



Transit Advisory Committee

1st Quarter 2022

March 23rd, 10:00am

Zoom

Our mission is to provide safe, reliable, accessible and courteous public transportation services in response to the needs of our communities.

Committee Members:

x Kirk Kuchera – SMART Transit	Lenore Fries – Albert Lea (passenger)
Joanne Brackey – SMART Transit	Joyce Poshusta – Austin City Council
x Garry Hart – CVS/SMART Transit	Polly Glynn – Mower County
x Shelly Rockman – SMART Transit	Kathryn Leidal – Mayo Health Systems
x Chris Thompson – SMART Transit	Waseca County – Commissioner
Ashley Strand – SMART Transit	Kelly Sutlief – Waseca (passenger)
x Greg Krueger – Steele County	Matti Gurney – MNDOT OTAT
Troy Klecker – City of Owatonna	Barbara Schreiber – MNDOT OTAT

Review of scope and mission for TAC

Purpose: The purpose of a TAC is to provide guidance and advise transit staff in issues related to transit services, funding, marketing, service strategies, developing policy, special projects, and capital investments/projects. This committee/council is not a governing board, so do not have a legal authority to oversee the transit program, however, provide as a valuable resource to the transit program in developing and providing for transit services.

Updates

- Stats
 - Review of numbers

SMART Transit-Cedar Valley Services - 2021 Data													
Data for all counties combined	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	YTD
	no preschool												
PASSENGERS													
Albert Lea	2,913	3,599	4,393	4,531	3,997	3,877	3,375	4,056	3,705	4,149	4,423	4,085	47,103
Austin	8,088	8,633	8,680	9,304	8,571	5,320	4,219	4,559	10,000	8,921	9,680	8,783	94,758
Owatonna	3,726	3,906	4,071	3,818	3,805	3,091	2,688	2,892	4,297	4,048	3,857	3,400	43,599
Blooming Prairie													0
Waseca	1,488	1,667	1,860	1,726	1,758	1,410	1,235	903	1,654	1,784	1,868	1,591	18,944
TOTAL	16,215	17,805	19,004	19,379	18,131	13,698	11,517	12,410	19,656	18,902	19,828	17,859	204,404
HOURS													
Albert Lea	1,028	1,103	1,367	1,261	1,217	1,093	1,059	1,165	1,240	1,204	1,157	1,166	14,059
Austin	2,090	2,098	2,347	2,195	2,113	1,814	1,754	1,885	2,156	1,986	1,941	1,880	24,256
Owatonna	1,236	1,282	1,418	1,358	1,252	1,122	1,155	1,108	1,222	1,193	1,109	1,110	14,563
Blooming Prairie													0
Waseca	660	656	752	688	660	698	671	718	767	775	728	750	8,523
TOTAL	5,014	5,139	5,883	5,502	5,242	4,727	4,638	4,875	5,384	5,158	4,935	4,906	61,400
MILES													
Albert Lea	12,068	13,002	16,132	16,135	15,183	15,303	14,160	15,027	15,206	15,900	15,456	14,386	177,958
Austin	22,306	22,848	24,535	23,795	22,915	21,112	20,455	21,219	23,159	21,350	20,505	20,098	264,296
Owatonna	13,720	14,840	16,253	15,277	15,425	14,396	13,216	14,605	15,406	14,891	14,038	13,091	175,158
Blooming Prairie													0
Waseca	5,549	5,393	5,781	5,529	4,854	5,324	4,908	4,517	5,279	5,024	5,076	5,015	62,249
TOTAL	53,643	56,083	62,701	60,736	58,377	56,135	52,739	55,368	59,050	57,165	55,075	52,590	679,661

