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CONTRACT REVIEW FORM

Contract between the City of Bismarck and Bis-Man Transit

Purpose of Contract: Approval of Coordinated Public Transportation-Human Srvs Plan (CPTHSP)

Contract Amount: N/A

Contract Period: 2026 through 2030

Department: Planning Budget Number (if applicable): N/A

Revenue / Funding Source: FTA grant / Mill Levy Project Number: N/A

Comments: The CPTHSP is required by Federal Law for FTA's 5310 grant program (Enhanced Mobility for Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities). SEE ADDITIONAL PAGE further comments.....

Please check all that apply:

- ☐ Regular Contract Review
- ☐ Change Order
- ☐ Grant Funded
- ☐ Subrecipient/Vendor Determination
- ☐ IT / GIS-Related
- ☐ Mayor's Signature Only
- ☒ Commission Approval and Mayor's Signature
- ☐ Attestation of Mayor's Signature

Procurement Attached:

- ☐ Three Quotes
- ☐ RFP/RFQ/Bids
- ☐ Cooperative Agreement/ State Contract

APPROVALS:

Department Director DocuSigned by: Daniel Nairn 7020985A0AD245F... Date: 10/2/2026

Grants Coordinator (if needed) Date:

Comments:

IT/GIS (if needed) Date:

Comments:

City Attorney DS Date: 10/13/2026

Comments: okay

Procurement Officer Initial Date: 10/13/2026

Comments: okay

Finance Director Initial Date: 10/13/2026

Comments: ok

Administrator DS Date: 10/13/2026

Comments: Okay

10/21/2026

DocuSigned by: DB23347C43514F0...

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Approval of Coordinated Public Transportation-Human Service Plan (CPTHSP)

Comments:

The CPTHSP is required by Federal Law in order to fund projects under the FTA's 5310 grant program (Enhanced Mobility for Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities). The plan was created by Bis-Man Transit with assistance from area seniors, individuals with disabilities, people with low incomes, and representatives of public, private, and nonprofit agencies. It identifies the transportation needs of these individuals and provides strategies for meeting those needs.

The plan was approved by the Bis-Man Transit Board on September 24, 2026, and is attached. It is being forwarded for approval by the Bismarck City Commission as the City is the oversight agency and FTA grantee. FTA’s 5310 funds are awarded to the City of Bismarck via NDDOT contracts and are passed through to Bis-Man Transit.

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September 24, 2026

TO: Bismarck City Commission

FROM: Deidre Hughes, Executive Director, Bis-Man Transit Board

SUBJECT: 2026 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan Approval

BACKGROUND: In 2022, the Bis-Man Transit Board approved the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan. In order to continue receiving federal funding, this plan must be updated every five years.

> Federal transit law requires that projects selected for funding under the Enhanced Mobility for Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program be "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan," and that the plan be "developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and other members of the public" utilizing transportation services. These coordinated plans identify the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provide strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation.

DISCUSSION: A series of public comment meetings were held to gather input for the 2026 Plan. The final public hearing was held September 24, 2026. Surveys were distributed to human service agencies and the general public. The plan update includes the feedback received. Funding sources and additional statistics have been included in the proposed plan.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None.

RECOMMENDATION: The Bis-Man Transit Board recommends approval of the 2026 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan.

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Bismarck, ND 58501
701.258.6817
info@bismantransit.com
www.bismantransit.com

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Bis-Man Transit

Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan 2026

Prepared by

Bis-Man Transit September 2026

Approved by Bis-Man Transit
Board of Directors: September 24, 2026

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Introduction

The requirement to develop a Coordinated Plan originates from the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005. This act required designated recipients of Section 5307 and Section 5310 funds to develop a plan to address the transportation needs of older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes. This requirement has been reauthorized several times. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which provides long term funding for surface transportation infrastructure planning and investment, was authorized on November 15, 2021.

The IIJA included the requirement (continued from the previous federal transportation authorization) that local communities have a "coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan" to improve mobility for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes by removing barriers to transportation services. It also included $550 billion in new investments for expanding transportation mobility options, among other needed improvements.

This plan fulfills the Coordinated Plan requirement for Bis-Man Transit.

Required Elements of the Plan

Federal transit law requires that projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 program be "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit- human services transportation plan," according to FTA C 9070.1G (page V-I). The Coordinated Planning process can be broken down into three steps.

1. Identify the transportation needs of older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low income.
2. Create strategies that address local needs.
3. Prioritize strategies for funding and implementation.

