

**MINUTES
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JOINT MEETING
September 18, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gilman called the September 18, 2024, Joint Meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority (ITA) and Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to order at 5:30 p.m. This was a hybrid meeting.

Members Present: Chair and City of Olympia Councilmember Clark Gilman; Vice Chair and Thurston County Commissioner Carolina Mejia; City of Lacey Councilmember Carolyn Cox; City of Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan; City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess; Community Representative Sue Pierce; Community Representative Justin Belk; Labor Representative Mark Neuville.

ITA Members Excused: Community Representative Don Melnick.

CAC Members Present: Clair Bourgeois; Eliane Wilson; Harrison Ashby; Doug Riddels; Garrett Fuelling; John Paul Fox-Seidel; Ty Flint; Marilyn Scott; Rachel Wilson; Betty Hauser (remotely); David Payton (remotely).

Staff Present: Emily Bergkamp; Kiera Maryott; Heather Smith; Dena Withrow; Pat Messmer; Amanda Collins; Daniel Van Horn; Ramon Beltran; Jessica Gould; Michael Maverick; Katie Cunningham; Noelle Gordon; Jonathan Martin; Tammy Ferris; Thera Black; Michael Maverick.

Others Present: Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

A. David Chaffee introduced Matthew Desy, Vehicle Detailer.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was M/S/A by Mejia and Sullivan to approve the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Darci Mugartegui, advocate on behalf of DAL client, Kim Carpenter provided public comment. Ms. Carpenter has been receiving DAL service to her home address for 16 years, however, her residence is and has been out of the service area. Effective September 30, 2024, DAL service to her home will be discontinued. Ms. Mugartegui explained her client's sight limitations make it impossible for Ms. Carpenter to navigate her neighborhood safely due to its rural nature and they are requesting DAL service continue.

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RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION - 2024 STATE ROADEO

Bergkamp introduced the 2024 Washington State Transit Associations State Roadeo participants:

Bergkamp introduced Service Impacts Supervisor David Dudek, Operations Supervisor Bill Miller and his wife Shanika. They were recognized for their coordination and planning efforts of the State Roadeo Planning Committee. The State Roadeo wouldn't be as successful as it is without these individuals.

Bergkamp congratulated the following competitors on their accomplishments and for representing Intercity Transit:

- **2nd Place Overall Maintenance Competition:** Richelle Loken, Sean Malay, & Jonathan Reynolds
- **2nd Place 35-foot Coach Competition:** Fred "Uncle Freddie" Sambrano - in his very first State Roadeo appearance
- **2nd Place Body on Chassis Competition:** Dan Savage
- **Honorable Mention 40-foot Coach Competition:** Clinton Jimenez

Bergkamp also recognized the following Intercity Transit employees and family members who were essential volunteers with the State Roadeo, as judges and in other roles: Operations Supervisor Rob Wood and family member Susan Wood; Fixed-Route Manager Michael Midstokke; Operations Deputy Director Cameron Crass; Intercity Transit Authority Board Member Sue Pierce; Operator Janet Depoe; Maintenance Director Jonathon Yee; Human Resources Deputy Director Alana Neal; Customer Service Supervisor Russell Gilsdorf; family member Lillian Dudek; and Administrative Services Director Heather Stafford.

Bergkamp recognized that while Intercity Transit was the runner up for State Grand Champion this year, IT held the title for seven years in a row. Kitsap Transit won the 2024 Grand Champion, and we congratulate them on this outstanding achievement. Sharing the opportunity to hold the Grand Champion title with other transit systems only showcases how Intercity Transit shares Roadeo knowledge with others to help them learn and grow, which improves the overall competition on the State Roadeo stage and the public transit industry overall.

INTRODUCTIONS

The Authority, CAC members and staff provided self-introductions.

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APPROVAL OF AUTHORITY CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

It was M/S/A by Pierce and Belk to approve the consent agenda items as presented.