2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
47,103	35,764	66,630	72,627	63,793	52,900	49,612	41,645
94,758	82,167	122,684	123,489	104,812	98,681	90,045	80,385
43,599	38,293	55,238	58,205	57,617	50,340	44,445	38,979
0	0	0	0	1,890	2,935	2,596	
18,944	14,710	24,246	23,417	21,035	18,519		
204,404	170,934	268,798	277,738	249,147	223,375	186,698	161,009
14,059	12,050	14,645	14,824	13,206	10,701	8,166	7,501
24,256	22,032	23,826	22,595	20,771	19,654	18,749	19,061
14,563	13,184	15,882	14,387	12,895	10,655	9,908	10,050
0	0	0	0	718	514	507	
8,523	7,420	9,436	9,409	9,744	8,112		
61,400	54,685	63,788	61,215	57,334	49,636	37,330	36,612
177,958	140,273	181,264	183,952	168,274	133,370.0	114,940	111,127
264,296	245,547	286,710	239,193	227,469	229,089.7	223,447	217,466
175,158	151,328	210,922	193,709	178,377	151,102.1	150,747	150,065
0	0	0	0	1,431	1444.0	1,037	
62,249	47,366	73,630	70,488	60,808	45,875.0		
679,661	584,514	752,525	687,342	636,359	560,881	490,171	478,658

- Start of 2022

SMART Transit-Cedar Valley Services - 2022 Data			
Data for all counties combined			
	January	February	March
PASSENGERS			
Albert Lea	4,245	4,276	0
Austin	9,402	10,282	0
Owatonna	3,430	3,413	0
Blooming Prairie			
Waseca	1,775	1,899	0
TOTAL	18,852	19,870	0
HOURS			
Albert Lea	1,189	1,111	0
Austin	2,012	1,922	0
Owatonna	1,045	994	0
Blooming Prairie			
Waseca	774	732	0
TOTAL	5,019	4,759	0
MILES			
Albert Lea	14,065	14,424	0
Austin	21,864	21,440	0
Owatonna	12,233	12,208	0
Blooming Prairie			
Waseca	5,745	5,282	0
TOTAL	53,907	53,354	0

- COVID-19
 - Update
 - Quick 'This Day in History'
 - Two years ago today, in 2020, SMART began meal delivery in Austin as part of a COVID Community Response Plan
 - Resulted in delivery nearly 50% of all meals in Minnesota over the course of three months – Over 62,000 meals delivered across our communities
 - Not much change since last meeting – still following COVID protocols as an agency/organization
 - Federal mask mandate extended until mid-April 2022
 - Will update mandates/requirements based on local and federal guidelines
 - FTA is looking at face mask requirement policies that may mimic CDC guidelines
 - Training
- SMART Functional Updates

Ridership

- Nearly a 20% increase in riders from 2020
- Deficit of over 70,000 from highest year

Hours

- Over 6,700 hours more than 2020
- Within 5% of previous highest hours
- ** Note service hours were added in 2020 for additional PreK services

Miles

- Nearly 100,000 more miles traveled

Ridership

- Increased over 16% from previous year
- Passenger Per Hour has increased by nearly one passenger since last year
 - January 2021 – 3.23/hr
 - February 2022 – 4.13
 - Note that PPH rates during peak months hovered between 4.5-4.75

