

Minutes
Transit Passenger Advisory Committee

Monday, September 18, 10:00 a.m.
Transit Services Administration Building
1015 Transit Drive, Large Conference Room

Call to Order, Quorum, Introductions

- No quorum was established; no voting during this meeting.
- The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.
- Susanne Whited, as the Committee Vice Chairperson, requested introductions from all present.

Members Present

Susanne Whited	2019	Fixed-Route Rider Advocate, Vice Chairperson
Rick Orthwein	2019	Fixed-Route Rider Advocate
Liz Robertson	2018	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Courtney Stone	2018	The Independence Center
Ron Anderson	2018	Fixed-Route Rider Advocate

Members Absent

<i>Allison Burns</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>Discover Goodwill, Committee Chairperson</i>
<i>Charlton Clarke</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>Aspen Pointe</i>
<i>Rebecca Shields</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>Metro Mobility Rider Advocate</i>
<i>Lynn Harrington</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>Metro Mobility Rider Advocate</i>
<i>Larry Schaefer</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>Fixed-Route Rider Advocate</i>
<i>Dick Hyde</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>Community Intersections</i>

Service Providers

Andrew Cottrell	McDonald Transit Associates (Fixed Route Service Provider)
Tim Van Zalen	National Transit (Metro Mobility ADA Paratransit Service Provider)

City Staff

Craig Blewitt	Transit Services Manager
Erin McCauley	Transit Services Data Analyst
Vicki McCann	Transit Services Marketing & Public Relations Supervisor
Maggie Chapman	Transit Services Admin Tech; TPAC Liaison

Guests

None

Review Agenda

- The Agenda was adjusted to include a presentation of this year's rider survey.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

- Note: The August meeting was canceled due to anticipated low attendance. The meeting minutes from July were reviewed and no corrections were noted

- The July and September meeting notes will be reviewed for approval at the October meeting

Public Comments

- None

Craig Blewitt, Transit Services Division Manager (Transit Administration)

Fall Service Changes starting October 1:

- Route 25 will be operating at 15-minute frequencies
- Adding a bus to the interlined routes 10 and 11 to improve on-time performance
 - Susanne: I was surprised to notice it's going to be five minutes earlier; would have liked to hear it from Transit before finding it on a new schedule.

Title VI Plan

- Introduced the Title VI Program (was approved August 26)
 - Required by the FTA to demonstrate compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which protects people from discrimination based on race, color, and national origin
 - Erin and an outside consultant put this together; there were some adjustments, but no major changes from the way things work now:
 - Redefined the categories of service changes to be either *Minor* or *Major*; the Moderate category was eliminated. This clarifies and right-sizes the amount of public process involved when developing service changes

City Council, August 21

- Gave a Real-Time Bus Presentation along with Public Works' informational presentations
- Introduced the Title VI Program (was approved August 26)
- Introduced the Downtown Transit Center Resolution of Support, including highlights that stress the importance of aesthetic and accessible design
 - Anticipating Council Approval at the September 26 meeting; will be recognizing the steering committee members at that meeting, too

New Buses:

- Six of our ten new buses are out on the road having been prepared , including updating and testing all of the on-board equipment
- A few key features you may have noticed:
 - The head sign is brighter, easier to read
 - There are USB ports so you can charge your phone! (Along the black chair-rail strip)
 - Molded plastic seats are easy to keep clean (and for riders to know when they're not!)

Student Pass Programs

- University Colorado of Colorado Springs (UCCS) and Colorado College (CC) programs are up and running; the first report shows 4,000 UCCS student-trips and 600 from CC, both of which are great numbers!
- Still working with PPCC to start a similar program.

Streets, Potholes, and Detours:

- Rides are getting smoother, but there are a lot of detours!
 - Nevada Ave. northbound will be closed for ten days then southbound another ten days

PPRTA Funding is getting us more service next year.

