

Nebraska Transit Trends

March 2010

TRB Rural Conference Scholarship - Burlington, Vermont
October 24-28, 2010

TRB (Transportation Research Bureau) is sponsoring the 19 National Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation Conference on October 24 - 28, 2010, in Burlington, Vermont. This conference is designed to address key rural public and intercity bus transportation themes including accessibility; rural transit policy and planning; alternative fuels; intelligent transportation systems and rural transit; regional systems; networks and coalitions; operations, safety, and security; and tribal transportation.

Four scholarships to the 19 National Rural Public and Intercity Bus Conference are offered to our NATP membership. Please write at least two paragraphs as to what your objectives are for attending the conference. Jerry Wray, DOR Transit Liaison Manager and Georgia Janssen, NATP Director will make the final decisions. Announcements will be made at the June Managers' Workshop to be held in Lexington. All applications must be received no later than May 14, 2010.

Please send all requests to: NATP

56726 HWY 98
Winslow, NE 68790

Calendar of Events 2010	
March 23-25	FTA region VII Meeting, Kansas City, MO
April	NATP Driver's Training, 6 sites across Nebraska
April 16	Grand Island @ Grand Generation Board Room (304 E. 3rd Street)
April 22	Norfolk Senior Center (307 Prospect)
April 23	Beatrice ESU (900 West Court)
April 29	Ogallala City Office (411 East 2nd)
April 30	Gering Civic Center
May 1	Kearney NE Safety Center (1801 Railroad)
May 22-28	CTAA National Rodeo & Expo Long Beach, CA
June 22, 23 & 24	NATP Managers' Workshop Lexington Holiday Inn Express
August	Rodeo Committee Meeting, North Platte
September 21 & 22	NATP Driver Training/Rodeo
October 24-28	19th National Conference on Rural & Intercity Bus Transportation Conference Burlington, Vermont

How Will the Brokerage Affect Rural Transit in Nebraska?

The following is an email that was sent by Jerry Wray, Transit Liaison Manager to Courtney Miller, Transportation Program Specialist.

Courtney -

Can you tell me how this brokerage will affect the rural transit providers in Nebraska? I have been fielding questions from several rural transit providers that are worried about losing riders and not knowing what will happen to their agreements with HHS.

From: Miller, Courtney
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2010 10:38 AM
To: Wray, Jerry
Subject: RE: HHS Brokerage

Jerry,
I have fielded many calls in this regard as well and am glad to help you answer this question. The purpose of the RFP for a transportation broker is to increase access to necessary services for eligible clients; reduce fraud and abuse; coordinate transportation services with medical and social service providers; and achieve provider equity and accountability. Public transportation is under utilized by DHHS programs, especially in the rural areas. The Broker would be responsible for administrative functions, to include establishing a cost effective transportation resource network; receiving NET service requests; verifying client program eligibility; screening clients for their mobility status and existing transportation resources; verifying coverage of program transportation services; authorizing and arranging for the most appropriate mode of transport; and verifying claim documentation for provider payments, etc. The service (direct provision of transportation services) shall be performed only by transportation providers with active provider agreements with the Department. The impact of the brokerage is anticipated to actually result in an increase in riders for public transportation providers. This is based on requiring the utilization of the most appropriate cost effective transportation mode from all transportation resources statewide.

Your efforts to help address this concern is greatly appreciated. As always, feel free to contact me with further questions. Have a great weekend!

Courtney Miller
Transportation Program Specialist
DHHS Medicaid & Long Term Care
301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, NE 68509
Phone: (402) 471-9530, Fax: (402) 471-9092
Courtney.Miller@nebraska.gov

Greetings Transit Providers:

We are in the middle (not the best place to be) of so many projects and issues concerning transit in Nebraska that it makes one's head spin.

The software committee has been meeting for nearly a year now, and still a decision has not been reached. We are closer, but not quite there yet. Lee Meyers of MAPA Omaha is drafting an RFP which will be going out soon and responses are due in 60 days, so, hopefully, a recommendation will be made soon after that.

Your funding requests are being written for submission to NDOR in April, and I want to remind everyone that the Rural Transit Conference that TRB holds every other year is coming up this October. It would be good to include about \$2000 in your budget for travel to this conference which will be in Burlington, VT. These conferences are extremely valuable for Rural Transit Managers because they are geared for small systems and I highly recommend that every one who can attend do so.

Recently, Georgia, Curt Simon (Omaha MAT), Larry Worth and Scott (Lincoln Startran) and I met with NDOR Director Monty Fredrickson and other NDOR personnel including Ellis Thompkins, Abe Anshasi and Jerry Wray from Rail & Transportation Division. It has been an ongoing issue for some time now that some systems are not taking in as much revenue per passenger as others which creates an unbalanced burden to bear for those systems whose revenue/cost ratio is up to standard. The dollars from the state funds have to make up for the local shortfall in revenue and that means fewer dollars to go around. A decision was made to investigate the feasibility of developing a funding formula that is performance based. This may serve to close the large disparities now evident in the revenue/cost ratios.

Managers! Be sure to schedule your drivers for the upcoming regional driver trainings in April. These trainings will improve driving skills and are full of good information. The drivers get a lot out of talking to each other as well. The dates and locations for the trainings can be found on the website www.neatp.org. Georgia will also be mailing the information and registrations out.

