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# Regular Meeting of the Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha (dba Metro Transit) Transit Advisory Committee

This regular meeting of Metro Transit's Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on September 9, 2026 from 6:45 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and was open to the public online and in-person at the Metro Transit Administrative Building (2222 Cuming Street). Notice of the meeting was published in the Omaha Daily Record on September 3, 2026, in advance of the meeting. For the benefit of the public in attendance, a copy of the Open Meetings Law was posted in the meeting room, and the agenda was on display in the facility lobby.

## Attendance

The following were in attendance at the meeting:

Transit Advisory Committee Members

- Joichiro Yamada, TAC Chair
- Clyde Anderson, TAC Vice Chair
- Raymond Williams
- Gab Rima
- Rondae Hill
- Lindsey Button
- Alex Mendoza
- Brian Neely

Metro Transit Staff

- Lauren Cencic, Chief Executive Officer
- Kevin Pendland, Deputy Executive Officer
- Nicole Ebat, Senior Manager of Communications and Community Relations
- William Clingman, Finance Director
- Bridget Battafarano, Community Mobility Coordinator
- Evan Schweitz, Senior Manager of Planning and Scheduling
- Alicia Johnson, Civil Rights and Inclusion Director

Others Present

- Rob Sembrat
- Todd Nichols

- Levelle Wells
- Lucas Lee
- Debbi Breeling
- Curt Simon, RMTA Board of Directors Chair representing District 6
- Daniel Padilla, RMTA Board of Directors Vice Chair representing District 4
- Cornelius Williams, RMTA Board of Directors representing District 1
- Clarice Dombeck, RMTA Board of Directors representing District 2
- Yanira Garcia, RMTA Board of Directors representing District 3
- Josh Corrigan, RMTA Board of Directors representing District 5

## Agenda Item #1 - Call to Order

Chair Yamada called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

## Agenda Item #2 – Budget Hearing Follow-Up Questions (W. Clingman)

Chair Yamada opened the floor for follow-up questions about the Metro Transit budget.

Mr. Rob Sembrat, member of the public, asked about the adequacy of transit funding and questioned whether Metro has sufficient financial support to provide the level of service needed by the community. The speaker noted that public transportation is an essential service in many cities and raised concerns about service availability during holidays, emphasizing that many residents work in sectors such as healthcare, hospitality, and restaurants on those days. Sembrat asked what additional funding sources may be available and how other communities fund transit services to support expanded or more consistent operations.

Cencic responded that Metro is funded at a lower per-capita level than many comparable transit agencies but benefits from a stable and dedicated funding structure as an independent political subdivision of the state. She explained that Metro is primarily funded through a property tax levy that it can establish independently, providing greater budget stability than agencies that rely on annual appropriations or contributions from cities or counties. Cencic noted that transit funding models vary widely across the country, including property taxes, sales taxes, and local government contributions. She stated that Metro is currently utilizing all funding mechanisms available under state law and that any additional funding sources would require legislative changes. Cencic further indicated that the proposed budget provides sufficient resources to advance MetroNEXT service improvements and that near-term operational capacity, including operator recruitment and vehicle procurement, is a more immediate consideration than securing additional funding.

Sembrat shared that in cities like Winnipeg (Canada) there is service 365 days a year with a longer span of service hours and asked how Omaha could get there.

Board Chair Simon noted that public transit usage is influenced by local cultural and land-use factors, including the widespread availability of personal vehicles and parking in the Omaha metropolitan area. Simon contrasted these conditions with cities where transit is more deeply integrated into daily life and emphasized that increasing transit ridership requires gradual, incremental service improvements over time. He stated that efforts to establish a Regional Transit Authority and secure additional resources help advance the MetroNEXT plan and improve service levels. Simon expressed confidence in Metro's recent progress and indicated that continued, deliberate improvements would strengthen the transit system and support long-term growth in ridership and service utilization.

Cencic shared that the proposed budget includes resources to operate 10% more service by the end of next year than today.

Sembrat shared observations based on experiences with transit systems in other cities and expressed support for expanding transit service levels in the Omaha metropolitan area. He noted that some peer communities provide transit service year-round, including holidays, and contrasted those systems with current local service levels. Sembrat acknowledged differences in community culture and transit usage patterns but indicated a desire to see continued progress toward more comprehensive transit service as the region grows. He expressed optimism that Metro can continue advancing toward that goal over time.

Cencic agreed that significant cultural and development pattern differences influence transit use in the Omaha metropolitan area. She noted that, while challenges remain, Metro has been able to implement annual service improvements over the past several years, representing a positive shift from historical conditions. Cencic attributed these improvements in part to the benefits provided through Regional Transit Authority Legislation. She further emphasized that land use and development patterns, including population density and walkability, are among the most significant factors affecting the success and public support of transit services. Cencic noted that Metro is working to better integrate land use planning, transportation planning, and economic development efforts, with the goal of fostering development patterns that can more effectively support public transit. She stated that these factors may have a greater impact on transit effectiveness than funding levels alone.

Sembrat shared support for continued investment in public transit and noted experiences with transit systems in other metropolitan areas. He observed that some cities with extensive geographic sprawl provide higher levels of transit service and

expressed the view that Omaha's size presents opportunities for further transit development. He concluded with appreciation for the community and voiced encouragement for Metro's ongoing efforts to expand and improve public transportation options, emphasizing support for transportation alternatives to private vehicle use.

Vice Chair Anderson noted that transit fares have not increased in approximately 10 to 15 years. Anderson stated that he does not support increasing fares and instead expressed support for fare-free transit service. Anderson referenced the fare-free period during COVID, saying that it contributed to increased ridership and improved operational efficiency by reducing boarding delays associated with fare collection, particularly cash transactions.

Chair Yamada invited public comments. There were no further questions or discussion.

## Agenda Item #3 – Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the August 2026 meeting were sent to all committee members in advance and are available at ometro.com/tac. Vice Chair Anderson made a correction to include a statement that he presented to the Board on the agreed-upon topics from July.

**Motion to approve as amended: Button; Seconded by Neely**
**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

## Agenda Item #4 – 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.

Curt Simon, RMTA Board of Directors Chair and District 6 Representative
Simon requested that the Board and TAC members introduce themselves. Introductions were made.

Rob Sembrat, Midtown Resident

Sembrat has continued using Micro Flex including a trip to Heartwood Preserve. He expressed desire for expanded public transit access in the area in the future. Sembrat also recommended that Micro Flex be more prominent on the website so more people see it. He believes that this would get more ridership. He commented on the importance of the Micro Flex pilot program with its service to locations and time periods when the buses do not run and expressed concern that current ridership data may not fully reflect the service's value to the community. Sembrat acknowledged that the program is

currently supported through philanthropic funding and noted concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of the service once the initial funding period concludes. He further noted that the service generates valuable data regarding community travel demand and destinations not currently served by traditional transit.

## Agenda Item #5 – Committee Report on Public Feedback

This is an opportunity for members of the Transit Advisory Committee to share feedback they have received from members of the public regarding topics related to the Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha, or to share feedback about their own ridership experiences.

TAC Member Rima
Committee member Rima received concerns from healthcare workers and other individuals with nontraditional work schedules regarding the lack of transit service on designated service holidays, which requires riders to arrange alternative transportation.

TAC Member Hill
Committee member Hill shared that she attends a community support group for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Concerns were raised regarding a service gap in northwest Omaha, where some eligible MOBY riders reside outside the current service area and must use services like Lyft or Uber to reach locations within the MOBY boundary. Hill noted frustration among affected riders and indicated that some individuals have contacted local elected officials and Metro regarding the issue.