- We're looking at the data and reaching out to community groups for input
- The initial concepts include:
 - Basic service to Memorial's Northern facilities

- Any new service would start as a demonstration project to evaluate the community's need before establishing any standard route
- Limited-stop service (express route) would go along Union; would not expand the existing ADA footprint
- We are working with HSPs to ensure we get service up to the hospitals
- Increase frequency on either:
 - Route 27 - would strengthen a significant corridor, or;
 - Route 1 – may improve trips between the southeast and northwest areas of town; this route has higher ridership than 27

Joint Call Center:

- Still making progress; there's a Mobility Manager position requested in our 2018 budget.
 - Salary for Mobility Manager would be primarily grant-funded (20 City/80 Grant)

Erin McCauley, Transit Services Data Analyst

Our Rider Survey is done every three years or so – We'll send out a copy of this presentation with the meeting minutes and the full study will be published as soon as possible.

Survey Summary:

The information from this survey is used extensively for planning purposes. We ensured it is a scientifically-based survey, using stratified random sampling for a true representation of our riders. We conducted the survey on February 7, 8, and 11, which was a typical week without holidays.

Generations:

- 2.08% Silent generation – (b. 1925-1944) aged 72-92
- 18.92% Baby Boomers (b. 1945-1964) aged 53-71
- 25.45% Generation X (b. 1965-1979) aged 37-52
- **43.33% Millennials** (b. 1980-1997) aged 20-36
- 10.22% Generation Z (b. after 1997) aged +/- 12-19
 - *We did not survey people who appeared to be under the age of 12.*

According to a 2014 report from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA):
“Millennials are multi-modal, they choose the best transportation mode (driving, transit, biking, or walking) based on the trip they are planning to take.”

Gender:

- Male: 56%, Female: 42%, Trans/Other: 2%
 - Unusual when compared to the 53% female nationwide average
 - Males outnumbered females in all age ranges except for the Silent Generation

Race & Ethnicity

- Higher proportion of our riders is of minority groups as compared to overall local demographics, including El Paso County and the Cities of Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs.

Language:

We asked about our riders' primary language:

- 95% of riders' primary language is English; were fewer Spanish-speaking folks (2.82%) than we anticipated

Income:

We asked about the total combined household income from 2016.

- More than half of our riders are from households making \$20K or less
 - 85% are under \$40K

- APTA’s “Who Rides Public Transit” report found that riders in small- and mid-sized cities tend to skew to the lower end of the national income distribution. Nationwide, approximately 69% of riders’ incomes are below \$50K

Employment

Based on the Department of Labor Statistics guidelines, most of our employed riders are in the leisure and hospitality industries.

- 41% employed full time and 20% are employed part-time
- 21% are unemployed, 30% of these are students
- 9% are retired and 9% were a combination of ‘other’ or marked multiple choices

Education:

- 17% of our riders are students, more than half of which have had some college education
- Most of the college students in the survey attend Pikes Peak Community College, followed by the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, and Colorado College.

Access to Transit:

We asked whether access to transit service was a factor when deciding where to live.

- About half of our riders indicated yes, it was a factor, and half said no.
- “Yes” responses were deeply skewed toward lower-income families.
- Very few riders with an income of \$40K or higher considered this.

Types of Riders:

We asked our riders how often they ride and for what purposes:

- All-purpose riders – 71.56%
 - People who ride either occasionally or regularly and for more than one purpose
- Sole-purpose – 17.8%
 - Riders who only use the bus for a single purpose (i.e. commuting to work)
- Occasional Riders – 8% (many from the Manitou Shuttle)
 - Riders who only use the bus occasionally and for any number of purposes

These categories are much more accurate in the real world than the transit-industry concepts of choice vs. captive riders, which often asserts that people who don’t have other transportation will use public transit regardless of the quality of service.

Fare Media

- More than 40% of our riders pay in cash at the farebox

Information Sources:

We asked riders where they go to get information about our service

- 33% of our riders will ask the driver for information, 27% use the website, and 24% ask friends or family. Generationally speaking:
 - Our eldest riders (The Silent Generation) are more likely to ask the supervisors at the Downtown Terminal
 - Baby Boomers ask drivers and use paper schedules
 - The Gen Xers and Millennials ask the drivers and use the website about equally, and also use the information provided through bus stop signage
 - Our youngest riders, (Generation Z), rely on other riders, friends and family, and social media

How are we doing??

