



Transit Advisory Committee
2nd Quarter 2022
 June 22nd, 10:00am
 Austin/Zoom

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

Committee Members:

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|---|--|---|--|
| x | Kirk Kuchera – SMART Transit | | Lenore Fries – Albert Lea (passenger) |
| x | Joanne Brackey – SMART Transit | x | 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 |
| x | Kevin Hemann – SMART Transit | | Kelly Sutlief – Waseca (passenger) |
| x | Greg Krueger – Steele County | | Matti Gurney – MNDOT OTAT |
| | Troy Klecker – City of Owatonna | x | 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

SMART Transit-Cedar Valley Services - 2022 Data					
Data for all counties combined					
	January	February	March	April	May
PASSENGERS					
Albert Lea	4,245	4,276	4,815	4,899	4,517
Austin	9,402	10,282	10,221	9,867	9,895
Owatonna	3,430	3,413	3,670	3,431	3,671
Blooming Prairie					
Waseca	1,775	1,899	2,207	1,830	1,908
TOTAL	18,852	19,870	20,913	20,027	19,991
HOURS					
Albert Lea	1,189	1,111	1,291	1,130	1,159
Austin	2,012	1,922	2,075	1,937	1,995
Owatonna	1,045	994	1,054	1,007	1,048
Blooming Prairie					
Waseca	774	732	837	732	767
TOTAL	5,019	4,759	5,256	4,806	4,968
MILES					
Albert Lea	14,065	14,424	16,258	15,219	15,554
Austin	21,864	21,440	21,976	19,404	21,445
Owatonna	12,233	12,208	13,537	12,560	13,099
Blooming Prairie					
Waseca	5,745	5,282	6,277	5,165	5,302
TOTAL	53,907	53,354	58,048	52,348	55,400

2022 -

- 99,653 rides
- 24,808 hours

2022 is...

- 10% more rides than 2021
- 7% less hours than 2021 (staffing issues)
- 23% more rides than 2020
- 10% more hours than 2020 (COVID)
- 18% less rides than 2019
- 9% less hours than 2019

- COVID-19
 - Update
 - Federal mask mandate has been removed for public transportation
 - Cedar Valley Services removed face mask requirements in late May, and is currently following local and federal guidelines for all things COVID
 - Slight increase in exposures and positive cases but all very mild; all staff have recovered very quickly and are doing well
- SMART Functional Updates
 - Training
 - Lot of training – New hires, ELDT, staff refreshers
 - ELDT
 - All new non-CDL new hires
 - Continue to train existing staff with goal of wrapping up by end of summer (before we get to our busier seasons)
 - Refreshers and CPR
 - D&A
 - State Audit last month went really well
 - Owatonna/Waseca
 - Excited to have some new Owatonna staff on board
 - Two new FT staff have been fully trained and are out driving on their own
 - One new driver starting tomorrow (6/23)
 - Has helped relieve some stress that we experienced over last several months
 - Waseca currently has two PT openings but going well
 - Staff are very excited for new building getting worked on as we speak
 - Austin/Albert Lea/Dispatch
 - Have some trips set up with a partnership with local agencies to deliver food to families
 - Have some summer school trips set up with local preschools (Austin & Albert Lea) on Demand Response service
 - Working with local organization to get young boys picked up to go to a day program
 - Working with CVS to get some additional consumers back to work
 - Each dispatcher is working full time hours
 - Austin has a new FT driver starting next week (brought on some other staff over last couple weeks)
- MNDOT Update
 - Operating (2023 and beyond)
 - Have received direction from MNDOT on the 2023 Operating grant application – Working through this now (due July 1)
 - Looking to do a salary increase across the board for staff, and increasing starting wage to be more competitive in the market place; this will hopefully help with staffing
 - 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)
 - Received first bus from 2020 order in mid-May, likely another year before we receive any more new buses
 - Ordered five replacement buses (from 2021 capital grant; one in Austin, one in Owatonna, and three in Waseca)
 - Approved for two buses from 2022 Vehicle Replacement grant – Initiated procurement process and currently in holding stage (order buses in Sept.)
 - Low-No Emission Grant – BETTER

- Worked with MNDOT and three other agencies to apply for an exciting opportunity to bring an electric bus to SMART
- “Buses Electrified To Travel Efficiently in Rural” MN Communities application was completed the last week of May
- If approved, bus would operate out of new Owatonna facility
- Facilities
 - Owatonna facility
 - Ground/foundation work completed before the winter
 - Building was delivered earlier this year and construction is moving along well
 - Still shooting for a late summer to early fall move



- 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
 - Procurement documents submitted to MNDOT late May – waiting to get approval to proceed
- Big Picture – Down the Road
 - Shared Mobility Opportunity
 - Mobile app would allow users to arrange transportation with SMART
 - Schedule the trip and pay for it all at once
 - Everything is lined up and meetings are taking place
 - Possible launch late this year to early next year
 - Region 10 Local Human Services – Transit Coordination Plan 2022
 - Shelly and Kirk are part of committee with other agencies in SE MN assisting towards updating the regional coordination plan between MNDOT and transit agencies
 - Draft has been reviewed by committee and a final draft to arrive later this year
 - Cedar Valley Services Update
 - SMART/Austin hosting the MPTA State Bus Rodeo this summer
 - More consumers coming back to work (restrictions being lifted)
 - Biggest barrier has been staffing
 - Frontline worker pay – Public Transit included
 - Staff are encouraged to sign up
 - Information being provided to staff as needed
 - CVS working with state legislators on future funding

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:

- Fuel Pricing
 - Continuing to monitor – We have used less fuel than expected due to reduced service; this will pick up due to us adding service (increased staffing)
 - Will work with MNDOT to make some adjustments to budget as needed (from other areas)

NEW items from TAC Members/Community Feedback?

- Thank you for continued work for all transit workers (Greg)
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MPTA State Bus Rodeo – Austin MN 2022!
 Riverland Community College and Holiday Inn
 July 15 and 16, 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!**