

Nebraska Transit Trends

2015 ROADEO

The Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers held their Annual Statewide Roadeo at the Nebraska Safety Center in Kearney on September 23. A total of twenty-six drivers braved the rainy weather conditions to compete in the small bus and mini-van divisions. Thirty-two volunteers, made up of transit managers and staff and others served as judges for the event. Jeff Baker of Seward County Public Transit and Cindy Sanders of Guide Rock Public Transit were once again co-chairs of the Roadeo.

After the Roadeo, everyone who participated stayed onsite for the awards banquet. During the banquet, drivers who had been accident-free for the past 12 months were given a "Safe Driver" key chain. Drivers from both divisions were announced and presented with certificates for their participation along with water bottles featuring the NATP logo. Judges were also announced and thanked for their participation in making the event run smoothly. Roadeo committee members were also announced and recognized for their hard work.



Cindy Sanders presents the mini van division traveling trophy to Larry Vortherms



Cindy Sanders presents the small bus division traveling trophy to Diane Schaepe.

Committee members include Jeff Baker, Scott Bartels, Wayne Masek, Cindy Sanders, Denise Smith, Corrina Duckworth, Carol Prince and Neva Umstead. The committee met numerous times prior to the Roadeo to ensure a successful event.

The Roadeo competition consists of a written test, pre-trip inspection, wheelchair securement, and a driving skills course. This year's theme was nautical. The first and second place drivers from each division and

their managers are eligible to attend and compete in the CTAA National Roadeo in Portland, Oregon in May of 2016.

First place winners of both divisions won \$250 and an engraved clock. The second place winners received a \$150 check along with an engraved key ring that features the state seal. The third place winners received a \$100 check.

Winners of the small bus division were Diane Schaepe of Seward County Public Transit, first place; Carol Graham of Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging, second place; and David Fowler of Ogallala Public Transit, third place.

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NATP PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings to All,

I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving.

It has been a busy holiday season if you are getting involved in the process of educating your representatives and advocating for public transit. You can tell by the number of emails we send out urging your participation and requesting you to "Speak Up For Transit" by contacting your Senators and Congressmen that NATP feels it is very important for you to tell your story. As public transit managers, you are the experts. You know the transit business inside out; far better than your elected officials. I also believe that we too often forget to seek out support for our services from those who benefit most, our users. We need to reach out and ask passengers and agencies we serve to assist us in telling local officials, senators and congress how vital our service

is and what our needs are.

At this time, we especially should impress upon them our need for capital to replace old vehicles (state of good repair) and explain to them why "one size fits all" safety regulations are burdensome, harmful and inefficient. For example, do you believe that our rural public transit systems face the same degree of security issues and safety risks as Lincoln StarTran? Congress' proposed two-tier system of dividing transits by a) those with 100+ buses and/or rail or b) those with fewer than 100 buses, would require all Nebraska rural public transit systems to meet the same regulations as our urban partners. So, how many rural transit systems have enough set aside in their budget to hire a safety officer?

Furthermore, we need to advocate for a competitive grant program for buses and bus facilities. There are more than the seven high density states that are striving toward the state of good repair. Of the six vehicles in Saline County Area Transit's fleet, only two are not beyond the useful life status. I am sure many of you share my experience in struggling to finance the purchase of new vehicles.

So for those of you who answered our pleas for action,

a very special "Thank You." We understand how busy you are and that it isn't always easy to express yourself. But if you don't, who will? And you have a great service to advocate for – just ask your passengers!

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude to the NATP staff and board members for their dedicated work to continue improving transit and our association. It has been a busy year and much has been accomplished. We have enjoyed the opportunity to discuss our agenda with legislators, present our services to the League of Municipalities and the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska, attend conferences and training sessions, network with colleagues and set up a new communication system on the NATP website. I look forward to continuing to work for and with the association members throughout 2016.

Until we meet again, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Safe travels,

Scott Bartels

RYDE TRANSIT NEWS

The holiday season is upon us. RYDE Transit wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year.

