

HB2017 Transit Advisory Committee

February 18, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Tom Mills – TriMet

David Bouchard – TriMet

Adam Argo – Committee member, Clackamas County Rider Rep

Anne Buzzini

April Bertelsen – PBOT, City of Portland

Ariadna Falcon Gonzalez

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

Catherine Ciarlo – PBOT

Christina Deffebach – Washington County

Metro Councilor Duncan Hwang – New committee member

Dan Bower – Committee member, Portland Streetcar

Deanna Palm – Committee co-chair

Dwight Brashear – Committee member, Wilsonville SMART

Emily Motter

Eve Nilenders – Multnomah County

Jan Campbell – Committee member, TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation

Jarvez Hall – Committee co-chair

Jodi Parker – Committee member, LiUNA L737

John Whitman – Ride Connection

Julie Wilcke Pilmer – Committee member, Ride Connection

Kate Lyman – TriMet

Chris Fick (on behalf of Commissioner Jessica Vega Peterson) – Multnomah County

Kristina Babcock – Clackamas County

Mailee Xiong – TriMet

Mariana Valenzuela – Committee member

Mary Lou Ritter – Committee member

Mercedes Elizalde – Committee member, Central City Concern

Michael Dohn – TriMet

Clackamas County Commissioner Paul Savas – Committee member

Reza Farhoodi – Committee member, Multnomah County Rider Representative

Washington County Commissioner Roy Rogers – Committee member

Teresa Christopherson – Clackamas County

Sarah Ianarone – Committee member, The Street Trust

Tom Markgraf – TriMet

Valerie Egon – ODOT

Wes Charley – TriMet

Maia Vasconez – OPAL

Preliminaries

- The meeting begins at 8:33 AM.
- Tom reviews the Webex interface and meeting agenda.
- Tom: We are aiming for the committee to approve the plan by September.

Public Comment

- There is no public comment.

Updates to Committee Roster

- Welcome Metro Councilor Duncan Hwang. The committee roster is now complete.
- Committee bylaws require chairs to be selected for each term. After four and a half years of service, Deanna Palm will step down as co-chair, but will still serve as a committee member.
- Three people have expressed interest in serving; Jarvez Hall, Jodi Parker, and Commissioner Paul Savas.
- Commissioner Savas withdraws his name from consideration, and motions to appoint Jarvez and Jodi as co-chairs. Mariana seconds. There is no discussion. The motion carries.
- Until the TriMet Board officially approves the new committee roster in March, no votes which affect the plan will be taken.

Equity Map Discussion

- As a reminder, the legislation encourages investments to be directed in areas of poverty. Rules are such that each area must determine how they measure poverty. This committee uses a 10-factor equity index, which includes 200% of the Federal Poverty level.
- The top 25% of census blocks are considered equity areas.
- Separate analyses were done for the TriMet district and each county for areas outside of the district.
- Tom has had conversations with county staff, who were surprised by the results of the map. Washington County staff were surprised that North Plains did not stand out on the map as much as expected, and Multnomah County staff were surprised that areas east of Troutdale were not as prominent.
- The poverty factor may have been overwhelmed by other factors in these areas, and the block groups themselves are much larger.

- Commissioner Savas appreciates the map. He gathers that anything which is red, orange, or green is outside of the service area, and of high poverty, and blue areas are within the committee's jurisdiction.
- How will areas with low or no coverage be prioritized?
- Tom: We can overlay this map with TriMet's transit network, and color the lines based on the level of service they receive.
- Commissioner Savas supports this idea.
- Commissioner Roy Rogers thanks Tom for his work and clarification in regards to how counties will engage as the process moves forward. He understands the rationale behind the map. Washington County is in the process of refining its plan, and will have a more detailed analysis of their equity areas. He expects that Clackamas County is likely doing a similar analysis.
- Tom: Previously, we combined all areas into one analysis, which predominantly displayed the TriMet areas due to population distribution. While somewhat surprising, the data is more accurate than the past 2 bienniums. The TriMet portion of the map is no surprise.
- Sarah is still concerned about how the equity index factors into the concentration of inequality. Is there a way in the analysis to factor concentration of inequality? Ideally, resources could be focused in areas with high concentrations of inequity.
- Tom is willing to discuss this further with TriMet's GIS staff.
- April seconds Sarah's comments. More fine-grained county analyses would be very useful. She also suggests breaking out the different elements of the equity index, with a simplified map of the transit network. Tom agrees.
- Are the factors of the index mapped individually? Tom: Not at this time, but it is possible to do. We should discuss to what extent that mapping should be done.
- Commissioner Savas also seconds Sarah's points. If there is a cluster of census tracts in a small area which is underserved, we should target them for service.

Projected Revenues for FY24-25

- Tom refers to four buckets of revenue;
- FY22-23 overage: We are currently in the FY22-23 biennium, and are spending money. Our plan amount is based on projections from December 2020. If the money is coming in better than anticipated, we refer to it as overage. This overage cannot be spent in FY22-23, because you can only spend what is stated in the plan. The money can be spent in the next biennium, but only if the amount is included in the plan.
- Based on incoming revenue, ODOT has projected how much overage is expected.
- Payroll tax projections for FY27-25 courtesy of ODOT: These projections were released in December 2021.
- FY22-23 carryover: Sometimes, we do not spend all of the money anticipated by the end of the biennium. An example would be procuring and preparing assets for capital projects.
- The total amount from all of the four buckets indicates the level of overall revenue.
- In FY22, ODOT projected that TriMet would receive \$51.9 million, but now project that they will receive an extra \$1 million. In FY23, TriMet is expected to receive an extra \$4.4 million. The individual counties are also projected to receive more funding than expected.
- STIF Formula projections: For FY24-25, ODOT projects \$62.7 million in FY24, and \$65.8 million in FY25, more money than ever received. The increase in wages across the region is a primary factor.
- TriMet expects to receive \$70 million for FY25.
- Tom provides a brief overview of the approximately 25-year-old STF program, and which local providers receive money from it. The program is intended to support the transportation needs of seniors and people with disabilities.

