

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
REGIONAL METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY OF OMAHA  
2222 Cuming Street  
Omaha, Nebraska, 68102  
February 26, 2026  
8:30 a.m.**

**Minutes**

The Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha Board met on Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 8:30 a.m., in person at the Authority's Administration Building, 2222 Cuming Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102, and virtually. Notice of the Regular Meeting was published in the Omaha Daily Record on February 20, 2026, 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 Dombek  
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)  
E. Schweitz, Senior Manager of Planning and Scheduling  
W. Clingman, Finance Director (Virtual)  
J. Willoughby, Senior Project Manager  
A. Johnson, Civil Rights & Inclusion Director (Virtual)  
J. Beverage, Maintenance Director (Virtual)  
N. Ebat, Sr. Manager of Communications & Community Relations  
A. Summerfield, Senior Manager of Mobility (Virtual)  
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 8:31 am**

Notice of the Regular Meeting was published in the Omaha Daily Record on February 20, 2026. 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.

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

Regular Meeting: January 22, 2026

**Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Padilla**

**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS (GARCIA ABSENT) 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.

Clyde Anderson, 7020 Burt Street, Omaha, NE 68132

Mr. Anderson commended the level of service provided on Routes 18 and 15, noting that performance has been strong this month. He also observed that MyRide information has remained current and reliable.

Mr. Anderson indicated that he plans to raise the topic with the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) to explore whether additional support can be provided to assist workers and staff during severe weather events, particularly when other transportation options, such as rideshare services (e.g., Lyft and Uber), have suspended service.

### **Agenda Item #4 Administrative Report**

(L. Cencic)

Ms. Cencic began her report by sharing Metro's ridership numbers for January. Fixed network rides totaled approximately 268,000, ORBT 45,932, K-12 Rides Free ridership 47,276 for the month of January. For the 2025/2026 school year, the K-12 Rides Free program has provided approximately 407,000 rides, with a program total of 2.1 million. Microtransit completed 975 rides in January, with the majority in the North Zone.

On Tuesday, March 3rd, Ms. Cencic will participate in the We Make Omaha planning effort as a panelist for the *Health and Place* session from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Catalyst Omaha. The discussion will focus on how public health data can inform urban design priorities. The interactive session will explore how the built environment, transportation networks, economic opportunity, and community belonging intersect to influence health outcomes.

Ms. Cencic shared with the Board that Nebraska Public Transit Week coincides with Transit Employee Appreciation Day on March 18th. She expressed her appreciation to Metro staff for their dedication and commitment, and acknowledged the vital role Metro Transit plays in the greater Omaha region. Metro will celebrate Nebraska Public Transit Week from March 15th through March 21st with the following activities:

- March 3: Proclamation ceremony with Governor Jim Pillen
- March 15: Scavenger Hunt launch
- March 16: Fare-Free Day
- March 17: CEO and Mayor Ride Along
- March 18: Transit Employee Appreciation Day
- March 19: Books + Bus event with Omaha Public Library

Metro Transit staff are also evaluating proposed service changes anticipated for April and have been actively seeking public feedback through March 1st regarding these improvements. The proposal includes significant service increases on Routes 4, 11, and 13, as well as a realignment of Route 30 to add new service along Saddle Creek, in addition to several adjustments to other routes.

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

There were no questions from the Board other than Director Lonergan asking for the list of events for Nebraska Public Transit Week to be sent out to the Board.

#### **Agenda Item #5 Administrative Reports**

##### **Administration/Human Resources**

(D. Grant)

Mr. Grant reported for January that Metro hired five new operators and one paratransit operator and identified ten operators who are expected to begin employment in February.

Today, Metro Transit will be celebrating the graduation of six bus operators and one paratransit operator at 1:00 pm in the operator's lounge.

Mr. Grant concluded his report and opened the floor to the Board for questions. There were none.

##### **Programs/Operation**

(K. Pendland)

Mr. Pendland reported on customer service for January. A total of 11,958 calls were offered, with 10,741 calls answered, resulting in an overall service level of 91%.

Fixed route revenue hours for January totaled 24,181, reflecting an increase of 323 hours compared to January 2025. Passenger trips reached 268,640, an increase of 6,573 trips compared to last year, and the highest ridership for January over the last 10 years.

Route productivity level was 11.1 passengers per revenue hour across all fixed routes in January, which is the highest productivity number seen in January over the last 6 years.

On-time performance for January averaged 4% early departure, 12% late departure, and an on-time departure rate of 84%.

Service Interruptions accounted for 1.3% of revenue hours, which is an increase of .1% from December, but within expectations. Mr. Pendland noted that service interruptions generally rise slightly in winter months due to illness and the increased potential for inclement weather.

For paratransit operations, a total of 7,569 trips were completed in January, which is an increase of 159 trips from last January. The average paratransit passengers per revenue hour in January increased slightly to 2.0.

