July 2021

ASTRANSIT NEWSLEIMER

Supporting the needs of Texas' public transportation systems through statewide advocacy and education.

The Texas Transit Association congratulates the winners of the 2021-2023 Board of Directors election



Jeff Arndt TTA Board Member, Metro Via, San Antonio 2021-2023



Tom Jasien TTA Board Member, Metro Houston Metro 2021-2023



Scott Lewis TTA Board Member, Small Urban Longview Transit 2021-2023



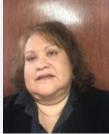
Chris Mandrell TTA Board Member, Small Urban Citibus, Lubbock 2021-2023



Lylene Springer TTA Board Member, Rural Panhandle Community Services 2021-2023



J.R. Salazar TTA Board Member, Rural Central Texas Rural Transit District 2021-2023



Sarah Hidalgo-Cook TTA Board Member, Rural Southwest Transit (SWART) 2021-2023

TTA is governed by a Board of Directors elected from the general membership. The TTA board consists of 18 members which is comprised of 5 Metro, 5 Small Urban, 5 Rural agencies, along with 3 Associate Members. Being a board member allows members to expand their professional network and be an advocate for the transit industry within the state of Texas! TTA board members serve a two-year term and meet several times a year in person and virtually. TTA looks forward to the continued leadership and support of each of our board members.

Link to see a list of all TTA board members: <u>https://txtransit.org/members/board-and-officers/</u>

Texas Department of Transportation

Items of Interest from TxDOT's Public Transportation Division (TxDOT-PTN)

Texas Transportation Commission Awards Over \$89 Million to Public Transit Programs Statewide

On June 30, the Commission approved the largest amount of transit funding ever awarded in a single meeting.

•State funds: \$35 million

•Federal funds: \$54 million

See the Commission Minute Order awarding the funds, plus exhibits detailing the agencies and communities that received them <u>here</u>.

The funding includes over \$10 million from the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act to help transit agencies manage the impacts of COVID-19. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas transit agencies have worked diligently to maintain safe and reliable transit services throughout the state. TxDOT funding contributed to the nearly 20 million transit rides provided in Fiscal Year 2020, even during the pandemic.

"When most services shut down during the pandemic, these transit agencies continued serving thousands of Texans across the state," TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams said. "In a time when they were needed most, these agencies helped people get to jobs, groceries or the medical care they needed. This additional funding will continue to improve access for Texans, enabling TxDOT to fulfill our mission of 'Connecting You with Texas.'"

"During the pandemic we saw how important these transit agencies are for many Texans, especially in the more rural regions of the state," Texas Transportation Commissioner Alvin New said. "Transit can be a lifeline for many people, and I'm happy to see this amount of funding go to these communities."

These funds also include over \$7 million for selected public transportation projects that address the needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities. There were 39 projects across the state selected in a competitive process to receive funding, including:

- Valley Metro in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, to expand its transit service offerings with on-demand microtransit, increase its flexibility in scheduling and routes, and offer advance reservations to seniors and individuals with disabilities.
- Spartan Public Transportation in the Levelland area, to fill existing service gaps, maintain vehicles, pay mobility managers who help plan and manage trips, and purchase four accessible replacement vehicles.
- South East Texas Regional Planning Commission in the Beaumont area, to continue and expand its collaborative work with local transit agencies that provide seniors with curb-to-curb paratransit service to nutrition centers, Area Agency on Aging programs, and foster grandparent programs.

The awards provide funding to public transportation providers in rural, small urban, and large urban areas, and support a combination of service and capital program expenses. Public Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting to be Conducted Virtually on Tuesday, July 27

Meeting Begins 10am. Link to join (no password needed)

TxDOT Semiannual Transit Operators Business Meeting to be Conducted Virtually on Wednesday, July 28. Meeting link will be transmitted via TxDOT email.

Texas Transportation Commission Actions

April 2021 – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Funds

These awards reflect the allocation of FTA Section 5310 program funds for operating expenses. These funds were allocated to the state based on the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.

June 2021 – State and Federal Funds

These awards reflect the allocation of fiscal year 2022 state funds to large urban, small urban, and rural transit districts; the allocation of first-year awards to various entities for the biennial section 5310 call for projects; the allocation of formula section 5311 funds to rural transit districts; and the allocation of section 5311 and 5311(f) funds awarded through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP).