- Traditionally, ODOT has informed TriMet about how much money is coming through the region. The STFAC has a solicitation process in which local jurisdictions and Ride Connection apply for funding; the committee then decides which applications are funded.
- STFAC members on HB2017 TAC;
 - Jan Campbell – STFAC Chair
 - Julie Wilcke Pilmer – Ride Connection
 - Mary Lou Ritter – Washington County
- In addition to cigarette taxes, licensing fees, and non-vehicle fuel tax funding, STF sporadically receives general funding support from the state, because cigarette taxes are a declining revenue source. License fees may also decrease as Real ID is fully implemented.
- In the 2021 legislative session, the STF and STIF programs were merged. All revenue streams were preserved, but STIF dollars would replace general state dollars.
- The Legislature set a figure that they wanted the STF program to hit, and STIF money would be used to reach that figure. For this region-which receives the most amount of funding-the total revenue is at least \$8.5 million per biennium.
- We may receive more than that in FY24-25, but no less.
- Now that the merge is in effect, the STFAC committee will act as a subcommittee to the HB2017 TAC. The Regional Coordination Subcommittee will also be revived this year.
- We still do not know what our carry-over will be for the current biennium. However, TriMet's Finance team works closely with various project managers who analyze cash flows. Tom will be working with them to understand how much money is projected to be spent. He hopes to have more information about this at the next meeting. Following this analysis, we will have revenue projections. Tom will be working with project managers to determine how much more money is needed for projects to continue.
- TriMet will approach the committee with a proposal for each program, and how much they are expected to cost. It will be up to the committee to decide on the continuation of the various programs. If there is extra money, the committee can allocate the funds to existing programs, or fund new projects.
- April notes that the online PowerPoint does not fully match what is on-screen.

Low-income Fare Program Update – Wes Charley

- Wes provides an overview of the low-income fare program. Low-income riders pay Honored Citizen rates under the program.
- TriMet partners with approximately 46 organizations who assist their clients with enrollment.
- The program was on pace for approximately 40,000 enrollments by December 2020. The pandemic slowed that momentum, and TriMet expects to reach 40,000 participants this month.
- Wes reviews the program's enrollment qualifications, and highlights TriMet's fare capping features. The fact that the program receives state funding makes TriMet stand out from other agencies across the country.
- Enrollments dropped by 83% in April 2020. Almost every partner location suspended their services between April 2020 and February 2021. To compensate, TriMet created an online application process, and trained Customer Service staff to do enrollments.
- The program was further impacted when enrollments from 2018 began to expire in July 2020. Cards are only good for 2 years, at which point the individual must re-apply.
- Enrollment is slowly but steadily increasing. TriMet is approximately 70% of normal.
- Wes displays demographic data of program participants. Younger people are strongly represented, and women are represented more than men.

- Enrollments were impacted when higher-education institutions reduced in-person instruction opportunities.
- Between July, 2018-March, 2020, TriMet averaged approximately 1300 enrollments per day. The peaks in red correspond with university schedules, with spikes in enrollment at the beginning of new academic quarters.
- At the height of the pandemic, enrollments were about 300 per day, but have been slowly inching up. Expirations correspond with the college enrollment dates.
- The first significant enrollment spike occurred in September, 2021. These were based on the beginning of the fall academic quarter.
- Expirations are currently outpacing enrollments, but improvement in this area is expected, with new growth projected in mid-March.
- TriMet expects a return to normal numbers by 2025.
- Mary Lou asks for clarification regarding card expirations.
- Wes: The card is programmed with an expiration date when it is printed, and automatically deactivates on the date of expiration. TriMet communicates with the customer via email and/or postcards when their card expiration date is approaching.
- Mariana points out that participants can receive their card by mail when enrolling through third-party partners such as Centro Cultural.
- April: Is TriMet able to break out enrollments done through TriMet versus through partner locations. Wes: Yes, but many partners are assisting clients with TriMet's online application. April suggests adding a question designed to track if applicants are receiving assistance from providers. Wes agrees, but notes that fewer questions can be better for the applicant.
- Jarvez: How can organizations become partners?
- Wes: Prior to the pandemic, TriMet had a recruitment team. The hope is to resume those recruitment efforts. He is always willing to discuss the process with any prospective partner.
- Sarah notes that enrollment numbers will likely fluctuate at universities, but points out that this student population will still have a high need for this program. TriMet may need to explore new ways of engaging these students.
- Wes notes that they have good partnerships with PSU, PCC, and Clackamas Community College, who advertise the program through their respective Transportation offices.
- These community colleges also receive grant dollars from TriMet, which are leveraged to sign students up for the program, in the interest of maximizing resources.

Items for follow up before next meeting

- At the next meeting, Tom will display an equity map including the TriMet transit network. Lines will be color-coded to indicate level of service.
- Tom and TriMet's GIS analyst will continue discussions regarding the equity map with Sarah and April. Other interested members are invited to participate. He will provide the data ahead of time.
- Mary Lou appreciates that staff representatives from various TriMet programs are presenting at these meetings. Tom has more speakers lined up.
- We adjourn at 9:54 AM.