

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

Minutes

The Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority of Omaha Board met on Thursday, March 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 March 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 Dombeck
Ms. Yanira Garcia
Mr. Tim Lonergan
Mr. Cornelius Williams

Authority Staff:

L. Cencic, CEO/Executive Director
K. Pendland, Deputy Executive Officer (Absent)
D. Grant, Human Capital and Talent Development Director
E. Simpson, Legal Director (Absent)
E. Schweitz, Senior Manager of Planning and Scheduling
W. Clingman, Finance Director
J. Willoughby, Senior Project Manager (Virtual)
A. Johnson, Civil Rights & Inclusion Director
J. Beverage, Maintenance Director (Absent)
N. Ebat, Sr. Manager of Communications & Community Relations
A. Summerfield, Senior Manager of Mobility
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 8:30 am

Notice of the Regular Meeting was published in the Omaha Daily Record on March 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 Meetings

Regular Meeting: February 26, 2026

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.

Kyle Rossen 2464 Harney Street

Ms. Rossen commented on the ORBT emergency hatches located at the front and rear of the buses. She inquired whether Metro has an established policy regarding when these hatches may be opened for ventilation during hot weather.

Joel McGee 3108 Davenport Street

Mr. McGee addressed the Board with his concerns about the proposed change to end service hours at 8:25 pm on the Route 4 bus in the Regency area.

Agenda Item #4 Administrative Report

(L. Cencic)

Ms. Cencic began her report by sharing Metro Transit's ridership numbers for February. Fixed route carried 277,303. Currently, this is a higher ridership level for this time of year (January & February) than the same time period during any of the last seven years. Of those fixed rides, 48,190 were on ORBT, and 50,397 were K-12 Rides Free. Microtransit completed 892 rides, with the majority of those in the North Zone.

Ms. Cencic reported that Metro had a successful Nebraska Public Transit Week and thanked the Board for recognizing the week during the February Board meeting. As part of the celebration, a ride-along was held with Omaha Mayor John Ewing and members of his team. The group met at the North Omaha Transit Center and boarded Route 18, providing an opportunity to engage directly with riders. Discussions focused on the importance of collaboration among local governments to enhance transit accessibility, the need for walkable communities and quality sidewalks, and how land use decisions outside of Metro's control impact service delivery. In a related social media post, the mayor noted, "It's clear transit is the heartbeat of our community."

Ms. Cencic also shared that on March 18th, Metro recognized National Public Transit Employee Appreciation Day. To celebrate, yard signs were placed at headquarters to thank employees, and Metro leadership visited transit centers and buses to personally express appreciation. Metro employees distributed treats, posted signage throughout key areas of the building, and ensured banners were displayed at transit centers. Ms. Cencic emphasized that all Metro employees play a vital role in the organization's success.

Additionally, Ms. Cencic announced that Metro is partnering with the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) to host the National Rodeo in Omaha on Mother's Day 2026. This annual event rotates among cities and serves as a national competition for transit agencies, featuring both fixed-route and paratransit operators. She noted that while Nebraska hosts an annual statewide competition, it is limited to paratransit vehicles.

Ms. Cencic further reported that Metro is actively training the new customer service contractor, with services scheduled to begin on April 1, 2026. A transition period is expected as the new team is onboarded.

Finally, Ms. Cencic shared that digital signage and a kiosk have been installed at Eppley International Airport, which she recently observed in operation. She also noted that Metro is partnering with Florence Futures, a local nonprofit organization, to install three new bus shelters along 30th Street.

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

Director Dombeck asked if the new shelters mentioned in the Florence area on 30th Street have digital signage.

Ms. Cencic indicated the shelters being installed on 30th Street will not have signage; they will look like the shelter right outside Metro's building on 22nd & Cuming, and she further explained that the shelters are being paid for by the non-profit. As a part of MetroNext, there are 50 locations identified to place bus shelters with digital signage; this phase is still in progress.

Director Williams asks operators participating in the Rodeo if they are being provided with any incentives.

Ms. Cencic responded that participants primarily receive bragging rights. If they are participating, they are paid to do so, and the event provides an opportunity to engage in a fun and competitive experience. She added that individuals selected through CTAA's rodeo may advance to the national competition, which has previously been held in locations such as Florida and California.

Director Simon asked where the Nebraska Rodeo is held.

Ms. Cencic advised that it's being held on Grand Island. For the past couple of years, Metro has sent two paratransit operators, and if they place in the state competition, they move on to nationals in the host state for that year.

There were no further questions or discussion.

Agenda Item #5 Administrative Reports

Administration/Human Resources

(D. Grant)

Mr. Grant's report for February Metro welcomed 11 new employees and identified 11 additional hires for March. Of the 11 new hires, there were five fixed bus operators and six paratransit operators. Mr. Grant further explained that he updated the recruiting board report to make it easier to follow.