For microtransit in January, there were 975 completed rides in January, including 537 in the North Zone, 169 in the South Zone, and 269 in the West Zone. Based on reporting from the fare system, there were 131 riders transferred from microtransit to fixed route service, 81 riders transferred from fixed route service to microtransit, and one rider transferred from microtransit to paratransit service.

Mr. Pendland provided an update to the Board regarding the garage fire that occurred on the morning of January 27, 2026, involving the combustion of a single vehicle (bus 1308). He expressed appreciation to Metro Transit staff for their bravery and composure, adherence to safety procedures, the effectiveness of the building's fire suppression systems, and the timely response of Omaha's Fire Department. The incident had only a minor impact on operations. He also extended formal thanks to the custodial, facilities, operations, and maintenance staff for their efforts to ensure continuity of service under the circumstances. As a result of these collective efforts, Metro successfully delivered 99.6% of its service obligations that day, demonstrating the dedication of Metro's staff.

Mr. Pendland further reported on the severe winter storm that affected the Omaha metropolitan area on February 19th. Based on preliminary forecasts indicating lighter daytime conditions with worsening weather later in the evening, Metro announced implementation of Snow Route B service from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., when service was scheduled to conclude for the day. The 60-foot ORBT buses were proactively rotated out of service beginning at 12:45 p.m. By 4:00 p.m., heavier-than-anticipated snowfall, combined with high winds and low temperatures, significantly degraded road conditions, resulting in icy and low-traction surfaces system-wide. Due to the rapidly deteriorating conditions and the potential impact on the safety of operators, passengers, and the fleet, Metro operations then decided to pull in most service, with Routes 13, 15, 18, and ORBT continuing to operate until 7:00 p.m. The final Metro bus returned to the garage at 8:27 p.m. without the need for external recovery assistance. During the event, 20 buses became temporarily immobile, with ten buses requiring assistance from maintenance and field supervisor staff to be freed. Metro experienced four minor accidents caused by sliding vehicles; however, no injuries were reported.

System-wide delays occurred as operators exercised additional caution and, in some cases, pulled over until conditions allowed for safe travel. Mr. Pendland noted that the skill and safe driving practices of Metro's operators significantly reduced the potential for accidents and enabled full recovery of the fleet that evening.

The Planning Department is continuing to analyze available data to determine the full impact of the service interruptions. Preliminary figures indicate 7,236 passenger trips on February 19th, compared to 12,852 on the previous Thursday, and 6,127 trips on February 20th, compared to 10,901 on the previous Friday. Additional information regarding service impacts will be presented at the next Operations Committee meeting and included in the March Board meeting materials.

Mr. Pendland opened the floor to the Board for questions.

Director Dombek asked how microtransit functioned during the winter storm.

Mr. Pendland responded that Metro Transit communicates directly with microtransit when any changes occur with the fixed route fleet. The Operations Director advised Mr. Pendland that the microtransit service was pulled at the same time as Metro's fixed route.

Director Lonergan asked how the sinkhole in the Aksarben area was affecting service. Ms. Cencic responded that we are running on a detour at this time.

There were no further questions or discussion.

## **Communications**

(N. Ebat)

Ms. Ebat reported that since the previous Board meeting, Metro has had sixteen earned media placements. The media focused on the weather and the public meetings.

Metro held seven public meetings on the proposed service changes, using a variety of formats, including virtual and in-person options. Outreach efforts included an evening meeting held in conjunction with a regularly scheduled monthly public meeting, a weekend meeting at a coffee shop near one of the affected routes, and meetings at most of Metro's transit centers. One meeting was held during a significant snowstorm last week.

Ms. Ebat informed the Board that the public meeting scheduled during the storm was not rescheduled; however, staff adjusted their approach for that day. Several members of the outreach team boarded buses from the 14th & Dodge downtown layover at the advertised meeting location and rode routes within the affected area to engage directly with riders. Two additional staff members remained at the layover and circulated among buses stationed there to provide information and gather feedback.

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

Director Simon asked if there were any media questions regarding the service changes.

Ms. Ebat confirmed that Metro received most questions via the press release, seeking clarity on the changes and their impact on riders.

Director Corrigan thanked the staff who braved the storm for the public meeting.

There were no further questions or comments.

## **Agenda Item #6 Resolution 2026-04: Request Approval of Contract with ServPro for Fire Remediation Services**

(L. Cencic)

On January 27, 2026, Metro experienced a fire in the bus garage requiring fire remediation services. Metro contracted with ServPro to provide initial remediation services in a not-to-exceed contract in the amount of \$400,000. This contract included initial stabilization, environmental assessment coordination, temporary support, and initial air quality control measures, including HEPA-filter air scrubbers and hydroxyl generators.