- A. Minutes** - August 7, 2024, and August 21, 2024.
- B. Payroll August:** \$5,127,659.73
 - Warrant Numbers: 40411-40428; 40529-40532; 40636-40640 in the amount of \$55,083.75.
 - ACH Payment Amount: \$5,072,575.98.
- C. Accounts Payable August:** \$4,107,355.17
 - Disbursed Warrants: 40429-40528, 40533-40630 & 40641-40649 in the amount of \$4,089,532.02.
 - Voided Warrants: 36978 & 40455.
 - ACH Payments: \$17,823.15.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Federal Advocacy Contract Renewal.** Noelle Gordon, Procurement and Project Management Coordinator, presented a contract for renewal of Federal Advocacy Services with Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Relations.

In October 2023, Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Relations was awarded Intercity Transit's new contract for Federal Advocacy Services. The initial contract term was for a period of one year, with four one-year renewal options. This item represents the first one-year renewal, and the annual contract amount remains the same as the previous term.

Intercity Transit has been satisfied with Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Relations representation of its interests over the past fifteen years. The firm has been a valuable partner in assisting Intercity Transit to secure available funding. As federal funding, policy, rules, and regulations remain uncertain, the need for Intercity Transit's interests to stay engaged in Washington DC continues. It remains beneficial for Intercity Transit to have an advocate in Washington DC to ensure our priorities and points of view are considered while legislation and regulations are developed and implemented.

Staff believes Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Relations will continue to provide valuable services at fair and reasonable rates and recommends that a contract extension with Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Relations is approved.

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It was M/S/A by Sullivan and Pierce to authorize the General Manager to execute a contract amendment with Gordon Thomas Honeywell Governmental Relations to renew the contract for Federal Advocacy Services for a period of one year in the amount of \$96,000.

- B. State Advocacy Contract Renewal** Noelle Gordon, Procurement and Project Management Coordinator, presented a contract for renewal of State Advocacy Services with Foster Government Relations.

In October 2021, Foster Government Relations was awarded Intercity Transit's contract for State Legislative Advocacy Services. The initial contract term was for a period of one year, with four one-year renewal options. This item represents the third one-year renewal. The annual contract renewal amount remains the same as the original term.

Intercity Transit has worked with Foster Government Relations for the past eight years and has been satisfied with the firm's representation of our interests during this time. Foster Government Relations has provided valuable consulting services in support of the development, communication, and implementation of Intercity Transit's legislative agenda with the Washington State Legislature and Executive Branch. As funding, policy rules, and regulations remain uncertain, the need for Intercity Transit's interests to stay engaged in Washington State legislation continues.

Staff believes Foster Government Relations will continue to provide valuable services at fair and reasonable rates and recommends approval of the contract extension with this firm.

It was M/S/A by Mejia and Belk to authorize the General Manager to execute a one-year contract extension with Foster Government Relations to provide State Legislative Advocacy Services in the amount of \$48,000.

- C. CAC Stipend Program Procedures.** Public Records Officer, Amanda Collins, reviewed the procedures to navigate the CAC Stipend Program. Collins noted all CAC members are eligible to receive Stipend payments effective August 21, 2024.

CAC members who wish to participate in the Stipend Program will submit a W-9 to ap@intercitytransit.com within 90 days of appointment or 30 days of program funding.

Attendance will be regularly monitored at each meeting and recorded through an attendance sheet attached to committee minutes. Minutes are then reviewed and approved by the committee. The CAC Staff Liaison will prepare a Request for Warrant form at the end of each quarter or more frequently if indicated by the

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General Manager. Warrant forms will provide the total amount due to each CAC member based on the attendance record, which will attach to the form as backup documentation. CAC members will receive the Request for Warrant form via e-mail and sign to authorize the request. The CAC staff liaison will approve the Request for Warrant forms and submit to Finance Accounts Payable for processing. Checks will be issued following Intercity Transit's Warrant Approval process and payment will be mailed to CAC members.

