



HB 2017 Transit

Advisory

## Committee Minutes

**Date:** May 22, 2026

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. to 11:31 a.m. (meeting room open approximately 9:52 a.m. to 11:34 a.m.)

**Meeting Location:** Virtual meeting

**Recording:** To request a copy of the meeting recording, email David Bouchard at [bouchard@trimet.org](mailto:bouchard@trimet.org).

### Attendees:

#### Committee Members and Alternates

Michael Morrow, Chair, TriMet District 7 representative, TriMet Riders  
Jason Snider, Washington County Board of Commissioners, Local Governments  
Vince Jones-Dixon, Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, Local Government  
Diana Helm, Clackamas County Board of Commissioners, Local Governments  
Brandon Brezic, Central City Concern, Low Income Individuals  
Jarvez Hall, TriMet District 6 representative, TriMet Riders  
Patricia Kepler, People With Disabilities  
Nansi Lopez, Centro Cultural, People With Limited English Proficiency  
Andy Nelson, Ride Connection, Public Transportation Providers  
Eve Nilenders, Multnomah County, Public Transportation Service Providers Outside the TriMet District  
Andrew Plambeck, Portland Streetcar, Inc., Public Transportation Providers  
Mary Lou Ritter, Older Adults  
Phil Selinger, TriMet District 2 representative, TriMet Riders  
Lindsay Huber, The Street Trust alternate, Active Transportation  
Sara Wright, City of Portland alternate, Local Governments

#### Additional Agency and Partner Representatives

Teresa Christopherson, Clackamas County  
Bryn Thomas, Washington County  
Ashley Graff, Multnomah County District 4  
Heidi Muller, City of Canby / Canby Area Transit  
Dean Orr, Ride Connection  
Diana Kotler, Wilsonville SMART  
Kristina Babcock, Clackamas County Transit Services  
Dyami Valentine, Washington County Land Use & Transportation  
Reza Farhoodi, Washington County  
Kelsey Lewis, Wilsonville SMART  
Andi Howell, City of Sandy / Sandy Area Metro  
John Mira, Ride Connection  
Dwight Brashear, Wilsonville SMART

## **TriMet**

Tom Mills, Director, Mobility Planning & Policy  
Wes Charley, Fare Programs  
Eileen Collins Turvey, Director, Accessible Transportation Program  
Debbie Gregg, Grants  
Justin Trubiani, Senior & Disabled Transportation Coordinator  
Alex Page, TriMet staff  
JP Gonzalez, Grants Department

## **Visitors/Public Commenters**

Dave Daley, Multnomah County Aging Services Advisory Council and TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation  
Kenneth Law, Asian Health and Service Center

## **Minutes:**

### **A. Call to Order and Agenda Overview**

Chair Morrow reviewed the agenda, including public comment, work plan and timeline, ATFAC process update, project evaluation considerations, STIF plan project presentations related to fares and LIFT, outreach process discussion, and a guiding statement vote.

Commissioner Snider recommended moving the guiding statement vote earlier in the meeting to ensure the committee had quorum and adequate time. Tom confirmed the agenda could be adjusted.

### **B. Public Comment**

Dave, speaking as a member of the Multnomah County Aging Services Advisory Council and as Multnomah County representative on the TriMet CAT Committee, read testimony approved by ASAC. The testimony expressed concern about the proposed withdrawal of \$4 million in human services transportation funding from the ATFAC process. ASAC raised concerns about limited stakeholder input, insufficient communication of impacts to the governing board and HB 2017 committee, and whether assumed cost reductions account for potential increased LIFT demand. The testimony urged TriMet to slow the process, gather input from affected communities, and consider the effect on older adults and organizations serving them, including Asian Health and Service Center, Impact NW, Metropolitan Family Service, Project Linkage, Neighborhood House, Community for Positive Aging, Albertina Kerr, IRCO, and Ride Connection general public services. Kenneth, Community Project Manager for shuttle services at Asian Health and Service Center, asked the committee to maintain transportation funding for older adults and people with disabilities. He described the center's culturally and linguistically specific services for Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Vietnamese, and English-speaking communities, many of whom are low-income immigrants with limited English proficiency. He emphasized that transportation access supports health equity, mental health, social connection, case management, cancer support navigation, and participation in culturally specific senior programming.

