheduling Policy Writing Customer Service	TO BE DETERMINED	TO BE DETERMINED
Tentative: September	Emergency Preparedness Vehicle Maintenance	TO BE DETERMINED	TO BE DETERMINED
Tentative: October	Train the Trainer: PASS Defensive Driving/ Maltreatment Awareness	TO BE DETERMINED	TO BE DETERMINED

Out of State Events—Non MnRTAP

Date(s)	Event	Location	Registration Deadline
April 28-30, 2015	10th Annual FTA Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference	Atlanta, GA	http://transit-safety.fta.dot.gov/Training/new/CourseDetails.aspx?csid=28
May 31 - June 5, 2015	CTAA Expo	Tampa Bay, FL	http://web1.ctaa.org/
August 9-12, 2015	National Rural ITS Conference	Snowbird, UT	http://www.nationalruralitsconference.org/
October 11-13, 2015	Transit Trainer Workshop	New Orleans, LA	http://www.ntionline.com/courses/courseinfo.php?id=176

Contributed by JOHN GROOTHUIS and LORA BENNETT

The Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program was established by the Federal Transit Authority as a discretionary capital assistance program. In cases where public transit is inadequate or inappropriate, the program awards grants to private non-profit organizations to serve the transportation needs of elderly persons and persons with disabilities. Tribal governments, State or local governments, Private nonprofit organizations, operators of public transportation services, private operators of public transportation services are eligible to receive these funds. MNDOT primarily funds transit buses and Transit

Coordination Projects with these grants.

There will be three training workshops held in April for all current 5310 recipients. These workshops will feature information and instruction on the requirements for operation of 5310 vehicles. The training will include required quarterly reporting into the new Panther Blackcat reporting system. Vehicle and licensing overview from the Commercial Vehicle Operations Office. Instruction on the new Federal Title VI requirements. Additional 5310 programming information in regard to Coordination and project oversight will also be presented.

Job Posting:

Transit Director



The Faribault/Martin County Transit Board, a newly formed Joint Powers entity under Minnesota Statute 471.59, a governing entity for a two county public transit system for Faribault and Martin Counties (MN) is now accepting applications for the position of Transit Director. Responsibilities and duties include: the direction and management of the Faribault/Martin County Transit System, responsible for the planning, financial, promotion, personnel, developing and implementing various functions of Faribault/Martin County Transit System while maintaining compliance with established federal, state and local transportation law, rules and regulations.

Qualifications include: Graduation from High School or equivalent, plus at least two years of post-secondary education in transit planning, transportation, business administration, or closely related field. Bachelor's degree preferred in transportation, public administration, regional planning, business administration or related field, and at least 3 years of management and supervisory experience and demonstrated ability. OR Any equivalent combination of education training and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this position. Additional skills and experience or abilities include but not limited to: planning, organizing and directing programs, development & operations, working with boards and diverse community organizations, contract negotiations and proposal development, finance and personnel management, demonstrated knowledge of transportation systems policies and procedures, knowledge of the organization and operation of related local, state, and federal governments, ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing, and have strong public relations skills, ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with others including co-workers, boards/committees and outside agencies, ability to work independently as well as within the team environment, displays good judgment, professionalism and confidentiality, ability to prioritize and multi-task. Possession of a valid driver's license. Some evening and weekend work may be required, and ability to travel. Subject to complete criminal background checks satisfactory to the appointing authority.

The position is considered a full time position and eligible for full time benefit package. The starting salary range is \$23.56- \$25.96/ hour depending on successful applicant's qualifications. For a complete job description, required application, application supplement, and other required application documents, please contact Job Service at Fairmont Workforce Center, 412 South State Street, Fairmont, MN 56031 or call (507) 235-5518; Deadline February 13, 2015, 4:00 p.m. Applications can also be obtained on the Martin County, MN website at www.co.martin.mn.us. Completed application forms are to be submitted to the Fairmont Workforce Center only.



Job Posting: Transportation Director

Job # 7419167 - Job Class J - Starting Salary: \$58,926.00 Annually + Benefits

Location: Waite Park Office - Job Status: Full Time Exempt Position

JOB SUMMARY:

Under the direction of the Executive Director, The Transportation Director is responsible for directing the management of the Agency's Transportation Division, including, but not limited to, administration of transit system and volunteer driver program, overseeing operations, development of standard operating procedures, grant requirements, employee development and reporting requirements. The Transportation Director is responsible for assisting the Executive Director with Agency planning and budgeting. The Transportation Director actively participates as an Agency Management team member in the determination of policy, procedures, and to implement decisions of an Agency-wide nature.

