

**98th Meeting of the
Metro Area Transit Coordinating Board
February 7, 2024 – 8:00 AM**

Fargo Commission Chambers w/ Virtual Option

Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order and Introductions

2. Action Items:

- a. November 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes

3. Informational Items:

- a. Update on Transit Reorganization Study and Discussion on Concept of 2025 proposed Organizational Chart – Julie Bommelman
- b. 2023 Achievements – Lori Van Beek & Julie Bommelman
- c. 2024 Goals - Lori Van Beek & Julie Bommelman
- d. Update on Driver Shortage – Matt Pinotti, TransDev General Manager
- e. Vehicle Replacement Updates – Jordan Smith
- f. Marketing Strategy for 2024 – Taaren Haak & Luke Grittner
- g. Mobility Management Report / Paratransit Service Demand – Shaun Crowell
- h. 2023 Operations Report – Cole Swingen & Lori Van Beek

4. Other Business

97th Meeting of the Metro Area Transit Coordinating Board November 15, 2023 – 8:00 AM

Virtual Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Denise Kolpack, Fargo City Commission
Brad Olson, West Fargo City Commission
Amber Borah, Dilworth City Council
Brit Stevens, NDSU
Sebastian McDougall, Moorhead City Council
Scott Ebsen, M | State
Jean Hollaar, MSUM
Ryan Nelson, Moorhead City Council
Sarah Orr, Concordia College

Members Absent:

Kevin Hanson, Chair
John Strand, Fargo City Commission
Paul Grindeland, Valley Senior Services
Cindy Girdner, Valley Senior Services

Others Present:

Julie Bommelman, City of Fargo
Chelsea Levorsen, FM Metro COG
Matthew Pinotti, First Transit
Jordan Smith, City of Moorhead
Lori Van Beek, City of Moorhead
Luke Grittner, City of Fargo
Tarren Haak, City of Moorhead
Shawn Crowel, City of Fargo
Cole Swingen, City of Fargo
Jaron Capps, FM Metro GOC
Julie Sellner, Transdev
Brian Sellin, City of Fargo
Anonymous

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Hanson was not present. Commissioner Kolpack volunteered to chair the meeting. Kolpack called the meeting to order. A quorum was present and the meeting officially began at 8:01 am.

2. Action Items**2A. October 4th, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes from the October 4th meeting was made and seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

2B. Amendment to Transdev Contract for 2024 – Julie Bommelman & Lori Van Beek

The current contract expires December 31st and Staff negotiations with Transdev are now completed. MATBUS is currently short 10-12 drivers. They have a 60% turnover rate for new hires during training and 53% turnover for drivers in service.

MATBUS' strategy to recruit and retain drivers includes:

1. Starting wage increase to be a preferred employer
2. Pay differential (additional \$2/hr.) for night and weekends
3. Hire full-time classroom trainer and survey existing drivers to determine retainage strategies
4. Reduce or eliminate split shifts

Current fixed-route service costs \$38.70/Hr. The proposed changes would increase to \$43.10/Hr. (Additional \$4.40 / 11%) Current paratransit service costs \$37.34/Hr. The proposed changes would increase to \$41.15/Hr. (Additional \$3.81 / 10%) The proposed cost increases include annual training wages, increase in starting pay scale, bonuses, and sign-on bonus. It also includes nine full-time management staff, New Classroom Trainer position, COLA increase, and technology (drive Cam system, Geotab performance data, and scheduling software). There is no change in Overhead and profit. Cost allocation is based on percentages of revenue hours.

Fargo \$5,715,853 (increase of \$697,001 / 14%)

Moorhead \$7,914,341 (increase of \$948,643 / 14%)

Kolpack asked if MATBUS had discussed the increase with Fargo's Finance Director. Julie said there has been discussion and that it is included in Fargo's budget and has been approved.

Nelson asked if there had been discussion with Moorhead. Van Beek said that she has had discussion with Moorhead, however, the amount she originally mentioned has increased and that she is planning to discuss the increase again. Olson also asked about discussions with West Fargo's Finance Director. Bommelman said that there has not been any discussion with West Fargo, but she will reach out for discussion.

A motion to approve the price proposal by Transdev for option year 2024, Contract Amendment #2 was made by Arett, seconded by Olson, and unanimously approved.

3A. Proposed change to replacement Card Fee – Jordan Smith & Lori Van Beek

Jordan Smith reported that the number of lost cards has increased substantially and the current card inventory has depleted faster than budgeted. The supply of the cards is low since covid, and lead time for a new shipment of cards is 12 weeks. Currently, the cost of a lost/stolen card is \$5, which covers the cost of card, printing on card, and administration costs to record replacement and discontinue previous card.

MATBUS customer care and marketing will encourage mobile tickets purchased on their smart phone at no additional fee.

A motion to approve the change in replacement card fee from \$5 to \$10 was made by McDougall, seconded by Nelson, and unanimously approved.

3. Informational Items

3A. Update on Transit Reorganizational Study

Bommelman provided an update on the Reorganizational Study conducted by KLJ.