### **C. Guiding Statement Vote**

Tom presented the clean version of the guiding statement for committee action. He read the preamble, which emphasized that STIF provides needed transit investment, that low-income workers contribute proportionately more through the payroll tax, that affordability pressures push residents to areas with lower transit service, and that TriMet is facing a funding shortfall and service cuts. The statement frames

STIF investment around affordable, reliable, and convenient service for low-income people, older adults, and people with disabilities, and around an equitable, fiscally responsible transportation system. The statement's goals included sustaining and expanding transit services and first/last-mile services, with consideration for equity areas; sustaining and expanding first/last-mile services inside and outside the TriMet District within Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties to increase regional coordination and reduce service fragmentation; reducing fares for low-income households; procuring zero-emission buses; and supporting capital projects required for the maintenance, creation, expansion, and improvement of transit services, including speed and reliability projects, with consideration for low-income communities, responsible contracting, and workforce utilization.

Commissioner Snider moved to approve the guiding statement as presented. Mary Lou seconded the motion.

Commissioner Helm asked whether language about stable, fiscally sound revenue should be included, noting the tension between service expansion goals and anticipated service cuts. Phil noted that the first two goals already use the word "sustaining," which helps capture maintaining existing services. Eve noted that language about responsible use of public funds had been incorporated into the bylaws discussion from the previous meeting. Commissioner Helm accepted that explanation.

The committee voted by virtual hand raise. Tom confirmed the vote was unanimous, including Patricia's affirmative vote after she clarified her vote verbally. The guiding statement was approved as presented.

#### **D. Work Plan and Timeline**

Tom reviewed the work plan. In May, staff were developing the STIF proposal and beginning project presentations to the committee. Additional project presentations will continue over the next several months before the proposal is pulled together for committee review.

He noted that ATFAC, formally the Accessible Transportation Funds Advisory Committee, is operating as a work group/subcommittee to the HB 2017 Transit Advisory Committee and will bring forward recommendations on how to allocate accessible transportation funds.

The June work plan includes continued ATFAC process updates, Regional Coordination Program discussion, the STF Discretionary Process, and continued outreach process discussion. He noted the work plan is a living document and that July, August, and September agenda items will continue to be filled in as the process moves forward.

#### **E. ATFAC Process Update and Human Services/LIFT Funding Discussion**

Tom provided the first regular ATFAC process update in response to public comments at the prior meeting and again during this meeting.

He reviewed the distinction between STIF payroll-based formula funds and STIF population-based formula funds. STIF payroll-based formula funds come from the 0.1% payroll tax, with 90% of funds generated in the TriMet District returning to TriMet. These funds can be used for many transportation programs but cannot be used for light rail capital investments. STIF population-based formula funds, formerly Special Transportation Funds, come from sources including cigarette tax, ID card fees, non-auto gas tax, and STIF payroll funds used by the state to stabilize the fund.

He explained that ATFAC makes recommendations for transportation programs for older adults and people with disabilities. By law, the funds go to TriMet, but TriMet has chosen to make them available to partners within the TriMet District and to areas outside the district.

For the current biennium, STIF population funds total approximately \$10.5 million. For the upcoming biennium, the projected amount is approximately \$11.5 million. In the current biennium, TriMet and the HB 2017 committee also added \$4 million in STIF payroll-based funds to the ATFAC process as the Human Services Program, for a total of approximately \$14.5 million. Staff are recommending not adding that \$4 million in the upcoming biennium and instead dedicating it to LIFT operations and vehicles. He noted that

because the STIF population fund is projected to increase, the projected reduction is approximately \$2.8 million rather than the full \$4 million, with updated ODOT projections expected in July.

He stated that if TriMet keeps the \$4 million for LIFT, TriMet will not pursue the \$11.5 million in STIF population funds, leaving those funds available for partner providers. He also noted that the \$4 million would still serve an eligible population, but through ADA paratransit rather than through non-LIFT human services transportation.

He also reviewed ODOT 5310 funds, which are federal funds administered through the state. The committee has already made recommendations for the upcoming biennium. The current biennium amount is approximately \$7.348 million, and the upcoming recommendations total approximately \$7.3 million. TriMet reduced its request from \$1.5 million in the current biennium to approximately \$364,000 for vehicle replacement. He noted that applicants received the amounts they requested, and reductions such as South Clackamas Transportation District's reflected lower requested amounts rather than a reduction by the committee.

He presented an aggregate comparison showing that, after accounting for STIF population funds, the prior \$4 million Human Services Program contribution, ODOT 5310 funds, and the TriMet award, funds available to non-TriMet providers would decline by about \$1.283 million from the current biennium, assuming the projections hold.

He reviewed LIFT's ADA paratransit mandate. LIFT service must be provided within three-quarters of a mile of fixed-route bus stops and MAX stations and during the same days and hours as fixed-route service. LIFT cannot prioritize trips by purpose and must serve eligible trips that are possible on the fixed-route network. He stated that LIFT ridership is expected to reach approximately 881,000 rides this year, an 18% increase, and could exceed one million rides and surpass historic ridership if current trends continue. He also said service hours and costs are increasing, and that much of the LIFT fleet is seven years beyond its useful life. He stated that demand-response services provided by partners are valuable and do defer some LIFT rides, but because many of those programs do not have the same eligibility processes, TriMet does not know how many rides would otherwise be LIFT-eligible. Staff's view is that the scale of deferred LIFT rides is being outpaced by LIFT demand growth and the need to replace vehicles.

## **F. ATFAC Discussion and Questions**

Phil asked whether fixed-route service cuts could shrink the LIFT boundary or whether the boundary is grandfathered. Tom responded that recent service cuts will shrink the LIFT boundary in some areas, and future cuts could reduce LIFT availability depending on where fixed-route service is removed.

Commissioner Snider asked how much of the LIFT demand increase is due to fixed-route service reductions. Tom responded that LIFT eligibility is based on disability-related inability to use fixed route, so reductions in fixed-route service do not by themselves create LIFT eligibility, though fixed-route reductions can shrink the LIFT boundary. Commissioner Snider commented that the proposed changes, especially alongside fixed-route reductions, may leave vulnerable community members without service or place greater demand on other providers.

Sara, representing the City of Portland in April Bertelsen's absence, requested that the committee see the July ODOT revenue forecast and understand the budget impacts and tradeoffs for providers. She stated that decisions to reduce STIF funding allocations should be guided by equity, especially where racial equity, health equity, age, disability, language access, and income intersect.

Tom clarified that the funds would continue serving a portion of the intended population through LIFT and noted that prior ATFAC/Human Services funding has also supported providers and rural areas outside the TriMet District. He stated that TriMet is trying to balance valuable partner programs with rapid LIFT demand growth and constrained funding.

Brandon asked whether losing nearby fixed-route service would make a rider unable to use fixed route and therefore eligible for LIFT. Tom clarified that LIFT eligibility is tied to physical or cognitive ability to use fixed

route, not simply proximity, but if a rider is LIFT-eligible and the LIFT boundary shrinks because fixed-route service is cut, the rider may lose LIFT service.

Commissioner Helm said the situation is heartbreaking and asked whether more funds could be passed to smaller providers because they can often provide service at lower cost, especially in areas such as Lake Oswego and West Linn. Tom said TriMet is not pursuing STIF population funds if it keeps the \$4 million, and that the projected reduction available to non-TriMet providers is closer to \$1.3 million once TriMet is removed from the process. He reiterated that partner programs often serve older adults who are not LIFT-eligible and therefore do not directly offset LIFT costs.

Eileen clarified that LIFT eligibility includes conditional eligibility, where a rider may be able to use fixed route for some trips but need paratransit for others, such as dialysis days or days with varying pain. She said the effect of service reductions on demand is not fully known because the reductions have not yet gone into effect. She noted that some TriMet 5310 funds support Ride Connection and Clackamas County to fill gaps where partners can provide service more affordably, and said about 25% of riders served by Clackamas County's Transportation Reaching People program are LIFT-eligible. She also described LIFT outreach efforts, including Mobility on the Go at Centro Cultural and Virginia Garcia Clinic, on-site eligibility determinations with interpreters, culturally relevant information, and efforts to serve riders who have been displaced toward the edges of the service area. She noted that some supplemental providers can provide trips at about \$24 compared with about \$70 for a LIFT trip, but partner costs have risen as programs move from volunteer drivers to paid drivers.

Andy of Ride Connection acknowledged TriMet's difficult fiscal position and LIFT demand growth, but pushed back on the characterization of demand-response services. He said Ride Connection's network was created in response to the cost of ADA services and that demand-response programs have historically reduced pressure and costs on LIFT. He argued that upfront investment in demand response can help contain LIFT costs and asked that the committee have full information before moving away from that strategy.

Mary Lou asked whether the failed ballot measure and updated July projections could indicate further losses. Tom said the ballot measure would have doubled STIF revenue, so its failure means STIF will not double, but does not necessarily mean STIF will shrink. He noted that STIF payroll revenue in the current biennium is coming in below projections, but STIF population funds are supported by different revenue sources and stabilized by ODOT using payroll funds.

Phil noted that fixed-route service also serves a large portion of the committee's equity-focused target audience, so TriMet has to balance fixed-route and demand-response services.

Nansi said Ride Connection and similar services are integral to culturally specific communities and that the impacts of funding decisions will be lasting. She also emphasized the importance of community engagement before major decisions are made.

Patricia emphasized that aging, extreme weather, poor air quality from fires, and other changing environmental conditions can push people off fixed-route service even when accessibility is not the only barrier. She said the region needs to figure out how to continue supporting riders who need to get out of their homes and reach services.

Tom said the ATFAC update discussion could continue at the next meeting, and regular ATFAC updates will continue.

## **G. Project Evaluation Considerations**

Tom reviewed the project evaluation language added to the bylaws in response to ODOT compliance feedback. The bylaws use language from the STIF Oregon Administrative Rules, and staff asked the committee to clarify how subjective terms should be understood when projects are presented. He emphasized that the committee is identifying considerations, not creating a scoring system. TriMet and participating public transportation service providers will answer these questions when presenting projects for committee consideration.

The considerations include whether a project is eligible under STIF, whether it maintains existing service, the extent to which it meets public transportation needs, whether it is a responsible use of public funds, the extent to which it benefits or burdens historically or currently marginalized communities now and in the long term, and any other factors determined by the qualified entity or advisory committee.

Commissioner Snider said Washington County views the considerations as comprehensive and supports the qualitative approach shown in the examples. He did not suggest additions.

For “public transportation need,” he suggested considering whether the project provides public transportation service; increases access to public transportation; or supports capital purchases, capital projects, marketing, planning, rider training, or administration connected to public transportation.

For “responsible use of public funds,” he suggested considering whether the project is for a public agency or nonprofit provider and whether it is intended for public use for any reason, rather than a single restricted trip purpose.

For historically or currently marginalized communities, he suggested considering whether the project is intended for low-income communities; older adults and people with disabilities; or exists within or adjacent to an adopted equity area. Phil supported including the adopted equity area reference, noting that the equity considerations are broader than only income, disability, and age.

He invited committee members to send any additional suggested considerations to him or Chair Morrow over the next month so they can be discussed at the next meeting if needed.

## **H. STIF Plan Project Presentations: Fare Programs**

Wes presented the Income Qualified Honored Citizen Program. The existing STIF program provides fare discounts of approximately 50% to 72%, depending on how riders use the system. The monthly pass discount is approximately 72%, with a monthly cap of \$28. Eligibility is for Oregon residents ages 18 to 64 with income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.

He reported that roughly 80% of enrollments are based on active benefits in other social programs, with Medicaid and SNAP the two largest sources of qualification. Approximately 42% qualify through Medicaid and 33% through SNAP. About 54% of enrollees identify as something other than white. Income-qualified taps have exceeded pre-pandemic levels since around August 2025.

