

## **2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program**

### **2026 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Amendment**

#### **Public Comments and Responses**

##### **Comment #1 – KCATA 2026 Internation Soccer Tournament Transit**

“I am firmly opposed to #995233 being included in the TIP. KCATA should not be dipping into grants that were awarded to buy low/no-emissions buses, as well as to pay for operating the highly-successful Prospect MAX, just to provide a few weeks of service for tourists during the World Cup.

This is an absolutely short-sighted decision that is going to harm everyday bus riders (like me) and bus drivers through forcing them to ride and operate older vehicles that are past their useful life. This is an absolute misuse of taxpayer money, and I strongly urge the TTPC to vote against including this amendment in the TIP.

By voting for this, you will have made the decision to prioritize tourists over the long-term benefit of everyday bus riders and our bus drivers that keep our system running. They need the equipment in which to do so safely and efficiently.”

##### **Response to Comment #1**

Thank you for your recent comment regarding the proposed 2026 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Amendment to the 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program. We shared your comments with the MARC Total Transportation Policy Committee and the MARC Board of Directors for their consideration on the proposed amendment. Additionally, your comment was forwarded to the project sponsor, the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority. Their response is attached for your convenience.

We look forward to your continued participation in the regional transportation planning process and encourage you to review the [Guide to Transportation Decision Making](#). This guide is designed to help area residents understand the complex process of transportation decision making and learn how they can more effectively provide input.

Sincerely,

Marc Hansen, AICP

Principal Planner

Mid-America Regional Council

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##### **Comment #2 – Johnson County 2026 Internation Soccer Tournament Transit**

“Johnson County Kansas is planning on providing bus transportation for free during the 2026 World Cup. I don't know why it is free. The people visiting our county during the World Cup are people who have the money to pay for transportation. I believe it is not fair and unusual for us tax payers to provide the transportation for free. The county should not get any federal funding if they are not charging something for the transportaion.

Thank You for allowing us to voice our comments.

There is no reason for Johnson County, KS to pay for transportation for the visitors and locals who attend the world soccer games. If they have the money to pay for the high price tickets and restaurants then they have the money to pay for other transportation. This is a complete waste of funds. It only feeds the egos of the county politicians."

### **Response to Comment #2**

Thank you for your recent comment regarding the proposed 2026 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Amendment to the 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program. We shared your comments with the MARC Total Transportation Policy Committee and the MARC Board of Directors for their consideration on the proposed amendment. Additionally, your comment was forwarded to the project sponsor, Johnson County Transit. Their response is enclosed for your convenience.

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Sincerely,

Marc Hansen, AICP  
Principal Planner  
Mid-America Regional Council

### **Johnson County Transit Response to Comment #2**

Thank you for your comment regarding World Cup related transit service. Johnson County Transit appreciates this feedback and would like to clarify that not all World Cup transit services will be fare-free; fare collection is still being evaluated for certain services. Limited fare-free service is proposed only where supported by federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds, which are specifically intended to reduce traffic congestion and vehicle emissions by encouraging transit use during high-demand events. Federal CMAQ program guidelines allow fare-free or reduced-fare service when it supports these objectives, and the proposed project complies with all applicable funding requirements. The use of CMAQ funds in this manner is intended to benefit the broader community by mitigating congestion and air quality impacts associated with World Cup activities.

Justus Welker  
Interim Director, Transit Division  
Johnson County Public Works & Infrastructure Department

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### **Comment #3 – Johnson County 2026 Internation Soccer Tournament Transit**

"I do not support using any local taxpayer money to support transportation. Eliminate public transit in Johnson County and certainly don't spend money for FIFA."

### **Response to Comment #3**

Thank you for your recent comment regarding the proposed 2026 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Amendment to the 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program. We shared your comments with the MARC Total Transportation Policy Committee and the MARC Board of Directors for their consideration on the

proposed amendment. Additionally, your comment was forwarded to the project sponsor, Johnson County Transit. Their response is enclosed for your convenience.