Hours

- Reduction of hours largely due to staffing

- Working through driver's training sessions right now (last week Albert Lea/Austin, next week Waseca/Owatonna)
 - Joanne helped formulate state-wide curriculum for Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) for all CDL candidates (part of committee that met weekly)
 - Plans to complete several refresher courses for existing drivers this summer (best time given workload)
- Owatonna/Waseca
 - Doing well staffing-wise in Waseca (one PT, one Sub)
 - Owatonna has had more challenges with staffing
 - New FT staff started this week
 - Aging fleet is having effects on services in some areas
 - Exciting progress with new facility
- Austin/Albert Lea/Dispatch
 - Albert Lea is fully staffed and they have been helpful with assisting Austin as needed
 - Austin has two FT and one PT position open
 - Dispatch is doing well – call volume is growing
 - Phone system is working well (new features including phones not ringing when staff is busy on other lines, etc.)
- Staffing
 - Continues to be our number one challenge in multiple communities
 - Reduced service in Owatonna and Austin due to staffing issues
- MNDOT Update
 - Operating (2023 and beyond)
 - With federal infrastructure bill more funding coming to transit in future years – MNDOT is working through numbers but good reason for optimism
 - Capital
 - Vehicles
 - Vehicle Replacement
 - Ordered six replacement buses (from 2020 capital grant; two in Austin, two in Albert Lea, one in Owatonna, and one in Waseca)
 - Working on getting one bus within the next couple weeks
 - Ordered five replacement buses (from 2021 capital grant; one in Austin, one in Owatonna, and three in Waseca)
 - Completed application for 2022 vehicle replacement
 - Facilities
 - Owatonna facility
 - Ground/foundation work completed before the winter
 - Remaining timeline –
 - Materials delivered nearly two weeks ago, construction process started this past Monday!



- August (into the fall) – Move in
- Austin and Waseca facility approved through MNDOT grant – Future projects
 - Austin scheduled for 2025; Waseca scheduled for 2026
- Other
 - Vehicle Maintenance Software
 - Requested vehicle maintenance software as part of the 2019 grant and was approved
 - Will be purchased and installed this year
- Big Picture – Down the Road
 - Shared Mobility Opportunity
 - Ecosystem in communities where the public would have access to a platform that would help guide them to various mobility services (in some cases it could be multiple services to complete their trip)
 - Waiting for MNDOT to secure vendor contract – will continue to update group as developments take place
 - Staff Meetings
 - Continue to work through annual staff trainings
 - Currently working through staff trainings in all cities
 - Cedar Valley Services Update
 - Owner and operates SMART
 - CVS has staffing challenges as well – filling spots as we can
 - Face mask mandate at CVS continues as well (following FTA mandate to avoid confusion)
 - Bringing back consumers as allowed

2022 Program Goals (carried over from 2021)

- Continue to keep staff and passengers safe
- Continue to streamline and simplify processes and policies
- Work to grow ridership out of COVID Pandemic
 - Gain rider trust
- Any new goals/ideas?

TAC Members/Community Feedback from Last Meeting to Re-visit:

- Brochure locations – If you know of a place that should have brochures, please contact Chris and/or Shelly (or through dispatch)
 - Chris Thompson (Austin/Albert Lea) – CThompson@cedarvalleyservices.org
 - Shelly Rockman (Owatonna/Waseca) – SRockman@cedarvalleyservices.org

NEW items from TAC Members/Community Feedback?

- Discussion on fuel prices –
 - Will there be additional funding on fuel due to increase in prices?
 - Discussions are ongoing with MNDOT and budgets will consistently be monitored
 - Adjustments will be made as needed (move monies from various lines as needed)
 - Will we see additional ridership based on increase in fuel prices?
 - Very possible we'll see increases in ridership due to fuel price increase – will monitor ridership trends as months go on
- Introduction – Barbara Schreiber
 - With MNDOT for over five years
 - Will be Transit Project Manager until November, 2022

2022 Meeting Dates:

Quarterly on 4th Wednesday ... 10:00 am rotating city (Zoom option available for all meetings)

Q1 = March 23rd, 2022 ... ~~905 E 16th St, Albert Lea, MN~~ (Zoom only)

Q2 = June 22nd, 2022 ... 2803 W Oakland Ave, Austin, MN

Q3 = September 21st, 2022 ... 3325 9th St NW, Owatonna, MN

Q4 = December 14th, 2022 ... 303 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093 *

* Changed to 3rd Wednesday due to Christmas holiday, held at Emergency Services Building

** *In person opportunities for all meetings subject to change based on current guidelines, etc.*

**Thank you all so much for your continued support and advocacy on
behalf of public transportation in our region!**