Alicia Johnson, Metro's Director of Civil Rights and Inclusion, offered to follow up directly regarding the specific rider concern and clarified that the issue relates to eligibility boundaries rather than limited evening service. She acknowledged that other riders in the northwest area face similar challenges, particularly where fixed-route service is limited or unavailable. MOBY service eligibility is tied to proximity to fixed-route transit service and noted that certain northwest Omaha areas remain outside the required service radius. Johnson further stated that service to this area may be considered as part of ongoing long-term planning efforts.

Cencic outlined operational and regulatory challenges associated with expanding service. These include funding, vehicle and workforce availability, and compliance with federal accessibility requirements. She explained that new bus stops cannot be established in locations that do not meet ADA accessibility standards, including the presence of accessible pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks. As a result, transit expansion is dependent in part on broader community infrastructure improvements and walkability enhancements.

TAC Member Anderson
Committee member Anderson suggested evaluating whether resources currently dedicated to Route 120 could be reallocated to provide a more frequent local shuttle service in northwest Omaha. He proposed a potential circulator route connecting these neighborhoods to Westroads, such as the former Route 22, noting that increased service frequency may better address mobility needs in the area.

In response, members and staff discussed current usage of express routes. Observations were shared indicating that certain express services continue to attract riders, although ridership remains below pre-pandemic levels. Staff noted that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted commuter-oriented transit services due to increased remote work arrangements. While overall system ridership has largely recovered to pre-pandemic levels, express route ridership has not returned to previous levels and continues to lag behind systemwide recovery trends.

TAC Chair Yamada invited public comments.

Public Comments
There were none.

There were no further questions or discussion.

## Agenda Item #6 – Committee Report on RMTA Board of Directors (G. Rima)

TAC member Rima reported highlights from the August board meeting: Metro saw the highest July ridership since 2019, the highest July K-12 ridership in recent years, and an increase in MOBY ridership. Ridership for the summer as a whole is up from last year, with 15% higher ridership for ORBT in July, marking the highest ORBT ridership numbers for July. Eleven new Metro Transit employees were welcomed in July, and 18 new employees are scheduled to start in August. Rima also noted there was some discussion about microtransit, including assurance that all departure and arrival requests are analyzed, even requests that aren't in zones, to see where people want the service.

Chair Yamada invited TAC member discussion and public comments on Rima's report.

Public Comment

Todd Nichols, Dundee
Nichols asked how the K-12 program numbers are calculated since the students don't scan or tap a card. Ebat shared that when the students board, the drivers have a

specific tally key that they tap when the students board, and for ORBT, it is a percentage of the ridership. Schweitz added that Metro uses a system-wide average usage rate seen on fixed routes. Drivers can't tally in the same way on ORBT with all-door boarding, but Metro staff believe the estimation is a conservative estimate. Central High School is directly on the ORBT route and feedback from drivers, in-person observations, and camera review show a higher usage rate compared to the rest of the system.

TAC Member Anderson
Vice Chair Anderson noted that he has observed a lot of UNO students riding when he rides ORBT and asked how they are counted since they ride free. Metro staff said that UNO students swipe their student IDs on the Umo machine.

There were no further questions or discussion.

## **Agenda Item #7 – Metro Transit Staff Report (N. Ebat)**

Ebat shared the following updates:

- Last month Metro Transit staff attended the 2026 Magis Health Fair, hosted by Creighton University at Sienna Francis, as part of mobile outreach efforts for the half-fare program and attended the Nebraska Urban Indian Health Coalition Back to School event, along with other back to school events.
- Procurement and Contracts Manager and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Liaison attended the Small Contractor + Public Agency Procurement Outreach Event hosted by the City of Omaha's Human Rights and Relations Department.
- Metro Transit staff tabled at the 2026 AfroFest on September 8.
- Metro Transit's Community Mobility Coordinator trained staff from several organizations, including Common Spirit, Restoring Dignity, and UNO Student Mentors.
- Submissions for the Wheel Appeal student art contest closed on August 31. Metro is no longer taking applications, but staff were happy to have a number of submissions that will be reviewed. A winner will be announced in the coming future.
- Metro Community College South Transit Center is scheduled to reopen on September 21.
- The Request for Proposals to study the 24th Street Corridor for transit enhancements received three bids. The contract is tentatively scheduled to be awarded at the October Board meeting.
- Staff from Metro will visit Outlook Nebraska tomorrow, September 10, to gather feedback about accessibility measures for the blind and visually impaired. A

second session was added due to an emergency in the Outlook building the day of the previous session.

- Metro Transit will participate in the upcoming Fiestas Patrias Parade on Saturday, September 12. TAC members and their families were invited to stroll with Metro in the parade.
- The September Board meeting will be held a week earlier than normal, on September 17.
- Applications for new TAC members are open through October 1st.

TAC Chair Yamada invited TAC member discussion and public comments on Ebat's report.

TAC Discussion
No discussion.

Public Comment

Curt Simon, RMTA Board of Directors Chair and District 6 Representative
Simon encouraged fellow board members and anybody else that is interested to visit Outlook Nebraska and see their impressive operations.

TAC Member Hill
Committee member Hill shared appreciation that Metro staff are visiting a second time to get feedback since most Outlook employees were absent the first day due to the facility emergency.

There were no further questions or discussion.

## Agenda Item #8 – Proposed December 2026 Service Changes (E. Schweitz)

Metro's Senior Manager of Planning and Scheduling, Evan Schweitz, presented proposed December 2026 service changes. Metro's Civil Rights and Inclusion Director, Alicia Johnson, presented planned and proposed changes to fare collection. Large print copies of the presentation were provided to those in the room who requested them. The presentation slides follow. The slide images have been marked as decorative for those who may be using a screen reader. The slide text and additional information shared during the presentation is below the image.

Metro Transit will be holding public meetings September 15 through 23 to solicit feedback on these proposals and compile that input for the Metro Transit Board of

Director's consideration. The slides presented are what will be displayed at the public meetings that are coming up.

Slide 1




Title: Metro Transit Public Meeting Overview

Metro Transit Public Meeting
September 15, 2026
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

