

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

BOARD WORK SESSION

Wednesday, July 17, 2019

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on July 12, 2019, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District held a Board Work Session meeting on Wednesday, July 17, 2019, beginning at 4:00 p.m., at the LTD Board Room, 3500 E. 17th Avenue, Eugene, Oregon.

Present: Kate Reid, Vice President  
Josh Skov, Secretary (via teleconference)  
Don Nordin, Treasurer  
Emily Secord  
Caitlin Vargas  
Steven Yett  
A.J. Jackson, General Manager  
Camille Straub, Clerk of the Board  
Lynn Taylor, Minutes Recorder

Absent: Carl Yeh, President

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL** — Ms. Reid convened the meeting and called the roll.

**PRELIMINARY REMARKS BY BOARD PRESIDENT** — Ms. Reid asked that Board members to write down their questions and ask them at the conclusion of the Transit Tomorrow presentation.

**COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER** — None.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** — None.

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**Transit Tomorrow** — Daniel Costantino with Jarrett Walker & Associates stated that the purpose of Transit Tomorrow was to determine how LTD's transit services should be provided, and how those should work together as a network. He noted that it had been almost 20 years since LTD had taken a comprehensive look at its system and during that time the only major changes had been implementation of the EmX service, although a number of small adjustments over the years had resulted in changes to the system.

Mr. Costantino described the analysis conducted at the beginning of the Transit Tomorrow process, resulting in a Choices Report that presented the public with some high level choices to consider. Based on feedback obtained during public feedback, a series of scenarios reflecting different choices was developed. Those were presented in the Scenarios Report and based on public feedback and direction from the LTD Board, a draft network was developed. He said the draft network report had been circulated within LTD and among partner agencies that had been involved in design. Comments from staff and agencies, along with comments from the Board, would be used to refine the draft. That draft would be presented to the Board for permission to proceed in developing a final plan to be taken to the community for feedback. Final adoption of a plan by the Board would be followed by very detailed technical work to prepare for implementation.

Mr. Costantino used a series of maps to illustrate the existing network and the results of various choices related to tradeoffs between ridership and coverage. Community responses to the question of how new State Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) should be used were largely in favor of more evening and weekend service. He said the current system was 65 percent ridership/35 percent coverage. The Board had given direction to consultants to design a network that was 80-85 percent ridership/15-20 percent coverage/up to 5 percent in-service other than fixed-routes and, except for the youth pass and expanded low-income programs, focus most new resources on service. The resulting draft network plan used 83 percent of the resources for ridership and 17 percent for coverage. He used maps to illustrate differences between the existing and draft proposed networks.

Mr. Costantino reviewed specific route details and highlighted aspects of the draft network such as simpler and more frequent service, expanded evening and weekend service and faster, better access to jobs and residences. He also described broad distribution of benefits to the community and specific populations. He pointed out those areas that would lose service or have longer trips and the factors used to prioritize coverage areas. He stated that the base network costs and phasing were within LTD's current resources and included 10-15 minute service on a majority of routes on weekdays, 30 minute service on Saturdays and Sundays, and 30 minute service until 10:00 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays. He listed the following options for use of additional resources in order of priority:

- 15 minute Saturday service
- 15 minute Sunday service
- always 30 minute or better service
- restore all coverage as fixed routes
- restoring lifeline coverage as mobility-on-demand zones

Mr. Costantino said the Board should consider how decisions about the network design and the balance between ridership and coverage aligned with District goals and described how various strategies for use of additional resources might impact the system. He said the Board would be asked for approval to produce a final plan for public review and comment in August.

In response to a question from Mr. Yett, Mr. Costantino said the estimated cost of mobility on-demand service was approximately \$300,000 per square mile, based on the assumption a contractor would charge about 20 percent more than RideSource charged.

In response to a question from Ms. Secord, Mr. Costantino illustrated hypothetical best and worst case individual travel scenarios on maps of the existing and proposed network.

Mr. Nordin expressed concern that exurb communities with populations of low-income, seniors, and those with disabilities were not going to receive service under the draft network plan beyond what was currently available. He said there should be better consideration for those communities. Mr. Costantino responded that the Transit Tomorrow project focused on the allocation of metro area resources and did not assume any changes to service outside the metro area and between outlying communities. Director of Planning and Development Tom Schwetz commented that outside of the Transit Tomorrow process, South Lane Wheels was developing an on-demand plan as a foundational step in determining the need for additional service and STIF funds were being used to support service between Eugene and Florence, and increase Rhody Express and Diamond Express service.

Ms. Reid asked if there was any significance to the size of the circles representing areas losing coverage, such as number of people. She also asked what mobility-on-demand services could be provided for the \$300,000 per square mile cost. Mr. Costantino said the circles roughly represented areas where there were people who would be more than one-quarter mile away from transit. He explained the figures were developed based on two test case areas: one in southwest Eugene and the other in Springfield around Hayden Bridge Road. He said the analysis of the areas looked at the number of people in each area that would lose transit access and estimated the extent to which they were likely to use mobility-on-demand service. He said the conclusion was that a single vehicle could

serve an area most of the time, with a second vehicle required during peak hours. He said each area was approximately a square mile and mobility-on-demand might be better suited to some areas than others.

Ms. Reid suggested that if additional funds were available, the District could look more deeply into mobility-on-demand as an option and use pilot projects to determine if there was a demand for the service. She said that she thought it was important to keep in mind that people in areas losing coverage or frequency would not be happy, but often in the past some service decisions were based on the pleas of individuals, rather than looking at the community as a whole and its growth. She said the Board's decision on Transit Tomorrow would determine the infrastructure that would be built to accommodate the community in the future. She said the proximity graph should be updated to help explain to the community why the changes were necessary.

Mr. Costantino said that he agreed with Ms. Reid's remarks. He said those who were unhappy with the changes were likely to be louder than those who supported them, and the Board would need to be prepared to deal with that. He said there had been relatively few test cases of mobility-on-demand in communities the size of Eugene/Springfield and urged caution when considering how to best use any additional resources. The District would likely need to explore options in order to find the right balance in serving people in the areas while not consuming all available resources.

Mr. Skov said that he felt the draft network plan was moving in the right general direction. He echoed Ms. Reid and Mr. Costantino's comments regarding options in the areas that would lose service and said she felt statistics would help explain how benefits to the community would be increased by the new network. He said that he wanted to return to the pedestrian network analysis (PNA) and how improvements would be made in areas where service was being expanded. He said that he also wanted analytics that explained why some routes were being discontinued and how prioritization was done. He pointed out that Uber was uninterested in first mile/last mile rides and that remained an unsolved challenge. He asked whether a quarter-mile or half-mile was being used to define whether people were close enough to transit stops.

Mr. Costantino said there was some debate about which metric to use, but for the purpose of the Transit Tomorrow report, a half-mile was used because otherwise there would be a significant expansion of frequent service in the proposed network and studies had shown that people were willing to walk a half-mile or more to access services that came often. He said a quarter-mile was often used in United States transit studies for less frequent service because of the additional inconvenience.

Mr. Skov remarked that while elsewhere in the world people walked a half-mile or more on a daily basis, the norm in Eugene/Springfield was not to walk so far, even when people were physically capable of doing so.

In response to a question from Mr. Yeh, Mr. Costantino said the ridership/coverage ratio for the proposed metro area network was 83 percent/17 percent; if the rural routes were taken into account the ratio was closer to 75 percent/25 percent.

Mr. Yeh said the expansion of weekend and evening service would be a selling point for the new network. Mr. Costantino said he agreed that the District should promote the benefits of the new service and there were aspects, such as weekend and evening service, which would sell themselves as people saw that transit could be useful for many things. He said typically changes in service took several months for the public to accommodate, but ultimately more people would use it because more people would find it useful.

Mr. Yeh said it would be helpful to have talking points for the new network when discussing the changes with people in areas that would lose service.

Mr. Yett said it help to have actual numbers rather than percentages when discussing changes with the community. He asked if it was possible to determine from current data the number of people who were currently using transit in the areas that would lose service and compare that to the increased ridership expected with the new network. Mr. Costantino said that he estimated that service would improve for about 80,000 people, while about 12,000 people would be more than one-half mile from service.

Ms. Vargas said Eugene was in a housing crisis and in order to build more affordable housing, one of the stipulations required specific proximity to a bus stop. She asked how taking away some routes near buildable land and concentrating on the developed metro area would impact the ability to construct more affordable housing.

Ms. Secord suggested that some surplus resources could be reserved for new development.

Mr. Costantino said the City of Eugene was involved in the development of the network plan, including development of scenarios. He said the network could result in some restrictions on where people could take advantage of the low-income housing tax credit, but the plan would also insure that development occurred in places that could be served well by transit in the long term. He said that was an ongoing discussion that LTD should have with the city.

Mr. Schwetz said the city currently had a policy of spreading affordable housing throughout the community and LTD would continue to work with Eugene to address issues of service and low-income housing.

Mr. Skov said he agreed that the issue of affordable housing locations was important and said he felt the District had often been deferential to land use decisions by agencies in charge of land use, specifically the cities, and waited to see what decisions were made, then tried to accommodate them. He said LTD should be frank about how locating affordable housing in certain areas could push residents toward use of a car and force the community to make more difficult decisions about tradeoffs as a result of sprawl. For example, higher density in downtown housing should be prioritized by finding re-developable commercial property on the existing transit network.

**ADJOURNMENT** — Mr. Yeh adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.