As defined in the federal guidance, public transportation is regular, continuing shared-ride surface transportation services, which are open to the public or a segment of the public defined by age, disability, or low income, and the services currently available to them. Public transportation does not include intercity passenger rail transportation; intercity bus service; charter bus service; school bus service; sightseeing service; courtesy shuttle service for patrons of one or more specific establishments; or intraterminal or intrafacility shuttle service. Public transit can be broken down into the following 3 categories:

1. Fixed Route Transit
2. Demand Response Paratransit
3. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Complementary Paratransit

Required elements of the plan include:

1. An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and nonprofit);

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2. An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service.
3. Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and
4. Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

Executive Summary

Bis-Man Transit 2026-2030 Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan (herein referred to as the "Coordinated Plan" or the "Plan") addresses the mobility needs and services gaps in Bismarck, Mandan and Lincoln; specifically, for seniors (over the age of 65), persons with disabilities, low-income individuals, and veterans (herein referred to as "target populations"). This is done by providing a framework of strategies and projects to improve service levels through an open stakeholder engagement process.

Per the Federal Transit Administration, Bis-Man Transit is required to update the Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan every five years, as Bis-Man Transit receives Section 5310 funding for capital and operating projects.

> *Federal transit law requires that projects selected for funding under the Enhanced Mobility for Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program be "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan," and that the plan be "developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and other members of the public" utilizing transportation services. These coordinated plans identify the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provide strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation.*

The Plan does the following:

- Assesses transportation services provided for target population groups.
- Considers and evaluates current and future transportation needs of the target population.
- Develops goals and strategies to address gaps in existing transportation services.
- Prioritizes projects and programs that will improve mobility for target population groups.
- Addresses funding gaps for Bis-Man Transit.
- Allows Bis-Man Transit to fulfill its responsibilities as a Section 5310 funding subrecipient.

Mobility Needs and Service Gaps

To engage stakeholders and assess mobility needs and service gaps for Bis-Man Transit, a comprehensive outreach process targeted participation by geographic and specific populations. The outreach process included engaging with stakeholders and gathering data on transportation needs and

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preferences from service agencies. Outreach efforts included three public comment meetings, distribution of a public transit-specific survey to 104 human service agencies, and a 30-day public review and comment period of the Plan. Following the 30-day public review period, a public listening session was held at the Bis-Man Transit Facility. All meetings were available for in-person and virtual participation.

For the release of the Plan, outreach efforts included a variety of traditional and digital notification methods to research target populations through the Bis-Man Transit service area. Notification materials were distributed to a variety of public entities throughout the service area, including public libraries, city halls, and human service agencies. Digital and social media campaigns promoting community involvement were used, along with on-bus flyers, to encourage survey responses and public comment. Stakeholders submitted comments via the bismantransit.com website form, e-mail, phone, on-site, and at the public comment meetings held in July of 2026. The general public provided comments via the survey, email, and public comment meetings.

Human Service Agency Survey

A survey was distributed to individuals associated with service agencies throughout Bismarck, Mandan, and Lincoln. The agency survey identified the anticipated transportation service gaps over the next five years throughout the service area. Agency respondents identified the following key mobility issues:

- Difficult trip types
- Barriers for access/mobility
- Barrier for agencies
- Safety
- Barriers to using technology

Community Meetings

On-site and virtual meetings were held in July of 2026 to present an overview of the draft Plan and to provide an additional opportunity for public comment. The draft Plan was available for public review and comment from the meetings were recorded and are available upon request. Information on how to submit comments on the draft Plan was also provided to encourage additional participation. An Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible version of the draft Plan was made available on the website.

Goals

Building on the 2022-2026 Coordinated Plan, the Transit Development Plan, and input received throughout the outreach effort, the following goals and strategies have been identified to address the mobility needs and service gaps of Bis-Man Transit's target populations:

- **Goal 1**: Expanding Mobility Access– Improve coordination between Bis-Man Transit and human service agencies to address mobility gaps.
- **Goal 2**: Improve Operational Efficiency– Provide support services to enable access for the target populations.
- **Goal 3**: Promote Service Expansion – Promote additional fixed-route service hours and general public demand response Sunday and Holiday options.

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- **Goal 4**: Information Accessibility – Improve information accessibility through the company website.
- **Goal 5**: Increase local partnerships – Increase knowledge and comfort with public transportation in an effort to improve ridership (schools, hospitals, etc.).

Bis-Man Transit Funding

Historically, funding has been a significant topic of discussion for Bis-Man Transit. In recent years, additional funding sources have become available

FTA Formula Funds

Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program

The largest FTA funding program is the Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program. Section 5307 authorizes federal, capital, and, in some cases, operating assistance for transit in UZAs. The FTA apportions Section 5307 funds based on legislative formulas. Different formulas apply to UZAs with a population of less than 200,000 (small UZA or small urban area) and to UZAs with a population of 200,000 or more (large UZA or large urban area). The FTA allocates to UZAs with a population 1 million or more (very large UZA or very large urban area) based on the same formula as large UZAs.

