

**Minutes**  
**INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**November 6, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Gilman called the November 6, 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:** 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; Community Representative Sue Pierce; Community Representative Don Melnick; Labor Representative Mark Neuville.

**Members Excused:** City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess; Community Representative Justin Belk.

**Staff Present:** Emily Bergkamp; Pat Messmer; Matt Kenney; Amanda Collins; Daniel Van Horn; Jonathon Yee; Katie Cunningham; Michael Maverick; Tammy Ferris; Lynne Cunningham; Jonathan Martin; Brenden Houx; Peter Stackpole; Jana Brown; Jason Aguro; David Chaffee; Thera Black; Noelle Gordon; Ramon Beltran; Nicole Jones.

**Others Present:** Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel; Betty Hauser and Doug Riddels, Community Advisory Committee.

**STAFF INTRODUCTIONS**

A. David Chaffee introduced **Joshua Yearout, Technician 1.**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**PUBLIC HEARING**

A. **Draft 2025 Budget.** Chief Financial Officer, Jana Brown presented the updated 2025 Draft Budget for public comment. The original proposed Operating Budget for 2025 was \$90.6 million and the proposed Capital Budget was \$70.7 million for a total proposed 2025 expenditure budget of \$161.4 million. Brown said there have been three changes made to the original budget.

Jonathon Yee, Fleet and Maintenance Director requested we pull \$5 million from the Capital 2026 budget into the 2025 budget. It's been determined staff have repeatedly needed to order ahead of time fixed route bus replacements, resulting in staff coming back to the Authority in order place those orders.

Intercity Transit is a member of the Washington State Transit Insurance Pool and insurance has been a challenge across the nation. IT self-insures and we have carriers that provide different layers on top of that, and one of the layers was not renewed because the insurance provider didn't wish to do so, and staff is

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struggling to find that coverage. Staff are aware there is going to be an increase in cost, and by the end of November, Brown will know the exact amount, and in the meantime, an additional \$50,595 is added to the budget.

Brown said IT received increases to the Labor and Industries rates and the Washington paid medical leave premium rate, which brings another increase of about \$84,000, and brings the new total 2025 budget to \$166.5 million Operating and Capital.

**Chair Gilman opened the public hearing at 5:36 p.m.**

**With no members of the public giving testimony, Chair Gilman closed the public hearing at 5:36 p.m.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT - None.**

### **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- A. Minutes** - September 18, 2024, ITA/CAC Joint Meeting
- B. Surplus Property** (*Noelle Gordon*): Staff is requesting to declare the property Operations vehicle 1227 as surplus. Operations vehicle 1227, a 2018 Ford Explorer 5-passenger vehicle, was recently involved in an accident. Based on an assessment provided by WSTIP, Intercity Transit's insurance provider, the total estimated pre-accident fair market of the vehicle is \$14,726.98. The estimated cost to repair the damage to this vehicle is \$29,093.54, which exceeds its fair market value, and the vehicle has therefore been deemed a total loss.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Design Services for Zero Emission Master Plan.** Construction Projects Coordinator, Jonathan Martin, presented a Task Order from Transit Planning On-Call Consulting Services Master Contract for design services for the development of a long-term site master plan to support the agency's zero-emission transition planning efforts.

Following the zero-emissions analysis and final report completed in 2023, in January 2024 staff shared recommendations for both short- and long-term implementation steps that will be included in the final agency zero-emission transition plan. In addition to vehicle purchases, the transition plan will incorporate major site and infrastructure upgrades necessary to accommodate both fuel-cell electric and battery electric vehicles at full-fleet scale.

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This task order, issued to Stantec Architecture, Inc. utilizes the Transit Planning On-Call Consulting Services Master Contract. Stantec has been the primary design firm for the 2018 Pattison Master Plan and the Pattison Site Expansion and Rehabilitation Project. The scope of this task order includes coordination and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders to verify programming needs, includes both hydrogen fueling and electric vehicle charging, and explores design solutions for incorporation of all necessary infrastructure upgrades to support the long term zero-emissions transition. The total requested amount of \$275,000 includes \$232,555.91 for Stantec Architecture design labor fees, reimbursable expenses and an approximate 18% contingency.

Given their long-term involvement with Intercity and our Pattison facility, staff are confident that Stantec is well qualified and the best fit to assist with this next phase of design and site master planning for our zero-emission vehicle and infrastructure transition.

