

Nebraska Transit Trends

2017 LEGISLATIVE EVENT

Another successful Legislative Event was held on March 7 and 8 in Lincoln.

The afternoon began with a presentation about Nebraska's 150th Celebration by executive director Regan Anson. Anson provided information about the fun and exciting events planned for Nebraska's 150th Celebration including a health and wellness challenge, volunteer challenge, "Now you know Nebraska" YouTube videos designed for classrooms, a mobile children's museum, tree planting initiative and more. More information can be found at www.ne150.org. Donna Williams provided information about the Hildegard project which is a traveling photo exhibit titled "Bridges: Sharing our past to enrich the future." This signature event, endorsed by the Nebraska 150 Commission, issued a call to amateur and professional photographers to capture images of historical sites or hidden treasures from all 93 counties in Nebraska. The exhibit will be featured across the state throughout the year.



Regan Anson, executive director for Nebraska's 150 Celebration, led the first session for the Legislative Event.



Rik Barrera provides a session on generations in the workplace.

Next, Tourism Development Consultant Micheal Collins provided an update about what's new and exciting about Nebraska tourism, how it's funded and how communities can increase tourism.

Following this, an update was provided from consultant Bill Troe about the mobility management project. After a short break, the last speaker was Rik Barrera from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln who provided an entertaining presentation on working with different generations in the workplace.

Following the training, members were invited to participate in a special NATP membership meeting to hold elections that should have been held in 2016 and discuss bylaw amendments proposed by the board. Those elected to serve on the board were Scott Bartels (Eastern Region), Coletta Clouse (Western Region) and Denise Smith (At-Large).

The next morning, a breakfast was held at the Ferguson House across the street from the Capitol. All senators were invited and many were able to attend and sit down with NATP members.



Following the breakfast, the group moved to the Capitol to watch Lt. Governor Foley sign a proclamation declaring the second week in April as Public Transit Week.

Thank you to everyone who attended.

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NATP PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings to all,

I place a lot of value on conferences and training sessions that allow transit personnel to network with other transit managers, drivers and association leaders. A recent trip to Washington, D.C. created another similar opportunity. Six transit managers had the privilege to meet with our House and Senate staff members regarding transit issues. It was a terrific advocacy team, in part, because of the diversity of the group. It was a true cross-section of the public transit systems that are found all across Nebraska. Participants included managers from a recent start-up agency in rural Nebraska to a 43-year-old transit system; managers who wear dual hats as Veterans Service Officers and senior center directors; and managers who are wholly devoted to transportation, both urban and rural. Just as importantly, all were excited to be selected for this opportunity to meet and educate our elected officials and took this responsibility seriously.

Equipped with statistics, personal experiences, passenger testimonials, and even some updates from CTAA Director, Scott Bogren, we were able to relate the importance of the impact public transit has on each community, both socially and economically. We relayed concerns and potential solutions regarding regulatory reform, asset management requirements, vehicle procurement difficulties with the Buy America Act, and the importance of federal capital funding for infrastructure development improvement. An interesting point that Bogren made is that we were not there to beg for federal money. Rather, we were giving input on how the taxes they collect from Nebraska can be used most efficiently and beneficially by sharing our expertise and insight on the industry.



CTAA's Scott Borgren and Chris Zeilinger met with the group prior to delegate meetings.



It is good to know that our Nebraska delegation recognizes NATP as a resource for information and insight. It would be my hope that the success of this trip would be repeated in future years.

I look forward to seeing everyone in a few weeks in Scottsbluff for the NATP Managers Workshop. Until then, safe travels everyone.

Scott Bartels
NATP President

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

In April, Governor Pete Ricketts approved LB 339 which merges the Nebraska Department of Roads with Aeronautics to form the Nebraska Department of Transportation. The official merger will take place on July 1, 2017, and the new acronym for the Department will be NDOT. The mission, goals and overall branding of NDOT will be reviewed and occur over time. The merger should not have a significant impact on the Transit Section as we will continue to do business as usual.

NATP SENDS DELEGATION TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

The NATP board decided to send a group of NATP members to Washington, D.C. to advocate for public transit in Nebraska. The purpose of the trip was to develop relationships with the Nebraska delegation and their staff, discuss issues and concerns, offer solutions, and provide the delegation with a resource if future issues arise.

The NATP office reached out to the membership to seek individuals interested in making the trip. The following members represented NATP: Scott Bartels, Saline County Area Transit; Jeanne Doerneman, Norfolk Public Transportation; Mike Davis, City of Lincoln StarTran; Beth Siegfried, City of McCook Transit; Jeff Baker, Seward County Public Transit; and Tammy McConnell, Garden County Transportation.

