

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
SPECIAL MEETING
May 17, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Debbie Sullivan called the May 17, 2017, Special Meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority to order at 5:30 p.m., at the administrative offices of Intercity Transit.

Members Present: Chair and City of Tumwater Councilmember Debbie Sullivan; Vice Chair and Citizen Representative Karen Messmer; Thurston County Commissioner Bud Blake; City of Lacey Councilmember Virgil Clarkson; City of Olympia Councilmember Clark Gilman; City of Yelm Councilmember Molly Carmody; Citizen Representative Ryan Warner;

Members Excused: Citizen Representative Don Melnick; Labor Representative Art Delancy.

Staff Present: Ann Freeman-Manzanares; Dennis Bloom; Paul Koleber; Steve Krueger; Pat Messmer; Jim Merrill; Carolyn Newsome; Eric Phillips; Steve Swan.

Others Present: Citizen Advisory Committee member, Michael Van Gelder.

Prior to approval of the agenda, Chair Sullivan announced that agenda Item 6 could potentially run longer than the allotted 60 minutes, and if that should be the case, she will move Item 7 to a future meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was M/S/A by Councilmember Carmody and Councilmember Clarkson to approve the agenda as presented.

INTRODUCTIONS

Customer Service Manager, Joy Gerchak, introduced Denise Paul, Customer Service Representative.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PUBIC HEARING 2018-2021 Transit Improvement Program

Development Director, Eric Phillips, presented for public comment the 2018-2021 Transit Improvement Program (TIP). Phillips noted he received one comment via email from someone who was looking for a copy of the project list.

Chair Sullivan opened the public hearing at 5:36 p.m.

With no one from the public present to comment, Chair Sullivan closed the public hearing at 5:37 p.m.

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT.

CAC member Michael Van Gelder said the CAC met on May 15. The committee received a briefing on the Transit Improvement Plan which generated several questions and comments.

Members conducted a full discussion of the strategic plan policy positions, and some of the highlights included continued interest in park-and-ride lots, and the agency should continue to look for partners to help fund park-and-rides. Looking at the mix of services the agency offers, members want to explore local express service with limited stops between points A and B, and members agreed it was important to reduce travel times. Members had questions about definitions of the transit priority measures. Members want to see continuation of the Youth Education Program; bus stop and ADA enhancements.

The CAC supports the positions as stated by the Authority, and asked how the positions could be connected to other things. The CAC discussed how to serve beyond the current service area recognizing there are funding limitations, and they recognize that the agency needs to build up service within the existing service areas like Hawks Prairie. The CAC also received a presentation by CAC member, Carl See about road usage charges.

Commissioner Blake arrived.

SHORT RANGE SERVICE PLAN & COMMUNITY CONVERSATION UPDATE

Planning Manager, Dennis Bloom, along with Thomas Wittmann from Nelson Nyggard, and Jason Robertson, the Communications and Outreach Consultant, provided an update on current efforts in developing the Short Range Plan, including ongoing efforts to engage broad public participation in identifying and setting future priorities for the agency's Long Range Plan.

Bloom provided a brief overview of what would be presented including Wittman's recently completed Existing Conditions Report, and Robertson's update on the current outreach effort. Bloom mentioned the effort the agency has been looking at for some time, how service is currently performing and how it relates to land use issues. Part of this will also be provided at public open houses during the month of June.

Wittman presented a slide show on his work to date for Intercity Transit's Short/Long Range Plan. Wittman said he hopes to help the Authority understand what the context is, and what the market for transit is, how Intercity Transit is doing currently, and if there are any gaps that the data reveals in terms of travel patterns and where people are actually using transit services now.

Transit Plan Goals and Objectives – an assessment of strengths and weaknesses of IT service; the Short Range Plan will be used to address growth and operational issues; the Long Range Plan is to position IT to provide mobility throughout the PTBA.

In some cases, it could be service that IT is currently providing, and in other cases it might be different ways to serve mobility needs that may not necessarily be apparent now. Wittmann will look at these services and present a series of options to consider. Another part of this effort is to look further into the future to help understand where the region is growing. There are 140,000 new people anticipated to move to the area in the next 20 years, and how are they going to travel around? And what things does IT need to do in order to make sure the public can get to where they need to go and still maintain the quality of life and economic vitality of this region?

This review process is to help the Authority understand various service elements such as: where the market for transit service might be, an in-depth look at where ridership is now, how are the routes doing for ridership and on-time performance, what stops are being utilized effectively. Next steps include engaging the public, understanding what existing users as well as potential users' needs are before coming up with alternative options. The key is to listen to what the public has to say, listen to what the ITA and CAC have to say to help understand what the priorities should be, and through a specific process end up with a plan that reflects community values for both the short term and long term.

