

**15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
MATBUS Coordination Committee  
January 21, 2026 – 9:00 AM  
Metro COG Conference Room/Zoom**

**Members Present:**

Deb White, Moorhead City Council, Chair  
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  
John Strand, Fargo City Commission

**Others Present:**

Adam Altenburg, Metro COG  
Jeff Anderson, The Arc of Cass County  
Heidi Benke, MATBUS  
Jamie Bullock, City of Moorhead  
Shaun Crowell, MATBUS  
Brenda Derrig, City of Fargo  
Josh Gordon, MATBUS  
Luke Grittner, MATBUS  
Jean Henning, City of Fargo  
Aiden Jung, Metro COG  
Nicole Lipinoga, Metro COG  
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. McDougall and seconded by Ms. Bommelman. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**1b. Review and Action on Minutes from December 17, 2025**

A motion to approve the minutes for the December 2025 regular meeting was made by Ms. Bommelman and seconded by Mr. Mastera. 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. Ms. Bommelman noted that questions related to the comment had been addressed and offered to distribute a copy to any committee member upon request.

### **3a. Capital Project Cost Allocation Plan**

Mr. Smith provided an overview of the Capital Project Cost Allocation Plan. He explained that capital costs are allocated using a revenue-hour-based methodology, whereby each entity's share of applicable capital costs is proportional to the revenue hours operated within each service category. He then presented an example illustrating the cost allocation for a large fixed-route bus.

Mr. Rietz asked whether the plan is intended as a starting point or a final framework. Mr. Smith responded that it is a starting point and that additional discussion will occur as the process moves forward.

Ms. Zahradka added that the Federal Transit Administration should be consulted to confirm that the cost allocation plan can be fully implemented at the local level. She also emphasized the importance of clearly defining the revenue split, particularly for older assets purchased entirely by Moorhead or Fargo, to ensure that any sale proceeds are allocated to the appropriate agency.

Ms. Bommelman noted that the committee should review the interim Joint Powers Agreement to ensure proper policies are being followed. She further stated that discussions should begin regarding development of a permanent Joint Powers Agreement.

Ms. Flannagan joined the meeting at 9:16 am.

### **3b. Monthly Budget to Actuals Report**

Ms. Henning introduced the Budget to Actuals report, which will now be presented to the MCC on a monthly basis. She explained that the purpose of the report is to identify any irregularities and to improve tracking of MATBUS financials.

Ms. Flannagan asked whether the 2025 budget figures were included in the report. Ms. Henning responded that the 2025 numbers are not yet included but that she can provide them. Ms. Flannagan also inquired whether operations costs would be incorporated into the report. Ms. Henning noted that Mr. Swingen will include those figures in his operations report.

Ms. Henning added that the report will also include grant status updates to provide the committee with a clearer picture of overall budget conditions.

### **3c. Safety Incidents/Feedback Update**

Mr. Swingen provided an update on recent safety incidents, as well as feedback received by MATBUS. He noted that, at the committee's request, feedback is now being included in the report and may range from positive comments and stop requests to reported incidents.

Chair White asked whether it is necessary to present these reports to the committee on a monthly basis. Mr. Swingen responded that a quarterly reporting schedule may be more realistic. Mr. Mastera added that it may be helpful to summarize the incidents and feedback received and to present the committee with overarching themes from the comments.

### **3d. MATBUS 2025 Accomplishments**

Mr. Swingen presented the 2025 MATBUS accomplishments, including:

- **Equipment**
  - Purchased two new paratransit vehicles and three fixed route vehicles.
- **Fares**
  - Approved a cash fare increase, from \$1.50 to \$2.00 for regular fare and \$0.75 to \$1.00 for discount fare, effective January 1, 2026.
- **Route & Service Changes**
  - Due to budgetary cuts and declining ridership, LinkFM was eliminated, effective June 9, 2025.
  - Due to budgetary cuts and declining ridership, approved the elimination of the Industrial Park On-Demand service and the suspension of Route 16, effective January 1, 2026.
- **Shelters & Facilities**
  - Completed the installation of 5 bus shelters in Moorhead located at M-State, Riverview Heights, Moorhead Library, Target and Lakeland Mental Health.
  - Completed the Ground Transportation Center deck overlay project. Due to structural damage uncovered, began study to determine the facility's useful life.
  - Awarded A&E contract for Metro Transit Garage Facility Improvements.
- **Studies & Plans**
  - Completed the 2026 - 2030 Transit Development Plan.
  - The State of North Dakota's Government Finance Committee began a study to determine a long-term state funding formula for ND urban transit providers (Fargo, Grand Forks, Bismarck and Minot).
- **Personnel & Training**
  - Bus operator and management staff positions were transitioned from being contracted with Transdev to being positions within the City of Fargo, effective December 22, 2025.
- **Other**
  - Began the "Where's my Bus" SMS/IVR bus stop pilot program.
  - Completed the 2025 Triennial Review.

### **3e. 2025 Ridership Report**

Mr. Grittner presented ridership data for the 2025 calendar year.

Chair White asked whether the 5% decrease in Fargo/West Fargo/NDSU ridership was related to the U-Pass system not accurately capturing ridership. Mr. Grittner responded that it is difficult to determine the exact impact of the U-Pass issue on the reported figures. Ms. Bommelman noted that the elimination of Route 32 and significant construction projects affecting bus routes may have also contributed to the decline in ridership.

Mr. Pinotti added that additional buses had previously operated on Route 15, which would have affected revenue hours. Ms. Bommelman stated that a breakdown of revenue hours by route would be helpful and noted that the MATBUS team could provide that information to the committee.

Mr. Crowell provided an overview of paratransit ridership trends. He noted that he approves approximately 250–280 new paratransit applications annually, which has contributed to increased ridership over time. He added that as the metro area continues to grow, he anticipates continued growth in the paratransit system.

Chair White asked whether MATBUS could make the fixed-route system more accessible to paratransit riders, noting that paratransit service is more expensive per rider than fixed-route service. Mr. Crowell stated that one of the primary barriers for current paratransit riders using fixed-route service is the need to complete transfers, and suggested that reducing transfers could potentially encourage greater fixed-route usage.

Mr. Anderson of the Arc of Cass Clay asked whether MATBUS has sufficient buses and drivers to meet service demand. Mr. Crowell responded that current demand is being met and that an additional bus could be added if demand increases. Chair White emphasized the importance of closely monitoring paratransit services to ensure demand continues to be met.

Ms. Bommelman added that current demand can be met, noting that it is rare for a ride request to be declined. She also noted that an expansion vehicle is included in the paratransit capital plan should demand warrant additional capacity.

Ms. Zahradka asked whether MATBUS could share the 2025 Budget to Actuals report for operating expenses, noting that operating costs account for a significant portion of the overall budget.

#### **4. Other Business**

No additional business was brought before the committee.

Chair White adjourned the meeting at 9:43 AM.