



TRANSIT TIDBITS

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THOUGHT FOR NOVEMBER 2025

May this November be full of
opportunities and hope.

CTAA'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AND DATA DASHBOARDS

Terry Hoffman
Co-Director, CTWSI

Andrew Carpenter is the Director of the National Center for Applied Transit Technology. Through N-CATT, Carpenter works with small-urban/rural/tribal transit agencies to understand the technologies that can help them address their goals and better serve their communities.

Carpenter delivered an informative presentation at the Dakota Transit Association Conference in September at the Jamestown Civic Center. His presentation focused on two key topics: CTAA's upcoming legislative priorities and the growing importance of data dashboards in public transit decision-making.

Carpenter began by outlining CTAA's legislative priorities for the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization expected next year. He emphasized the need for sustainable, equitable support for public transit—particularly for rural and smaller urban systems. The priorities include:

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1. Sustainably funded support for public transit projects through the Highway Trust Fund's Mass Transit Account, with modest growth aligned with inflation.
2. A consistent 80 percent federal share for transit projects, including operating assistance for rural and small urban systems.
3. Increased formula grant allocations for small transit-intensive communities (STIC) based on performance.
4. Reducing regulatory burdens that disproportionately impact smaller and rural transit providers.
5. Greater formula-based funding for bus and bus facility projects in rural and smaller urban areas.

In the second half of his presentation, Carpenter shifted focus to how data dashboards can help agencies turn information into actionable insight. He encouraged transit providers to leverage the data they already collect to:

- Address immediate operational issues or decisions,
- Identify and respond to long-term service trends, and
- Support strategic, long-term planning based on cumulative data.

The session sparked lively discussion around what makes an effective dashboard—ultimately, Carpenter noted, it depends on each agency's goals. Participants shared creative ideas for how they could apply dashboard tools to improve efficiency, monitor trends, and make better-informed decisions in their own systems.

Overall, the presentation offered both policy insight and practical strategies, leaving attendees with a clearer understanding of CTAA's federal priorities and new ways to use data to strengthen their operations.

SOUTH DAKOTA TRANSIT DELEGATION TOURS BUS MANUFACTURERS

Terry Hoffman, Co-Director CTWSI

major bus manufacturing facilities in Kansas and Indiana, gaining firsthand insight into the craftsmanship and technology behind today's transit vehicles.

Diamond Coach Corporation – Oswego, Kansas

Date: Monday, October 27, 2025

- Tour organized by Brenda Sharkey, Procurement Specialist, SD Department of Transportation
- The group was hosted by Caleb Strickland and his team at Diamond Coach



- Highlights included a guided factory tour, a presentation on company history and standards, and a meal at the plant.
- Attendees explored the production process from design to final inspection and viewed several completed buses.



A group of South Dakota public transit professionals took part in a multi-day trip to tour



Forest River Manufacturing – Goshen, Indiana

Date: Wednesday, October 29, 2025

- Second stop on the tour provided another in-depth look at the manufacturing process
- Hosted by Scott DeFrees, Paul Watson and Derek Wyman
- Presentation covered company operations, vehicle design, and innovation in commercial and public transit vehicles
- Participants observed assembly in progress and discussed trends in safety, efficiency, and technology
- The tour concluded with a discussion on procurement and evolving transit needs in South Dakota

Purpose of the Trip

The multi-state tour gave participants a closer understanding of how vehicles are produced and the factors that influence performance, safety, and reliability. Both visits reinforced the strong partnership between manufacturers and South Dakota's transit providers, ensuring quality vehicles for communities statewide.

- Participants included administrators, accountants, and mechanics from:

- River Cities Public Transit (Andy Sharp, Caleb Kusser)
- Community Transit (Kathy Holman, Terry Hoffman)
- Prairie Hills Transit (Lisa Johnson, Taylor Jensen)
- Aberdeen Ride Line (Shawn Johnson)
- People's Transit (Gayle Kludt, Sheila Suttan)
- Brookings Area Transit Authority (Travis Bortnem)



FROM BRONZE TO GOLD: LOCAL COUPLE SHINES AT MUSTANG RALLY IN STURGIS

Terry Hoffman, Co-President
CTWSI

When most people think of Sturgis, South Dakota, motorcycles come to mind. But every Labor Day weekend, the town becomes a hub for horsepower of a different kind—the Mustang Rally, where Ford's legendary pony car takes center stage.