For the small UZAs with a population of less than 200,000, the FTA bases the formula solely on population and population density. The FTA sets aside 1% of Section 5307 funds for Small Transit Intensive Cities. The FTA apportions these funds to UZAs with a population of less than 200,000 that operate at a level of service equal to or above the industry average level of service for all UZAs with a population of at least 200,000 but not more than 999,999. The FTA allocates the funds based on level of service and performance in one or more of six categories: passenger miles per vehicle revenue mile, passenger miles per vehicle revenue hour, vehicle revenue miles per capita, vehicle revenue hours per capita, passenger miles per capita, and passenger trips per capita.

For UZAs with a population less than 200,000, the FTA apportions Section 5307 funds to the governor of each state for distribution. The governor or designee may determine the sub-allocation of funds among the small UZAs or elect to obligate the funds in the amounts based on the legislative formula.

Eligible purposes for use of Section 5307 funds include planning, engineering design, and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies; capital investments in bus and bus-related activities such as replacement of buses, overhaul of buses, rebuilding of buses, crime prevention and security equipment, and construction of maintenance and passenger facilities; and capital investments in new and existing fixed guideway systems including rolling stock, overhaul and rebuilding of vehicles, track, signals, communications, and computer hardware and software. All preventive maintenance and some Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit service costs qualify as capital costs. For most projects, up to 80% of the project cost may be used for federal funds.

Small UZAs with a population of less than 200,000 may also use Section 5307 funds for operating assistance up to 50% of the operating deficit (operating expenses less fare revenue). For UZAs with

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populations of 200,000 or more, operating assistance is not an eligible expense. The FTA provides UZAs that reach or exceed the 200,000-population threshold for the first time after the most recent decennial census a transition period of several years to eliminate the use of Section 5307 funds for operating assistance.

Under the FTA's 5307 Urbanized Area Formula grant program, agencies are required to allocate at least 1% of the total apportioned funds to the public transportation security projects. Alternatively, agencies must officially certify to the FTA that these security expenditures are unnecessary for the agency.

FTA Competitive Funds

Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program

Section 5310 provides formula funding to states to meet the transportation needs of seniors and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meet these needs. It provides funding to remove transportation barriers, expand mobility options, and support services that go beyond standard public transit.

Capital projects are eligible for funding. Most funds are used to purchase vehicles or to provide preventive maintenance for transit fleets, but acquisition of transportation services under contract, lease, or other arrangements, and state program administration are also eligible expenses. The maximum federal share is 85%. State or local funding sources may provide the local share.

Section 5339 Program

Section 5339 makes federal resources available to states and directs recipients to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities, including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no-emission vehicles or facilities. Funding is provided through formula allocations and competitive grants. A sub-program, the Low- or No-Emission Vehicle Program, provides competitive grants for bus and bus facility projects that support low and zero-emission vehicles. The maximum federal share is 85%. State and local funding sources may provide the local share.

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Local Funding

Local funding for Bis-Man Transit is derived from mill levies for both Bismarck and Mandan. Mill levies are property taxes based on a property's assessed value. The rate of this tax is expressed in mills. One mill equals $1 for every $1,000 of assessed value. The mill levy rate is determined every year by dividing the total assessed value of all of the taxable property in a city or town by the overall amount of tax that is necessary to cover city, county and state budget requirements. Presently, Bis-Man Transit receives 3 mills from the City of Bismarck and 2 mills from the City of Mandan annually.

Local Funding Source				
	2022	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
City of Bismarck Mill Levy (3 Mills)	$ 1,220,605	$ 1,339,405	$ 1,451,168	$ 1,260,705
City of Mandan Mill Levy (2 Mill)	$ 208,534	$ 225,158	$ 248,557	$ 193,592

As of 2026, the cities of Bismarck and Mandan have each implemented a 0.2% (2/10-cent) sales tax to support public transportation within their communities. These funds are distributed annually based on identified operational and service needs.

State Funding

State support for Bis-Man Transit is derived in part from a statutory allocation of 1.5% of North Dakota's Highway Tax Distribution Fund. In the 2025–2027 fiscal biennium, the State also provided supplemental paratransit funding totaling $384,123 to support specialized transportation services.

