

HB2017 Transit Advisory Committee

June 17, 2022 Minutes

[Attendees](#)

David Bouchard - TriMet

Tom Mills - TriMet

Committee Co-chair Jodi Parker – LiUNA L737

Dyami Valentine

Washington County Commissioner Roy Rogers – Committee member

Adam Argo

Andrew Plambeck (Alternate to Dan Bower) – Portland streetcar

Anne Buzzini

April Bertelsen – Portland Bureau of Transportation – Committee member

Aron Carleson – Committee member, Executive Director, Hillsboro Schools Foundation

Catherine Ciarlo – Portland Bureau of Transportation

Chris Fick (Alternate to Commissioner Jessica Vega Peterson) – Multnomah County

Christina Deffebach – Washington County

Claudia Robertson – Committee member

Deanna Palm – Committee member

Metro councilor Duncan Hwang – Committee member

Dwight Brashear – Committee member, South Metro Area Rapid Transit

Jamie Surface - TriMet

Jan Campbell – Committee member, Committee on Accessible Transportation

Committee Co-chair Jarvez Hall – East Metro Economic Alliance

Julie Wilcke Pilmer – Committee member - Ride Connection

Justin Trubiani – TriMet

Kate Lyman – TriMet

Ken Zatarain

Kristina Babcock – Clackamas County

Maia Vasconez - OPAL

Mary Lou Ritter – Committee member

Michael Ray – TriMet

Clackamas County Commissioner Paul Savas – Committee member

Reza Farhoodi – Committee member

Tangerine behere

Teresa Christopherson – Clackamas County

Sarah Ianarone – Committee member - the Street Trust

Victoria Paykar – Climate Solutions

Preliminaries

- The meeting begins at 8:31 AM.
- Tom reviews the WebEx interface and agenda.
- There is no public comment.

PTIP Schedule

- The meetings for May, June and July are dedicated to discussing the budget proposal, with opportunities to discuss and make changes as necessary. By the end of the July meeting, the committee will vote to take the proposal to the public. The PTIP will be updated and available to the public by the end of the next meeting.
- August will be dedicated to public outreach and comment gathering. In September, the committee will vote to approve the plan, which will then go to the TriMet board for approval.
- There is flexibility in the timeline. Two months have been allocated for putting together the 400+ page application.

Discussion of Budget Proposals

- Tom reviews projected funding amounts for FY24-25. He reviews the list of projects and briefly discusses each one.

Discussion

- Commissioner Rogers hopes that there will be more in-depth committee discussion around the proposals at this meeting.

Low-income Fare Program

- Approximately 6,000 riders are returning per week, although ridership is still down 45% since the pandemic began.
- The summer pass program for low-income high school students launches this month, and will also be offered in the summer of 2023. The goal is to continue the program in FY24-25.

Discussion

- Victoria suggests that if funding allows, free fares could be provided to all during the summer. TriMet could also ramp up their marketing efforts during the timeframe of the free fares.
- Tom can arrange for the Project Manager involved with marketing to come before the committee at a future meeting. Free fares for all during the summer could be explored, but would require a trade-off in another part of the budget. Making the system fare-free at this scale would require input outside of the committee. TriMet prefers to offer reduced or free fares to those who have the greatest financial need.
- Commissioner Savas previously requested a service level study across the region. He suggests that TriMet put in to context what percentage of STIF funds the \$14 million represents. Additionally, how flexible will we be able to be in addressing any large service gaps that may be identified during the Forward Together Comprehensive Service Analysis? Tom can amend the slides to include the percentage information. He also summarizes the Forward Together Comprehensive service Analysis process. The Existing Conditions report should help Commissioner Savas and others discover where gaps in service exists. The project will wrap up in the fall. In August, TriMet expects to have a scenario to bring before the public.

Service Expansion

- Currently, \$13 million is being spent on service increases made several years ago. Operator shortages have prevented TriMet from increasing service.
- Beaverton Transit Center and Oregon city transit Center will be expanded. Federal funding has been earmarked for these expansions, and HB2017 funds will be used to provide the required match.
- One-time only funding will be used to upgrade the scheduling software necessary for operator sign ups.

Zero Emissions Buses

- This represents the largest expense. An order has been submitted for 24 long-range battery-electric buses, which will arrive in 2024. They will be paid for once they have been tested at TriMet
- In FY24-25, \$7.2 million is reserved for the next order, to be submitted in 2024, and received in 2025. About 50 buses will be procured in that order; STIF funds will cover a portion of the costs, with other funding streams being used to cover the rest.
- TriMet envisions the Columbia garage being able to support hydrogen fuel-cell buses. Charging islands will be added at Powell and Merlo, and substations will be upgraded. Design and engineering work will be undertaken to develop overhead charging systems. An additional staff person will be hired to facilitate the work.

Discussion

- Commissioner Savas confirms that other sources of funding are also being tapped into to support fleet electrification.

Human Services, Senior and Disabled Transportation

- \$2 million is set aside to purchase new vehicles and software upgrades. With increased fuel prices, paratransit costs continue to increase.

Discussion

- Julie clarifies that the Ride Connection network has used these funds for operations and vehicle procurement.
- Jan confirms that any entity providing paratransit service is eligible to apply for these funds. Julie clarifies that it would be more appropriate to change "paratransit" to "accessible services."
- Commissioner Rogers: Anything we can do to increase Regional Coordination funds for first and last mile connections is important. We need to become very regional in our approach to service delivery.
- Commissioner Savas How much of TriMet's budget is dedicated to LIFT paratransit? Tom will review the budget and follow up with Commissioner Savas. The State of Oregon provides additional Special transportation funds, of which Clackamas County receives a significant portion.

Access Transit Student Fares Program

- This program is designed for low-income students outside of the Portland Public School district, and only covers their fare for the school year.

Better Bus: Transit Priority Program

- TriMet plans to implement transit priority improvements outside of Portland in the future.

Discussion

- Aron: Shouldn't upgrades to scheduling and dispatch software be included in this bucket? Including them under Service expansion is misleading and disingenuous. In her view, service expansion means more routes, more buses, faster travel times, etc.
- Tom: There is a 10% increase in FY24, and a \$1 million for FY25. Tom and his team will re-evaluate where in the plan to include the software upgrades.

Stop Amenities

- These funds focus on investments in shelters, ADA improvements, and digital transit tracker displays.
- In the last 2 years, the budget to replace shelter glass has tripled, with approximately 10 panes of glass a day being replaced. A new shelter design is being developed, featuring more durable glass and narrower shelters. More shelters will be added in equity areas, and shelters 20 years or older will be replaced.
- Additional investments will be made to clean more shelters twice a week.
- More concrete boarding pads will be installed to improve access for riders with disabilities.

Discussion

- Jan stresses the need for the new shelter design to accommodate people with disabilities. Electric wheelchairs are at risk of malfunctioning if they are exposed to too much rain. She expects the Committee on Accessible Transportation to be involved in vetting the design.
- Tom agrees, and recognizes that the new shelters can be added to areas that cannot currently accommodate existing shelters.

- April confirms with Tom that TriMet will still use larger shelters where appropriate. Tom will follow up with April to inform her of how many shelters would be installed.

Security

- Currently, there are 24 unarmed safety ambassadors on the system. This proposal calls for an additional 24 ambassadors and 8 supervisors.
- Money has also been allocated for additional cameras and staffing investments to monitor them.

HB2017 Compliance

- TriMet receives money for the entire Tri-County area, including areas outside of the District. TriMet passes on the funds to the other providers in this area, and is required to audit their spending of the funds.

Regional Coordination

- This program is being expanded. TriMet's trip planner will also be expanded to include the Tri-County providers outside of the District.

Discussion

- Deanna: Once we expand Regional Coordination, is there certainty that these investments will be sustained?
- Tom views this as service. Cutting this program would be akin to cutting TriMet service.

Portland Streetcar

- Funding for the Streetcar will be increased.

Discussion

- Reza: Will any of the money go towards increasing service levels? Andrew: Long term, the way to do that is to replace aging vehicles. Cars in the fleet should be replaced within the next decade. Three cars are due to arrive next year.
- Jan: Will access to schedules at streetcar stops improve, and will there be more ramp-equipped doors on new vehicles? Andrew: Streetcar is in the process of upgrading to 4G signs, with priority given to the stops with the most ridership. The new streetcars will offer low-floor boarding at all doors.
- Catherine emphasizes that vehicle replacements are a means for future service expansion.

Conclusion

- Tom: This proposal has been endorsed by TriMet leadership. Next month, we will run through the proposals again, and answer any remaining questions raised at this meeting. A vote to begin public outreach will be taken at the end of the next meeting.
- We adjourn at 9:58 AM.