**It was M/S/A by Melnick and Cox to authorize the General Manager to execute a Task Order with Stantec Architecture, Inc. in an amount not-to-exceed \$275,000.**

- B. Draft Strategic Plan and Request for Public Hearing.** Bergkamp reviewed the major changes to the draft Strategic Plan. Bergkamp said 2025 recognizes that we met our primary goal to return to full-service levels pre-pandemic and re-establishes a clear focus on accomplishing goals from Proposition 1 and the Authority approved long-range plan out to 2030.

Bergkamp made some structural changes to the plan. Notable changes to the Plan include:

- Combined Historical Perspective with Background
- Updated State and Federal reimbursement amounts and projections
- Added grants applied for 2025-2027 State Biennium and for TRPC's consideration of FHA 2025-2030 funding
- Discussed estimated total cost of ownership of zero-emissions technology
- Updated sales tax trends
- Discussion of I-2117 and funding impermanence
- Modification of Guiding Principles to reflect our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Updated Policy Positions to remove expired references to COVID-19 impacts no longer adversely impacting the agency

Bergkamp reviewed the alterations she's recommending to the mission and vision statements based on the conversation with the ITA and CAC at the September Joint Meeting that included adding language that reflects our commitment to DEI principles as an agency. Several take-aways resulted from the Joint meeting conversation - safety and inclusion and barrier free and be

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respectful. Bergkamp combined these suggested changes and offered this **revised Mission Statement**:

**“To provide and promote transportation choices respectful of the safety, comfort, and diverse needs of all our customers, to support an accessible, sustainable, livable, healthy and prosperous community.”**

Bergkamp moved on to the Vision Statement which reflects what organizational success looks like. It serves as our guide to action. It is consistent with the organization’s values. It challenges and inspires us to achieve our mission, and incorporating pieces from the conversation at the Joint meeting as well as from the DEI Committee, she offered this **revised Vision Statement**:

**“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 providing inclusive and exceptional transit services that enhance the quality of life for all in Thurston County.”**

Bergkamp reviewed the Goals and End Policies in which revisions are noted in red below:

**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 **diverse** transportation needs of our Public Transportation Benefit Area.

**Goal 2:** Provide outstanding and **inclusive** 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.

**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 **diverse** community.

**Goal 5:** Integrate **equity** and 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.

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

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

- End Policy - Educate and encourage all 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 **high-quality and inclusive** mobility options as well as educational and socio-economic opportunities in our community.

**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.

Bergkamp reviewed the Design Principles. In developing recommendations for the Thurston County PTBA, seven general design principles were identified. These principles guide development of a public transportation system appropriate for our PTBA over the next six years. These principles provided guidance in the development of a Short- and Long-Range Service Plan and remain relevant today.

1. Operate a range of services, each designed to meet the needs and capabilities of the neighborhoods it serves.
2. Strengthen service operating along major corridors.
3. Reduce customer travel times.
4. Keep pace with development.
5. Expand regional express routes.
6. Support a range of transportation choices.
7. Provide fixed facilities and equipment that support the region's public transit infrastructure.

Bergkamp reviewed changes she made to the Policy Positions and other sections of the strategic plan.

Section 2 - Policy Positions #1: Should Intercity Transit maintain service levels in 2025 or consider new or expanded local transit services needed to serve the growing population?

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- ~~• Continue to focus on the restoration of service to pre-COVID-19 levels.~~
- Proceed with the implementation of the **expansion focused** Long-Range Plan recognizing that COVID-19, ~~and in particular impacts to the labor market,~~ temporarily paused our forward momentum.

Section 3 – Recommended Service Plan: Bergkamp said IT met the goal of restoration, now it's time to lean into our promises to the community. "Intercity Transit's recently adopted Transit Development Plan forecast for years 2025 – 2029 reflects Intercity Transit's expectation to reach substantial completion of enhancement elements defined in the 2018 Long-Range Plan. Specifically in 2025, Intercity Transit will transition from restoration of service to a state of growth and expansion." Bergkamp said we're hopeful to end the year with just over 4 million rides, which is excellent progress and 2025 brings with it the expectation of extra service hours and hoping for continuation of trajectory of increased ridership.