1. Fargo has been approved as the designated recipient for Federal Grant Funds by Minnesota Governor Walz.
2. They are currently working on coordination of Fargo-Moorhead financial records and cost/revenue allocation between the jurisdictions.
3. Currently reviewing staffing needs related to new requirements as a large Urban UZA
4. They are considering merging transit staff into one organization.
 - a. Moorhead currently has 3 administration staff.
5. They are reviewing utilization of vehicles without consideration of ownership.
 - a. This would lower the expense for spare vehicles
 - b. Would allow for bus routes to cross state lines
6. With the goal of minimizing multiple approvals, KLJ is working on a proposed governance model
 - a. Option 1 : MAT Board with Technical Advisory Committee
 - b. Option 2 Hybrid : MAT Coordinating Board / Transit Technical Advisory Committee

Kolpack commented that she would prefer option 2. McDougall asked how often Option 2 would meet. Van Beek responded that they would likely meet monthly.

3B. Update on Vehicle Purchases

Jordan Smith said the following vehicles are on order:

Fixed-Route

1. 9 New Flyers on order for Fargo – February/March delivery
2. 1 New Flyer on order for Moorhead – February Delivery
3. 4 replacements for Fargo are funded for 2024

Paratransit

1. 4 E450 Elkhart Cutaway buses received for Fargo
2. 3 Ford Transit Wheelchair Accessible vans on order for Fargo – April Delivery
3. 2 E450 Elkhart Cutaway buses on order for Moorhead – April Delivery
4. 2 Fargo Paratransit replacement buses funded for 2024
5. 1 Moorhead paratransit replacement funded for 2024
6. 1 Moorhead Expansion bus funded for 2024 (possible on-demand vehicle)

Smith also shared a vehicle option for future consideration - the New England Wheels Low Wheelchair Accessible Bus. It features a low floor design and allows for single step curb height entrance. It has a wide door opening for better accessibility

and a low ramp angle allowing for easier loading/unloading of wheelchairs, which is safer than raising on a lift. The vehicle has an unprecedented score of 91%, offers better fuel economy, and operating costs.

3C. Update on Software Selections for Paratransit and Fixed-Route

Jordan Smith said the software previously used was implemented in 2009 and is outdated. The State of North Dakota issued an RFP for Paratransit and/or Fixed Transit Scheduling and Dispatch software on 1/31/23. MATBUS, along with other ND Transit agencies assisted the state in developing the RFP. MATBUS/City of Fargo staff served on the evaluation committee to help determine suitable vendors. Notice of intent to award was issued 08/11/23, with contract negotiations following soon after. Multiple vendors were awarded the contract with the State, which allowed transit agencies to select a vendor that best suited their needs and the size of their agency. MATBUS staff viewed demonstrations from five vendors, three for paratransit and two for fixed-route software. After financial / technical review, VIA Mobility LLC was selected for a Paratransit replacement and GMV Syncromatics Corporation was selected for fixed-route software replacement. A request to award contracts to VIA and GMV was approved by the Fargo City Commission on 10/30/23 and finalized contracts will be brought to Fargo City Commission and Moorhead City Council for approval later this year. Both contracts have been fully funded and training/implementation is expected to begin early next year.

GMV – 5-year total: \$1,320,150

VIA – 5-year total - \$276,000

3D. January – October Ridership

Swingen reported ridership data for Fargo from January to October 2023 as follows:

- Route 11 - 15.79% (service cuts)
- Route 13 + 8.92%
- Route 14 – 7.69% (service cuts)
- Route 15 - 0.67% (service cuts)
- Route 16 – 4.81% (road construction in 2022 made people to use route 15, they may still be riding 15)
- Route 17 + 1.94%
- Route 18 + 9.08% (route has not been affected by driver shortages)
- Route 20 + 6.60% (route has not been affected by driver shortages)
- Route 24 + 18.48% (route has not been affected by driver shortages)
- Link FM + 67.75% * this number may not be correct.
- Industrial Park On-Demand – 43.29%
- Paratransit + 3.31%
- Route 31 + 12.26%
- Route 32 – 8.11%
- Route 33 + 22.49%
- Route 34 + 73.94% (there are new student housing units along this route)
- Route 36 - 42.59%
- NDSU on-Demand - 38.01% *note - number shown on PPP was not correct
- NDSU - 3.29%
- MSUM – 14.03%

- Concordia + 21.21%
- M | State + 65.79%
- NDSCS – 12.76%

Van Beek said Moorhead ridership overall is up. She presented ridership data for Moorhead from January to October 2023 as follows:

- Route 1 + 18.56%
- Route 2 – 1.87% (decrease in service hours)
- Route 3 + 9.95%
- Route 4 + 6.81%
- Route 5 + 12.02%
- Route 6 + 1.69%
- Route 9 + 50.79%
- Mhd. Senior Ride + 6.88%

4. Other Business

Hearing no other business, the meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Kolpack.