Gilman asked how CAC members will make changes mid-term. Collins said changes can be made any time (either opt in or opt out) simply by completing necessary forms.

D. CAC Self-Assessment. The CAC self-assessment survey was conducted in August 2024, and 16 members were eligible to participate, 13 members completed the survey. Bergkamp shared the results of the CAC self-assessments' nine questions as follows:

Q1. We remained faithful to our purpose: 85% strongly agreed and 15% somewhat agreed.

Q2. The CAC represents the community: 38% strongly agreed; 46% somewhat agreed; 15% disagreed.

Q3. Intercity Transit and the community benefited from our input: 54% strongly agreed; 46% somewhat agreed.

Q4. We add value to the Transit Authority's decisions: 77% strongly agreed; 23% somewhat agreed.

Q5. Our meetings are run well. 85% strongly agreed; 15% somewhat agreed.

Q6. I feel satisfied with my participation level within the CAC: 69% strongly agreed; 15% somewhat agreed; 15% somewhat disagreed.

Q7. I am prepared for meetings: 46% strongly agreed; 54% somewhat agreed.

Q8. I feel comfortable contributing at meetings: 85% strongly agreed; 8% somewhat agreed; 8% somewhat disagreed.

Q9. Comments:

- *I think this year we did an exceptional job of informing the committee about all that Intercity Transit does, and a background into the many aspects of the agency.*

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- *I think we could better represent the community and be more diverse, I think the stipend will help. I feel like extending the recruitment might help. I feel like I need to talk it up all year to find folks who are excited about being on CAC. It might be neat to have a representative from SPSCC, Evergreen, and St. Martin's. Those folks use transit a lot and that would help with that segment of the population.*
- *Have been impressed over the past two years with the quality of our new CAC Members. They are younger, many are all users of various IT services, and most are focused on the future of Intercity Transit.*
- *So many people do not ride the bus, and they need to be encouraged to change. They are not on the committee.*
- *I think we learn a lot and become better advocates for transit. I think it would be neat to advise more directly on routes or timing, too.*
- *Unless it is controversial, or something that hits the headlines, I don't feel the overall public really pays attention to either the Authority or the CAC.*
- *Basically agree. I am glad we're around for IT to check with.*
- *This is the main reason I enjoy being on the CAC. Members of the Authority are always welcoming, and during their meetings our representative has a seat at the table.*
- *They do pretty well for time, sometimes I get antsy if they run past 7:30.*
- *Yes thanks to "double A" ...Amazing Amanda!*
- *I think I'm going to try to make sure to look at the packet before meetings so I can ask more informed questions.*
- *Having the material as it is going to be presented as opposed to a synthesis would help to prepare better. Such could be done economically via the use of links to access the relevant information.*
- *I forgot one meeting after a crazy day.*
- *It might be good for us to learn other folks' transit interests so we can better include folks that don't talk as much in meetings. It seems that about a quarter of the CAC actively comments, but the other folks have good ideas.*
- *Enjoy being able to participate on the committee*
- *Thank you to ITA for listening to the CAC.*
- *The CAC is undergoing changes with the influx of new members; by diversifying and bringing new blood, it can become even more beneficial to the ITA.*
- *I've learned so much in this first year and expect to be a stronger advocate going forward.*
- *I expect it to be quite easy for future members to join for the stipend, attend virtually, and not actually contribute. Please be on the lookout for that.*
- *I've really enjoyed being on the Intercity Transit CAC in the past few months. I'm excited for the rest of the year and hoping to be more involved, especially for the youth in our community.*

E. Draft Strategic Plan and Set Public Hearing. Bergkamp provided a concept review and presentation of the Strategic Plan Process, to prepare the CAC and ITA for follow-up conversations for eventual adoption by the end of 2024. Bergkamp said the 2025 Strategic Plan will re-establish a clear focus on accomplishing goals from the long-range plan. Currently, IT is at 102% pre-COVID levels of service with

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ridership matching our service restoration. That also includes being fully staffed with 325 Operators by end of 2024 – the September 8 service change established that; Nightline is returning in September with The Evergreen State College in session; and DASH service estimated to return with the 2025 Legislative Session. The Strategic Plan will return to focus on implementing the nine promises from Proposition 1.

