

# MINUTES

## COORDINATED TRANSIT COMMITTEE



Wednesday, April 16, 2025 | 10:30a

Boardroom - Main Level of the Metro Transit Building

Virtual Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88690451412?pwd=4KAm95gmpCKdgHNpCqW21VsxdEiCN6.1>

**(All voting members must be physically present to vote; virtual attendance counts for [maintaining voting status](#))**

*Committee members or members of the public seeking accommodations to attend or provide feedback to the meeting should contact Court Barber, Transportation Planner, at 402-444-6866 or [cbarber@mapacog.org](mailto:cbarber@mapacog.org).*

### Attendees

Alicia Johnson (Metro Transit)  
Tami Jenson (City of Council Bluffs)  
Ben Franks (Community Alliance)  
Cory Hale (Community Alliance)  
Rich McFall (Nebraska VR)  
Amanda Parker (City of Bellevue)  
Donna Monteleagre (City of Papillion)  
Brandon Smith (Omaha Public Schools)  
\*Mark Lander (SWITA)  
\*Kaily Stanley (City of La Vista)

\*Cindy Petrich (New Cassel)  
\*Kristin Harr (Iowa DOT)  
\*Cale Broderson (City of La Vista)  
\*Elle Ward (MAPA)  
\*Vicky Quaites-Ferris (Empowerment Network)  
\*Sarah Soula (NDOT)  
\*Ann Brodin (UCP of Nebraska)  
\*Brent Paulsen (Iowa DOT)  
\*Laura LZ (Unknown)

\*attended virtually

### Action Items

#### For CTC Approval

1. March Meeting Attendance

MAPA staff received requests to have the March meeting removed from consideration when determining voting status on the committee on account of the weather.

**McFall made a motion to waive attendance for March 19th 2025 for voting records. Cory seconded. Motion carried.**

2. Approval of Minutes from the [January 15, 2025](#) and [March 18, 2025](#) Meetings

MAPA Staff will present meeting minutes from the prior meetings for approval.

Second paragraph, Rich noted that the CTC had been presented the Civil Rights Policy to the group twice... not Cale. Second paragraph in item three, last sentence, Rich, not Hale.

Item 5, second paragraph, also Rich, not Hale.

**Hale motioned to approve the January 15, 2025 minutes, pending corrections noted above. Seconded by Alicia. Motion carried.**

Regional Transit Authority should read Regional Metropolitan Transit Authority (item 2, 2nd paragraph, last sentence)

Note in the minutes that this meeting was streamed live on youtube to account for last minute changes and increase transparency.

Rich would like to note that in future when having virtual only meetings, the committee should strongly encourage cameras be turned on.

**McFall motioned to approve the March 19, 2025 minutes, pending corrections noted above. Seconded by Hale. Motion carried.**

## **Discussion Items**

### **3. 5310 Program MAPA-NDOT Transition Discussion**

Barber presented on the 5310 program transition, providing background information that was also discussed at the March meeting. Currently, MAPA puts in applications to the FTA to directly manage service contracts. This is an odd role for the MPO to take on. Splitting the program between vehicles and service contracts also makes the program difficult to deliver, requiring increased coordination with the State DOTs, as well as FTA. One goal of this transition is to simplify the process for all parties. This should also make it more clear / easy to navigate for vehicle recipients working directly with NDOT. Trying to coordinate funding between FTA and two DOTs. A few years ago, NDOT approached MAPA and asked if we would like the State to start handling the whole of the FTA relationship. At the time, MAPA was hesitant, but is finding more and more that there are things that the DOT can do that are challenging for MAPA to handle as an MPO.

Morales added that MAPA would retain our ability to locally within the region define the priorities of which vehicles and how the vehicles are purchased as a part of a selection process, but once that is done, it would be a complete hand off to NDOT so local institutions work directly with NDOT and MAPA would no longer be in the middle. This would give local institutions direct contact with NDOT after the award is made. Barber noted we would continue to be a part of project selection. The CTC would still review applications and present a recommendation to NDOT. NDOT would still make those final approvals, especially with regards to ensuring all federal requirements are met. NDOT would maintain veto power, but generally our priorities would be carried up to the State. Donna asked for clarification on what would change. Barber - we would start using NDOT's application. Wind down the service contracts.