MATBUS Informational Items

02/07/2024

(701) 232-7500

matbus.com

650 23rd St N. Fargo, ND 58102

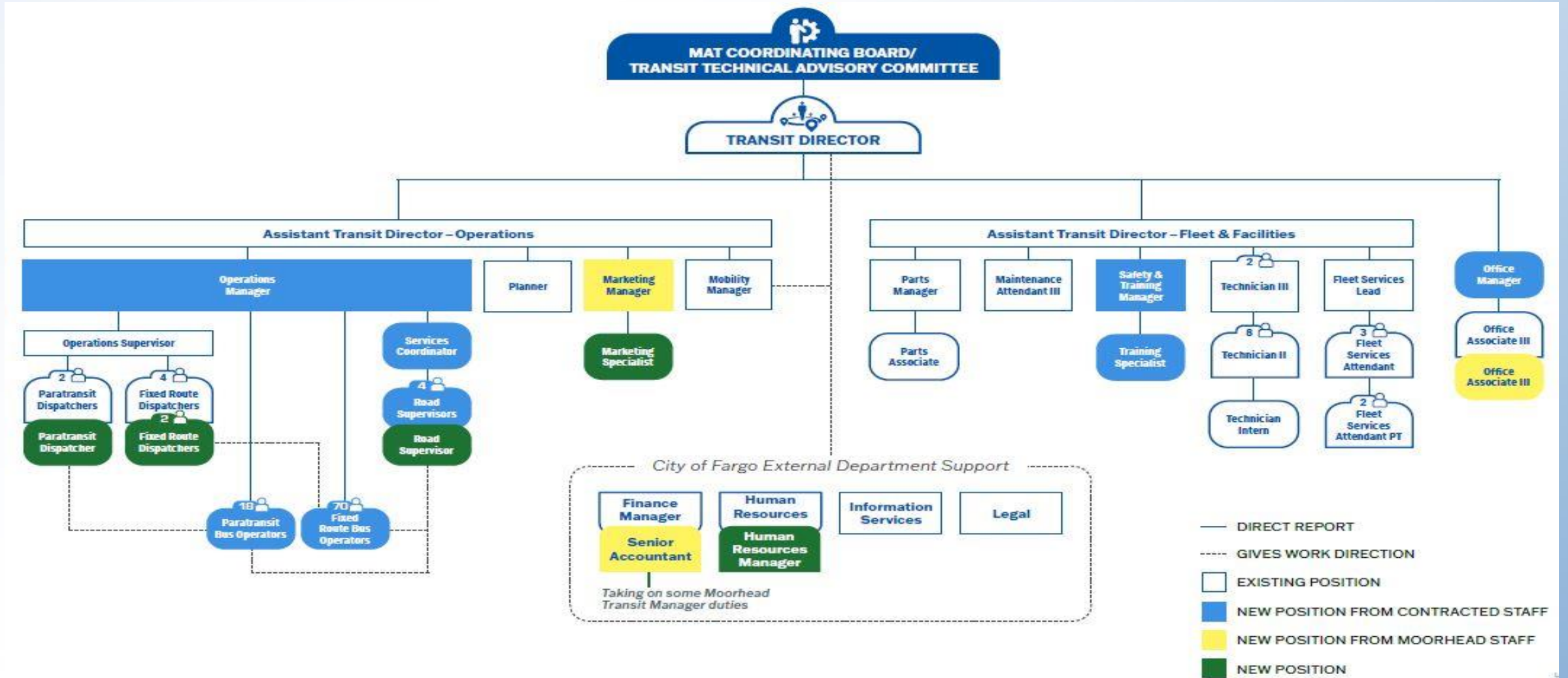


3a. Update on Transit Reorganization Study

- Fargo approved as the Designated Recipient for Federal Grant Funds by the North Dakota Governor (Minnesota previously approved).
- Progressing on coordination of Fargo-Moorhead financial records and cost/revenue allocation between jurisdictions.
- Analysis and recommendations on staff framework for the Large Urban UZA designation – requires additional planning activities, civil rights requirements, grant administration, etc.
- Transit staff changes can incrementally unfold in 2024, with most notable changes becoming effective in 2025:
 - ✓ Moorhead Transit Manager responsibilities shared across the organization
 - ✓ Current Moorhead staff retained
 - ✓ Contract drivers and operations staff transition to Fargo employees
 - ✓ Position reclassification evaluation



2025 Proposed Organizational Chart





3b. Annual Achievements Report

EQUIPMENT:

- Participated in procurement for replacement of large buses as part of Duluth Consortium. Finalized order and buses proceeded to build in January 2024. 1 Moorhead, 9 Fargo
- Awarded bid for replacement of two Paratransit buses for Moorhead (Units 1231 & 1232) in 2021; delivery delayed from 2022 to April 2024 due to Ford chassis availability.
- Received replacement shop truck, awaiting accessories to be installed in 2024
- Replaced water heater at the Metro Transit Garage
- Received 4 replacement Paratransit vehicles that were ordered in 2019 and 2021

FARES:

- Approved increase in Connect card replacement fee from \$5 to \$10 effective January 1, 2024.



