

**MINUTES
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JOINT MEETING
September 16, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cox called the meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority (ITA) and Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to order on September 16, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. This was a hybrid meeting held at the Pattison Street facility.

ITA Members Present: Chair and City of Lacey Councilmember Carolyn Cox; Vice Chair and Community Representative Sue Pierce; City of Tumwater Councilmember Eileen Swarthout; Community Representative Wendy Goodwin; City of Olympia Councilmember Robert Vanderpool; Thurston County Commissioner Carolina Mejia; and Labor Representative, Mark Neuville.

ITA Members Excused: City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess; Community Representative Justin Belk.

CAC Members Present: Rachel Wilson; Margaret Janis; Ellen Matheny; Jacqueline Garrison; JoAnn Scott; Kindra Galan; Marty Slighte; Michael Gray; Suzanne Simons; Rabia Sheikh; Matt Collins; Jim Hanley; Don Melnick.

Staff Present: Emily Bergkamp; Dena Withrow; Jonathon Yee; Jill Nordstrom; Pat Messmer; Amanda Collins; Nicole Jones; Ray Velasquez; Jesse Eckstrom; Nathan Davis; Michael Maverick; Thera Black; Peter Stackpole; Brenden Houx; Katie Cunningham; Noelle Gordon; Michael Midstokke; David Dudek; David Chaffee; Jane Denicola; Dan Savage; Clinton Jimenez; Richelle Loken; Jonathan Reynolds; Rob Wood; Staci Revel; Karl Hug; Alejandro Soto; Amanda Caskin; William Rice; Zachary Irving; Nathan Foisy; Bill Miller.

Others Present: Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel; Dara Dotson, former CAC member.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

- A. Michael Midstokke introduced Operator Class 26-03.
- B. David Chaffee introduced Zachary Irving, Technician and Nathan Foisy, Service Worker.
- C. Alejandro Soto introduced William Rice, Inventory Specialist.
- D. Jonathon Yee introduced Amanda Caskin, Maintenance Assistant.
- E. Staci Revel introduced Karl Hug, Facilities Supervisor.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was M/S/A by Swarthout and Mejia to approve the agenda.

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PUBLIC COMMENT - None

RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION - 2026 STATE ROADEO -The ITA, CAC and staff celebrated the combined high performance from Operations and Maintenance declaring Intercity Transit the 2026 Washington State Rodeo Grand Champions.

Dena Withrow, Director of Operations explained the Rodeo is an annual event celebrating frontline transit workers through timed obstacle courses, simulated driving scenarios, vehicle inspections, mechanical diagnosis, and safety tasks.

Operators navigate a 7-minute timed course including turns, offsets, serpentines, backing, passenger stops, tennis ball clearance, and a precision judgment stop (clearing barrels down to 2 inches and stopping within 6 inches of a cone). They also undergo uniform and pre-trip inspections with planted defects.

The Maintenance team compete on brake boards, vapor doors, Thermo King HVAC systems, bus inspections, IO boards (electronic brains), disabled engine diagnostics, and a written test.

Withrow acknowledged the following Rodeo support staff:

- **Dave Dudek:** Recognized for his dedication and leadership in setting up the state rodeo.
- **Bill Miller & wife Shanaka:** For their continued hard work on the Rodeo Steering Committee.
- **Rob Wood:** Coach and prior winner instrumental in team preparation.
- **Bryce Reinhardt & Joe Bell:** Advanced technology/training coordinator and fleet maintenance supervisor supporting the maintenance team.
- **Sue Pierce & Jill Nordstrom:** Both course Rodeo judges - Pierce has served as a frequent Rodeo judge.

Withrow presented the State Conference 2026 Operator Competitor Award Results:

Operator Competitors

- Fred Sambrano came in 1st place in the 35-foot competition.
- Clinton Jimenez came in 5th place in the 40-foot competition (and he also won 1st place for the best pre-trip in the state Rodeo).
- Steve Bleecker came in 6th place overall in the Body-on-Chassis competition.

