

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
REGIONAL METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF OMAHA  
2222 Cuming Street  
Omaha, Nebraska, 68102  
March 27, 2025  
8:30 a.m.**

**MINUTES**

The Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha Board met on Thursday, March 27, 2025, at 8:30 a.m., in person at the Authority's Administration Building, 2222 Cuming Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102, and virtually. Notice was published in the Omaha Daily Record on March 21, 2025, in advance of the meeting. For the benefit of the public in attendance, a copy of the Open Meetings Law is posted in the meeting room, and the Agenda is published on the display in the facility lobby. The following were in attendance at the meeting:

**Authority Board:**

Mr. Curt Simon, Board Chair  
Mr. Daniel Padilla, Vice Chair  
Mr. Josh Corrigan  
Ms. Clarice Dombeck  
Ms. Yanira Garcia  
Mr. Tim Lonergan  
Mr. Cornelius Williams

**Authority Staff:**

L. Cencic, CEO/Executive Director  
K. Pendland, Deputy Executive Officer  
D. Grant, Human Capital and Talent Development Director  
E. Simpson, Legal Director (Virtual)  
W. Clingman, Finance Director  
J. Willoughby, Senior Project Manager (Virtual)  
A. Johnson, Civil Rights & Inclusion Director (Virtual)  
J. Beverage, Maintenance Director (Virtual)  
N. Ebat, Sr. Manager of Communications & Community Relations  
S. Perry, Executive Administrator & Board Secretary

**Others Present:**

Other Metro staff  
Members of the public

Metro connects people, places, and opportunities through quality transit services.

**Agenda Item #1 Call to Order at 8:33 am.**

Notice of the Regular Meeting was published in the Omaha Daily Record on March 21, 2025. For the benefit of the public in attendance, a copy of the Open Meeting Law is posted in the meeting room, and the Agenda is published on the display located in the facility lobby and online at ometro.com.

**Agenda Item #2 Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

The first order of business is the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting.

- a. Regular Meeting: February 27, 2025

**Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Padilla**  
**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda Item #3 General Public Comment Period**

This is an opportunity for members of the audience to be heard regarding topics related to the Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha, not on the agenda for a maximum of 2 minutes.

There were none

**Agenda Item #4 Administrative Report**

(L. Cencic)

Ms. Cencic reported upcoming services from Metro. Metro's successful Bus to Ballot initiative will continue with a fare-free day for the general election on May 13, 2025. During the College World Series, ORBT will be available after game times. Additionally, Metro will extend the Green Route service area and hours.

Overall, February ridership across the system was 241,867. February experienced rough weather days; however, with lower ridership, it was still apparent how necessary transit is during those times. ORBT ridership was 39,277, and K-12 Rides Free ridership was 42,679, which pushed its ridership well over 1.5 million rides since its inception.

Ms. Cencic further reported that she, along with the Senior Manager of Planning, presented at a meeting with the heads of non-profits and other organizations whose clients may benefit from the upcoming microtransit pilot. Via and River North Transit, the chosen contractor, also provided attendees with an idea of what using the service will likely look like. Directors Dombeck, Lonergan, and Williams were present to represent the Board.

Metro recently celebrated Transit Employee Appreciation Day, and Metro was featured in a nationwide video as one of the transit agencies across the country. Many transit agencies and the American Public Transit Association shared it.

Nebraska Public Transit Week will be the first full week of April. Metro will celebrate with community partners, riders, and honor Metro's hardworking staff. More details later in the board report. The week following, Metro will hold its annual Safety Awards Banquet.

Ms. Cencic will be speaking on a panel with other Board members for a documentary that will be featured on April 14<sup>th</sup> about how car-centric Omaha is and how to change and be more inclusive of other modes of travel. April 21<sup>st</sup> Ms. Cencic will be speaking at a transportation conference hosted by the Refugee Task Force, focusing on bringing together transit agencies, lawmakers, and other decision makers to look at the solutions as it pertains to transportation for the refugee community.