3b. Annual Achievements Report

FARGO ROUTE & SERVICES CHANGES:

- January 9, 2023: Implemented minor route changes to Routes 15, 18, 20, and 32 to improve consistency and on-time performance.
 - Route 15 was reduced by .54 miles, making the route 2 minutes shorter.
 - Route 18 was reduced by 3.6 miles, making the route 8 minutes shorter.
 - Route 20 was reduced by 1.06 miles, making the route 10 minutes shorter.
 - Route 32 was adjusted to travel on different roads near the University Village Shelter to avoid issues with snow during winter.
- March 6, 2023: Replaced TapRide with MATBUS on Demand powered by TransLoc.
- July 2023: Added one additional vehicle to Routes 11 & 14 to increase frequency.
- August 2023: Temporarily suspended Route 36 and added an additional vehicle to Route 13 to increase frequency to every 30 minutes and to provide additional service to the northern part of Fargo.
- October 2023: Eliminated the Osgood portion of Route 18 to further increase on-time performance. Reduced the route's overall time by approximately 3 minutes.



3b. Annual Achievements Report

SYSTEM-WIDE TEMPORARY ROUTE & SERVICE CHANGES:

- Jan 9, 2023: Expanded temporary suspension of bus service due to driver shortage from 9:45 p.m. to 10:15 p.m. Reduced frequency on Routes 11, 13, 14 and 15. TapRide service to the Industrial Park suspended on Saturdays rather than 10:15 p.m.

SHELTERS & FACILITIES:

- Temporary relocated Dilworth Walmart Transit Hub to the west during construction of Walmart grocery store expansion April-August 2023
- Completed design for Dilworth Walmart Transit Hub Improvements
- Received delivery of two new Moorhead downtown Center Avenue shelters
- Received nine replacement shelters with solar lighting for Moorhead
- Worked in coordination with Moorhead Engineering to replace concrete and accessible pathway for shelter at RiverView Heights.



3b. Annual Achievements Report

STUDIES & PLANS:

- Updated Safety Plan in August 2023
- Awarded Contract to KLJ for Transit Reorganization Study

OTHER:

- Negotiated one-year option to Transdev contract for 2024 to increase driver wages and add pay differential for night and weekend shifts to attract and retain drivers with the goal to return service levels ASAP, added full-time classroom trainer.
- Completed procurement with State of ND for replacement of fixed route CAD AVA/AVL software and Paratransit dispatch software.
- Fargo Transit Director successfully secured \$2,337,500 in capital grants for the replacement of two fixed route buses, the completion of the bus deck repair at the Ground Transportation Center (GTC) and replacement software for AVL/AVA plus \$81,600 for Mobility Management functions.



3b. Annual Achievements Report

TRAINING:

- Asst. Transit Planner/Marketing Specialist attended the APTA Marketing and Communications Workshop - Las Vegas, NV - 2/26-3/1
- Mobility Manager setup at the Senior Safety Academy at the Hjemkomst Center put on by Valley Triad on 9/14/23
- Mobility Manager made a presentation to juveniles at juvenile court on 10/17/23
- Moorhead Transit Manager made a presentation to Kiwanis International



3c. 2024 Goals

- Fill driver vacancies and reinstate full service through pay differentials targeted on weekend and evening shifts
- Implement recommendations of the Transit Reorganization Study
- Complete construction of the Dilworth Walmart Transit Hub
- Replace downtown Moorhead shelters on Center Avenue
- Replace shelter concrete for improved accessibility on up to six locations
- Implement new Paratransit scheduling software
- Implement new Fixed Route CAD AVA/AVL software, including live tracking and Google Transit
- Implement new technology for pre-trip and post-trip vehicle inspections
- Request qualifications for Engineering and Architectural Services
- Continue major improvements to the Metro Transit Garage and Ground Transportation Center
- Continue discussions to replace and relocate the West Acres Transit Hub
- Continue to increase ridership and return full service



3d. Transdev Driver Shortage Update

As of January 7, 2024:

- 66 drivers employed, including 4 people on leave of absence
- 59 drivers available for service, with 3 daily call-offs and 4 on leave

As of February 1, 2024:

- 77 drivers employed, 67 available for service

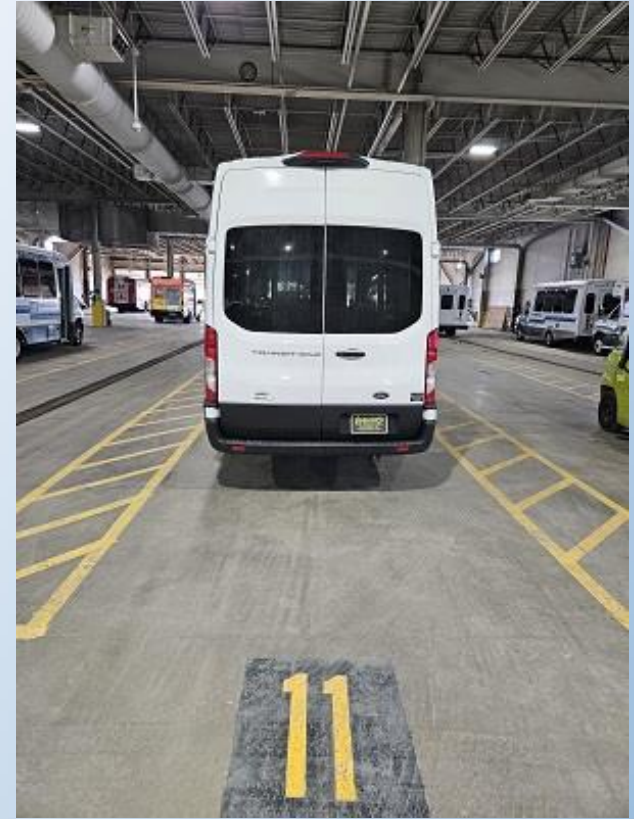
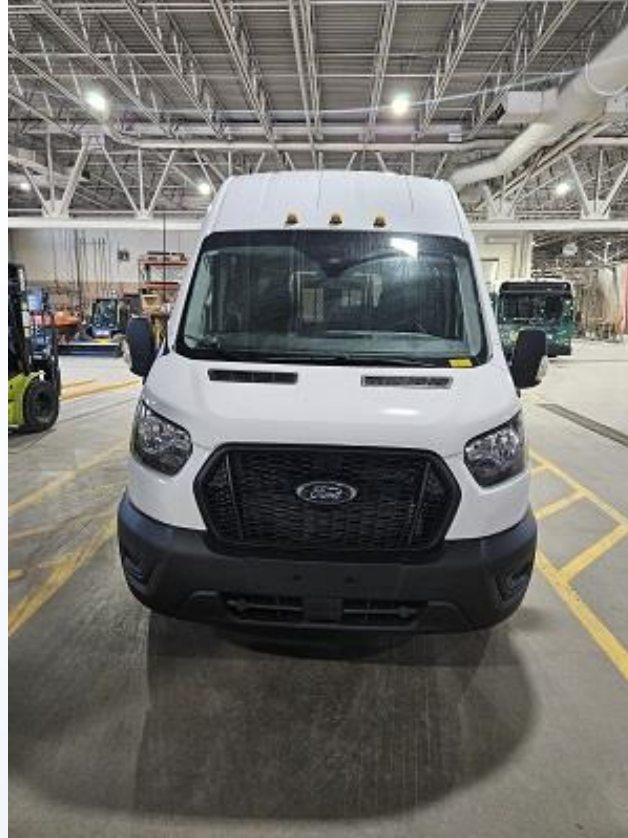
Results from pay increase implemented for 2024:

- Increase of 8 new drivers in service since January
- Applicant flow has increased substantially
- Average 6-7 drivers in classroom every other week (previously 2-3)
- Average training takes 4-5 weeks to complete for revenue service

Drivers needed to return to full service: 99 full-time drivers



3e. Vehicle Replacement Updates





3f. Marketing Strategy for 2024

Goals

- Focus on education
- Utilize a series of short-form videos on educational topics such as:
 - The benefits of using the Connect App
 - Rider courtesy campaign
 - Winter riding tips
 - How to use the bike rack
- Assess MATBUS.com to focus on ease of use and developing FAQs
- Maintain digital marketing presence consistently throughout the year
- Engage younger riders; feature bus wrap design competition
- Continue to develop new social media platforms – Instagram and TikTok
- New MATBUS Connect promotion to highlight mobile ticketing



3f. Marketing Strategy for 2024

Goals

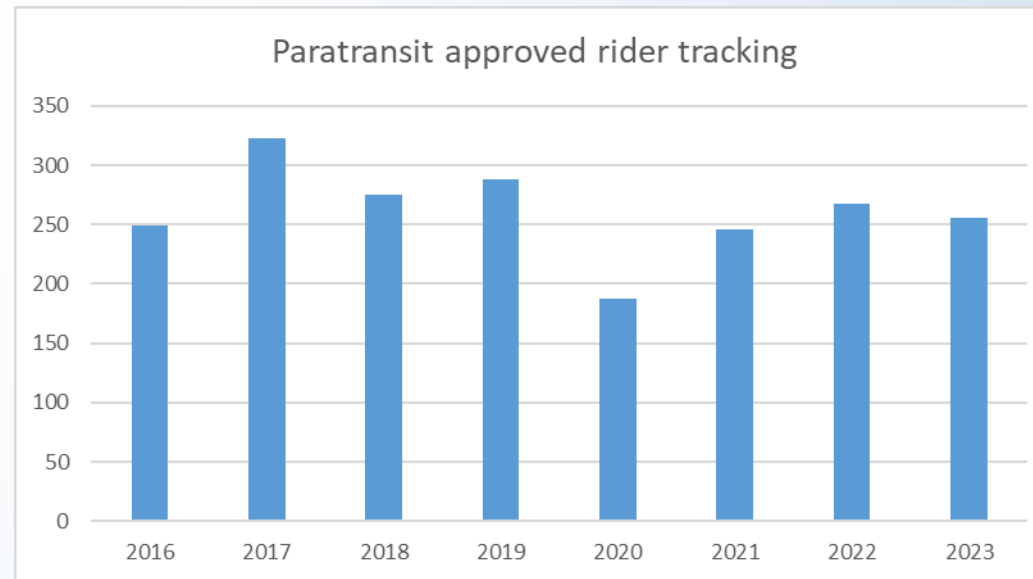
- **LinkFM Partnership Events:**
 - Frostival at Hjemkomst
 - Celtic Festival
 - Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival
 - Downtown Fargo Street Fair
 - Trollwood Mainstage Musical (Bluestem)
 - Pangea: Cultivate Our Cultures
- **Community Partnership Events:**
 - Midwest Kid Fest
 - Fargo Police Community Picnic
 - Stuff the Bus – Midwest Radio
 - Red River Market
 - Public Libraries – Fargo, Moorhead, West Fargo
 - Party for the Planet – Red River Zoo
 - Homeless Veterans’ Stand Down
 - College Orientations
 - Holiday Lights Parade