RYDE Transit in Franklin is coordinating rides with Webster County Transportation Services and Village of Guide Rock Public Transportation. The goal of this project is to give Franklin County and

Webster County residents more options to travel to Kearney, Hastings, and Grand Island. Call 308-425-3724 to schedule your ride today.

A special "Thank You" goes out to the transportation staff at all locations who worked on days before, and right after the Thanksgiving holiday to provide transportation

for our clients. Your help is appreciated greatly.

2016 TRANSIT MIDWEST CONFERENCE

Mark your calendars for the 2016 Transit Midwest Conference which will take place August 14-16 in Kansas City.

Nebraska is once again joining with the Iowa, Kansas and Missouri state transit associations to offer a great learning and networking opportunity for members across the region.

The planning committee has held several conference calls and has made a lot of progress on the event. While most of the breakout sessions have not yet been determined, many of the keynote sessions have been decided including acting administrator of the

Federal Transit Administration, Therese McMillan.

Tours of KCATA and the streetcar facilities will also be provided.

A large exhibit hall will be open to attendees as well as bus vendors located outside of the property. Nebraska is in charge of seeking exhibitors and sponsors. Please let the NATP office know of any companies that we should reach out to. We encourage you to do the same.

The social network event is set to take place at the World War I Museum. Buses will shuttle attendees to and from the hotel.

A full day of workshops are planned that are sure to meet your needs. Nebraska-specific tracks will also be provided along with our Annual Meeting.

More information will be available as we get closer to the event.



2016
Save THE Date!

Transit Midwest Conference

Westin Crown Center
Kansas City, MO

In Partnership with the 2016 State Public Transit Partnership

August 14-16, 2016

Missouri Public Transit Association
Kansas Public Transit Association
Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers
Iowa Public Transit Association

AASHTO
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS

APTA
AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION

NATP
NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

Kansas Public Transit Association

ipta
iowa public transit association

MISSOURI Public Transit Association

Community Transportation Association

NDOR TRANSIT MOBILITY MANAGEMENT PROJECT

The NDOR Transit Section has procured the services of SRF Consulting to launch a statewide Mobility Management project to develop and implement a coordinated, regional strategy for transportation. SRF is headquartered in Minneapolis but project management will be provided primarily through their office in Omaha. The project kicked off November 18, 2015 with a meeting between Kari Ruse, NDOR Project Manager, consultants from SRF and subconsultants. The project duration is anticipated to be eight to twelve months.

Mobility Management is defined as a strategic approach to service coordination among

transportation providers to create a full range of transit services. The project strategy will focus on coordinating transportation services among public and private transportation providers including recipients and subrecipients of Federal Transit Administration funds. The primary objective of the project is to determine if regionalized public transportation through Mobility Management is feasible in Nebraska. The project will also identify methods for coordination to improve the sustainability, efficiency and accessibility of the transportation service delivery system across Nebraska.

To gather input from stakeholders, NDOR will organize a Statewide Coordinating Committee and up to six Regional Coordinating Committees. Both Committees will meet regularly during the project to review information and provide direction. Rural transit managers and nonprofit agencies providing specialized transportation for the elderly and disabled will be strongly encouraged to participate on the Regional Committees. The public will be invited to provide comment through public meetings and surveys. As they become available, all project materials will be posted online at nebraskatransit.com.



AAM Staff: Kathi Schildt, Amy Prenda, Jodi Roth, Kylie Schildt and Tiffany Fougerson



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Senate just approved a five-year, \$305 billion highway Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FACE) Act on December 3. The act calls for spending \$61.1 billion on transit projects over the next five years. All five years of the bill are fully funded.

Congress had not passed a transportation funding bill that lasted longer than two years since 2005.

For Section 5311, additional sources of eligible "non-federal" matching funds are established, including cash from non-governmental sources and advertising sales (both of which were previously not allowed as matching funds).