Bergkamp said it's time for responsible creativity, and as with all things, funding for transit fluctuates up and down, and this year is no exception. Staff are working on rightsizing the budgeting process as an agency. Jana Brown, Chief Financial Officer, and her staff have been working to identify forecasting based on past spending and avoiding the urge to plan for a rainy day by adding a cushion into the budget. This gives the community a more accurate picture of what the agency plans to spend as well as the projects we can realistically undertake in a year.

Bergkamp discussed the impacts of the possible repeal of the Climate Commitment Act in November. Currently, we're talking about how to educate the public on what would happen to Intercity Transit if we lost that funding. Intercity Transit is being conservative with the forecasting for the budget because we will need to make up that grant funding from somewhere else if it's not coming from the Climate Commitment Act (CCA).

Bergkamp said we looked at the historical background, and funding information will be updated to reflect changes over the past year. IT applied for grants that are tied into some of that money in the CCA and it's an opportunity to revisit the mission and guiding principles as a group.

Bergkamp reviewed the various sections of the Strategic Plan starting with Section 1 that addresses the purpose and the background of the strategic plan and represents the continuation of commitments from the multi-year short-and long-range planning process IT did in 2018, which culminated into Proposition 1. This includes goals and policy positions, as well as information about IT's capital program and services outlined for the next six years.

The Strategic Plan is a guiding document that applies certain strategies that ensure IT can financially meet our goals. IT also has a well-developed Capital Improvement Plan, and the goal is to create a 10-year plan to make sure we're allocating our reserves for those larger capital purchases that ultimately come up down the road as far as vehicle replacements. Our new facility will serve IT well for the next three to four decades, but at some point, we will include that in our financial improvement plan when it comes time to do renovations.

Bergkamp provided a history of the Strategic Plan and then reviewed the mission and vision statements. Bergkamp asked the CAC and ITA to share their thoughts on

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possible enhancements to the mission and vision statements. The mission statement outlines why an organization exists. Our mission is to provide and promote transportation choices that support an accessible, sustainable, livable, healthy and prosperous community.

Bergkamp reminded everyone that IT has a new diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) committee that's been in existence for two years and they are committed to fostering a positive work culture through these ongoing efforts. The DEI Committee is hoping the ITA and CAC can suggest enhancements to our guiding principles, which are the mission, vision, goals and policies to reflect the ongoing commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Diversity means the presence and participation of individuals with varying backgrounds and perspectives, including those who have been traditionally under-represented. Equity is equal access to opportunities and fair, just and impartial treatment. Inclusion is a sense of belonging in an environment where all feel welcomed, accepted and respected.

Bergkamp said a vision statement reflects what organizational success looks like. It serves as our guide to action and it is consistent with the organization's values, and it also challenges and inspires us to achieve our mission. She hears consistently that IT has the most customer-friendly drivers, and she attributes that to IT's human resources department. They do a wonderful job recruiting for customer service skills. We know that we can hire anybody and teach them to drive a bus, but we can't always teach people how to treat each other well. That's what our vision statement is about. All of IT employees embody this vision, "to be a leading transit system in the country, recognized by our peers, community and customers for our well-trained, highly motivated, customer-focused, community-minded employees committed to enhancing the quality of life for all in Thurston County."

The ITA and CAC provided discussion and comments for enhancements to the mission and vision statements:

To the mission statement, add the word "safe" to emphasize how public transit can make people feel safe emotionally, mentally and also physically. If you're taking cars off the road, you're making it safer, not just for other drivers and people riding the bus, but for pedestrians and cyclists.

Reiterating "without judgement" because many people use the transit system, and it doesn't matter who boards the bus.

The bus can be a good social outlet, and it starts when the Operator opens the door.