QUALIFICATIONS (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities)

1. A combination of a four (4) year degree in business administration or related field and six (6) years' experience including transportation programming, administration, budgeting, supervision, planning or a combination of ten (10) years' experience and education.
2. Knowledge of federal compliance regulations such as ADA, FTA, Motor Carrier, Specialized Transportation, and any others.
3. Strong leadership and managerial skills to motivate, lead, and develop a team.
4. Excellent organizational, process, analytical and problem solving skills.
5. Strong reasoning ability to understand regulations, funder mandates and to present proposals.
6. Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite and agency specific software.
7. Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
8. Ability to work with mathematical concepts such as probability and statistical inferences along with basic math concepts.
9. Valid driver's license with ability to transport self to locations within a three county area.
10. Knowledge and experience working with the low-income population.

Please see website www.tricap.org for full Job Description

CLOSING DATE: Position open until filled

PROCESS: Download or complete online the Tri-CAP Employment Application and Affirmative Action Reporting and Vehicle Driving Application or call 320-251-1612 to have an application mailed and submit it to hr@tricap.org or to PO Box 683, 1210 23rd Ave. S, Waite Park, MN 56387.



News



MVTA to celebrate its 25th year throughout 2015

The Minnesota Valley Transit Authority is now 25 years old. MVTA was formed in 1990 and began to operate transit service in the south suburbs in 1991.

Throughout 2015, the MVTA will have celebrations recognizing the anniversary, highlighting service achievements, acknowledging growth of the system and hailing customer service initiatives. “This is a huge milestone for the MVTA,” said Clint Hooppaw, MVTA Chair. “MVTA has been innovative and creative from the get-go, and we will celebrate our efforts and look forward to many more years of providing great transit service,” he said.

In its early years, the MVTA operated 14 daily routes (it’s now 29) with 88 trips per day (as of Jan. 1, 2015, we now operate nearly 10 times that number of trips - 822 trips). Initially, service was operated Monday through Friday, but now the MVTA operates four routes seven days per week. When MVTA service began, there were express routes and seven vanpools. Now, the vanpools are all operated by the region and the MVTA operates express, local and flex routes as well as the METRO Red Line BRT (under contract to the Metropolitan Council.)

The MVTA’s facilities have also changed significantly, said Beverley Miller, MVTA Executive Director. “Most of today’s six park & rides and seven transit stations did not exist,” she said. “And, those that were around – Blackhawk and Eagan – have been reconfigured with increased capacity and a ground lease with tenants at Eagan Transit Station. We have also grown to operate out of two bus garages. All of these facilities have been significant construction projects,” she added.

The MVTA Board, comprised of nine elected officials from the cities of Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan, Prior Lake, Rosemount, Savage and Shakopee and both Dakota and Scott Counties, has adopted a mission statement to: *Provide mobility through an efficient, integrated network of equipment, facilities, and service.*

Activities throughout the year include: Launching of a new MVTA website, complete integration of Prior Lake and Shakopee service with the MVTA system, a non-rider survey covering the entire MVTA service area, a study of needs in Northern Scott County, opening of a bus layover facility in Apple Valley, continued State Fair Transit Service and more.

As part of the 25th Anniversary Celebration, the MVTA has also refreshed it’s “look” with a bold splash of color and the extension of the “swoosh” portion of the logo on letterhead, envelopes and business cards.

MVTA Then & Now	1991	2015
Trips per day	88	822
Weekday Routes	14	29
Weekend Routes	0	4
Hours per day	84.7	480
Passengers per day	3,222	11,000
Miles per day	1,929.35	17,500
Budget	\$2,984,722	\$27,367,743
Staff	2	13

MVTA Transit Ridership Strong, Highest Ever at 2.8 Million Rides

MVTA saw ridership record again in 2014, with total of 2,812,265 rides in 2014, up 3.9 percent from 2013.

“The MVTA is very pleased with our 2014 ridership growth,” said MVTA Board Chair and Apple Valley Councilmember Clint Hooppaw. “There is terrific potential in our suburban areas and we provide an excellent service,” he said. “The addition of such amenities as Wi-Fi on our buses, additional service to the University of Minnesota and operation of the METRO Red Line have all contributed to our growth.”

Highest ridership routes are MVTA’s Route 460 accommodates some 15 percent of MVTA’s ridership; Route 477 accommodates some 13 percent of MVTA’s ridership; and Route 444 accommodate just less than 10 percent of MVTA’s ridership.

Two local routes (Route 438 and 440) and one all-day route (Route 475) experienced the greatest ridership growth. Route 438 ridership increased from 7,376 in 2013 to 12,996 in 2014 (up 76%); Route 440 ridership increased from 28,786 to 43,039 (up 50%) and Route 475 increased from 48,843 to 60,698 in 2014, up 29%. MVTA’s average daily ridership reached a high in September at 11,198 rides.

METRO Red Line, service operated by the MVTA under contract to the Metropolitan Council and funded by the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) increased from 130,733 in 2013 (with slightly more than six months of service since it opened on June 22, 2013) to 265,514 in 2014.

