

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting
October 16, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Mejia called the October 16, 2024, meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority to order at 5:30 p.m. This was a hybrid meeting held at the Pattison Street facility.

Members Present: Vice Chair and Thurston County Commissioner Carolina Mejia; City of Lacey Councilmember Carolyn Cox; City of Tumwater Councilmember Kelly Von Holtz; Community Representative Sue Pierce; Community Representative Don Melnick. Community Representative Justin Belk; Labor Representative, Mark Neuville.

Members Excused: Chair and City of Olympia Councilmember Clark Gilman; City of Tumwater Mayor Debbie Sullivan; City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess.

Staff Present: Emily Bergkamp; Pat Messmer; Matt Kenney; Jessica Gould; Amanda Collins; Daniel Van Horn; Jonathon Yee; Katie Cunningham; Michael Maverick; Tammy Ferris; Lynne Cunningham; Jonathan Martin; Brenden Houx; Peter Stackpole; Brian Nagel; Jana Brown; Jason Aguero; Rob LaFontaine; Carey Leanord; Jane Denicola; Joy Gerchak; Julie DeRuwe; Nicole Jones.

Others Present: Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel; Clair Bourgeois and Betty Hauser, Community Advisory Committee; Dale Learn, Gordon Thomas Honeywell; Jakub Kocztorz, Law, Lyman, Daniel, Kamerrer & Bogdanovich.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

A. Jane Denicola introduced **Carey Leanord, Customer Service Representative.**

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was M/S/A by Melnick and Cox to approve the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC HEARING

A. **January 2025 Service Change.** Planning Deputy Director, Rob LaFontaine said the written summary and draft equity analysis is posted on the website for public comment, which will continue through October 25. LaFontaine shared information about the service change posted on the web page that includes information about the service change, maps of the proposed route at the Capital campus and the draft service equity analysis. He briefly reviewed that document. LaFontaine said in terms of the outreach effort, this information was shared with our contacts at the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services, the City of Olympia, the Downtown Association for Olympia, and the property, formerly known as Quixote Village, which is the New Horizon Communities. He shared the invitation to review and comment with 15 residents who have written to Intercity Transit with comments mostly related to restoration of services like DASH, or inquiries about frequency on routes 42 and 67.

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Vice Chair Mejia opened the public hearing at 5:38 p.m.

Brandon Mixon from Olympia commented on the reintroduction of a Capitol Campus shuttle route. He is concerned with a location the route historically has served but newly proposed plans neglect to acknowledge. The Olympia Farmer's Market may be within a near walkshed to the OTC but as it stands there is no way to get back to the transit center without either connecting to another bus or riding all the way through the Route 45 loop. This is an accessibility concern as the sidewalks on the walking route aren't fit for all people with mobility aids. The DASH shuttle served the purpose of southbound trips from the Farmer's Market, but current route drafts show no signs of service returning to this stop. He understands the modifications to the DASH routing are to give more readily available connections to the OTC and he appreciates that. But he believes there should be some greater consideration to connection in the northern end of downtown.

With no further members of the public giving testimony, Vice Chair Mejia closed the public hearing at 5:40 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Brandon Mixon of Olympia provided comment on the execution of the One bus route. He rides the route frequently and he runs into the situation of people not understanding or being aware of the limited stops concept. The general public tends to overlook signage related to the One and he proposes the addition to the voice announcement system. Namely, the external speaker should more clearly state limited stops. Also, if people pull the cord the internal speakers should announce the next stop rather than announce that a stop has been requested. A stop request is redundant on a route that stops at all stops along the route, and he feels a notification of what the next stop is more clearly communicates to people what the route is meant to do.

APPROVAL CONSENT AGENDA

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

- A. Minutes - September 4, 2024**
- B. Payroll September: \$3,503,365.76**
 - Warrant Numbers: 40732-40734; 40829-40856 in the amount of \$53,160.55
 - ACH Payment Amount: \$3,450,205.21
- C. Accounts Payable September: \$1,803,502.08**

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- Disbursed Warrants: 40650-40699, 41700-41731, 40735-40828 & 40857-40913 in the amount of \$1,790,380.48.
- Voided Warrants: 37199, 36701 & 40802
- ACH Payments: \$13,121.60

NEW BUSINESS

A. Federal Advocacy Report. Federal Advocate, Dale Learn from Gordon Thomas Honeywell (GTH) provided an update on activities affecting public transportation in Washington D.C. and provided insight on what is going on in Congress. Learn said over the last several years Congress has acted to help transit primarily with more resources beyond those even in the infrastructure law. The Administration is pro transit. The current Senate has been supportive of high transit numbers. The House has been less so. However, it appears we're far away, even in the House, from those days where they were zeroing out discretionary bus accounts, seeking to end the gas tax set aside and fighting to cancel existing full funding grant agreements.

