



City of Tacoma
Transportation Commission

Jane Moore, Co-Chair, District 2
Gerrit Nyland, Co-Chair, City Manager Appointed
Luis Alonzo, District 3
Richard Gardner, At-Large
Justin Leighton, At-Large
Evette Mason, At-Large
Erin Anderson, At-Large
Bruce Morris, District 4
Jacki Skaught, District 1
Matt Stevens, City Manager Appointed
Vacant, District 5

Minutes

Meeting: Regular Meeting
Time: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 5:30 P.M.
Place: Conference Room 243, Tacoma Municipal Building, 2nd Floor
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

Join by computer, click on the following link:

<https://zoom.us/join> or <https://zoom.us/j/98722456000?pwd=OVZwNGp6Qi9FUDdvcW1WMUJpUDRnQT09>

Join by Phone: (253) 215-8782

Meeting ID: 987 2245 6000

Passcode: 969420

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I. Call to Order

Co-Chair Nyland called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

II. Roll Call/Introductions

No absences noted.

III. Approval of Minutes (February 17, 2021)

The minutes were moved and approved with minor changes to grammar.

IV. Public Comment on Agenda Topics

No members of the public provided comments.

V. Business Items

a) **Pierce Transit Connections to Manufacturing Industrial Centers**

Penny Grellier and Nathan BeVelle, Pierce Transit, provided a presentation on the access to the City's Manufacturing Industrial Center. Penny explained that the Tideflats area does not have currently any transit service, but a need does exist.

Penny provided an update on the Runner Pilot Service on Ruston Way, which was app-based and on-demand. It had no specific route or bus stops. It connected to bus stops at N 51st Street, downtown, and the Tacoma Dome Station. The runner service cost the same as standard bus trips. The vehicle used was an ADA compliant mini-van. The program kicked off in February 2020 and was placed on pause as of March 1, 2021 because of low ridership and pandemic concerns. Commissioner Leighton asked what the average cost per passenger was. Penny stated that they were looking to 300 trips per month, and they saw 300 trips for the entire service period. She shared that Pierce Transit contracted with a service provider and paid regardless of number of trips, as they were on stand-by. The results were much lower than expected and was not deemed cost-efficient.

Penny shared that Pierce Transit is evaluating an expanded proposed runner program that would include the Tideflats Area. Pierce Transit applied for grant funding to pilot this program. Commissioner Leighton asked if the businesses in the Tideflats are affected by the Commute Trip Reduction Law. Penny stated that there are a handful that are affected and do utilize vanpool strategies. Commissioner Alonzo asked if the workers have been surveyed about possible transit services and if the service would only take them to Downtown or Tacoma Dome station, which requires them to transfer/connect to other services or modes. Penny shared that businesses have indicated interest in transit services. The service would only connect them to Downtown of the Tacoma Dome Station. Nathan provided an overview of the commute options available for the Tideflats area, which includes vanpools and vanshare. Both options can be door to door. The vanshare program is similar to the runner service, but it is not on-demand. The vanshare program is a flat monthly fare, but is limited to no more than 30 miles daily round trip. Another option is the ORCA for Business Passport program (5-499 employees) that is a deeply discounted program that covers the employees' commute needs and includes 100% vanpool/vanshare subsidies and Emergency Ride Home (ERH).

Nathan also provided an overview of Pierce Transit's Balancing Project, which includes looking at all bus stop locations in the system and balancing safety, access, and equity goals. The primary reason people don't ride transit is that it takes too long to get to their destination. Pierce Transit makes these decisions based on safety, accessibility, equity, proximity, ridership, key transfer points, and investments. Guidelines suggest that bus stops should be no closer than 1/8 mile in dense urban areas and 1/4 mile in other areas. Staff evaluated each bus stop. Pierce Transit is seeking feedback through April 11, 2021. Commissioner Leighton asked if there is a standard for bus stops that have very few to no riders each day. Penny shared that bus stops with lower ridership were prioritized for review. Commissioner Alonzo appreciates the evaluation as he has seen multiple stops on a block. He asked what the intended increase in frequency might be and if it meant that there could be an increase in service hours. Penny shared that it depends on the route and that there one route could be saving up to 8 minutes. Nathan shared that it will improve run time (on-time service) and not necessarily frequency. Commissioner Mason voiced support for increasing access to the Tideflats, which provides a variety of job opportunities for people who may not have a car. Commissioner Mason suggested Pierce Transit reach out to UPS logistics center and West Rock. Commissioner Stevens stated that he works in the Tideflats and is excited to see transit service; however, he sees the challenges in getting folks to use transit. Co-Chair Nyland shared that his experience working at homeless fairs has indicated that access to work is one of the largest challenges.