Due to the nature and time sensitivity of this service, the CEO/Executive Director advised the Board Chair, Director Simon, who provided special approval of the purchase. Pursuant to Metro's Purchasing Operating Policy 27, all such emergency purchases shall be presented before the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting or a Special Meeting called by the Board Chair.

This item was sent to the Finance/Procurement Committee for review.

The resolution was recommended to the Board for approval.

The Board invited public comments and Board discussion on this resolution.

## **Board Discussion**

Director Dombeck asked if there was an industry standard on how often the garage is cleaned to remove diesel soot, and if there was a way to ensure regular cleaning is being done.

Ms. Cencic responded that while she does not have them in front of her, there are some best practices that Metro follows. The last few years, Metro has done a good job keeping the garage clean, e.g., scrubbing walls and repainting. Recently, the HVAC system was cleaned. She stated that the facility is an active working garage which comes with the expectation of some diesel soot and limitations, and Metro does follow guidelines and regulations. Ms. Cencic further stated that staff will evaluate if there are potential improvements to regular cleaning protocols.

#### Public comment

Clyde Anderson, 7020 Burt Street, Omaha, NE 68132, asked if insurance would exceed the deductible.

Ms. Cencic explained that Metro has engaged the adjustor and is currently going through the process. She is cautiously optimistic that the resolutions presented today will be covered in part by insurance.

Joyce Vondrasek, 619 S. 37<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE, provided more explanation of what a thermal event means.

The Finance/Procurement Committee had no issues or questions.

With no further questions or comments, the Board approved unanimously.

**Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Corrigan**

**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

#### **Agenda Item #7 Resolution 2026-05: Request Approval to Award Contract for Cleaning and Remediation Services**

(K. Pendland)

Metro sought approval to award a contract to United Water Restoration Group for fire restoration services beyond the initial emergency services provided in Phase 1 of remediation.

Metro solicited proposals from numerous fire remediation providers in the aftermath of the bus garage fire and received four (4) proposals for cleaning and remediation services of Metro's fleet and/or bus garage. Staff reviewed the proposals and recommended awarding a contract to United Water Restoration Group, not to exceed the amount of \$908,500. This project will include in-depth cleaning for all vehicles and buses in the garage that were impacted by smoke/soot, commercial duct cleaning and HVAC system treatment, cleaning of the bus garage, maintenance area, and mechanical/boiler/storage areas, and deodorization services.

This item was sent to the Finance/Procurement Committee for review.

The resolution was recommended to the Board for approval.

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

#### Board Discussion

Director Lonergan asked the United Water Restoration Group if it is local.

A representative from United Water Restoration, Shauna Slobodnik, confirmed they are local out of Omaha.

The Finance/Procurement Committee had no issues or questions. With no further questions or comments, the Board approved unanimously.

**Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Padilla**

**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

**Agenda Item #8 Resolution 2026-06: Request Approval to Award Task Order #17- Park Ave and Dodge Street ORBT Station Design Services for the BRT Final Design Contract with AECOM** (J. Willoughby)

The BRT Final Design Contract with AECOM is split into multiple task orders. Task Order #17 – Park Ave and Dodge Street ORBT Station Design includes the design and construction of a new small ORBT Station at Park Ave and Dodge Street. A large station was planned at Park Ave and Dodge Street during the design of the other 23 stations. Due to right-of-way constraints, the station was not constructed. The small station design, which came later, is small enough to fit within the right-of-way constraints. The small station will match the other three stations and will include a solar panel system. The other three stations will have their solar panel system upgraded to match. Solar power digital displays will also be installed at the four small stations since they were not available when the BRT project was constructed. The audio will also be upgraded at all 24 large stations. The scope of work includes the following: 100% Design Documents, 100% Cost Estimate, Construction Project Manual, bidding assistance during the advertising period, and construction administration. Metro and AECOM negotiated the total fee based on industry-standard hourly rates, the hours required to complete the scope, and direct costs (ODCs). AECOM and Metro assigned hours by task to each team member by discipline. The number of negotiated hours was 1,176, which was 2.00% lower than the Independent Cost Estimate prepared by Metro. Metro and AECOM then negotiated Direct Costs (ODCs). The agreed-upon fee was \$249,772.92. The negotiated fee amount was within 1.88% of the Independent Cost Estimate.

Staff requested Board authority to enter into Task Order #17 – Park Ave and Dodge Street ORBT Station Design Services for the BRT Final Design Contract with AECOM for the amount of \$249,772.92.

This item was forwarded to the Procurement Committee, prior to the Board meeting, for review.

The resolution was recommended to the Board for approval.

**Board Discussion**

Director Padilla asked whether the digital display for this station would be consistent with the displays at other ORBT stations.

Ms. Willoughby explained that the station will utilize a solar panel. During the original project, there were limited options available; however, the display will provide the same information as the other stations.