He also presented the Fare Relief Grant Expansion, an existing TriMet program expanded using STIF funds. The program provides free fare to more than 161 local nonprofit organizations serving low-income riders. Approximately \$1 million is funded by TriMet and \$2.4 million by STIF. Eligible organizations must be 501(c)(3) nonprofits, provide services within TriMet’s service area, primarily serve low-income riders, and ensure fares go to low-income riders rather than employees or volunteers.

Day passes are the highest-use fare type in the program, with additional use of monthly passes and 2.5-hour tickets. Most fares are distributed as paper single-use tickets, though some passes are loaded to cards. The program also supports some paratransit fares. He described the program as a safety net for riders who cannot qualify for discounted fare programs or need immediate fare assistance, including riders who are unhoused, lack documentation or ID, or are undocumented. Many grant recipients also conduct enrollments for the Honored Citizen program.

Tom connected the two fare programs to the committee’s evaluation considerations: they are eligible projects, maintain existing programs, improve access to transportation, are available to the public for any purpose, and serve low-income riders as a marginalized community.

Phil asked about the possibility of fare resale or transfer. Wes said there is some risk, and TriMet asks partner organizations to do due diligence, but there is no way to fully prevent someone from selling or giving a pass to someone else.

Commissioner Snider asked how community members learn about the grant program and the Income Qualified Honored Citizen Program if they are not directly connected to a community-based organization. Wes said outreach happens through partner organizations, newsletters, websites, city and social service programs, DHS offices, county partners, HUD housing, community health departments, WorkSource

locations, and enrollment partners. He added that TriMet provides flyers and materials and that the program includes translations into 15 languages and intentionally engages language service and culturally specific partners.

Brandon described the programs as highly used by Central City Concern residents and said physical passes are critical for extremely low-income, chronically homeless, formerly homeless, unbanked, and phone-insecure riders. He asked about a paper ticket supply issue. Wes said the issue has not been resolved due to vendor quality problems. He said he is the contact for pass distribution, while Greg LaRue is the likely contact for the issue resolution timeline and plan.

## **I. Student Fare Program**

Because the meeting was near time, Tom said the LIFT program presentation and outreach process discussion would shift to the June meeting, but Wes would present the student fare program before adjournment.

Wes explained that STIF requires TriMet to dedicate 1% of received STIF funds to high school transit for students in grades 9 through 12. The intent is to serve transit-dependent youth and supplement school transportation benefits through a grant process.

The grant calculation considers the number of students, number of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch, and transit availability and access. He said the FY27 amount is expected to be about \$600,000 distributed across participating school districts. The program is available to public schools, and he believed nearly all districts participate, with Riverdale likely the only exception.

Participating schools distribute passes to transit-dependent students. He said school districts determine distribution methods because they know their students best. The program supports access to school, employment, social services, after-school activities, and other needs.

Tom asked whether the Summer Pass program for high school students is still funded. Wes said it is funded for the current year and begins June 1, but the future of the program is uncertain.

Tom noted that the student fare program is a legislatively required eligible project and that TriMet has chosen to apply the required 1% to fares rather than service. The program is existing, improves transportation access, is available for public transportation for any reason, and serves students from low-income families.

Phil asked why Portland Public Schools was not listed. Tom explained that PPS participates through a separate two-thirds/one-third program, where the district pays two-thirds of the cost of transit passes for all students and TriMet pays one-third. Other school districts may also choose to participate in that model.

## **J. Outreach Process and Next Meeting**

The planned outreach process discussion was deferred to the June meeting due to time.

Commissioner Snider said Washington County and other participating public transportation service providers are likely conducting outreach over the summer and urged TriMet not to miss opportunities for targeted outreach and engagement, particularly related to the Human Services Program impacts discussed earlier in the meeting.

Tom acknowledged the concern and said staff will work internally and return with suggestions. He noted two outreach challenges: the upcoming STIF proposal largely continues existing operating programs rather than creating new programs, and the funds are already built into TriMet's financial forecast and should not be framed as new money that could simply be redirected to prevent service cuts.

Commissioner Snider clarified that his outreach concern was specifically focused on impacts around the Human Services Program.

## **K. Adjournment**

Chair Morrow adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:31 a.m.