Ms. Cencic concluded her report and opened the floor to the Board for questions.

The Board asked what kind of patronage Metro experienced during previous Bus to Ballot days. Additionally, the Board asked where others could view the video that was shared nationwide for

Transit Appreciation Day. Lastly, the Board asked for more details as it relates to the car-centric Omaha documentary, who is hosting it.

Ms. Cencic responded as follows: During the Bus to Ballot initiative, there is typically a general uptick in ridership—not only because people are going to vote, but also due to the availability of free fares.

The video shared by transit agencies is available on Facebook.

Ms. Cencic also informed the Board of the details regarding the forum hosting the documentary, *Reimagining Omaha: Car-Centric Documentary and Community Conversation*. She and the Board members will be hosted by the Omaha Downtown Improvement District.

Mr. Williams took a moment to share how informative and beneficial he found the stakeholder presentation on the microtransit pilot that he attended with Metro staff and fellow Board members.

There were no further questions or discussion.

**Agenda Item #5 Administrative Reports:**

**Administration/Human Resources**

(D. Grant)

Mr. Grant's report began with the monthly recruitment update. For February, there were nine new hires, including one internal promotion. Of the nine hired, five were bus operators, two were paratransit operators, and one mechanic. The internal promotion was from a Metro bus operator to a field supervisor position.

Metro saw nine bus operators graduate from its training program. In addition, Metro posted and filled the scheduling supervisor role. More details will be provided in April.

Mr. Grant concluded his report and opened the floor to the Board for questions

There were no further questions or discussions.

**Programs/Operation**

(K. Pendland)

Mr. Pendland reported that Metro's customer service numbers remained steady in February, with 11,743 calls answered, providing a 95% service level. The average queue remained at less than one minute.

Fixed route revenue hours in February were 22,227, which reflects a slight decrease in service delivery by 677 hours compared to February 2024. This slight drop in service delivery and overall comparative revenue hours and passenger trips can partly be attributed to weather events and that 2024 was a leap year. This provided Metro with an average route productivity of 10.9 passengers per revenue hour across all fixed routes.

On-time performance in February averaged 4.5% early departure, 15% late departure, with an on-time departure rate of 80.5%.

In February, service interruptions accounted for 1.5% of our revenue hours. With most of those interruptions due to operator availability. Mr. Pendland mentioned in last month's board meeting that February was trending towards those numbers rising; however, Metro was able to reduce service interruptions by .7% over January. It is important to note that these service interruption numbers do not include an additional 36 hours of service that was cancelled due to a published 6 am start on

Wednesday, February 12th, in anticipation of inclement weather. He explained that this is considered a reduction of scheduled service rather than a service interruption because it was communicated in advance to the public. Service interruptions show an unplanned loss of service and provide us with useful data on where we can work to minimize unexpected delays and interruptions for the public.

For paratransit operations, Metro completed a total of 7,150 trips in February, which is an increase of nearly 400 trips from last February. The average paratransit passengers per revenue hour in February was 1.7, which is slightly higher than February of 2024 but on par with the current trend.

Mr. Pendland concluded his report and opened the floor to the Board for questions.

The Board inquired whether customer service assistance is provided through IntelliRide and whether those employees work remotely. They also asked about the current on-time performance figure of 80.5%, specifically, whether that is the target Metro is aiming to meet, and what is causing the increase in service interruptions due to a lack of operators.

Mr. Pendland confirmed that customer service is still provided through IntelliRide, with staff working both remotely and in-house. He clarified that Metro's on-time performance target is 85%. The shortage of operators is due to various factors, including employee illness, scheduled vacations, and weather-related issues.

Lastly, the Board asked Mr. Pendland to explain the role of a field supervisor at Metro.

Mr. Pendland explained that field supervisors provide on-the-ground support for bus operators. Their responsibilities include responding to accidents, addressing bus or passenger issues, monitoring road conditions, and checking detours, especially during inclement weather.

There were no further questions or discussions.