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

Programs/Operation

(A. Summerfield)

Aaron Summerfield, Director of Operations, presented the board report on behalf of Mr. Pendland. Last month, regarding customer service, there were 11,903 calls offered, and 10,985 calls answered, with an overall service level of 92%.

Fixed route revenue hours in February were 22,158, which reflects an increase in service delivery of 31 hours compared to February 2025. Passenger trips were at 277,303, which is an increase of 35,436 passenger trips compared to February 2025.

Route productivity level was 12.5 passengers per revenue hour across all fixed routes in February, which is the highest productivity number seen in February over the last 7 years.

On-time performance in February averaged 3% Early Departure, 14% Late Departure, with an On-time departure rate of 83%.

Service interruptions accounted for 2.5% of our total revenue hours, which was an increase of 1.2% from January, but includes the service interruptions that resulted from the winter storm. The winter storm on February 19th resulted in a loss of 100.26 revenue hours and accounted for 18% of all the service interruptions that occurred in February. As mentioned in last month's board report, Metro had planned for some reduction in service in preparation for the storm; however, due to the rapid deterioration of road conditions, Metro Transit was unable to continue service to the extent planned. Metro ended service on February 19th at 7 pm with the final Metro bus arriving safely back at the garage at 8:27 pm. Even with curtailed service hours, Metro was able to provide rides for 7,236 passengers that day.

For paratransit operations, a total of 7,577 trips in February were completed, which is an increase of 1,393 trips from last February. The average paratransit passengers per revenue hour in February increased slightly to 2.1.

For microtransit in February, there were 892 completed rides, with 461 of those within the North Zone, 131 in the South Zone, and 300 in the West Zone. Based on reporting from Metro's fare system, 118 riders were transferring from microtransit to fixed route service, and 108 riders who transferred from fixed route service to microtransit.

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

Director Corrigan asked if Metro is feeling any effects due to the transition to the new contractor for customer service.

Mr. Summerfield advised that at this time, a drastic impact has not been seen, but this may be different next month. Ms. Cencic agreed but did express that Metro is monitoring call hold times as this transition occurs. This week, there has been an issue with staffing due to representatives from the outgoing contractor staff finding new employment, but services provided have been within contractual standards.

There were no further questions or discussions.

Communications

(N. Ebat)

Ms. Ebat reported that since the previous Board meeting, Metro has had four pieces of organic media and has had six outreach events largely surrounding Nebraska Public Transit Week (NPTW). She provided information on all the events during NPTW.

- 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
- March 21: Bus + Crafts event at Gene Leahy Mall

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

Director Williams asked how the events went with the weather changes, and Director Simon commended Metro for their work during NPTW week.

Agenda Item #6 Resolution 2026-09: Request Approval of the 2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

(E. Brooks)

Staff requested approval of the 2027 element of the 2027-2031 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This is to program funds and create the 2027 Program of Projects (POP).

Staff recommended programming Urbanized Area Apportionment Funds (5307) and Bus and Bus Facility Apportionment Funds (5339) in the FY 2027 element of the TIP.

Additionally, staff recommended approval of the 2027 Program of Projects in the following manner:

PROJECT	SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
SUPPORT EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES	5307	Fed: \$3,364,400 Local: \$841,100 Total: \$4,205,500	Update BGE equipment, Paratransit software, Radio replacements, design work for Administration Building repair
TRANSIT ENHANCEMENTS	5307	Fed: \$160,000 Local: \$40,000 Total: \$200,000	Design work for transit center
UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM	5307	Fed: \$1,600,000 Local: \$400,000 Total: \$2,000,000	Planning activities for 2027 and Onboard Survey.
OPERATIONS	5307	Fed: \$13,650,200	Preventative Maintenance, partial ADA service, Employee and

		Local: \$3,412,550 Total: \$17,062,750	Staff Training, Project Administration.
PROJECT	SOURCE OF FUNDS	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
ROLLING STOCK	5339	Fed: \$680,000 Local: \$120,000 Total: \$800,000	8 Moby vans
OPERATIONS	5339	Fed: \$6,400 Local: \$1,600 Total: \$8,000	Training

Board approval will allow the projects to be committed for FY 2027. Projects will be submitted to MAPA for consideration at the April 2026 MAPA Board Meeting. Total new encumbrance of federal funds will be \$19,461,000. Total new encumbrance of local funds will be \$4,815,250. Total new encumbrance of all funds will be \$24,276,250. Approval ensures Metro’s compliance with FTA planning requirements.

This item was reviewed by the procurement committee prior to the Board Meeting.

The resolution was recommended to the Board for approval.

The Board invited public comments and Board discussion on this resolution. There were no public comments on this resolution.

Board Discussion

Director Corrigan asked if the onboard survey is a usual addition to the project's budget.