b) **Sound Transit South Tacoma Access**

Katie Drewel, Melanie Mayock, Melissa Flores-Saxe, and Zac Eskenazi, Sound Transit, provided an update on Sound Transit projects. Katie provided an overview of the capital program realignment that is in response to lower revenues, and increased construction and real estate costs. Katie shared that some of the realignment tools include cutting costs through reduced project scope, suspending or canceling projects; raising new revenues through issuing higher debt or seeking additional state or federal funding; and delaying or phasing projects to spread costs over time and keep total agency debt within current legal limits. The schedule to review realignment includes April 2021 seeking public feedback and discuss cost review results, June develop realignment plans, and July Sound Transit Board decision.

Zac provided an overview of the South Tacoma Station Access Improvement Project, which currently identifies access improvement to the station that are primarily for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access. The project includes approximately \$45 Million for improvements. The project goals and objectives that will inform the criteria include affordability, access (multiple modes and underserved communities), environment, partnership (connections to the surrounding neighborhood in partnership with the City and stakeholders), and passenger experience. Public engagement would start April 1, 2021. Staff would evaluate potential improvements Summer 2021 and conduct another round of public engagement Fall 2021. Engagement includes online open houses, technical advisory groups, and in-person events (when allowed).

Commissioner Alonzo asked if the Tacoma Link Extension would also be subject to realignment. Katie shared that it would be. Commissioner Gardner asked if City staff is working with Sound Transit staff on current and proposed improvements. Zac shared that Liz Kaster and Lisa Spadoni are on the Advisory Group. Co-Chair Nyland asked if the previous list identified during the initial development (2011/2012) regarding ADA concerns is available, e.g. pedestrian gates at crossings. Zac will follow-up with City staff or reach out to Co-Chair Nyland if needed.

c) **Home In Tacoma Letter Approval**

Commissioner Alonzo provided an overview of the letter that he, Co-Chair Nyland, and Commissioner Skaught drafted in response to the released draft of the Home in Tacoma policy and framework. Commissioner Alonzo shared that the focus was on the goals and policies in the Transportation Master Plan, specifically providing safe and connected access for pedestrians, bicycles, transit, and people with disabilities. The letter was approved with the change to move Vision Zero to the top priority.

VI. Other Business/Updates

- a) Transit Oriented Development Advisory Group (Justin Leighton/Evette Mason) - Commissioner Mason and Jennifer Kammerzell shared that TODAG is concerned with the Sound Transit Realignment program and would like to send a letter affirming the importance of not delaying or reducing and projects in Tacoma. They would like to know if the Commission would be interested in a joint letter. Commissioner Gardner shared that at a Sound Transit Board, they showed a table that indicated Tacoma Dome Link Extension could be a 1 year extension. Co-Chair Nyland asked who represents Tacoma on the Sound Transit Board. Commissioner Leighton said Mayor Woodards is the City's representative. Commissioner Leighton would like to see



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additional information on the proposed alignment, but suggests the letter would include support of no reduction in funding or delay for Tacoma projects.

- b) Bus Rapid Transit Citizens Committee (Richard Gardener/Jane Moore)
Commission Gardner shared that the group announced their next meeting on March 30th. The project is starting with potholing.
- c) Bicycle and Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group (Jane Moore)
The February 22, 2021 meeting was cancelled.
- d) Planning Commission Agenda
The March 17, 2021 meeting was on the Tideflats and Land Use Regulations

VII. Staff Reports

- a) Responses to Commission Inquiries & Staff Comments
Jennifer shared that Commissioner Stevens reached out regarding pedestrian safety and speeding on Marine View Drive between Taylor Way and Norpoint Way NE. The City will be embarking on a state of the speed study this summer for the City that will evaluate lowering speed limits. Vision Zero and the Tideflats Subarea Plan are also opportunities to address speed, safety, and access.
- b) Status of Grant Applications & Major Capital Projects
Staff did not have any updates.
- c) Upcoming Public Meetings & Events
Jennifer shared that the Tideflats Subarea Plan is conducting visioning workshops. Transportation and infrastructure will be on Saturday, March 20, 2021. A community meeting on May 6, 2021.

VIII. Commissioner Comments

Co-Chair Nyland and Co-Chair Moore shared that they participated in a Tideflats Subarea Plan workshop.

IX. Public Comment

No members of the public provided comment.

X. Adjourn

Co-Chair Nyland adjourned the meeting at 7:04 PM.



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