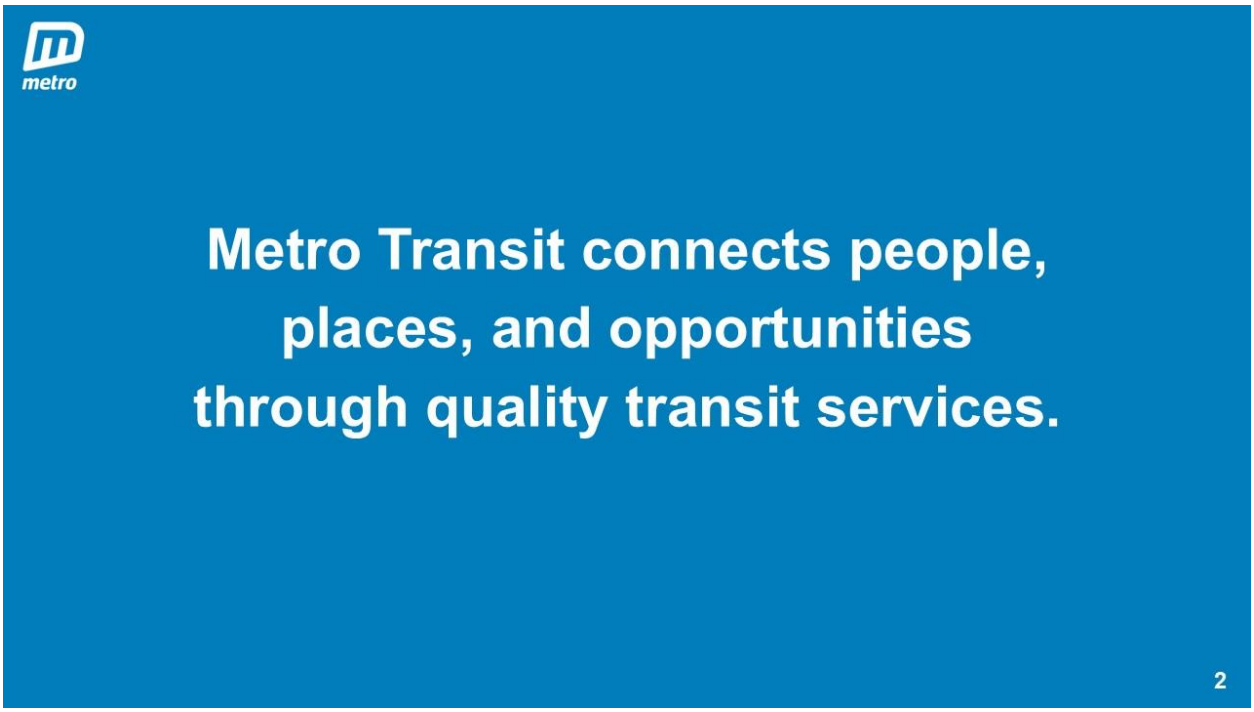
This meeting will be recorded. The recording will be available on Metro's YouTube channel and at ometro.com/September2026.

Available features:

- Automated closed captions
- American Sign Language interpretation (only in English)

Este material se presentará en español el 16 de septiembre de 2026, de 12:00 a 1:00 p.m., por Zoom. El enlace está disponible en ometro.com/September2026.

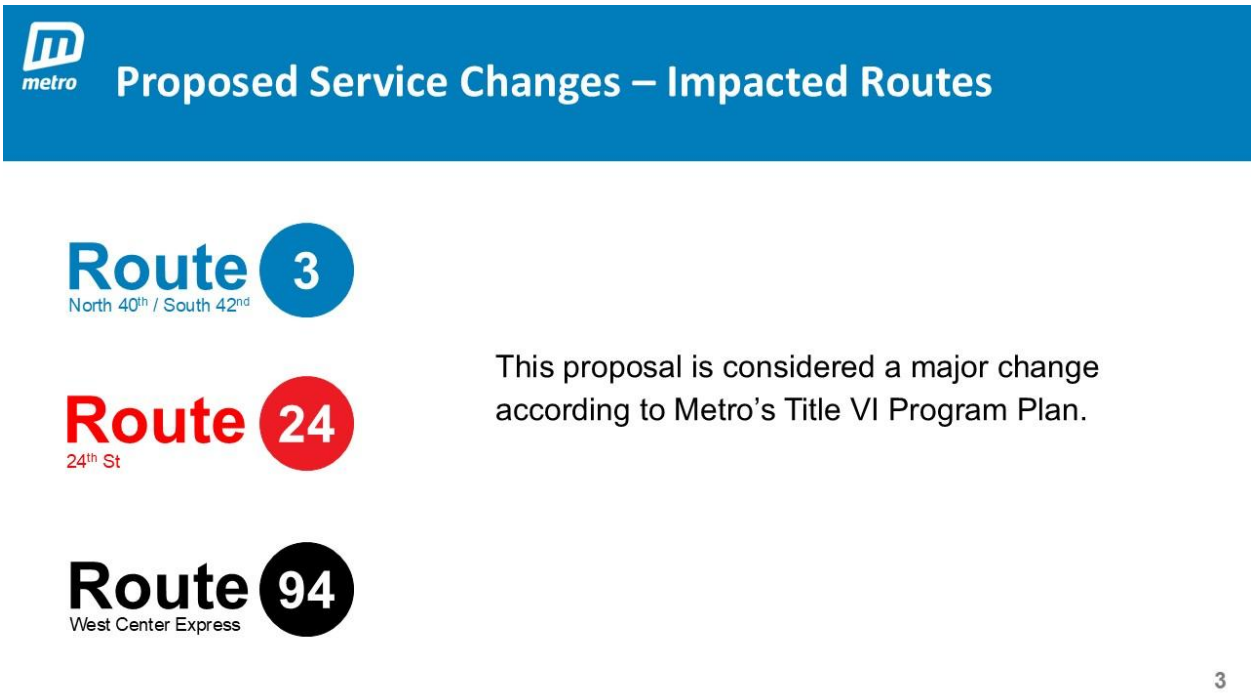
Slide 2




Title: Metro's Mission

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

Slide 3

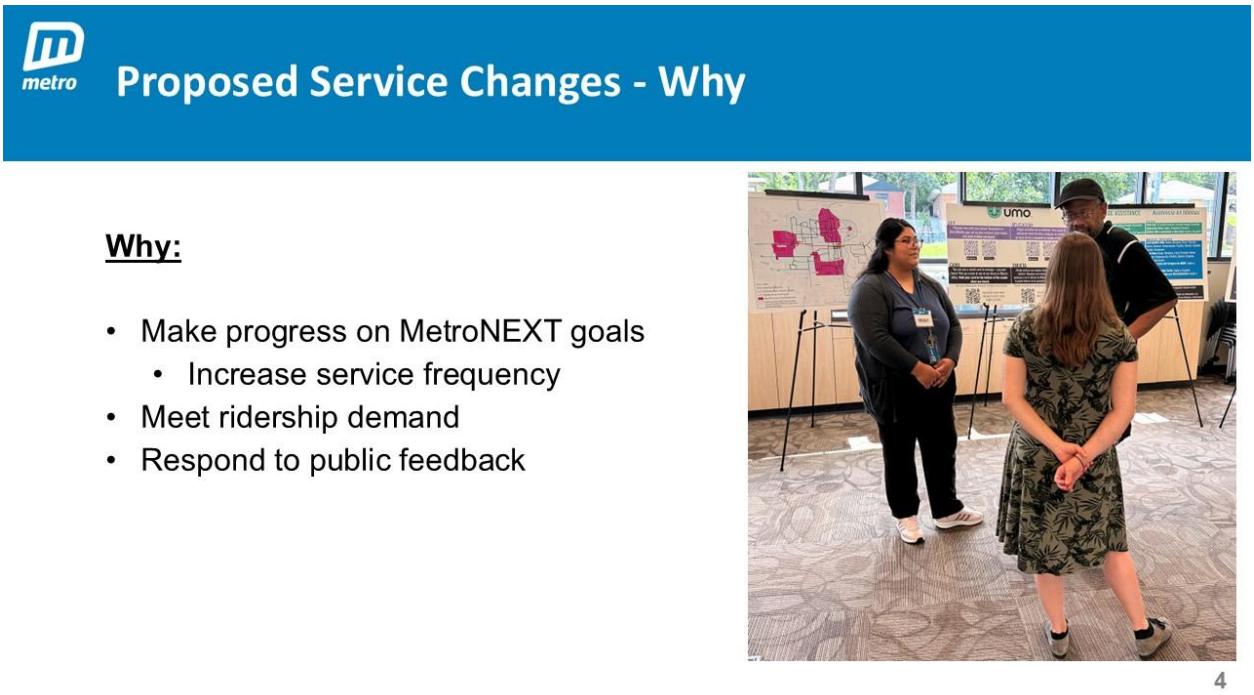



Title: Proposed Service Changes – Impacted Routes

-Route 3, North 40th/South 42nd
-Route 24, 24th St
-Route 94, West Center Express

This proposal is considered a major change according to Metro's Title VI Program Plan

Slide 4




Title: Proposed Service Changes – Why

Why:

- Make progress on MetroNEXT goals
    - Increase service frequency
- Meet ridership demand
- Respond to public feedback

On this slide there is a photo of a group of three individuals discussing proposed service changes at a previous public meeting.