Highlight the message about safety and how best to include being barrier free. Our mission is a place to build community.

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Speak to what's essential in a clear, elegant manner.

It's okay if words mean more than one thing and the mission statement should contain everything we think it needs to contain and that's just as important as what's actually black and white. We all need to understand what it means, and that accessible is strictly in the ADA sense, but it's also in the sense that we accept everyone. It's barrier free and safe. Safe means multiple things as long as we all have an understanding as the leaders of the agency. That we all understand our values. But the words on the page don't have to capture every single aspect verbatim. Let's be stronger with our words and double-down on the commitment that we can provide for the community.

Add to the mission statement the integration of current and future transportation modes that includes vanpool. Some ride the train, and they need a way to get to another transit system. It's the integration to provide a better transportation system as a whole.

Strengthen the mission and vision statements by eliminating those first few words because you have a heading that says vision statement and it weakens it to say our vision is. I think we could say we are a leading transit system in the country or to be a leading transit system in the country. Also include the word "respectful."

Gilman suggested he and another Board member attend a meeting with the DEI Committee to bring ways to include celebrating diversity and working on fostering belonging, and some of their suggestions for ways to work that in.

Before reviewing the Goals and End Policies she asked the CAC and ITA to review them and to provide suggestions at a future ITA or CAC meeting in October about how they can be enhanced. Bergkamp reviewed the Goals and End Policies:

Goal #1: Assess the transportation needs of our community throughout the Public Transportation Benefit Area.

End Policy–Intercity Transit Authority, staff and the public will have access to clear and comprehensive information related to the transportation needs of our Public Transportation Benefit Area.

Goal #2: Provide outstanding customer service.

End Policy–Customers, staff and the broader community will report a high level of satisfaction.

Goal #3: Maintain a safe and secure operating system.

End Policy–Focus on the continual improvement for the safety and security of all customers, employees and facilities.

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Goal #4: Provide responsive transportation options within financial and staffing limitations.

End Policy–Customers and staff will have access to programs and services that benefit and promote community sustainability, focused on serving the mobility needs and demands of our community.

Goal #5: Integrate sustainability into all agency decisions and operations to lower social and environmental impact to enhance our community and support the Thurston County Regional Climate Mitigation Plan.

End Policy–Resources will be used effectively to minimize the overall impact on the environment and community, and to the extent possible, efforts will be pursued that integrate or otherwise align with broader sustainability goals.

Goal #6: Encourage use of our services, reduce barriers to access and increase ridership.

End Policy–Educate and encourage community members to explore, appreciate and utilize the benefits of our services and programs while making the system easier to use.

Goal #7: Build partnerships to identify and implement innovative solutions that address mobility needs, access and equity as a service provider and as an employer.

End Policy–Work with governmental entities, educational institutions, businesses, not-for-profit community partners, and customers to facilitate great mobility options as well as educational and socio-economic opportunities in our community, including removing barriers to mobility for historically marginalized individuals while accounting for diversity.

Goal #8: Integrate resiliency into all agency decisions to anticipate, plan and adapt given the critical functions of transit operations.

End Policy–Promote community, organizational and individual resiliency.

The strategic plan also includes IT's role in Thurston County and how we are the leader and major advocate for sharing information about public transportation in the community, because we also focus on connecting with other systems. IT also has a role in emergency response and is identified in the Hazard Mitigation Plan and several emergency or essential support functions. That includes evacuation efforts and temporary shelters, because our buses can temporarily be used as heating or cooling centers.

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The strategic plan refers to how performance and certain metrics are important to identify where IT should dedicate resources, using data about ridership and passengers per revenue hour, which in 2023 was 15 passengers per revenue hour.

Seven general design principles were identified, and they provide guidance and development of our short-and long-range service plan. These are the design principles we wrap around our service design and we welcome additions or changes.