Learn said as we move to a new authorization, who will be in power in January, both the Presidency and Congress will have an impact. On the Congressional administrative action side, Congress stepped up and has gone beyond this transit-friendly administration. CARES and ARPA helped to keep transit afloat during the pandemic on grants and appropriations and there continues to be large increases in the transit accounts over the last several years. Those increases also continued this year in the House and Senate bills aided by that kind of baseline numbers from the current authorization.

The federal grant process at Intercity Transit, led by Jessica Gould, is very aggressive in pursuit of these funds and resulted in some wins for IT, especially in those traditional federal funding areas and hard infrastructure. We also continue to evaluate and sometimes seek funding in other areas.

Learn said he interacts with the FTA in many ways, including on our apportionments. He said IT moved up into a new urbanized area category which improves formula funding and makes us more competitive in those discretionary applications.

The current surface transportation authorization has seen large increases from the past and we're approximately 43% overall in those legacy transit accounts. When we include those supplemental appropriations like Senator Murray as Chair of the Appropriations Committee has added, transit over the last several years has seen a 90% increase overall. Those are programs like bus and bus facilities and alternative fuel buses, BRT, and Small Starts. Alternative fuels have become a big issue with Congress and this Administration. Department of Energy developed a strong partnership with the Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Association.

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There have been increases in multi-modal programs like RAISE and INFRA as well as those aimed at alternative transportation safety, air quality, alternative fuels, resiliency and new programs to assist seniors with disabilities and other accessibility programs.

Learn said we are in the fourth year of the resurrected Congressional earmark system. Congressional directed spending and the House calls them Community project funding. Collectively, Learn calls it the CDSCPF process. The CDSCPF process over the last four years has been light on transit, but there have been some awards. IT was designated in fiscal year 2023 for an earmark of \$1.8M for the Zero Fare bus stop access improvements to upgrade our frequently used bus stops on our system and we continue to move forward.

Overall, the CDSCPF process will remain and hopefully we'll continue to look at request funding for discrete projects in that process. Learn said we're going into a new federal authorization with the last year of the infrastructure law being fiscal year 2026. How federal budget processing works next year will be the last formal work year in the appropriations on our current authorization. The Authorization Committees for Transit, the Transportation Infrastructure Committee in the House, and as mentioned, Congresswoman Strickland's on that committee are beginning to examine what the next bill will look like. They evaluate current programs, explore new ones and it's important to note Congress rarely gets rid of programs - more often than not they add new ones.

In the coming years they extend the current bill because there's a lot on the plate in the new administration and new Congress. We'll see a lot of data information requests from Congress to the FTA hearings proposals. Learn mentioned we currently have one member on the authorization committee, Representative Strickland. There are also two senior Senators with Cantwell, who is currently the Chair of one of the three committees who put this overall bill together, the Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction over freight issues and safety, and Murray, who is the most senior Democrat in the United States Senate. Learn will work with our trade association on some of the national issues and Learn suggested to Bergkamp that we work to develop our own wish list on policy issues that we would like to see in the reauthorization.

Learn said whoever wins the upcoming election, the President and Congress should have a significant impact on this process. Transportation is still very much a bipartisan issue. On the federal level, the GOP tends to favor more formula funds and few, if any, discretionary accounts. And the Democrats tend to be more of a balance between formula and discretionary. If President Trump wins, like in many things, it will be a huge wild card. Not only will we likely see proposals with more formula funds and the discretionary, but you may recall his infrastructural proposals during his last term sought to flip through the traditional 80/20 federal state financial split in funding to 20/80 federal state. If Vice President Harris wins,

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we'll likely see more status quo, with increases in new programs. In the make-up of Congress there's a good chance we'll have a barely Republican majority in the Senate in probably a barely Democratic majority in the House. The surface transportation authorization is a product of Congress, the President does make proposals and often times really drives the top line numbers, but in the end the finished product's really a creature of Congress.