Slide 5




Title: Proposed Changes for Route 3

- Increase weekday evening frequency from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes starting at approximately 7:15 p.m., depending on the direction of travel.
- Route 3 would no longer interline with Route 24 on weekday evenings.
    - Routes 3 and 24 will still interline in the evening on Saturdays and Sundays.
- No change to the Sunday schedule
- No impact to MOBY service

Slide 6




Title: Proposed Changes for Route 24 - Slide 1 of 3

- Increase weekday and Saturday daytime service from every 20 minutes to every 15 minutes between North Omaha Transit Center and MCC South Transit Center.
- Increase weekday evening service from every 60 minutes to every 30 minutes around 6:45 p.m., depending on direction of travel.

Committee member Mendoza shared virtual applause at the news of the increased frequency for Route 24.

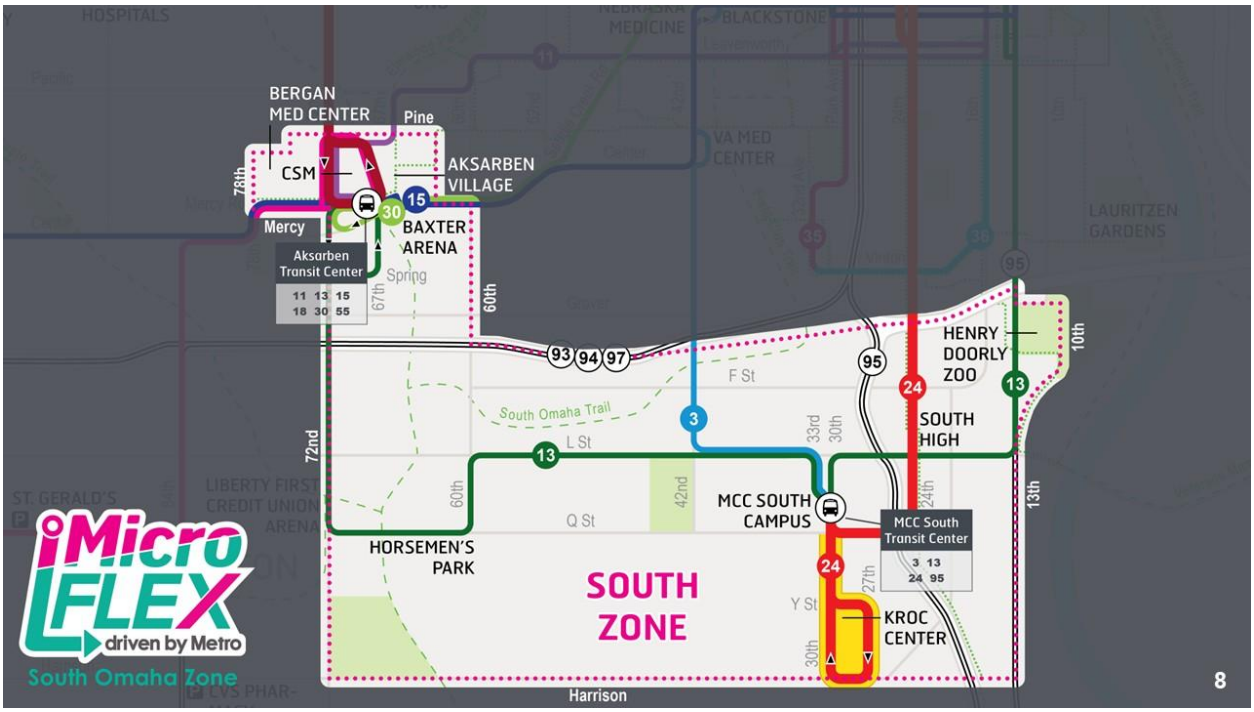
Slide 7




Title: Proposed Changes for Route 24 - Slide 2 of 3

- Reduce frequency from every 20 minutes to every 30 minutes for the southern loop of Route 24 from MCC South Transit Center to 30th and Harrison Streets on weekdays and Saturdays.
- This area is part of the South Zone of Micro Flex // driven by Metro.

Slide 8




Title: Map of Micro Flex // driven by Metro South Zone with the Harrison Loop of Route 24

Map of the Micro Flex // driven by Metro South Zone with the southern Harrison loop of Route 24 highlighted. The Harrison Loop is between the MCC South Transit Center and 30th and Harrison Streets.

Every other trip for Route 24 would make the loop.

Slide 9




Title: Proposed Changes for Route 24 - Slide 3 of 3

- Route 24 would no longer interline with Route 3 on weekday evenings.
    - Routes 3 and 24 would still interline in the evening on Saturdays and Sundays.
- The Saturday evening schedule would not change.
- The Sunday schedule would not change.
- No impact to MOBY service

Slide 10




Title: Proposed Changes for Route 94

- Add a second trip to the morning and afternoon schedule
    - AM: Depart Lakeside Park and Ride (168th and West Center) at 7:26 a.m., arrive Downtown (12th & Dodge) at 8:06 a.m.
    - PM: Depart Downtown (12th & Dodge) at 4:39 p.m., arrive at Lakeside Park & Ride at 5:23 p.m.
- No impact to MOBY service

Schweitz noted that the proposed schedule is meant to adapt to post-COVID commuter schedules.

Slide 11




Title: Timeline & Updates to Route Schedules

**Timeline**

- If approved by the Board of Directors, the changes would go into effect on Sunday, December 13, 2026

**Route Schedules**

If approved, the respective route schedules will be updated:

- On Metro Transit's website by December 7, 2026: ometro.com/september2026
- In MyRide OMA on December 13, 2026: ometro.com/maps-schedules/myride-oma

Slide 12




Title: Major Service Changes

- This proposal is considered a major service change according to Metro's Title VI Program Plan
- All changes were evaluated cumulatively for disparate impact to racial minority populations and disproportionate burden to low-income populations