## **Communications**

(N. Ebat)

Ms. Ebat reported that during February, Metro had 17 articles published from six different outlets, local and national.

Metro has provided training since the last Board meeting. A member of the communications team and a member of the civil rights and inclusive team presented a webinar for Nebraska's chapter of the International Association of Public Participation. It was an abridged version of Metro's presentation at the organization's conference last fall. The presentation focused on how local governments can ensure they relate to their community. It looked at how Metro intentionally and successfully reorganized and refreshed the Transit Advisory Committee.

Ms. Ebat further reported on additional training, fairs, and upcoming events. Metro's Civil Rights Inclusion Director and Procurement Manager recently provided a training session through the Urban League of Nebraska, aimed at educating local businesses on how to bid on contracts with Metro. The training also covered Metro's goals and processes related to Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) participation.

Staff attended the Completely Kids Resource Fair to assist mostly Spanish speakers with different ways they can access our services.

Lastly, Ms. Ebat reported that during Nebraska Public Transit Week, Metro will join the Omaha Public Library for a joint celebration, which coincides with National Library Week. To recognize and celebrate how Metro connects people to opportunities, such as the many services the public library offers, Metro staff will participate in a reading at the Washington Branch Library on April 9 at 10:30 a.m. and will have a bus on-site for attendees to explore. The library has also invited nearby preschools to visit and learn about the bus and how public transit helps keep Omaha connected. Metro will also be hosting two train-the-trainer events in the week of April 8<sup>th</sup> & April 11<sup>th</sup>.

To close out the week, Metro will be revealing and celebrating the winning Wheel Appeal design—the winning student is a middle schooler from Bennington Middle School, and their design celebrates people’s differences. It’s an extremely colorful and vibrant design. A reveal party will be hosted at Metro for the students' families, where everyone will see the design for the first time.

Before concluding her report, Ms. Ebat was able to provide additional Bus to Ballot information requested during Ms. Cencic’s report. The last off-election-year Metro saw about a 15% increase in ridership. City elections tend to be less frequent than congressional elections.

Ms. Ebat concluded her report and opened the floor to the Board for questions.

**Agenda #6 Resolution 2025-07 Request for Approval of the Amendment of Operating Policy 26, Standards of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest** (W. Clingman)

Staff proposed the amendment of Operating Policy 26, Standards of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest. This policy was last revised in January 2017. This revision provides updated language and additional clarification of the existing policy related to the solicitation, selection, award, and administration of Metro’s procurement activities. Additionally, it updates the acknowledgment document for this policy to be required from applicable individuals every three years instead of the current practice of every year. Staff reviewed this policy with the Planning & Policy Committee.

The Board invited public comments on this resolution. There were none.

There was no further Board discussion necessary. The Board approved unanimously.

**Motioned by Corrigan; Seconded by Lonergan**  
**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda #7 Resolution 2025-08 Request Approval of the Amendment of Operating Policy 27, Purchasing Policy** (W. Clingman)

Staff proposed the amendment of Operating Policy 27, Purchasing. This policy was last revised in December 2022. This revision will update the policy with the most recent FTA guidance found in FTA Circular 4220.1G, which was released on January 17, 2025. Staff reviewed this policy with the Planning & Policy Committee.

The Board invited public comments on this resolution. There were none.

There was no further Board discussion necessary. The Board approved unanimously.

**Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Dombeck**  
**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda #8 Resolution 2025-09 Request Approval of the 2026 Amended Transportation Improvement Program**

(W. Clingman)

Staff requested approval of the amended 2026 element of the 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This amendment is to program funds and create the 2026 Program of Projects (POP).

Staff recommended programming Urbanized Area Apportionment Funds (5307) and Bus and Bus Facility Apportionment Funds (5339) in the FY 2026 element of the TIP.

Additionally, staff recommended approval of the 2026 Program of Projects in the following manner:

PROJECT	SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
SUPPORT EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES	5307	Fed: \$2,287,096 Local: \$571,774 Total: \$2,858,870	Update BGE equipment, replace MOBY tablets, and administration facility upgrades
TRANSIT ENHANCEMENTS	5307	Fed: \$1,192,000 Local: \$298,000 Total: \$1,490,000	Installation of up to 20 bus shelters
UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM	5307	Fed: \$920,000 Local: \$230,000 Total: \$1,150,000	Planning activities for 2026.
OPERATIONS	5307	Fed: \$14,010,592 Local: \$3,502,648	Preventative Maintenance, partial ADA service, employee and staff training.

		Total: \$17,513,240	
PROJECT	SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
ROLLING STOCK	5339	Fed: \$2,034,419 Local: \$359,015 Total: \$2,393,434	4 Moby vans and 2 fixed route buses
OPERATIONS	5339	Fed: \$40,622 Local: \$10,154 Total: \$50,776	Project Administration and training

Board approval allows the projects to be committed for FY 2026. Projects will be submitted to the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) for consideration at the April 2025 MAPA Board Meeting. The total new local encumbrance of federal funds will be \$20,484,729. The total new encumbrance of local funds will be \$4,971,591. The total new encumbrance of all funds will be \$25,456,320.

Approval ensures Metro's compliance with FTA planning requirements.

Curt Simon, Board Chair, asked Mr. Clingman to explain what is included in the Unified Work Program to the Board.

Mr. Clingman explained that it's the agency planning activities. Short- and long-term changes, streetcar and how it will go into our services. Planning for audit and pension would be included as well.

Ms. Cencic informed the Board for the record that part of this process is publishing this resolution in the Daily Record for the public to review and provide comments. Then it continues to the Metro Board, then to MAPA's Board. Once fully approved, projects will take at least a year to become programmed. There was no formal Finance Committee meeting regarding this, but it was provided in the packet, and there were no questions.

The Board invited public comments on this resolution. There were none.

There was no further Board discussion necessary. The Board approved unanimously.

**Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Dombeck**  
**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda #9 Resolution 2025-10 Request Approval to Award Service Order to River North Transit for Microtransit Services**

(L. Cencic)

Staff requested approval to award a service order to River North Transit, LLC, a subsidiary of Via Transportation, Inc., for microtransit services and to authorize the CEO/Executive Director to execute the same.

Metro released a Request for Proposals for a Microtransit Pilot Project in September of 2024 and received two proposals. The proposals were reviewed by an evaluation team, and the proposal from Via Transportation, Inc./River North Transit, LLC was the highest-ranked proposal in terms of the established criteria, which included software & data capabilities, operating plan, contractor flexibility, contractor experience, personnel experience, and price.

In February of 2025, The Board authorized a Master Terms and Conditions Agreement with River North for a pilot period and approved the Title VI Equity Analysis. The Service Order outlines the initial zones and operating characteristics as well as establishes a maximum not to exceed price for the pilot period.

Ms. Cencic further explained that this is overall for two years not to exceed the price of \$6,926,296 and provides options for years three through five with operational service or software only. Entirely funded by philanthropic grants and will not come out of Metro's operational budget.

The Board inquired about the ability to accept cash payments for this service, particularly for unbanked individuals. They also asked whether Via would be purchasing vehicles following the approval of this resolution and sought clarification on the data-sharing provisions in the contract.

Ms. Cencic explained that fare payment options are still being determined, including how fares and transfers will work for this service. On regular fixed routes, cash is accepted, and UMO allows cash to be loaded onto an account for card usage. Metro is working to integrate this system with microtransit.

Regarding vehicle purchases, Metro will continue discussions with the vendor to address fare structures, service zones, and fleet needs.

Ms. Cencic also noted that Via is open to sharing data and providing the necessary information for Metro to evaluate the pilot project. Metro's planning team has reviewed the data-sharing methods that contractors will use, and the service zones and characteristics that were in the Title VI analysis are reflected in this work order.

Since this is a pilot program, the contract allows for modifications through written agreements with the vendor as needed.

The Board invited public comments on this resolution.

**Chris Nanke, President, Transportation Workers Union, Local 223**

Mr. Nanke wanted to reiterate the importance of having transfers. He expressed that this was never to be a stand-alone service but a service to bring riders to a fixed route. He stressed that transfers must be a priority, bringing riders to the bus.

**Clyde Anderson, 7020 Burt Street, Member of the Transit Advisory Committee**

Mr. Anderson expressed that he would like to see a designated location at the major transit centers where the microtransit vehicles will be located. He also assumes that nine months into the second year, this program will be evaluated but is asking that information is shared with the public as well.

There was no further Board discussion necessary. The Board approved unanimously.



**Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Garcia**  
**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda Item #10 Resolution 2025-11 Request Approval of Board Recognition of Nebraska Public Transit Week, April 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>** (N. Ebat)

Nebraska Public Transit Week is dedicated to raising awareness of public transit across the state. Public transit has served the cities of Omaha and Council Bluffs since 1867. Metro's fixed-route service operated 3,843,159 miles and 278,606 hours in 2024. Metro's paratransit service operated 601,292 miles and 52,273 hours connecting people, places, and opportunities.

Nebraska's Public Transit Week provides a special opportunity for people all over the state to show their support for services that help thousands of Nebraskans stay mobile and have active lives within their communities.

Metro and public transit overall connect people to the parts of their communities that help people live an active, vibrant, interesting life. To recognize that, Metro, along with transit agencies across the state, is celebrating April 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> as Nebraska Public Transit Week.

Metro will partner with the Omaha Public Library to read transit-themed books while also celebrating National Library Week, celebrating the importance art and our youth play in our community with a reveal of the winning design from this year's Wheel Appeal student artist, and recognize the hardworking and dedicated workforce with a safety banquet to award and honor Metro employees.

Board Chair Curt Simon read into the record the resolution in its entirety.

**RESOLUTION 2025-11**

March 27, 2025  
Omaha, Nebraska

RESOLVED BY THE BOARD of DIRECTORS of the REGIONAL METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF OMAHA:

WHEREAS, public transit provides Omaha and all Nebraskans access to medical, business, employment, social, and supportive services and allows people to contribute to a vibrant city and society;

WHEREAS, public transit allows individuals to remain independent, contributes to economic development, reduces traffic congestion, decreases carbon emissions, and improves mobility;

WHEREAS, Nebraska has many public transit employees who provide service to Nebraska, more than 300 of whom are employed by Metro, who must maintain stringent educational requirements and standards, particularly bus and paratransit operators;

WHEREAS, public transit professionals play an important role in so many lives;

WHEREAS, Metro provides public transportation service in the Greater Omaha area;

WHEREAS, More than 3.2 million rides were provided on Metro routes in 2024;

WHEREAS, More than 82 thousand paratransit trips were provided on MOBY in 2024;

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors wishes to encourage all citizens to increase their understanding, awareness, and the benefits of their local transit system;

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors and the Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers recognize the important role public transit professionals play and wish to acknowledge that role;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE REGIONAL METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF OMAHA BOARD:

The Board of Directors DO HEREBY CONGRATULATE the employees of Metro and proclaim the week of April 6 - 12, 2025, as

**PUBLIC TRANSIT WEEK**  
in Omaha and all of Nebraska.

The foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Board of the Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha at a meeting held on the 27th day of March 2025, and the undersigned hereby certifies the adoption of this resolution.

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Curt Simon, Board Chair

Selina Perry, Board Secretary

This was signed immediately following the board meeting.

The Board invited public comments on this resolution.

There was no further Board discussion necessary. The Board approved unanimously.

**Motioned by Williams; Seconded by Lonergan**

**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda Item #11 Board Chair Report**

Board Chair Curt Simon had no updates to report for this meeting

(C. Simon)

**Agenda Item #12 Date, Time, and Place of Next Board Meeting**

Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 8:30 a.m.

Authority's Administrative Building

**Agenda Item #13 Adjournment at 9:13 am.**

**Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Dombeck**

**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**