We asked riders to rate the following categories on a scale of one (bad) to four (excellent):

- Safety: 3.27
- Customer Service and Comfort: 3.08
- Usefulness of Information: 3.04

- Fares: 2.93
- Service Quality: 2.34

We asked about how our riders would like to see the services improved or expanded

- The options for more frequent service and accessibility to more places rated much higher than all other options.
- More riders thought shorter trip times would be very important than not
- On-board wifi and charging ports both were relatively balanced between 'very important' and 'not important'
 - Courtney pointed out we'd take it if Comcast wanted to give us free wifi...
- Many riders added a comment that their routes don't run late enough; we've gathered information on which routes they were referring to and will be using this in future service considerations

Was there anything surprising?

- Low number of Spanish-speaking
- Increase in millennials since the last survey
- Boomers haven't given up their cars yet? – there's so many more of them

Andrew Cottrell, McDonald Transit Associates (Fixed-Route Service Provider)

- Six new drivers coming out tomorrow – harass them a little bit! (Four more in process)
 - Susanne: What's the biggest reason for your high turnover?
 - It's not particularly high for the industry; some safety violations, work ethic...
 - Rick: You have to be a certain kind of person to be a bus driver
 - Andrew: some don't realize what they're getting into– it's not just driving a bus!
- Still emphasizing hard-braking issue and ensuring people have time to be seated

Tim VanZalen, National Transit, General Manager (ADA Paratransit Service Provider)

- Have a couple of new drivers out there, but also a couple that dropped out of the training class, so we're at a net change of 0 – will start a new round and hopefully a new class starting Oct 2.
- School year started – so there are more rides and some (anticipated) chaos involved, but it's smoothing out

New Topics for Discussion

Accomplishments:

- We're keeping lines of communication open among many different groups
 - COS Plan, Senate Bill Project, etc.
- Review accomplishments from April, May, and June

Member Announcements:

Liz – Senate Bill II project:

- Liz is heading up the El Paso County working group; presented gaps analyses to see discuss suggestions and what we can actually do.
 - No surprise here: Everyone wants more transit service
- Teller County's group came up with different gaps –
 - Cell phone coverage – if I can't make a call, how can I book a ride?
 - Issues with dispersed locations
- Transportation group reviewed technology solutions –

- Lots of options with Uber, Lyft, Yellow Cab, etc.
- IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO PARTICIPATE!
 - Next meeting: October 24, 12-3pm at Library 21C

Courtney:

- Not strictly transit-specific – but interesting: There will be an ADA survey tour on October 6
 - Project highlights accessibility downtown and how to be more inclusive –
 - Will go through the art walk and see what the situation is
 - Part of will be giving feedback and it's mostly also just pleasant
- By the way –the Independence Center's gotten a very cool award for providing an exceptionally accessible voting location
 - Provides hands-on voting training, completely accessible voting options, etc.

Liz

Plan COS is about to release the first chapter to the public

- Transit and Transportation come up in every one of the conversations! (...and it wasn't even Courtney bringing it up!!)
- If you want to be participating in the future of the city – go to these co-creator meetings!!
 - March or April there were forty or fifty people – this last time there was very few
 - IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO PARTICIPATE! (<https://www.coloradosprings.gov/PlanCOS>)

Rick:

Driver Appreciation

- The drivers are wonderful and patient people... Is there something we can do for them? Thank you notes to show appreciation?
 - There's a Driver Appreciation Day in March... let's plan on doing something

Public Comments

- None

NEXT MONTH:

- Top options for 2018 Service Changes – discussion and input
 - Which community groups have been involved with 2018 Service Change options so far?
- How much follow-up was there done for recruitment for members?
- For Future Reference: Coordinate for Driver Appreciation Day (March, 2018) – what to do?

Adjourned 11:15 am