Director of Fleet and Facilities Maintenance Jonathon Yee presented the State Conference 2026 Maintenance Award Results:

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Maintenance Team Members: Richelle Logan, Jackson Madison, and Jonathan Reynolds.

- Tied for 1st place in Thermo King and Brake Board.
- 1st place in IO Board and Vapor Door.
- 1st place in the Overall State Maintenance Competition.

SELF INTRODUCTIONS

The Authority, CAC members and staff provided self-introductions.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

It was M/S/A by Mejia and Goodwin to approve the consent agenda items as presented.

- A. Minutes** – August 19, 2026, Regular Meeting.
- B. Payroll August: \$4,340,988.67**
- Warrant Numbers: 46443-46454; 46559-46564 in the amount of \$37,606.93
 - ACH Payments: \$4,303,381.74
- C. Accounts Payable August: \$5,369,230.77**
- Disbursed Warrants, Numbers: 46099-46207 & 46212-46316; and voided warrant number 46188 totaling \$5,352,034.38
 - ACH Payments: \$17,196.39
- D. Federal Advocacy Services Contract Renewal** (*Noelle Gordon*). Authorized the General Manager to execute a contract amendment with Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Relations to renew the contract for Federal Advocacy Services for a period of one year in the amount of \$96,000.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Vanpool and Staff Vehicle Purchase.** Procurement-Project Management Coordinator, Noelle Gordon, presented the purchase of replacement vanpool and staff vehicles. Intercity Transit is seeking authorization to purchase 22 new 2027 model year Toyota Sienna Hybrids from Toyota of Yakima under Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) Contract No. 28423. This acquisition will facilitate the replacement of the aging Vanpool and staff vehicles in our fleet. These replacements are essential for maintaining reliable and effective vehicles for our community and staff.

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Ordering and production of this type of vehicle has been extremely limited over the last few years. Despite these challenges, Intercity Transit is actively working to purchase all 22 new 2027 Toyota Sienna Hybrids and is collaborating closely with Toyota of Yakima to secure all 22 replacements needed for the aging vehicles in our fleet.

Intercity Transit has received a Public Transit Rideshare grant from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). This grant will be used to support our Vanpool program by assisting us in purchasing 7 of the 22 replacement vehicles. The total order value for these vehicles will not exceed the budgeted amount of \$1,030,000.

As a member of the Washington State Purchasing Cooperative, Intercity Transit is eligible to procure vehicles through DES Contract 28423, which was awarded to Toyota of Yakima via a competitive bidding process. Staff concur with DES's assessment that the pricing is fair and reasonable, and that Toyota of Yakima has the ability to perform. Our past experience with Toyota of Yakima and Toyota vehicles gives staff confidence that these new Sienna's are mechanically sound and will serve our agency and vanpool program effectively for years to come.

It was M/S/A by Pierce and Vanderpool to authorize the General Manager, pursuant to Washington State Contract 28423, to purchase replacement Vanpool and staff vehicles in an amount not-to-exceed \$1,030,000.

- B. Hydrogen Tube Trailers & Associated Services.** Senior Procurement-Project Management Coordinator, Brenden Houx, presented the purchase of up to two Hydrogen Tube Trailers and associated services to support Intercity Transit's hydrogen supply solution.

On July 6, 2026, Intercity Transit issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Hydrogen Tube Trailers to establish a contract for the purchase of up to two (2) new gaseous hydrogen tube trailers, and related accessories and services. These trailers will transport, store, and dispense gaseous hydrogen to support the agency's hydrogen bus fleet.

Intercity Transit received three (3) proposals, one (1) of which was deemed responsive and fully compliant with all RFP requirements. Fleet and Facilities Maintenance and Procurement staff evaluated the submissions based on the criteria established in the RFP. Following a comprehensive review of cost factors, non-cost factors, and a responsibility check, Intercity Transit determined that PowerTech is the responsible proposer who best meets all requirements and offers the most advantageous proposal.