VIA Continues Fare-free Trips to COVID-19 Vaccination Sites

More than 1,900 passengers have taken VIA to City/ County vaccine clinics

VIA Metropolitan Transit continues to offer complimentary transportation for any person traveling to or from an appointment at a City/County-sponsored COVID-19 vaccination site including the Alamodome, Wonderland of the Americas mall and others. Beginning Tuesday, April 6, persons age 75 and older no longer need an appointment to receive the vaccine at the Alamodome, according to a recent update.

Since VIA began providing this service in January, more than 1,900 fare-free rides have been provided, including nearly 600 VIAtrans paratransit service trips.



VIA will continue to provide complimentary transportation to vaccine sites, including regular bus service, VIA Link, and VIAtrans paratransit service, until further notice. VIA bus and VIA Link passengers may present their appointment registration in print or on their mobile device, and/or their COVID-19 shot record to ride fare-free on the day of their appointment. Registered VIAtrans customers must schedule their trip in accordance with VIAtrans policies and procedures by phone or online. Passengers eligible for this service should inform their driver when boarding. VIAtrans customers should notify the booking agent when making their appointment.

VIA continues to provide safe, reliable essential trip options for persons who must travel during the ongoing COVID crisis. Health and safety precautions designed to slow the spread of germs will remain in place for all VIA riders and employees, including masks over the nose and mouth at all times, safe capacity limits on vehicles to allow for social distancing, enhanced cleaning and sanitizing of vehicles and facilities, frequent hand washing and other good hygiene practices. Customers are asked to only make essential trips during this time and avoid public spaces, including public transit, if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or have recently been exposed to someone who has tested positive for the virus.

If you plan to ride VIA to get your COVID-19 vaccine, here's what you need to know: Who can ride fare-free?

Any VIA bus, van or VIA Link passenger traveling in the VIA service area to a confirmed COVID-19 vaccine appointment at a designated City of San Antonio or Bexar County vaccination site. Persons age 74 and younger, please present your appointment confirmation in print or on your mobile device to the operator when boarding. You may also present the vaccine record provided when you receive your shot for the return trip. Registered VIAtrans customers must schedule their trip in accordance with VIAtrans policies and procedures by phone or online. Please mention you are traveling to a scheduled COVID-19 vaccine appointment when making the reservation. Persons age 75 and older do not need an appointment to access the Alamodome vaccine site. Please alert your driver when boarding or your VIAtrans registration agent when booking your trip.

When is the free fare available?

Persons age 74 or younger, on the day of your appointment. Persons age 75 and older, on the day you are going to receive your vaccine (no appointment necessary).

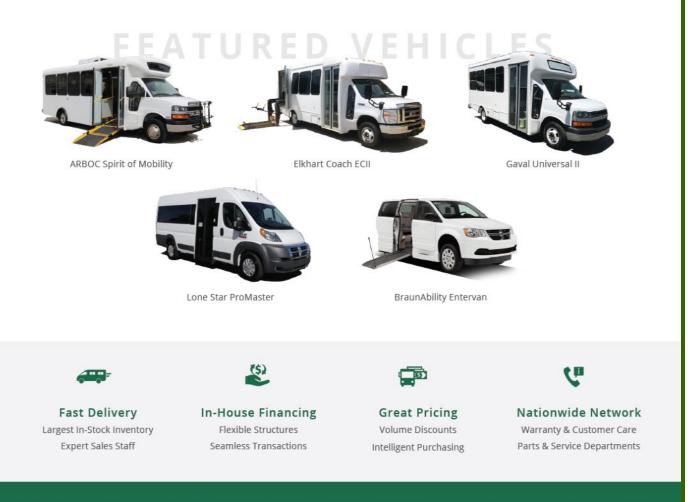


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The Largest, Most Experienced and Trusted Dealer

Creative Bus Sales offers dedicated sales, parts, and service departments to help you in all stages of bus ownership. Our customers benefit from our strong manufacturer partnerships, the largest in-stock inventory, and a nationwide team of experts. As a family-owned business with experience in the transportation industry since 1980, it's no coincidence that we've grown to become the nation's largest bus dealership.