Bergkamp reviewed the policy issues that face the agency and fall into these categories: Fixed-route service and service design; capital investments; financial policies; and other Intercity Transit services, such Village Vans, Vanpool, DAL and general policy issues like the CAC Stipend policy.

In 2025, IT will transition from restoration of service to a state of growth and expansion. In the next year, we expect to see increases in span and frequency of routes as well as some tweaks to make more direct connections between routes, so riders don't always have to make connections at transit centers. We also reference our five-year Capital Plan that helps create a plan for the future for large capital investments. The intent with a financial plan is to move forward cautiously with the goal of 2025 to 2030 strategic plan to implement capital improvements and levels of service which can be sustained for the foreseeable future given uncertainty with the climate commitment act.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston Regional Planning Council (Sept. 6) Sullivan reported on the Assessment Subcommittee meeting and recommended action. Executive Director Daily briefed TRPC on the recommendation from the TRPC Assessment Subcommittee. The subcommittee recommended the Council consider enacting a Tech Fee to be added to TRPC member annual assessments. The Tech Fee would generate approximately \$97,000 each year for the next five years. This would cover the rolling five-year costs of agency Information Technology (IT) infrastructure. Funds generated by the Tech Fee would be managed separately and only used for IT-related expenses. The subcommittee recommended the costs be shared proportionally across all members based on members' current assessment. This equates to about a 14 percent increase in assessments for each member. Council directed staff to bring a resolution and draft bylaws changes to incorporate that Tech Fee for Council consideration at its October meeting. The full presentation can be found here: [PowerPoint Presentation \(trpc.org\)](https://trpc.org). Sullivan said for more details on other agenda items, refer to the TRPC After Meeting Summary.

Sullivan will be out of town for the next TRPC meeting on October 4 and asked if the Intercity Transit alternate could provide the report. Councilmember Cox said she will provide the report.

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B. Transportation Policy Board (Sept. 11) Belk said staff briefed the TPB on the 2025-2028 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Annual Update. The RTIP is a four-year programming document derived from local six-year Transportation Improvement Programs. The RTIP includes federally funded, state-sponsored, and regionally significant projects. It is prepared annually to provide a list of RTIP projects for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program in order for funding to be released. This was an Action item – TPB approved the recommendation to Council of adoption of the RTIP. The full presentation can be found here: [DRAFT 2020-2023 Regional Transportation Improvement Program \(RTIP\) \(trpc.org\)](#)

The TPB was briefed on TRPC's 2024 Call for Projects federal transportation and Rural Community Support Program grant proposals. Andy Ryder, Justin Belk, Michelle Murray, Robert Vanderpool, and Travis Millar volunteered to serve on a grant review subcommittee to assist the Board with ranking the proposals and guiding funding scenarios. TRPC staff will coordinate with the subcommittee members to schedule their meeting. The TPB is expected to approve a funding recommendation to the Council on November 13. The full presentation can be found here: [A7-2024-Federal-Transportation-Grant-Funding-Call-for-Projects-09112024 \(trpc.org\)](#)

Staff provided an overview of Congestion Management Process. The TPB discussed the need to further emphasize land use in the CMP and whether or not SR 507 should be included in the route network. The Technical Advisory Committee were asked to consider these things in their recommendation. Staff will return to the TPB in October for a recommendation on adopting a congestion management process. The full presentation can be found here: [A9_CMP-Presentation \(trpc.org\)](#)

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Bergkamp presented an Intercity Transit community update to the Yelm Chamber of Commerce on September 10. There was a group of about 25 business owners from the community of Yelm. She shared information on progress IT has made to be back to 102% pre-pandemic service levels, and our plans for 2025 of increasing the accessibility to and enhancement of our service in line with the promises from Proposition 1, including better express-like service to Yelm once the bypass is complete.

Intercity Transit's Grant Program Manager Jessica Gould submitted an application for WSDOT's Green Transportation Grant program for the purchase of 2 BEB's replacement vehicles with 2 chargers. She also submitted an application for 5 propane DAL and 2 Battery Electric DAL replacement vehicles.

