

## **Request for Information: Mass Transit Fare Collection Technology**

Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority

RFI Issue Date: **April 20, 2026**

Response Due Date: **July 1, 2026**

### **I. Synopsis**

Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority (TMTA) is seeking information from transit vendors, organizations, and agencies on the current state of mass transit fare collection technology. Information obtained through this request for information (RFI) may be used by TMTA staff in preparation for the development of a subsequent request for proposals (RFP) to outfit the TMTA fixed route fleet with new fare collection equipment. TMTA staff seek to gain a more thorough understanding of the current state of fare collection technology in order to best meet the needs of our agency and riders.

### **II. Instructions**

- Written electronic responses to this RFI are due by July 1, 2026
- TMTA prefers responses to be no more than 20 pages in length, not including links to additional webpages or information.
- Questions related to this RFI must be emailed by July 1, 2026, using the attached form (Appendix A) using the following contact information:

Subject: **RFI Question: Fare Collection**

Jessica Moberly, Director of Planning

[jmoberly@topekametro.org](mailto:jmoberly@topekametro.org)

***Responses are to be submitted in .pdf or similar format, and emailed using the following contact information:***

Subject: **RFI Response: Fare Collection**

Richard Appelhanz, CFO

[rappelhanz@topekametro.org](mailto:rappelhanz@topekametro.org)

- TMTA staff will review all responses submitted by the above deadline and may reach out to respondents with further questions.
- Respondents to this RFI expressly waive all claims to TMTA for any costs involved in the preparation and submission of responses.
- Responses submitted to this RFI are voluntary and for informational purposes only, and in no way does this RFI or submitted responses obligate TMTA to take any further action.
- Respondents acknowledge that responses submitted through this RFI are public record.

### III. Project Timeline

| Date      | Project Milestone  |
|-----------|--|
| 4/20/2026 | RFI Issued   |
| 5/4/2026  | Questions related to RFI submitted to TMTA                 |
| 5/11/2026 | Responses to questions by TMTA staff issued to all parties |
| 7/1/2026  | Responses to this RFI submitted to TMTA staff              |
| July 2026 | TMTA follow-up questions with responders                   |

### IV. Background

Since its beginning in July 1973, Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority (Metro) has operated transit service as an independent public entity under the authority of Kansas statutes and Topeka ordinances. Metro has the state statutory authority to operate in the City of Topeka, Kansas and within ninety miles of the City limits. The primary function of Metro is to plan, develop, finance, and operate transit buses, equipment and facilities serving the City of Topeka and surrounding area.

Metro provides fixed route bus service Monday through Saturday during daytime hours, and ADA paratransit (lift) service during fixed route bus service hours. Metro currently operates twelve fixed routes all within the city limits.

Metro receives the following types of funding:

- U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, operating and capital grants
- Kansas Department of Transportation, operating and capital grants
- City of Topeka, property tax funding for operating and capital expenses
- Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization, City of Topeka, planning grants

The above-mentioned funding constitutes approximately 90% of Metro's annual revenues. Metro's fiscal year is July 1 through June 30. Total annual budgeted expenses are approximately \$10 million.

Metro currently has 80 employees.

### V. Purpose

TMTA seeks to replace current fare collection equipment on fixed route buses with the latest technology offering enhanced convenience and reliability for riders and the agency. Of particular interest for TMTA is expanding options for riders to purchase fares, aiding a seamless boarding experience, and generating the most accurate ridership and revenue data for in-depth analysis and financial reporting. Through this RFI, TMTA is seeking to gain a better understanding of the current state of the transit fare collection industry, and what technology and features will best fit the needs of the agency. TMTA recognizes that transit technology is evolving and seeks to be poised to adapt to a changing transit landscape.

Specific areas of interest about which TMTA seeks further information through this RFI include account-based fare payment methods, various fare media options, automatic fare collection systems, fare capping, equipment reliability, ease of maintenance, and integration with third party applications.