M-Line Trolley Celebrates 32 Years of Service to Dallas

On Thursday, July 22, the McKinney Avenue Transit Authority (MATA) will celebrate 32 years of streetcar service to Dallas residents, businesses, and visitors.

In 1983, MATA was founded to return heritage streetcars to the urban fabric of Dallas. Two Dallas residents, Phil Cobb and Ed Landrum, began championing the idea after discovering tracks on McKinney Avenue that had been paved over and forgotten. On July 22, 1989, the McKinney Avenue Trolley celebrated the grand opening of its 2.8-mile route.



The M-Line has expanded several times over the years, eventually reaching a total of 4.6 miles in length. The first expansion opened in 2002, extending the route north to connect to DART's Cityplace/Uptown Station, followed by the construction of a turntable in 2011. The second expansion opened in 2015, creating the southern loop in downtown Dallas that connects riders to DART's St. Paul Station.

Currently served by seven vintage cars, the M-Line trolley provides more than 600,000 rides every year within Uptown and Downtown Dallas.



August Training Opportunity.....

Take a moment to review the August course/webinar opportunities hosted by TxDOT. Registration links are included. Training Webinar and Course Offerings - August 2021 Click on the links below for course descriptions and to register.

ADA: Reasonable Modification Express Workshop (webinar) Dates: August 3, 2021

Time: 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Central Audience: General Audience including Drivers; Dispatchers; Transit Managers

Transit Accident & Incident Reporting Workshop (four 90-minute webinars)
 *Registration links below.
 Date: August 9, 12, 13, and 16, 2021
 Time: 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Central
 Audience: Transit Managers; Operations Supervisors; Safety Officers
 Registration Links – NOTE: You must register for each session separately.
 Participationin all sessions is required.

August 9: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ tZcsdu6trTIsEt0OTipTFn9UKxXhkzBttojq August 12: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlkc--ppz8pE9YPbluLULDRSF3IxDPS-v August 13: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwkdiegTwiHtPvvanBi2phwDrSgruBLSGV August 16: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ tZYrfuqtqT8iGNHYBGtRH6yUJzE5Osuoo1cH

• <u>Marketing Your Transit Program Express Workshop</u> (webinar) Dates: August 19, 2021 Time: 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Central Audience: Transit Managers; Dispatchers; Marketing Staff

• <u>Bus Driver Training Workshop</u> (Two ½ day webinars) Date: August 24-25, 2021 Time: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Central Audience: Bus Drivers

<u>ADA: Making Your Materials Accessible</u> (webinar)
Dates: August 31, 2021
Time: 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Central
Audience: General Audience including Admin Staff; Dispatchers; Transit Managers

Courses are delivered via the Zoom platform and are structured to resemble in-person trainings, as such, class size is limited. Please sign up right away if you are interested. <u>Urban transit agencies' staff are encouraged to participate. However, due to program funding</u> <u>requirements the majority of the seats must be reserved for rural transit agency participants.</u> There is no charge for these courses.

Boost your fleet performance with the ENGIE CAD/AVL



Real-time fleet management

Dispatchers and supervisors are provided with real-time information about the traffic and their vehicles, so they can make decisions about services based on what's happening in real-time.

Operator terminal

The bus operator interface allows sign in and sign out, trip switching, headway spacing indicators for on-time performance assist, emergency alerting, dispatch messaging, manual counting, pre-trip inspection and maintenance indications and troubleshooting.



Headway management

The smart headway management system provides dispatch and operators with the spacing indicator, automatically adjust departure times at timing point to avoid bunching.



High-speed and secure communications

Using cellular coverage, your operators are in constant communications with dispatchers and supervisors, with the ability to send canned messages, driver issues, or use Voice over IP communications.

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Innovation in Solar Technology ENGIE solar-powered digital bus stop sign is a cost-saving and sustainable solution for real-time arrival information to your community.



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Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority Celebrates Transfer Station Groundbreaking with Community Focused Fiesta

On June 18, 2021, Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority (CCRTA) commemorated the groundbreaking for the reconstruction of its Port Ayers Transfer Station. The fiesta-themed celebration was at the upcoming location for the CCRTA's second-busiest transfer station, which is adjacent to the transfer station's current setting. In November 2019, CCRTA was awarded a \$7.2 million federal grant through the Buses and Bus Facilities – 5339(b) program to improve several capital projects including



CCRTA Board of Directors and Leadership are joined by political and community stakeholders to break ground on the Port Ayers Transfer Station reconstruction

the Port Ayers Transfer Station, CCRTA Operations Center parking lots, and two stops at a higher education facility's campus in development. Port Ayers Transfer Station is a central hub for transportation disadvantaged individuals, with the transfer station accessible to nearby government offices, health clinics, restaurants, and shopping centers. Port Ayers Transfer Station is also vital for college students, as the city's primary community college, Del Mar College, is just down the street (1.2 miles away) from the transfer station.



CRTA Chief Executive Officer Jorge G. Cruz-Aedo addresses local media following to Port Ayers Transfer Station groundbreaking ceremony

"CCRTA will continue to move forward, improve transit mobility in the area, and bring our infrastructure up to date. This groundbreaking represents your efforts and hard work," stated Jorge G. Cruz-Aedo, CCRTA Chief Executive Officer. The current Port Ayers Transfer Station began service in 1995, and has served the west and central parts of Corpus Christi for more than twenty-six years. The transfer station is more than a decade past its fifteen-year useful life.

"The Port Ayers Transfer Station has been a vital part of our transit system since its introduction, and with the start of reconstruction, we hope that it can continue to energize the community with high quality transportation services," said Edward Martinez, CCRTA Board of Directors Chairman. The transfer station's reconstruction will significantly advance public transportation in the area by improving safety, security, reliability, and accessibility for the Coastal Bend community. "The Port Ayers Transfer Station will help connect our current and future generations of residents to essential services for years to come. I look forward to seeing our emerging community thrive alongside the upcoming reconstruction," said Paulette M. Guajardo, Mayor of Corpus Christi. CCRTA's Board of Directors, Executive Leadership, and staff were joined by political stakeholders and community partners to celebrate the groundbreaking.

TECHNOLOGY TO BRING RIDERS BACK SAFELY

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SUPPORTING TODAY'S COVID-19 SAFETY NEEDS

PASSENGER COMMUNICATION Sharing information about safe rides using on-board Infotainment

COVID TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT Track Vehicle Inspection Cleaning & Verify Inspections

MONITORING

Video Surveillance systems up to 16 camera views in up to 4k quality

WIRELESS DOWNLOADING & LIVE STREAMING

Video downloading, live streaming & system health checks to ensure physical distancing

MobileView

*(IHS Technology Group Research, 2017)

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SEON

- PRETORIA -

Mirrors

District 7 and El Metro Transit introduce Green Ranch Circulator



The City of Laredo, El Metro Transit and Council Member for District 7, Vanessa Perez, are proud to introduce the new C2 Green Ranch Circulator. The C2 Green Ranch Circulator will bring public transportation services and connectivity to residents and workers in areas including Green Ranch, Deer Creek, La Bota, and the Pan-American and Inter-America warehouse districts along FM 1472.



A ribbon cutting ceremony took place at the Green Ranch Community Park, located in 1827 Mustang Island Dr., on Tues-

day, June 1st. Those who attended the ceremony included Council Member for District 7, Vanessa Pe-



rez, Assistant City Manager Kristina Hale, and El Metro's General Manager, Claudia San Miguel. In addition, El Lift Paratransit Service will also be available to those citizens with disabilities who are unable to use El Metro fixed route buses.

El Metro General Manager, Claudia San Miguel stated; "This new service is set to improve the quality of life of residents by enabling those without a vehicle to attend work, college, medical appointments, and meet other basic or leisure transportation needs."



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Implementing the New Normal Total Decontamination and Driver Protection Systems

Creative Bus Sales has expanded its services and expertise to meet the demand of our marketplace as it adapts to the "new normal" of operating safely during and beyond COVID-19.

Total Decontamination System

We have partnered with AeroClave to bring you the latest in decontamination technology. AeroClave fogging, CIO2based systems offer fast turn-around times and ease-of-use with the ability to ensure whole area decontamination utilizing a safe, EPA-approved disinfectant.



