

Nebraska Transit Trends

2018 NEBRASKA PLANNING AND ZONING DISTRICT AWARDS

The Scotts Bluff County Commissioners were awarded the Elected Official Award on March 8, 2018 at the Annual Banquet for the Nebraska Planning Conference. The awards recognize individuals and organizations for excellence in the field of planning in Nebraska.

The Elected Official Award was for the outstanding support and commitment to planning and collaboration in the development of the Tri-City Roadrunner, the new flexible route transit service, which began operation on January 10, 2018. The transit service operates in the cities of Scottsbluff, Gering, and Terrytown. Over two years of planning and the cooperation of multiple partners led to the development of the Tri-City Roadrunner. The need for increased service levels was identified through NDOT's Statewide Mobility Management project.



Tri-City Roadrunner serving West Medical Center

Scotts Bluff County is the third transit agency in the state, behind Omaha and Lincoln, to offer scheduled bus service with more than one fixed route. The Commissioners not only led the way through their support, but also sought input from each of the three communities with public and focus group meetings. Partners for the new flexible route service include:

- Cities of Scottsbluff, Terrytown, and Gering
- Scotts Bluff County
- Regional West Medical Center
- Western NE Community College
- Walmart
- Federal Transit Administration
- Nebraska Department of Transportation



Transit Manager, Shari Hinze, recognizing Scotts Bluff County Commissioners: Ken Meyer, Sherry Blaha and Mark Masteron.

The Nebraska Annual Planning Conference was held in Kearney, NE, from March 7-9, 2018 at the Younes Conference Center. The conference is sponsored by the NE Chapter of American Planning Association and the Nebraska Planning and Zoning Association. The annual event provides training to planning commission members, as well as continuing education for professional planners. The Panhandle Area Development District nominated the project for the annual award.

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NATP PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello Transit Friends,

It seems we went straight from snow on the ground to 80-100 degree days. Our area is very dry. We could really use some significant rainfall – without damaging storms! Can you believe we are entering June, the last month of another fiscal year? I trust you are all getting those last expenditures and projects finished up while still under budget (becoming more difficult with rising fuel prices) and are prepared to start the new year with robust plans on how to continue providing quality service while still finding ways to improve or even expand transit options. Whether meeting higher standards comes through new routes, more vehicles, or smarter scheduling and technology, it is important for transit agencies to do an annual review. Figure out what has been accomplished, evaluate what strategies and techniques have

performed well in creating desirable outcomes, and determine what needs to change to improve. Many transit-dependent residents are relying on you to do so!

Hope to see you all soon at the NATP Managers Workshop in Grand Island. Early registration deadline is June 13, so don't delay if you haven't already registered. We have an exceptional set of training sessions being offered, NDOT will provide updates, and FTA Region VII staff will present as well.

The NATP Annual Meeting will be held June 19 and will include board election for the Eastern, Western, and one At-Large position. Members should seriously consider serving.

A quick shout out and congratulations again to Carol Graham and Larry Vortherms who will be representing Nebraska at the CTAA Rodeo Competition and EXPO next week in Pittsburgh, PA. We are cheering for you! Tammy McConnell and Lori Byers are also attending the event; participating as judges and going to the Expo learning sessions. Relax and enjoy the experience!

See you in June! Safe travels everyone.

Scott Bartels
NATP President

2018 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Just a reminder, renewals for the 2018-2019 NATP membership year were mailed in May and are due July 1. NATP works hard to promote professionalism in public transportation operators through research, advocacy and educational opportunities. The association also works to educate the public about the importance of public transportation in Nebraska.

Outreach - Promotion - Information - Networking - Education

STARTRAN'S CNG PROJECT RECEIVES \$3.4 MILLION IN GRANTS

May 24, 2018 - Mayor Chris Beutler today said two recent grants totaling \$3.425 million will help StarTran increase the use of compressed natural gas (CNG) in its fleet. The funds will go toward site acquisition, research and design for a CNG fueling station and eventually a bus maintenance and storage facility. The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) awarded the City \$2.6 million, and the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) awarded the City \$825,000 for the project.