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We anticipate delivery of the first tube trailer by the end of 2026, alongside associated deliverables including maintenance, training, and technical support. Intercity Transit plans to evaluate the performance of this initial trailer and leverage operational data to inform a data-driven decision regarding the purchase of a second trailer. PowerTech will provide hydrogen tube trailers and associated goods and services accordingly for the trailers.

Founded in 2023, the company is led by a team with decades of experience in hydrogen infrastructure, key innovations in mobile fueling technology, and integrated fueling systems. Intercity Transit believes PowerTech will deliver high-value equipment and services at fair and reasonable rates, and staff recommend contract approval.

It was M/S/A by Swarthout and Cox to authorize the General Manager to execute a five-year contract, with five one-year renewal options, with Powertech USA, Inc. (Powertech) to provide Hydrogen Tube Trailers and associated services in the amount of \$4,780,950, which includes sales tax and an approximate 10% contingency.

- C. Community Advisory Committee Self-Assessment.** Jill Nordstrom, Chief of Staff, reviewed the Self-Assessment survey questions for the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The survey focused on members' perceptions of the committee's purpose, diversity, input value, meeting organization, and personal experience, utilizing scale-based statements and open-ended questions regarding strengths and improvements. Nordstrom noted upfront that it was an incredibly positive survey with high overall agreement on how well the CAC is currently performing.

Survey Results

1. Focus and Purpose

- **Results:** 50% strongly agreed and 50% somewhat agreed that the committee stays focused on its purpose.
- **Comments:** The committee noted that specific service concerns can be submitted directly to customer service rather than waiting for monthly meetings.

2. Community Perspectives and Diversity

- **Results:** 11 members strongly agreed and 3 somewhat agreed that the CAC reflects a broad mix of backgrounds.

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- **Comments:** Members acknowledged that there is always room for improvement to expand outreach to wider audiences.

3. Value of Input Provided

- **Results:** 79% overall agreement (between agree and somewhat agree) regarding providing valuable input to Intercity Transit and the Authority Board. 14% somewhat disagreed, and there was 1 non-responsive answer.

4. Consideration of Input in Decision-Making

- **Results:** This question yielded the most divided response among the group regarding whether input is actively considered during Intercity Transit's decision-making processes.
- **Comments:** Almost one third of respondents felt unsure or expressed that their lived experiences do not always translate into final decisions.

5. Meeting Organization and Time Management

- **Results:** Satisfaction with meeting organization, facilitation, and timely distribution of materials was nearly unanimous.
- **Comments:** Requests were made for non-PDF meeting formats to be optimized for mobile devices, as well as options for text messaging meeting reminders.

6. Timeliness of Meeting Materials

- **Results:** The vast majority agreed strongly that meeting materials and information were timely, with only one person strongly or somewhat disagreed.

7. Psychological Safety, Respect, and Comfort Contributing

- **Results:** 100% agreement (with 1 response left blank) indicating high levels of psychological safety and confidence that members are treated with respect by staff and peers.
- **Comments:** Regarding comfort contributing to discussions, 12 members strongly agreed and 2 somewhat agreed.

8. Overall Satisfaction and Recommendation

- **Results:** 100% overall satisfaction with the experience of serving on the CAC (71% strongly agreeing, 28% somewhat agreeing). For recommending service to others, 78.5% strongly agreed, demonstrating an overwhelmingly positive sentiment and willingness to advocate for the CAC to prospective members.

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Areas Going Well (Strengths)

- **Staff Facilitation:** Repeated praise was given to staff members Amanda Collins, Nikki Jones, and Ray Velasquez, as well as the committee Chair, for their clear communication, strong organization skills, and supportive, orderly facilitation before and during meetings.
- **Listening and Inclusion:** Members noted a strong sense of respect amongst the team as a whole.
- **Information and Scope:** Members expressed appreciation for being able to learn about the organization as a whole and the full scope of services provided by Intercity Transit.

Suggestions for Improvement

- **Meeting Format:** Members requested less of a highlight reel presentation format and more time dedicated to interactive brainstorming, roundtable discussions, and hands-on demonstrations with technical tools for staff.
- **Authentic Impact and Closing the Loop:** Desire for input to have a clear impact, quicker follow-up on past questions, and more inclusion in decision-making processes by Intercity Transit staff.
- **Logistics for Hybrid Meetings:** Addressing difficulties with the integration of online participants alongside in-person participants.

Next Steps and Future Action Items

- **CAC Concern Tracking Sheet:** Staff created a tracking sheet to ensure IT staff follow up on concerns and questions raised at committee meetings.
- **Intercity Transit Authority Feedback Integration:** A topic raised for future thought regarding how the ITA would like to receive input from the CAC and how to facilitate that communication effectively.
- **Long-Term Planning Integration:** Staff are working to identify a process for including CAC input into long-term project planning (such as the Capital Improvement Plan and the TAM plan) by reviewing parameters and integrating comment periods for meaningful contributions.

Vanderpool shared an observation regarding the survey question on whether input is considered in decision-making, noting it reminded him of his experience at the City of Olympia with advisory boards. He raised the fundamental question of

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whether the group functions purely as an advisory board or does commissioner-style work, emphasizing the importance of being able to interact with material more deeply rather than just answering or getting questions answered.

Vanderpool highlighted the value of being hands-on and involved in work planning early, noting the timeliness required when regional planning or planning documents come down. He questioned how members would feel about having the ability to vote on whether they support an item or not and being part of the work planning process hands-on. He pointed out that staff often give a technical readout and answer questions, but there is sometimes a lack of ability for the public to propose alternatives or provide direct feedback. He noted that the CAC gives input at the end of meetings, but he does not usually get feedback on items being voted on.

Vanderpool raised the idea of the CAC having the ability to write a letter to let leadership know if there is a concern about an item or if there are planning documents needing more feedback, remarking that giving feedback is the purpose of being advisory, and without it, leadership assumes everything is fine. Observing that a lack of active interaction, collaboration, roundtable discussion time, authentic input, and closing the loop leads to burnout and members leaving, he emphasized the need to retain passionate people and asked for the theory of change around resolving that next step.

Nordstrom responded that this is a commonality across government in trying to incorporate meaningful feedback into planning methodologies, especially for long-range planning like the Capital Improvement Plan or Transit Asset Management (TAM) plan, which look two to three years out. She explained the focus is on figuring out where people's temperatures are for long-range planning, who wants to participate, and identifying strategic outcomes and thematic goals (such as moving into a greener transportation space, expanding paratransit, or using smaller vehicles for Vanpool). She noted it will be an iterative process that will not happen overnight, and that expectations need to be managed as integrated planning processes are gathered together.

Vanderpool provided an example from the City of Olympia where the Planning Commission requested capital facilities planning drafts in February instead of right before final writing to allow early questions and deep dives.

Melnick inquired about data regarding transit agencies of a similar size and how successful their CACs are, noting past impressions that CAC's in similarly sized agencies don't often work well, though Intercity Transit is making good progress. He also noted that detailed minutes were helpful to him as an authority member.

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Nordstrom agreed anecdotally that most agencies of this size do not have active CACs, making Intercity Transit special, and reiterated the goal of continuous improvement.

Matheny stated she is relatively new to the committee and finds the CAC a vibrant group representing a wide sector of riders and leaders. She asked the board if meeting notes are read and valuable, and if discussions are effectively communicated.

Pierce confirmed the minutes are read, are available online, and included in meeting packets, noting that staff often use CAC presentations as a learning tool before items come to the board.

Matheny invited the board to bring issues where they want community perspectives directly to the CAC, noting the group's enthusiasm.

Garrison shared that her experience on the Intercity Transit CAC has been uniquely positive regarding feeling heard and supported by staff liaisons Collins and Bergkamp. She noted the CAC's expertise is simply being regular bus riders, making their day-to-day passenger feedback valuable for describing the rider experience rather than making high-level administrative decisions.

Janis said experiences on past system changes showed the CAC was truly listened to and changes were made. The CAC has a committee working with other CACs around the state to share best practices. And the 2026 CAC recruitment achieved an extraordinary cross-section of ridership, including seniors, the Spanish-speaking community, and various neighborhoods.

Collins provided an update on CAC recruitment for 2026, noting intentional outreach by an ad hoc recruitment group focusing on less-heard voices (such as Spanish-speaking communities and houseless service providers). Staff (Ray Velasquez) covered Yelm, Thurston County, Olympia, Lacey, and are visiting Tumwater, resulting in 17 submitted applications and several inquiries so far. Collins noted that recruitment materials and applications are now fully translated into Spanish, and a stipend is highlighted for those facing time or financial constraints.

Melnick mentioned that advertising should reach specific communities like Panorama (housing 1,100 residents) and that mentioning the honorarium/stipend is important for financially compromised individuals. **Collins** agreed to schedule a tabling event at Panorama.

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Collins confirmed that youth applications are being encouraged (ages 15 to 19 attending school in Thurston County), with one youth application already received.

Cox said CAC reps attend the ITA meetings, and some provide report-outs from the CAC monthly meetings, and others do not. She asked whether lack of report-outs is due to the fault of the ITA Chair or whether the CAC rep doesn't feel comfortable speaking up about their meetings or is there something else the ITA can do to help facilitate more conversation at the regular authority meetings.

Janis explained that timing shifts (CAC meeting frequency vs. ITA meetings) and the meeting summary of CAC minutes help equip members, though occasional schedule alignments mean reports might cover two meetings worth of highlights.

Cox asked staff to place the topic of receiving feedback on specific issues on an upcoming ITA agenda before the end of the year to maintain momentum.

Vanderpool suggested looking into subcommittees on specific issues for members wanting deeper interaction.

Pierce raised a concern that a subcommittee might dilute the strength of having 20 diverse voices in the full CAC. It was agreed to defer this to the upcoming board conversation.

Mejia suggested sending out an exploratory question to CAC members prior to the next board conversation to gather their input on what connectivity and collaboration should look like.

D. Strategic Plan Concept Review. Bergkamp provided a high-level overview of the Strategic Plan which acts as a comprehensive roadmap for the agency. She introduced the fundamental definition of the agency's strategic plan, describing it simply as the process of defining where we're going, why we're going there, and how we'll get there.

Bergkamp explained the purpose of the plan is to provide clear direction and shared vision for Intercity Transit's future, creating transparency for staff, the Board, CAC, and customers. It offers a roadmap to align all teams behind the agency's guiding values and goals.

Structure of the Strategic Plan & Guiding Values

- Bergkamp explained that last year, Marketing and Communications staff helped create an executive summary format. The full strategic plan includes a robust

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history section updated annually, which tracks agency milestones and funding levels. Because funding directly impacts goal completion, addressing financial realities upfront is vital.

- **Annual Review Purpose:** The review process allows the CAC and the ITA to review guiding values annually, clarifying and expanding them as needed. Bergkamp recalled past updates – such as adding language around equity, diversity, and inclusion to ensure a welcoming environment for all riders in the zero-fare system.
- **Core Components:**
 - **Mission & Vision Statements:** Define organizational existence and long-term aspirations (e.g., widening the circle so people feel a sense of belonging).
 - **Goals with End Policies:** End policies tied to specific goals that define desired outcomes, benefits, and agency impact. Bergkamp noted that agenda items for both the CAC and ITA reference these goals to tie daily service back to core principles.
 - **Design Principles:** Strategies to enhance mobility across the four-city PTBA (Public Transportation Benefit Area) and urban growth areas, rooted in planning concepts and financial realism.

Highlights of Goals, End Policies, & Design Principles

Bergkamp briefly reviewed some of IT's goals and end policies that are the outcomes that we hope to achieve through the service we provide:

#1 is to assess the transportation needs of our community throughout the public transportation benefit area. Through the end policy of ITA, staff and the public will have access to clear and comprehensive information related to the diverse transportation needs of our public transportation benefit area. You can view that through the equity analysis when we've done public engagement and captured a lot of feedback.

#2 is providing outstanding customer service. We try to do that by customers, staff and the broader community reporting a high level of satisfaction. We have been doing some focus groups, mostly around zero fare, but in the past, we have done satisfaction surveys, both with our fixed-route passengers and our DAL passengers. And throughout COVID, we put the pause button on those just because it was difficult to actually get those completed. Once we have our ERP up and running, we'll start making sure those are getting done on a regular basis. But the focus groups and the information that we've received from folks about zero fare has been

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very important for us to share with you so you can understand the life-changing impacts that pilot is having on people.

Bergkamp skipped over several of the end policies and moved onto #7, which focuses on building partnerships to identify and implement innovative solutions that address mobility needs, access, and equity as a service provider and as an employer. That end policy is working with government entities, educational institutions, businesses, not-for-profits, community partners, and customers to facilitate high quality and inclusive mobility options as well as educational and socioeconomic opportunities in our community.

Bergkamp said the CAC recruitment is a great example, and she praised the recent success of the CAC recruitment on staff and the ad hoc committee as a great example of collaborative progress.

Bergkamp moved onto the seven design principles that Intercity Transit is committed to over the next six years. These principles identify strategies our agency can deploy to provide and enhance mobility throughout the four-city PTBA and their urban growth areas. And these principles are also responsive to projections of population density and land use. Our Planning department is great about keeping track of development and where things are popping up using all the data that we have at our disposal to make sure we're providing service in the areas not only that are most densely populated but will provide service for the majority of people who do not drive.

Mentioning a recent trip to Washington, D.C., Bergkamp shared an interaction with a congressional staffer from Senator Maria Cantwell's office who recognized transit theorist Jarrett Walker's high-frequency corridor philosophy. Bergkamp noted that Intercity Transit utilizes similar design principles, such as operating a range of services tailored to neighborhood capabilities (e.g., avoiding oversized 40-foot buses on tight routes with roundabouts like the old Route 45) and strengthening service along major corridors.

Lastly there is Commitment to Improvement. Performance is primarily measured by ridership to determine service effectiveness and resource allocation, alongside on-time performance and Operator feedback. Bergkamp cited the expansion of service to Northeast Lacey as a prime example of responding to booming population growth.

Tentative Update Timeline

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Bergkamp outlined the upcoming schedule for updating the strategic plan and gathering stakeholder feedback:

- September 16: Strategic Planning 101 orientation and overview.
- October 19: Present the first draft of changes (including the annual history update) to the CAC for feedback.
- October 21: Bring the first round of changes to the ITA for feedback and request the scheduling of a public hearing.
- November 18 (Tentative): Hold the public hearing.
- December 2026: Final adoption of the updated strategic plan by the end of the year.

Closing & Next Steps

- Bergkamp noted that while staff strive to bring items to the CAC first, scheduling can sometimes be impacted by external factors, limited staff capacity, and major organizational efforts like the ongoing ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) software project.
- CAC members are encouraged to review the materials and reach out with feedback before drafting changes begin ahead of the October meetings.

Scott asked how the agency collaborates with cities to improve crosswalk infrastructure where crossing options are currently lacking. **Bergkamp** said the Planning staff actively collaborates with city planning commissions and departments. For example, we had a successful crosswalk collaboration near day shelter for the houseless community on Martin Way working alongside City of Olympia staff member Kim Kondrat. While Intercity Transit doesn't have direct municipal authority to install infrastructure ourselves, we do participate in data-sharing and development awareness.

