

CAPITAL METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY 2009 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



Allow Capital Metro to hire fare enforcement officers and to enforce fares through contracted law enforcement

MetroRail Red Line will be a barrier-free system. DART, the Fort Worth "T", and San Antonio VIA have these abilities.



Allow Capital Metro's contracted peace officers to operate with full law enforcement authority throughout Capital Metro's service area if the offense occurs on or involves the Capital Metro system

Capital Metro hires contracted peace officers for Capital Metro security. Capital Metro's service area crosses multiple jurisdictions. State law may need clarification on the authority of contracted peace officers when performing Capital Metro duties outside their jurisdiction.

Approve an Interlocal Agreement between the State of Texas and Capital Metro for annual transit passes for State employees in the Capitol Complex area

Growing interest from State employees. Multitude of Benefits. (Sponsored last session by Wentworth and Dukes.)

Allow Capital Metro and other mass transit providers (VIA and Denton County Transportation Authority) to operate on highway shoulders during times of congestion in compliance with TxDOT regulations

Pilot program only in areas where safe. (Sponsored last session by Wentworth and Straus.)

Allow transit agencies, including Capital Metro, to participate in the State's negotiated travel services contracts

Would allow Capital Metro to take advantage of the same travel discounts available to State agencies, counties, cities, community colleges, and school and emergency communication districts.



OTHER CHALLENGES FOR CAPITAL METRO

Rail referendum requirement

Only transit agency in the state, and it appears in the entire country, required to secure voter approval in order to build or operate passenger rail, even if done within existing funds. (State Transportation Code Section 451.071)

Requirement that fares be approved by an external committee

Virtually all U.S. transit agencies are authorized to set their own fares. Unique requirement compared to peers across country and only required in Texas of Austin, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi (though Capital Metro's board, unlike all other Texas agencies, is required to include elected officials). (Section 451.061)

Limited short-term bonding authority

Capital Metro's short-term bonds are limited to terms of up to 12 months, or 5 years for rail projects (but only if the project is approved at referendum). San Antonio VIA, DART, Fort Worth, and Houston have this authority for up to 5 to 10 years. (Section 451.362)

Requirement to continue providing paratransit services in communities that withdrew from Capital Metro

Required for paratransit riders that had regular subscription service when their communities voted to withdraw from the service area. Not required of any other transit agency in Texas or, it appears, in the entire country. (Section 451.610)

Limited funding options

Traffic congestion is choking Central Texas. Central Texas needs a truly regional transit system but there are not enough funds to implement this. Local governments need more funding options. (Section 451.405)



***Central Texas has 21st century transportation problems.
Capital Metro needs 21st century tools.***