Section 4 – Capital Plan: Bergkamp said staying the course with Pattison Street Facility rehabilitation and expansion to ensure effective operations of services for the next 3-4 decades. Keep building out the Capital Improvement Plan from 5 to 10 years to ensure we have the tools we need to ensure responsible operation of services as a lifeline provider. The Capital Improvement Plan identifies \$166.6 million in capital projects estimated to take place over the course of the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan:

- Preventive maintenance of vehicles in IT's fleet.
- Purchase of replacement vanpool vans.
- Continuing progress on Bus Stop Enhancements and Accessibility program
- Continuing Youth Education Program(s) that foster skills and provides education on using transit, bicycling, and walking as transportation choices.
- Acquisition of heavy-duty coaches to replace models that are at or beyond their expected useful life.
- Purchase of replacement Dial-A-Lift vans to meet the needs of our region's eligible clients.
- Planning, design, and capital improvements to provide High Performance corridor service consistent with the adopted Long-Range Plan.
- Planning, design, facility, and site improvements for Alternative Fuel Infrastructure systems.
- Planning, design, and construction of the NE Lacey Operational Support Terminal Facility
- Real Time and Digital Signage project

Section 5 – Financial Plan: The future is never certain. IT has survived the loss of revenue from economic downturns, past initiatives and the threat of new initiatives like I-2117. It is our responsibility to not take the community's support in vain, but to plan service within our financial means and create a plan for a state of good repair. Our intent is to move forward with an iterative financial approach implementing capital improvements and a level of service that can be

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sustained with often variable funding levels. And finally, Bergkamp talked about financing the Strategic Plan with these considerations:

- Managing Growth identified in Long-range plan
- Enterprise Resource Planning software system
- Cost of Services
- State of Good Repair/Zero Emissions Transition
- Voters rejected I-2117 by over 60% in the first ballot count. Climate Commitment Act funding for Move Ahead Washington remains unchanged, but also serves as a reminder the future likely holds more funding challenges.

Melnick suggests taking advantage of current funding to and be part of the experiment to purchase battery electric vehicles versus waiting for when the experiment is over and the dust settles. He doesn't believe Intercity Transit should wait to be part of this new technology and he'd like to see that placed in the strategic plan. Bergkamp said she'll address it in the document itself to bring it into the mind stream that this is something we'll need to plan for and it's a very costly expenditure. She can speak more about our vision of what that's going to look like and mention the pilots we have planned like with hydrogen fuel cell and purchasing some battery electric vehicles.

Cox suggested more reference to what Intercity Transit is doing in the way of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion language withing the strategic plan. Bergkamp said she can provide more of that information for context, however, explained the DEI Committee mainly focuses on highlighting the diversity of our workforce about issues that pertain to LGBTQ community or sharing slides about Filipino Heritage month and in November we'll honor Native American Heritage. These are the pieces we've started to share information and trying to bring everyone's attention to the fact there ais a lot of diversity in our workforce. We also convey the message to treat everyone with respect.

Gilman would like to see language about being an employer of choice and recognizing our desire to create an equitable, welcoming, belonging sort of work culture and Intercity Transit's success in recruiting and retaining staff and the level of morale that's allowed us to engage in innovation and growth.

Neuville said there's a new group called Regional Hydrogen Alliance RH based in Oregon, but they're interacting with Centralia College. They're creating curriculums as we speak and by us being there they realize that operators are going to be using this. It's focused initially on building trades because they're building the hydrogen plant there. It's the operators and maintenance that are going to be doing this in the foreseeable future. Being involved at that level will allow us to create those programs coming out that provide the emphasis you need to bring people who already know what to expect with driving and dealing with everything that goes along with the technology.

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It was M/S/A by Sullivan and Melnick to schedule a public hearing on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. to receive comments on the 2025-2030 Draft Strategic Plan.

**C. ITA Community Representative Interview Questions.** Bergkamp reviewed the questions used during past interviews for the ITA Community Representative to determine if they need to be updated. The Board discussed each of the questions and determined the following changes should be incorporated to formulate the questions for the upcoming interviews being held on November 22. The Board directed staff to make the following changes.

**Question 5:** Remove the words “specifically in Thurston County.” New question: How do you think transportation fits into today’s society and culture?

**Add a question 9:** Do you have any questions for us?

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**A. Thurston Regional Planning Council (Nov. 1)** Sullivan said 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 Council approved the proposed membership fees and associated changes to the Bylaws. Access the presentation [PowerPoint Presentation](#).

