

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

## Early-Bird Registration is now open for TTA's 2025 State Conference, Expo, and Roadeo



We're excited to announce that Early-Bird Registration is now open for TTA's highly anticipated [2025 State Conference, Expo, and Roadeo](#), held March 7-12, 2025, in McAllen, Texas. Mark your calendars because you don't want to miss timely general sessions, in-depth breakout sessions, training, and networking opportunities with your friends and colleagues from the transit industry.

Also, TTA membership has its benefits! In appreciation of your continued support of TTA, all current TTA members will receive a reduced membership rate for booths and registration fees. However, an exclusive access code must be used to ensure that you receive the discounted rate. Please don't hesitate to contact Laura Herrera to get your membership code today.

### [Metro McAllen Invitation Video](#)

**Note:** Your TTA dues must be current to receive the discounted membership rate.

### Highlights include:

- Texas State Roadeo Competition
- New Paratransit Maintenance Competition
- Pre-Conference Workshops, General Sessions & Breakout sessions
- TTA's Annual Awards Presentation
- Full Expo featuring Vendors, Vehicles, & Mini Golf Classic
- Multiple Networking Opportunities, including a Welcome Reception and Big Night Out!

Check [TTA Website](#) regularly & Hotel Links.

In addition, TTA will host it's first ever Mini-Golf Classic during the Expo! This exciting new addition to our expo and trade fair is sure to be a hit with attendees and exhibitors. The [Mini-Golf Classic](#) will feature nine uniquely designed golf holes sponsored by our incredible vendors. Participants will navigate the course through the expo hall, visiting each hole/vendor to complete their scorecards and earn a chance to win fantastic prizes.

As a vendor, you won't want to miss out on the exclusive opportunity to sponsor one of these exclusive holes. With only nine sponsorships available, it's a unique chance to maximize your exposure and create meaningful connections with attendees. Don't miss out on this featured sponsorship or one of the many other [sponsorship opportunities](#). If you would like to discuss becoming a sponsor at this year's Conference, Expo, and Roadeo, please contact [Allen Hunter](#) or [Laura Herrera](#).

## Last call for TTA Awards Nominations!

The last chance to recognize outstanding individuals or agencies that have demonstrated excellence in public transportation across the state is Friday, December 20th at 5:00 PM.

**Deadline to submit nominations is Friday, December 20, 2024.**

[Submit Your Nomination Today](#)



# INVESTING IN AMERICA: Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$268 Million to Support a Rapid Transit Corridor in San Antonio, Texas

On December 19th, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced a \$267.8 million construction grant award in the city of San Antonio, Texas, which will support the construction of the new VIA Advanced Rapid Transit (ART) North/South Corridor, also known as the Green Line. Funded by President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the grant will support a 10-mile bus rapid transit (BRT) line that will provide fast and frequent service linking people in neighborhoods along the line to regional activity centers and popular tourist sites like Riverwalk and the Alamo.

"The Green Line is more than just a transportation project; it's a commitment to making travel throughout the San Antonio region more convenient and affordable and ensuring that more people have access to jobs and schools, grocery stores and doctors' offices." said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "With the funding we're announcing today, the Biden-Harris Administration is making a vital investment in San Antonio's transit future that will strengthen the community for generations to come."

[Full Article:](#)

## Adios El Jefe

On Monday, December 16th, Board members of the Texas Transit Association joined friends, family, and colleagues at Café Hernan to celebrate the remarkable career of Jeffery Arndt, President and CEO of VIA. The evening was filled with heartfelt tributes, reflecting on Jeff's incredible thirteen years of leadership at VIA and his significant contributions to San Antonio, the State of Texas, and the transit industry as a whole.

Jeff's dedication to advancing public transportation has left an indelible mark on the industry, inspiring countless professionals along the way. As he embarks on this next chapter of his life, TTA extends its deepest gratitude for his service and leadership to TTA and wishes him all the best in his future endeavors. Thank you, Jeff, and best of luck on this next chapter of your life!



Above: Jeff Johnson, Model-1, Mario Delgado, Metro McAllen, CEO Jeffrey Arndt, VIA Metropolitan Transit, Rob Alfieri and Executive Director Allen Hunter, Texas Transit Association-TTA

## Spreading Holiday Cheer Across Texas

Texas transit agencies are stepping up to spread joy throughout their communities. From festive Christmas Parades to organizing Toys for Tots Drives, these agencies bring people together and light up the season with acts of kindness and community spirit. A big Thank You to everyone for going above and beyond to make the holidays brighter while spreading the holiday spirit of coming together!