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Sincerely,

Marc Hansen, AICP  
Principal Planner  
Mid-America Regional Council

#### **Johnson County Transit Response to Comment #3**

Thank you for your comment. Johnson County Transit acknowledges your perspective regarding the use of local funds for transit and World Cup related activities. Public transit in Johnson County is provided pursuant to adopted county policies and long-range plans to support mobility, access to employment and services, congestion management, and air quality goals, and is funded through a combination of local, state, and federal sources. World Cup related transit projects, where proposed, are designed to address temporary, event-driven transportation demand and are largely supported by external funding intended for congestion mitigation and air quality improvement. All proposed expenditures are reviewed through the public process and must comply with applicable funding requirements and approvals.

Justus Welker  
Interim Director, Transit Division  
Johnson County Public Works & Infrastructure Department

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#### **Comment #4 – Johnson County 2026 International Soccer Tournament Transit**

“The \$2.1 federal monies targeted for the ‘Fan Circulator Route’ are an inappropriate use of funds for Johnson County residents. Alternatively to the proposed max 9 mon usage of \$4.1 mln (\$2.1 mln fed’l + \$2 mln local) on a wasteful spend, the funding should instead be targeted for use on necessary hard assets. Many JoCo homeowners are struggling with high property taxes and high spending by county government and are conversely looking for fiscal responsibility from county leadership. Please reject this excessive, short term spend which has very debatable value and instead request Johnson County government to identify priority hard-asset investments which bring long term value to taxpayers. Thank you.”

#### **Response to Comment #4**

Thank you for your recent comment regarding the proposed 2026 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Amendment to the 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program. We shared your comments with the MARC Total Transportation Policy Committee and the MARC Board of Directors for their consideration on the proposed amendment. Additionally, your comment was forwarded to the project sponsor, Johnson County Transit. Their response is enclosed for your convenience.

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Sincerely,

Marc Hansen, AICP  
Principal Planner  
Mid-America Regional Council

#### **Johnson County Transit Response to Comment #4**

Thank you for your comment. Johnson County Transit acknowledges the concern regarding the proposed use of federal and local funds for the Fan Circulator Route. The federal funds referenced are Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds, which are restricted to projects that reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality and cannot be repurposed for general capital or "hard asset" investments outside of those program objectives. The proposed circulator service is a temporary, event-driven project intended to address extraordinary travel demand during the 2026 World Cup and to mitigate congestion impacts on the local roadway network, while local contributions are structured to meet required matching obligations. All funding allocations are reviewed through the public Transportation Improvement Program process to ensure fiscal accountability and compliance with federal eligibility requirements.

Justus Welker  
Interim Director, Transit Division  
Johnson County Public Works & Infrastructure Department

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#### **Comment #5 –2026 Internation Soccer Tournament Transit**

"Spending \$4.1 Million on short term bus service for World Cup seems like an unbelievable waste of money. Please do better than this."

#### **Comment #6–2026 Internation Soccer Tournament Transit**

"Ay dios mio, bon dia my friend! I writing you this because I am so excite to coming from Curacao to the Kansas City for the big football, the World Cup 2026, but I tell you truly, I am looking at the maps and the buses and my head is spinning like a caribeean hurricane, no? I find one nice Airbnb in the place they call Westport, which they say is very lively with the drinks and the dancing, but now I must find how to get to the stadium and the airport without spending all my florins on the taxi!

First, let me tell you about this bus they calling "ConnectKC26." I read the news and they say they bringing 215 big motorcoach buses, very fancy, very cold with the air conditioning (thank goodness because I hear Kansas City in July is hot like the salt pans in Jan Thiel!). If I want to go to the Arrowhead Stadium—which they now calling the Kansas City Stadium for the FIFA—I cannot just drive there because the parking is for the rich people only, very limited! They say I must use the "Stadium Direct." But wait, the Stadium Direct, it does not pick up in Westport. No, no. I have to take the local bus or the streetcar first.

From my house in Westport, I think I take the Line 47 bus. It goes on the street called Broadway or Main. I must go to the "FIFA Fan Festival" which is at the WWI Memorial. From there, I can catch the

official World Cup shuttle to the stadium. But I tell you, I am worry! They say the buses come every 15 or 20 minutes, but with so many people, maybe I am standing in the sun for a long time? I hope the bus driver is friendly like back home and maybe plays some Tumba music, but probably it is only the radio.

And the airport! My goodness, the MCI airport is so far away, like driving from Westpunt to Willemstad three times! They have this "Airport Direct" bus now. It goes from the airport straight to Downtown every 15 minutes. So when I land from my long flight (I probably fly through Miami, very tiring!), I take this Airport Direct. But then I am Downtown, and I still need to get to Westport! I have to jump on the Streetcar—which is free, imagine that!—and take it down to the stop at 39th or the last stop and then maybe a short taxi or another bus to Westport.

I see the prices too, they say it is not free! The local bus in Kansas City used to be free, but for the World Cup, they want a "pass." I don't know the price yet, they keep it a secret like a grandma's keshi yena recipe! They say they will tell us in 2026. I hope it is not too many dollars because I want to buy many jerseys and maybe some of that famous barbecue meat I hear so much about.

But listen, the most important part is the "Region Direct." They have 15 places where the bus goes. If I want to see the city, I can go from the Fan Festival to places like Overland Park or Independence. It is good they are making more buses because usually, I hear the public transit in Kansas City is very difficult if you don't have a car with four wheels. Now, they have "motorcoaches" which are big and have 53 seats. I hope I can get a seat and not have to stand up like a sardine in a tin!

I am very happy to visit the Missouri, but I keep checking the website "kansascityfwc26.com" every day because I don't want to get lost in the middle of the American Midwest. If I end up in a place called "North Kansas City" when I want to be in "Westport," I will be very sad and maybe I miss the kickoff! Would you like me to look up the specific schedule for the Line 47 bus or the streetcar extensions to see exactly how many minutes it takes to get from Westport to the Fan Festival?"

#### **Response to Comments #4 - #6**

Thank you for your recent comment regarding the proposed 2026 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Amendment to the 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program. We shared your comments with the MARC Total Transportation Policy Committee and the MARC Board of Directors for their consideration on the proposed amendment. We also shared your comments with Johnson County Transit and the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority.

The 6 matches to be held in Kansas City as part of the 2026 international soccer tournament bring an opportunity to provide unprecedented global exposure to our region where hundreds of thousands of visitors will spend time in Kansas City. A majority of these visitors will rely on public transit systems to move around the region. The positive economic impact of this activity is anticipated to be significant. To allow these economic opportunities to benefit a broader regional audience, regional partners across all levels and disciplines are working to ensure fans and residents can move across the region with comfort and ease. The variety of provided services are intended to complement the region's options in mobility services to enhance Kansas City's multi-modal transportation system.

We look forward to your continued participation in the regional transportation planning process and encourage you to review the [Guide to Transportation Decision Making](#). This guide is designed to help area residents understand the complex process of transportation decision making and learn how they can more effectively provide input.

Sincerely,

Marc Hansen, AICP  
Principal Planner  
Mid-America Regional Council

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**Comment #7 –Transit**

“MARC always does a wonderful job of planning for transportation needs in the KC region. Having said that, given the recent announcement of the Chiefs relocating to the legends in Wyandotte County, my hope is that public transit, including the street car be considered to extend to the new stadium. Failure to do so will deny significant parts of the population in the inner core of Kansas City to enjoy the new stadium and the accompanying ancillary businesses. Thank you.”

**Comment #8 –Transit**

“We should create an Amtrak route from Union Station, to the airport, St Joe and Omaha with other possible stops along the way. There is existing track from KC to Omaha and only a little track would be needed to connect it to the airport via I 435 and US 150 right of ways. Airports/cities that currently have direct Amtrak service include Newark, Burbank, Baltimore, and Milwaukee.”

**Comment #9 –Transit**

“They need to connect to the east side more (independence,lees summit, etc)”

**Comment #10 –Transit**

“We need bus stops on 19th Street for the 18 Indiana”

**Comment #11 –Transit**

“I'm going to keep saying this, but the future of transit in our metro area needs to include more rail. I do applaud what the KC Streetcar Authority has done and continues to do, but honestly the entire metro area needs rail - especially if we want to get people to use more public transit. I don't think buses are a long-term solution - that's been proven over the past few decades. So, let's actually focus on rail. Thank you.”

**Response to Comments #8-#11**

Thank you for your recent comment regarding the proposed 2026 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Amendment to the 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program. We shared your comments with the MARC Total Transportation Policy Committee and the MARC Board of Directors for their consideration on the proposed amendment.

Expanded transportation options are a key goal of the region's transportation plans, and three recent efforts highlight this. In June 2025, the MARC Board of Directors adopted an update to ConnectedKC 2050, the metropolitan transportation plan for the Kansas City region. This plan identifies multiple strategies by which communities across the region can provide a range of transportation choices to allow for ease of travel as well as public health and environmental benefits.

In 2026, MARC and partners will complete a [Smart Moves Transit and Mobility Plan Update](#). This plan details the transit system vision for the Kansas City area and will include an assessment of existing services, prioritization of existing and new routes services and programs, identification of potential

capital and operating costs for system enhancement and review of governance and funding models for system enhancement. This work is being conducted with the assistance of local stakeholders and the public.

Additionally, MARC is coordinating the [Bi-State Sustainable Reinvestment Corridor](#) project that seeks to connect four cities in two states and two counties. This comprehensive approach to corridor planning includes zero-emission transit, public infrastructure upgrades, energy-efficient housing, equitable Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), area-wide broadband, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and workforce training associated with green stormwater infrastructure.

We look forward to your continued participation in the regional transportation planning process and encourage you to review the [Guide to Transportation Decision Making](#). This guide is designed to help area residents understand the complex process of transportation decision making and learn how they can more effectively provide input.

Sincerely,

Marc Hansen, AICP  
Principal Planner  
Mid-America Regional Council

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**Comment #12 –General**

“I love Kansas City”

**Comment #13 –General**

“You need drive”

**Response to Comments #12- #13**

Thank you for your recent comment regarding the proposed 2026 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Amendment to the 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). We shared your comments with the MARC Total Transportation Policy Committee and the MARC Board of Directors for their consideration.

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Sincerely,

Marc Hansen, AICP  
Principal Planner  
Mid-America Regional Council

**Comment #14 –General**

“This is stupid spending at it's finest. No return for tax payers just spend, spend spend our tax dollars. ABSOLUTELY NO & HELL NO!

BTW - when was the last time you MARC thugs threw out a resident who went to your meeting? I will tell you. You did it to my husband when he asked where our house was in ur drawings. You tapped him on the shoulder and said come with me and then LOCKED HIM OUT OF THE ROOM SO HE COULD NOT COME BACK INTO THE MEETING. YOU ALL FROM MARC ARE T.H.U.G.S.....LET ME REPEAT...MARC IS A THUG DIRTY BIZ!"

#### **Response to Comments #14**

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding the proposed 2026 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Amendment to the 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). We shared your comments with the MARC Total Transportation Policy Committee and the MARC Board of Directors for their consideration.

MARC understands and respects the concerns that many in the community have about how tax dollars are spent and we are committed to being transparent about our processes and decisions. We also strive to ensure that all community members feel welcome and heard at our meetings. MARC regularly evaluates and updates our processes for engaging with the public and will undertake an update of our Public Participation Plan in 2026. This document provides a framework that guides public involvement in MARC's transportation planning projects and specifies goals, strategies and techniques that encourage successful public involvement.

We encourage your participation in the update of the Public Participation Plan and invite you to review the [Guide to Transportation Decision Making](#). This guide is designed to help area residents understand the complex process of transportation decision making and learn how they can more effectively provide input.

Sincerely,

Marc Hansen, AICP  
Principal Planner  
Mid-America Regional Council



Marc Hansen  
Principal Planner, Mid-America Regional Council  
600 Broadway Blvd., Suite 200  
Kansas City, Missouri 64105

Dear Mr. Hansen, *Marc,*

Thanks for your correspondence related to KCATA's reallocation of previously awarded CMAQ funds. Project #995233 will support KCATA in delivering some additional services during the World Cup events in Kansas City in June and July of this year.

