

The St. Cloud Metro Bus Rider Advisory Committee (RAC) held an in-person meeting at the Mobility Training Center and streamed simultaneously on Microsoft Teams on Tuesday August 20th, 2024, at 10:00 AM. The meeting was held to discuss ridership, hear a presentation about the APO's Looking Ahead 2050 Long Range Plan, hear the latest updates about The Metro Bus Forward Project, as well as various other questions.

The following individuals attended: Michael Kedrowski, Bruce Benner, David Williamsen, Vicki Johnson Kelly Carlson, Jan Scott, Paul Thomas. **Absent:** Kiesha Anderson-King and Jenny Svihel

Welcome. Michael thanked everyone for coming and reviewed the purpose of the RAC.

Public Open Forum.

- 1) None

Old Business:

- 1) RAC Emails - None
- 2) Review of July Minutes - The meeting was held to discuss ridership, hear the latest updates about The Metro Bus Forward Project, Discuss volunteering for the Benton County Fair, as well as various other questions.

New Business:

- 1) Ridership Update - The total ridership numbers for July were 63,359 rides. Of those 49,156 were fixed route, 1,217 were Northstar and 12,626 were Dial a ride.
  - a. Ridership was down about 3% from last month, even though there were more days of service.
  - b. Routes 6, 8 and 22 saw decreases of 10% or more. There were large areas not served by routes 6 and 8 due to road construction.
  - c. Several routes saw some increases, with route 10 having the highest percentage increase of 8%.
  - d. Northstar Link had one of its better months in July with 1,217 rides provided.
- 2) St Cloud APO Presentation – Vicki presented information on the St. Cloud Area Planning Organization's long-range plan for the St. Cloud area titled: Looking forward 2050.
  - a. The Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO) is a regional transportation planning entity that works closely with area cities and counties to plan for future transportation needs in Central Minnesota. One way the APO conducts this is by developing a long-range transportation plan. The plan looks at how people travel in and through the region, as well as forecasting future travel patterns and needs on the regional system.
  - b. Vicki presented a Story Map overview of the recommendations on the proposed transportation infrastructure projects within Looking Ahead 2050.
  - c. Vicki mentioned that between Aug. 8 and Sept. 7, APO staff want to know what you think about the proposed plan during their public comment period.
  - d. For more information visit: <https://stcloudapo.org/current-plans/current-mtp/status-update-for-for-next-mtp/>
  - e. Copies are available for those who do not have access to a computer or internet. Please reach out to the St. Cloud APO at 320-252-7568

3) Long Range Plan Updates

- a. In the last few weeks, tabling has been done at the Benton County Fair and other events throughout the service area.
- b. Mobility Training Specialists were also at the Transit Center and many events in the area.
- c. The surveys will remain open for a while longer, Michael shared some preliminary information with the Committee, not to be shared in the minutes.
- d. Continue to get the word out and request information if needed to get more feedback on the proposed services.

4) Open Discussion

- a. It was asked if paper surveys would be available for those who do not use a computer.
  - i. There will be tabling events at the Transit Center and other locations across the service area, and assistance will be provided to fill out surveys.
  - ii. The Travel Training team may be able to visit and assist locations where groups may be looking to fill out surveys and need assistance.
  - iii. If assistance is needed, please contact Michael or Customer Service and Metro Bus will make things available as needed.
- b. Beginning on September 1, the 3rd Annual Thank Your Transit Professional campaign will kick off. The campaign gives individuals the opportunity to share praise for Metro Bus employees by filling out an online form or calling in. As a token of appreciation, they will receive \$5 Stored Value loaded on a Smart Ride Ticket along with a Thank You card.

The meeting adjourned at 10:52