CapMetro



REAL, Inc.



Island Metro



El Metro



DART



Brownsville Metro



Waco Transit System



CCRTA



## El Metro Transit System

### El Metro Transit System: A Legacy of Innovation and Service

The history of public transportation in Laredo, Texas, dates back to 1889 when the city built the first street railway system in the United States west of the Mississippi River. This pioneering achievement laid the foundation for what would evolve into the award-winning El Metro Transit System we know today.



### A Snapshot of Today's El Metro

Today, El Metro serves as a vital part of Laredo's infrastructure, providing fixed-route and paratransit services to the community. The system has grown significantly over the years, with a workforce of 187 employees dedicated to ensuring the smooth operation of the transit network.

### A Diverse and Expanding Fleet

El Metro operates a fleet that includes over 47 fixed-route buses, one trolley, and 15 demand-response "El Lift" vans. These vehicles work together to offer a comprehensive range of services that meet the needs of various passengers. Whether it's commuting for work, accessing medical services, or simply running errands, El Metro provides Laredoans with affordable, reliable, and convenient transportation options.



The fixed-route buses serve regular city routes, while the "El Lift" vans offer more flexible, on-demand transportation for individuals with disabilities or those needing special assistance. The inclusion of the trolley adds a touch of charm and nostalgia to the city's transit options, offering an enjoyable ride for locals and tourists alike.

### A Commitment to Service and Affordability

El Metro's commitment to providing economical fares and reliable service ensures that public transit is an accessible option for everyone in the Laredo community. The system's leadership, under the direction of Robert J. Garza, Transit Director, continues to focus on improving services, expanding routes, and enhancing the overall rider experience.

### Looking Ahead

As Laredo continues to grow and evolve, El Metro remains an essential part of the city's transportation landscape. The system's dedication to safety, efficiency, and innovation will undoubtedly contribute to the ongoing success of public transit in Laredo, providing generations of residents with a dependable, affordable, and sustainable way to navigate the city.

In conclusion, El Metro is more than just a transit system—it is a testament to Laredo's commitment to progress and its vision for the future. Whether it's the legacy of the original street railway system or the modern, award-winning transit services of today, El Metro continues to serve as the backbone of transportation in Laredo, making it an integral part of the city's history and growth.



# Dart's Holiday Theme

The holiday season is in full swing in North Texas, and there is still time to see DART's holiday trains and buses, bringing cheer and joy to their community. This year, DART's holiday theme is, "Explore a DARTable Wonderland," with visuals that include a customized snow globe representing each of DART's 13 member cities.



With so many holiday events over the next few weeks, DART wants to be the ride all season long. To see a listing of holiday events across the DART service area and the individual snow globes designed for each city, visit [www.dart.org/holidays](http://www.dart.org/holidays)

"The DART Holiday trains and buses have become a holiday favorite in our region," said Jeamy Molina EVP and Chief Communications Officer for DART. "We are excited to have these vehicles transporting our passengers during this festive season and especially look forward to seeing these vehicles at holiday events across our member cities."



## CAD/AVL SYSTEM

# WORK SMARTER WITH NAVINEO: THE POWER OF CAD/AVL REINVENTED

EQUANS redefines public transit operations and support improvement of service reliability with real-time CAD/AVL functionality.

EQUANS is proud to support CCRTA, in Corpus Christi, TX, to upgrade their Fixed route, CAD/AVL, APC and Intelligent Transportation System.



### CONTACT US

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[www.navineo.co](http://www.navineo.co)

## Vehicle Safety Inspection Changes Take Effect January 2025

AUSTIN – The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) reminds Texans that changes to the state’s **Vehicle Safety Inspection Program** – which eliminate most vehicle safety inspections – begin on **Jan. 1, 2025**. These changes are due to **House Bill 3297**. The bill was passed by the 88th Legislature and signed into law by Governor Greg Abbott in 2023, abolishing the Vehicle Safety Inspection Program for non-commercial vehicles.

Starting New Year’s Day, non-commercial vehicles will no longer need a vehicle safety inspection prior to registration. **All non-commercial vehicles in the state will still be subject to a \$7.50 inspection program replacement fee.** The inspection program replacement fee will be paid at the time you register your vehicle with the **Texas Department of Motor Vehicles**.