TRPC adopted a congestion management process which includes a systematic and regionally accepted approach for managing congestion that provides accurate, up-to-date information on transportation system performance and assesses alternative strategies for congestion management. Access the presentation [A7\\_CMP](#)

The Council discussed the Growth Management Act (GMA) Housing Need Allocations. TRPC is working with local partners to implement new state requirements for jurisdictions to plan for and accommodate affordable housing to a range of incomes in their Comprehensive Plan updates. Access the presentation [Meeting 1 Requests](#)

The Council performed a first review of the proposal to add TRPC’s Multimodal Level of Service Phase 2 project to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Contingency List. Access the report [A10\\_Contingency-List](#)

Staff presented an overview of TRPC’s Draft 2025 TRPC Annual Work Program that highlights agency projects and programs for the coming year and is the basis for the agency budget. Access the presentation [Rochester/Grand Mound Trail Feasibility](#)



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The Council discussed the events and next steps of the High-Capacity Transportation Study Visioning Event held on October 23, 2024. Sullivan attended this event, and it was a really good event, and a lot was learned. The event brought in different partners for example the light rail system, and looking at all those different options. Access the presentation [A12\\_HCT-Visioning-Event-Presentation-Council-11012024](#)

Lastly, there was a report from Chris Sterns on the Puget Sound Regional Council Growth Management Policy.

- B. Community Advisory Committee (Oct. 21).** Betty Hauser reported the CAC received a review of the draft 2025 Budget. They reviewed the upcoming route changes. There was some discussion about the new downtown route because it doesn't include the Farmer's Market and that was explained. Reviewed the equity regulation in regard to the route changes. The CAC conducted nominations for 2025 Officers. Rachel Weber was nominated for Chair and Claire Bourgeois for Vice Chair. They discussed a consumer issue regarding signage at the park and ride that 612 is still up there and there was discussion about what was the most dependable transit app and One Bus Away is being deleted.

### **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

- The agency celebrated Customer Service week, October 21-25, which saluted our dedicated and knowledgeable Customer Service division. Festivities included an open house, Intercity Transit swag giveaways for customers, and a staff potluck.
- Bergkamp, Rob Lafontaine Deputy Director of Planning and Drew Goffeney Sr. Planner participated in TRPC's half day transportation leaders visioning meeting on October 23. At the meeting, TRPC shared their High-Capacity Transportation project findings, and a panel of regional transportation providers, including Bergkamp and Goffeney from Intercity Transit, and other professionals from Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, Rural Transit and Amtrak discussed possible future high-capacity options.
- Intercity Transit continued the tradition of employees wearing work-appropriate Halloween costumes on October 31. Employees dressed up in a wide variety of amazing costumes, showing our community we can deliver our mission in a way that brings a smile to their face.
- Last week, we celebrated Denise Paul's retirement after almost 17 years of service to the community. Paul started her career at Intercity Transit in 2008 as a Coach Operator, before becoming a Customer Service Representative where she worked for the past seven years making sure customers got the most out of our services. In both roles, Paul consistently advocated for her customers and co-workers alike, always putting others' needs before her own. Many of us were

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aware that she has dealt with significant health challenges over the past few years, making her transition to retirement even more important as she focuses on herself for a change. We will miss Paul's steadfast presence, hard work, and compassion.

- On November 8, 14 candidates will be interviewed to fill 6 open positions on the Community Advisory Committee. The combined ITA/CAC ad-hoc committee will complete the interviews and make recommendations to the Authority at the December 4 ITA meeting. Similarly, interviews for Don Melnick's Community Representative position, whose term ends at the end of this year, will take place on Friday, November 22. We all look forward to the outcome of these important recruitments.

### **AUTHORITY ISSUES**

Melnick said public hearings meet the letter of the law but it's evident they don't generate much public attention or engage our staff. Melnick thinks it's critical because when it comes time for the public to vote on something affecting us, public hearings don't really carry the water. It's critical that the public understands there are human beings who are caring who are trying to keep the system going.

Sullivan thanks staff for the fast turnaround to make improvements to a bus stop in Tumwater. And construction on Israel Road is complete with the exception of some bumps in the middle of the road. Due to supply chain issues the covers are on back order.

Pierce said Whatcom Transit has a special button on their newer buses that Operators can push whenever public drivers behind them let them merge in or change lanes. When the button is pushed an electronic emoji (fist) shows up on the outside back of the bus thanking the driver(s) for courtesy.

Pierce also suggested Pierce Transit provide a quicker bus between the 512 parking and ride and downtown and meet those commuter buses at 512 and get riders into downtown or into Tacoma Dome station in less than 45 minutes.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**With no further business to come before the Authority, Chair Gilman adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.**

**INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

*Clark Gilman*

**Clark Gilman, Chair**

**ATTEST**

*Patricia Messmer*

**Pat Messmer**

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**Clerk to the Authority**

**Date Approved: December 18, 2024**

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