

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

## **It's official: Cap Metro names Dottie Watkins new president and CEO**

A bus driver who rose through the ranks of Capital Metro over three decades has now taken the top job at the transit agency. The Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board of Directors voted unanimously Monday to hire Dorothy "Dottie" Watkins as president and CEO.

Watkins had served as interim president and CEO of Capital Metro since May.

Dottie Watkins, a lifelong Austinite, first joined CapMetro in 1994, working as a part-time shuttle bus operator while attending the University of Texas at Austin. Over the course of nearly three decades, she has held a variety of leadership roles, including Deputy CEO, Chief Customer Officer/Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of Bus Operations and Maintenance. During the early days of the coronavirus pandemic, Watkins played a key role in ensuring the region's transit system continued to operate safely.



"As a board, it was crucial that we selected the right leader for this position and for our community," said CapMetro Board Chair and Travis County Commissioner Jeff Travillion. "We interviewed multiple qualified candidates for this position, and we wanted to make sure the person we selected had a stellar professional reputation, a proven track record of getting things done and most importantly, was someone the community could trust and their staff could respect and also have confidence in. Dottie meets all those qualifications and I'm confident we made the right decision selecting her as the next President and CEO." Watkins assumes her new role immediately.

"I am honored, humbled and ready to serve as CapMetro's President and CEO," Watkins said. "I want to thank the board for selecting me to serve in this capacity and for their vote of confidence. I've gotten to watch firsthand as CapMetro and our teams grow into what I consider to be among the best in transit agencies in the nation. Delivering safe, reliable and customer-oriented service for our customers is a priority to me."

It's shaping up to a busy year for CapMetro. Work is progressing on a Red Line station at Q2 Stadium, home of Austin FC.

"Central Texas has a lot to look forward to when it comes to public transportation, and I can't wait to continue collaborating with our stakeholders, the CapMetro staff and our community members on the future of CapMetro," Watkins said. "We work hard, and will continue to do so, to be an agency that delivers service that everyone is proud of and takes care of everyone in our community."

# TTA Award deadline extended!

TTA has extended the award nomination deadline to February 16, 2023. Nominations may be made by any individual employed by a transit agency, an official of a transit agency, a regular or an associate member of Texas Transit Association, any TxDOT employee who works with the public transportation industry, any elected official or employee of local, city, or county governments.

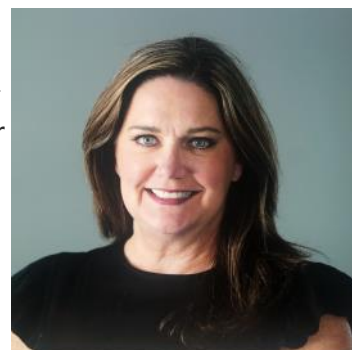
An organization may also self nominate. Categories include Outstanding Metropolitan, Small Urban and Rural Transit Systems along with many other classifications recognizing the outstanding individuals and accomplishments in our industry. See the link below for a full listing of categories. Again, the last day for nominations will be February 16, 2023.

**[Submit your nomination today!](#)**

**[Award criteria](#)**

## TTA would like to welcome our newest staff member, Janet Nors

The Texas Transit Association would like to welcome our newest staff member, Janet Nors! Janet will be joining TTA as Administrative Assistant/ Program Manager. She will provide a vital role in the implementation of our new State wide training program and will help to expand our membership base, increase sponsorships, maintain our monthly newsletter, and will provide tremendous support with our annual conference.



Janet is a graduate of Baylor University where she received her undergraduate degree in Business Management. She brings many years of experience in working with Boards and not for profit agencies. Janet recently served as the Chief Advancement Officer for the Baylor Line Foundation and served for 8 years as Director of Development for Meals on Wheels Waco as well as being a volunteer.

Janet's commitment is to foster and help fund the ongoing mission of the Texas Transit Association by providing the highest level of customer support and assistance possible to all TTA members while seeking opportunities to create growth and sustainability for TTA.