New issues pop up all the time, particularly with the FTA. Learn said we have senior staff and members of Congress like Strickland who finds time to visit our agency. And Learn is in constant contact with them and their staff, both local and in D.C. on the issues that are important to us and seeks help from Congress and the FTA to understand what's happening, but also to advocate on behalf of our interests.

B. TSP & Smart Corridors Implementation Contract Authority. Development Director, Peter Stackpole, presented a contract to continue work under the contract with Iteris, Inc. to support the implementation of TSP and the Thurston Smart Corridor projects.

In late 2021, Intercity Transit entered into a contract with Iteris, Inc. to support its TSP and Thurston Smart Corridor Implementation projects. The Authority approved Task Order 1 in October 2021, focusing on coordinating with project partners to develop an implementation "Roadmap" for TSP, conducting bench testing of traffic signal equipment, establishing a data collection approach, and updating other relevant information related to the Smart Corridors project.

In June 2022, the Authority approved Task Orders 2 and 3, which provided additional technical support during the initial implementation phase. Task Order 2 (the Data Task) established an automated web-based program (Data-as-a-Service model) to track intersection operations and integrate corridor data with reporting accessible to project partners. Task Order 3 (the Implementation Task) provided engineering support services, including field testing, design work, implementation coordination, and development of the project's implementation strategy (Roadmap). The Draft Roadmap for Phases 1-3 was completed on June 17, 2024, and presented to project partners at the June Smart Corridors Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting. The scope of work also included a phasing plan and recommendations for funding future efforts consistent with the Smart Corridor program.

The proposed Task Order 4 builds on the foundation of the first three task orders and aims to expand the pilot project's field implementation analysis for the Smart Corridors program. This proposal includes project management, stakeholder coordination, technical support services, EMTRAC data support, and data analytics. The anticipated timeline for completion is approximately six months, with an estimated cost of \$299,214.49; however, the project team is seeking \$400,000 to accommodate a contingency to allow for any unforeseen modifications.

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Intercity Transit is serving as the lead agency and providing all matching funds for the three separate grant awards related to this project. The 2024 and 2025 budgets include \$1.5 million for the TSP and Smart Corridor projects. Future phases are planned in the 2025 budget for \$1,350,000, contingent on Intercity Transit receiving Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) grant funding.

It was M/S/A by Melnick and Pierce to authorize the General Manager to execute Task Order 4 with Iteris, Inc. providing additional contract authority of \$400,000, for a revised total not-to-exceed contract value of \$1,067,642.33, to support engineering and consulting services for implementation of TSP and Thurston Smart Corridors.

C. Design and Construction Services for LTC and Amtrak Restrooms Renovation.

Construction Project Coordinator, Jonathan Martin, presented a Task Order from the On-Call Engineering Services Master Contract for design and construction support services for renovation of the Lacey Transit Center (LTC) and Amtrak restrooms.

The LTC was originally constructed in 1996. Since that time, Transit operations have increased significantly, along with an increase in usage of both the public and staff restrooms. Due to the facility's age and increased usage, the restrooms are now at the end of their useful life, therefore, making it difficult to maintain and keep clean. Additionally, the restrooms are supported by a small utility closet that currently houses janitorial equipment, electrical infrastructure, data communication equipment and security. Due to these issues, LTC restroom facilities are due for a renovation. The goal of the project is to address the deteriorating restrooms and to reconfigure the layout to accommodate current facility needs.

The Centennial Station Amtrak facility was built with volunteer and community support and opened in 1993. While the site has been meticulously maintained over the years, the time has come for the restroom facilities to be replaced. In addition, there have been past issues with sewer backups into the restrooms, likely due to poor slope and failing sewer lines. The goal of the project is to renovate the restrooms and address the site utility issues.

Staff recommend the Authority authorize the General Manager to execute a Task Order with SCJ Alliance to provide design services and construction support for the renovation of LTC and Amtrak restrooms. The scope of work also includes schematic level design and cost estimating for a much-needed addition to LTC to accommodate a staff break room, as well as providing adequate space for a custodial and utility closet. The total requested amount of \$225,000 includes \$175,804.66 for SCJ's fee, an approximate \$25,000 contingency for design beyond schematic and construction support for the LTC addition, and an overall \$25,000 contingency to allow for unforeseen changes. Staff have negotiated the Task Order scope and fee with SCJ Alliance in accordance with the terms of the existing On-Call Engineering

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Services Agreement. Based on the scope and proposed hours, staff are confident the pricing is both fair and reasonable.

