

**IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL
TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2019

MINUTES

Durant called the meeting of the Iowa Northland Regional Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) to order at 9:00 a.m.

Meeting Attendees:	Lori Glover	Black Hawk County Emergency Management
	Nafissa Cisse-Egbuonye	Black Hawk County Health Department
	Jan Heidemann	Bremer County of the East Central Region (ECR)
	Debra Hodges Harmon	Iowa Works
	Todd Rickert	Grundy County Social Services
	Susan Backes	House of Hope
	Mark Little	MET Transit
	Lon Kammeyer	MET Transit Board
	Mike Dangan	Public
	Ben Kvigne	INRCOG/RTC
	Kyle Durant	INRCOG
	Codie Leseman	INRCOG

The first item was to review and consider approval of the minutes for the September 10, 2019 Transit Advisory Committee meeting. It was moved by Little, seconded by Glover to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

The next item was to discuss the development schedule for the FY 2020-2024 Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP). Durant said the draft Plan is due February 1, 2020, and the final is due May 1, 2020. The Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) consists of transportation providers, human service organizations, and interested individuals that work cooperatively to identify transportation issues and to identify future coordination possibilities. The TAC serves as the main sounding board for passenger transportation planning issues in the region and plays an integral role in the development of the PTP. The next TAC meeting will focus on discussing the results of the Transit Providers Survey and identifying projects and initiatives for the PTP.

Next on the agenda was to review and discuss the draft Transit Providers Survey. Durant said INRCOG staff reviewed past survey results and example transit providers surveys from around the state. Past surveys have collected a wealth of transportation provider information that was limited in use for identifying transportation gaps and coordination opportunities. This draft survey is intended to collect more useful information. The survey will be available online as well as paper format. The group opted to review the draft questions one by one:

- 1. Who does your agency serve? (check all that apply)**
 - Youth (under 18)
 - Older adults (65+)
 - People with disabilities
 - Other, please specify

Backes said as worded, she would likely fill out "Other" and list "Women 18-65". Leseman asked if the question should be open ended. Hodges Harmon said her agency serves everyone and would likely select all. Cisse-Egbuonye said this question needs to engage all survey takers. It was recommended to add a category "Adults 18-64".

2. Which of the following apply to your agency? (check all that apply)

- We provide transportation to our clients
- We contract with another entity who provides transportation services
- We purchase transit passes for clients
- Our clients arrange their own transportation
- Our clients use MET Transit fixed route buses
- Our clients use MET Transit paratransit
- Our clients use RTC buses
- Other, please specify

Backes recommended spelling out Regional Transit Commission, and providing a brief explanation of what RTC is.

3. Approximately how many of your clients use transportation services per week?

Heidemann suggested that the question specify a number (#).

4. Which counties and cities do your clients have transportation service to?

- Black Hawk County
- Bremer County
- Buchanan County
- Butler County
- Chickasaw County
- Grundy County
- Waterloo
- Cedar Falls
- Waverly
- Independence
- New Hampton
- Grundy Center
- Other, please specify

Durant recommended adding “check all that apply”. Discussion ensued regarding the wording of the question. Backes suggested adding in parentheses “all transportation except personal automobile”. Kvigne recommended adding “Cedar Rapids” and “Iowa City” as options.

5. How many vehicles does your agency own to provide transportation services?

	Wheelchair Accessible	Not Wheelchair Accessible
Bus		
Van or Minivan		
Car		

Glover recommended adding “and/or lease” to the question.

6. What days/times do your clients use transportation services?

	Start	End
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

7. What days/times do your clients want to use transportation services, but currently cannot?

	Start	End
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Leseman said questions six and seven are new to the survey. Responses can be analyzed in GIS to potentially identify patterns. No changes were recommended.

- 8. List up to five destinations your clients most frequently travel to.**
- 9. List up to three additional destinations your clients would like to travel to, but currently cannot.**

No changes were recommended for questions eight and nine.

- 10. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement below (Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree)**
 - a.) Demand for transportation services is growing at our agency.**
 - b.) The cost of providing transportation services is becoming increasingly burdensome.**
 - c.) Language barriers are a challenge for many of our clients.**
 - d.) Our clients' low income prevents them from travelling as much as they would like.**
 - e.) Maintaining our vehicles is becoming increasingly challenging.**

For question 10b, Glover recommended changing the word "burdensome" to "challenging". For question 10d, Cisse-Egbuonye recommended removing the word "low". Heidemann said as worded, travel could be misinterpreted as long-distance vacation travel. It was recommended to reword question 10d to "Our clients income prevents them from using local transportation services as much as they would like." For question 10e, Heidemann recommended changing the wording to "The cost of maintaining..."

- 11. Is your agency interested in coordinating services with RTC?**
 - Yes, please send us more information**
 - Maybe, please send us more information**
 - No**

Backes recommended adding an explanation of what RTC is. Heidemann recommended changing the wording to "No, please explain."

It was recommended by the group to add "Your Name" as well as a best way to contact the person completing the survey.

The next item was to discuss the potential and need for a Large Employer Public Transit survey. Durant said that in 2018, Grow Cedar Valley conducted a survey of businesses in the Airline Highway Industrial Area. Leseman said this was a follow-up to a survey that Grow Cedar Valley had conducted in 2017 which found that public transit was ranked the lowest of all community services in the six-county area surveyed. INRCOG staff have discussed the idea of conducting a similar survey of larger businesses in the region as part of the FY 2020-2024 PTP. With the draft document being due in February 2020, staff are recommending delaying this survey until summer 2020, at the earliest. This will allow for additional time to develop the ideal survey methodology.

Next was an update on new ADA-compliant bus stop landings in Waterloo. Leseman said the City of Waterloo recently removed its bus benches in response to a letter from the Department of Justice, and installed around two dozen ADA-compliant landings at select locations. The City installed temporary benches at select locations to provide seating through the winter. The City plans to request proposals from businesses to construct and maintain bus shelters, with the opportunity for advertising on said benches. This effort also ties into a contract between the Iowa department of Public Health and INRCOG called SNAP-Ed which will focus on education and planning for improving walkability around low-income senior housing and congregate meal sites.

The next item was a presentation on MET Transit Fixed Route restructuring. Leseman provided a presentation which was recently provided to the MET Transit Board, the Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Board and Technical Committee, and the Waterloo City Council. Little said there would be some trade-off with the route restructuring, as

some areas of Waterloo and Cedar Falls would no longer be covered, and persons with mobility devices may need to utilize MET Paratransit services which would be a higher cost to the user.

Next was to discuss agency and user needs, coordination issues, and funding needs. No updates were provided.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Codie Leseman
Acting Secretary