

AISD Expands Bus Capacity to Support Updated Transportation Model

By Villager staff

(AUSTIN, TX) - Austin ISD is increasing the number of buses in operation as part of a broader effort to strengthen student transportation for the coming school year. The expansion accompanies recent adjustments to the district’s routing model, including the restoration of neighborhood stops for middle school students and the addition of new transportation hubs for high school routes. District officials describe these changes as a practical response to access concerns, operational strain, and sustained community feedback.

AISD’s transportation system has faced pressure from limited state reimbursement, rising operating costs, and an ongoing driver shortage. Families across the district, particularly in East Austin, have raised concerns about long walking distances and safety under the hub-only model. Restoring neighborhood stops for middle school students requires additional buses and drivers to cover more dispersed routes, and the district has said that recent budget savings make this expansion possible.

The current transportation updates reflect a shift

toward increased capacity. More buses are being deployed to support neighborhood stops, and the number of transportation hubs is increasing from 242 to 254 to improve access for high school routes. AISD has been conducting route testing and site evaluations to ensure new stops and hubs meet safety and accessibility standards, and updated route maps and schedules are being released through the district’s Bus Stop Finder system. Although AISD has not specified the exact number of buses added, the operational changes indicate a clear expansion of active fleet usage.

The transportation budget has fluctuated in recent years due to districtwide cost-saving measures. After reductions, AISD identified new savings—partly from campus closures—and redirected those funds to strengthen transportation services. The current adjustments reflect an effort to balance fiscal constraints with the need for reliable and equitable access to school.

Families can expect shorter walking distances for middle school students, more predictable pickup and drop-off times supported by increased bus availability, and continued hub service for high school students with



expanded hub locations. AISD will continue monitoring route performance and adjusting as needed, with safety, walkability, and traffic flow remaining central considerations.

The decision to expand bus capacity marks a notable shift from recent years of transportation reductions. The changes reflect operational needs, community input, and a broader recognition that reliable transportation is essential to attendance, equity, and student well-being. As the new school year approaches, AISD is preparing a more robust and accessible transportation network for students across the district.

Austin City Council’s week in review: Mobility, enforcement, and curbside strategy take center stage

By Villager staff

(AUSTIN, TX) - Austin’s only City Council activity this week came through the Mobility Committee, which convened Wednesday for a series of briefings that underscored the city’s ongoing effort to manage rapid growth, evolving transportation habits, and public-safety concerns. While no major policy votes were taken, the session offered a clear look at the issues shaping Austin’s near-term mobility agenda.

The committee opened by approving minutes from its May 14 meeting before turning to a detailed update from the Austin Police Department on the rise of electric mini-motorcycles—commonly referred to as e-motos—on city streets. APD outlined proposed changes to City Code and administrative rules intended to clarify enforcement authority and improve safety. The department also described new officer training protocols, revisions to general orders, and a forthcoming public-awareness campaign aimed at educating riders and residents. Officials noted that the city is exploring the creation of a des-

ignated recreation area where e-moto use could be permitted without disrupting traffic or endangering pedestrians.

Transportation staff followed with a briefing on Austin’s developing Curb Management Plan, a framework that will guide how the city allocates curb space for parking, loading, transit, micromobility, and other uses. As demand for limited right-of-way continues to intensify, staff emphasized the need for consistent standards and data-driven decision-making to balance competing interests and maintain safe, efficient corridors.

The committee also received a report summarizing recent actions by the Urban Transportation Commission, covering its June, July, and August meetings. Commissioners have spent the summer reviewing mobility priorities, weighing in on infrastructure projects, and evaluating policy recommendations that may come before Council later this year.

Rounding out the session, Austin Transporta-



tion and Public Works delivered its monthly regional mobility update, highlighting construction progress, operational adjustments, and service changes across the city’s transportation network. Committee members closed the meeting by identifying topics for future agendas.

The next full City Council meeting is scheduled for September 10, where members are expected to take up items related to workforce development, youth leadership programs, and partnerships with Austin ISD.

Abbott Presses Feds to Release \$10M in Medicaid Support for Struggling Hospitals

By Villager staff

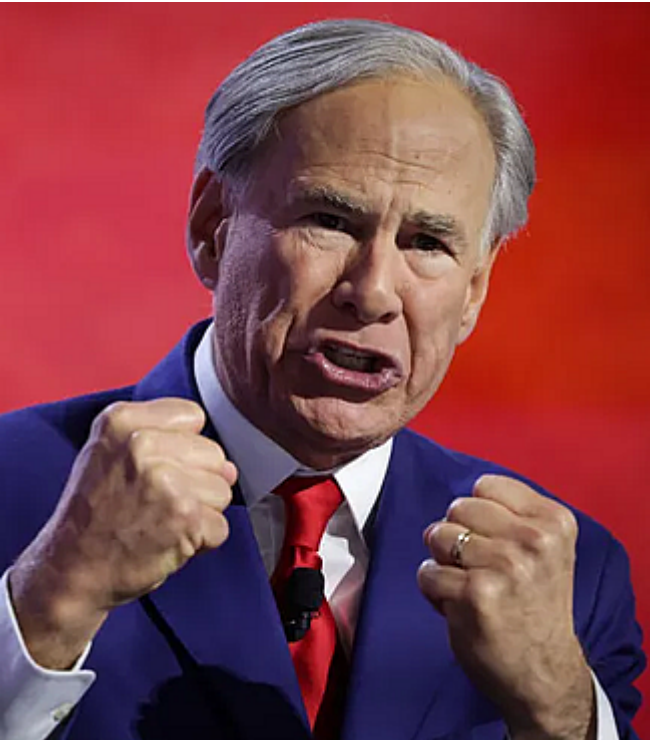
(AUSTIN, TX) - Gov. Greg Abbott is publicly defending Texas’ receipt of \$10 million in Medicaid-related funding, framing it as essential support for hospitals that serve low-income Texans. Abbott’s position comes amid an ongoing dispute with federal officials, who have questioned how Texas calculates local hospital taxes used to draw down federal matching dollars.

Abbott’s office argues the state’s financing system is fully compliant with federal law and that hospitals should receive the money they are owed. His spokesman emphasized that the funding helps facilities close the gap between Medicaid reimbursements and the actual cost of care — a gap

that, if left unfilled, threatens emergency services and safety-net operations across the state.

The governor has taken the unusual step of directly pressing federal authorities, calling the hold on funds an economic “gun to the head” and insisting that Texas hospitals cannot absorb prolonged losses without cutting critical services. Each day the funding is delayed costs hospitals an estimated \$27 million, according to the Texas Hospital Association.

Abbott’s defense marks one of his strongest public stances in support of Medicaid financing — a notable move in a state that has historically resisted Medicaid expansion and continues to have the highest uninsured rate in the nation.



Gov. Abbott (Photo by Alex Wong/Getty Images)



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