We're excited to see her apply her experience and education to help grow our business and reach our revenue goals for 2023!

Janet is looking forward to meeting you at the upcoming TTA Annual Conference in Corpus Christi. She can be reached at [Janet@TxTransit.org](mailto:Janet@TxTransit.org) or 512-900-0550.

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# Important upcoming TTA Events

**February 1, 2023** — Evening Reception at Jack and Ginger's Irish Pub in the Domain, Austin, TX.



***Canceled due to inclement Weather***

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**March 7, 2023** — [TTA Legislative Day at the Capitol](#)

The Texas Transit Association will host TTA's Day at the Capitol on March 7th, 2023. For details or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Allen Hunter at [allen@txtransit.org](mailto:allen@txtransit.org).

Breakfast at the Stephen F. Austin Royal Sonesta Hotel followed by a shuttle to the Capitol  
Meetings at the Capitol  
Lunch on your own followed by an ice cream social  
Evening Reception at the Stephen F. Austin Royal Sonesta Hotel

[Please RSVP so that we can plan for your arrival.](#)

**April 11-15, 2023** — [2023 TTA State Conference, Expo and Roadeo](#)

This year's State Conference, Expo, and Roadeo will be held in the beautiful city of Corpus Christi, Texas, full of one-of-a-kind attractions.

Our 2023 Annual State Conference and Expo will feature industry-leading content, with timely general sessions, in-depth breakout sessions, and training. It will also have numerous networking opportunities with your friends and colleagues from the transit industry.

[Register Today! \(early bird registration has been extended until February 28, 2023\)](#)



***Note: Exhibitor and Sponsorship opportunities are beginning to sell out so act quickly. Don't miss this excellent networking opportunity with transit members from across the state. You can find information on sponsorships or booths at: [TTA State Conference, Expo and Roadeo info](#)***

***or by contacting Allen Hunter at [Allen@txTransit.org](mailto:Allen@txTransit.org).***

# 2023 TTA State Bus Roadeo Competition



Registration is now open for the 2023 TTA State Bus Roadeo Competition. This will be the first State Bus Roadeo since 2019 and is an excellent way to recognize some of your best operators and maintenance staff. All roadeo participants are able to attend the Expo on Thursday and will have training available on Friday morning before the Roadeo events take place.

## Draft Roadeo Schedule

### Friday April 14, 2023

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 8:00 am - 5:00 pm  | Set up course                                     |
| 9:00 am—12:00 pm   | Training for operators and maintenance (Optional) |
| 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm | Registration (Omni Hotel)                         |
| 2:00 pm - 3:45 pm  | Display buses/van                                 |
| 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm  | Orientation for Judges                            |
| 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm  | Paratransit wheelchair securement training        |
| 4:00 pm - 4:30 pm  | Competitor welcome meeting                        |
| 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm  | Operator orientation                              |
| 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm  | Technician orientation                            |
| 5:30 pm - 6:00 pm  | Paratransit Operator written test                 |
| 5:30 pm - 6:00 pm  | Technician written exam                           |
| 6:00 pm - 6:30 pm  | Resume Operator vehicle inspection                |

### Saturday April 15, 2023

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 6:00 am - Ongoing  | Shuttle participants from OMNI            |
| 6:30 am - 8:00 am  | Breakfast                                 |
| 6:30 am - 7:00 am  | Operators, Judges, & Technicians check in |
| 7:00 am - 7:30 am  | Judges walk the course                    |
| 7:30 am - 8:00 am  | Operators walk the course                 |
| 8:15 am - 8:30 am  | Opening ceremony                          |
| 8:30 am - 12:00 pm | Roadeo Competition                        |
| 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm | Lunch                                     |
| 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  | Awards Banquet (Omni Hotel)               |

*\*Please note these times are subject to change slightly.*

## Calling all Bus Roadeo Experts!



TTA and CCRTA is seeking assistance with laying out and setting up this year's bus Roadeo course. We will be meeting at Whataburger Field parking lot in Corpus Christi at 8:00 AM on March 23 and 24, 2023. Over these two days the goal is to complete the course layout and completely mark the vans, 35 ft and 40 ft courses. Your assistance and expertise is very much appreciated. Please email Allen Hunter at [Allen@TxTransit.org](mailto:Allen@TxTransit.org) if you plan on assisting.





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# METRO Unveils Lone Star College Connector

METRO leadership, Lone Star College and community partners celebrated the launch of a new service to the Lone Star College-Houston North Fallbrook campus on Tuesday, Jan. 24.

The [Lone Star Connector](#) runs six and a half miles near the campus, improving students' and faculty's commute and providing important connections to three local bus routes—85 Antoine / Washington, 86 FM 1960 / Imperial Valley and 96 Veterans Memorial.

"Convenient, high-quality transit is essential for communities because it gives people a safe, sustainable, and affordable way to get to schools, job opportunities, health care, grocery stores, parks, recreational facilities, and other essential destinations," said METRO's Board Chair Sanjay Ramabhadran.

The connector runs Monday through Saturday from 7:30 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. with destinations to the LSC campus, Walmart and Fallbrook Church.

"The two main issues we have with students, one is money and the other is just transportation issues," said Lone Star College Chancellor Dr. Stephen C. Head, "If we can get them here, we can at least give them the opportunity to be successful."

Riders can also connect to METRO's broader network including Park & Rides and transit centers, as well as destinations including Willowbrook Mall, the Houston Methodist Willowbrook Hospital complex, and downtown Houston.

The pilot project launched as part of the January service change on Sunday, Jan. 22. The Authority currently offers service to four LSC campuses. Students interested in riding METRO can obtain a discounted fare card.

Watch the full event [livestream](#).



# VIA Announces Day Passes Now Good for 24 Hours

## Day Pass only \$2.75, valid for unlimited rides on regular, Express, Primo, and VIA Link service

Effective immediately, VIA Metropolitan Transit Day is offering an added benefit for riders by making Day Pass e-fare tickets valid for a 24-hour period from the time activated.

Passes can be purchased any time and only are activated upon the first use. For example, a Day Pass swiped on a bus at 10 a.m. will be valid until 10 a.m. the following day.

Riders simply insert the Day Pass e-fare ticket into the fare box on the first ride to activate and just swipe on subsequent trips.



Day Passes can be purchased at all [VIA Customer Service Centers](#), and also are available on every bus. If you purchase your e-fare Day Pass on the bus, you must let your driver know you want to buy a Day Pass before inserting any money into the fare box. Your Day Pass will be dispensed, activated and stamped with an expiration date. Simply swipe and go on subsequent trips during that day.

The Day Pass costs only \$2.75 and is valid for unlimited rides on all regular, Express, Primo, and VIA Link service during the 24-hour period of activation. The half-fare Day Pass costs \$1.35 and is available to riders who qualify for reduced fares. Passes purchased in advance are activated by inserting into the fare box on the first ride.

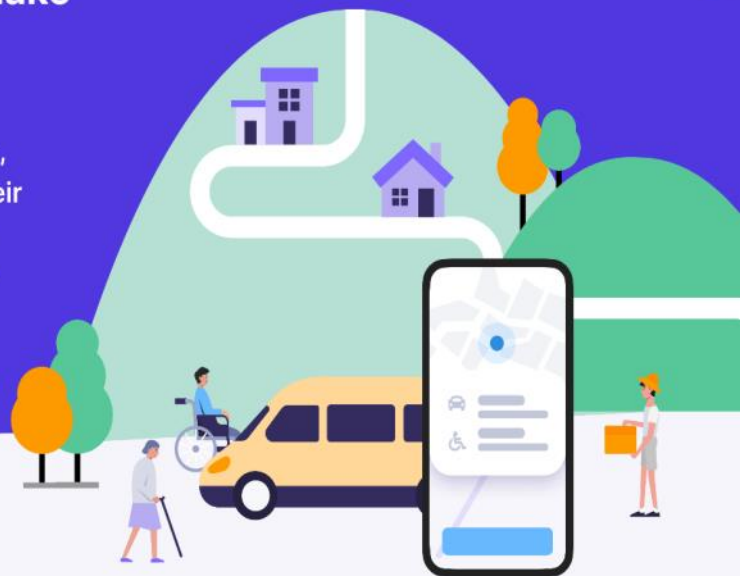
VIA offers cashless payment options through its free [VIA goMobile+ app](#), access to BCycle and other travel tools on the [Transit app](#), and free high-speed Wi-Fi with instant access to the Bexar BiblioTech e-library. For more information about the Day Pass, visit [viainfo.net/rates/#passes3](http://viainfo.net/rates/#passes3).





## Spare is a leading provider of On-Demand Transit Software with a mission to make every ride possible since 2015.

Spare's tech-enabled platform empowers over 200 services and empowers transit and mobility innovators, both in the public and private sectors, to streamline their network's day-to-day on-demand mobility operations. Spare's philosophy, which rests on its open API, is that anyone can and should be able to launch an efficient, well-run transportation network with ease.



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**Citibus** revolutionizes on-demand transit options in Lubbock through data-



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Ready to learn more? Send an email at [hello@sparelabs.com](mailto:hello@sparelabs.com) to know how Spare uses it's innovative Open Fleets module to help transit agencies deliver same-day paratransit cost-effectively.

## Reminder: DART Discount GoPass Tap Card Pilot Program Extended

The Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Board of Directors has extended the Discount GoPass Tap Card pilot program through December 31, 2024. The program provides riders using any one of nine support assistance programs with a 50% discount on the regular price of a DART local pass.

DART launched the pilot-program to ensure riders who qualify have access to jobs, health care and educational opportunities, reducing social and economic inequalities by making mobility financially feasible to more people.

All new and current DART riders who participate in any of the following programs are eligible for DART services at half the fare:

- CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program),
- TANF (Texas Temporary Assistance for Needy Families),
- CEAP (Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program),
- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program),
- Housing Choice Vouchers,
- DHA Housing Solutions for North Texas program,
- Medicaid,
- Medicare,
- Texas WIC (Texas Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children).

Participants who are renewing their discount must visit the DARTmart store with documentation that verifies participation in a qualifying program. Registration for new users is available at [DART.org/TapForHalf](https://www.dart.org/TapForHalf), or at the DARTmart store at DART Headquarters (1401 Pacific Avenue, Dallas, TX 75202). Discount Tap Cards can be used on any DART bus, GoLink or light rail, including the Trinity Railway Express (TRE) between EBJ Union Station and CentrePort/DFW Airport Station.

Qualified, registered riders receive half off regular adult local day passes with the Discount GoPass Tap Card. More information is available at [DART.org/TapForHalf](https://www.dart.org/TapForHalf) or by calling DART Customer Service at 214-979-1111, Option 1.



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

### Upcoming dates of interest:

TTA's Evening Reception at the Domain,  
Feb. 1, 2023 (**Canceled Due to Weather**)

Webinar: Marketing Your Transit Program  
Feb. 14, 2023, (1:30 pm – 3:00 pm)

Virtual Course: Grant Writing (2 hrs. each day)  
Feb. 28 and March 1, (1:30 pm – 3:30 pm)

TTA's Day at the Capitol,  
March 7, 2023 (**RSVP today**)

Roadeo Course Set up, Corpus Christi  
March 23-24 2023

[TTA State Conference, Expo and Roadeo](#)  
April 11-15, 2023

Allen E. Hunter  
Executive Director

## 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 limited 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:

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