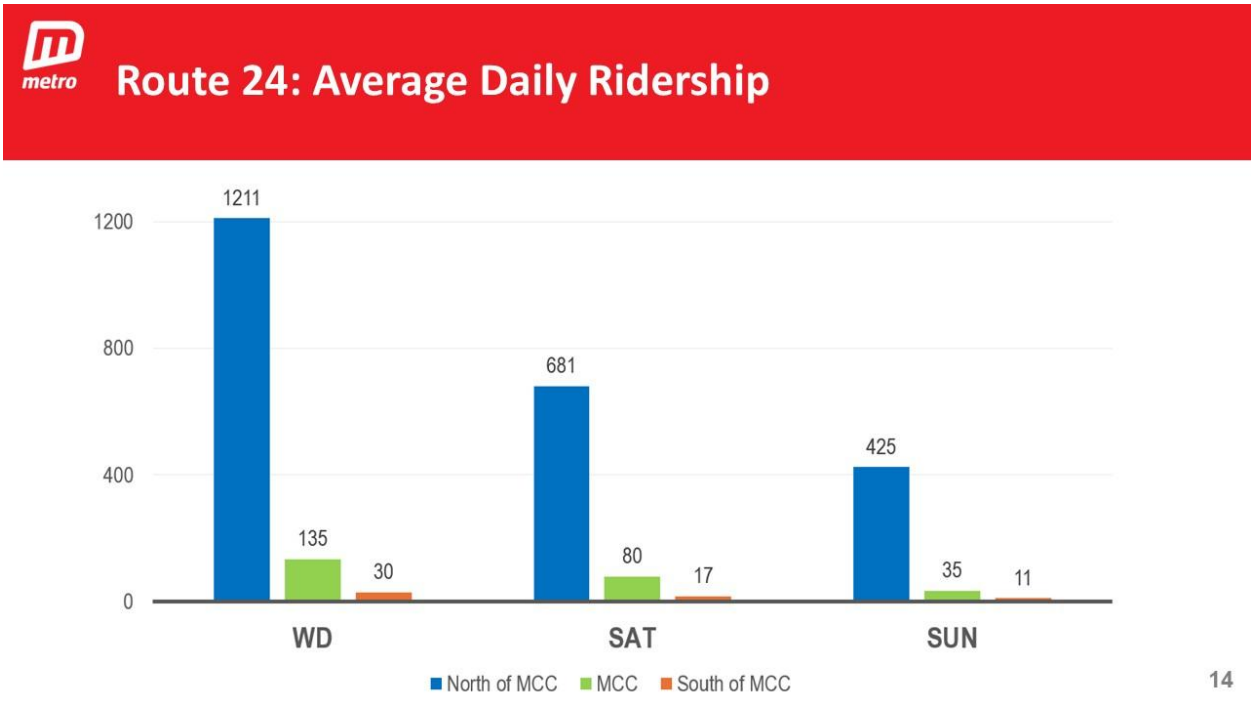
Slide 13




Title: Major Service Change: Route 24

- Route 24 will increase service by more than 15%
- The Harrison Loop of Route 24 will decrease from 20-minute to 30-minute service.
- Considerations for the reduced frequency:
    - Approximately 30 rides in the impacted portion of the route each weekday
    - The area is part of the South Zone of Micro Flex // driven by Metro

Slide 14



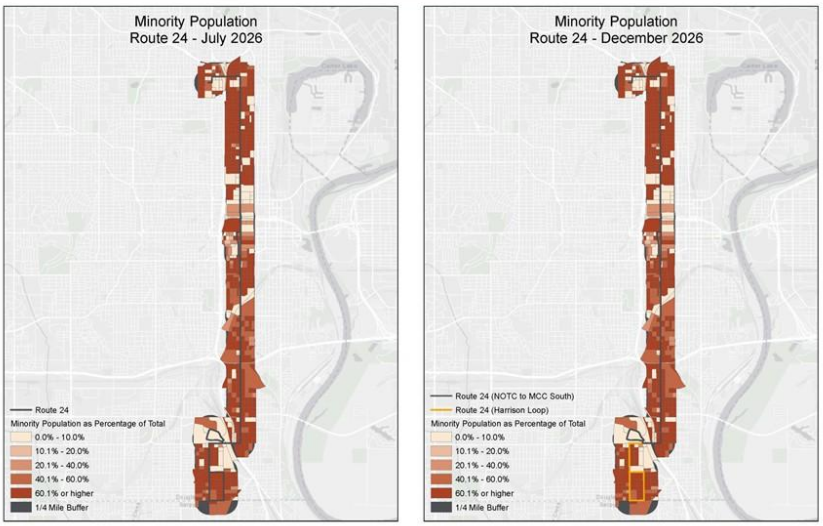

Title: Route 24: Average Daily Ridership

A bar chart of Route 24 average daily ridership in April 2026. Weekday average daily ridership was 1,211 north of MCC South Transit Center, 135 at MCC South Transit Center, and 30 south of MCC South Transit Center. Saturday average daily ridership was 681 north of, 80 at MCC South Transit Center, and 30 south of MCC South Transit Center. Sunday average daily ridership was 425 north of, 35 at, and 11 south of MCC South Transit Center.

There are currently 45 trips made by buses each day, meaning there is less than one rider per route. Looking at the effectiveness of the service is what led staff to make the recommendation to serve the area south of MCC South Transit Center every other trip instead of every trip.

Slide 15

## Disparate Impact Analysis: Route 24




| Benefits to Minority Population | Benefits to Non-Minority Population |
|---|---|
| 22.6% | 25.3% |
| | -2.7% |

15

Title: Disparate Impact Analysis: Route 24

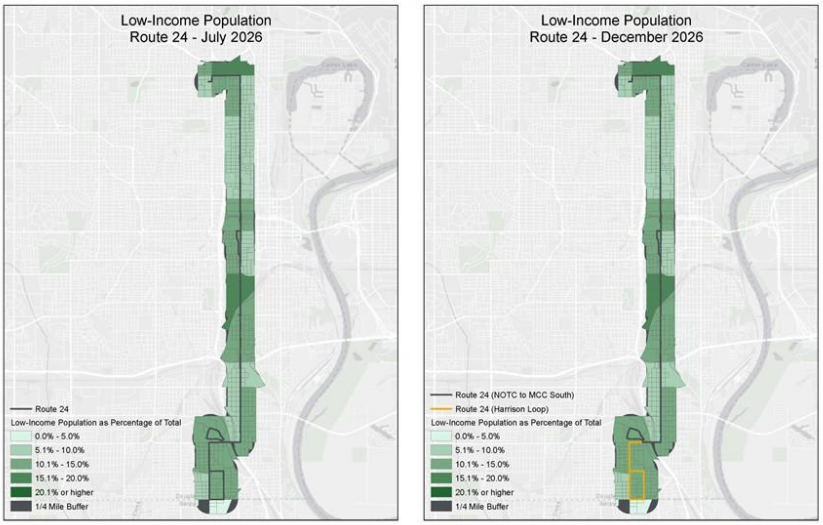
An image of an aerial map view of the City of Omaha where Route 24 travels and the quarter mile radius around the route. There are varying shades of red to indicate the percentage of residents identifying as a racial minority according to the decennial census. The lighter shade represents a lower percentage of the racial minority population in that area, and a darker shade represents a higher percentage. This image is the population surrounding the route as it existed in July 2026.

This is the same image as the first one on the left but represents the population surrounding the route if the proposed changes are approved and go into effect in December 2026. The Southern Loop of Route 24 (MCC South Transit Center to 30th and Harrison) is in gold instead of black as that area would have reduced frequency. There are no other identifiable differences between the two images, as the proposed service change does not include route alignment.

A table that indicates the percentage of the benefits experienced by the racial minority population along the route, which is 22.6% additional service, and to non-minority populations, which is 25.3%. The difference shows that racial minority populations experience 2.7% fewer benefits than non-racial minority populations.

Slide 16

## Disproportionate Burden Analysis: Route 24




| Benefits to Low-Income Population | Benefits to Non-Low-Income Population |
|---|---|
| 24.7% | 23.3% |
| | +1.4% |

16

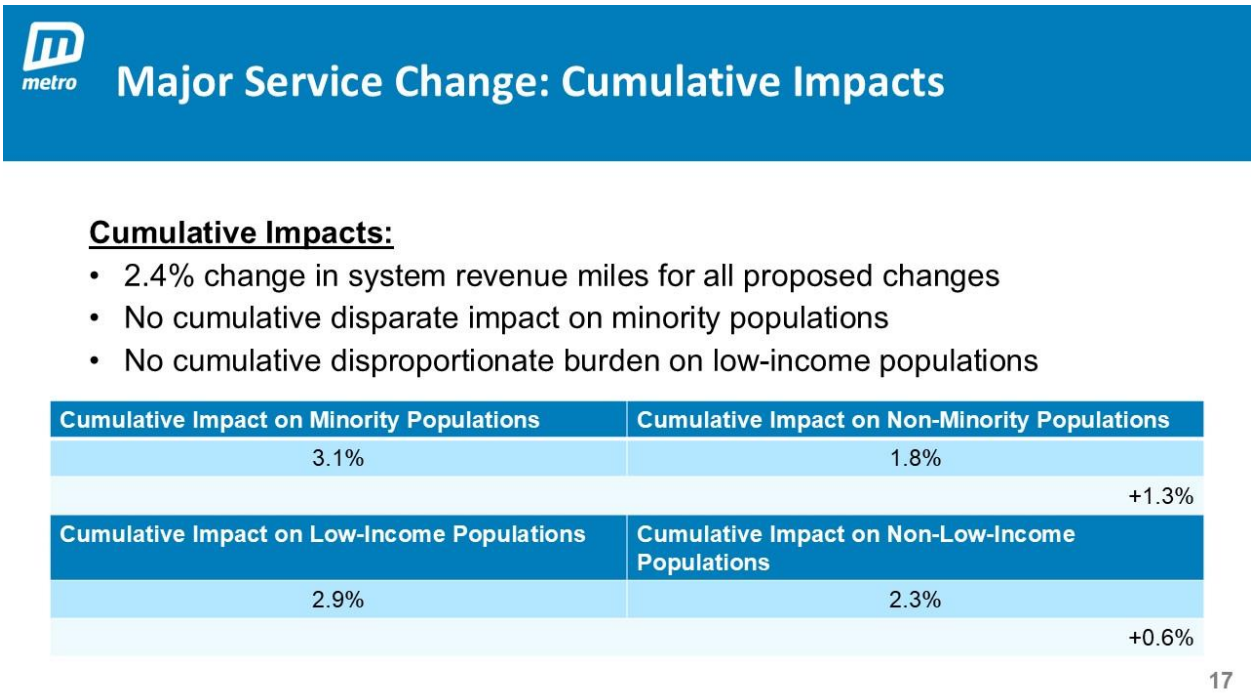
Title: Disproportionate Burden Analysis: Route 24

An image of an aerial map view of the City of Omaha where Route 24 travels and the quarter mile radius around the route. There are varying shades of green to indicate the percentage of residents identified as low-income according to the American Community Survey. The lighter shade represents a lower percentage of the low-income population in that area, and a darker shade represents a higher percentage. This image is the population surrounding the route as it existed in July 2026.

This is the same image as the first one on the left but represents the population surrounding the route if the proposed changes are approved and go into effect in December 2026. The Southern Loop of Route 24 (MCC South Transit Center to 30th and Harrison) is in gold instead of black as that area would have reduced frequency. There are no other identifiable differences between the two images, as the proposed service change does not include route alignment changes.

A table that indicates the percentage of the benefits experienced by the low-income population along the route, which is 24.7% additional service, and to the non-low-income population, which is 23.3%. The difference shows that low-income populations experience 1.4% greater benefits than non-low-income populations.

Slide 17




Title: Major Service Change: Cumulative Impacts

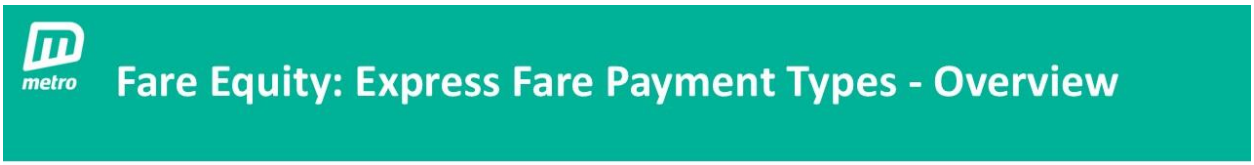
Cumulative Impacts:

- 2.4% change in system revenue miles for all proposed changes
- No cumulative disparate impact on minority populations
- No cumulative disproportionate burden on low-income populations

Two tables stacked on top of one another. The first table indicates the percentage of the cumulative impact of all proposed service changes to the racial minority population, which is 3.1% additional service, and to the non-racial minority population, which is 1.8%. The difference shows that racial minority populations experience 1.3% greater benefits than non-racial minority populations.

The second table shows the percentage of the cumulative impact of all proposed service changes to the low-income population, which is 2.9% additional service, and to the non-low-income population, which is 2.3%. The difference shows that low-income populations experience 0.6% greater benefits than non-low-income populations.

Slide 18




Title: Fare Equity: Express Fare Payment Types - Overview

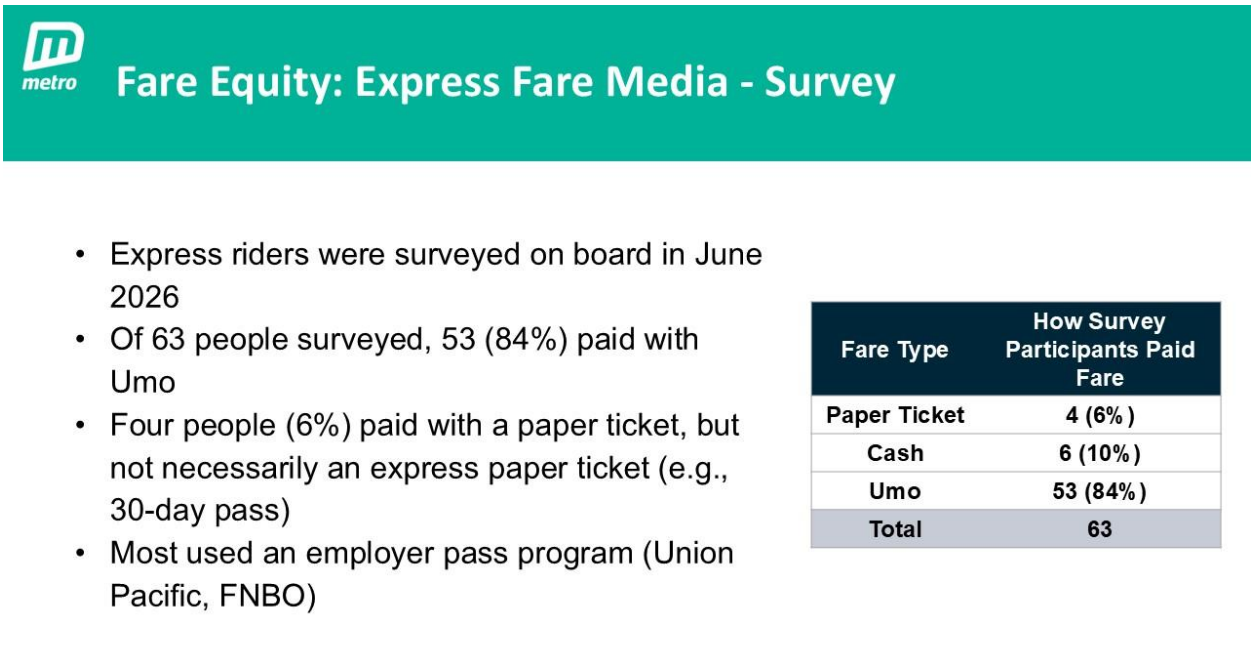
**Proposal:** Discontinue paper ticket for express fare

- Fare rate of $1.50 would remain the same
- Cash would still be accepted on board

**Why?**

- Express fare counts toward fare capping
- Continue the modernization of Metro Transit's fare payment system

Slide 19




Title: Fare Equity: Express Fare Media - Survey

- Express riders were surveyed on board in June 2026
- Of 63 people surveyed, 53 (84%) paid with Umo
- Four people (6%) paid with a paper ticket, but not necessarily an express paper ticket (e.g., 30-day pass)
- Most used an employer pass program (Union Pacific, FNBO)

A table that indicates the fare type express survey participants used to pay their fare. Four or 6% paid with a paper ticket, six or 10% paid with cash, and 53 or 84% paid with Umo. The total number of survey participants was 63.