Wittman reviewed some of the processes completed so far:

Market Assessment:

- Commuter Travel Patterns (TRPC maps) of those traveling within Thurston County.

- The Market Segmentation and Customer Satisfaction reports: provide very good details of IT's current market, riders and non-riders.
- Socio-economic/census map within the district: demographics by age, low income, disabled, households without vehicles, etc. that show the areas where there's a "propensity" to utilize transit service. The map also displays routes showing areas served by IT; and areas that are not currently served.
- Population/Employment density (map). The rule of thumb is approximately 80% of the success of a transit system ridership has to do with population and employment density. For example, where are the higher levels of population? For a system the size of IT, if there are less than five to seven households per acre, fixed route isn't necessarily going to be successful.
- Where is employment density? While there is some employment density, there are not really high levels. Each one of the population /employment density areas tells its own story. Our effort will help determine if there are areas with these higher densities that don't have service now. But from a Gap Analysis perspective our initial conclusion is that the highest density areas of population/employment are currently being served by IT.

Low Income Households (map)

- Certain clusters in northeast and west sections of Olympia and in the south core of Lacey. There is also a correlation between low income households and areas that have zero vehicles per household. For example, zero vehicle households are more likely to use transit.

Renter Household Density (map)

- Greater concentration of rental housing are traditionally more likely to use transit. For example there are concentrations in some of the older areas of Olympia, west Olympia and Lacey.

Demographic Analysis Takeaways:

- Majority of PTBA currently has less than 10 residents/acre
- Areas with highest propensity are currently served by Intercity Transit
- Older neighborhoods, close to downtown Olympia, have high transit propensity (dense and socio-economic propensity)
- There are certain areas where there are unmet needs: NE Lacey, Jubilee which has a high senior population. It's one of the challenges that IT needs to look at as part of this process.

Travel Demand - All Trips

- TRPC data was used to review trip patterns internal to the PTBA and in some cases, Thurston County; also Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data from U. S. Census.

Estimated Travel Demand

School/Work Trips: includes work trips, university, high school and other school trips. We also look for gaps or trip patterns that don't show up.

- Work Travel from Thurston County
 - Total = 94,443 daily work trips in 2014.
- Work Travel to Thurston County
 - Total = 95,061 daily work trips in 2014.
- Work Travel to Olympia
 - More than half of all work trips in the County
 - Total = 42,055 daily work trips
 - Over 3,200 from Lacey
 - Over 2,200 from Tumwater
- Work Travel to Lacey
 - Total = 18,784 daily work trips
 - Nearly 2,000 from Olympia
 - Over 600 from Tumwater
- Work Travel to Downtown Olympia/Capital
 - Total = 20,764 nearly half of all work trips are to Downtown Olympia/Capital area
 - Over 1,400 from Lacey
 - Over 1,100 are from Tumwater

From a trend perspective there is an anticipated growth in commuter service and commuter market into Thurston County to and from the north, but an increasing trend is coming from the west and south.

Look at it from a downtown perspective: almost half of the work trips coming into Olympia are headed to the downtown Olympia area. Riders coming from Olympia, Lacey and Tumwater are the biggest markets, but Seattle and Tacoma have almost 500 people that drive to work in downtown Olympia every day. IT's fixed route service is carrying some of those individuals and some are using vanpools, too.

Travel Demand Takeaways

- Strongest travel desire lines within the PTBA are served by IT now
- Unserved travel patterns include:
 - East Lacey to North Lacey trips (a.k.a. Hawks Prairie)
 - Regional markets outside of PTBA
 - NW Thurston County
 - Pierce County
 - King County

Bigger markets without direct service (not going through downtown Olympia):

- SE Tumwater to SW Olympia
- How big is the market from Tumwater to Lacey?
- How likely would intra-county express service be successful? It could be, but there is no guarantee given the numbers that we see.
- Tumwater to Lacey 'travel lines' are not as high as multiple other markets.

Olympia Zoning (comp plan map) – looking for big developments coming in the future, but the city has set it on the east and west sides of the city.

Lacey Zoning (map)– Wittman noted the brown areas on the map along Martin Way indicate anticipated growth, as well as the core area. Hawks Prairie zoned for light industrial and senior housing on the north end. There is single family density housing. Looking at an opportunity perspective – are there areas in Lacey that need service as a result of recent development; or if there is a need for service – is a 40' bus the right solution?

Key Market Segmentation & Customer Satisfaction Survey Takeaways

- Low income population is more transit dependent
- Market share of Intercity Transit has shrunk
- Customer satisfaction has dropped, especially on-time performance
- Top desired service improvements:
 - On-time performance
 - Extended evening hours

System/Service Evaluation

- This is a high level overview of strengths and weaknesses of existing service. It's drilled down for each of the routes. For example, what is the ridership by stop? For each trip? Is the bus on time, overloaded, what is the quality of service? Thirty-minute service typically is the threshold for discretionary riders. If bus service doesn't come every 30 minutes, then it's not convenient. When looking at

service designs, anytime service is showing 45 minutes or more, it's not designed for discretionary riders.