State Funding				
	2022	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
ND Department of Transportation	$ 386,593	$ 342,637	$ 442,113	$ 457,847

Reported based on State Fiscal year (July to June)

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Coordination Planning Process

The 2026 coordination planning process began in the summer of 2026. A total of 104 agencies and providers were invited to participate in a community transportation survey. Members of the general public were also encouraged to complete a transit survey and provide comments on the draft Plan document.

The public survey was promoted through the Bis-Man Transit website, social media platforms, and on-board bus advertisements. Agencies were asked to encourage both current and potential riders to participate. Additional outreach included promotional posters placed at grocery stores, colleges, and libraries. Local media outlets also promoted the public survey on June 29, 2026.

Community Transportation Input Committee

The Community Transportation Input Committee (CTIC) met on June 22, 2026. During this meeting, Bis-Man Transit staff encouraged committee members to participate in the survey and to promote participation among others in the community. The 2026 Plan was distributed to all committee members, and feedback was solicited regarding potential improvements and changes to the plan.
The CTIC is composed of Bis-Man Transit Board members, riders, and stakeholders from across the Bismarck and Mandan communities.

Public Meetings

Public Comment Meetings were conducted July 28, 2026, at the Bis-Man Transit Center and the Morton Mandan Public Library; and July 30, 2026, at the Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library. Virtual attendance was available for each of the public comment meetings. Meetings were advertised in the local newspaper, on the Bis-Man Transit website, on social media, and on board all buses.

Following the public comment meetings, the proposed plan was posted on the Bis-Man Transit Website for 30 days prior to the public hearing meeting. Legal notice of the public comment period and the subsequent public hearing meeting was displayed in the Bismarck Tribune.

The Public Hearing Meeting was held at the Bis-Man Transit facility on September 24, 2026.

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Background & Demographics

Bis-Man Transit's paratransit service provides service within the city limits of Bismarck, Mandan, Lincoln, and the University of Mary, or within three-quarters of a mile of a fixed route. Bis-Man Transit's fixed route service, Capital Area Transit (CAT), provides service throughout Bismarck and Mandan, as well as to the University of Mary. Counties serviced include Burleigh and Morton.

The Bis-Man Transit service area is approximately 56 square miles, with a total estimated population of 104,459, based on the 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Table 1 – Total Population based on the 2024 American Community Survey 5- Year Estimates

CITY	ESTIMATED POPULATION*	MARGIN OF ERROR
Bismarck	75,556	± 71
Mandan	24,522	± 32
Lincoln	4,381	± 27
TOTALS	104,459	± 130

*Based on 2024: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

An important component of the planning process is the analysis of Bismarck and Mandan's demographic survey data. Table 2 (Bismarck) and Table 3 (Mandan) illustrate the region's "means of transportation to work" based on the 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. The combined number of working public who use the bus system was 0.2% (Bismarck) and 0.00% (Mandan) of the total combined surveyed working population of the cities. As the information demonstrates, only a small percentage of Bismarck and Mandan citizens use Bis-Man Transit's modes of service for traveling to and from work.

Table 2 – Bismarck's "means of transportation to work" 2024: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Table

	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total	38,489	± 990
Car, Truck or Van—drove alone	80.2 %	± 1.6
Car Truck, or Van — carpooled	8.8%	± 1.2
Public Transportation (excluding Taxicab)	0.2%	± 0.2
Walked	1.9%	± 0.5
Bicycle	0.3%	± 0.2
Other means	1.0%	± 0.4
Worked at home	7.6%	± 1.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2024: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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Table 3 – Mandan's "means of transportation to work" 2024: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Table

	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total	13,733	± 506
Car, Truck or Van—drove alone	78.0%	± 3.9
Car Truck, or Van — carpooled	9.2%	± 2.7
Public Transportation (excluding Taxicab)	0.0%	± 0.2
Walked	1.0%	± 0.7
Bicycle	0.1%	± 0.2
Other means	0.9%	± 0.7
Worked at home	10.9%	± 3.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2024: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Based on the 2024 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, the percentage of Bismarck and Mandan residents below the poverty level was 9.3% and 9.8%, respectively, including the city's total population, not just the working-age population.

Given the above data, it is safe to assume that Bis-Man Transit's fixed-route busing system (CAT) is a largely underutilized resource in the area it serves. This observation makes CAT a potentially high-impact resource for the future. It is clear that driving a vehicle is the primary means of transportation within Bismarck and Mandan.

The combined population of Bismarck and Mandan, based on 2024 data, was 100,078. Table 4 details the Bismarck-Mandan 2024 disabled population. The combined 2024 population of individuals with disabilities in Bismarck and Mandan was 11,649. This is about 12.2% of the 2024 Bismarck population and 9.8% of the 2024 Mandan population. Based on the tables pictured below, it becomes quite clear that the elderly, disabled, veteran, and low-income populations of Bismarck and Mandan are substantial. This data points to the importance of both modes of service for the community.