The group traveled together from May 14-17. On the first day, the group met with CTAA Executive Director, Scott Bogren, and Assistant Director, Chris Zeilinger, to develop a plan for their delegation meetings and obtain information sheets. The staff reviewed the difference between advocating and lobbying. The NATP group could explain difficulties with regulation or inability to purchase buses but could not directly ask for more funding. After the successful meeting, the group put together a packet with great information



to leave behind with the delegation and their staff.

On the second day, the group met with two senators and two representative's offices. The group met with Deb Fischer in her office and went into more detail with the aides, highlighting why they were there to see the Senator. Within the packets, letters from constituents were included and were very much appreciated.

The group attended the Nebraska Breakfast on Wednesday morning. This 70-year-old tradition allows constituents to spend time with the entire Nebraska delegation and hear about what's happening on Capitol Hill. Nebraska was the first state to start this tradition and the only state to keep it going. All of the groups present at the breakfast introduced themselves and offered a short synopsis of why they were in D.C. Congressman Fortenberry put on a presentation educating the audience on some of the things that the delegates must do.

"I really appreciated this presentation because it enabled me to see things from their point of

view," said Tammy McConnell.

"I was impressed that Jeff Fortenberry took the bus in Lincoln. It shows that people are watching what we do," commented Mike Davis.

After breakfast, the group met with Congressman Smith's legislative director. Congressman Smith came over to introduce himself, but he had to leave to get to another meeting.

The group of NATP members made great strides on this trip. The board would like to continue to send members to D.C. to represent our state and transit needs.

"Overall I felt that our objective for this trip was met. We were able to advocate and educate on behalf of public transportation in Nebraska. It seemed to me that it was well received," stated McConnell.

"I had an amazing time on the trip. Very educational and fast paced!"



Watch for more information regarding future advocacy trips and ways to advocate for public transit.



2017 NATP MANAGERS WORKSHOP

Make plans to attend the 2017 NATP Managers Workshop taking place June 20-22 in Scottsbluff. The event will take place at the Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel & Conference Center.



Presentations include:

- NDOR General Updates
- Mobility Management Updates
- FTA Updates
- Enhancing Your Online Marketing Strategies
- Ethics in the Workplace
- Working with Local Governments
- Strategic Planning
- Homeland Security
- Marketing Your Community
- Roundtable Discussions

The annual banquet and membership meeting will take place on the evening of June 20.

During the banquet elections for the West Central, East Central and At-Large positions

will be held. If you are interested in running for one of these positions, contact Tiffany Fougeron at the NATP office.

We will have exhibitor time and prize drawings for two hours on June 21.

The Managers Workshop is a great time for learning, but more importantly, it is a time for networking. Catch up with old friends and meet newer managers.

More information, including the registration brochure, is available on the website.

See you in Scottsbluff!

STATEWIDE VANPOOL PROGRAM

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) has contracted with Enterprise Rideshare to bring a statewide vanpool program to Nebraska. A vanpool is defined as a group of individuals who agree to share their commute to work, thereby resulting in cost savings for participants. In addition, NDOR has secured federal funds to subsidize eligible vanpools which will reduce the cost even more.

For commuters choosing to participate in the program, the benefits include reducing driving stress, helping the environment, reducing

congestion and saving wear and tear on a personal vehicle. Employers benefit when employees have access to safe, reliable transportation especially when public transportation options are limited.

Enterprise will be responsible for providing commuters with late-model, well-equipped vehicles. They will also be responsible for maintenance, reporting, insurance, driver training, marketing, etc. NDOR will manage the program and pass through funding for subsidies.

Representatives from Enterprise will be reaching out to employers across the state to provide information about the benefits of vanpools and to recruit participants.

If you have an employer in your area that might be interested, ask them to contact Cynthia Kinning at Enterprise Rideshare, 402-659-6027, cynthia.e.kinning@ehi.com for additional information.





3rd National RTAP Technical Assistance Conference **TRANSPORTATION AT THE CENTER**

Omaha, Nebraska
October 29-November 1, 2017

Presented by the National Rural Transit Assistance Program

For more information:
nationalrtap.org/conference2017
conference@nationalrtap.org

NATIONAL RTAP CONFERENCE

The National Rural Transit Assistance Program is excited to host the third biennial Technical Assistance Conference: Transportation at the Center. The conference will continue the great momentum that was started in Denver in 2015 with content from FTA's Technical Assistance Centers, workshops, round-tables, and a focus on practical solutions for rural and tribal transportation.

Participating and cooperating organizations include the Federal Transit Administration, Nebraska Department of Roads, Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers, University of Nebraska, the

National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, and the National Center for Mobility Management.

The event will take place October 29 - November 1 in Omaha.

There is a room block available for attendees at the Hilton Omaha. You can reserve a room online or call 1-800-HILTONS and use group code "RTA" to make your reservation. There will be pre-conference events on Sunday so NATP members are invited to make a reservation for Saturday evening as well.



