Exhibit C to Ordinance 382

FY27 Service Change Engagement Report

Phase 1: Service Priorities Survey (Sep-Oct 2025)

Phase 2: Service Cut Feedback Survey (Jan 2026)

Report prepared February 27, 2026

Overview

This report synthesizes findings from two sequential research and outreach efforts conducted between September 2025 and January 2026 to inform TriMet's Service Change Proposal. Phase 1, the Service Priorities Survey, gathered community input on the types of service reductions they felt should be prioritized first versus last to address the $300 million structural budget deficit we announced in July 2025. Phase 2, the Service Cut Proposal Feedback Survey, presented specific, line-level proposals and asked riders to evaluate their anticipated personal impact and share detailed feedback.

Together, these phases engaged 4,806 survey participants in Phase 1 and 8,138 in Phase 2. This escalation reflects both broader outreach strategies and heightened public interest as proposals became more concrete. Community engagement expanded substantially between phases, with enhanced community group and partner communications, mailed postcards and printed handouts, print advertising and a flyer distributed by Operators directly to riders during Phase 2. In addition to the increase in survey participants, visits to trimet.org/servicecuts, where the proposals were detailed by area and line, increased from 153,717 views during Phase 1 to 287,649 views during Phase 2, and unique users more than doubled. Open house events also increased, from 13 events in Phase 1, hosting 612 participants, to 16 events in Phase 2, hosting 783 participants.

Phase 1 established the community's values framework for approaching service reductions. Phase 2 translated abstract preferences into real-world tradeoffs, revealing where theoretical efficiency intersected with essential daily travel needs. The findings from both phases directly informed refinement of the final Service Change Proposal.

Metric	Service Priorities Survey (Sep-Oct 2025)	Service Cut Survey (Jan 2026)
Survey Respondents	4,806	8,138
Webpage Views	153,717	287,649
Unique Web Users	15,886	32,259
Open House Events	13	16
Open House Participants	612	783

Phase 1: Community Values and Service Priorities (Sep-Oct 2025)

In Phase 1, respondents ranked nine potential service reduction strategies from "cut first" to "cut last." The results clustered into two clear groupings.

Options most frequently ranked "cut first" included:

- Reducing or eliminating service where lines are close together and riders could walk, roll, or transfer to nearby service.
- Shortening the MAX Green Line.
- Stopping funding support to other transit agencies.

Options most frequently ranked "cut last" included:

- Reducing how often buses arrive on Frequent Service lines.
- Reducing how often MAX trains arrive.
- Reducing or eliminating evening and weekend service.

Across demographic groups and geographies, respondents consistently differentiated between efficiency cuts and 'lifeline' cuts. While there was broad recognition of fiscal constraints, respondents emphasized protecting frequency, span of service, and access to essential destinations. Many cautioned against compounding effects of service cuts, where reduced service leads to reduced ridership and further cuts.

Implications for Proposal Development

Phase 1 findings guided development of a proposal centered on reducing redundancy where feasible, consolidating routes in dense corridors, and avoiding broad reductions to frequent, weekend, or late-night service where possible. TriMet's Service Planning Team used these findings as well as ridership data to help inform initial proposals emphasizing redundancy reduction, preservation of core frequency, and minimization of impacts to essential destinations. These line-level proposals were shared with the community online, at open house events and in the Service Cut Feedback Survey (Phase 2).

Phase 2: Evaluating Line-Level Impacts (Jan 2026)

Phase 2 moved from presenting riders and community members with abstract categories to providing specific line-level changes relevant to people's travel patterns or areas and destinations of interest. Survey respondents selected which lines they ride and regions traveled to, reviewed detailed descriptions of proposed changes, and rated how much each change would impact their daily travel on a five-point scale. Respondents also provided contextual feedback through three open-ended questions asking their likes, dislikes and any additional information they would like to provide.

Lines with Highest Perceived and Emotional Impact

System-Level Lifeline Corridors

Line 19 (Woodstock/Glisan) emerged as the single most consequential proposal, generating the highest response volume and the highest share of "a whole lot" impact ratings, as well as the greatest proportion of open-ended feedback. Respondents described it as essential for accessing medical facilities, most notably Providence Portland Medical Center, as well as disability support programs (e.g., NorthStar, Portland Public Schools' Community Transition Program), senior housing, and daily necessities. Comments framed the line not as redundant service but as a lifeline, and the proximity of the adjacent Line 20 to Glisan and the Portland Medical Center in Northeast Portland was considered by many to be too far for patients and older adults to manage, especially in difficult weather months.

The MAX Green Line also generated substantial concerns that may largely be addressed through education about transfer schedules and adjacent services, including bus line changes to provide more direct service between most Green Line stations along Interstate 205 and Downtown Portland. While MAX service would continue along the system where the Green Line currently runs, riders were concerned that bus frequency reductions and transfer changes at the affected transit centers would diminish the usefulness of the line, particularly

for Downtown and Portland State University travel. Emotional intensity centered on longer waits, safety during transfers, and cascading reliability concerns.

Isolation and Peak-Only Risk Corridors

Lines such as 16, 34, 38, 44, 76, 96 and 97 showed disproportionately high proportions of "a whole lot" impact ratings relative to their response volumes, which – for some lines – represented a low or modest number of total responses; this suggests concentrated but intense dependence among those who do utilize them. These corridors were frequently described as geographically isolated, with limited nearby alternatives and constrained pedestrian infrastructure. Proposals to shift service to peak-only hours or eliminate weekend access were perceived as removing flexibility for appointments and off-peak trips.

Frequency and Compounding Impacts

The most frequently coded qualitative themes included:

- Work commute disruption (30%)
- Increased wait times (15%)
- General appreciation for TriMet (14%)
- Accessibility challenges (14%)
- School commute impacts (13%)

Respondents often described concerns about how reductions across multiple lines might compound impacts to their travel times. Even where alternative routes existed, added transfers, longer waits, or reduced frequency created practical and psychological strain.

Trust and Engagement

Importantly, though, engagement remained constructive and fairly positive. Fourteen percent of respondents expressed general appreciation for TriMet's transparency or efforts. A small but symbolically important subset raised concerns about long-term system decline if service reductions undermine rider confidence. Overall, feedback reflected a public that is pragmatic but protective, recognizing fiscal constraints while emphasizing fairness and access.

Convergence: Where Values Met Reality

Efficiency in Theory, Complexity in Practice

Phase 1 respondents endorsed reducing redundancy and improving operational efficiency. Phase 2 revealed that when redundancy reductions affected corridors serving essential destinations, impacts were experienced as lifeline disruptions rather than efficiency gains. This pattern suggests that redundancy was evaluated by riders not purely by route proximity, but by functional destination access. This dynamic was most visible in feedback on Line 19.

Frequency as Stability

Phase 1 respondents consistently protected frequent, weekend, and evening service. Phase 2 demonstrated that peak-only shifts in suburban and lower-density corridors generated high perceived impact. Frequency reductions were interpreted not only as schedule adjustments, but as signals of declining reliability and system confidence. For them, frequency functions not only as a service metric but as a symbol of reliability and autonomy.

Community Values Prioritize Accessibility

In Phase 1, survey respondents emphasized protecting dependent riders and vulnerable populations. Phase 2 data showed higher intensity ratings among riders with accessibility challenges and those in corridors with limited alternatives. These patterns did not reflect disagreement about which changes were impactful, but differences in intensity based on reliance and flexibility.

Across both phases, community priorities remained internally consistent. What changed was not the public's values, but the specificity with which those values were tested against corridor-level realities. Phase 2 added contextual clarity about where theoretical efficiency intersects with lived dependence.

How Engagement Shaped the Final Proposal

Findings from both phases informed refinement of the final Service Change Proposal. The refinement process focused less on whether change was necessary, and more on where and how change could be structured to reduce disproportionate harm. Specifically:

- Corridors generating both high response volume and high severity ratings received thorough review and consideration.
- Essential destination access, including medical facilities and disability services, were weighted heavily when evaluating tradeoffs.
- Geographic isolation and pedestrian infrastructure constraints were considered when assessing peak-only and elimination proposals.
- Outreach strategies were broadened in Phase 2 to ensure participation across languages, regions, and community networks.
- Qualitative themes were interpreted with quantitative ratings to ensure that lower-volume but high-context corridors were not overlooked.

These engagement efforts provided a clear evidence base for prioritizing adjustments that balance fiscal responsibility with the preservation of essential service, and maintenance – to the extent possible – of community trust and continued investment.

Conclusion

Across both phases of engagement, the community demonstrated a nuanced understanding of TriMet's fiscal constraints and the complexity of balancing efficiency with fairness. Phase 2 findings validated many of the values expressed in Phase 1 while revealing corridor-level complexities that required careful consideration.

Key Takeaways

- Community priorities remained consistent across both phases. Riders supported redundancy reduction and operational efficiency in principle, while strongly protecting frequency, span of service, and access to essential destinations.
- High-response corridors such as Line 19 demonstrated system-level significance, while lower-volume corridors with disproportionately high "a whole lot" impact ratings signaled concentrated dependence and geographic isolation risk.

- Proposals affecting evening, weekend, and peak-only service generated concern in suburban areas and reinforced that perceptions of reliability affect rider confidence.
- Access to medical facilities, disability support programs, schools, and senior housing emerged as defining factors in how riders evaluated proposed adjustments.
- Feedback clarified where adjustments could reduce disproportionate harm and where education or mitigation strategies may address concerns.

Together, these findings provide a clear evidence base supporting the final Service Change Proposal. TriMet will continue monitoring impacts and engaging the community as service changes are implemented, ensuring that future adjustments continue to respond to both fiscal realities and community-defined priorities.