Cox added that pedestrian crossing studies are currently underway on Martin Way for approximately six to seven spots to address these dangerous areas.

Scott expressed a specific safety concern regarding Ruddle Road; recent route adjustments are making it really difficult to cross the street, especially for pedestrians with visual impairments.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Transportation Policy Board (Sept. 9).** Vanderpool reported on the Transportation Policy Board on behalf of Justin Belk. He said TPB reviewed the early draft of the

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Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), which includes funding package items such as the Deschutes Valley Trail and the Dial-A-Lift Service. Public review for this draft runs through October 2.

TPB reviewed the final version of the Public Participation Update Plan which serves as the one-stop shop for public engagement with the Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) and the Transportation Policy Board. This is the first time the plan has been updated since 2019, focusing heavily on the process of accessibility. Future updates will continue to evaluate additional engagement factors.

TPB received an update on the Human Services Transportation Plan. The update focused on connecting special mobility needs and services in the community (including timing, transit access, bike/pedestrian infrastructure near transit, and expanding eligibility for specialized transit services). They provided an example of specialized services, such as transit from the Lacey Veterans Hub to the base. The public comment period is currently open.

Vanderpool provided a review as a member of the Call for Projects Subcommittee covering incoming federal and state projects. He noted that Intercity Transit has a few projects included, specifically mentioning the Smart Corridors project.

B. Thurston Regional Planning Council (Sept. 10). Vanderpool would like to provide this report at the October 7, 2026, ITA meeting since Thurston Regional Planning Council conducted an all-day retreat and there is a lot of material to digest.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

- Bergkamp shared awareness that Intercity Transit is extending the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with Thurston County for continued work and partnership on our Transit Signal Priority project.
- Special thanks to Clerk to the Board Pat Messmer, PRO/CAC Liaison Amanda Collins, Executive Assistant Nikki Jones, Intern Ray Valasquez, Chief of Staff Jill Nordstrom and Information Systems Staff Jesse Eckstrom and Nathan Davis for all their planning and coordination for the joint ITA/CAC meeting, including a special meal, ensuring there was enough room for the large group, seamless technology, and presenting CAC self-evaluation information. Bergkamp was thankful to be able to go on her trip to D.C. without worrying about the need to be in two places at once.

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- Bergkamp and Grants Manager Jessica Gould were in Washington, D.C. September 15-17 with APTA staff and colleagues for a Legislative Fly-In to advocate for public transit and passenger rail. IT's Federal advocate Dale Learn from Gordon Thomas Honeywell coordinated in-person meetings on Capitol Hill with Senator Patty Murray's Office, Congresswoman Strickland's Office, Congresswoman Marie Glusenkamp-Perez's Office, and Senator Maria Cantwell's Office. This advocacy visit is on the heels of the U.S. House of Representatives passing a [Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act](#) that funds the federal government—including FTA, FRA, and USDOT programs—extending the Surface Transportation Authorization through December 11, 2026. However, the bill cuts federal public transit investment by **20 percent** from current funding levels; cuts passenger rail investment by **81 percent**; and passenger rail receives no guaranteed funding.

Bergkamp and Gould attended this event to thank these legislators for their continued support of IT's federally funded capital projects such as the Pattison Base project and coach purchases, and to provide a general agency update. They also advocated for the return of advance appropriations in any subsequent CR's prior to a new surface transportation bill (aka BUILD America 250 Act) and to match previous surface transportation bill (aka Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding levels, rather than the 14% reduction currently in the draft. Several benefits to transit are in the draft too, including doing away with FTA's mandatory 20% spare ratio, the National Environmental Protections Act (NEPA) requirement evaluations being made before transits can purchase property if they plan to use federal funding for projects on the property.

Cox asked if staff received any recent customer feedback regarding the September route adjustments. **Bergkamp** said internally staff are doing a hotwash of the whole process, however, she'll check with Planning staff and report back at a later date.