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Could thanked everyone who made these applications possible:

- Associate Planner Claire Daniels provided multiple maps and GIS skills to help strengthen our applications.
- Planning Deputy Director Rob Lafontaine provided service level estimates for the DAL project.
- Fleet & Facilities Maintenance Director Jonathon Yee provided reliable content, cost estimates, and milestones along with collaboration on approach and strategy. The thoughtful edits and extra set of eyes was invaluable.

Could thanked Thera Black for taking everything provided and forming the content into a solid ask with an excellent chance of being funded.

Bergkamp said we can expect to hear back on this application in May - June 2025. If awarded, the project can officially start 7/1/2025 and will help fund IT's first Battery Electric Coaches and DAL vehicles!

Bergkamp presented Intercity Transit's Severe Winter Weather operations at DES's yearly preparedness meeting on September 17, which is a great way to touch base with local jurisdictions on their preparations and sharing of information.

Bergkamp invites CAC and ITA members to the Avanti Bikes! Open House on September 25, 5-7 p.m. at Avanti High School. Over the last few years Walk N Roll Program Representative A Puri has been working hard developing this amazing partnership with Avanti. A and Avanti PE teacher Nikki, co-teach a PE class where youth learn and practice essential bicycle handling and safety skills. They also learn bike mechanic skills in the school's bike shop that Walk N Roll helped them create through sharing expertise and resources. Walk N Roll gives student participants a refurbished bike, helmet and lock. This program prepares students to ride their bike safely, independently and confidently for transportation. It has been so successful that A is now adjusting some of their time to focus on creating a new similar program at Envision Academy, the alternative high school in North Thruston.

Miscellaneous Discussion

Kim Carpenter's Public Comment

Gilman asked the Board and CAC how they felt about the public comment from Ms. Carpenter and asked staff to explain how the decision was made regarding the elimination of service to her home.

Pierce asked if there are other roads Ms. Carpenter could safely take to get her to the other boundaries. Bergkamp said DAL could pick up a client at a nearby address within the service area if the individual can find a safe way to get there.

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Gilman said since Ms. Carpenter has been riding for 16 years, we might consider letting that person run out the rest of their once-a-month ride and apply this more accurate mapping to the new applications. He believes that's worth consideration because he sees it different when our better technology determines somebody's ineligible versus a reconsideration of their capacity to use transit.

Bergkamp summarized the circumstances that led to Ms. Carpenter's public comment and request for consideration. Intercity Transit has been providing service to Ms. Carpenter's home address of 5119 Brenner Rd NW since 2008, which is outside of the Dial-A-Lift (DAL) service area. At that time, there was a previous exception in place, that staff had made in 2007, to provide service to Ms. Carpenter's neighbors who also lived outside the service area – they have since moved and no longer live there. Consequently, Ms. Carpenter was given the same level of service because she lived across the street.

Dial-A-Lift transitioned to a different software (from Routematch to VIA) and during that time we had to remap the service area boundary, and we found that Ms. Carpenter was among a handful of other individuals who were still receiving service just outside the service area who had been grandfathered in years ago. DAL staff worked with each of those individuals and explained the reason why IT could no longer serve their address, and all of those individuals understood the circumstances except Ms. Carpenter.

Ms. Carpenter was notified September 2023 that DAL would no longer be able to service her home address after October 1, 2024, and provided her with several other options and resources including Senior Services for South Sound. Out of fairness to others also living outside the service area; the exception for her home address was the only exception to the DAL service area in place. In reviewing Ms. Carpenter's request, we also double checked where her address is located to ensure our initial judgement of it being outside of the service area was accurate. Upon this review, it was identified that Ms. Carpenter's address was not in a "hallway" or "donut hole" surrounded by the service area.

