

**16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
MATBUS Coordination Committee  
February 18, 2026 – 9:00 AM  
Metro COG Conference Room/Zoom**

**Members Present:**

Deb White, Moorhead City Council, Chair  
John Strand, Fargo City Commission  
Julie Bommelman, Fargo Transit Director  
Susan Thompson, Fargo Finance Director  
Sebastian McDougall, Moorhead City Council  
Jenica Flanagan, Moorhead Finance Director  
Mike Rietz, Moorhead Assistant City Manager  
Dustin Scott, West Fargo City Administrator  
Peyton Mastera, Dilworth City Administrator  
Brit Stevens, NDSU Transportation Manager  
Ben Griffith, Metro COG Executive Director

**Members Absent:**

Denise Kolpack, Fargo City Commission

**Others Present:**

Adam Altenburg, Metro COG  
Heidi Benke, MATBUS  
Shaun Crowell, MATBUS  
Brenda Derrig, City of Fargo  
Cindy Girdner, Valley Senior Service  
Josh Gordon, MATBUS  
Luke Grittner, MATBUS  
Jean Henning, City of Fargo  
Aiden Jung, Metro COG  
Nicole Lipinoga, Metro COG  
Wyatt Papenfuss, City of Fargo  
Matt Pinotti, MATBUS  
Jordan Smith, MATBUS  
Cole Swingen, MATBUS  
Megan Zahradka, City of Moorhead

**1a. Approve Order and Contents of the Agenda**

A motion to approve the order and contents of the agenda was made by Mr. Mastera and seconded by Mr. Griffith. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**1b. Review and Action on Minutes from January 21, 2026**

A motion to approve the minutes for the January 2026 regular meeting was made by Ms. Thompson and seconded by Ms. Bommelman. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

## **2. Public Comment Period**

No members of the public were present to address the committee. One online comment was received that included several observations regarding the January 2026 committee meeting.

### **3a. 2025 YTD and January 2026 Monthly Budget to Actuals Report**

Ms. Henning provided the committee with an update on the 2025 year-to-date and January 2026 budget to actuals report. She noted that the 2025 financials remain preliminary, as the fiscal year has not yet been fully closed out. She explained that compiling the report required coordination among multiple entities and highlighted the challenges associated with aligning the timing of the various reports.

Ms. Henning also noted that grant revenues are not yet reflected in the Moorhead budget but are included in the Fargo budget. She added that the report now includes a grant status section to provide the committee with a clearer understanding of grant funding for both the Moorhead and Fargo portions of the system.

Ms. Henning provided an update on the 2025 budget, noting that fuel expenses came in under budget. She also highlighted fluctuations in billings from TransDev and the transition of drivers to City of Fargo employees as factors contributing to some variability in the budget. She added that staff are continuing to finalize remaining items needed to close out the 2025 financials.

Ms. Flannagan asked for clarification regarding the Purchase of Service and Fargo payments. Ms. Henning explained that the allocation is accounted for through Period 13 and reflected in the Purchase of Service; however, Fargo has not yet billed for Period 13, so it is not currently reflected in the revenue.

Ms. Flannagan also inquired about a discrepancy in fare revenue. Ms. Henning replied that when the 2025 budget was prepared in 2024, the Moorhead budget was inadvertently included in the Fargo budget when it should not have been. As a result, the revenue was effectively doubled, since Moorhead already had its own budget.

Ms. Flannagan also asked about the variance in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding shown in the report. Ms. Thompson explained that in 2025 Fargo inadvertently used Moorhead's allocation of the FTA grant. To reconcile this, Moorhead will receive the equivalent amount of grant funding that was used by Fargo. She added that this issue should not occur moving forward, as Moorhead is now a subrecipient of these funds and will manage its own grants going forward.

Ms. Flannagan also asked about the grant status for 2026. Ms. Henning replied that the Section 5310 grant is currently in progress and that Ms. Bommelman is working with the Federal Transit Administration on a program guide for those funds. She added that MATBUS will pursue the 5310 grant and will work on Section 5339 grants afterward.

Mr. Swingen provided an overview of the operational data. He noted that there are a handful of inconsistencies between the operational data and agency billings. He stated that he will follow up with the committee regarding these discrepancies and provide an update at the next MCC meeting. In the meantime, he noted that the data should still provide a high-level overview of expected figures.

Chair White inquired about Route 13's increase in ridership and decrease in revenue hours. Mr. Swingen explained that this is likely due to several factors, including reduced service on Route 33 and the elimination of Route 32 at NDSU. Because Route 13 serves NDSU, he noted that some ridership likely shifted to that route. He added that part of the reduction in revenue hours was due to operating one fewer bus on Route 13 on Saturdays.

Mr. Papenfuss reiterated to the committee that many of the final billing numbers remain pending Mr. Swingen's reconciliation of the operational data. He noted that jurisdictions will receive their billings in March but will also receive a final reconciliation later to account for any discrepancies.

### **3b. Ground Transportation Center (GTC) Update**

Mr. Smith provided the committee with an update on the structural issues identified at the Ground Transportation Center (GTC). He noted that there are two primary options moving forward: remaining at the GTC and repairing the parking structure, or relocating the GTC to a new location. He also stated that buses will no longer stage on NP Avenue and will instead be relocated to the 4th Street lot. He added that an ADA-accessible ramp connects the lot to the GTC.

Chair White expressed frustration with the findings, noting that the facility underwent upgrades as recently as 2021. She asked whether legal counsel is involved to determine if the construction company may have been aware of the structural issues. Ms. Bommelman confirmed that city attorneys are reviewing the matter. She explained that it appears engineers may have miscalculated some of the load-bearing capacities of the structural posts during the original design and construction, which are now contributing to the current issues. She also noted that MATBUS is attempting to locate information related to a previous lawsuit associated with the issue. Ms. Bommelman expressed frustration with the situation and noted that it is creating several operational challenges. She added that using the 4th Street lot will impact operations, and staff are hopeful that a resolution can be reached quickly.

Ms. Derrig asked whether other locations for bus staging were considered besides the 4th Street lot. Ms. Bommelman replied that other options were explored but noted that bus transfers would be significantly more difficult, particularly for individuals with disabilities.

### **3c. Security Incidents and Safety/Satisfaction Survey**

Mr. Swingen provided an update on recent safety incidents and announced that a staff satisfaction survey will be distributed soon. He noted that several positive security-related incidents occurred during the month, including situations in which drivers were able to assist lost individuals and help them return to safety. He also described an incident in which an individual threatened to shoot someone. In response to this and other concerns, MATBUS will be distributing a satisfaction survey to gather feedback directly from drivers regarding safety and workplace conditions. He noted that the goal of the survey is to ensure drivers feel heard and safe while performing their duties. He added that the survey results will be shared with the committee.

Chair White emphasized the importance of the survey and commented positively on the new format of the safety and security report. She reminded the committee that the report represents only a snapshot of incidents occurring throughout the month. She asked Mr. Swingen whether a total monthly incident count could be included in future reports so the committee can better track whether incident levels are increasing or decreasing over time.

### **3d. 2025 Ridership Report and Revenue Hours Update**

Mr. Grittner provided an update on systemwide ridership and revenue hours for 2024 and 2025. He noted a 2.62% decrease in revenue hours and a 2.65% decrease in ridership, explaining that some of these changes are attributable to service adjustments implemented in 2024 and 2025.

Chair White noted several routes that experienced significant increases in ridership in 2025 and suggested that those routes should be evaluated to determine whether the current number of buses is sufficient to meet demand. Mr. McDougall also asked about the approximately 50% increase in ridership on Route 31. Mr. Grittner responded that the increase is likely related to the suspension of Route 32 in 2024.

### **4. Other Business**

No additional business was brought before the committee.

Chair White adjourned the meeting at 9:47 AM.