Finally, I hope to see all of you at the Managers Workshop to be held in Lexington in June. We may have some of the things that we are now "in the middle of" wrapped up by then. We provide an important service to the citizens of Nebraska and there are so many who are yet un-served or under-served. I want to see all Nebraskan's with access to safe, reliable and affordable transportation.

Carol Maxson
NATP President



Pictured at the Capitol Cafeteria during the January Legislative Day :

From Left to Right: Carol Maxson, Ogallala Transit Manager and NATP President, Scott Bartels, Saline County Area Transit Manager, Darrell Mueller, Recreation Director, North Platte, Dan Giese, Hall County Transit Manager, Theresa Engelhardt, Hall County, Senior Citizens Industries, Executive Director, and Charles McGraw, Kearney, RYDE Director.

Reducing the Cost of Fuel Consumption

Many transit organizations are asking the question, "How can we reduce our fuel cost?" There are many ways to help reduce the cost of fuel consumption. An important way to start saving fuel is by getting the proper maintenance on your vehicle. Keeping your vehicle in top operating condition will not only save you fuel and money, it will help reduce your long-term maintenance costs and minimize harmful exhaust emissions. You can start by using our checklist of fuel-saving maintenance measures below.

A Checklist of Fuel-Saving Maintenance Measures

Monthly check: Head off problems that can cost you fuel and money by performing a monthly check.

Pay special attention to your tires: Check your tires once a week because operating a vehicle with just one tire under-inflated by eight psi (56 kPa) can reduce the life of the tire by over 9,000 miles and increase the vehicles fuel consumption by four percent.

Check your alignment: Poor alignment can decrease fuel economy by up to two percent, in addition to accelerating tire wear and decreasing vehicle performance.

Replace worn-out oil: Neglecting to replace your worn-out oil results in poor engine performance, higher fuel consumption, and, possibly, severe engine damage.

Inspect your air filter: Regularly inspect and replace filters as necessary. Remember engines that can't breathe properly burn excess fuel and work harder to expel exhaust. A clogged air filter can increase fuel consumption by 10 percent.

Match engine power to terrain and service: In some cases, a 50 HP reduction can increase fuel economy by five percent.

Maintain the air system and repair leaks to minimize compressor operation: While compressor duty cycles may only be five percent, they can reduce fuel economy by up to two percent when pumping.

Maintain the cooling system: Keep the cores clean and unobstructed to minimize fan-clutch engagement. The fan can reduce fuel economy by 5 to 10 percent when fully engaged.

Purchase fuel in bulk: Buy thousands of gallons of fuel in bulk from large suppliers in your area.

**Remember - Not only will a well-maintained vehicle save you fuel, but a well-maintained vehicle is safer, more reliable, and could be worth more when you want to sell or trade it.*

Facts

The most efficient drivers can achieve 30 percent greater fuel economy than the least efficient drivers.

Minimize idle time. An hour of idling in a day can decrease fuel economy by over one percent.

Slow down. Above 55 mph, each one mph increase can decrease fuel economy by 0.1 mpg.

Additional Ways to Conserve Fuel

Drive efficiently: Another important way to conserve fuel is by educating your drivers to drive efficiently. Do you know that driving techniques have the greatest impact on fuel economy, and speed is the single biggest factor? So, the best place to start is by educating your drivers about ways to reduce wasted fuel before, during, and after they do their routes.

Accelerate and decelerate as smoothly as possible, use cruise control to your advantage, select the highest gear suitable for the desired speed, and avoid using climate control unless you really need it.

Also, when the engine is off, lower the window shades on your vehicle to reduce the solar heat load and air conditioning required to cool the interior. Remove any unnecessary weight or cargo. During cold months, remove ice and snow accumulations, which is also a safety benefit.

Resources and Additional Information

Fueleconomy.gov is the official site for fuel economy information, including downloadable versions of the annual Fuel Economy Guide, files of the annual underlying fuel economy data, and more.

The Environmental Protection Agency has tips for saving energy and reducing pollution when driving, visit: www.epa.gov/air/actions/drive_wise.html

The Alternative Fuels and Advanced Vehicles Data Center provides information regarding alternative fuels use, visit: www.afdc.energy.gov/afdc/index.htm

This National RTAP brief is a product of the Rural Technical Resource and Communications Center. For more information call us toll-free at: 888-589-6821 or reach us online at: www.nationalrtap.org

Dial-A-Ride Usage Soars

It was a record-setting month.

The City of Neligh's Dial-A-Ride service provided one-way transportation for a record-high 603 passengers in October. This is 102 more passengers than October of last year. The previous record was 561 passengers during the month of April this year.

Passengers utilizing the service included the general public, pre-school contracts and Sunday church contracts.

City Clerk Elaine Hamm said "ridership this whole past year has really increased."

Hamm reported 4,105 passengers during the 2007-08 fiscal year and 5,036 during the 2008-09 fiscal year. She attributes the increase in usage to "loyal customers and caring service by our drivers."

Dial-A-Ride employs three part-time drivers—Jack Conger, Anita Miller and Dave Detlefsen. Dispatching work is done by city office

personnel.

The City of Neligh has operated the service since 1978, under the auspices of the Federal Urban Transportation Division and the Nebraska Department of Roads. The service is subsidized with federal and state funding.

Through the years, Neligh has had four different buses and one van. The city currently operates a van and a 10-passenger bus with the capability to transport individuals with disabilities.



DIAL-A-RIDE • Driver Jack Conger is pictured with the City of Neligh's Dial-A-Ride van on Monday.

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