Table 4 – Individuals with Disabilities in Service Area 2024: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Table

	Bismarck	Mandan
Total Disabilities	9,234	2,415
Total Disabilities for Ages Under 18	366	240
Total Disabilities for Ages 18-64	4,012	1,280
Total Disabilities for Ages 65+	4,856	895

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2024: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 5 – Veterans in Service Area 2024: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Table

	Bismarck	Mandan
Total Veterans	3,829	1,515
Total Veteran %	6.2%	7.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2024: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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Table 6 – Elderly population in Service Area 2024: ACS 5-Year Subject Table

	Bismarck	Mandan
Total 65+	14,738	4,015
Total 65+ %	19.6%	16.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2024: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 7 – Population below poverty level in Service Area 2024: ACS 5-Year Subject Table

	Bismarck	Mandan
Total Population below poverty level	6,794	2,355
Total Population below poverty level %	9.3%	9.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2024: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Assessment of Available Services

Some human service providers in the Bismarck and Mandan area operate their own transportation for clients; however, these services are often limited to specific hours and/or purposes. As a result, many providers rely on external transportation options, such as public transit or taxi services, to meet their clients' broader mobility needs.

Nursing homes in the area typically maintain vans or small buses for resident transportation. These services are generally limited to medical appointments, organized activities, and outings coordinated by facility staff or activities departments. Nursing homes in the Bismarck-Mandan area include Augusta Place, St. Vincent's, Missouri Slope Lutheran Care Center, Baptist Health & Rehab, Benedictine Living Community, and Sanford Continuing Care.

Assisted living facilities generally offer more flexible transportation options. Their vehicles are commonly used for facility-sponsored activities, personal shopping, community outings, and both medical and non-medical appointments. However, service hours may still be limited. Assisted living facilities in the area include Lakewood Landing, Primrose, Touchmark, Thrive at Hay Creek Lodge, Good Samaritan Society, Prairie Pointe Assisted Living, The Waterford, and three Edgewood Vista communities.

Providers of services for developmentally disabled clients have buses or vans for group home residents' activities. These providers include Pride Inc., HIT, Inc., Enable, Dakota Center for Independent Living and Community Options.

United Tribes Technical College is situated on the southern edge of Bismarck, and students and family members staying on the campus may need a way to access services in the Bismarck and Mandan communities. A bus service through campus transportation is available, but on weekdays, trips are only provided for social services and medical appointments. In the late afternoon, during the week and on weekends, bus service is available for people who want to shop or take part in social activities and events in the Bismarck and Mandan communities.

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BISMARCK – 3 Taxi services registered with the city	
Affordable Taxi Dakota Transportation Services Guiding Wheels	Licenses for all three are valid through December 31, 2026.
Title 5-05-02(1) of City Ordinances mandates that "they shall answer all calls received for services inside the corporate limits of the city as soon as they can do so." Title 5-05-02(2) also dictates the requirements for accessibility. The City of Bismarck receives a vehicle inspection certificate at the time of application, with accessibility among the inspection requirements. Each of the approved businesses has one vehicle each registered with the City of Bismarck.	

MANDAN
Sec. 12-7-4. - Reciprocity with Bismarck. A taxicab business licensed to do business by the City of Bismarck and a taxicab driver licensed to drive taxicabs by the City of Bismarck may provide taxicab services in the City of Mandan so long as the business license and the driver's licenses are issued in conformance with the provisions of this article. A taxicab business must be licensed in the city where it is located. (Code 1994, § 13-19-24; Ord. No. 1053, 6-2-2009)

Ride share services in the community include Lyft and Uber.

Standing Rock Transit and West River Transit provide rural services for Burleigh and Morton Counties.

Bis-Man Transit Services Offered

Bis-Man Transit's paratransit service provides services to the people residing within the city limits of Bismarck, Mandan, Lincoln, and the University of Mary. Paratransit service is available to seniors aged 70 and older and individuals with disabilities. It operates Monday through Saturday from 5:30 a.m. to midnight, and Sunday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at a cost of $3 per one-way ride. Sunday's on-demand service is open to the general public. Ride reservations must be made at least a day in advance, and interested individuals must complete an application and have it approved by Bis-Man Transit staff. The current paratransit fleet consists of 20 accessible buses.

Capital Area Transit (CAT) is the fixed-route public bus system, operating from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Saturday. The cost of a one-way, full-fare ride is $1.50, with a reduced rate of $0.75 for Medicare cardholders, K-12 students, college students, and veterans. A free rate is available for seniors aged 65 and older and/or paratransit members. A 30-day regular fare is $36, with a discounted fare of $24. The fixed-route fleet currently has 9 heavy-duty, accessible buses.

Bis-Man Transit Assessment

The organization's ongoing objective is to move capable individuals utilizing the paratransit to the fixed route. 2,144 people are registered in the organization's paratransit/demand response database. A Marketing and Mobility Specialist is employed by the organization to assist with this effort. Since the last Plan in 2022, travel training, participation in community events, and web presence have increased

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significantly. In recent years, these efforts have resulted in a stabilization of monthly paratransit trips and consistent month-over-month increases in fixed-route ridership.

Bis-Man Transit and Human Service Provider Communications

The Bis-Man Transit staff maintains open lines of communication with service providers in the area. Frequent travel training opportunities are communicated to various agencies to increase public transit awareness. Rider guides and paratransit applications are provided to service providers to distribute.

Identification and Analysis of Service Gaps and Service Needs – 2023 Transit Development Plan

The 2023 Transit Development Plan highlighted needs and gaps in Bis-Man Transit's current service modes, including paratransit and fixed-route services. Since the 2023 Transit Development Plan was finalized, Bis-Man Transit has increased fixed-route service hours and added Sunday transportation options for the general public. Ongoing efforts to increase safety and security on board buses have resulted in the installation of live-view cameras on all buses.

Needs:

- Continue to shift trips from the demand response paratransit to the fixed route CAT bus service to make the overall transportation system more cost-effective.
- Educate service providers on the transportation options their clients have.
- Increase the frequency of the Purple Route – possible development of a second Mandan route.
- Increase public awareness of new service hours.

Gaps:

- Increase connections with area employers.
- Address first and last mile system gaps.
- Environmental barriers, including unplowed snow banks in loading areas.
- Transit infrastructure on route (benches, shelters, transit hub, etc.)

Goals and Objectives:

- Marketing
    - Ensure ongoing efforts to increase technology tools.
    - Provide marketing activities to reach transit-dependent communities, including non-technology users.
    - Increase the number of first-time riders.

- Demonstrate effective and efficient use of staffing resources.
    - Develop a succession plan.

- Bis-Man Transit shall operate a safe, ethical, and compliant transportation system, foster a culture of transparency and accountability, while adhering to federal/state/local regulations.
    - Ongoing update of policies and procedures.
    - Adhere to federal/state/local regulations.
    - Enhance safety training and ensure current safety-sensitive employees are receiving ongoing training.

- Position Bis-Man Transit to be financially sound, to grow the system and provide a valuable service to the community.

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  - Develop and operate within a budget.
  - Adhere to long-term Bus Replacement Plan.
  - Adhere to Cash Reserve policy

- Review and recommend fixed route system changes per the currently underway Transit Development Plan to achieve simplicity and efficiency.
  - Design and implement a plan to increase fixed route ridership.

The Transit Development Plan, conducted every five years, provides the organization with an understanding of how it delivers quality transportation services to the Bismarck and Mandan communities. The current study will begin in July 2026 with anticipated completion in the fall of 2027.

Survey Results

Full survey questions available upon request.

Provider Results

Of the 104 agencies contacted for the Provider Survey, seven agencies participated.

Organizations represented included:

- Human service agencies
- Healthcare providers
- Senior housing providers
- Affordable housing providers
- Reentry services
- Disability advocacy organizations

The organizations collectively serve a broad range of populations, including:

- Older adults
- People with physical, developmental, or cognitive disabilities
- Low-income individuals and families
- Veterans
- Individuals in recovery
- People with chronic medical conditions
- Youth
- Unhoused populations
- Minority populations

Among respondents:

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- 1 organization directly provides rides to clients.
- 1 organization funds or contracts transportation services.
- Most organizations do not provide transportation directly but support clients through information, education, trip planning assistance, transit passes, or encouragement to use transit services.

Most Common Transportation Challenges

Several themes emerged consistently across responses.

1. Limited Route Coverage

The most frequently identified concern was that:

- Bus routes are not close enough to residences and/or destinations.
- Important destinations are not accessible by public transit.

These issues were mentioned by multiple agencies serving seniors, individuals with disabilities, healthcare patients, and low-income populations.

2. Lack of Sunday Service

A significant concern among providers was:

- Fixed-route transit does not operate on Sundays.

This was one of the most commonly reported barriers.

3. Transportation Affordability

Respondents reported that:

- Transportation options can be too expensive for the populations they serve.

This concern was particularly noted by organizations working with low-income individuals and people with disabilities.

4. Need for Travel Assistance

Several organizations indicated that:

- Clients need assistance when traveling.
- Navigation and trip planning can be difficult, especially for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Additional Challenges

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Other transportation barriers mentioned included:

- Long wait times between fixed-route buses.
- Difficulty finding information on available transportation services.

Satisfaction with Current Transportation Services

Among organizations that answered the question:

- 3 respondents indicated they were not satisfied with the current level of public transportation services.
- 1 respondent was neutral.
- 1 respondent was satisfied.
- Several respondents did not answer the question.

Notable Comments

Respondents emphasized that:

- Transportation remains a major need for low-income families and individuals.
- Additional support is needed for people who cannot afford paratransit services.
- Transit accessibility and coverage continue to be barriers to employment, healthcare, shopping, and community participation.

Key Takeaways

The survey indicates that providers view service availability and accessibility as the primary transportation issues in the Bismarck-Mandan-Lincoln area. The highest-priority concerns are:

1. Routes not reaching key destinations.
2. Insufficient proximity of routes to where people live and work.
3. Lack of Sunday service.
4. Transportation affordability.
5. Need for additional travel assistance and rider support.

General Public Results

The General Public Survey received **31 responses** from residents of Bismarck, Mandan, and surrounding communities. Respondents included transit users, paratransit users, walkers, cyclists, rideshare users, and individuals who primarily rely on personal vehicles. Ages ranged from young adults to seniors, with many respondents identifying as older adults, employed workers, retirees, or individuals with disabilities.

Respondent Characteristics

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Most respondents lived in:

- Bismarck
- Mandan

A significant portion of respondents were:

- Employed outside the home
- Retired
- Individuals with disabilities requiring mobility assistance
- Current users of fixed-route and/or paratransit services

Current Transportation Modes

The most commonly used transportation options were:

1. Personal vehicle or rides with friends/family
2. Fixed-route public transit
3. Walking or bicycling
4. Paratransit/demand response services
5. Uber/Lyft and other rideshare services
6. Carpooling/vanpooling

While many respondents primarily rely on personal vehicles, several reported using transit frequently or daily.

Why People Would Use Transit More

The most common reasons respondents would increase transit use were:

- Saving money on fuel, vehicle ownership, and maintenance
- Having no alternative transportation available
- Improved accessibility for people using wheelchairs or mobility devices
- Environmental benefits
- Expanded service hours and availability

Most Desired Improvements

Several themes appeared repeatedly throughout the survey.

1. Larger Service Area

The single most requested improvement was:

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- Expanded transit coverage to reach more neighborhoods and destinations.

2. More Frequent Service

Many respondents expressed frustration with:

- 60-minute route frequencies
- Long waits between buses

Respondents consistently requested:

- More frequent service
- Shorter wait times
- Better transfer opportunities

3. Improved Reliability

Many riders would like:

- More reliable pick-up and drop-off times
- Fewer delays
- Better adherence to schedules

4. Technology Improvements

Several respondents requested:

- Easier trip planning
- Improved mobile tools
- Online scheduling, especially for paratransit
- Simpler route and schedule information

5. Better Bus Stops and Passenger Amenities

Frequent comments included:

- Need for shelters
- Benches
- Dedicated bus stops rather than flag stops
- Improved safety at stops and while riding

6. Lower Cost

Some respondents indicated:

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- Fare affordability remains a concern.
- Discounted passes and lower fares could encourage additional ridership.

Most Common Destinations

The destinations most frequently identified were:

1. Medical clinics and hospitals
2. Shopping, grocery stores, and pharmacies
3. Employment/workplaces
4. Social and recreational activities
5. Senior and human service agencies
6. Schools
7. Religious organizations and volunteer activities

Primary Transportation Barriers

The most common difficulties preventing people from reaching destinations were:

Top Tier Issues

- Insufficient coverage to key destinations
- Transit does not operate when needed
- Infrequent service
- Routes and schedules are confusing

Secondary Issues

- Service is too slow
- Lack of weather shelters at stops
- Accessibility concerns
- Transportation affordability
- Reliability concerns

Several respondents also noted challenges with:

- Early morning medical appointments (especially dialysis)
- Sunday and holiday service
- Paratransit advance reservation requirements that do not accommodate same-day work calls or schedule changes.

Satisfaction with Current Services

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Despite identifying numerous improvement opportunities, overall sentiment was mixed but generally positive.

Of respondents answering the question:

- A majority reported being **satisfied** with current public transportation services.

Positive comments frequently highlighted:

- Recent improvements in service
- Affordable fares
- Helpful staff
- Better paratransit wait times
- Appreciation for maintaining public transportation in the community.

Negative comments primarily focused on:

- Limited service hours
- Coverage gaps
- Frequency of service
- Reliability and scheduling concerns.

Key Findings

The survey indicates that residents value Bis-Man Transit and recognize improvements made in recent years, but significant unmet needs remain. The highest priorities identified by the public are:

1. Expand service coverage to more destinations.
2. Increase route frequency and reduce wait times.
3. Extend operating hours, particularly early mornings, evenings, Sundays, and holidays.
4. Improve reliability and on-time performance.
5. Add shelters, benches, and permanent bus stops.
6. Improve technology and customer information tools.
7. Simplify route and schedule information.
8. Continue improving accessibility for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

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Strategies and Actions

The following five-year action plan was developed based on input received at the various transportation coordination meetings and through public transportation surveys. It is important to point out that roadblocks for implementation have been identified. For the strategies to be successful, Bis-Man Transit must be aware of all possible roadblocks.

Table 8 – Strategies, Action Items, Timelines, and Roadblocks

Strategies	Action Items	Party Responsible	Timeline by When	Roadblocks to Implementation
Create positive relationships with service providers.	Improve communication and training opportunities so providers learn how to help their clients use Bis-Man Transit's services effectively. Open lines of communication.	Bis-Man Transit Board & Staff	Currently done with some providers. Hope to build relationships with all providers over the next 2 years.	1. Service providers already have busy schedules and tasks. 2. Some providers feel they already know all there is to know about paratransit and fixed route services and don't think additional information would be helpful.
Increase ridership on the CAT bus service. Ongoing review of fixed routes.	1. Expand travel training opportunities. 2. Promote technological additions to Bis-Man Transit. 3. Review second route in Mandan. 4. Explore dedicated transfer hub.	Bis-Man Transit Staff	Ongoing effort	1. Personal car use causes a lack of interest in riding the CAT bus. 2. Marketing and advertising can put strain on budget. 3. Increased operating expense for additional route. 4. Hub location and cost.
Investigate increased demand response service hours for holidays.	Request public feedback for the most needed holiday service hours.	Bis-Man Transit Staff	2026	1. An increase in revenue hours means an increase in operating expenses.
Reach out to employers in the community to increase employee ridership.	1. Develop events to train employers on public transit. 2. Leverage CAT Bus as a way to get employees to work.	Bis-Man Transit Staff	Ongoing effort	1. Lack of employee interest, as they may already have a vehicle.
Create a student-specific training program for local schools to increase student ridership.	On-site training with schools, facilitation of CAT buses for field trips.	Bis-Man Transit Staff	Ongoing effort	1. Parents are not comfortable with public transportation. 2. Extracurricular activities often end later than fixed route service.

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Long-Term Goals and Strategies

As the Bismarck, Mandan, Lincoln communities continue to grow, so do the transportation needs. Recent expansion in the downtown Bismarck area has reduced parking for many residents, employees, and patrons, increasing the need for public transportation options.

The organization's overall goal is to provide the best transportation service to as many people as possible. This is done through continual monitoring of ridership and financial reports, as well as feedback obtained from riders, non-riders and service providers in the area about unmet needs and suggestions for improvement.

The organization is continually building relationships with service providers and the citizens of Bismarck and Mandan to promote the use of public transportation in the area.

Conclusion

Bis-Man Transit has provided transportation for people in the Bismarck and Mandan community since 1990, when it started a coordinated ride service for individuals with disabilities and seniors. The system has continued to grow and more transportation options became available in 2004 with the implementation of the CAT fixed-route public bus system. The organization has identified areas for improvement and continues to solicit feedback from riders, human service providers, community stakeholders, and community members to evaluate the services we provide.

Approved by the Bis-Man Transit
Board of Directors

Title: Bis-Man Transit Board Chair

Signature: Lynn Wolf (Sep 28, 2026 20:40:29 CDT)

Date: 28/09/2026

City of Bismarck

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Michael Schmitz, President
Board of City Commissioners

9.24.26 Coordinated Human Service Plan FINAL

Final Audit Report 2026-09-29

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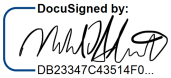
Michael T Schmitz mschmitz@bismarcknd.gov Donor to event City of Bismarck Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)	DocuSigned by:  DB23347C43514F0... Signature Adoption: Drawn on Device Using IP Address: 174.238.228.177 Signed using mobile	Sent: 10/21/2026 3:47:09 PM Viewed: 10/21/2026 3:51:59 PM Signed: 10/21/2026 3:52:13 PM

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