It was M/S/A by Cox and Von Holtz to authorize the General Manager to execute a Task Order with SCJ Alliance in the amount of \$225,000.

D. Selection of CAC Candidates for Interviews. Bergkamp said in response to the CAC recruitment, 14 applications were received to fill 7 vacancies by the submission date of October 4. The ad-hoc committee is made up of three ITA and three CAC members (Board members Debbie Sullivan, Carolina Mejia and Justin Belk; and CAC members Eliane Wilson, Rachel Wilson, and Rachel Weber). They recommend interviewing all applicants on November 8, including an extension for youth applicants who apply through November 6, 2024. The ad-hoc committee would recommend candidates for appointment at the December 4, 2024, ITA meeting.

It was M/S/A by Cox and Melnick for staff to schedule interviews of all CAC applicants on November 8, 2024, including an extension for youth applicants who apply through November 6, 2024.

E. Selection of ITA Candidates for Interviews. Bergkamp said Community Representative Don Melnick's term expires December 31, 2024. The Authority directed staff to conduct a recruitment, and staff are seeking direction regarding which applicants to put through for interviews.

Five applications were received by the deadline of October 4, 2024, and those were forwarded to the Authority for review. Interviews are scheduled during a special ITA public meeting on November 22, 2024.

It was M/S/A by Melnick and Von Holtz to interview all five applicants for the Community Representative position, at a special meeting being held on November 22, 2024.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Thurston Regional Planning Council (Oct. 4). Cox reported staff provided a review of the draft Congestion Management Process report and next steps for adoption. The five objectives identified were to increase walking, bicycling and transit use; reduce congestion and improve travel times; reduce fatal and serious injury crashes; maintain our existing transportation assets; and improve access to jobs and community destinations. The members looked at a strategy toolkit and active transportation safety and land use policies. Members provided direction to staff to include Rainier Road, Old Highway 99, and SR 507 in the route network; the draft report and resolution will be updated to reflect this direction. This item will return to Council in November for action. The full report can be found here: [A6_CMP-Presentation](#)

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Staff provided the Council with an overview of each federal transportation and Rural Community Support Program grant application. This review was the Council's first step in the process of selecting grant awards, with final action expected on December 6, 2024. The presentation can be found here: [A7-2024-Federal-Transportation-Grant-Funding-Call-for-Projects-09112024](#)

Executive Director Marc Daily reviewed suggested changes to membership fees to include a Technology Fee that would help manage the fund balance and support the agency's required Information Technology infrastructure. The report can be found here: [PowerPoint Presentation](#)

The 2025 legislative priorities were reviewed. Staff reviewed the recommendations of the Council/Policy Board Legislative subcommittee on priority issues for the region to take to State Legislators for the 2025 session and asked Council to take action on the recommendations. Those include a state highway matrix package that adds roundabout improvements throughout South County, i.e. Morris Rd/Bald Hill roundabout in Yelm totaling. They are asking for \$34.8 million, and there is a high-capacity visioning process that they'll be doing an ask for too. Presentation can be found here: [Thurston County Bicycle Map](#)

B. Transportation Policy Board (Oct. 9) Belk said the Council approved several recommendations including several Cox mentioned in her report above. Thurston County requested an amendment to the 2024-2027 RTIP to include the Countywide Electrical Services Project (HSIP). The Board approved the amendment, and they recommended the comprehensive plan review and certification process.

Staff provided a review and update of what occurred at the September TPB and TAC meetings as well as the direction provided by the Council at their October 4th meeting. TPB recommended that TRPC adopt a congestion management process (CMP), as outlined in the resolution and modified to include SR 507, Rainier Road, and Old Highway 99 in the route network. Staff will update the CMP report to reflect the revised route network. The council will take action on the CMP at their November meeting.

The TPB is reviewing those Call for Projects applications for those grants and the various pots of money to make a recommendation to the Council.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Last week, Intercity Transit's Authority Board Chair Clark Gilman, Administrative Services Director Heather Stafford and Bergkamp met with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee to collaborate on possible language to include while updating the mission and vision statements to better reflect our values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. While the Board approves these renewed mission and vision statements

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annually with the updated Strategic Plan, this work with staff demonstrates the agency's dedication to ensuring everyone feels a sense of belonging at Intercity Transit so we can better serve our community with these same principles. Bergkamp plans to bring the draft updated Strategic Plan before the Board in November.