3g. Mobility Management Report for 2023

(Paratransit Service Demand Trends)

- Approved Paratransit application tracking 2016-2023, In 2023 we had 256 approved applications, down slightly from 2022 when we had 268 approved applications. Approved applications in 2023 by Funding Source: Fargo 141, Moorhead 57, West Fargo 27, Dilworth 11 and we had 20 Visitor/Temp applications approved.

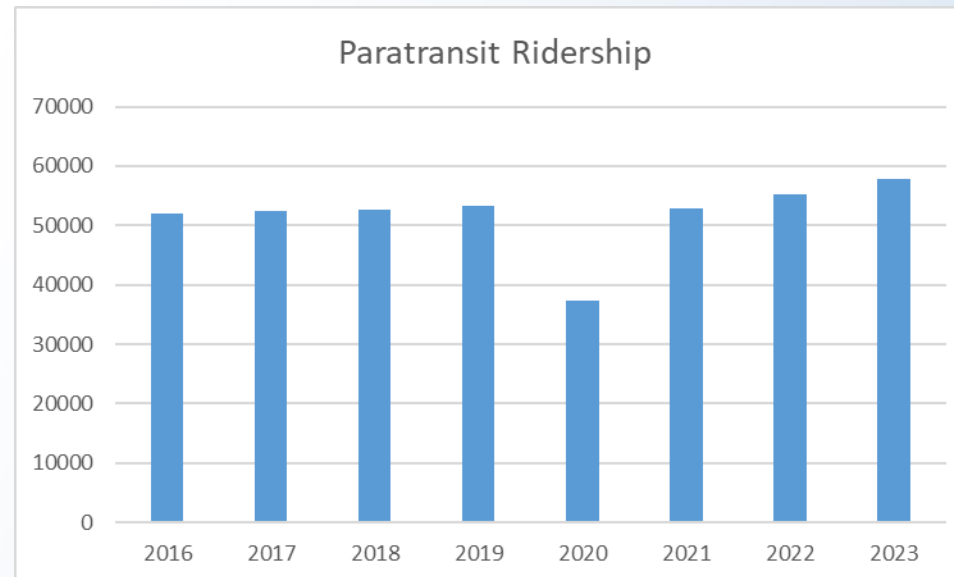




3g. Mobility Management Report for 2023

(Paratransit Service Demand Trends)

- With the exception of 2020, Paratransit Ridership has been trending higher. Most likely due to increased demand in Dilworth and West Fargo.

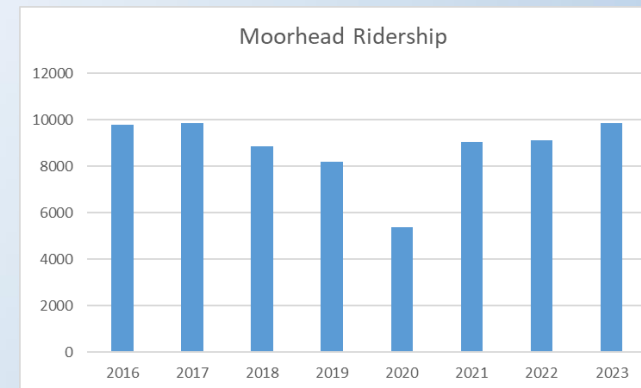
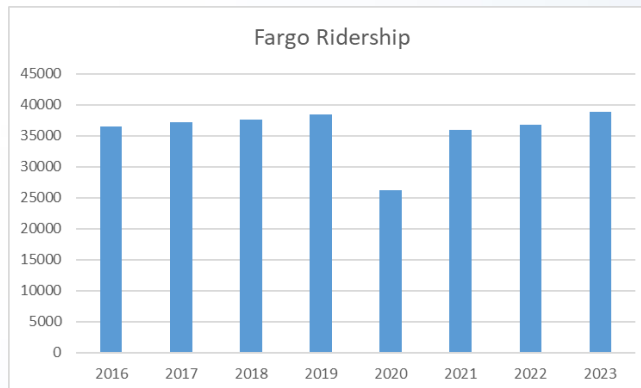
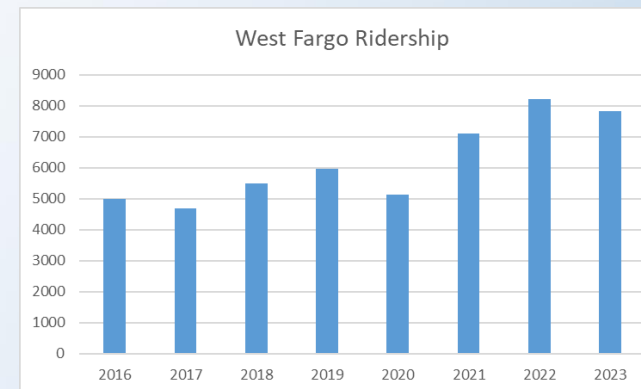
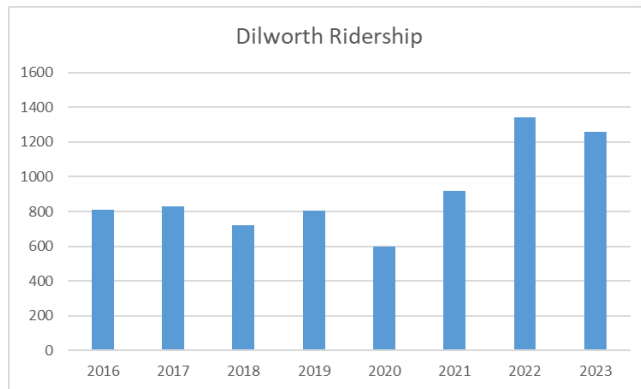




