

**CORVALLIS CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TRANSIT**

**SPECIAL MEETING - MINUTES**

April 17, 1997

Members Present

Bob Lowry, Chairman  
 Joanne Adler  
 Craig Anderson  
 Jonathan Cardozo  
 Caron Johnson  
 Ed Barlow-Pieterick, Councilor

Members Absent

Bill Hoffman

Staff

Steve Rogers, Public Works  
 Bernadette Barrett, Public Works

Visitors

Jarrett Walker, Nelson/Nygaard  
 Alan Lehto, Nelson/Nygaard  
 Tom Adler

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations/Action
OSU Earth Week - April 21-25	X		
1997 Oregon Legislature	X		
10th Street Traffic Calming	X		
Transit Master Plan			Recommend Council Adoption as Revised

**CONTENT OF DISCUSSION**

**I. INFORMATION SHARING**

- A. OSU Earth Week.** Staff noted that CTS is participating in OSU Earth Week by providing free bus rides on Earth Day, April 22. Additionally, staff reserved a table on campus to distribute transit information and be available to answer questions. If volunteers cannot be found to staff the table, that portion of CTS's participation may be eliminated this year.
  
- B. Oregon Legislature.** Staff provided a copy of information from the Oregon Transit Association regarding the status of House Bill 3163. This is the House transportation package which includes the \$2 per household fee for the "Transportation Safety and Service Fund". This provision creates the only statewide funding source for transportation alternatives such as transit. The bill has moved out

of the House Transportation Committee and will be considered by the House Revenue Committee next week.

- C. 10th Street Traffic Calming Project.** Staff brought this item to the Commission to get CACOT's input prior to consideration by Council's Urban Services Committee. Committee members did not feel that the traffic calming on 10th Street had any greater impact on transit than it does on any other vehicle traffic on 10th Street. Committee members expressed concerns about the small circle size, the lack of yielding by some motorists and the impact on bicycle and pedestrian users.

## **II. TRANSIT MASTER PLAN**

Commission Chair Lowry opened the discussion by consideration of the process to approach the draft Plan. Commission members agreed to discuss the short-term scenario, recognizing that it was related to the long-term scenario. The Commission briefly discussed the philosophy of the plan and the existing Comprehensive Plan findings and policies. Transportation and transit findings and policies are included in the draft plan, pages 3-8 and 3-9. It was noted that many policies were established prior to the adoption of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and the City's implementation of ADA paratransit service.

It was noted that even without the current transit master planning process, the current 60-minute routes would need to be redesigned. Ridership has grown more than 41 percent since route redesign and implementation of the fourth bus in September 1994. Increased ridership has resulted in transit travel times diminishing to a point where the service is unable to meet its scheduled times, resulting in customer dissatisfaction and loss of some ridership.

**Short-Term Scenario, Chapter 5.** Council liaison Barlow-Pieterick felt that it was important to identify those areas which are impacted by the short-term scenario and discuss each one. It was noted that a change in a proposed route which lengthened the travel time must be balanced with a cut in another location because the routes interconnect. It was also noted that Routes 1, 2, 3, and 4 each represent an eastbound and a westbound route, interconnecting with Route 5 at Timberhill Shopping Center.

Other information was provided, including an analysis of ridership gathered during an on-board survey. Staff noted that if all riders who caught the bus on one of the

abandoned route sections chose not to ride from a relocated route, they would represent four (4) percent of total daily ridership. It is assumed that some portion of the four percent would catch the bus at another location or would be eligible for Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service. The trade-off is substantial ridership gains through the proposed system redesign. Some of the advantages of the redesign are: on-time service, the convenience of 2-way routes, and more direct service along major corridors, particularly in north Corvallis.

Each area of concern was identified by a dot on a large short-term scenario map and discussed. They were as follows:

1. Barley Hill. This area is currently not served except by service to the corner of S. W. 53rd and Technology Loop. It was noted that there are many areas within the city limits which are currently not served by transit. Many of those were identified. No changes were proposed.
2. Environmental Protection Agency. This facility is proposed to be served by Route 6, which is within a short walking distance of the facility. No changes were proposed.
3. Samaritan Village. The residents of this facility will be able to access transit on Harrison Blvd. The distance from the north end of the Village complex is approximately the same as the distance from the current bus shelter. The distance from the south end is approximately one to two blocks. This distance is within current adopted service standards. Additionally, residents will receive better service on Harrison Boulevard. Currently, there is only westbound bus service on Harrison with bus stops at any location where customers want to access the bus, and customers must cross the street to catch the bus. The bus travels westbound to 36th, north to Witham Hill and Walnut and returns downtown via 29th Street and Monroe Avenue. It does not connect with any shopping area or medical facility until it reaches Monroe or downtown Corvallis.

The current bus service on 35th (Route 3) travels a large loop westbound only on Harrison to 53rd, southbound on 53rd to Technology Loop/Research Way, to 35th Street, and returns downtown through the University. It has no direct service to any shopping area or medical facility except the downtown after traveling the large, one-way loop. To reach the northerly shopping areas or medical facilities, customers are required to transfer to another bus.