“The economy proved stronger in 2014, and gas prices plummeted, but ridership remained strong,”

said MVTA Executive Director Beverley Miller. “We saw an increase in rides through the Cedar Grove Transit Station with the opening of Twin Cities Premium Outlets,” she said. “Ridership to the University of Minnesota continues to grow.”

Service changes in 2015 include the integration of the Prior Lake and Shakopee BlueXpress Commuter service and the Shakopee Circulator, addition of service to the University of Minnesota from Prior Lake and Shakopee, new service to/from downtown Minneapolis from the Marschall Road Transit Station in Shakopee, additional peak-period service between the Rosemount Transit Station to downtown Minneapolis, a potential-rider study of the entire MVTA service area, and a study of service needs in northern Scott County.

MVTA Launches New Website

The Minnesota Valley Transit Authority launched a new website at www.mvta.com on January 1st. This is the first re-write of the site in more than 10 years, with the purpose of the new site being “To enhance the user experience, simplify content management, and provide better information and customer service to our community,” said Beverley Miller, MVTA Executive Director.

Among the new features of the site are the ability to sign up for route-specific Rider Alerts, automatically generated any time there is an impact to service related to a detour, accident or other incident that affects transit service. The site also includes access to the Google Trip Planner and MVTA’s “Where’s my bus web portal” where riders can find real-time information about the status and/or location of a bus (not yet available for mobile devices). The new site is also the launching point for the MVTA’s first ever and just-completed “How to Ride” video.



News



Council Adopts 2040 Transportation Policy Plan

Edited by LAURA EASH

People in the Twin Cities metro area are on the move. Every day residents take nearly 10 million trips, whether it's in a car, a bus or train, or by biking or walking. On weekdays, those trips total nearly 70 million miles.

Amidst all that movement regional transportation plans and policies help keep congestion and costs to a minimum, and ensure that people can get where they want to go, whether it's work, school, the doctor's office or grocery store.

On Jan. 14 the Metropolitan Council adopted the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) for the metro area. It's the region's long-range transportation plan and sets the stage for investing in the transportation system to 2040--to ensure residents have the transportation choices they need now and in the future.

"It's a robust plan that calls for investment in all modes of transportation and thoughtful, coordinated decision making between local units of government and the Council about the connections between land use and transportation," said the Council's Transportation Committee Chair Adam Duininck. "The region's success depends on it."

TPP promotes investment for mobility, livability, prosperity

Highways, transit, walking paths and biking provide mobility and important connections that fuel the economy. They are a network that is, and will be, indispensable to people's lives, the movement of goods, the region's quality of life, and economic prosperity as the region grows and changes.

By 2040, the metro area will grow by more than 800,000 people and 550,000 jobs. The number of residents 65 and older will nearly double what it is today. People of color will make up 40 percent of the region's population. As the region evolves, it will need a mix of transportation choices to accommodate the needs of a growing, changing region.

The TPP is the region's plan for helping to maintain and enhance what we have, better connect people and places, provide the transportation choices that help people in their everyday lives, and guide the growing region toward success and vibrancy for years to come.

What makes this plan different from previous versions is greater emphasis on the relationship between local development decisions and transportation investment.

Two Long-term Operators Retired In January

From DREW KERR and edited by LAURA EASH

Several longtime employees retired from Metro Transit this year, including the 2013 Minnesota Operator of the Year Tony Taylor and 40+ year operator Paul Liddicoat.



Tony with his Operator of the Year award. He retired on January 15th with 36 years of service.



Tony getting surprised by the media while in service.



General Manager Brian Lamb and others joined Paul for his last day as a Metro Transit bus operator.

Commuter Choice Awards Now Taking Nominations

From DREW KERR and edited by LAURA EASH

Metro Transit is accepting nominations for the 2015 Commuter Choice Awards through February 25. Awards recognize innovative outreach efforts or programs designed to increase the use of sustainable transportation modes, such as taking transit, biking, walking, carpooling, vanpooling or teleworking. Organizations, employers, building owners/management companies, government agencies and individuals are eligible for recognition. Nominations will be judged by a panel of Twin Cities' transportation experts and presented at an event later this spring. Visit the Metro Transit website for more information and to get a nomination form.

Like Minnesota Public Transit Association on Facebook and follow @MNPublicTransit on Twitter for:

- Legislative updates
- News and retweets from MPTA members
- Local and national media coverage of transit news and issues

Send submissions for the next *InTransit* to Laura: laura_eash@mpta-transit.org

InTransit newsletter is a bimonthly newsletter published by the Minnesota Public Transit Association (MPTA). Opinions and views expressed in this publication may not necessarily be those of the Minnesota Public Transit Association or its members.



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