

# Nebraska Transit Trends

## UPDATE FROM THE NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ROADS

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) will be submitting to the Federal Transit Administration its State Management Plan (SMP) for Rural Programs for final approval. A change from the draft SMP that was submitted for public comment is the removal of a 10% fare box recovery provision that would have been implemented July 1, 2014. The NDOR will continue to analyze the impact of fare box recovery with the provision in the SMP for rural transit programs to charge a minimum boarding fare of \$1.00. This provision will be effective July 1, 2013. Another new provision in the SMP will be for rural transit programs to operate a minimum of 16 hours per week.

NDOR would like to introduce the new Transit Liaison Manager, Kari E. Ruse. Kari has worked at NDOR for 3 years. Prior to accepting this position, she was the Quality Management Coordinator in the NDOR Local Projects Division. She has worked for a variety of employers in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors and some of her experience includes grant writing, program development and management, adult education, and quality control.

Her contact information is:

Kari E. Ruse  
Transit Liaison Manager  
NDOR Rail & Public Transportation  
1500 Hwy 2  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759  
402-479-4694 (phone)  
kari.ruse@nebraska.gov

## DRIVERS TRAINING DATES

March 19th  
**Grand Island**

March 20th  
**Norfolk**

March 26th  
**Beatrice**

March 28th  
**Kearney**

April 9th  
**Alliance**

April 10th  
**Ogallala**

Additional information  
on page 5.

## CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RETIREMENT!

Congratulations to Larry Worth on his retirement from StarTran on Friday, March 8th. Larry has represented StarTran on the NATP Board for many years. We appreciate his years of dedication to Nebraska Transit and the association! Larry provided this message:

*"As Manager of StarTran, Lincoln's transit system, it has been my pleasure to have been involved in the Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers for over twenty years. I learned early on, and continue to admire the work of the rural transportation systems which afford vital transportation services to their clients, many who have no viable alternatives to travel for medical and other important purposes. I will miss working with members of the NATP, many who I have known for several years. But, I know you will continue to meet the transportation needs of your clients and your communities."*



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## LEGISLATIVE DAY

Participating in legislative activities is an important part of any association. Legislative Day is always a great opportunity for NATP members to speak with their Senators and provide information concerning transit issues in Nebraska.



The original date for Legislative Day was set for January 30, but due to snowy and windy conditions, it had to be

postponed until February 6.

NATP members and staff had a chance to meet for lunch at the cafeteria in the Capitol.

After lunch, everyone split into

groups and met with most of the Senators. Informative handouts and first aid kits that featured the NATP logo were handed out to each Senator.

Senators were very receptive to what NATP members had to say. Senators like to get to know their constituents so it is important that members build relationships with them.

Look for future details about next year's Legislative Day and make plans to attend! You won't want to miss out on the opportunity to spend the day with other NATP members, learn more about issues pertaining to

transportation, and meet with your Senator.



*Pictured from L to R are: Tiffany Fougerson, Dustin Butler, Mary Delka, Scott Bartels, Larry Vortherms, Carol Meyerhoff, Cindy Sanders, Denise Smith, Neva Umstead, Colleen Clayton, Vicki Goeken, Charles McGraw and Kathi Schildt.*

## 2013 TRANSIT MIDWEST CONFERENCE - KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

In the last newsletter, it was announced that NATP will not host the regular Managers Workshop in June. Instead, NATP has teamed up with transportation associations in Missouri, Kansas and Iowa to offer members a large, joint conference.

The Transit Midwest Conference will be held August 4-6 at the Intercontinental Kansas City at the Plaza Hotel in Kansas City, Missouri.

Executive Directors and staff from each association have had numerous conference calls to determine speakers and programming, social events, hotel contracts, etc. for this event.

NATP managers will be able to view a wide variety of speakers, attend a full exhibit hall, and network with managers from other states.

The entertainment for Monday evening will include entrance into the American Jazz Museum and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum. Of course, you can't visit Kansas City without sampling some of its finest barbeque! The meal on Monday evening will feature a barbeque buffet provided by Jack Stack Barbeque.

NATP is in charge of the exhibit hall so please encourage your vendors to exhibit at this event. The registration link for exhibitors is posted on the NATP website. Exhibitors can also be directed to the NATP office for more information on how to register.

In order to positively represent the association and our State, it is important that Nebraska has a large number of members in attendance.

The plan is to have a charter bus pick up managers at designated locations along I-80 and drive everyone to the conference. This will help keep travel costs down. Mileage to the designated areas will be reimbursed through RTAP.

A block of rooms has been reserved for conference attendees. NATP members are encouraged to share rooms if possible to help alleviate some of the costs. To book your reservation, call the Kansas City at the Plaza Hotel at (866) 856 9717. The group rate is \$109 per night.

Attendee registration forms are set to go out towards the end of April.

This will be a great opportunity for everyone. Please mark your calendars!

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Think spring! Like most of you, I am ready for warmer weather! Unfortunately, as I am writing this, I am catching glimpses of snow flurries. I hope everyone has had a safe winter and that you were able to transport your passengers without any problems.

The snow caused us to postpone the scheduled Legislative Day to the following week. Thank you to everyone who was able to attend and provide information to the senators.

With Spring on its way, that means the NATP Drivers Training is quickly approaching. If you haven't sent in a registration for you or your drivers, be sure to do so soon. Once again, Dennis Holtz from the Nebraska Safety Center will present in the morning. His session will include a traffic refresher and an ADA basic knowledge update.

Tiffany or I will conduct the

afternoon segment. A refresher on wheelchair securement and a presentation on distracted driving will be provided. We also have some new giveaway items that can be used "on the job."

If you attend the Drivers Training, you'll be able to view the new display banner that Tiffany designed. We plan on showcasing the banner at various training events, the Rodeo, the NACO Conference and at the next Legislative Day.

On page 6, you'll see that NATP has a new address. I purchased a building in Milford in October of last year and have been in the process of renovating ever since. If you send in any materials, be sure to use our new address as the mail forwarding seems to take a while!

Abe Anshasi and Kari Ruse, the new Transit Liaison Manager, were able to stop and visit with us last week. It was great to meet Kari, and we

look forward to working with her - Welcome Kari!

The drivers who won 1st & 2nd in the Rodeo, their managers, and Tiffany and I are all registered for the National Rodeo & Expo which will take place in Albuquerque in June. It will be a great learning opportunity for everyone. Since NATP is in charge of the Exhibit Hall at the Transit Midwest Conference, we will try to recruit some of the exhibitors at the EXPO to come to our conference in August. Speaking of the Midwest Conference, look for registration information coming at the end of April!

We hope to see you this spring! Thanks everyone for your continued commitment to "moving Nebraskans to the Good Life!"

Kathi Schildt  
NATP Executive Director

## NATP'S 2012-2013 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Let us all welcome Kari Ruse as NDOR Manager of Transit Planning, Training/Operations/ Drug and Alcohol Program. Kari comes to us from the NDOR Local Projects Division where she spent about three years. Welcome, Kari to the Public Transportation family. We look forward to working with you.

We had a very pleasant "snow date" at the State Capitol on February 6th. Thanks to all who adjusted their schedule and assisted in promoting NATP. Legislative Day gives us the opportunity to advocate for all the benefits of, and importance of Public Transit to our Senators. It also provides the chance to discuss current events and hot topics affecting our transit agencies.

It was interesting that Senator Harms was proposing a bill that would enforce cognitive

testing for elderly drivers. When asking, or forcing, drivers to relinquish the right to drive, it becomes imperative that other transportation options are made available. Once again the importance of funding public transit comes to light. That was a point that many of us stressed to Senators during our office visits.

Last, but perhaps most important, I want to thank everyone that responded to the NDOR request for comments on the proposed changes to the State Management Plan. Though we are awaiting official notification, after visiting with Frank Faughn, I am able to report that correspondence from Ellis Tompkins would indicate that the final requirements will include:

1. Operating a minimum of 16 hours per week.
2. Charging a minimum per boarding fare of \$1.00.

Item 3, the minimum fare box recovery of 10% of operating costs will be withdrawn completely.

With that, agencies all across the state can breathe a sigh of relief. However, let's not miss the point. State funding is a finite resource. We must all do our best to provide efficient, cost effective services. So, now that fare box recovery is not a requirement, I strongly urge that we use this as a performance measurement, along with several others, to set worthy goals of improvement for our agencies to strive toward.

I know we can accomplish great things when there is a joint effort toward desirable goals. That is another reason to encourage NATP membership.

Scott Bartels  
NATP President

# PASSENGER ASSISTANCE AND SENSITIVITY TRAINING



Below are the dates, times and places for the Spring 2013 Americans With Disabilities Act classes. NDOR strongly encourages all new drivers of public transportation to take this class.

Classes are limited to 15 drivers  
You must register to attend  
Classes are free of charge

Classes will be on a Saturday. If Saturday classes fill up, we will assign a second class on the preceding Friday at each location. To register please provide your name, address, telephone number and the public transportation provider you work for by contacting the Nebraska Safety Center at:

308-865-8256 or  
via email to [keithdc@unk.edu](mailto:keithdc@unk.edu)

Training is provided by the Nebraska Safety Center through the Nebraska Department of Roads.

## CLASS DATES & TIMES *All Classes are 8am—5pm Daily*

**April 13th**  
LINCOLN, NE  
Holiday Inn Express  
3939 N 26th St

**April 20th**  
NORFOLK, NE  
Holiday Inn Express  
920 S. 20th Street

**April 27th**  
NORTH PLATTE, NE  
MPCC—North Campus, Rm 201  
1101 Halligan Drive

**May 4th**  
KEARNEY, NE  
West Center, Room 003N (Park in Lot 24)  
1917 W 24th St.



**May 11th**  
GERING, NE  
Civic Center  
1050 M Street



For more information, please contact us at 308-865-8256





"Moving Nebraskans to the Good Life"

## 2013 Statewide Training Schedule

Make plans to register for the upcoming Drivers Training which will be held at six locations across the state of Nebraska in March and April. Dennis Holtz, of the NE Safety Center, will be presenting in the morning and wheelchair securement and distracted driving presentations will be offered in the afternoon. Don't miss out on this spring offering! If you have questions, please contact the NATP staff via email or phone.

☐ **GRAND ISLAND**  
Tuesday, March 19th  
Grand Generation  
304 East 3rd Street

☐ **KEARNEY**  
Thursday, March 28th  
NE Safety Center  
1801 Railroad Street

☐ **NORFOLK**  
Wednesday, March 20th  
Senior Center  
307 Prospect Ave.

☐ **ALLIANCE**  
Tuesday, April 9th  
Knight Museum  
908 Yellowstone

☐ **BEATRICE**  
Tuesday, March 26th  
ESU 5 Office (Room B)  
900 West Court

☐ **OGALLALA**  
Wednesday, April 10th  
City Offices  
411 East 2nd Street

Please mark which session you will be attending

### AGENDA

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome & Introductions
- 9:15 a.m. Traffic Refresher & ADA Basic Knowledge  
*Presenter: Dennis Holtz - NE Safety Center*
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch on your own
- 1:00 p.m. Sure-Lok wheelchair securement refresher
- 1:45 p.m. Distracted driving
- 2:45 p.m. 2013 Statewide Drivers Training & Rodeo
- 3:00 p.m. Adjourn



### 3 WAYS TO REGISTER:

Scan a copy of your form and send to [info@youraam.com](mailto:info@youraam.com)

Complete form and fax to 402.761.2224

Complete the form and mail with payment to:

NATP  
521 First Street  
PO Box 10  
Milford, NE 68405

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Transit System: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ NATP Member - FREE

☐ Non-member - \$75.00

**Please return your registration form no later than March 15th**

*NOTE: Driver wages & travel expenses are eligible for RTAP reimbursement through NDOR*

tel  
402-761-2216

521 First Street, PO Box 10, Milford, NE 68405  
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# Box Butte County Public Transit Places Additional Bus Stop Signs

Through the collaborative efforts of Box Butte County Public Transit and members of the City of Alliance Street Department, additional bus stop signs were placed at the bus stop located in downtown Alliance at 4th St. and Box Butte Ave. This was completed for better recognition and public education of the bus stop location. The location is used for the safe loading and unloading of passengers in the downtown area. A passenger shelter is scheduled to be established at the location this spring.

*Submitted by:*  
*Jonnie Kusek, Director*  
*BBCO Public Transit*



*See the new NATP display banner at the upcoming Drivers Training. We plan on featuring the banner at all of NATP's events throughout the year.*

## NACO Conference

NATP was represented at the 2012 Annual NACO Conference in Kearney in December. NACO is the Nebraska Association of County Officials and they hold a conference every year. Many of your county representatives were in attendance.

Tiffany Fougeron attended the conference and set up an informational booth in the exhibit hall. The exhibit hall was open for two days and many attendees picked up brochures and stopped to ask questions about what NATP does for the citizens in their

counties. A Husker blanket was displayed as a raffle item and was given away on the last day of the conference.

Charles McGraw of RYDE Transit was also on hand during part of the conference.

If you would like more information on NACO, you can visit their website at [www.nacone.org](http://www.nacone.org).

The 2013 NACO Conference will be held December 11-12th at the CenturyLink Center in Omaha.



## NATP Office Has Moved!

*The NATP Office has moved from Lincoln to Milford. We are excited about the "new" space - a renovated building built over 100 years ago! Our space has doubled which means we have more space for meetings and possibly various training events in the future. If you're in the area, feel free to stop by!*



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**Next newsletter deadline is  
June 14, 2013**

Please send your articles and pictures for the Nebraska Transit Trends newsletter to the NATP office by **June 14, 2013**.

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 [info@youraam.com](mailto:info@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 appear in the next newsletter.

**Visit Us On The Web!**  
[www.neatp.org](http://www.neatp.org)

*Dates To Remember***March**

- 19 NATP Drivers Training Grand Island
- 20 NATP Drivers Training Norfolk
- 26 NATP Drivers Training Beatrice
- 28 NATP Drivers Training Kearney

**April**

- 9 NATP Drivers Training Alliance
- 10 NATP Drivers Training Ogallala

**June**

- 2-7 CTAA National Rodeo/EXPO Albuquerque, NM

**August**

- 4-6 Transit Midwest Conference for Managers Kansas City, MO

**September**

- 17-18 21st Annual Drivers Training and Rodeo Kearney

**December**

- 11-12 NACO Conference CenturyLink Center Omaha, NE