New vehicles (those of the current or preceding model year on the date of purchase) purchased in Texas that have not been previously registered in Texas or another state are required to pay an initial inspection program replacement fee of \$16.75 to cover two years.

Please note the inspection program replacement fee **is not an increase in the cost of your vehicle registration**. As its name suggests, this fee simply replaces the revenue source for state programs and operations—like the construction and expansion of state highways—once supported by vehicle safety inspections.



### Vehicles Registered in Emissions Counties

While comprehensive vehicle safety inspections will be eliminated for all non-commercial vehicles, Texans whose vehicles are registered in emissions counties will still be required to have emissions tests. The price of vehicle emissions tests varies by vehicle and county.

Emissions tests are required in major metropolitan areas, including Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris and Montgomery counties; Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall and Tarrant counties; Travis and Williamson counties; and El Paso County. **Bexar County will be added to the list of counties requiring emissions tests in 2026.**

### Commercial Vehicles

**All commercial vehicles in all counties will still be required to obtain a passing vehicle safety inspection.** Because they will still need to pay for a safety inspection, commercial vehicles will be exempt from the inspection program replacement fee.

Remember, all vehicles will still need to be registered; the registration process will continue to be managed by the **Texas Department of Motor Vehicles**.

Even though vehicle safety inspections are being eliminated for most vehicles, the department reminds Texans to regularly service their vehicles to keep themselves and other motorists safe on the road. Regular maintenance ensures the proper operation of your vehicle’s headlights, taillights, horn, mirrors, windshield wipers, tires and other critical functions. Driving a vehicle without many of these properly working safety features is against the law and puts everyone at risk.

## VIA Offers Park & Ride to the Valero Alamo Bowl



College football fans can ride [VIA Park & Ride Event service](#) and enjoy a convenient, affordable travel option to the Valero Alamo Bowl when the BYU Cougars take on the Colorado Buffaloes, **Saturday, Dec. 28, 2024** at the Alamodome.

Kickoff is at 6:30 p.m., and Park & Ride service to the Alamodome will be provided beginning at 3:30 p.m., three hours prior to game time, and return service will

run for one hour after the conclusion of the game. The park-and-ride route will run from [Stone Oak Park & Ride](#) and [Crossroads Park & Ride](#) to the Robert Thompson Transit Center at the Alamodome.

The fare for VIA's service is only \$1.30 each way with discounted fares for children, seniors, students, and active-duty U.S. military. Cash and credit cards are accepted at the Park & Ride location, and VIA passes are accepted for event service. Customers also can conveniently pre-purchase tickets on their smartphones with VIA's [goMobile+ app](#), available to download free on Apple and Android devices.

## TTA's Legislative Day

Join us for [TTA's Legislative Day](#) in Austin, a pivotal opportunity to connect with Texas legislators. This full-day event engages participants with state leaders, advocates for transit-related initiatives, and fosters meaningful connections for Texas' transit community. The day will begin at The Stephen F. Austin Royal Sonesta Hotel with breakfast, materials pick-up, and a brief orientation on the day's objectives from TTA leaders Eron Linn and Wade Long. Attendees will head to the Texas Capitol to spend the day meeting with legislators.

Participants are encouraged to come prepared with pre-scheduled appointments to maximize their time and use the "TTA 2025 Legislative Agenda" handout as a discussion guide. Make sure to invite legislators and staff you meet with to attend the Ice Cream Social and Evening Reception. Lunch will be on your own. Please don't forget to register if you will be attending.

### Afternoon & Evening Highlights:

Ice Cream Social (1:30-3:30 p.m.): Located at the Extension Legislative Conference Center (LCC, E2.002), this casual event offers a great opportunity to invite legislators and staff to gather and connect.

Evening Reception (5:30-7:30 p.m.): Conclude the day at the Royal Sonesta's Bar and Terrace for Austin's best reception spot, with a balcony view of Congress Avenue and the Texas Capitol. A chance to build relationships with legislators in a relaxed setting!

Attire: Business casual

[Attendee Registration Link](#)



## TTA Statewide Training Initiative

These courses are offered at **no cost**, but space is limited, so make sure that you and your staff don't miss out. This training opportunity is made possible with a grant through TxDOT.