Ms. Cencic responded that yes, a usual occurrence due to Title VI and occurs every five years. This is also used for route planning purposes.

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

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

Agenda Item #7 Resolution 2026-10: Request Approval of the Title VI Service Equity Analysis for Proposed April 2026 Service Changes (A. Johnson)

Metro Transit’s Title VI Policy requires a Service Equity Analysis to be completed for any proposed changes that meet Metro Transit’s definition of a Major Service Change, including:

1. The addition and/or elimination of a bus route.
2. A ten percent or more addition or reduction in the system revenue miles.
3. A fifteen percent or more addition or reduction of revenue miles on any individual route.
 - i. This includes a change in frequency, span of service, or route alignment beyond a three-quarter-mile buffer of the terminus and either side of an existing alignment.

The proposed service changes for April 2026 meet this definition of a Major Service Change due to proposed changes to the Route 11 schedule that would adjust the schedule more than seven minutes during peak hour periods, the revenue miles on Routes 13 and 30 would increase by more than 15% and the proposed route alignment for Route 30 is greater than the allowable three-quarter mile buffer.

A Title VI Service Equity Analysis was completed to identify the impact of the proposed changes to Routes 11, 13, and 30 on (racial) minority and low-income populations. The Title VI Service Equity Analysis found:

- **No disparate impact on minority populations.**
 - The cumulative system level of the benefit of all proposed changes to minorities is 4.3% additional service, and to non-minorities is 4.8%. The negative difference of 0.5% does not exceed the 15% threshold of Metro Transit's Disparate Impact Policy.
- **No disproportionate burden on low-income populations.**
 - The cumulative system level of the benefit of all proposed changes to low-income populations is 5.0% additional service, and to non-low-income populations is 4.6%. The negative difference of 0.5% does not exceed the 15% threshold of Metro Transit's Disproportionate Burden Policy.
- **No mitigation strategies are proposed as a result of the adverse effect reviews for Routes 11, 13, and 30.**
- **The proposed additions and changes to service on Routes 3, 4, 11, 13, 18, 26, 30, and 106 do not come at the expense of reductions in service on other routes.**
- **Minority and/or low-income individuals will not be limited by or denied the benefits of the proposed service increases.**

Board approval will ensure Metro Transit's continued compliance with the Federal Transit Administration's Title VI requirements. The Title VI Service Equity Analysis was available as part of the March 2026 Board Packet and available to the public upon request by emailing civilrights@ometro.com.

The resolution was recommended to the Board for approval.

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

Public Comment

Clyde Anderson 7020 Burt Street, Omaha, NE - Vice Chair of Transit Advisory Committee (TAC)

Mr. Anderson stated that the proposed service changes that are scheduled for implementation on April 19, 2026, were presented to TAC. He noted that feedback from public meetings held in February was favorable. On March 11, 2026, TAC members unanimously approved the proposed bus service and route changes.

Mr. Anderson expressed concern regarding the Route 4 service to Regency ending earlier in the evening and apologized for not recognizing this impact during TAC's review of the proposal.

Board Discussion

The Board discussed several factors regarding the proposed changes to Route 4, including whether the service change should be delayed. Questions were raised regarding ridership levels, specifically the number of riders utilizing the Regency segment compared to the overall route.

The Planning Department reported that prior analysis indicated low utilization in the Regency area, with approximately 1,097 total riders on Route 4 and only 10 riders going to Regency daily.

The proposed changes would provide an additional 30 minutes of service to the downtown area. Ms. Cencic explained that the service changes could not be implemented on a partial basis; any modifications would require withdrawal of the entire service change package, resulting in a delay to the other service improvements.

The Board acknowledged that service changes may have a negative impact on some riders but emphasized the importance of maintaining service efficiency and aligning with Metro Transit's mission.

Staff noted that the Regency area could be reevaluated following implementation. The potential for microtransit service expansion to the area, in coordination with Via, was also discussed. It was confirmed that a new Title VI analysis would not be required if changes made to Route 4 differed from what was being proposed to the Board, as the changes fell within the 10% threshold.

The Board discussed several factors regarding Route 4, including whether this service change should be delayed. In the end, the Board agreed that with any changes, some will be negatively affected, but ultimately, a service is being provided, and Metro Transit must strive to follow its mission.

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

Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Padilla

ROLL CALL: 4-0, with 1 abstention (Williams), MOTION CARRIES

Agenda Item #8 Board Chair Report

(C. Simon)

Director Simon congratulated Metro Transit on an incredible job during the week of NPTW.

Agenda Item #9 Date, Time, and Place of Next Board Meeting

Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

Authority's Administrative Building

Agenda Item #10 Adjournment at 9:29 am

Motioned by Lonergan; Seconded by Garcia

ROLL CALL: UNANIMOUS, MOTION CARRIES