For one local couple, what began as a casual invitation has grown into a golden tradition.

Larry Konradi is a part-time driver for Community Transit. His wife Kathy stumbled on a 1999

Chrome Yellow Convertible Mustang in Wisconsin several years ago. Bright, bold, and unmistakable, the car quickly became more than just a fun drive, it was a source of pride. In 2022, friends encouraged the couple to bring their Mustang to Sturgis and enter it into the Rally's car show. Somewhat unsure of what to expect, they entered their convertible in the 1999–2004 category. To their delight, they brought home a bronze award that first year.

Inspired, they returned to the rally in 2023. This time, with more experience and polish, their Mustang stood out from the crowd. The judges agreed, and the couple proudly claimed gold.

After skipping 2024, they returned in 2025, rolling into Sturgis with their gleaming yellow Mustang. Once again, they drove away with a gold award in their category, proving that their car—and their commitment—shines brighter each year.

"We never imagined we'd win anything, let alone gold twice," Larry said. "But now, the Rally is something we look forward to every year."

The Mustang Rally, which draws enthusiasts from across the country, celebrates more than just cars—it celebrates community, passion, and the joy of the open road. For this Community Transit driver and his wife, it has also become a symbol of what can happen when you follow a little encouragement, take a chance, and share something you love.

"It's not only a blast to show, but it's a joy to drive," said Konradi.

From bronze beginnings to golden glory, their 1999 Chrome Yellow Convertible has become a true standout—not just on the streets of Sturgis, but in the hearts of its proud owners.



FUNDAMENTALS OF TRAINING MANGEMENT TRAINING

Anna Olson, Assistant Director Souris Basin Transportation

It was my honor to attend the Fundamentals of Transit Management training class held at the North Dakota Department of Transportation building in Bismarck, ND, on October 20–21, 2025. The class was led by Carol R. Wright Kenderdine of Carol Wright Consulting in Tampa, Florida.

Approximately twenty attendees from a variety of North Dakota transit agencies—ranging from small rural systems to larger urban operations—joined the training, along with several DOT employees.

This highly interactive and informative two-day session covered a wide array of topics, including Human Resource Management, Financial Management, ADA, Title VI, Civil Rights, Federal Requirement Updates, Customer Service, Marketing, Operations and Service Design, Vehicle and Facility Management, Emergency Management, Performance Measurement, and many related subtopics.

As someone new to management in the transit industry, I found the information presented to be invaluable. Even those with years of experience commented that they gained new insights and

updates that will benefit their agencies. Carol was an engaging and knowledgeable instructor who shared real-world experiences, encouraged participation, and led activities that sparked thoughtful discussion.

These exchanges allowed participants to learn from one another and gain fresh perspectives on how different agencies handle various scenarios. What stood out most to me was the sense of camaraderie and support among everyone in attendance. Regardless of agency size or years of experience, every participant was open, helpful, and eager to share their knowledge and resources. There was no gatekeeping- only genuine collaboration and encouragement. It was truly heartwarming and reaffirmed how special it is to be part of such a dedicated and supportive network of professionals within North Dakota's transit community.

In summary, it was an excellent and informative training course that provided me with a wealth of knowledge to help improve my agency. I highly recommend others attend this course if they have the opportunity in the future! It was truly a pleasure to meet and interact with both the instructor and fellow attendees and to learn such valuable information about the many important topics covered during the two-day session.

TRAINING UPDATE

Contact Information

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UPCOMING PASS TRAINING: PASS Training will be held in Watertown, SD, Monday December 29 and Tuesday December 30 at Lake Area Technical College. If you have drivers or staff in need of PASS training and you would like them to attend, please contact Rod to get them registered. Registration deadline for this class is Friday, December 19.

Are you or someone from your agency interested in becoming a PASS trainer? CTAA now offers PASS - Train the Trainer certification 100% online. It's never been easier to become a PASS trainer.

If you have drivers/staff in need of training or re-certification and would like to inquire about or schedule a class, please contact Rod using the information listed above.



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Tidbit Articles

Please contact me with articles you would like to place in the Transit Tidbit.

Distribute

Please share your Transit Tidbit with your staff and other individuals interested in the Dakota Transit Association.