**January**

**Mobility Management & Community Engagement**  
January 9, 2025  
Virtual  
10:00 a.m.—11:30 a.m.  
[Register Here](#)

**January**

**Knowing What Works: Metric & Methods to Evaluate Programs**  
January 16, 2025  
Virtual  
10:00 a.m.—11:30 a.m.  
[Register Here](#)

**February**

**CARES Transit Management Certification**  
February 3-4, 2025  
In-Person  
San Antonio, TX  
8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.  
[Register Here](#)

**February**

**Principles of Effective Leadership**  
February 5-6, 2025  
In-Person  
San Antonio, TX  
8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.  
[Register Here](#)

**February**

**Civil Rights, Title VI, and the ADA**  
February 13, 2025  
Virtual  
10:00 a.m.—11:30 a.m.  
[Register Here](#)

### TTA's Upcoming Courses:

- Financial Management Level 2 Workshop
- Rural and Small Urban Transit Service Design for the Future: The Art and Science
- Giving Effective Presentations
- Workplace Impairment Training
- Managing Operational and Capital Costs at Rural and Small Urban Transit Systems
- Maintenance Training

[Click here for Training Calendar](#)



## Newsletter Sponsorship

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.



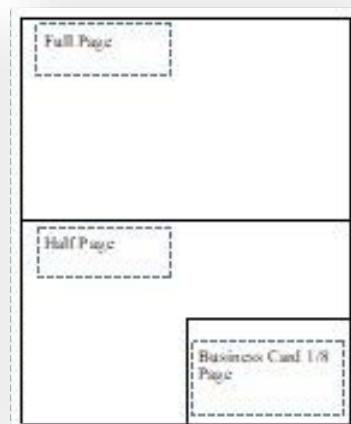
TTA Member Price	
Full Page Ad single issue	\$500
Full Page One Year	\$2,000
Half Page Ad single issue	\$250
Half Page One Year	\$1,000
Business card Ad single issue	\$100
Business card One Year	\$500

Non-Member Price	
Full Page Ad single issue	\$750
Full Page One Year	\$3,000
Half Page Ad single issue	\$400
Half Page One Year	\$2,000
Business card Ad single issue	\$200
Business card One Year	\$1,000

There are sponsorship levels available for any budget. You are able to sponsor a single issue or the entire year. For more information or to start your ad please contact:

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## Time for Membership Renewal

As we move forward with our commitment to advancing public transportation in Texas, we invite all members to renew their membership for another impactful year. Together, we are shaping the future of transit and ensuring communities across Texas benefit from safe, efficient, and sustainable transportation options. Renewing your TTA membership means staying connected, informed, and engaged in the collective work we are all doing to support Texas transit.

Not a Member?  
Join Today!  
Contact us (512) 900-0550  
[laura@txtransit.org](mailto:laura@txtransit.org) or [allen@txtransit.org](mailto:allen@txtransit.org)

### Why Renew Your Membership?

Here’s a glance at what your membership offers:

- **Networking Opportunities**  
Connect with other transit professionals, leaders, and industry advocates across Texas. Share ideas, discuss solutions, and collaborate on projects that matter to you and your community.
- **Discounts on Event Registration**  
Enjoy member-only rates for TTA’s major events, including our annual State Conference, Expo, and Rodeo. This year’s event, taking place in [McAllen from March 7-12, 2025](#), will be packed with insights, innovations, and networking opportunities you won’t want to miss!
- **Advocacy and Legislative Updates**  
TTA represents your voice in state discussions, advocating for policies that support public transportation in Texas. Stay informed and involved in these crucial efforts to make positive changes for our communities.

**[Renew your membership for the term September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025](#)**

## Upcoming Dates of Interest:

D E C	December 25, 2024 Christmas Day
J A N	January 1, 2025 New Year’s Day
J A N	January 9, 2025 <a href="#">Mobility Management &amp; Community</a>
J A N	January 16, 2025 <a href="#">Knowing What Works</a>
J A N	January 27-29, 2025 Texas Transportation Forum

F E B	February 18-21, 2025 <a href="#">SWTA Conference &amp; Expo</a>
F E B	February 25, 2025 <a href="#">Legislative Day at the Capitol</a>
M A R	March 7-12, 2025 <a href="#">TTA State Conference, Expo, &amp; Rodeo</a>
M A R	March 12, 2025 TxDOT Semi-Annual Operators Meeting