The proposed service travels in an easterly and westerly direction. The eastbound route provides a direct connection to downtown Corvallis. The bus would continue to the hospital and several shopping areas, without requiring a timed transfer. Therefore, no crossing of Harrison Blvd. is necessary. Additionally, a more direct access to Timberhill Shopping Center would be accomplished by crossing Harrison Boulevard.

All residents of Samaritan Village are eligible for Dial-A-Bus service by virtue of their age. Dial-A-Bus also provides the City's paratransit service during the same hours and days that the fixed route service operates for those persons who are unable to walk to the bus stop. Staff has offered to meet with residents of Samaritan Village to discuss their transportation options. No changes to the draft plan were proposed.

**The Commission suggested that the signalization of the intersection of Harrison/35th/36th be accomplished as soon as possible to facilitate pedestrian, bus passenger, and bus movements at this intersection.**

4. 53rd between Harrison and West Hills Road. It was noted by a Commissioner that the distance between Willow and West Hill Road is a short walking distance. The Commission discussed the mobile home park by the fairgrounds, noting that it is outside the city limits. Commission members also considered the current low ridership at this location, as well as this entire length of 53rd. Special fairgrounds events would be addressed separately. The City is already working with Benton County to provide the traditional free shuttle to the fair. Following discussion, the Commission proposed no changes to the draft plan.

5. Jefferson between 2nd and 3rd. Currently, the south Corvallis route drops customers at this location as the route loops around 2nd Street to Western, where it travels to OSU before returning downtown. Much of this ridership is middle school students who are walking to the transit terminal to catch the bus to Western View. Some may be downtown employees who prefer to walk to their destination rather than ride the loop through campus. The distance from 5th and Western is one block longer. No changes to the draft plan were proposed.

6. 5th Street between Harrison and Buchanan. Currently, this street segment is served northbound by Route 1 and southbound by Route 7. The area in the north section is

primarily made up of automobile dealerships. The area in the south contains a few apartment complexes. The proposed draft plan would move the service to Harrison and Van Buren via 9th Street. This would provide 30-minute, consistent service. Concern was expressed for those persons who would not be able to walk the 2- or 3-block distance to Harrison or Van Buren. Those unable to walk the distance would be considered for ADA paratransit service. Fixed route service could be shifted away from 9th Street without a major impact on service times, but it then results in a reduction of service to those areas west of 9th Street and provides less consistent service. This location is closely tied to the following paragraph 7. The Commission had many pros and cons for restructuring this service. They did not propose changes but **requested that Council take a look at this service and consider the trade-offs.**

7. 11th Street from Buchanan to Monroe. This discussion was closely tied to the above, 5th Street discussion. Currently, Route 1 travels southbound on 11th Street between Buchanan and Jefferson. It was noted that OSU students use this route to reach campus and that this route directly serves Corvallis High School. Several members of the Commission and the City's consultant supported the higher frequency on 9th Street as a trade-off to serve on 11th Street for several reasons. It was observed that high school students currently frequent 9th Street to access commercial establishments; and the distance between the high school and 9th Street was walkable for high school students. It was also thought to be a good idea to provide a separate space on 9th Street for those students riding the bus from other students near campus. Secondly, it was thought that OSU students would walk the difference of two blocks in exchange for twice the frequency on 9th Street. No changes were proposed, but see discussion in paragraph 6 above.

8. Hospital Service. Currently, Routes 1 and 8 serve the front entrance to the hospital and the Clinic's Asbury Building. Route 1 travels a large loop from downtown Corvallis north via 5th Street, Buchanan, and Highland, then east on Walnut to Satinwood, reaching the Asbury Clinic Building and Hospital before returning downtown via 9th Street, Spruce, Highland, and 11th Street. Route 8 makes a large loop, traveling west on Monroe, north on Kings Blvd., east on Walnut, north on Satinwood, east on Elks Drive, then circling the hospital and Asbury Clinic Building before returning downtown via Satinwood, Walnut, Highland, and 9th Street. A customer who boards along one of these 60-minute routes would have direct service to the front of the

hospital. Because the two routes run during a different 30-minute cycle, the hospital receives 30-minute service from downtown Corvallis. Transfers are necessary from the other six routes to reach the medical complex from downtown Corvallis.

The proposed service to the hospital is by way of Eastbound Route 2 and Westbound Route 2. The Eastbound Route 2 is a continuation of Route 1, which travels west from downtown Corvallis, north to Witham Hill, and east along Walnut Boulevard to Timberhill Shopping Center where it becomes the Route 2. It also connects with Route 5 at Timberhill. It then travels east along Walnut to Satinwood, then travels east on Samaritan Drive, turning by the street fronting the Asbury Building. The proposed route requires about a 1-block walk to the hospital's entrance. It then returns to downtown Corvallis via Elks Drive and 9th Street. The Westbound Route 2 travels in the opposite direction along the same route. Therefore, anyone wanting to reach the medical complexes from a large area of the community could do so without transferring buses. The eastbound route and westbound route arrive at the medical complexes approximately nine minutes apart.

The major concern regarding the proposed routes (eastbound and westbound) was that they did not travel directly in front of the hospital. **The Commission unanimously adopted a motion to re-route service to the front of the hospital.** Staff was directed to work with Good Samaritan Hospital to determine if buses could be provided access to their parking lot to make the turn in front of the hospital. If an agreement cannot be reached, staff was directed to explore what options were available to cut other service to maintain the needed schedule time.

**Long-term Scenario, Chapter 4.** The consultant noted that the long-term scenario was developed in conjunction with Corvallis's Transportation Alternatives Analysis (TAA) project. It reflects the assumptions made in that project about future land uses and proposed neighborhood focus areas and opportunities for increased densities within the existing city limits. Actual land use patterns in the future may not parallel the assumptions in the TAA project.

The long-term scenario points out the importance of the land use/transit connection and the need to establish street patterns which allow efficient use of transit in new developments and existing developments where possible. An example of this situation is the Conifer/Conser transit

route which has no street pattern allowing it to serve the densely-populated western area and reverse direction without traveling in a large circuitous route through the low density, eastern area. It was noted that Lancaster Drive was originally planned to extend south and connect with the Walnut extension. The City may have an existing right-of-way for the extension. This street would provide a more efficient transit service.

Another area discussed in the long-term plan was the direct service on South 3rd. It was noted that service is needed east of South 3rd, but only interior, residential streets are currently available to reach the area. Concern was also expressed for the area south of Goodnight Avenue, including the airport. Appropriate street patterns were again emphasized as an important element in transit service. **The Commission requested that secondary routes be shown in the long-term scenario, such as the current service.** It was noted that secondary routes would be served less frequently than primary routes.

The concept of service routes was discussed as an alternative to primary fixed route service in the isolated areas of the city as a long-term, public transportation alternative. Service routes are routes which operate along a semi-fixed route and schedule, with possible route deviation. They might utilize smaller, low-floor buses which can navigate smaller streets, possibly including private streets. They are not as time-sensitive and can serve seniors, the disabled, and the general public. **The Commission requested that the service route concept be incorporated into the long-term scenario as a possible method of addressing these needs.**

The Commission accepted the long-term scenario as revised.

**Policy Issues, Chapter 6.** The Commission next discussed the key policy issues.

Commission member Adler was concerned about the proposed change from a flag stop system to designated stops. Chairman Lowry noted that this change has been discussed by the Commission for many years and recognized as a needed change. The change would address two major issues. One relates to transit efficiency. Drivers are frequently flagged down within short distances. This reduces their operating speed and also affects the operating efficiency of the vehicles. Another important aspect is safety. Drivers currently must continually divert their attention from the

roadway to the sidewalk to assure that they do not miss customers. This creates a safety hazard.

Ms. Adler was concerned about those people who were unable to walk to a designated stop and asked if there was a way to accommodate those customers. Staff noted that designated stops would be placed in accessible locations, approximately 800 to 1,000 feet apart. Stops would be placed after consultation with CTS drivers. Following discussion, it was determined that the number of persons needing special accommodation would be small. **It was then agreed to incorporate a policy which would allow ADA certified individuals to call the transit service one hour in advance to request a special stop near their boarding.** The driver would then be notified by radio to look for the customer.

The Commission then addressed the issue of the philosophy of the plan which was developed to address traffic and congestion issues. Ms. Adler was concerned about the shift from a service which she felt historically was developed as a social service (serving those who have no transportation alternatives) to one which is focused on efficiency. Reference was again made to the City's Comprehensive Plan, which emphasizes both concern for those without transportation alternatives and the need to provide transit service which addresses traffic and environmental factors by providing a viable alternative to the automobile.

Transit policy 10.6.1 states: "An improved public transportation system...should be established to improve the livability of the community, to reduce pollution and traffic, and to reduce energy consumption."

Transportation policy 10.1.4 states: "Special consideration in the design of the transportation system shall be given to the needs of those people who have limited choice in obtaining private transportation." [This includes all transportation modes.]

**It was agreed that Chapter 6 be modified to reflect a continuing need to address the needs of those who have no transportation alternatives.** The methods for meeting those needs was not specified; although, transit service routes remain an alternative in the long-term scenario. Additionally, the service implemented to address social service needs should be identified as such, possibly with a separate revenue source. Such a service would be coverage-based.

**Transit Master Plan Recommendation.** Chapters 1-3 of the draft Plan provide background information. Chapters 4-6 were discussed and agreed upon as noted above. The Commission requested that detailed information regarding the Commission's discussion process (the "dot" approach) and level of discussion be conveyed to the City Council. Following a brief discussion, the Commission voted unanimously to forward the draft Corvallis Transit Master Plan to the City Council as modified above.

#### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Future Meetings:

May 8, 1997; 7:50 a.m.; City Hall Conference Room D  
June 12, 1997; 7:50 a.m.; City Hall Conference Room D