The public comment MARC received related to the above (below) is obviously from a thoughtful public transit rider and supporter;

*"I am firmly opposed to #995233 being included in the TIP. KCATA should not be dipping into grants that were awarded to buy low/no-emissions buses, as well as to pay for operating the highly-successful Prospect MAX, just to provide a few weeks of service for tourists during the World Cup."*

*"This is an absolutely short-sighted decision that is going to harm everyday bus riders (like me) and bus drivers through forcing them to ride and operate older vehicles that are past their useful life. This is an absolute misuse of taxpayer money, and I strongly urge the TTPC to vote against including this amendment in the TIP."*

*"By voting for this, you will have made the decision to prioritize tourists over the long-term benefit of everyday bus riders and our bus drivers that keep our system running. They need the equipment in which to do so safely and efficiently."*

I appreciate the writer's concerns, but I hold fast to the KCATA's request for reallocation. Please allow the following to act as a response to the public comment stated above:

#### **Justification for Repurposing Grant Funds for the Upcoming International Event**

The request to reallocate existing grant funds to support the upcoming international event taking place in Kansas City is both reasonable and strategically beneficial for the City. While concerns have been raised, several compelling factors demonstrate that this shift is not only appropriate but also the most responsible use of the funds under current circumstances.

##### **1. Significant Economic and Civic Benefit to the City**

- Hosting an international event of this scale brings substantial economic activity, visibility, and long-term reputational value to the City.
- The event will attract visitors, stimulate local business, and showcase the City's capacity to support global gatherings.

- Supporting this event aligns with broader community and economic development goals that the governing body has historically endorsed.

## **2. Lead Times Make the Original Use of Funds Impractical**

- The current procurement lead time for buses is approximately **12 to 18 months**, which makes it impossible to execute the originally planned capital purchases within the grant's timeline.
- The international event occurs over a **six-week period**, well before any newly purchased vehicles could be delivered or deployed.
- Attempting to force the funds into their original purpose at this stage would result in delays, inefficiencies, and potentially the loss of the funds altogether.

## **3. The Reallocation Prevents Funds From Going Unused**

- Without repurposing, the funds would sit idle and ultimately fail to meet their intended purpose of supporting mobility, access, and community benefit.
- Redirecting the funds ensures they are used in a timely, impactful way that still aligns with the spirit of the original grant.

## **4. Replacement Funding Is Readily Available for the Original Projects**

- We can request **additional capital funding** to support the bus acquisition and other long-term needs.
- These projects will still be implemented—just with new funding streams that align better with procurement timelines.
- This approach ensures no loss of progress on planned capital improvements.

## **5. The International Event Creates Temporary but Critical Transportation Demands**

- The event will place extraordinary pressure on local transportation systems.
- Using the funds to support temporary mobility solutions directly benefits residents and visitors, as well as the City's operational readiness.
- This is a legitimate and urgent transportation need that fits within the allowable scope of many grant programs.

## **6. The Reallocation Supports Public Safety and Operational Efficiency**

- Large-scale events require enhanced transportation coordination to ensure safe movement of people.
- Funding can support shuttles, traffic management, accessibility services, and other mobility enhancements that protect public safety and reduce congestion.

## **7. The Use of Funds Remains Consistent With the Grant's Intent**

- Even though the funds are being redirected, they are still being used to support transportation, mobility, and community benefit.



2 STATES  
7 COUNTIES  
1 AUTHORITY

- The shift does not represent a departure from the grant's purpose—only an adjustment in timing and application.

#### 8. The Event Provides a Unique, Time-Bound Opportunity

- This is a one-time international event that cannot be postponed or revisited.
- Missing the opportunity to support it would be a lost chance to leverage the grant for maximum community impact.
- In contrast, capital projects can be funded and executed on a more flexible timeline.

#### 9. The Reallocation Demonstrates Fiscal Responsibility

- Rather than allowing funds to lapse or be spent inefficiently, the City is proactively ensuring they are used where they can deliver immediate, measurable benefit.
- This approach reflects prudent stewardship of public resources.

Thank you,



Chuck Ferguson

*Chief Operations Officer/Acting CEO*  
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