

ATTACHMENT A

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION October 21, 2009 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

CAT minutes may be obtained in alternate formats by calling TriMet's Accessible Transportation Program Administrative Offices: (503) 802-8200/TTY 802-8058, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm weekdays

Attendees: Jan Campbell, Chair; Trish Baker, John Betts, Leon Chavarria-Aguilar, Teresa Christopherson, James Jackson, Diana Keever, Arnold Panitch, Zoe Presson, Beth Rehm, Albert Rouse, Terry Watson, Bob Williams

Staff: Drew Blevins, Josh Collins, Eric Hesse, Debbie Huntington, Kathy Miller, Tom Mills, Allen Morgan, Claudia Steinberg

Guests: Colleen Crawford, Chris Walker

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND 7-15-09 MINUTES

Jan asked for approval of the minutes.

Three corrections were noted including:

1. Teresa Christopherson was incorrectly listed as an attendee.
2. Page 2, Paragraph 5, change "seen" to "see" in the first sentence.
3. Page 4, Paragraph 3, change "CAT" to "TriMet" in the second sentence.

Beth Rehm made a motion to approve the July 15, 2009 minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

Jan asked that CAT members:

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- Raise their hands before commenting and try to avoid having any side conversations during the course of the meeting.
- Limit their comments to during the public comment period to asking questions for clarification purposes.
- Be good listeners and to show respect for others' comments.
- Contact Allen Morgan or Kathy Miller for follow-up on any specific issues or concerns. Their numbers are included in the CAT Handbook.
- Report their concerns or comments about their personal transit experiences to Customer Service for follow-up

Jan said that Michael Levine, former CAT member, had attended an awards ceremony the previous week and received an award for his advocacy on transportation issues from the City of Portland. She said that the two of them had spent some time on the new transit mall and Michael had raised some concerns. He will be sending a letter for follow-up.

Jan announced that she has been appointed to the City of Portland's new disabilities commission as the transportation representative. She thanked those who had supported her appointment.

She added that there may be a transportation committee within the commission and if so, there may be opportunities for CAT members and the public to be involved.

Jan said that Arnold Panitch and Leon Chavarria-Aguilar would represent at the Oregon Transportation Conference at Seaside October 25-28.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Kathy said that she had distributed two pieces of written communication including: 1) an email from Patricia Keplar on behalf of fixed route customer, Karen LaGrange; and 2) a letter from Albert Rouse, CAT member. Jan said that the CAT Executive Committee (EC) would review the two letters.

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STAFF COMMENTS

Kathy said that she had distributed a copy of the LIFT Eligibility Process Improvements – Final Plan at today’s meeting. The information has been distributed to the workshop mailing list and posted on the website. She will provide a project update at the November CAT Work Session.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chris Walker commented on his recent experience boarding a Type I (high-floor) MAX vehicle and asked that the operators be instructed to wait a certain period of time while passengers are boarding. He said that he had been carrying a rolling case and a laptop and got stuck in the doors because the operator didn’t wait long enough.

Allen said that the operators are instructed to leave the doors open for a specific period but sometimes they may leave early. He encouraged Chris to contact Customer Service at 503-238-RIDE (7433) to report any other comments for follow-up.

Arnold asked about the arrangement of the vehicles on the MAX trains. He suggested that Allen explain to Chris where to stand to enable him to board a low-floor car.

Allen said that while there is usually one low-floor car in the train, the position of the car varies. He suggested that Chris stand in the middle of the platform to have somewhat an equal distance to both cars.

Colleen Crawford, a LIFT client, commented on the LIFT drop-off/pick-up location on NW 194th at Macy’s at the Streets of Tanasbourne. She said that the Macy’s entrance at that location is down a ramp and below street level. She added that the Macy’s door doesn’t have an automatic door opener. She has contacted Macy’s about adding the door opener.

Colleen commented that it is difficult for the LIFT client to see an approaching bus from this location and that she also has to find someone to assist her in opening the door. It is also a difficult location for the LIFT operator to serve because they can’t lose visibility of the bus.

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Kathy commented that some shopping mall locations have designated stop locations that are curb-to-curb service. She will follow-up with LIFT staff.

Colleen said that she felt this location should have door-to-door service so that the client knows when the bus arrives since they can't see up to the street level.

Follow-up

1. Kathy will follow-up with LIFT staff on the LIFT stop location at Macy's at Streets of Tanasbourne.

REVIEW OF CAT ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS REPORT

Jan asked if there were questions/comments on the report. Bob Williams asked for an update on each of the four recommendations. Kathy responded as follows:

1. Recommendation to waive the proposed \$25 fee for LIFT customers who may qualify for the proposed Honored Citizen (HC) fixed route identification card for free transit use in Fareless Square. This recommendation was forwarded to the Board and staff and an update would be provided at the November 3 Work Session.
2. Recommendation to send a letter to the Board regarding the use of the priority seating area on MAX. The letter was sent in August and the Board's response, dated September 10 was included in the September 18 CAT packet.
3. Recommendation to appoint two new CAT members. The recommendation was forwarded to the General Manager and Board President, approved, and the members appointed.
4. Recommendation to adopt the FY10 CAT Work Plan. The plan was adopted at the October 6 Work Session and distributed to CAT members.

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WINTER SERVICE CHANGE UPDATE – Tom Mills, Planner III, Service Planning

Tom Mills briefed the CAT on service changes effective November 29, 2009. Tom reported that TriMet will cover the remaining \$3.5 million FY10 budget gap by adjusting schedules during non-rush hours on 19 lines. These lines have service every 15 minutes, adding about two to four minutes between buses, a 2.6% service reduction.

Schedule changes on weekdays will include 18 lines, with 14 lines on Saturday and 12 lines on Sunday. He said the service reduction was approved by the TriMet Board on July 22, 2009.

Other points in the report included:

- Staff completed an outreach process that included two open houses and public hearings to answer questions and accept comments.
- Service changes will be targeted towards midday and evening service, between approximately 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., and in the evening between approximately 7 p.m. and 10 p.m., and on weekends.

The lines impacted will include:

4 – Division/Fessenden
6 – Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
8 – Jackson Park/NE 15th
9 – Powell/Broadway
12 – Barbur/Sandy Blvd.
14 – Hawthorne
15 – Belmont/NW 23rd
17 – Holgate/NW 21st
19 – Woodstock/Glisan
20 – Burnside/Stark
33 – McLoughlin
44 – Capitol Hwy/Mocks crest
54 – Beaverton/Hillsdale Highway
56 – Scholls Ferry Rd.
57 – TV Hwy./Forest Grove

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70 – 12th Avenue

71 – 60th/122nd Avenue

75 – Lombard/39th Avenue

77 – Broadway/Halsey

Discussion

Arnold asked if new schedules would be printed to reflect the changes effective in November. Tom responded that he thought new schedules would be printed for these specific lines only.

Arnold also commented on the full buses on Line 44-Capitol Highway which provides service to Wilson High School. He asked if consideration had been given to routes which are used for transportation to school. Tom said that the service cuts would be in midday and evening and would not impact the service when the school trips occur.

Tom added that staff has been monitoring the ridership on school routes daily. He said that typically, students will try to get on the first bus, even though there may be a second bus only two minutes behind it. Staff finds that after the first bus, the following buses carry much lower levels of passengers.

Arnold said that students do have varying schedules and he sees crowded buses throughout the day. He encouraged staff to continue to monitor the service.

Bob asked about if the service changes are being made on lines due to low ridership. He said that some areas of the region are more transit-dependent than others and riders may not have the ability to adjust their work schedules to meet the bus schedule.

Tom replied that these service changes aren't ridership driven but are service driven. As an example, if there is considerable service available, a route might be adjusted from 15 to 17 minute service which would result in operating one less bus over the course of the day. This service adjustment would be midday and not during peak hours.

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Staff has reviewed the ridership in terms of determining if there is sufficient capacity given the service reductions. He added staff is trying to make the right decisions under very difficult circumstances and that these lines would be the priority lines for when service improvements can be implemented.

TRANSIT INVESTMENT PLAN (TIP) Overview - Eric Hesse, Coordinator, Strategic Planning)

Eric Hesse provided an overview of the Transit Investment Plan (TIP) which is the strategic transit plan for a five-year period that interfaces with Metro's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

The purpose of the plan is to:

- 1) focus investments and identify priorities,
- 2) grow partnerships with jurisdictional partners, and
- 3) provide information to TriMet's partners and the general public.

Four priorities for the plan include:

- build the total transit system,
- expand high capacity transit,
- expand frequent service, and
- improve local service.

Eric reviewed each of the priorities, the work and accomplishments in each area and provided an overview of the current funding situation.

Discussion

Arnold made the following comments:

1. The painted numbers of the TransitTracker stop on poles have been removed and need to be reinstalled.
2. If bus schedules are going to be displayed at the stop, they need to be accurate and maintained.
3. TriMet should return to using the printed schedule on the mall. TransitTracker does not display a sufficient number of next arrivals to allow one to plan for the use of their time and their return trip.
4. Schedules would also be useful at the airport.

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Trish asked for clarification on the cost of fixed route service for people with disabilities as compared to the cost of providing LIFT service. Eric said that the operating costs for the ten million rides for customers with disabilities on fixed route was roughly equal to the cost of providing one million rides on an annual basis on the LIFT service.

Trish stated that everyone doesn't have a cell phone to call TransitTracker. Eric responded that past surveys have indicated that a high percentage of customers use cell phones and that many customers are able to access information by phone. Printed schedules are still available at customer information centers and on the buses. He added that he understands the desire to have schedule information at the stops.

Bob asked if staff anticipates that ridership would continue to grow if service cuts and schedule adjustments continue. Eric said that the impacts of service cuts and adjustments are a key concern and staff is closely monitoring the impacts on ridership.

Bob also asked that staff report back on the ridership trends in three months. Eric agreed staff would review and report back.

Jan said that the CAT would continue to work with staff on the signage concerns.

Follow-up

1. Staff will be report back on the impacts of service changes and frequent service adjustments on ridership in approximately three months after implementation.

TRIMET WEBSITE DESIGN - Drew Blevins, Director, Marketing; Debbie Huntington, Manager, Creative Services

Debbie Huntington provided an update on the new homepage for the TriMet website. Staff tries to update the visual design of the website approximately every three years and makes additional incremental improvements throughout the year.

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Highlights of the presentation included:

- There have been ten million visits to the website in the past year which averages approximately 30,000 visits per day.
- Of the 30,000 visits per day, approximately 13,000 visits are used for trip planning.
- The top five popular pages include: 1) the home page; 2) the trip planner; 3) maps and schedules and content; 4) TransitTracker; and 5) anything related to MAX.
- The website has won a number design awards and the FTA has awarded the website the Top Transit Website Award for two separate years.

The process for the redesign is based on statistics as to how the site is used, feedback and comments received from the users, and any priorities set by the agency. Comments and feedback can be submitted by email to comments@trimet.org or by calling 503-238-RDIE (7433).

The homepage design was also reviewed by over 1,000 people who have signed up through email to provide feedback. Staff has reviewed using in-house text-a-speech reader software and Commission for the Blind staff has also reviewed using their text-a-speech reader. All comments have been reviewed in development of the final version of the homepage.

Debbie said that improvements have also been made to the maneuverability on the homepage. The target area to hover over links and objects has been enlarged which is an improvement for those with limited dexterity. Also, font size can be adjusted through the browser.

Discussion

Jan encouraged CAT members with Internet access to view the homepage to provide any additional comments. She commented that some of the color and contrast choices might be an area of concern.

Drew said that the design of the homepage is dynamic and changes are easier to make. He said staff's goal for this meeting was to share the navigational changes made to improve the overall usability. He encouraged CAT members to provide any additional feedback on design features once they have reviewed the homepage online.

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Drew reported that 32 flat screen displays on the mall are now activated and all have the audio component with the push button except for one. The last one is expected to be finalized this week. There are seven cross-mall flat screens yet to be installed that will also include the audio feature.

On the I-205 segment of MAX, the TransitTracker will have ongoing audio at the stations instead of using a push button feature.