All AeroClave products are:

- Made in America
- Buy America Compliant
- Exclusively Distributed by Creative Bus Sales for Bus/Transit Industry

Vital Oxide Disinfectant is:

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- Tested by Boeing Corporation as safe on wide range of aircraft interior equipment and surfaces

Driver Protection System

To further enhance protection in the bus/transit industry, Creative Bus Sales is also manufacturing custom driver guards designed to allow quick installation and minimal vehicle modification. Our unique designs provide the best protection based on your vehicle type and chassis. These solutions are easily segmented to accommodate any existing vehicle components or customized for specific applications. Manufactured with quality material, the polycarbonate side barriers are AS-4 certified, meeting the FMVSS 205 and the textile barriers meet the FMVSS 302.



Rotating Hinge Design Vehicle Type: Single-Cab Door Cutaways with Front Passenger Entry Chassis: E-Series, F-Series



Sliding Hinge Design Vehicle Type: Dual-Cab Door Cutaways Chassis: E-Series, F-Series



Textile Design Vehicle Type: Minivans, Full-Size Vans, Dual-Cab Door Cutaways Chassis: Ford Transit, Dodge ProMaster, E-Series, F-Series

Explore Kits and Components

Capital Metro Participating in Back-to-School Supplies Campaign

The campaign is in partnership with H-E-B and For the Children

In partnership with H-E-B and its beneficiary, For the Children, Capital Metro is participating in a Back-to-School educational supplies drive that will also act as this year's annual Stuff the Bus.

Customers can donate to the campaign at registers at participating H-E-B locations from now until August 11. Stores in the following cities will be participating in the Back-to-School donation campaign: all Austin locations, Buda, Dripping Springs, Elgin, Hutto, Kyle, Georgetown, Leander, Pflugerville, Round Rock and San Marcos.

Capital Metro buses will be present in four select H-E-B parking lots from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 24 and Saturday, July 31. On these dates, H-E-B customers can "stuff the bus" with school supplies for children in the community.

On July 24, Capital Metro buses will be present at the following locations:

- H-E-B Lakeline, 14028 Northwest 183
- H-E-B The Oaks at Slaughter, 8801 South Congress Avenue

On July 31, Capital Metro buses will be present at the following locations:

- H-E-B Hancock: 1000 East 41st Street
- H-E-B Riverside: 2508 East Riverside

Capital Metro is proud to support our community's youth in the Central Texas area by providing school supplies leading into the 2021/2022 school year.

Here's an ADA Tip from Jess Segovia, your ADA Guru

Question: "How often should my agency review ADA policies and procedures? Are there any changes to the ADA that we should be concerned about?

Answer: While we have not had any changes to the ADA since 2015 (Reasonable Modification), regularly reviewing your policies and procedures is very important. In working with transit agencies throughout the United States, ADA Guru has seen instances of Operators not following important ADA policies for several reasons, including:

- Policies are confusing or unrealistic
- Conflicting information provided following initial training
- Policies lack detail; leaving decisions up to the Operator
- No refresher/follow-up training to reinforce policy knowledge
- Infrequent observations by supervisors; Operators believe that no one is "watching"
- Lack of sensitivity towards passengers with disabilities

While most agencies want to improve customer service and reduce complaints, very few of them look to the quality of their policies. Operator training is important, but to achieve the improvements that agencies want, let's start with fixing our outdated and confusing policies and procedures.

REGISTER FOR THE "CREATING EFFECTIVE POLICIES" WEBINAR ON SEPTEMBER 8! IN THIS SESSION, WE WILL REVIEW YOUR POLICIES AND MAKE IMMEDIATE IMPROVEMENTS! (see below)



Jess Segovia, your ADA Guru, is offering the following courses in August and September to assist transit professionals of all levels and responsibilities in understanding how to provide high quality, compliant accessible public transit services.

August 24 & 26, 2021:	ADA Compliance Requirements for Public Transportation Services
August 31 & Sept. 2, 2021:	ADA Paratransit Eligibility Determination Webinar
September 8, 2021 :	Creating Effective Operating Policies, Procedures & Documentation
September 15, 2021 :	Enhancing Your Community's Mobility Management Webinar
	Strategies
September 29, 2021 :	Bus Stop Accessibility Requirements Webinar

For more information, pricing and registration

Jess Segovia—ADA Guru

Jess has spent his career assisting agencies throughout the country in the delivery of safe, high quality and compliant accessible transportation services.