Amanda - where did the operational funds come from?

Barber - operational funds and service contracts are basically the same thing. The difference matters more when it comes to dealing directly with FTA

Amanda - is it NDOT saying we're just not going to do this any more or is it a MAPA thing?

Barber - a bit of both. MAPA wants to eliminate our direct relationship with FTA. We would like that to be on the State DOT as they are already putting in applications for state wide 5310 and this would simplify the process

Amanda - the service contracts would be moved over to vehicles only.

Barber - 5310 there are a number of different project types you can do with 5310 - buy vehicles, and service contracts / operations. In order for MAPA to eliminate that relationship with FTA, we would need someone else to handle all of those contracts. MAPA asked who is willing to do that. NDOT is the only agency who has said they can take that on, but they have the requirement that we don't do service contracts any more. Administering the service contracts is a lot of work, which is part of the burden issue.

Morales - MAPA is required to pass on federal rules and regulations to groups and agencies that are not normally comfortable dealing with high burdens of proof for submitting federally required supporting documentation. MAPA is stuck as the middle person trying to pass on these rules through contracting and things get stuck.

McFall - currently MAPA is accepting applications for the 5310 program. Going forward, the plan would be to go to NDOT's website to complete their application, which has been the same application they have used for a while. Barber - I believe so, but they may be in the process of updating that application. McFall - it's not something new. Realising that the DOTs aren't always able to attend CTC meetings, would you be able to provide an update to these meetings on vehicle status and other information to represent the DOT so the CTC can continue to go through project selection and continue the general function of the CTC? Barber - we would probably develop a new process there if we move forward with the transition. There would be a lot of discussion on what the process would look like both with the application and the purchase of the vehicles.

Vicky - Are you working with the agencies that will be impacted by no longer having the service contracts available? Are you providing time for the agencies to adjust?. Barber - yes.

Kristin - more conversations have happened with NDOT as there are more projects. Iowa DOT is not crazy about handling these funds. They don't have any other large metro areas where they manage 5310 funding. Caution that Iowa DOT is not fully on board with this transition. Going just to vehicles with 5310 they do not have an issue as this is what's been happening with vehicles going to region 13 (SWITA) to provide service. Iowa only gives the money to designated transit agencies and do not take applications from non-profits that are not already affiliated with a public transit agency. Who they are able to give funds to is different from Nebraska.

Barber - we wouldn't be changing the relationship with Iowa DOT with this proposal. Iowa DOT administers the funding for 5310 vehicle purchases from this region right now. Council Bluffs is the only Iowa agency receiving funding. MAPA administers the service contracts, but the vehicle purchases are flexed to the DOT. Kristin - our preference would be to have some sort of relationship for CB to be administering this. Flex funds has been done and can continue, but if there's more than that, Iowa DOT doesn't want to be administering. Barber - there would be no change. The flex might come from NDOT instead of MAPA. We tried to keep it as close to the way it currently operates as we could. Would only be removing service contracts. If there are other options on how we get the funding from FTA we are open to that as well.

Sarah - if NDOT is to administer this, the process and the relationship between our board and NDOT reviews has not been thoroughly discussed. CTC would still be able to review and have some input, but it would ultimately be NDOT's decision. Barber - MAPA understands there would need to be a significant conversation about what that process looks like and how CTC would be involved.

Donna asked for clarification on what changes would be made to the application process. Barber noted that MAPA's call for projects would align with the State's call for projects, but the specifics have not been fully fleshed out yet. Amanda - I've always been confused about where the funds are going and where the materials need to be sent - sounds like this may simplify things. Donna - are they considering that CTC doesn't need to be involved and NDOT wants to take over decision? Barber - NDOT would have ultimate authority, but there still needs to be room for the region as the funds are apportioned to the region specifically. MAPA and the CTC do have to be involved. McFall - ours would be a recommendation, the MAPA board would then give that recommendation over to NDOT. Barber reiterated that the level of authority MAPA has in that instance still needs to be determined. NDOT is concerned about making sure they are ... as they will ultimately be responsible to the federal government to ensure all rules and regulations are being followed. Sarah - we do this with Lincoln currently. It would be a reduced touch point.