Bergkamp, Grants Program Manager Jessica Gould and Chief Marketing, Communications, & Outreach Officer Nick Demeris, met with State advocates Joanna Grist and David Foster to discuss Intercity Transit's priorities for this year's legislative session.

In response to feedback from our employee engagement survey earlier this year, Human Resources developed a Leadership Academy for all levels of leadership at Intercity Transit which started last week. The purpose of this academy is to ensure supervisors, managers, and others have the tools and resources they need. The first session gave leaders the opportunity to learn what their personal strength profiles are, including if they lead from a promoting, supporting, analytical, or driving framework under both positive and adverse conditions. The goal is not to prove one framework is better or worse, but simply provide everyone with the tools on how to best interact with others from styles we may not be as strong in, to avoid miscommunications and unnecessary misunderstandings. The process encourages learning more about us and others and offers an opportunity to celebrate differences and provide support for each other's individuality.

The Maintenance Department held a chili cookoff and potluck recently to commemorate their transition to the temporary structure for Maintenance Operations while their facility is being rehabilitated. They will move in at the first of the year.

Deputy Director of Planning, Rob LaFontaine, provided a Transit 101 to the Tumwater Planning Commission last week. The presentation shared the major ingredients that go into transit planning in cities like Tumwater, as well as an update on current service levels, our progress on promises from Proposition 1, our Long-range Plan, and future system enhancements.

Intercity Transit hosted a visit from Congresswoman Marilyn Strickland last week. The agency is a recipient of \$1.8M in community project funding shepherded by Congresswoman Strickland for zero fare bus stop enhancements, which includes expanded concrete pads that accommodate front and rear door boarding and amenities like shelters and solar lighting for our Pacific NW weather. We started Congresswoman Strickland's visit with a staff overview of the work planned at the stops, similar to the comprehensive update the Board received at their meeting in August. Afterwards we took the Congresswoman on a tour to visit two nearby stops on the 94 at Washington Middle School scheduled for enhancement. Special thanks to ITA member and Lacey City Councilmember Carolyn Cox for joining us for this visit and Operator Lois Thomas for being our driver and tour guide going to the bus stops. Staff members, Drew

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Goffeney, Jessica Gould, Peter Stackpole, and Tammy Ferris were also on hand to provide details of the project.

Bergkamp, Operations Director Dena Withrow, Deputy Director of Operations Cameron Crass, and Service Impacts Supervisor David Dudek attended a memorial service for fellow transit colleague, Shawn Harris Operations Manager at Island Transit, who recently passed away after a battle with cancer. Bergkamp shared the following information from his obituary: "Shawn had plenty of jobs throughout his life because he was always willing to try something new. When he came to Whidbey Island he started working as a driver for Island Transit. With years of consistency, he moved up to Operations Manager where he would be able to showcase his creativity and impact on the company and community with his thoughts and ideas. His work ethic would ensure all of his people were straight and taken care of. He was the glue of the household. Shawn had a glow about him that was noticed every time he walked into a room."

AUTHORITY ISSUES

Cox thanked IT's Marketing and Communications Manager, Nick Demerice, for presenting last night at the City of Lacey Council meeting. He shared information about the Climate Commitment Act ballot issue, and he did a wonderful job on educating without advocating. The Council also presented a Proclamation declaring October Walk to School Month, making bicycling, pedestrian and active transportation safety improvements a priority. Demerice also provided a presentation on this program.

Melnick hopes staff continues their efforts to inform and engage the community in IT's public process to get the public more involved.

Pierce agrees with Melnick. She suggested teaming up with members of the CAC who are willing to step in and go out into the community with talking points or set up visits with other organizations during their monthly meetings.

Mejia thanked Intercity Transit for providing the transportation through its Community Van Program during a tour the County took of an agricultural farm with their Agriculture Advisory Committee, which consisted of 30 individuals and county representatives. They were able to go all around the county visiting different farms.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Cory Christopherson of Olympia lives downtown, and he advocates for the return of the Dash bus. He works at the Capitol campus. Not only for personal use, but the DASH was well used during the Legislative session.

ADJOURNMENT

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With no further business to come before the Authority, Vice Chair Mejia adjourned the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Clark Gilman

Clark Gilman, Chair

ATTEST

Patricia Messmer

Pat Messmer
Clerk to the Authority

Date Approved: November 20, 2024

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