



TRANSIT TIDBITS
Issue 166 March 2026

THOUGHT FOR MARCH 2026

A goal is not always meant to be reached; it often serves simply as something to aim at.



**DTA 2026 ANNUAL
CONFERENCE REMINDER**

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

Your 2026 DTA Conference will be held in Huron, SD, September 19th through the 23rd, 2026. The conference will be held at the Huron Event Center and the Rodeo at the SD State Fairgrounds. We have secured rooms at the Crossroads Hotel. More information will be placed in the Tidbit as we finalize the conference.

**NORTH DAKOTA TRANSIT
AGENCIES**

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

If any North Dakota Transit Agency would like to host the 2027 DTA Conference, please contact me.

IN THIS ISSUE:

DTA Conference Reminder	Page 1
ND Transit Agencies	Page 1
DTA Membership Forms	Page 1-2
Spring is Coming	Page 2
Four Hours that Changed	Pages 2-4
Souris Basin Transit	Page 4-5
Training Update	Page 5

DTA MEMBERSHIP FORMS

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

Please send in your 2026 DTA Membership forms. The 2026 DTA Membership Form was emailed out to all the transit agencies in the middle of January. Last year we had 35

agencies renew their membership – this year 22. They were due back March 9, 2026. If you did not receive your form, please let me know.

SPRING IS COMING

**Karen Schmeling, Program
Coordinator**

**Golden Valley/Billings County
Council on Aging**

We are only a few days away from spring and I saw the first meadowlarks yesterday. I have a friend that says we will have three more snows after the meadowlarks return and I am counting the snow we have right now as one. It has been a fairly mild winter in the southwest corner of the state but warmer days and more sunshine are most welcome.

The Golden Valley/Billings County Council on Aging acquired a new non ADA van in January. It is a 2026 Chrysler Pacifica. It has two bucket seats instead of a bench in the middle row. It is so comfortable to ride in. The drivers also love driving it.

One of our Billings County board members retired in December so a new one was appointed in January. I think she will be a great addition with all the changes happening in Medora. The Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library will open this July so there are great plans for the summer in Medora.

Happy Spring!

FOUR HOURS THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

(Written by CT Moore LR205)

Submitted by Terry Hoffman, Co-
Executive Director

Community Transit of
Watertown/Sisseton, Inc.

My name is CT Moore—some of you may know me better as LR205 over the radio. I'm a newer driver, having started this past October, and I'm still learning something new every day. But what I experienced this past Friday gave me a renewed sense of purpose and pride in being part of this team.

Friday started like any other day. I was tasked with transporting a passenger from Pierre to Sioux Falls—routine work, part of the mission. After safely delivering my passenger, I was instructed to meet up with our lead driver, Bryce Lambert, to spend a few hours observing operations in a larger city. Simple enough... or so I thought.

After linking up with Bryce at the Sioux Falls depot, I got a quick rundown of what the afternoon would look like. This wasn't training. It wasn't a walkthrough of dispatch or procedures. This was real-time operations. We had an objective and it needed to get done. Our assignment: assist with a pickup at DakotAbilities.

I was told we had approximately 26 passengers utilizing mobility devices that needed transportation. I remember thinking, there's no way that's all going on one bus... surely this will be spread out. I was wrong.

When we arrived, two buses were already staged lifts down, drivers ready. We pulled in as the third. And just like that, it clicked. We weren't there to help with 26 totals. We were there as part of a system moving dozens upon dozens of passengers, all depending on us right then, right there.

Bryce checked his manifest and got to work. One by one, passengers were brought forward. As quickly as he operated the lift and guided them onboard, I secured each individual safely into position. And then we moved. Drop-offs. Turnarounds. Reconfiguring the bus. Back again. Load. Secure. Roll out. Over and over. For the next three and a half to four hours, it never stopped. No slowdown. No hesitation. Just constant movement—loading, transporting, returning, adjusting for ambulatory and non-ambulatory passengers, and doing it all over again.

What stood out most wasn't the intensity; it was the consistency. Other drivers were running the same operations solo. No complaints. No frustration. Just focus and execution. Bryce and I worked together seamlessly as a team, keeping pace with the flow and the mission at hand. And here's the part that truly stayed with me: This wasn't a special event. This wasn't an exception. This is their daily operation. Morning. Afternoon. Evening. Monday through Friday.

Do the math, 26 passengers, multiple buses, three times a day. Then multiply that by a week, a month, A year.



What you get is not just a workload— you get a massive, continuous movement of people who depend on this service to live their daily lives.

And that's when it hit me. Back home in Pierre, there are days we may not transport a single mobility device. On other days, maybe five or six and sometimes that can feel like a lot. After Friday, I can honestly say, I'll never look at those days the same way again. Because what I experienced in Sioux Falls was on another level entirely.

The environment alone adds to the challenge— tighter roads, heavier traffic, longer drive times between stops. You can drive 10 to 15 minutes without a single drop-off. Drivers contend with potholes, congestion, and motorists who don't always make the job easier. Which means every securement, every turn, every merge carries even more weight. And yet—they execute. Every single day. So, this is a well-

earned recognition: To the Sioux Falls drivers and staff, what you do is nothing short of exceptional. Your consistency, professionalism, and commitment to those you serve deserve respect.

And to my fellow drivers here in Pierre. The next time the day feels heavy, the route runs long or the workload seems like a lot, stop and take a breath. Remember, this job, this mission, can look very different depending on your location. And no matter the size of the route or the number of passengers, what we do matters. We provide more than transportation. We provide access. We provide independence. We provide dignity. Every trip. Every stop. Every day.

and drop-offs and reporting trip data to Minot Transit. ADA riders are certified by Minot Transit staff, and monthly ridership consistently exceeds 2,000



SOURIS BASIN TRANSIT RIDERSHIP

Darrell Francis, Executive Director

SOURIS BASIN TRANSIT

- In April 2025, we transitioned from Route Match to Ecolane software, resulting in a 30% reduction in drivers and a 20% decrease in our vehicle fleet. Larger buses and transit vans have replaced smaller minivans, significantly increasing both wheelchair and overall passenger capacity and enhancing operational efficiency by at least 48%. These improvements reduced the need for drivers, while implementation of a new no-show policy has further decreased cancellations.
- Minot was reclassified as an Urban (5307) area, with SBT demand response service now operating from 6:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., M-F. City funding is restricted to areas $\frac{3}{4}$ miles to fixed routes and City Limits. Souris Basin Transit provides ADA-compliant service during Minot Transit's fixed route hours, managing all pick-ups

- 5310 funding has allowed us to extend Elderly and Disability services until 10 p.m. on weekdays and to provide weekend coverage, Saturday 7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. and Sunday 7 a.m.- 3 p.m.
- SBT provides transportation in the 10 counties, as our 5311 Rural grants have done for many years.
- Service enhancements commenced on July 1, 2025, and monthly ridership has demonstrated continual growth following initial adjustments.
- We have also provided Intercity trips to Bismarck, twice a day, every day, to meet the Jefferson Bus Lines schedule. Minot was also added to the Jefferson/Greyhound destination ticket system.
- We are in the planning stage to provide a weekly trip to Williston, working with the area public transit systems for the coordination.



- Recruiting qualified drivers, dispatchers, and office support continues to be a challenge as our system expands.
- I remain committed to leading Souris Basin Transit and look forward to continued participation in future DTA Conferences.

TRAINING UPDATE

Contact Information

Rod Graefing 701-845-4300

rod@southcentralseniors.org

Spring is almost here! If you are interested in hosting a PASS training class in April or May, please let me know as soon as possible so we can begin planning.

Are you or someone from your agency interested in becoming a PASS trainer? CTAA now offers PASS - Train the Trainer online certification. 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.



Jacque Senger, Executive Director,
DTA

jacquelinesenger@gondtc.com

Cell number 701-740-8894

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