

CORVALLIS CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT

AGENDA

Wednesday; May 5, 1999; 7:50 a.m.

City Hall Conference Room D

501 S. W. Madison Avenue

- I. INTRODUCTIONS

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - March 3, 1999 and April 7, 1999

- III. CACOT/VISITOR'S COMMENTS (Items not on Agenda)

- IV. CACOT - SUNSET PROVISION

- V. REVIEW OF SUBCOMMITTEE GOALS/OBJECTIVES/ASSUMPTIONS (*Copy attached.*)

- VI. INFORMATION SHARING
 - A. Ridership Reports (fixed route and paratransit service)
 - B. ASOSU Group Pass Program
 - C. Commute Week "Try Another Way" - May 24-28
 - D. Regional Transit Study
 - E. Status of Service Route Bus
 - F. ADA Paratransit Service

- VII. ADJOURNMENT

NOTE: NO SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING.

Future Meetings:

Wednesday, June 2, 7:50 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D

Wednesday, July 7, 7:50 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D

**CORVALLIS CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT
MINUTES**

March 3, 1999

Members Present

Craig Anderson, Chairman
Joanne Adler
Bill Hoffman
Caron Johnson
Lita Verts

Staff

Bernadette Barrett, Public Works
Steve Rogers, Public Works

Visitors

Tom Adler

Absent - Unexcused

Dan Preller
Ed Barlow-Pieterick, Councilor
Jessica Pearse, ASOSU Ex officio

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Agenda Item	Informa- tion Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations/Action
Land Use Follow Up		X	
Ridership Report	X		
OSU Ridership Survey	X		
ASOSU's 1999-00 Group Pass Program	X		
Exact Fare Policy		X	
Subcommittee Report		X	
Regional Transit Study	X		
Downtown Parking Commission	X		
Saturday Shoppers' Shuttle	X		
Oregon Legislature	X		
Laidlaw Labor Negotiations	X		

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - February 3, 1999

The minutes were accepted as presented.

II. VISITOR COMMENTS

Tom Adler referenced the land use item discussed at the

February CACOT meeting. He noted the mixed use designation at 53rd and Harrison as noted on a map published in the Gazette-Times. Staff will provide an up-to-date comprehensive plan map at the next meeting.

III. INFORMATION SHARING

A. Ridership Report. The monthly fixed route ridership report was provided to the Commission. February ridership was 37,813 compared to 31,206 for the same month last year. This was the highest February ridership in the history of the system, surpassing the record of 36,699 set in 1997. The paratransit ridership information was distributed.

B. OSU Ridership Survey. Staff distributed the results of the annual OSU faculty, staff, and student ridership survey, as well as the results of the annual surveys taken each year since 1993. It was noted that the survey was conducted the first two weeks in February, which is approximately the same time the survey is taken each year. The following results were noted: OSU student ridership has almost doubled since last year, going from 3,239 in 1998 to 6,096 in 1999; OSU faculty/staff ridership has decreased significantly from last year; total OSU ridership accounts for 36+ percent of the total transit ridership; and OSU students make up 89 percent of the OSU ridership. The student increase may be due to increased OSU promotional activities, including participation in the Chamber-sponsored Where It's @ event targeted at new students, increased Barometer advertising, and increased number of passenger shelters on and around campus. Staff will look for opportunities to target OSU faculty and staff.

The survey results detail the information by route and include information for all riders. The information will be particularly useful to the CACOT subcommittee looking at routes and other service issues.

C. ASOSU's 1999-00 Group Pass Program. Steve Rogers reported that he had met with the Student Fees Committee to present this year's proposal to continue the student group pass program at the same funding level as previous years. The Student Fees Committee indicated that they would recommend continuation of the program. City staff will most likely be requested to appear before the ASOSU Budget Committee.

D. Exact Fare Policy. Staff reported that the issue of allowing CTS customers to ride the bus in an emergency

was discussed with the CTS drivers. The City has a policy of requiring passengers to pay for service. The drivers indicated that they do allow customers to ride if they believe that the customer has an emergency. Commissioner Adler feels that the City should have a written policy which states that the City will allow passengers to ride in an emergency. Following discussion, Ms. Adler was requested to prepare proposed language regarding emergency transportation. The major concern with such a written policy is abuse by CTS customers.

- E. Service Subcommittee Report.** Chairman Anderson reported that the subcommittee has prepared goals, objectives, and assumptions for their task. Copies were distributed to CACOT members. He also noted that additional information would be available from a study to be conducted by an OSU civil engineering class spring term. CACOT members were asked to review the information and confirm or revise the document at the April meeting in order to provide direction to the subcommittee.
- F. Regional Transit Study.** Staff and Commissioner Verts reported on the second steering committee meeting, held February 23. The Steering Committee received a summary of information from the phone survey taken in Albany, Corvallis, and Lebanon. A final version of the information will be provided to CACOT members. The Steering Committee identified mobility issues, listed solutions, and developed a list of priorities. The consultant will prepare three transit service scenarios for presentation at public hearings on March 16. The budget for the scenarios is the estimated revenue of \$.25 per \$1,000 assessed value for Linn and Benton Counties. The first public hearing will be at 5:00 p.m. in Corvallis at the Wells Fargo Bank. A second meeting will be held in Albany at 7:30 p.m. to assure that Linn County residents also have an opportunity to hear the scenarios and participate in the discussions. A second round of public hearings will be held on May 11. CACOT members were encouraged to attend the public hearings.
- G. Downtown Parking Commission.** Transit Manager Barrett was invited to attend the February 24 Parking Commission meeting to describe the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan implementation efforts which began in January. As noted at the February CACOT meeting, the City, in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, has formed a group of employer representa-

tives to begin providing information regarding various TDM alternatives and strategies. Ms. Barrett provided the Parking Commission with information regarding the benefits of TDM to employers and employees, and particularly those benefits which relate to reduce demand for parking. She noted that four employers from the downtown area are represented. They are the City, County, U. S. Post Office, and the Downtown Corvallis Association. She was asked to meet with them as a subgroup and assist them in developing joint efforts to implement TDM for downtown employers and employees. Ms. Barrett was also asked to report back to the Commission to keep them up to date on those efforts. Lita Verts is CACOT's representative to the Parking Commission. She reported that the Parking Commission handed out a tentative schedule for issues to be addressed in the future. They also heard an appeal from Mike Sivetz regarding the 10-hour meters near his business. She explained his issues and his recollection of how the downtown parking lots were developed. She noted that this item is scheduled to be addressed in August.

- H. **Saturday Shoppers' Shuttle.** Staff distributed a copy of the Saturday Shoppers' Shuttle schedule. The shuttle is a free customer service, funded with City Economic Development Funds through the Downtown Corvallis Association and coordinated with CTS operations. The service began operating on February 27. Staff will report on shuttle ridership at the April meeting.
- I. **1999 Oregon Legislature.** Only a few bills have been introduced to date that impact public transportation, including one regarding jitneys. Most of the transportation focus has been on a gas tax increase for highways. A summary of public transit bills and their current status will be reported at the April CACOT meeting. It was noted that a Senior/Disabled Transportation Lobby Day has been scheduled for March 12 at the Capitol. CACOT members were requested to provide information they might have to City staff as they learn of pertinent transit-related bills.
- J. **Laidlaw Labor Negotiations.** Staff reported that they had met with Laidlaw representatives following the February 24 negotiations session. There was no resolution to the outstanding issues. Another session is scheduled for March 8. Staff will keep CACOT informed of this matter. Staff also noted that it will be preparing a comprehensive report regarding various alternatives for providing bus service. The report will be submitted for CACOT consideration at the April 7 meeting. It is scheduled to go to the Urban

Services Committee on April 12 and to City Council on April 29. The schedule allows for timely implementation of the selected alternative. It was noted that the Laidlaw contract expires December 31, 1999; and if a Request for Proposal is the selected alternative, it will need to be prepared and advertised no later than the middle of June.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

Wednesday, April 7, 7:50 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D

Wednesday, May 5, 7:50 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D

**CORVALLIS CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT
MINUTES**

April 7, 1999

Members Present

Craig Anderson, Chairman
Bill Hoffman
Caron Johnson
Lita Verts
Ed Barlow-Pieterick, Councilor

Absent - Excused

Joanne Adler

Absent - Unexcused

Dan Preller
Jessica Pearse, ASOSU Ex officio

Staff

Neil Mann, Public Works
Bernadette Barrett, Public Works
Steve Rogers, Public Works

Visitors

George Curtin
Bob Lowry

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Agenda Item	Informa- tion Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations/Action
Rail Passenger Service	X		
Provision of Fixed Route Operations/ Maintenance			Private Contractor/Joint RFP with School District, include minimum wage
Ridership Report - All-Time Record Ridership Month	X		
Saturday Shoppers' Shuttle	X		
OSU's 1999-00 Group Pass Program	X		
Regional Transit Study	X		
Laidlaw Labor Negotiations	X		
Status of Service Route Bus	X		

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

I. VISITOR COMMENTS

Bob Lowry appeared before the Commission to note that the Oregon Legislature would be holding a public hearing on Senate Bill 1051, which provides funding to maintain and enhance passenger train service within Oregon. Without this funding, the existing train and thruway motorcoach service will be terminated. Mr. Lowry encouraged Commission members

to contact Legislators to support this funding.

George Curtin from the AFL-CIO appeared before the Commission to provide information regarding the on-going Laidlaw Transit, Inc. and Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) negotiations covering Corvallis school bus and transit drivers. He reported that Union representatives and drivers were at the most recent City Council meeting. He noted that several unfair labor practice complaints have been filed with the National Labor Relations Board against Laidlaw and that a hearing is scheduled for April 27. He indicated that additional charges have been brought by the Union, and he reviewed the alleged actions which led to the charges. Mr. Curtin requested that the drivers be hired as City workers and indicated that it was his opinion that the City could run the operation at a cost lower than Laidlaw's cost. If the City decided to continue to contract the transit operation, he requested that the City include a minimum wage in the Request for Proposal (RFP). He asked that the City Council issue a statement indicating they were going to establish a minimum wage in the next RFP, believing that Laidlaw would perhaps settle if this occurred.

In response to a question regarding the possibility of arbitration, Mr. Curtin indicated that Laidlaw has not agreed to submit the labor dispute to arbitration and that they are not required to do so. Mr. Curtin described the arbitration process. Commissioner Verts referred to the most recent afternoon strike by local drivers, leaving school children without a ride home. She noted the negative feelings toward the Union's efforts as a result of that action and suggested that they not do that again. Other Commission members expressed the same sentiments.

II. PROVISION OF FIXED ROUTE OPERATIONS/MAINTENANCE

Public Works Director Mann referred to the staff report prepared in response to City Council's request for information regarding the provision of transit service in Corvallis and possible alternatives. He reviewed the schedule for this matter, indicating that the Urban Services Committee (USC) would take up the issue at their April 12 meeting. Staff will report CACOT's discussions to the USC members at that time, and he invited CACOT members to attend if they desired. The USC deliberations will then go to the City Council on April 19. He stated that the City Council has strongly remained neutral regarding the on-going labor relations issue between Laidlaw and the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), encouraging settlement.

Transportation Division Manager Rogers reviewed the memorandum, focusing on the service delivery alternatives and evaluation of the alternatives. In response to earlier discussions, he noted that under the current contract, the City does have the ability to reject any drivers that we do not feel are providing service consistent with City expectations.

Mr. Rogers reviewed each of the four alternatives, including continuing the existing RFP and private contract; issuing an RFP and contract with a minimum wage and/or benefit condition; joining with Corvallis School District 509J to issue an RFP, with or without a minimum wage/benefit condition; and the City taking over those services currently performed under a private contract. He also reviewed the attachments, which provided information on the City's current transit operating budget, the estimated impacts of various Laidlaw driver salary proposals on compensation paid to Laidlaw, and the costs for the City to provide the service.

Staff's recommendation is that the City join with the School District to issue an RFP containing minimum wage requirements for CTS drivers. The City and School District would enter into separate contracts, with the School District making its own determination regarding minimum wages or other special features. The joint process will encourage competition and may attract additional bidders. This alternative has been discussed in preliminary meetings with the School District staff. It was noted that the City has conducted joint RFP's on a variety of City services, such as banking services and street work. The City's construction contracts contain the prevailing wage language, as required by state and federal law for public contracts.

Mr. Rogers noted that no proposal was prepared for the City to operate school bus transportation because of the many barriers to such an arrangement. It was noted that the School District does not own the 50 buses and 10 special ed buses that are used to provide the current service. Additionally, the two operations are covered by different federal and state rules.

It was noted that the difference between the compensation paid to Laidlaw in calendar year 1998 and the estimate for the City to operate the service is about \$375,000. Three factors were noted that affect this kind of increase: facility costs, increased salaries, and increased staffing due to loss of efficiency if not jointly operated with 509J. In response to Commission questions, Mr. Rogers indicated

that the City's cost to provide the service included estimated salary ranges for proposed personnel at levels within the City's existing Classification and Compensation Plan. He selected salary ranges which Public Works staff believe have similar qualifications. Any new positions would go through the City's Classification and Compensation process and the exact salary ranges would not be known until the outcome of that process. The salary ranges may be higher or lower. Staff was asked to prepare additional information regarding the cost for the City to provide the service using lower driver salary levels. That information will be prepared for the Urban Services Committee meeting. Commission member Verts expressed her support for the City to join with the School District in issuing an RFP and that the RFP contain a minimum wage. She indicated that she had discussed this matter with Commission member Adler prior to the meeting; Ms. Verts felt that Ms. Adler would also support that alternative.

Bob Lowry suggested that wages not be indexed to other providers and cited a California example where that had occurred, unreasonably inflating salaries. He felt that local drivers' salaries should not be compared to larger systems where drivers are faced with more difficult working conditions. He noted the turnover of CTS drivers in the last several years. He expressed concern for the overtime costs that would need to be paid. He related this to the Loop operation and the impact it has on the Loop to provide Saturday and holiday service. He expressed the need to balance the benefits between in-house workers and contracted workers as they relate to wages and work quality. He suggested that if the City were to own the transit facility, similar to the bus fleet, the City would be better able to attract more private contractor competition.

Following further discussion, Commission members expressed their support for Alternative 3, to join with the School District in issuing an RFP which includes a minimum CTS driver wage. Commission members also indicated support for the City to consider developing a transit facility through the Capital Improvement Program and for the City to further explore moving toward City operation of the transit service, possibly after the next 3-year contract period.

III. INFORMATION SHARING

- A. Ridership Report.** The monthly ridership report was provided to the Commission. A new, all-time monthly ridership record was set in March, even with the 1-day

drivers' strike on March 30. The March ridership was 40,008--the first time ridership has exceeded 40,000. The last time a monthly ridership record was set was October 1996, when ridership reached 39,647. Concern was expressed that the 1-day strike, followed by the half-day strike, would discourage people from riding the bus since they can no longer depend upon the service.

- B. Saturday Shoppers' Shuttle.** Staff distributed the results of the Saturday Shoppers' Shuttle for the first five Saturdays. The results show that ridership is only 11.67 rides per operating hour. This is below the average Saturday ridership on the regular fixed route bus service (12.71 rides/operating hour) and well below the free holiday trolley average of 37+ riders per operating hour. The Downtown Corvallis Association has City Economic Development funding to continue this service through June 30, 1999. This service does not appear to be impacting ridership on the regular Saturday fixed-route service.
- C. OSU's 1999-00 Group Pass Program.** Steve Rogers and Bernadette Barrett met with Rob Specter, the new OSU Vice President for Finance and Administration, and Mark McCambridge, OSU Director of Business Services, recently to provide background information regarding the group pass program and discuss the program for 1999-00. The University has agreed to support the program for faculty and staff during 1999-00 at the same compensation level as 1998-99. A signed contract has been received.
- D. Regional Transit Study.** Staff reported that public hearings were held in Corvallis and Albany on March 16 to present preliminary information regarding three potential regional service levels to the public. Neither public hearing in Corvallis or Albany generated much public participation. The next meeting of the Steering Committee is April 20. CTS staff Barrett and Transportation Division Manager Rogers will attend the Technical Advisory Committee meeting on April 14. Another set of public hearings is scheduled for May. CACOT will be kept informed of this study and encouraged to attend the May Corvallis public hearing.
- E. Laidlaw Labor Negotiations.** Staff had no new information to report. It was clarified that staff has had no contact with Laidlaw representatives regarding negotiations other than to keep City staff informed of

the negotiating sessions. No new sessions have been scheduled to staff's knowledge.

- F. Status of Service Route Bus.** Staff reported that the service route bus has left the factory in Kansas and should arrive in Portland this weekend. The bus will be checked against the specifications by the West Coast distributor prior to delivery to Corvallis. The bus will then be checked locally to assure that it meets all specifications prior to City acceptance.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

Wednesday, May 5, 7:50 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D

Wednesday, June 2, 7:50 a.m., City Hall Conference Rm. D