Union Pacific has WageWorks, a pre-tax commuter benefit program, and FNBO has an employer pass program and pays for their employees to ride the bus.

The mentioned survey of express riders also helped inform the proposed service changes to Route 94 previously discussed.

Slide 20




Title: 2021 Fare Equity Analysis

- Metro Board of Directors adopted a Fare Equity Analysis on August 26, 2021
- What was approved?
    - Account-based fare payment system (Umo)
    - Replace 30-day paper passes with Umo fare capping after a transition period
    - Charge $2 for a reusable smart card after a promotional period
    - No disparate impact and no disproportionate burden found

Slide 21




Title: What is Fare Capping?

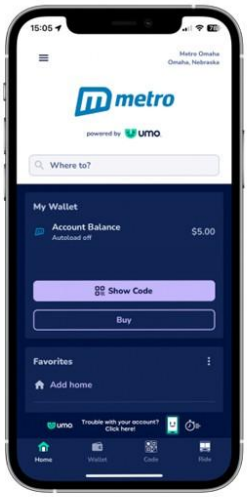
With a Umo account (card or app), riders can access “fare capping.”

- This means the system will recognize the amount a rider with a Umo account pays in a calendar month and “cap” payments when Metro’s monthly ride cost is reached – currently $55 for full-fare riders and $27.50 for half-fare riders.
- Once a rider reaches the monthly fare cap and boards with their Umo app or card, the system will allow the rider to ride for free for the rest of that month.

Slide 22

## Benefits of Fare Capping

- Monthly fare capping:
  - enhances customer convenience and functionality,
  - allows users to access the cost savings of a monthly pass without the burden of the upfront cost, and
  - only applies to Umo.




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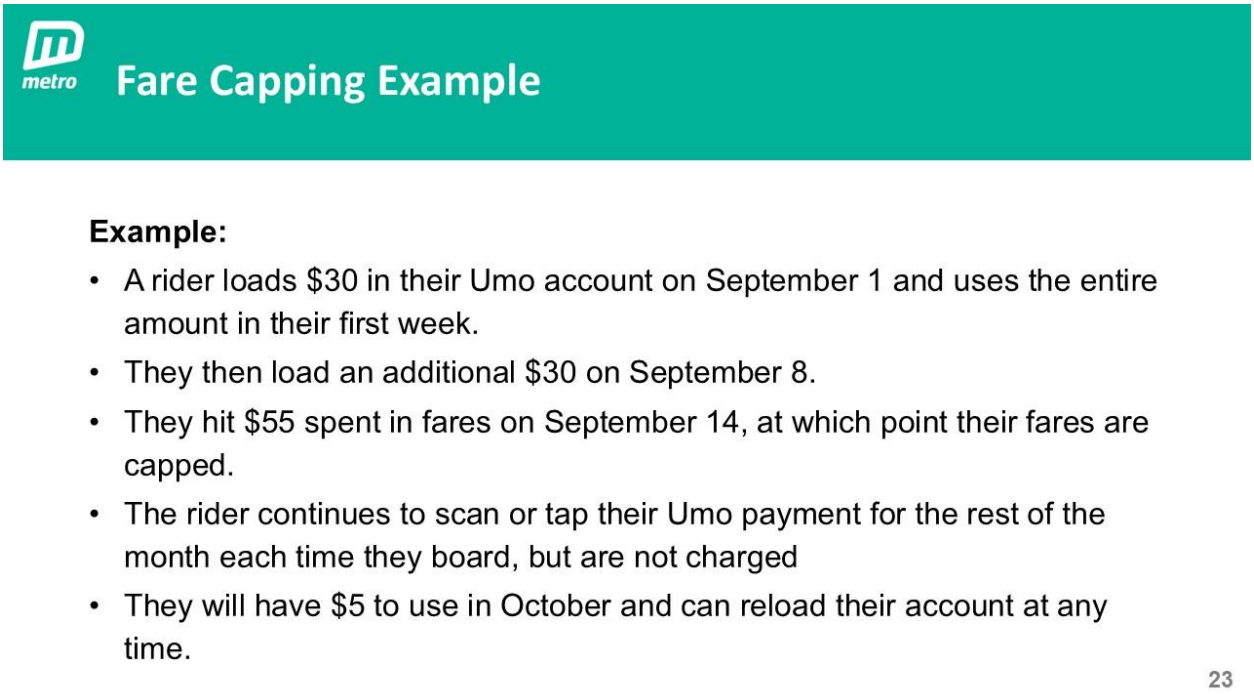
Title: Benefits of Fare Capping

Monthly fare capping:

- enhances customer convenience and functionality,
- allows users to access the cost savings of a monthly pass without the burden of the upfront cost, and
- only applies to Umo.

A front view of a mobile phone showing the Umo app home screen.

Slide 23




Title: Fare Capping Example

Example:

- A rider loads $30 in their Umo account on September 1 and uses the entire amount in their first week.
- They then load an additional $30 on September 8.
- They hit $55 spent in fares on September 14, at which point their fares are capped.
- The rider continues to scan or tap their Umo payment for the rest of the month each time they board, but are not charged
- They will have $5 to use in October and can reload their account at any time.

Users can also set up autoload for their account.

Slide 24




Title: Transition Plan for 30-Day Passes

- Metro Transit staff are working with social service organizations that currently sponsor 30-day passes for riders
- Last day of 30-day paper pass sales would be December 31, 2026
- 30-day paper passes would no longer be accepted as fare payment on board starting July 1, 2027

The six-month transition period allows riders to use up any 30-day passes they have, or come to Metro's administrative office to have the balance added to a Umo account.

Fare capping can also save riders money. If a rider pays for a 30-day pass upfront but doesn't end up riding enough to get the value out of it, they lose out that money. If they don't ride enough to reach the fare cap within a Umo account, the remaining stored value rolls over to the next month.

Slide 25

## Fee for Umo Cards

- Proposed a $2.00 fee for all Umo cards in 2021
- Currently propose a $2.00 replacement fee beginning January 1, 2027.
- Metro Transit reserves the right to implement a fee for all Umo cards, as originally approved, at a later date.




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Title: Fee for Umo Cards

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- Currently propose a $2.00 replacement fee beginning January 1, 2027.
- Metro Transit reserves the right to implement a fee for all Umo cards, as originally approved, at a later date.

A picture of the front side of a Metro Umo card. It is dark blue with teal, pink, and blue route lines with a bus icon and the Metro and Umo logos in white.
Slide 26

The replacement fee helps with accountability to being responsible with fare media. If a rider loses their Umo card and it is registered, they can come to the Metro office to get a replacement card and have the balance transferred to a new card.