- Looking at it from peak perspective and high frequency corridors: Martin Way, Capital Way/Blvd. service to Evergreen, Capital Mall and the Community College. Majority of IT riders are using these main corridors.
- Would also note, current trend in ridership is declining and this is a national trend. Only Seattle is seeing a gain in ridership, and much of it is on light rail, particularly new lines. What can be done to reverse this declining trend?
- The Lacey and Olympia Transit Centers are the highest ridership stops in the system by a big margin. A lot of that is transfer volumes, but we need to look to see what is around those areas in terms of walking access opportunities.
- What does Intercity Transit do with areas or routes not doing as well? Look at the productivity of individual bus routes by weekday. Questions to ask are: "Should you be serving low rider areas with any bus?" If a bus is carrying less than 15 passengers per hour, is this the market for a regular size bus? Perhaps an alternate option such as a smaller, flexible bus operated by another agency, or a private-public partnership that uses a smart device app. You can see these approaches being test piloted in different areas of the country now.

Warner asked if there is data showing how much Evergreen ridership goes down between June and September. Wittman responded yes, and service to the college is reduced, too.

Warner asked if there was a potential to increase Dial-A-Lift costs if eliminating some of the lower-performing routes might mean individuals would not be able to get to accessible fixed route service. Wittman said he is not recommending eliminating any routes. He's simply pointing out there may be opportunities to do things differently.

Messmer said it would be helpful to have information about the differences in hourly cost with just current cost for equipment and the service we're providing.

Messmer asked if productivity is measured differently for Express service. Wittman said Express service as currently configured should not be measured by "passengers per hour," but instead by "passengers per trip." On the other hand, ridership should be higher, yet it is dropping for any number of reasons. What can be done to make service more compelling than it is currently? Are we going to the right places? Are we going at the right times?

- Looking at ridership from a Saturday perspective, productivity has been down as well, and getting worse on Sundays because of the missing non-traditional market outside of the 8 to 5 workers and students. The challenge will be how to maintain service and coverage, and is there a different approach to do this.
- On-time performance: measured by every time point and every trip for multiple days over a month's time. The average on-time performance arriving 0 to 5 minutes of the schedule time - 65% of IT buses arrived at time point on time. That is lower than typically seen.
- Late arrival is a typical issue. A system the size of Intercity Transit should have on-time performance between 85% and 90%. On-time performance is a big challenge and concern. We need to ask, "Are we scheduling this the right way?" Short-term, we'll be looking at how to address some of these issues – are there things Intercity Transit can do to improve these numbers in order to make service more reliable.

Key Takeaways

- On-time performance needs significant improvements
- High frequency corridor approach is working
- Multiple routes/areas where productivity is less than 10 passenger/hours – an alternative approach should be considered
- Commuter services are expensive and productivity is declining

Public Outreach Efforts

- Before making recommendations there are three phases of public outreach. Talk with existing and potential customers, starting in June with public meetings.
 - Project Initiation
 - Information Gathering
 - Alternatives Development
 - Draft/Final Reports

Outreach Elements

- Project website
 - Learn about project
 - Feedback opportunities
 - Take the survey
- Public meetings
- Stakeholder meetings
- Operator outreach

- Customer comments

Jason Robertson spoke and provided an update on the Road Trip effort.

Road Trip Inputs to Date

- Online survey (32 entries and rising)
- Idea boxes (varied volumes)
- Existing public comment log (300+ inputs)
- Stakeholder interviews (Robertson reviewed the Road Trip Stakeholder Interview Participants List)
- Intercept surveys

Van Gelder would like to see state agencies included on the stakeholder interview list.

Robertson reviewed the sample stakeholder questions which are different from the survey questions. Stakeholder questions ask more in-depth about how to be partners. For example, what are they trying to do and how can transit help them get there? How to communicate with constituents? What are the public transportation priorities?

Robertson shared things riders are saying:

- Service frequency is important (Example: along main corridors 7 minute service would be better than 15 minutes)
- Express service
- Better connection times
- Expanded routes and services: Hawks Prairie, Panorama, Black Lake, Rich Road
- A west side Dash service (Harrison, Mall, Cooper Point)
- Continue serving needs of seniors, youth, and disabled populations
- New technology: swipe passes or electronic fare media
- A second downtown transfer station because the first one is too crowded and it affects transfer times; sometimes feeling unsafe there is also an issue.

Community Organizations:

- Pursue system flexibility (new services and product integration)
- Increase appeal and marketing to employers/economic activity centers
- Increase social media presence and use of apps
- Continue pursuing solutions for rural and out-of-county destinations
- Promote transit services to visitors

A slide of Upcoming Public Open Houses in June

- Monday, June 12 – Lacey Public Library from 4 to 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 14 – Tumwater Library from 4 to 6 p.m.

- Thursday, June 15 - Olympia Comm. Ctr. From 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- Thursday, June 15 - Olympia Library from 5 to 7 p.m.
- Tuesday, June 20 - Yelm Community Center from 4 to 6 p.m.

Next Steps

- Public outreach continues
- Land use scenarios to review
- Define mobility options
 - Emerging mobility options (like Uber and Lyft)
 - High capacity transit (like a Bus Rapid corridor line)
- "Alternatives" development of services and findings

Warner asked what is being done to make sure there is outreach to limited English proficiency populations. Wittman said he still needs to work on the outreach plan and how to publicize it, and what accommodations are needed for those populations. Robertson said he is hoping to catch people through the intercept surveys and reach a cross section of people. For example, they attended the Diversity Fair, and they will be attending more events like that. Looking at the current demographics, there are not a lot of diverse groups in our communities. If Authority members have contacts at any group, refer them to Robertson.

Messmer would like to take the final analysis to the Transportation Policy Board (TPB) and TRPC for discussion when the time is right.

Gilman, who serves on the Transportation Policy Board, said Amtrak and Sound Transit recently presented at the TPB a few weeks ago. He believes the TPB would now be more receptive to local and regional transit possibilities. He likes Robertson's idea about input from the outreach meetings being synthesized at the right time as questions are formulated.

STRATEGIC PLAN - GOALS AND END POLICIES.

Due to time limitations, Chair Sullivan deferred this agenda item to a future Authority meeting.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Ransomware update - Information Systems has been working many hours to ensure Intercity Transit's computer system is safe. They have been focusing on the Dial-A-Lift Web Portal which is used to reserve DAL rides via the internet. That system is running on an extremely old operating system (Windows Server 2003). Since the system is

Intercity Transit Authority Work Session

May 17, 2017

Page 11 of 12

publically accessible and on an operating system that is no longer fully supported by Microsoft, we are shutting the system down for an extended period.

Operators and Supervisors did a fantastic job of keeping everything running smoothly during the rain and wind storm on May 4.

The Authority is encouraged to attend the scheduled public meetings for the Intercity Transit Road Trip. CAC members are also invited to attend.

Intercity Transit will participate in four parades this summer:

- Capital City Pride - June 17
- Yelm Prairie Days - June 24
- Tumwater 4th of July Parade
- Lake Fair parade - July 15

Staff is working with the school districts and the jurisdictions to advertise the \$20 Summer Youth Passes.

Construction on the underground storage tank is moving along quickly.

Operator, Rob Wood, took 2nd place at the International Bus Rodeo in Reno, Nevada. There is a large group of Operators interested in participating in the 2017 Rodeo being held at the state conference in August.

AUTHORITY ISSUES

Gilman will not be available June 15 to attend the public meeting in Olympia.

Clarkson said the road paving along Marvin Road is almost complete. Striping of the road remains.

Carmody thanked Intercity Transit for participating in the Nisqually Home and Garden Show. She noted it was less well attended this year than in the past.

Warner referred to a letter sent to Intercity Transit's Dial-A-Lift staff from the Thurston County Thunder Fish - Special Olympics Swim Team. They apparently were stranded during swim practice on May 4 when the major rain storm hit, and Intercity Transit made great efforts to get them safely to their destinations.

Gilman said Mike Harbour attended the May 10 Transportation Policy Board meeting, and he strongly made the case to pursue stronger regional transit, and not to focus on the possibility of commuter rail hooking up to trains in Olympia.

Messmer attended the Transportation Policy Board and there was discussion about the rain storm and how Intercity Transit was part of the emergency response process. Many were not aware that the agency is often called upon during emergencies such as this.

Sullivan said on May 16, 2017, the City of Tumwater, the Tumwater School District and TOGETHER! co-hosted a Community Summit at Peter G Schmidt Elementary School. She thanked Freeman-Manzanares and Eric Phillips for attending. She noted that even though conversation centered on partnerships with the schools and other agencies such as law enforcement, transportation did come up several times in the conversation. She said it's important that Intercity Transit be invited to community outreach events.

Warner said Metro is conducting a trial run on their new app for purchasing fares. He said he could purchase a daily pass on his Smartphone and found it to be very convenient.

ADJOURNMENT

It was M/S/A by Councilmember Clarkson and Vice Chair/Citizen Representative Messmer to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY



Debbie Sullivan, Chair

ATTEST



Pat Messmer
Clerk of the Board

Date Approved: June 7, 2017

Prepared by Pat Messmer, Recording Secretary/
Executive Assistant, Intercity Transit