Donna raised questions and concerns regarding reporting requirements on existing 5310 buses. Barber clarified that a lot of the confusion here exists because MAPA is acting as a go between. The process would be much simplified if the process went directly through NDOT.

Barber noted the change would ideally take place within the next year.

Donna existing applications / awards that haven't been fulfilled yet, what will happen to those? Barber - it will be different between service awards and vehicle awards. We haven't had the conversation yet about honoring existing awards. This would still need to be discussed. We haven't done a call for projects in a while. There might be some programmed in FY2026, but there isn't anything programmed in future years. If there is something that needs to be corrected there in how awards will be transferred over this will need to be addressed.

Hale raised questions as to what happens to the service contracts.

Future contracts would not include service contracts. Current service contracts will not be affected and will continue to be managed by MAPA. Some future contracts may be affected. If MAPA is already working with you to develop a new contract, this transition will not impact that contract. Awards beyond existing and soon to be committee contracts may be rescinded. There may be a possibility of transitioning these service awards into vehicle awards, but this is still under discussion. McFall - how long are those service contracts good for? Barber - depends on the contract. Usually 1 to 2 years. If we have the funding, then MAPA will need to spend it anyway as it would be complicated to transfer that funding to a State DOT. Barber will be meeting with each agency individually to develop a transition or step down plan.

McFall raised questions regarding the differences between State fiscal and Federal fiscal. Barber clarified that the transition would ideally take place within the next calendar year (by January 2026) which would set us up to participate in NDOT's call for projects at that time.

Lander raised concern regarding the city of Council Bluffs regarding a switch to vehicle only as this doesn't do much for the city due to a limited fleet, and that the operations money they receive is critical. Barber echoed this concern.

Sarah - 24 apportionment has to be entered by FY26. The sooner the better. The critical part is to discuss what will happen with service contracts as NDOT doesn't have the capacity to manage those. Everything will need to be in by March 1 of 2026.

Barber outlined that the decision to transition will need to be made by MAPA's board of directors, and they will want a staff recommendation, information from NDOT, and a statement from the CTC.

Kristin wanted to echo Mark's concern regarding CB to make sure that they are on board. Tami noted that she is open to conversations.

McFall asked if there would be an opportunity for agencies to provide comment on this transition, and if so, when that would be. Barber noted this opportunity would not happen before July, after MAPA has had an opportunity to discuss with each individual agency.

Amanda appreciated that this transition was raised with the committee early.

McFall raised that this transition has nothing to do with the current political climate, and has been in discussion for a while prior to the current administration.

Amanda asked for clarification on when Metro transit was involved. Barber is unclear as to how the program was run prior to MAPA took it over. MAPA has been running the 5310 program since 2013.

McFall and Morales provided a brief overview of the 5310 funding program for the benefit of those in the room who may not be familiar with it

Donna requested NDOT provide additional thoughts on the transition. Sarah noted there is a lot still to discuss to determine the details.

#### 4. Additional Business & Public Comment

McFall reminded the group of the April 21 Conference at UNO 9am to 4pm - free registration. Lutheran family services and the refugee community.

Alicia noted that municipalities in Nebraska are eligible to join the Regional Transit Authority, so requested that if committee members see an opportunity to provide transit to your region, to please take that back to leadership. Alicia is able to schedule conversations as needed.

Metro Transit also has a train the trainer program - if you want to learn how to train those you serve on how to ride the bus either in a one on one or group setting. There is a community mobility coordinator who we can set those up with and get you on a list if needed.

## **Future Meetings & Events**

TTAC: Friday, April 18, 2025

[ORTF Statewide Transit Conference @ UNO: Monday, April 21, 2025](#)

MAPA Board of Directors: Thursday, April 24, 2025

CTC: Wednesday, May 14, 2025

*Meeting Quorum: The presence of  $\frac{1}{3}$  (currently 5) of the members of the CTC at an officially called meeting shall constitute a quorum.*