3g. Mobility Management Report for 2023

(Paratransit Service Demand Trends)

- Starting in 2021 ridership for Dilworth and West Fargo has gone up, while Fargo and Moorhead have stayed pretty consistent.





3g. Mobility Management Report for 2023

(Travel Training Workshop)

- Had 24 attendees for the Travel Training Workshop in 2023, agencies represented in attending the workshop are Southeast Human Service Center, CAPLP, RESTORE, Community Options, Freedom Through Discovery, CCRI, Metro COG, Lighthouse Recovery Services, SENDCAA
- Travel Trainer Workshops provides hands-on training and assistance for Human Service Professionals to empower their clients with independence by learning about MATBUS.
- Attendees can request a 10-Ride card to help in training clients on the MATBUS Fixed Route System. In addition they receive a Instructor card to ride free when training their clients.



3h. 2023 Operations Report - Ridership

Annual Fargo by Route

Period	Route 11	Route 13	Route 14	Route 15	Route 16	Route 17
2022	41,098	65,756	91,340	220,016	28,822	31,609
2023	35,318	74,244	87,636	222,635	27,137	32,254
Change	-14.06%	12.91%	-4.055	1.19%	-5.85%	2.04%

Period	Route 18	Route 20	Route 24	LinkFM	Ind. Park TapRide	Paratransit
2022	39,833	25,452	17,547	2,245	6,437	55,371
2023	42,639	27,584	20,837	3,781	3,561	57,545
Change	7.04%	8.38%	18.75%	68.42%	-44.68%	3.93%

Period	Route 31	Route 32	Route 33	Route 34	Route 36	NDSU TapRide
2022	13,072	81,657	115,938	25,893	24,173	6,070
2023	13,634	71,426	142,911	41,206	11,194	3,805
Change	4.30%	-12.53%	23.27%	59.14%	*-53.69%	-37.31%



3h. 2023 Operations Report - Ridership

Annual Moorhead by Route

Period	Route 1	Route 2	Route 3	Route 4	Route 5	Route 6	Route 9
2022	59,886	79,828	45,639	104,010	41,800	8,736	3,964
2023	71,410	78,231	51,117	111,840	47,323	9,110	5,897
Change	19.24%	-2.00%	12.00%	7.53%	13.21%	4.28%	48.76%

Period	Fargo Total	Moorhead Total	System Total
2022	822,206	343,863	1,166,069
2023	850,655	374,928	1,225,583
Change	3.46%	9.03%	5.10%



3h. 2023 Operations Report - Ridership

Trips by Customer Type

Period	Adult	College	Elderly	Disabled	Youth	Child
2022	714,116	335,375	94,302	170,632	18,073	20,923
2023	878,472	365,990	104,058	205,739	20,648	27,813
Change	23.02%	9.13%	10.35%	20.57%	14.25%	32.93%

Period	NDSU	MSUM	Concordia	M State	NDSCS
2022	296,568	19,092	10,864	8,151	350
2023	321,537	18,154	12,807	13,188	304
Change	8.42%	-4.91%	17.88%	61.80%	-13.14%



3h. 2023 Operations Report - Ridership

Annual Metro Senior Ride (Moorhead/Dilworth)

METRO SENIOR RIDE 2023									
MOORHEAD & DILWORTH, MINNESOTA									
Month	MOORHEAD SENIORS			DILWORTH SENIORS			TOTAL PASSENGERS		
	2023	2022	% Change	2023	2022	% Change	2023	2022	% Change
January	638	560	13.93%	85	65	30.77%	723	625	15.68%
February	528	460	14.78%	68	28	142.86%	596	488	22.13%
March	672	723	-7.05%	81	54	50.00%	753	777	-3.09%
April	532	583	-8.75%	79	67	17.91%	611	650	-6.00%
May	730	616	18.51%	80	56	42.86%	810	672	20.54%
June	674	626	7.67%	81	76	6.58%	755	702	7.55%
July	576	512	12.50%	90	61	47.54%	666	573	16.23%
August	660	614	7.49%	67	91	-26.37%	727	705	3.12%
September	650	668	-2.69%	76	97	-21.65%	726	765	-5.10%
October	703	662	6.19%	64	72	-11.11%	767	734	4.50%
November	612	594	3.03%	41	79	-48.10%	653	673	-2.97%
December	529	498	6.22%	35	70	-50.00%	564	568	-0.70%
TOTAL	7,504	7,116	5.45%	847	816	3.80%	8,351	7,932	5.28%

