

# NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Journey.

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Jim Pillen, Governor

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### “Faces of Transit in Nebraska” Creating Awareness of Vital Services Statewide

**Dec. 4, 2023 (Lincoln, Neb.)** – A groundbreaking video series, “Faces of Transit in Nebraska” spotlights the indispensable efforts of rural transit agencies across the state to enhance and broaden transit options across Nebraska. The series was prepared in collaboration with the Nebraska Department of Transportation, the University of Nebraska at Omaha Center for Public Affairs Research, the University of Nebraska at Kearney Nebraska Safety Center, White Shutter Media, and numerous rural transit agencies.

Curtis Richter, Tri-City Roadrunner Transit Manager, emphasized the significance of public transit, stating, “I think independence is a basic human need and even a right. Having access to public transit is one of the most important things for a community to thrive.”

For many residents in rural communities, transit serves as a lifeline linking them to healthcare, work, education, and civic life. Consequently, public transit in Nebraska is vital to the state’s economic prosperity and future. Throughout the “Faces of Transit in Nebraska” series, you will hear from transit managers, drivers, passengers, and community leaders about the impact public transit has in preventing community members from being left behind. Kate Littrel, the videographer and owner of White Shutter Media, also brings an additional layer to the series by skillfully capturing the beauty of Nebraska’s landscapes and its residents.

Joel, a passenger with Cedar County Transit, said “They’re my transit family I like to call them. It keeps me very almost independent, almost as if I’m driving myself.”

The series also sheds light on many innovative initiatives undertaken by agencies, from launching new services in unserved areas to constructing bus barns for vehicle management and conducting open

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houses to educate the public about their services. By delving into the stories of those served and the destinations reached; the series aims to provide an understanding of how these vital services operate.

“It’s for anybody and I have a lot of people say well I’m not old enough to ride the bus, well, you don’t have to be old enough,” said Butch Morris, a Blue Rivers Transportation System bus driver. “You can be 7 or 8 years old, or you can be 107 or 108 years old, and you can ride the bus.” Eric, a passenger with the City of McCook Transit, said “The transportation service greatly improves my quality of life, I appreciate that.”

In 2022, rural and urban transit agencies collectively covered a total of 9,873,676 miles, an increase of 80% from 2021. Rural miles accounted for 43% of this total. The total number of passenger boardings, defined as anytime a passenger steps onto a transit vehicle, reached 4,734,215 in both rural and urban areas, reflecting an increase of 140% from 2021.

Nebraska Public Transit began to feature these stories in April during Nebraska Public Transit Week and continued to showcase a new video monthly thereafter. Watch the entire series here:

[www.nebraskatransit.com/faces-of-transit-in-nebraska](http://www.nebraskatransit.com/faces-of-transit-in-nebraska).

For media inquiries and additional information about the video series contact Nebraska Department of Transportation at (402) 479-4694 or [kari.ruse@nebraska.gov](mailto:kari.ruse@nebraska.gov).

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