

**IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL  
TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, January 21, 2026**

**MINUTES**

Fratzke opened the meeting of the Iowa Northland Regional Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) at 10:01 a.m. Following that, attendees introduced themselves.

Meeting Attendees:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Thomas Weintraut*	Planner III	Cedar Falls
Lisa Sesterhenn*	Public Health Planner	Black Hawk County Public Health
Rachel Mayer*	Epidemiologist	Black Hawk County Public Health
David Sturch	General Manager	MET Transit
Deanne Kobliska*	Mayor	Evansdale
Danny Laudick*	Mayor	City of Cedar Falls
Stephanie Sheetz*	Director of Community Dev.	City of Cedar Falls
Sharon Droste*	MET Board	Met Board
Bill Symnon*	Director of Sales	Via Transportation
Cathy Showalter*	Executive Director	Schoitz Otto Foundation
Aric Shroeder*	City Planner	City of Waterloo
Emily Hanson*	Executive Director	BHGA
Erin Tink	Executive Director	Waterloo Community Foundation
Nina Grant*	Vice President of Student Affairs	Hawkeye Community College
Megan McKenzie	Executive Director	McElroy Foundation
Nick Fratzke	Transportation Director	INRCOG
Sanzida Rahmatu Setu	Transportation Planner II	INRCOG
Oghogho Oriakhi	Transportation Planner I	INRCOG

*\*Attended Online*

**Actionable items**

The first item was approval of the agenda. It was moved by Tink, seconded by McKenzie, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Next, the minutes of the October 22, 2025, meeting were reviewed and considered for approval. It was moved by Sesterhenn, seconded by Tink, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**Next was the Discussion Items**

1. Via Transportation – Microtransit solutions Presentation

Fratzke opened the discussion by highlighting that Microtransit is a top objective identified by the TAC for the 2026 – 2030 Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP). As such, the group's interest in understanding what Microtransit could look like, both within and outside the metro, and exploring its potential to address gaps in existing fixed-route and paratransit services within the metro areas, particularly in response to evolving transit challenges after COVID.

Symon (Via Transportation) provided an overview of Via's transit solutions, including planning, operations, and

optimization tools that connect multiple public transit modes through a unified platform. He explained that Microtransit is an on-demand public transportation service optimized through technology, like ride-hailing apps, and can serve cities of various sizes. Via's services span Microtransit, paratransit, fixed-route transit, and student transportation, providing flexible solutions for agencies seeking efficient routing and service planning. Symon highlighted their extensive experience working across multiple U.S. cities, citing their recent project in Sioux Falls as a key example. Questions and discussions included potential community applications, funding opportunities, and the cost of implementation, bridging the gap between fixed-route and paratransit services, extending service hours, and offering convenience to choice riders without requiring them to give up personal vehicles, etc.

The next steps include exploring the full scope of Microtransit services and identifying potential communities for implementation in the MPO. Laudick proposed considering the formation of a task force to guide planning and execution, monitoring funding opportunities, and engaging potential partners and stakeholders for input and collaboration, and planning follow-up meetings, potentially including in-person discussions with Via.

### **General Discussion**

Fratzke discussed exploring the full scope of the initiative, including the communities and organizations involved, and suggested setting up a task force aligned with Laudick's earlier suggestion to guide the process. Sturch noted that it would be beneficial to proceed with initial steps, and once funding becomes available, the team can move forward with the next steps. Sturch also highlighted that the initiative could bridge the gap between fixed-route and paratransit services, extending service beyond current operating hours, with the primary appeal being to riders who value choice, allowing them to access the service without giving up their personal vehicle. Droste added potential opportunities for after-school and youth programs. McKenzie noted that with the merger of Waterloo High School, there may be additional opportunities for alignment or services with the school board. Potential partners and stakeholders include UNI, Hawkeye, school districts, Workforce Development, and Grow Cedar Valley, with suggested outreach to mayors of jurisdictions and public health partners, etc. Hanson recommended including Evansdale and Elk Run in ongoing discussions to ensure broad community inclusion, as Microtransit could potentially meet the needs of these communities.

There being no further discussion, Fratzke declared the meeting adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Oghogho Oriakhi  
Secretary