



MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION STEERING COMMITTEE

2/25/2025 - Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

The Transportation Steering Committee met on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at 12:00 PM, in the Tom Baker Meeting Room, 221 N 5th St, Bismarck, ND.

Committee members present included Brenda Nagel, Trevor Vannett, Micah Olson, Mayor Mike Schmitz, Commissioner Michael Connelly, Mike Taylor, Dustin Gawrylow, Jaelyn Chathams, and Lane Hoffer. Member Dawn Kopp joined the meeting via Teams. Member Brian Ritter was absent.

REGULAR AGENDA

A. Public Comment

Mayor Schmitz opened the meeting for public comment.

No members of the public appeared for comment.

B. Committee Introductions

All members of the committee introduced themselves and provided a brief background and described how public transportation impacts their life or those they serve.

C. Transit History

Commissioner Connelly gave a brief history of how the citizen-initiated measure came to pass. Diedre Hughes, Bis-Man Transit Executive Director, gave a brief history of Bis-Man Transit and described the various services the organization provides.

D. Transportation Needs

Various committee members provided input on the various transportation needs and gaps of services our community currently has.

- Commissioner Connelly and Trevor Vannette expressed that there are long wait times for individuals traveling to and from medical appointments. They both concluded that the fixed route services need to be modified to meet the needs of the community.
- Dawn Kopp provided an example of the rideshare program Via in Birmingham, Alabama that is run by their local transit. She stated that this rideshare is similar to Uber or Lyft but is run by the municipality. The program has an app and has a very low cost per ride, and it could be a missing link in our transit system. This rideshare

program may also be an opportunity for new Americans to enter the workforce.
<https://ridewithvia.com>

- Brenda Nagel asked if Diedre Hughes could provide financial information for Bis-Man Transit for the committee prior to the next scheduled meeting.
- Dustin Gawrylow expressed that after Bis-Man Transit is "made whole", a voucher system for private transportation use could be developed. Dustin Gawrylow further stated that it is important to look at other options to address the needs of those who are already on government programs.
- Jaelyn Chatham stated that the fixed route schedule doesn't meet the needs of medical professionals who work shift work at our local medical facilities.
- Trevor Vannette stated that the Sunday schedule is a barrier for those getting medical care and the location of Sanford North causes problems for individuals needing transportation services as it is not on the fixed route schedule.
- Mayor Schmitz stated that he believes our transit system needs to expand hours, days and have quicker turnaround services.
- Micah Olson shared that it is important that accessible housing on the bus route schedule.

E. Topics to Discuss at Next Meeting

Trevor Vannette stated that he believes Bismarck Public Schools should be invited to attend the next scheduled meeting to discuss the changes in their bus scheduling for the 2025-2026 school year. The committee expressed that they would like Darin Scherr, Bismarck Public Schools Business and Operations Manager, to attend the next meeting and address Administration staff to coordinate.

The committee also agreed that they would like to discuss the Fixed Route Service provided by Bis-Man Transit at the next scheduled meeting.

F. Committee and Meeting Schedule

The committee decided that they would continue to meet starting at 12:00 PM and did express the need to have a longer meeting schedule. Mayor Schmitz directed Administration staff to work with the committee members to schedule the next meeting on March 14th or March 21st.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Bismarck/Mandan Relationship

There was no discussion on this topic.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 1:06 PM.