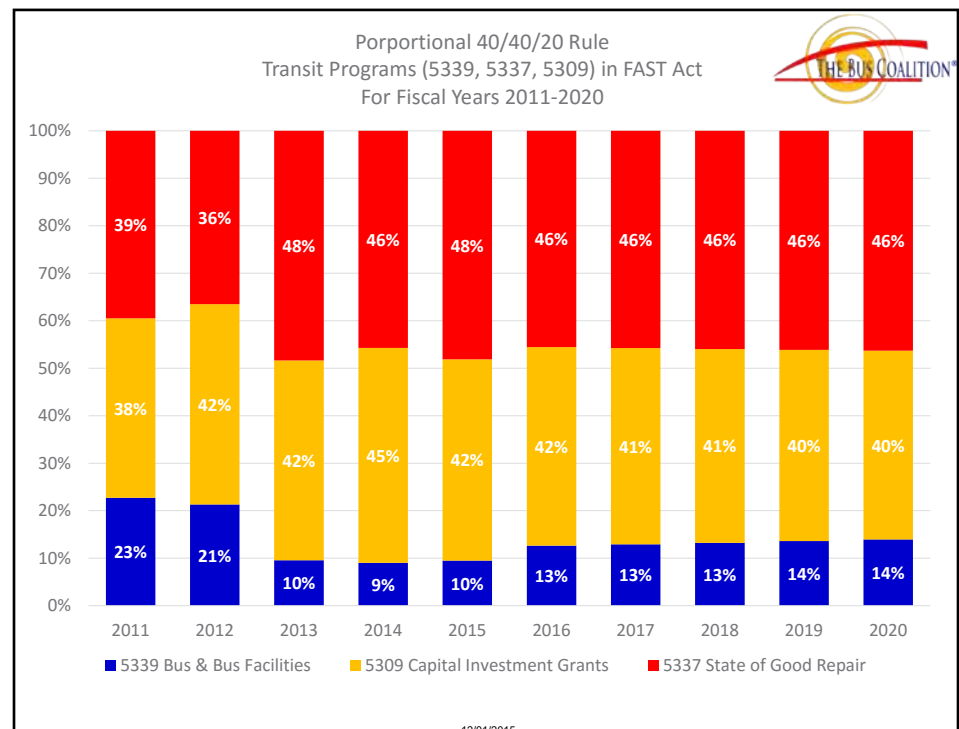
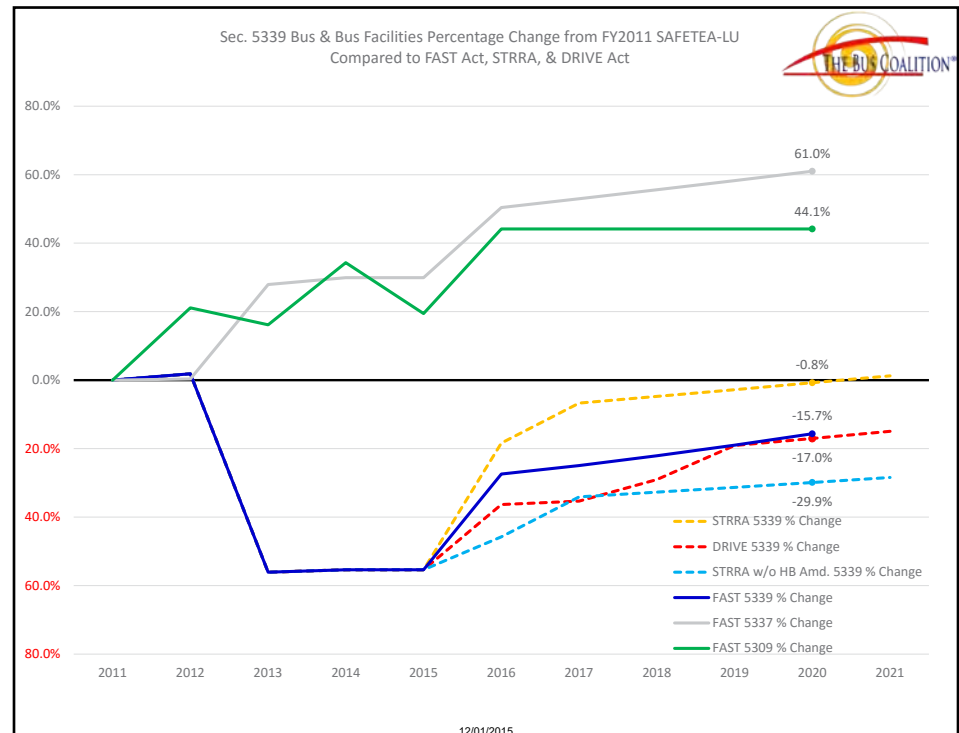
Section 5311 formula grants for rural transit, last authorized at \$607.8 million in FY 2014, increased to \$620 million in FY 2016, growing incrementally to \$673.3 million in FY 2020.

Section 5337 "state of good repair" grants, last authorized at \$2.2 billion in FY 2014, increased to \$2.5 billion in FY 2016, and will grow incrementally to \$2.7 billion in FY 2020.

Section 5339(a) formula grants for buses and bus facilities continue to be authorized at \$427.8 million in FY 2016 (same as MAP-21 levels), but will grow incrementally to \$464.4 million in FY 2020. This will prevent service reductions, fare increases and job losses among transit providers nationwide.

The new program of Section 5339(b) competitive grants for buses and bus facilities is authorized at \$268 million in FY 2016, growing incrementally to \$344 million in FY 2020; each year, \$55 million is set aside for competitive low and no emission bus grants.

Thank you to everyone who reached out to your Congressmen and a special thank you to Senator Fischer for her support on the conference committee. View more information at www.ctaa.org.



2015 ROADEO (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Mini-van division winners included Larry Vortherms of Avera Creighton Hospital, first place; Kily Gortmaker of Webster County Public Transportation, second place; and Michael Brown of McCook Public Transit, third place.



The Driver of the Year Award went to Larry Vortherms of Avera Creighton Hospital who had the highest score of the day. He earned 867 out of a possible 1000 points. Larry received a \$50 gift card as a prize and also took home the traveling trophy for winning the mini-van division.

For the fifth year, the Rodeo Committee honored someone who exemplified good sportsmanship and also participated in the theme. This year the committee chose the entire staff of Hall County Public Transportation as the winner of the goodie basket. The whole staff dressed according to the theme.



Carol Maxson, Georgia Janssen and Laura Lindgren stopped in to visit!

On Tuesday, the Nebraska Safety Center provided numerous educational sessions which allowed attendees to fulfil some or all of their requirements for the year. The training took place at the Younes Center.

Classes offered included Passenger Service & Safety Training, Defensive Driving Training, Emergency Evacuations, Dealing with

Difficult Passengers, Switcheroo and Distracted Driving.

Thank you everyone for your participation!

CTAA EXPO 2016

The annual Community Transportation EXPO is your chance to join colleagues from around the nation in a setting dedicated to fresh ideas, innovative products and services, networking and learning. You will not want to miss this conference. In addition to the important discussions on the legislative front, there will be dozens of training sessions, workshops and networking events that will allow you to advance your understanding of transit issues, develop fresh solutions to challenging issues and help you outline new approaches to your work.

Join us May 22-27 in Portland, Ore., for EXPO 2016! Always regarded as among the nation's most innovative communities, Portland, Ore., is a natural setting for our 28th annual EXPO. Beyond it's robust and diverse set of mobility options - ranging from light rail and streetcars to volunteer drivers and extensive bicycling infrastructure - Portland embraces concepts fundamental to community and public transportation: flexibility, responsiveness, scalability and efficiency.

See more at:
<http://web1.ctaa.org>.



The staff from Hall County Public Transportation took home the Spirit Award.

MEMBER APPRECIATION EVENT - WESTERN REGION

The NATP Board has been working on providing member appreciation events in each region of the state. The first event was planned in the Western Region.

Members in the area were offered tickets to the Old West Balloon Fest on September 5 at the Scotts Bluff County Fairgrounds. The event included entertainment, food, balloon launch and more.