Intercity Transit staff does not question Ms. Carpenter's need for DAL service, and she remains eligible to use it, but we've determined owing to the issue of inequality that exceptions create, DAL can only continue to provide Ms. Carpenter service to and from addresses within the service area. Additionally, Intercity Transit demonstrated sensitivity to Ms. Carpenter's circumstance by extending the timeframe DAL would pick Ms. Carpenter up at her home for an additional year so she could start using other community transportation resources that could pick her up at her home address, which was communicated to Ms. Carpenter in September of 2023. This extension was provided to reasonably accommodate Ms. Carpenter's needs and allow every possible opportunity for her to arrange for alternative transportation. Additionally, the address

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within the service area DAL staff suggested meeting Ms. Carpenter at, 2121 Simmons Rd NW, which she referenced in her public comment, was only a suggestion, and Ms. Carpenter is not required to meet DAL there. The alternate address Ms. Carpenter has requested we consider serving, 1901 Simmons Rd, is also outside of the service area. If Ms. Carpenter identifies another address within the service area, she would be more comfortable being picked up and dropped off at DAL staff are happy to coordinate this.

Since 2020, IT has informed approximately 140 DAL clients that we cannot provide DAL service to their home addresses which are also outside the DAL service area. Compared with Ms. Carpenter who was the sole person receiving DAL service outside the established service boundary, it is reasonable to predict continuing an exception of this nature can be construed as unfair to others in similar circumstances, which is the primary reason we can no longer do so.

Exceptions to the service area don't align with Federal best practices and guidelines because they can be viewed as unfairly biased in favor of one individual's circumstances when compared to another's. Exceptions that permit service outside the service area but cannot be evenly applied are inequitable to other DAL clients with similar needs who cannot receive service because they also live outside the service area. Unfortunately, we also don't have the necessary resources, including drivers, vehicles, or funding, to expand the DAL service area to serve the possibly countless eligible individuals living outside of it. The very real struggle of not being able to provide DAL to everyone is not because we don't have the desire to. Saying no to providing DAL outside the service area isn't something we take lightly because we know how much people need the service.

Legal Counsel Jeff Myers reviewed the situation and felt staff was justified in their determination to uphold the DAL service area out of fairness to others in similar situations as Ms. Carpenter.

Climate Commitment Act

Gilman referred to the Climate Commitment Act and there's some caution about how a transit agency might communicate the potential impacts. He's wondering if we might share with each of our jurisdictions that make up the Authority some bullet points about what losing that funding would mean for Intercity Transit. He said we could consider that a safe way to communicate factual information to the jurisdictions to aid them in whatever communication they're doing around considering resolutions where the local governments have more authority. We're allowed in local government to create resolutions in favor or opposed to a ballot measure.

Myers said he believes if a jurisdiction is considering one of those resolutions, Intercity Transit can attend the public hearing and testify about what those impacts are on transit

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in the community. That's one way to have that input, and if they're having a public hearing, he assumes written comments are also accepted.

Myers said the rules that the Public Disclosure Commission published allows an agency to send out a one-time mailer to people within their jurisdiction to communicate objective statement of the facts as to what the impacts would be. That's part of being a responsible government and communicating with your constituency in a factually objective way, without taking an advocacy position, one way or another.

AUTHORITY/CAC ISSUES

Sullivan said Tumwater's annual Fall Fest is September 28 and she thanks Intercity Transit for helping with the huge problem of limited to no parking.

Hess said Yelm is going through their strategic plan for growth and one issue he continues to bring to their planning department is where a transit hub can be established in Yelm. He's hoping to implement this within the strategic plan with Intercity Transit where bus 94 can stop. He'd like to see a couple of 35' passenger buses or smaller to help bring people in and moving them about to shop, go to the theatre, etc. within Yelm as they continue to grow. Hess said he wants to make some property available to make that happen.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Authority Chair Gilman adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Clark Gilman

Clark Gilman

ATTEST

Patricia Messmer

Pat Messmer
Clerk to the Authority

Date Approved: November 6, 2024

Prepared by Pat Messmer, Clerk of the Board/
Executive Assistant, Intercity Transit