More information will be coming soon! Check www.nationalrtap.org/conference2017 for updates and agenda.

We look forward to seeing you in Omaha!

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIP CONDUCTS FIRST SUCCESSFUL TRIP

A new public transit partnership successfully conducted its first trip on Tuesday, May 2 as County Commissioners and staff from Hooker County and McPherson County scheduled and conducted the first coordinated public transportation trip through Tryon to North Platte.

The new service is being offered as a pilot project through the Nebraska Department of Roads' Statewide Mobility Management program.

The Hooker County Public Transportation van met riders in Tryon at approximately 9:45 a.m. Central Time. After paying the \$8 round-trip fare, the passengers boarded the vehicle for the trip to North Platte. The trip took approximately 40 minutes to reach the intended destination, the North Platte Public Transit facility at 1520 North Jeffers Street.

Upon reaching the facility, the commissioners and staff were treated to a tour and discussion of the City of North Platte's transit program by Marilee Hyde, Transit Manager. The North Platte system would be able to offer an extension of services to riders from McPherson and Hooker Counties should they have additional destinations in North Platte while the Hooker County vehicle is in use elsewhere. A will-call reservation through North Platte Public Transit would allow riders to pay a reduced fare of \$1.50 per ride if they needed the supplementary service while in town.

Following the facilities tour, the commissioners and staff ran errands around North Platte and stopped for lunch at the Lincoln Highway Diner before returning to Tryon.

The new public transportation partnership is available to all residents of McPherson County. The public transit service is available to users of any age and is provided through an agreement between the Hooker County Board of Supervisors and the McPherson County Board of Supervisors. The partnership will leverage existing public transportation in Hooker County for residents traveling to North Platte. The new transit service will stop in Tryon to pick up and drop off McPherson County residents at the parking lot to the west of the McPherson County Courthouse.

To book a ride on the new transit service, please contact Hooker County Public Transportation at (308) 546-9347.

If you would like more information about this topic, please contact David Sullivan at (308) 546-2244 or email at Soscou93@nebnet.net.

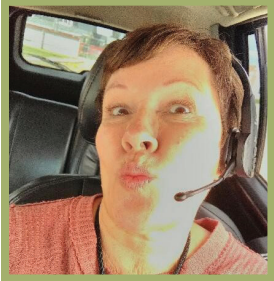


(From left) Hooker County Public Transit Manager Dave Sullivan, Hooker County Public Transit Driver Darlene Osborn, Hooker County Board Member Bryan Crisp, and McPherson County Board Member John Bryant gather in Tryon before boarding the van to North Platte.

2017 PUBLIC TRANSIT WEEK

The third annual Public Transit Week took place April 9-15 in Nebraska. More than 40 public transit providers held events to celebrate.

Check out the photos below and on the NATP Facebook page. We hope to continue the successful event in 2018.



Saunders County Public Transportation held a staff appreciation lunch, passenger appreciation day with gift bags, buddy day where riders could bring a friend to ride for free, and public transportation awareness day.



Kimball County Transit Services held contests and provided giveaways to riders throughout the week. Driver Kelly Durbin (pictured top left) made the week fun for all of the riders.



Valley County Health System held a "Spot the Bus" contest with prizes and offered free rides for veterans.



Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging celebrated with a coloring contest, free and discounted rides, passenger appreciation day, open house, veterans appreciation day, stuff the bus event, and employee appreciation day.

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**Next newsletter deadline is
August 23, 2017**

Please send your articles and pictures for the Nebraska Transit Trends newsletter to the NATP office by **August 23, 2017**

We want to know what all of our members are doing throughout the state. Also, if you see something newsworthy, be sure to let the office know. Submit your typed articles via email (as a word document) to the NATP office at **tfougerson@youraam.com**. You may include pictures if you like, but be sure to save them as a .jpeg file or they may not be included in the newsletter. Documents received after the deadline will appear in the next newsletter.

Visit Us On The Web!
www.neatp.org

transit video online

Check out Advance's Innovation and Safety in Transit video on YouTube. Numerous NATP managers and drivers are featured!

*Dates To Remember***June**

11-16 - CTAA Expo & Roadeo
Detroit, MI

20-22 Managers Workshop
Scottsbluff

August

30 - Older Nebraskans Day
Nebraska State Fair
Grand Island

September

26 - NATP Board Meeting

26-27 - Drivers Training & Roadeo
Kearney

October

29 - Nov. 1 - Nat'l RTAP Technology Conf.
Omaha, NE

2017-2018 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

NATP membership renewals were sent in May for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Thank you to those who have submitted dues. If you need a copy of your membership form, contact the office.

The NATP Board continues to develop new goals for the

association and attend events that promote NATP members and the services they provide.

If you would like to be more involved in your association by serving on the board or on a committee, contact the NATP office.