Harris County Transit Launches On-Demand Transportation Generation Park-Area Residents Gain New Service

Harris County Transit Plus begins its inaugural on-demand transport service today for residents living in the Generation Park-area of Precincts 1, 2 and 4.

This affordable service allows residents to schedule transportation from point A to point B, within two established zones, running along the Northeast quadrant of Beltway 8. The service provides a faster trip and enhanced passenger experience through areas of the county that are less densely developed.

The fare to ride is \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children, seniors and those with disabilities. Cash, transfers from other buses and the METRO Q[®] Fare Card are acceptable forms of payment.

The North Zone runs along Beltway 8 between Highway 59 and the northeast portion of Beltway 8. The South Zone runs between the northeast portion of Beltway 8 to Wallisville Road. The transit zone also includes the area within three-quarters of a mile in either direction of these sections of Beltway 8.

The METRO Eastex Park and Ride, located at 14,400 Old Humble Road, is the northernmost anchor point and the Jim Fonteno Annex, located at 14,350 Wallisville Road, is the southernmost anchor point. A central, transfer anchor point in Generation Park is 19,300 W. Lake Houston Parkway, where riders can transfer between zones. Additional anchor points can be found in each zone at the Walmart parking lots located at 9235 N. Sam Houston Parkway E and 5655 E. Sam Houston Parkway N (see map).

Two 18-passenger buses will travel within these two zones every Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

"Transit Plus is the result of the taking a closer look at the needs of residents and barriers to service that are unique to this section of Harris County. We have prescribed a system that works best for this area," said Harris County Community Services Department Executive Director Dr. Adrienne M. Holloway. "We are innovating to meet the needs of residents who require flexible transit options and of businesses that require a mobile workforce."

"Our survey revealed a transportation gap in the county's Northeast corridor," said Paul Weisser, assistant director of Transit Services for the Harris County Community Services Department. "Our goal is for Transit Plus to offer a great customer service experience for residents while allowing them to get where they need to be in a timely manner and at an affordable price."

Residents make a reservation by phoning the transit call center at 832-927-4953 to be picked up and dropped off at any flex stop within the designated zone(s). Reservations can be made up to three days in advance or as late as one hour before pick up. Residents without a reservation can catch a ride at one of the anchor point locations. Transit Plus operates within the zoned areas and does not follow a traditional, fixed bus route, thereby allowing businesses and other service providers in the area to benefit from increased foot traffic. Reservations also can be made using a QR code (attached).

Transit Plus also allows for riders to transfer to existing Harris County routes servicing Sheldon, Channelview, Cloverleaf, Crosby, The Highlands, Baytown and La Porte, as well as the METRO Eastex Park and Ride where METRO fares apply.

Harris County Transit conducted a survey of approximately 97,000 residents in five zip codes to determine the specifications for Transit Plus. Funding for this project, slated to run through February 2022, is approximately \$285,000 and is provided by the Harris County Commissioners Court and the Federal Transit Administration.



Texas Transit Association

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https://txtransit.org/

TTA's Mission is to support the needs of Texas' public transportation systems through statewide advocacy and education.

TTA needs your input as we work to update the <u>membership directory</u>

TTA is in the process of updating this year's <u>membership directory</u> and needs your input. Please select the link below and take just a few moments to update your membership profile. Your assistance will ensure that we have updated information for our members.

You will have the opportunity to provide multiple contacts along with your agency logo. In addition, you can modify your profile at any time when your agency experiences changes in staff. <u>Link</u>

> Allen E. Hunter Executive Director 254-405-4212 cell

Newsletter Sponsorship Opportunities

Sponsoring the TTA newsletter by purchasing ad space, can be a powerful way to reach decision makers at member agencies across the state. It will also help to increase exposure in a receptive environment (your customers' inbox) and can subtly promote your brand whilst gaining goodwill throughout the entire association. TTA newsletters are a particularly useful tool for communicating with customers, building engagement, and directing customers to key content.

Please be aware, there is a limited number of space available so be sure to lock yours in today. There are sponsorship levels available for any budget. You are able to sponsor a single issue or the entire year.

For information on pricing or to start your ad please contact:

Allen E. Hunter Executive Director Texas Transit Association 512-900-0550 254-405-4212 cell allen@txtransit.org

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