Drew said that staff would welcome further discussions with the CAT on signage strategy. Staff considers signage in three stages of the trip and what information is required for: 1) pre-trip planning; 2) when the customer is on the street; and 3) when onboard the vehicle. He added that while there are resource challenges, there are still opportunities for improvements and staff would like to discuss further.

Additional comments from CAT members included:

- TransitTracker audio at 5th and Morrison is not working and that there is an issue with the glare on the screens. Photos to show the issue are available.
- At the Mill Street stop, operators do not announce the location of PSU and the connection to the Portland Streetcar. Signage should be added in both English and Spanish.
- The Braille signage on the mall is very helpful but the locations are inconsistent; i.e., the signage is installed on different poles, faces different direction, etc. Signage needs to be at a consistent location at the stop to aid people with low vision and blindness to locate the information.
- A CAT member has identified a source for less expensive Braille signage.

Drew said that he and Jeff Rain would be visiting all the TransitTracker installations this week to audit the sound feature and that he would follow-up on any repairs needed. He asked that Jan send him the photos of the signage glare for review. Drew will also contact James Jackson to address the Braille signage location.

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Follow-up

1. Staff and the CAT Executive Committee will schedule follow-up agenda items on signage issues with the appropriate staff.
2. Jan will forward photos to Drew for review.
3. Drew with contact James Jackson to follow-up on the location of Braille signage.
4. Allen will continue to work with staff on the Braille signage source.

PORTLAND-MILWAUKIE LIGHT RAIL PROJECT UPDATE - Claudia Steinberg, Manager, Community Affairs

Claudia Steinberg provided an update on the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project. She reviewed a map of the alignment which begins at Portland State and ends at SE Park Avenue in Milwaukie. Planned stations include:

- Lincoln/SW 4th Avenue
- South Waterfront/SW Moody Avenue
- OMSI
- Clinton Street/ SE 12th Avenue
- Rhine Street/ SE 17th Avenue
- Holgate Boulevard/SE 17th Avenue
- SE Bybee Boulevard
- SE Tacoma Street
- Lake Road/SE 21st Avenue

A future station is also planned for SE Harold Street.

Claudia also showed a rendering of a new multi-use bridge across the Willamette River between OHSU's future south Waterfront campus on the west bank and OMSI on the east bank. Pedestrians and bicyclists will be separated on the bridge and the bridge will also be used by Portland Streetcar.

The timeline for the project includes:

Preliminary Engineering and Final Environmental
Impact Statement

2009-10

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Final Design	2010-22
Full Funding Grant Agreement	2011
Construction	2011-15
Service Begins	2015

The cost of the project is approximately \$1.4 billion. TriMet is asking for \$750-850 million in federal funds, \$250 million in lottery-backed funds (already funded), and \$300-400 million in the local match provided by a number of partners including TriMet, City of Portland, Metro, City of Milwaukie, Clackamas County and the State of Oregon.

Claudia added that the projected received a medium to high rating from the FTA for new starts which means the costs balance out with the projected ridership.

Claudia said that she will begin providing regular updates to the CAT. Lina Bensel, former CAT member, is also a member of the project's citizens' advisory committee and Jan serves as an alternate. The committee meets on the third Thursday of each month.

Discussion

Albert commented that a new bridge will add to the visual pollution in the area and that consideration should be given to using the Hawthorne Bridge and continue on the Portland Traction Company rail bed. He feels it would be a better use of tax dollars.

Arnold asked about for clarification on the alignment and if it would connect with the northbound MAX and the Milwaukie Transit Center. Claudia said the service would connect to existing service on the mall and also feed into the northbound service.

She added that the City of Milwaukie had made the decision to locate the station at Lake Road which is about three to four blocks from the existing transit center. The transit center will be refurbished and service will be provided on Washington Street. Some lines from the south and from Lake Road will connect to MAX at 21st and Washington and proceed to the Milwaukie Transit Center.

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Claudia said that the Portland-Milwaukie line will be called the Orange Line.

Bob added that with the projected growth of over a million people in the area, the use of the bridge would be to move transit away from the automobile traffic and provide an opportunity to expand transit entities across the river without interfering with existing traffic needs.

Claudia added that the alignment would also provide a connection between Portland State, OHSU, OMSI, and Portland Community College, all organizations involved with science and health.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 noon.