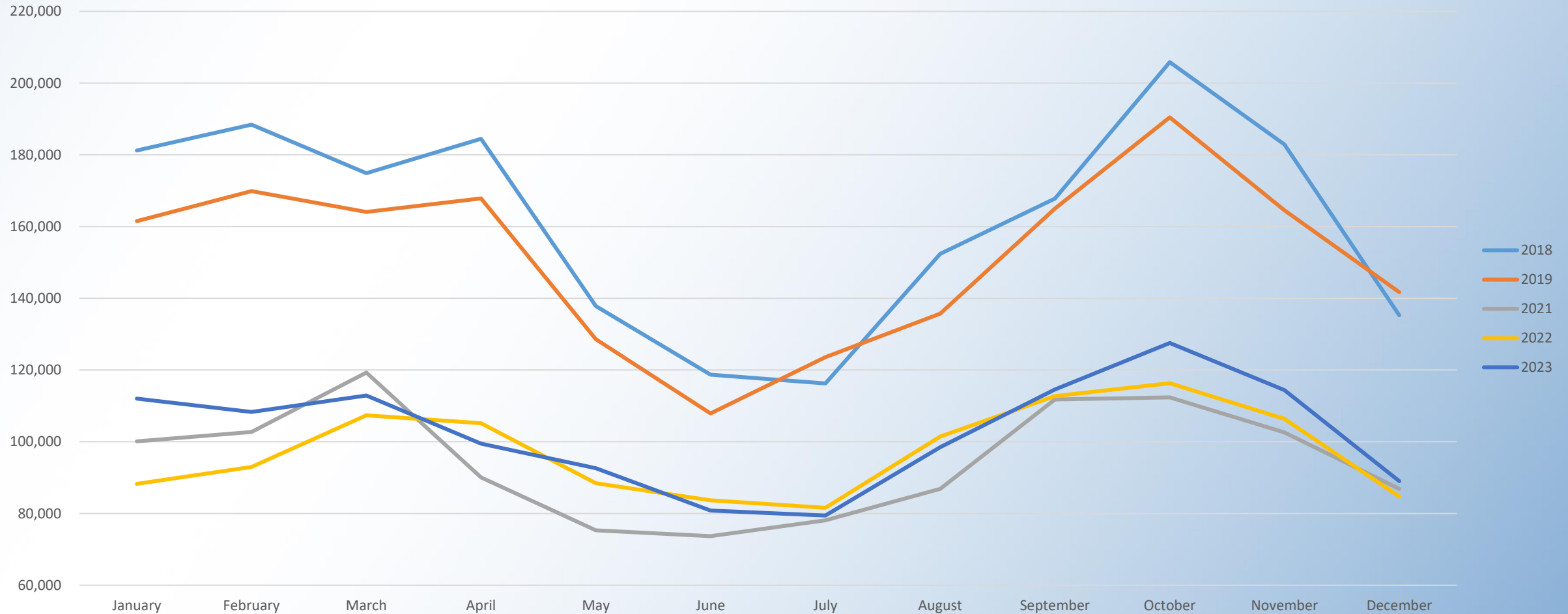
TOTAL PASSENGERS								
Month	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
TOTAL	10,765	10,907	10,454	10,172	5,695	6,681	7,932	8,351
% Change	6.13%	1.32%	-4.15%	-2.70%	-44.01%	17.31%	18.72%	5.28%
			Post-COVID Recovery		56%	66%	78%	82%



3h. 2023 Operations Report – Ridership Comparison

2018-2023 (Excluding 2020)

2018 - 2023 Ridership Comparison





3h. 2023 Operations Report – Additional Statistics

By Year

Vehicle Revenue Hours

Moorhead

2022 – 32,433.5

2023 – 32,462.13

Change – 0.09%

Fargo

2022 – 68,265

2023 – 63,074

Change – -7.60%

Paratransit

2022 – 28,248

2023 – 27,805

Change – -1.57%

Vehicle Revenue Miles

Moorhead

2022 – 436,712

2023 – 434,401

Change – -0.53%

Fargo

2022 – 794,916

2023 – 741,080

Change – -6.77%

Paratransit

2022 – 370,145

2023 – 391,999

Change – 5.90%

Ridership per Hour

Moorhead

2022 – 10.60

2023 – 11.55

Change – 8.96%

Fargo

2022 – 12.26

2023 – 13.49

Change – 10.03%

Paratransit

2022 – 1.96

2023 – 2.07

Change – 5.61%



3h. 2023 Operations Report – Additional Statistics

By Year

Vehicle Revenue Hours

Metro Senior Ride

2022 – 6,049

2023 – 6,113

Change – 1.06%

Vehicle Revenue Miles

Metro Senior Ride

2022 – 64,749

2023 – 75,133

Change – 16.04%

Ridership per Hour

Metro Senior Ride

2022 – 1.31

2023 – 1.37

Change – 4.58%