Director Corrigan asked why the original Park Avenue station was configured as it is and why it requires replacement.

Ms. Willoughby explained that the station was originally intended to be constructed as a larger station similar to the other ORBT stations. However, there is currently only a 10-foot-wide platform at the location due to right-of-way constraints with an adjacent property owner. As a result, a smaller station is being installed at that location.

Director Simon asked for confirmation that the larger ORBT stations are hardwired.

Ms. Willoughby confirmed that the larger stations are hardwired, while the smaller stations are not.

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

With no further questions or comments, the Board approved unanimously.

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

**Agenda Item #9 Resolution 2026-07: Request Approval of a Change Order for Bus Inspections**

(L. Rio Del Lopez)

On December 13, 2024, Metro awarded a competitively procured contract to Transit Resource Center (TRC) to provide in-plant bus inspections and post-delivery Buy America audit services for twenty-six (26) New Flyer buses produced at two manufacturing facilities. The original contract amount was \$96,770.00.

The original contract with TRC was based on an initial bus assembly and delivery schedule from New Flyer that experienced project delays. The proposed Change Order increases the total contract value to \$136,327.00. This adjustment is necessary to support additional inspection activities resulting from project delays at the New Flyer Crookston and Winnipeg facilities during vehicle assembly.

This Change Order ensures uninterrupted execution of the TRC inspection program and maintains full compliance with procurement and financial control requirements. This project is a part of Metro's compliance with FTA regulations regarding compliance with bus procurements, which require pre-award audits, in-plant inspections, and post-delivery audits.

Staff requested approval of the Change Order, resulting in a revised total contract amount of \$136,327.00. This project is federally funded through grant NE-90-X125 and requires a 20% local match.

The resolution was recommended to the Board for approval.

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

**Board Discussion**

Director Corrigan asked about Buy America requirements and what specifically is being audited.

Ms. Del Rio Lopez responded that a portion of the bus frame is being assembled in Canada. Under Buy America requirements, at least 75% of the bus must be manufactured in America. Ms. Cencic further explained that every component of the bus is inspected. She noted that there were four different bus builds with varying components from the pre-build stage through final assembly. The audit also observes the buses during the assembly process.

With no questions or comments, the Board approved unanimously.

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

**Agenda Item #10 Resolution 2026-08: Request Approval of Board Recognition of Nebraska Public Transit Week, March 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>**

(N. Ebat)

Nebraska Public Transit Week is dedicated to raising awareness of public transit and its benefits to all people across the state. Public transit has served the cities of Omaha and Council Bluffs since 1867. Metro Transit's fixed route service operated 3,904,941 revenue miles and 283,439 revenue hours in 2025. Metro's paratransit service, MOBY, operated 608,269 miles and 51,262 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 access their communities, whether that's medical appointments, grocery shopping, connecting with loved ones, or simply heading to a local park.

Metro Transit, 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 Transit, along with transit agencies across the state, are celebrating March 15th through 21st as Nebraska Public Transit Week.

Metro will partner with local entities that embody the importance of connecting through multiple areas of life and society: local elected officials will join Metro Transit leadership for rides through our system, giving our riders a chance to speak with decision makers; staff with the Omaha Public Library will lead a transit-themed story time, riders will have the opportunity to explore fun destinations around Omaha while solving a local transit-themed scavenger hunt; the Riverfront will play host to a Metro Transit bus where visitors can join us in celebrating with family friendly games and activities; Metro will launch our third Wheel Appeal student art contest; and recognize the hardworking and dedicated work force that makes up Metro Transit's employees.

**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 access to and the ability 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 accessibility and mobility;

**WHEREAS**, Nebraska has many public transit employees who provide service to Nebraska, more than 350 of whom are employed by Metro Transit, 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 Transit plans, builds, and operates public transportation service in the Greater Omaha area;

**WHEREAS**, 3.5 million rides were provided on Metro Transit's fixed routes in 2025;

**WHEREAS**, more than 88,000 paratransit trips were provided on MOBY in 2025;

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors wishes to encourage all citizens to increase their understanding, awareness, and knowledge of 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 Transit and proclaim the week of March 15 - 21, 2026, as

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

The resolution was recommended to the Board for approval.

Director Simon referenced the formal resolution and entered it into the record without being read in full.

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

Board Discussion

Director Williams asked for additional details regarding how the scavenger hunt would work and confirmed that it would be conducted while riding the bus.

With no further questions or comments, the Board approved unanimously.

**Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Williams**

**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**

Agenda Item #11 Board Chair Report

(C. Simon)

Director Simon took this opportunity to wish Lauren Cencic, Metro's CEO, a happy birthday.

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

Thursday, March 26, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

Authority's Administrative Building

Agenda Item #13 Adjournment at 9:13 am

**Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Garcia**

**ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES**