



Metro Transit Advisory Committee

This meeting was held on February 11, 2026 from 6:32 p.m. to 8:01 p.m. and was open to the public online and in-person at the Metro Office (2222 Cuming Street).

Attendance

- Metro Staff: Bridget Battafarano (Community Mobility Coordinator), Alicia Johnson, PhD (Civil Rights and Inclusion Director)
- Committee Members Present: Joichiro Yamada (Chair), Clyde Anderson (Vice Chair), Gab Rima, Rondae Hill, Lindsey Button, Marshall Maurer, Alex Mendoza (virtual), Rose Krekelberg (virtual), Brian Neely (virtual)
- Committee Members Absent: Ray Williams, Nupur Dhoot
- Members of the Public: Alexander Liu, Rob Sembrat, Ryan Steinhauser

Motion to Revise the Agenda:

- Motion to revise the agenda – Lindsey Motions, Clyde seconds
- Approved unanimously

Opening: Public comment period (Limit to ten minutes total, please)

- None

Approval of previous meeting minutes

- January 2026 meeting minutes approval is postponed to the March meeting.

New Business:

1. Paratransit appeals: None
 - a. An appeal was made in December, but the appellant did not follow up.
2. Committee report on public feedback
 - a. Clyde: Ongoing issues with MyRide OMA app. Drivers have also shared challenges. Suggestion to invite an IT staff member to a future meeting to explain how the technology works.
 - b. Rondae: Two Blind MOBY riders report that their profile says driver assist but have reported that drivers are not assisting. How do the drivers know what to do?

- i. Metro: Riders can request reasonable modification requests and MOBY drivers receive instructions. If provided with rider information for these individuals, staff will forward this feedback to the MOBY Manager and send the reasonable modification form as follow up actions. *(The form is also linked here: <https://www.ometro.com/reasonable-modification/>).*
- 3. Committee report on Metro Board
 - a. Clyde attended, reported:
 - i. Lauren Cencic reported about the upcoming service changes, same as what was shared with TAC in the December and January meetings.
 - ii. High service interruptions in the second and third weeks of January. Kevin Pendland, Deputy Executive Officer, noted that many operators were out sick.
- 4. MOBY appeals process – Alicia Johnson, Ph.D., Director of Civil Rights and Inclusion
 - a. Presentation (attached)
 - b. Public comment - Concern about HIPPA and application content, will make this a future agenda item.
- 5. Metro updates and upcoming events
 - a. Public meetings for proposed service changes
 - i. Recording of virtual meetings will be posted online. The recording of the English presentation with ASL are currently posted. The recording of the Spanish presentation will be posted by the end of the week.
 - ii. Remaining meetings:
 - 1. Aksarben Transit Center, Thursday, February 12, 3-5 pm
 - 2. Hardy Coffee at The Highlander on North 30th on Saturday, February 14th from 10 am - 2 pm
 - 3. North Omaha Transit Center, Tuesday, February 17, 3-5 pm
 - 4. Downtown Layover at 14th and Dodge on Thursday, February 19th from 3-5 pm
 - iii. All meeting details are available at [ometro.com/february2026](https://www.ometro.com/february2026).
 - b. Nebraska Public Transit Week – March 15-21
 - i. More details about events and training sessions will be sent out and posted on the website.
 - c. Doing more on-the-ground outreach with April service changes at transit centers, if the Board of Directors approves the changes. We will need help from TAC if committee members are willing and able to help.
 - d. Sara Moulton, Transit Planner, is on the Technical Advisory Council for the Ames Avenue Safe Mobility Recovery Plan helping understand patterns of buses and advocating for safety and accessibility in the corridor.

- i. <https://keepomahamoving.com/projects/ames-avenue-safe-mobility-recovery-plan>
 - e. Lauren Cencic, Metro’s CEO, will be part of a panel discussion for We Make Omaha, the City of Omaha’s Comprehensive Plan, on March 3rd. The panel will focus on health equity and social determinants of health with transit.
 - i. <https://wemake.omaha.gov/>
 - f. Lauren Cencic is on the Age Friendly Omaha Steering Committee. Age Friendly Omaha is an initiative through AARP focused on making Omaha a great place for older adults and people of all ages to live, thrive, and stay connected.
 - i. <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/>
6. Open Comment Comments and Questions
- a. Alex: Is there a plan to move back to the former downtown layover once the Mutual of Omaha building is complete?
 - i. The conversation is ongoing, but no information is available at this point.
 - b. Brian: Is the proposal that Route 30 still for the route to go to Aksarben Transit Center?
 - i. Yes, that is the proposal. The full proposal can be reviewed at ometro.com/february2026.
 - c. Clyde: ORBT, bus drivers are laying over on 11th between Dodge and Douglas, but some drivers have refused to let riders alight.
 - i. Gab shared that they thought they could board at that location.
 - d. Brian: Has heard that the City of Omaha is applying for federal funding for physical infrastructure.
 - i. Lindsey shared that the City of Omaha is constantly applying for funding for physical infrastructure.
 - ii. Alexander shared that the City Council is focused on walkability but expressed frustration that the ADA component of walkability has not been included.
 - iii. Clyde shared that there was a news report that funding was granted for replacement of the L street bridge.
 - e. Alex: Is the 15th and Douglas ORBT station/stop going to open once construction is done?
 - i. Staff were unsure and will inquire with Planning and report back.
 - f. Downtown transit center – Alex, Joey, Clyde and Gab shared that it would be ideal to have a downtown transit center location and clarity about ORBT stops.
 - g. Rondae: Will there be any impact to MOBY with the service changes?

- i. No, the service area for MOBY will not change with the proposed service changes. The only impacts to MOBY are expansion of service hours for routes that are proposed to have extended service.
 - h. Conversation around paratransit service in surrounding cities (e.g., Bellevue, La Vista, Ralston, Papillion)
 - i. MAPA has a Mobility Resource Guide: <https://mapacog.org/data-maps/mobility-resource-guide/>
 - i. Alexander raised concerns about city responsibility to provide ADA transportation alternative to riders. Proposed that this is an opportunity for Metro to collaborate with the city to get this done by entering an agreement to allow the city to provide this where Metro has jurisdiction.
- 7. Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm
 - a. Lindsey motioned, Clyde seconded, unanimously passed.

Next meeting:

- March 11, 6:30 p.m. at Metro administrative offices and on Zoom

For questions, please contact Bridget Battafarano at 402-341-7560 ext. 2560



Overview of TAC's Role in ADA Paratransit (MOBY) Eligibility

Metro Transit Advisory Committee

February 11, 2026



Historical Context of Paratransit Service

- 1970-1990: Back-and-forth between industry lobbyists and the federal government about mandatory lifts on buses
- “Local option” was introduced and reinforced as a compromise. Agencies could choose to put lifts on all buses or create paratransit service to meet the need.
- MOBY was launched on February 14, 1978
- 1990: Americans with Disabilities Act signed into law
 - Lifts on buses was the only piece required to be implemented within 30 days of passage

MOBY Service

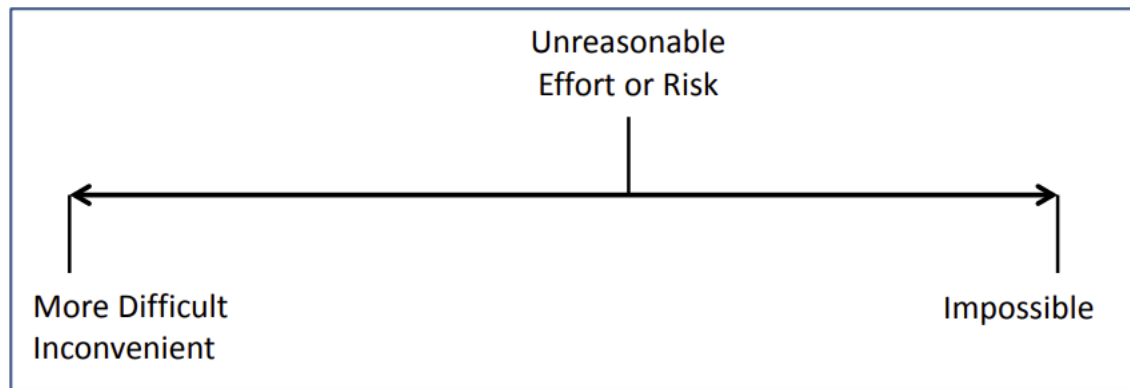
- Minimum requirement is to provide paratransit service $\frac{3}{4}$ mile on each side and terminus of a fixed route
- Express routes do not have a paratransit requirement.
- Operate same hours as the route the service area is connected to
- Fare is a maximum of twice the fixed route fare
- Trips must be booked by 4:30 p.m. the day before
- 30-minute pickup window
- Beginning March 1, 2026, the MOBY van will wait a maximum of five minutes upon arrival within the pickup window. This does not include boarding time.

Paratransit Eligibility

- Eligibility for complementary paratransit is directly related to the functional ability of individuals with disabilities to use fixed route transit services.
- Eligibility is not based on a diagnosis or type of disability.
- Eligibility is not based on the type of mobility aids that individuals use.
- Eligibility is not based on age, income, or whether or not individuals can drive or have access to private automobile transportation.

Eligibility Categories

1. Inability to navigate system independently
2. Lack of accessible vehicles, stations, or bus stops
3. Inability to reach a boarding point or final destination
 - a. Individuals are not ADA paratransit eligible if getting to or from fixed route stops and stations is only more difficult or inconvenient.



MOBY Eligibility Types

Unconditional Eligibility

Conditional Eligibility

Temporary Eligibility

Not Eligible (Denial)

Appeal Process

- Individuals have the right to appeal any written eligibility determination.
 - Could appeal denial, conditional or temporary eligibility status, or suspension status for no-shows.
- An individual must submit notice of appeal within sixty (60) days of receipt of the written eligibility determination.
- TAC reviews the eligibility determination and any additional information provided by the applicant.
- Any individual, or personal representative, appealing an eligibility determination is strongly encouraged to attend the TAC meeting.

Appeal Process

- The appeal hearing is not a public meeting.
- All information from an applicant will be treated as confidential.
- TAC's recommendation for approval or denial of the appeal is final. Written notification of TAC's recommendation will be provided to the individual, or their representative, within thirty (30) days, if all information has been provided by the appellant.
- If a recommendation is not made within thirty (30) days, on day thirty-one (31), paratransit MOBY service will be provided to the individual until TAC provides a recommendation.

Appeal Process

- Metro may refuse or suspend MOBY service if a rider establishes a pattern of behavior or misuse; engages in violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct; or represents a direct threat to the health or safety of others.
- MOBY Operations provides the rider with a written notice of the proposed suspension.
- Initial appeal goes to the Civil Rights and Inclusion Department.
- Individual can appeal to TAC if CRI Department determination is unsatisfactory.

Assessing Abilities to Use Fixed Route Transit Services

Tasks must be performed independently, with the exception of transit personnel providing assistance with boarding, alighting, and operation of lifts, ramps and securement systems. With a reasonable level of effort or risk, can the applicant indepe

- Get and remember transit system information
- Walk/wheel to and from transit stop/station
 - Throughout area – up to 3/4 mile
 - Over various surfaces
 - Over various terrain
 - Up/down curbs
 - Up/down curb ramps
 - Cross streets of various widths and with various controls
 - Find way in familiar and unfamiliar settings

Assessing Abilities to Use Fixed Route Transit Services

- Enter and exit transit stations
 - Flights of stairs
 - Elevators and escalators
 - Navigating complex stations
- Wait at a stop/station for transit vehicle with and without benches/shelters
- Locate and recognize bus/train to take Single route and multiple routes with transfers
- Board and exit vehicle
 - Inaccessible vehicles
 - Accessible vehicles (lift, ramp)

Assessing Abilities to Use Fixed Route Transit Services

- Pay fare
- Get to seat/securement area
- Ride in seated or standing position
- Recognize destination
- Signal for stop
- Perform above tasks in various weather and environmental conditions
 - Snow, ice, rain, heat, humidity, cold, smog
 - Bright light, low light, background noise
- Handle unexpected situations
- Remain safe when traveling alone (related to personal judgment and safety skills, not general public safety)

Assessing Abilities to Use Fixed Route Transit Services

Physical Functional Skills List

- Physical functional abilities needed to perform tasks required to use fixed route transit system:
 - Walking speed
 - Endurance
 - Coordination
 - Strength
 - Balance
 - Gait
 - Range of motion
 - Dexterity

Assessing Abilities to Use Fixed Route Transit Services

Cognitive Functional Skills List

- Cognitive functional abilities needed to perform tasks required to use fixed route transit system:
 - Orientation to person, place and time
 - Judgment and safety skills
 - Problem solving
 - Coping skills
 - Short and long-term memory
 - Concentration (attention to task)
 - Ability to seek and act on directions
 - Ability to process information
 - Ability to communicate needs
 - Consistency
 - Behavioral skills

Assessing Abilities to Use Fixed Route Transit Services

Sensory Functional Skills List

- Sensory functional abilities needed to perform tasks required to use fixed route transit system:
 - Orientation to place
 - Directional wayfinding
 - Ability to detect changes on surfaces
 - Ability to detect environmental cues (hearing)
 - Proficiency in using mobility aids