

King County Transit Advisory Commission

August 17, 2021

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Teleconference:

Here is the link to join the meeting via computer: <https://zoom.us/j/99560291505>

Here is dial in information: 1 (253) 215-8782, Meeting ID: 995 6029 1505

6:00 p.m. Welcome & Introductions

- Name
- Pronouns, if you would like to share
- Access needs
- Icebreaker: If you were a houseplant, what kind would you be?

6:10 p.m. Consent Agenda, and Announcements

- Consent agenda
 - Present:
 - TAC members: Sonja Tracy, Lin Robinson, Angela Theriault, Cheryl Harrison, Kevin Pelstring, Mina Barahimi Martin, Oskar Abian, Peter Rubin
 - Metro staff: Mark Nash, Ashish John, Simon Rojas Reyes, Shelby Cramer, Lizette Carrasco, Jeremy Fichter
 - Meeting minutes – July 2021
 - Vote: Cheryl moves to approve the minutes. Lin seconds. Minutes approved.
- Announcements
 - Need nominations for new chair and vice chair

6:15 p.m. July meeting recap, reflection, follow up

Facilitators: Shelby Cramer, Lizette Carrasco, Community Engagement Planners, Metro

- Marketing update and behavior change presentation
 - No follow-up questions from the TAC
- SaFE Reform feedback discussion
 - No follow-up questions from the TAC

6:30 p.m. Service Restoration: Fall 2021 service change briefing

Presenter: Jeremy Fichter - Service Planning, Metro

- Q: Do you see load limits having to be implemented again in the future? How will you deal with (potential) crowding?
 - A: Dynamic situation; decision to re-implement load limits is out of my powers. Will continue to monitor crowding. But hopefully mitigated by off-peak and peak period service restorations.
- Q: How will the Delta variant affect decisions around load limits and route changes?
 - A: Caught off guard by Delta variant. Hopeful for return to normal, but Delta variant may hamper this a bit. Employers are delaying plans to have employees return to the office. At this point, October service change set in stone. If the situation were to drastically change due to Delta, we would adapt.
- Q: Will priority populations have enough time to be notified about the upcoming service change?
 - A: Lots of people working hard to get that information out to customers using a variety of mechanisms (e.g. blog posts, information on-board coaches). This information likely to come out next month.
- Q: Can you explain more about the light rail changes? And can you clarify the point made about “Restoring >= 50% or 8 trips on applicable peak only routes”
 - A: In June Metro restored significant amount of bus service. Corresponded with Link service which moved from operating every 12 minutes to every 8 minutes. Made it buses came more frequently (for Link)
- Q: How will you communicate these changes to riders?
 - A: Will be providing information about the changes in advance of the service change. Will publish pamphlets among other things. Can view route-by-route changes and timetables
- Q: Are the 19 routes that are permanently suspended posted somewhere?
 - A: Probably won’t find them. Can send to the group
- Q: Clarification on what is meant by “applicable” in this talking point: “Restoring 100% of non-peak service on applicable all-day routes”
 - A: “Applicable” meaning the focus will be on restoring routes with relatively high ridership or equity priority routes

7:10 p.m. Access Paratransit – Q&A

Presenter: Ashish John, Mark Nash – Accessible Services, Metro

- Q: Aware that there is a new Access contractor. How have complaints to service been addressed? Are text communications in place yet?
 - A: Yes, new contractor, MV Transportation, is now responsible for providing service. Replaced the previous contractor, First Transit. Also conduct quarterly surveys; most riders report feeling safe and that things have gotten better since switching to the new contractor. Old process: Contractor would intake and investigate a complaint. With the new contract, complaint intake is through Metro. Allows for better oversight, making sure complaints are addressed. In

regard to messaging with customers: Point to “Access Trip Manager”, a tool customers can use to book trips online. Text message alerts also in the works.

- Comment: Glad Access is still developing + improving. Previously Access was not very flexible; it is more flexible now.
- Q: Where does the funding for Access come from? Concerns Access may not be viewed as a priority
 - A: King County has stepped up the funding for Access significantly; it is a major priority. Implemented more stringent standards + requirements for contractors. King County willing to pay for those higher standards. Access is not seen as “second-choice”. Actively trying to make experience very friendly and seamless.
 - A: On-time performance indicator is now at 91% (meaning Access trips are on-time 91% of the time). Always trying to improve this, but often there are challenges (i.e. traffic, accidents, etc)
- Q: Are individuals with severe mental illness eligible for Access?
 - A: Written application form and in-person intake process. Work with Harborview to determine the capability of an individual (usually activities relating to boarding/de-boarding the bus). Recertification every 3 years. Based on different levels of need, rider may transition from utilizing door-to-door service to a hand-to-hand service
- Comment: Re-iterate the importance of having text notifications for Access
- Comment/Question: Have never received a pick-up time, only a (30min) pick-up window. Long waiting time. Can Access streamline the pick-up/arrival system for Access users that have to make multiple stops?
 - A: The shared ride system gives us the opportunity to pick-up other riders who have a ride request at the same time. Unfortunately, pick-up windows are standard for paratransit, but we have high on-time performance and hope to only improve that. Our standard for an on-time pickup is within that 30min pick-up window time.
- Comment: No shelter at pick-up area (at the Vashon Ferry site). Access needs to understand the unique needs of serving transit users who live on islands and who depend on Access
- Comment: Appreciate Access, but find the whole process about Access stressful. Example: Notification that driver had arrived not always clear. No communication between dispatchers (multiple imminent arrival calls). Implicit bias; drivers do not always go outside and help riders
 - A: Driver should come to the door, that is the standard. Drivers should not assume a passenger does not require assistance. Please reach out for any specific complaints and we can address as they happen.

7:40 p.m. Customer Information intro

Presenter: Simon Rojas Reyes – Customer Information, Metro

- Simon gave introduction on his new initiative to improve customer information for Metro customers, including doing some customer mapping. Will share the workplan later on, but just wanted to meet the TAC and introduce himself.

7:50 p.m. Good of the order

- Meetings are at a more relaxed pace now, appreciate the change
- Pete at the end of his term! Will come to next meeting as ex-officio member and we will give them a proper thanks and goodbye. Will coordinate with Shelby + Lizette for recruitment for their position.

8 p.m. Adjourn