If you have suggestions for appreciation events in your region, please contact the NATP office or a board member in your region.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Hello everyone,

I hope you are all gearing up for the holiday season. I'm sure you have all your gifts purchased, wrapped and under the tree. I wish that was the case for me. I love this time of the year because I get to spend time with friends and family. I don't, however, love the last-minute shopping that I inevitably face due to my procrastination!

We already had our office Christmas party and we each received Fitbits. It's been eye-opening realizing how much I sit all day. It's been a great motivator though and will be fun to see how many steps we take when we go to conferences and events.

I had quite a few steps after finishing my first (and quite possibly last) half marathon last month. It was a great way to ruin a beautiful day! I'm only half joking. I completed the race 30 minutes faster than I thought I would. I consider that a success!



My nephew cheered me on during the race.

I also consider 2015 to be a success for NATP. The Board has met several times this year to develop new ideas and refocus the vision of NATP.

Committees have been created and we are looking to the members to join and serve. If you are interested in serving, please let me know.

NATP has been involved with new conferences such as the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska and the Nebraska State Fair. Both were excellent opportunities to reach out

to current and potential passengers. We also presented an hour-long program at the NACO conference in June.

The Legislative Event in March was revamped and included a half-day training, breakfast with the senators and proclamation signing. The first annual Public Transit Week was a huge success!

Our annual events including the Managers Workshop and Drivers Training and Rodeo were also excellent opportunities for learning and networking.

We've also worked on various marketing pieces and the forum page on the new website will be a great tool for everyone to use. See more on page eight.

I look forward to seeing what 2016 brings. Merry Christmas everyone!

Tiffany Fougeron
Executive Director

NEW WEBSITE AND FORUM PAGE

The NATP website has recently been updated to a new format. The new site includes a forum page which will be a great asset for NATP members.

The forum page allows members to post questions and topics pertaining to the industry and to read and respond to other users' questions and topics of discussion. This was created

to help reduce the amount of emails members receive through the ListServ and also to make it easier to access and sort through information by topic.

Only members have access to this forum page. You will receive an email invite from the NATP office or through Nebraska Digital. You will be provided a

username and password (that you can change). You can edit your profile, post new topics and reply to other topics posted. Instructions of how to use the forum page will be included in an email.

Watch for an email coming soon!

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

NATP hosted a booth and was an Empowerment Sponsor at the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska Annual Conference. The event was held on October 30 at the Divots Conference Center in Norfolk.

NATP Executive Director Tiffany Fougeron and Board Member Charles McGraw were on hand to host the booth. An informational sheet was provided to attendees in Braille along with other giveaway items.

The conference offered attendees a variety of training and networking opportunities.

This was a great opportunity to reach out to the members of this group and to discuss any issues that they might have with transportation. Numerous individuals were provided with contact information for transportation services in their area.



Tiffany Fougeron and Charles McGraw attended the National Federation of the Blind Conference.

SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS

NATP members are invited to submit photos that show public transit in action. Photos can include, but are not limited to: vehicles, passengers (with permission), staff, holiday events and communities served.

Photos will be shared on the NATP Facebook page and included in upcoming newsletters.

Send your photos to tfougeron@youraam.com.



Photo submitted by Avera Creighton Hospital.

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*Dates To Remember***March**

Date TBD
Legislative Event

April

April 11-15
Public Transit Week

**Next newsletter deadline is
February 23, 2016**

Please send your articles and pictures for the Nebraska Transit Trends newsletter to the NATP office by **February 23, 2016**.

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 **tfougeron@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

**2016 LEGISLATIVE EVENT
& PUBLIC TRANSIT WEEK**

Information will be coming soon about the 2016 Legislative Event. The date for the two-day event will be established after the first of the year. A similar schedule to the 2015 inaugural event will be offered.

This event will once again provide the opportunity for training as well as a networking event with the Senators.

The 2016 Nebraska Public Transit Week will take place April 11-15. More information will be sent soon. View ideas and information from last year's event at www.nebraskatransit.com.