## **VI. Objectives**

Through this RFI, TMTA is pursuing the following objectives:

- Gain a more complete understanding of the current state of fare collection technology for mass transit.
- Identify opportunities for integration of fare collection technology with other recent and emerging transit technologies, e.g., real-time bus trackers.
- Develop performance specifications for a potentially forthcoming RFP for the replacement of fixed route fare collection equipment.

## **VII. Preferred Functionality and Areas for Evaluation**

1. Retain features of existing fare collection system
  - a. Cash payments are rapidly processed, with reliable performance.
  - b. Ability for bus operators to input specific rider types via customizable keypad.
2. Mobile ticketing technology
  - a. Ability to purchase and store all fare options on mobile devices.
  - b. Ability to purchase mobile tickets using cash or credit cards.
  - c. Accessibility features for riders with disabilities.
  - d. Contactless validation, e.g., visual validation, RFID, QR scan
3. Account-based system
  - a. Ability for riders to purchase all fare types and store them indefinitely.
  - b. Fare-capping.
  - c. Ability to verify accounts based on rider type, including riders eligible for reduced fares.
4. Ability to issue printed or electronic transfers or change cards
5. Support for new fare media and vending
  - a. Smart cards
  - b. FOBs
6. Integration with AVL and APC technology to collate ridership data with route, bus stop location, date/time information
  - a. TMTA currently utilizes Strategic Mapping AVL technology on fixed route vehicles.
  - b. TMTA also uses Strategic Mapping APC technology on fixed route vehicles.
7. Integration of fare system across platforms, services, and third-party transportation providers
8. Integration with external organization user IDs
  - a. Washburn University student ID cards
  - b. USD 501 student ID cards
  - c. DCF ID cards
  - d. Additional ID cards as needed

9. Cloud-based data storage system that requires minimal impact upon TMTA's existing server capacity.
10. User-friendly reporting software
  - a. Ability to sort ridership data by route, fare type, date/time, bus stop location.
11. Preventive maintenance regimen to ensure reliable performance.

**VIII. Preferred Functionality Responses**

Upon review of TMTA's preferred functionality outlined above, indicate if your fare collection system may fulfill preferred features with 'Yes' or 'No' followed by a brief explanation using this template.

| Functionality   | Y/N | Explanation |
|---|-----|-------------|
| 1. Retain features of existing fare collection system   |     |             |
| 2. Mobile ticketing technology  |     |             |
| 3. Account-based system   |     |             |
| 4. Ability to issue printed or electronic transfers or change cards   |     |             |
| 5. Support for new fare media   |     |             |
| 6. Integration with AVL and APC technology to collate ridership data with route, bus stop location, date/time information |     |             |
| 7. Integration of fare system across platforms, services, and third-party transportation providers                        |     |             |
| 8. Integration with external organization user IDs  |     |             |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 9. Cloud-based data storage                                       |  |  |
| 10. User-friendly reporting software                              |  |  |
| 11. Preventive maintenance regimen to ensure reliable performance |  |  |

**IX. Submission**

Responses to this RFI should follow the general structure and address the points below:

1. Cover letter
  - a. Executive summary of company
  - b. Mission statement and business philosophy
2. Experience
  - a. How many years has your company been in the transit fare collection industry?
  - b. Experience of senior leadership team
  - c. In how many transit agencies is your fare collection system currently deployed?
  - d. Provide reference contact information for at least three (3) current customers with operating conditions similar to TMTA.
3. Product features and information
  - a. Number of years fare collection system has been deployed in the transit industry.
  - b. Expected lifespan of fare collection system
  - c. Data storage and transfer technology
  - d. Mobile ticketing and fare media options
  - e. Accessibility features for riders with disabilities across all applicable products.
  - f. Compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2)
  - g. Modular features or systems that are included as options in your fare collection system.
  - h. Provide examples of relevant reporting mechanisms (ex. pivot tables, dashboards)
4. Preferred Functionality Response Form

**APPENDIX A**

**Question Submittal Form**  
**Submission Due Date: July 1, 2026**

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Submitted by:   |  |
| Date Submitted: |  |
| Company Name:   |  |
| Phone:          |  |
| Email:          |  |

Use this space to list any questions for TMTA staff related to this RFI. If referencing this RFI, please include page, section numbers: