

Minutes
INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting
August 6, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Pierce called the meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority to order on August 6, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. This was a hybrid meeting held at the Pattison Street facility.

Members Present: Vice Chair and Community Representative Sue Pierce; Thurston County Commissioner Carolina Mejia; City of Tumwater Councilmember Kelly Von Holtz; Community Representative Justin Belk; Labor Representative Mark Neuville; Community Representative Wendy Goodwin; and City of Olympia Councilmember Clark Gilman.

Members Excused: Chair and City of Lacey Councilmember Carolyn Cox; City of Olympia Councilmember Robert Vanderpool; City of Yelm Councilmember Brian Hess.

Staff Present: Emily Bergkamp; Pat Messmer; Brian Nagel; Katie Cunningham; Matt Kenney; Peter Stackpole; Thera Black; Brenden Hoax; Jessica Gould; Daniel Van Horn; Dena Withrow; Heather Stafford; Tammy Ferris; Nicole Jones; Cameron Crass; Michael Maverick; Jonathon Yee; Noelle Gordon; Rob LaFontaine; Ramon Beltran; Alana Neal.

Others Present: Jeff Myers, Legal Counsel; Julian Preston and Margaret Janis, Community Advisory Committee.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

A. Alejandro Soto introduced Bret Eby, Inventory Specialist

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was M/S/A by Von Holtz and Goodwin to approve the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sam Coons of Olympia - Mr. Koons, who is visually impaired and uses the bus for all his transportation, spoke about the impact of the proposed changes to the Express routes 600 and 610. He explained he has a 2.5-hour round-trip bus commute five days a week for work. He also makes a seven-hour and 25-minute round-trip journey twice a month to visit a family member in Puyallup. He stated the new route changes will increase this specific Saturday trip to seven hours and 45 minutes, a 20-minute increase each trip. Mr. Koons mentioned he already submitted his comments via email and had a professional but unhelpful exchange with a transit staff member who indicated his route was not a priority. While he supports serving more people, especially those with disabilities, he asked the Board to reconsider the route change if it won't demonstrably

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improve the lives of other disabled individuals. He explained that his family's circumstances, including a wife who cannot drive and a child with special needs make it impossible for them to move closer to his job. He concluded by reiterating the significant negative impact the route change would have on his already challenging transportation schedule.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

A. Janitorial Contract Renewal Amendment *(Noelle Gordon)*

Authorized the General Manager to execute a contract amendment with CW Janitorial Service to renew the contract for janitorial services and supplies at Intercity Transit facilities for a period of one year in an amount of \$631,420, including taxes.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Adopt the Transit Development Plan.** Planning Deputy Director, Rob LaFontaine presented the final adoption of the updated Transit Development Plan (TDP) for 2025-2030. He explained the TDP is a mandatory document for all Washington state transit agencies, a compilation of the previous years' service and a six-year financial, capital, and service projection. The timeline for the TDP's adoption included a public hearing on July 16, and the final consideration was scheduled for the current meeting on August 6, with a September 1 deadline for submission to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

Lafontaine highlighted the nine required elements of the TDP, noting that planned operating changes for the upcoming years are a significant component. He outlined past and future service changes, including the enhancement of commuter service to JBLM in September 2025, and a comprehensive system redesign planned for May 2026. Regarding public feedback, he noted one formal comment on the draft TDP about commuter service and three informal comments regarding relocating a bus stop, introducing new service on South Bay Road, and correcting a bus schedule for Route 45. He also presented a historical analysis of public comments, showing that commuter service to Pierce County and requests for expanded service are the most common topics.

Lafontaine's presentation concluded with a staff recommendation to adopt the 2025-2030 TDP. During a brief Q&A, clarification was sought on historical route numbers and another inquiry about the future of service on Yelm Highway, to which Lafontaine responded the plan's redesign aims to address many of the public's service requests represented by stars on a map.

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It was M/S/A by Von Holtz and Mejia to adopt the 2025–2030 Transit Development Plan, as presented.

- B. Adopt September 2025 Service Change Summary and Equity Analysis.** Rob Lafontaine, Planning Deputy Director, presented the final adoption of the September 2025 major service change and its related equity analysis. He reminded the Board that these changes are part of the larger road map outlined in the Transit Development Plan, specifically focusing on enhanced commuter service to Pierce County and new access to JBLM's Madigan Gate. The core of this change is the replacement of the existing Route 620 with two new routes, the 600 and 610. Route 600 is designed as a more direct Monday-to-Friday route between Olympia Transit Center and stops in Lakewood. Route 610, which is supported by a Washington State Regional Mobility grant, will connect Olympia and Lacey Transit Centers and the Hawks Prairie Park-and-Ride with Pierce Transit's Route 206, providing a connection to JBLM.

Lafontaine noted this grant-supported route would be regularly monitored, allowing for adjustments to be made to the service as needed. Following the public hearing on July 16, which initially had no comments, an extension of the comment period resulted in 19 new submissions. The feedback was generally positive, with the number one category of comments being general support for the changes. Other comments included requests for increased span and frequency, concerns about Route 610 being less convenient due to added stops, and suggestions to extend service to Tacoma or Federal Way. Lafontaine acknowledged the critique about the added travel time on Route 610, particularly on weekends when the faster Route 600 is not operating. He explained this trade-off adds coverage to new areas like Northeast Lacey and that potential solutions, such as adding weekend service for the Route 600 or adjusting schedules, might be considered in the future. He also highlighted that the May 2026 comprehensive redesign could further address these issues, as the Hawks Prairie Park-and-Ride will become a significant hub. The comments received affirmed staff's position that the changes are generally positive and workable, and he recommended that the Board approve the service change for implementation on Sunday, September 7.

It was M/S/A by Mejia and Gilman to adopt the September 2025 Major Service Change Summary and Equity Analysis, as presented.

- C. Enhanced Procurement Authority for Securing Hydrogen Related Goods and Services.** Michael Maverick, Deputy Director for Projects, Procurement, and Materials Management, along with Maintenance Director Jonathan Yee, requested enhanced procurement authority for hydrogen-related goods and services. The issue stems from the volatile and immature commercial market for hydrogen as a transportation fuel, which presents challenges in consistent

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supply, delivery, and pricing. This volatility could jeopardize the agency's hydrogen demonstration project. The recommended action is to authorize the General Manager to use direct negotiation instead of standard procurement methods for these specific goods and services, including third-party subscription networks, service delivery, and storage. They emphasized this request does not change the agency's signature authority, and any commitments of \$100,000 or more would still require Board approval.

Maverick explained that the agency received a grant in 2023 to test hydrogen fuel cell buses and evaluate the technology's feasibility for future fleet transitions. The current market, led by California, is costly and therefore, risky for sourcing hydrogen. Therefore, the flexibility of direct negotiation is seen as essential for the project's success, particularly for ensuring a daily refueling supply on a limited site. The alternative, deferring the action, would result in continued struggles to secure hydrogen and could disrupt the bus operation. He also clarified this request does not involve an immediate financial commitment and that any future agreements would be supported by adequate funding. The request aligns with several of the agency's goals, including providing outstanding customer service, a safe and secure operating system, and promoting sustainability and resiliency.

It was M/S/A by Belk and Goodwin to authorize the General Manager to engage in direct negotiation as an alternative to standard procurement approaches, for goods and services related to the hydrogen demonstration project, including but not limited to third party subscription networks, service, delivery, compliance, and storage.

D. Schedule Special Meeting September ITA/CAC Joint Meeting. Bergkamp proposed scheduling a special joint meeting between the Intercity Transit Authority and the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). She noted this annual meeting is an opportunity for both groups to spend time together, share a meal, and discuss the CAC's activities. Staff are recommending a special meeting for Wednesday, September 17, 2025, for this purpose. During this joint session, the results of the CAC's annual self-assessment survey will be shared, giving the Authority a chance to engage in discussion with the CAC. Bergkamp added the meeting is typically a fun event, where they also honor the participants of the annual Rodeo competition.

It was M/S/A by Goodwin and Von Holtz to schedule a special meeting for Wednesday, September 17, 2025, to conduct a joint hybrid meeting of the Authority and the Community Advisory Committee.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS – Continued

Michael Cornelius, ATU International Vice President, addressed the Board to discuss a labor dispute involving the termination of two Intercity Transit employees, and noted that an unfair labor practice charge has been filed and the case is scheduled for arbitration in December. He urged the Board to intervene and settle the case, asserting the Board has the authority to end the dispute, and reinstate the two employees. He also warned the union would eventually ask the Board to open an investigation into management's conduct and allegedly defamatory comments.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Community Advisory Committee (July 21).** Julian Preston reported the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) discussed the new Ambassador Program, which selected six individuals from a pool of over 40 applicants to enhance safety and accessibility on Intercity Transit. Following this, Duncan Green presented the results of the Bicycle Community Challenge, announcing the Intercity Transit "Team Crank IT" had won the team challenge. Green also announced his retirement after 17 years and stated that a new representative would be hired to integrate the Bicycle Community Challenge with the Walk N' Roll program.

The CAC completed an online self-assessment survey to gauge how connected its members feel to the community. In other business, the Intercity Transit Authority received a recommendation to proceed with a roundabout for the East Martin Way project instead of a bus-only U-turn lane and awarded a contract for a hydrogen refueling station to support five new hydrogen buses. The Ad Hoc committee is developing a plan to collaborate with other transit advisory committees across the state, creating a five-question survey to gather ideas for a potential conference in 2027. Bergkamp reported on an air quality issue at the shop caused by smoke from a nearby encampment and announced that the winners of the Roadeo competition will advance to the state competition in August. Additionally, she announced that Transit Appreciation Day is scheduled for August 13. The meeting concluded with the CAC touring the building, where they saw the dispatchers' workspace and experienced a bus ride through the wash.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

The Senior Management Team, Deputy Directors and senior staff attended a leadership retreat on July 22 facilitated by [Momentum Professional Strategy Partners](#). The retreat focused on creating a framework for navigating organizational change as an agency. These changes include current and future projects like deploying new enterprise resource and asset planning software, transit operations management software, our upcoming service redesign, and navigating an uncertain federal funding landscape. It

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was a very productive day that yielded a resource guide recommended by the retreat group including change management books and practical team dynamics articles. The work done at the retreat will also be used to draft Intercity Transit's Framework for Change that will help us move forward with support structures and communication protocols that value and maintain our community like culture of collaboration. The agency hopes to have the same group facilitate a board retreat in late winter or early spring of 2026.

Join us on Wednesday, August 13 at the OTC (Operator's Lounge 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.) and AdOps (bus yard in front of the fuel wash building 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). This year's theme is Camping and the Great Outdoors. A BBQ lunch and activities (Fishing Hole, Feed the Bear, and a family photo board) will be available for attendees to participate in. An awards program will begin at 12 p.m. at AdOps and includes honoring staff who celebrated 20+ years of service between January and August; the Excellence in Transit honorees; all of our volunteers; newly hired staff since January and more! Nathan Vass will be our guest speaker, who will address the audience after the awards program. Nathan is an artist, filmmaker, photographer, and author by day, and a Metro bus driver by night, where his community-building work has been showcased on TED, NPR, The Seattle Times, KING5 and more, landing him a spot on Seattle Magazine's 2018 list of the 35 Most Influential People in Seattle, and Seattle Met's 2021 Power Players list. A Korean-American born in South Central LA, Nathan holds a BFA in Photography from the University of Washington, and has been featured in the Seattle Art Museum, Henry Art Gallery, and more, with 40 photography shows and nine films including the award-winning festival favorite Men I Trust. His first book, *The Lines That Make Us*, is a Seattle bestseller and 2019 Washington State Book Award Finalist in Non-Fiction. Learn more at www.nathanvass.com.

The Nisqually Indian Tribe is preparing to open their Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) facility on Pacific Avenue in the fall to address the opioid crisis within the Thurston County area. The Nisqually Indian Tribe is passionate about developing a whole person recovery model, keeping all services under one roof so patients have the best possible chance at recovery. The tribe's goal is to bring healing and wellness to the community, focusing on the entire family by serving tribal and non-tribal patients.

Tribal Council Member Guido Levy Jr. invited Bergkamp for a tour of the facility, which was led by the Center's Administrator Chris Petrozzi. The facility is amazing, and includes recovery and harm reduction services, general healthcare services, dentistry, and behavioral health. They have thought of many details like including the newest dental technology and creating an environment for behavioral health that is trauma informed. The Center is also filled with beautifully arranged historical pictures of the Nisqually Tribe, along with amazing displays of tribal artwork that showcases the tribe's tradition of generosity and welcoming to all.

Bus Buddy Coordinator Scott Schoengarth held the program's annual picnic, which several IT staff attended with a large gathering of Bus Buddy Volunteers. Scott is

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retiring later this month, and we will honor him and the legacy he's created at TAD next week.

Intercity Transit's audit for the Fiscal Year 2024 is complete. Board members are invited to attend an exit conference with staff scheduled at 8:30 a.m. on August 12, on Teams. Board members interested in attending should contact Pat Messmer for the meeting link.

Intercity Transit will be competing in the State Roadeo competition on August 17. For the driving portion, DAL Operator Dan Savage will be competing in the BOC category, Operator Clinton Jimenez is competing in the 40-foot category, and Operator John Clauson is competing in the 35-foot category. In the maintenance portion, our Maintenance team of Richelle Loken, Sean Malay and Jonathan Reynolds are competing. ITA member Sue Pierce will be in attendance along with many staff to cheer them on and will also be attending the public transportation conference that follows the Roadeo.

The ITA meeting on August 20 is canceled due to the Public Transportation "Wall of Fame" banquet.

AUTHORITY ISSUES

Mejia said the Thurston County Fair ended with great success and the County always appreciates the partnership with Intercity Transit and getting those bus services because parking can sometimes be a challenge. Mejia said Peter Stackpole, as well as staff from SCJ Alliance gave a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners on the East Martin Way roundabout. The County received public comment in regard to that. The Commissioners would like a follow-up presentation from Intercity Transit to get more details before there is agreement to move forward.

Gilman provided an update on the city's zero-emission efforts. He noted the city has expanded its fleet to include 26 electric vehicles (EVs), with an additional seven currently on order. This transition is happening as part of the city's standard fleet replacement process, with a focus on ordering EVs. Additionally, the city has switched its heavy-duty vehicles, such as garbage and fire trucks, from biodiesel to renewable diesel to further reduce its carbon footprint.

Goodwin stated that she and Caroline Cox were both involved with the Metropolitan Parks District, but she felt Cox would have more insight into the specific details of what occurred. She concluded her update by suggesting that Cox discuss the matter in more detail at the next ITA meeting.

Preston made a comment regarding the plan to make Route 600 a weekday-only service. He acknowledged that he may not have all the information but expressed concern the decision walks back recent efforts to create more parity between weekday

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and weekend service. Preston stated he often feels weekends are "put on the back burner" and the lack of a faster, more direct weekend option like the Route 600 is a step backward from the agency's recent commitment to improving weekend service.

Neuville mentioned an upcoming Renewable Hydrogen Alliance conference scheduled for mid-September, from the 15th to the 17th. He recently met with a group from the alliance in Vancouver and highlighted a key challenge: effectively communicating the possibility of a clean environment to the public. He noted that many people are influenced by a "dystopian image" of the future, like the one portrayed in Blade Runner, and find it difficult to imagine a more positive outcome. He believes that younger generations may be more open to the idea of renewal and a cleaner future. Neuville concluded that the primary challenge is to successfully "sell" clean energy, and specifically hydrogen, to the public.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Authority, Vice Chair Pierce adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

INTERCITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Carolyn Cox

Carolyn Cox, Chair

ATTEST

Patricia Messmer

Pat Messmer
Clerk of the Board

Date Approved: September 17, 2025

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