"StarTran has a long history of using alternative fuels in its fleet, and this project is another step forward," Mayor Beutler said. "Using compressed natural gas is saving us about 38 cents per gallon compared to diesel this summer. Air emissions are reduced about 20 percent. And it's reliable fuel source that we can produce from our own wastewater operations. I want thank NET and the FTA for investing in this important project."

Last year, the City announced it will process biogas from its wastewater treatment facility into vehicle fuel that can be sold locally or on the national market StarTran sees about 2.5 million customer trips each year, and its fleet has grown to 80 vehicles. The transit service has outgrown its location at 710 "J" Street and is evaluating a site on West "O" Street. The full project is projected to cost about \$40 million, and StarTran is pursuing additional grant funding.

StarTran currently has 13 CNG-fueled buses on the streets, and 11 CNG handivans will be in operation soon. In August, StarTran expects to receive 11 more CNG buses and two CNG trolleys, bringing the total CNG fleet to 37.

Increased use of CNG is one of the action strategies in the Lincoln Environmental Action Plan, which calls for reducing non-renewable fuel usage in City fleet operations by at least 50 percent by 2030. A previous study projected \$1.3 million in savings over 15 years by converting buses to CNG fuel.

"Riders turn to StarTran for several reasons, including the environmental benefits of public transportation, and CNG helps us deliver on that promise," said Transit Manager Mike Davis. "We appreciate the investment by NET and FTA in Lincoln's air quality and in our agency's ability to grow and meet evolving rider needs."

The FTA grant came from its Buses and Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program. The FTA received applications for 453 projects, and Lincoln's was one of 139 selected. More information on the FTA is available at transit.dot.gov.

The Nebraska Environmental Trust was established in 1992 and is funded by a percentage of proceeds from the Nebraska Lottery. More information is available at environmentaltrust.org. More information on StarTran is available at startran.lincoln.ne.gov.

STARPASS OFFERS UNLIMITED SUMMER RIDES FOR YOUTH

May 22, 2018 - Lincoln's StarTran bus service is now offering its summer StarPass for riders ages 5 through 18. The StarPass offers unlimited bus rides from May 23 through August 31 for \$20. The StarPass also includes special discounts at 22 participating sponsors.

The StarPass is available in three ways:

- Visit the StarTran office at 710 "J" Street.
- Buy a pass at one of the outlet locations listed at startran.lincoln.ne.gov.
- Use the Token Transit phone app, which allows riders to use their phones to present the pass to drivers and sponsors. First time app users will save \$5 on their first StarPass purchase. Access to the Internet is required to use the phone pass.

For more information about the StarPass and StarTran service visit startran.lincoln.ne.gov or call 402-476-1234.

2018 PUBLIC TRANSIT WEEK

Transit agencies, drivers and passengers celebrated the 4th annual Nebraska Public Transit Week on April 8-14, 2018. Thirty-nine agencies serving fifty Nebraska counties hosted open houses, hot dog cookouts and driver appreciation luncheons. Twelve "Stuff the Bus" events benefited nineteen local charities. NDOT transit staff and partners at the University of Nebraska visited or participated in over 30 events that week.



Nebraska Public Transit Week is supported by the NDOT Transit Section, University of Nebraska and the Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers. For more information about public transportation in Nebraska visit nebraskatransit.com.



Kaitlyn Richardson, NDOT's Lead Transit Driver Trainer, visited Sharon Menke, Grand Island Transit Manager



Ponca Express



McCook Public Transit



Ogallala Public Transit



Central City Public Transit



Fillmore County Rural Transit Service



Seward County Public Transit



City of Neligh Dial-a-Ride



Butler County Transit



Blue Rivers Public Transportation



Lincoln StarTran



City of Schuyler Handibus



North Platte Public Transit



Perkins County Public Transit



Garden County Transportation



York County Public Transit



Chase County Transit



MAAA - St. Paul



Sidney Public Transportation

MANAGER SELECTED FOR INCLUSION IN THE TRADEMARK WOMEN OF DISTINCTION 2018 HONORS EDITION

Oshkosh, Nebraska, April 20, 2018



Tammy McConnell has been selected for inclusion in the forthcoming Trademark Women of Distinction Honors Edition for demonstrating dedication, leadership and professional excellence. Her compassion and expertise set the standard in the industry. She has truly dedicated herself to her profession. Representing the state as one of the best in the country requires talent, experience and integrity. There is humility and personal touch she adds to her relationship with everyone she does business with, more than the value of her service it's her way of treating everyone like an extended member of her own family that people remember the most. As a talented disciplined professional she has maintained a proven track record of quality service, driven by her desire to succeed. During the vetting process it was noted along with her exceptional reputation that she has also maintained a positive peer rating. Her years

of service along with her level of expertise and several other factors also contributed to her inclusion. She prides herself on honesty and integrity. She is the kind of professional admired by colleagues and peers alike. Her kindness and willingness to always help others and find solutions to most questions is both exemplary and honorable. She has made her mark on her profession as an expert and will become part of history as one of the top professionals in her field.

About Trademark Women of Distinction

With expert female members representing every major industry, Trademark Women of Distinction Honors Edition is a trusted resource and tool dedicated to highlight the professional accomplishments and stories of today's best and brightest women in business. Trademark Women of Distinction is dedicated to the preservation of each individual females story as each of them deserve their own special place in history. The talented women profiled in this historic registry share such virtues as determination, courage, leadership, patience, and discipline. It is not these characteristics which set them apart from the rest of us, but their extremely high degree of accomplishment as female professionals. Now more than ever these females serve as an example, each of these extraordinary women documented in this publication offer tangible evidence of the value of hard work, goal setting and passion. Trademark Women of Distinction membership provides these hard working accomplished women with a certified and validated third-party endorsement of their accomplishments, and serves as a way to spread the word about their success through a trusted network of women brought together by the same common morals, values and dedication. The historic preservation of each woman's family legacy and personal achievements is also a driving force in the success of the publication. Such a well-researched and verified source ensures this tool to act as a bridge forging long lasting new business relationships.

NATP MANAGERS WORKSHOP

Register for the 2018 NATP Managers Workshop taking place June 19-21 in Grand Island. The event will take place at the Ramada Downtown and Conference Center.

Presentations include:

- NDOT General Updates
- Rider Centric Solutions- A Shift Towards Understanding the Rider's Perspective
- Mobility Management Updates
- FTA Updates
- Promoting Your Transit Agency
- Recognizing Drug Impairment
- How To Positively Impact the Lives of Others
- Everyone Communicates, Few Connect
- Keeping the Good Ones
- Bootcamp Highlights



The annual banquet and membership meeting will take place on the evening of June 19.

During the banquet we will hold elections for the Western, Eastern and At-Large Director positions.

Awards will also be presented.

We will have exhibitor time and prize drawings on June 20. We encourage you to invite vendors that you work with.

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.

The workshop brochure is available on the NATP website.

See you in Grand Island!



NATP COLORING BOOKS

NATP coloring books were distributed to members in the fall of 2017. Members were to distribute the books to children in their communities to inform them about public transportation.

The 16-page coloring book included information on public transit, fun games, and plenty of pictures to color.

Members are encouraged to submit photos or information on how the coloring books were distributed in their communities.



NATP 2017-2018 LEADERSHIP**BOARD MEMBERS**

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**Next newsletter deadline is
August 23, 2018**

Please send your articles and pictures for the Nebraska Transit Trends newsletter to the NATP office by **August 23, 2018**.

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

Dates to Remember**August**

29 Older Nebraskans Day
Nebraska State Fair
Grand Island

September

18-19 Drivers Training & Rodeo
Kearney