Title: Metro Transit Contact Slide

Facebook: MetroTransitOMA
Instagram:@METROTRANSITOMA
YouTube: Metro Transit Omaha
Website: ometro.com

Image description: A row of buses in a garage.

This concluded the presentation. Cencic shared that when Metro transitioned to Umo, it was always designed to be the replacement system to the old paper passes. The adoption took longer with helping social service agencies transition and working out some of the kinks with the ticket vending machines. Metro ran both fare programs in parallel for a number of years while trying to prioritize the higher tech one that provides more benefits to riders and remove some of the cost to Metro of having to print, provide, and stock both types of fare media.

TAC Chair Yamada invited TAC member discussion and public comments on the presentation.

TAC Discussion

Vice Chair Anderson referenced the note that Metro reserves the right to implement a fee for all Umo cards at any time as originally approved and asked for clarification if that means that Metro has the right to change what the fee would be. Cencic shared that Metro is proposing to start with keeping the first one free, but a second replacement card would be $2. If Metro sees a lot of abuse, then this may potentially charge at some point. Cencic shared that Metro is happy to give out the first card, but there it does cost Metro more than $2 to issue a Umo card. The Umo mobile app will continue to be free for everybody.

Committee member Button shared that she is very excited to see increased frequency on Route 24. She currently lives in Aksarben and works at MAPA in Metro administrative building. Button shared that there was a time when she could take Route 11 down to 24th and Leavenworth, and then just immediately get on Route 24 and this was a very efficient way of commuting. When the service times changed from 15 minutes to 20 minutes, that became a lot harder because the transfer time no longer aligned between Route 11 and 24. Button shared that she would have to wait 20 minutes for the bus when it takes 20 minutes to bike to work, which made the bus no longer a viable option for her to get to work anymore. Button is excited to do more bus commuting if the proposed service changes are approved.

Vice Chair Anderson asked which month the proposed changes would go to the Board for review and approval. Cencic shared that it will either be October or November, after Metro has solicited public feedback. Staff are working to make the October Board meeting deadlines.

Committee member Mendoza asked where the Umo cards will be available for purchase. Johnson shared that they are available at all the ticket vending machines as well as the Metro office and that staff print Umo cards with them to outreach events. If a replacement is needed, the individual would have to come to the office because we need to have the individual prove their identity before funds are moved to a new account.

Committee member Mendoza asked if there are going to be any additional places added for people to get Umo cards when the 30-day passes are discontinued. Johnson said not in terms of an initial card, but staff are working to enhance the retail vendor network for Umo account reloading options if somebody wanted to add funds to an existing card. But in terms of initial distribution, the ticket vending machines, which are at the transit centers except for Aksarben, and all the ORBT stations. She invited folks

to share ideas of where Metro staff can target or get a supply of Umo cards to folks to enhance access.

Committee member Mendoza asked if the paper tickets are sold through any retail stores. Johnson said that some grocery stores do currently sell the 30-day passes, but they unfortunately don't have the same network for Umo. Metro staff are trying to emphasize people's ability to reload their stored value from the comfort of their home or from their phone, either through the app or through a web browser.

Committee member Mendoza shared that he was thinking of those that don't have access or the ability to use the technology side of it and suggested partnering with the Central Library to publicize the proposed service changes, learn about how the bus system works, or purchase Umo cards at the library. Johnson shared that there is a half-fare outreach program and staff have a mobile ID printer that they take with them to outreach events. She said that staff could connect with the Central Library to set up some times to get people set up for their Umo accounts, see if they're eligible for half fare, and then provide opportunity for general Q&A.

Battafarano noted that she spoke with the libraries about this at some point, but due to the high volume of requests, they are not able to advertise it as a collaboration with the library. However, Metro could reserve a room in the library and advertise an outreach event, the library just doesn't do joint advertising for community efforts like this because of the high number of requests.

Board Director Williams asked for confirmation that if a rider uses their phone, they don't have to have a Umo card. Ebat confirmed and shared that riders actually have to make a choice between the app or the card. Ebat shared that there are some people who prefer the cards and shared she is one of them because it taps easier.

Committee member Hill asked what the process would be for the 30-day pass transition for community service providers or human resources that have caseworkers handing out bus passes to clients, such as Health and Human Services, Community Alliance, and Workforce Development. Johnson shared that Metro staff met with DHHS in advance. Currently, clients have a letter of eligibility that they or a caseworker brings to the office, Metro staff authorize it and distribute the 30-day pass and then invoice the organization. Metro staff have already started transitioning these programs over to the Umo card.

Committee member Hill asked how the transition will work for city shelters that give out bus passes. Johnson said these organizations tend to give out one-ride or 10-ride

tokens and those will still be available. The proposal is only for the 30-day pass, and the 30-day passes work on the fare boxes, not on the Umo readers, so it is a different from the other paper tokens. This transition will help Metro move closer to one fare payment system.

Director Williams observed that the numbers on the disparate impact slides for Route 24 show a negative number and asked for verification that the negative numbers don't equate to a negative impact, that the difference between them is negative, but overall, there is still a general increase. Schweitz answered yes and that the numbers can be difficult to digest. He shared that in both cases, Metro is adding service to the community. There's a 22.6% benefit to minorities that live along the corridor, and there's a 25.3% benefit to non-minorities. According to Metro's Title VI Plan, the goal is to have a greater increase of service to the minority population. So, the fact that this is negative just means that there's a high number of people that are not minority status along Route 24, meaning they're slightly benefiting more than the minority population.

Williams commented that there doesn't seem to be a problem (with the numbers). Schweitz said no, the numbers are still within an acceptable range, and both populations are gaining service. Schweitz shared that Metro wouldn't want to see a vast discrepancy between the two percentages and that Metro policy allows for a variance of up to 10 or 15.

Johnson noted that even if the percentages exceed those allowed by policy, Metro staff would identify mitigation strategies to lessen the disparate impact, and then Metro's Board of Directors would decide if those strategies sufficed.

Cencic added that Title VI is looking at two things: if service is being reduced, agencies look at who is bearing the brunt of those reductions, and if service is being improved, agencies measure the benefits to be shared among minority and non-minority and low-income and non-low-income populations. Title VI is a lens to look at not only who might be hurt by the changes, but also who is benefiting from them. For the proposed changes, both populations would benefit.

Public Comment

TAC Chair Yamada invited public comments. There were none.

## Agenda Item #9 – Approval of TAC Representative and Topics for the August 2026 TAC Report to the RMTA Board of Directors (J. Yamada)

Chair Yamada provided a review of topics that had been discussed to this point in the meeting and asked the TAC if any of the topics should be communicated to the Board. The TAC members contemplated whether a report was needed at the next Board meeting since the majority of Board members were present at the TAC meeting. Committee member Button advocated having the TAC report to the Board to express gratitude for being able to have the collaborative meeting and to record that the meeting happened.

Motion for Vice Chair Anderson to represent the TAC at the September 2026 RMTA Board meeting on September 17 at 8:30 a.m. at Metro's Administration Building. Anderson will share appreciation for Board members attending the September 2026 TAC meeting.

There were no further questions or discussion.

**Motioned by Button; Seconded by Williams**
**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

## Agenda Item #10 – Date, Time, and Place of Next TAC Meeting

Wednesday, October 14, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. at the Metro Transit Administrative Building and Online

## Agenda Item #11 – Adjournment at 7:59 p.m.

**Motioned by Anderson; Seconded by Williams**
**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**