AUTHORITY/CAC ISSUES

- **Suzanne Simons - CAC:** Brought up the September fixed-route readjustments, noting a lack of specific details provided to the CAC over the summer. She shared an experience from a senior center meeting where 20-30 attendees (several with walkers and wheelchairs) offered suggestions to staff but noted those suggestions did not appear to bear fruit in the September adjustments.
- **Robert Vanderpool - ITA:** Reported no specific issues from Olympia but expressed curiosity regarding the large volume of feedback received about the service adjustments.

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- **Kindra Galan – CAC:** Inquired about follow-up procedures for incidents happening on or off a bus involving a bus. She shared a personal incident where their child sustained stitches from a wheelchair ramp with no subsequent follow up from the agency, raising concerns about accessibility and communication for community members who might not speak English or face similar barriers. **Dena Withrow, Operations Director, will follow up with Galan.**
- **Jeff Myers – Legal Counsel:** Reported that on August 25, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals issued an opinion in the *King County v. Turner* lawsuit (a case Intercity Transit is a party to regarding federal DOT/FTA grant conditions attempting to curtail Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion [DEI] programs and require active cooperation with ICE enforcement). Myers noted that lead counsel Pacifica Law Group successfully argued that these grant conditions should be enjoined and the Seattle court and 9th Circuit agreed. Myers stated that a deeper dive will occur in an executive session at the October 7 ITA meeting, confirming that the federal government is currently not allowed to curtail DEI or force ICE cooperation enforcement.
- **Carolyn Cox - ITA:** From the City of Lacey, the grand opening of the Cuyo Park (a 500-acre park, first phase) is scheduled for September 24 at 5:30 p.m. Cox noted that applications for the Lacey City Council vacancy close at the end of business on Friday, with 21 applicants so far.
- **Sue Pierce – ITA:** She clarified regarding bus schedule changes that the September update primarily involves scheduling, timing shifts, and minor adjustments rather than changing routes or closing loops, though acknowledging a senior center report from a rider unaware of the changes.
- **Margaret Janis – CAC:** She reported some riders are unaware of recent schedule changes. Although the information was published in rider updates, some passengers experienced confusion and were unaware of when their buses would arrive, prompting a discussion on improving outreach for schedule adjustments.
- **Pat Messmer – Staff:** Recognized and thanked IS team members Jesse Ekstrom and Nathan Davis for their continued behind-the-scenes support during ITA and CAC meetings.
- **Ellen Matheny – CAC:** She received serious feedback regarding perceived safety issues on the buses and requested to postpone the discussion until the next CAC meeting to determine further communication.

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- **Mark Neuville - ITA:** Noted that approximately 20,000 hours were added to schedules via input from the scheduling/run-cut committee and line drivers to make schedules more realistic and improve on-time performance.

Neuville shared insights from a trip to Richland for fusion week and hydrogen offset, discussing advancements in fusion energy (mentioning reactors in Everett and Redmond compared to fission in Idaho) and hydrogen production options at Northwest Labs. He mentioned plans to attend the Bus of the Future Expo in Toronto on October 22, highlighting a spearheaded bike rack of the future designed to safely handle e-bikes and multiple bikes.

- **Marty Slighte - CAC:** Shared a critical concern regarding downtown public restrooms, describing a layout with a maze and a marginally accessible stall that feels like hostile architecture designed against disabled populations. He emphasized that Intercity Transit's reputation for kindness through zero-fare and ambassadors should be reflected in its architecture, prompting staff to follow up on a solution.
- **Carolina Mejia - ITA:** Agreed with the request to review feedback regarding recent service changes.
- **Matthew Collins - CAC:** Expressed appreciation for being part of the group.
- **Jim Hanley - CAC:** Expressed appreciation for a very informative meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business Chair Cox adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Carolyn Cox

Carolyn Cox, Chair

ATTEST

Patricia Messmer

Pat Messmer
Clerk to the Board

Date Approved: October 21, 2026

Prepared by Pat Messmer, Clerk of the Board/
Executive Assistant, Intercity Transit