



Salem Area Mass Transit District
~ **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Virtual Meeting** ~

Wednesday, May 19, 2021
Courthouse Square – Senator Hearing Room
555 Court Street NE, Salem, Oregon 97301

MINUTES

Members Present:	Ron Harding, Special Transportation Fund Advisory Committee (STFAC) Chair; John Hammill, STFAC Vice Chair; Bryant Baird, STFAC member; Emily Broussard, TAC member; Karen Odenthal, staff at the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments and member of the public
Staff Present:	Steve Dickey, Director of Technology and Program Management; Tom Dietz, Director of Operations; Peggy Greene, Grants Administrator; Ben Sawyer, Contracted Services Manager
SAMTD Board Liaison:	Director Colleen Busch (Alternate)
Guests:	Mark Knecht
Recorder:	Jolene White, Administrative Assistant, Finance/ Technology and Program Management

A. CALL TO ORDER AND NOTE OF ATTENDANCE

Chair Harding called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM. Attendance was noted that a quorum was present.

B. SAFETY MOMENT

Mr. Dickey shared the safety moment of the day. Stop look and listen. How many of us have heard that over the years? Everyone needs to be aware of their senses, using what we have to be able to be aware of our surroundings, especially when it comes to crossing roadways, walking on sidewalks, and crossing driveways. It is very important to do this on a regular basis. As children we were taught to look both ways before crossing the street and today in our multifaceted mobility it becomes more difficult. Now you need to watch for bicycles, scooters, powered wheelchairs and skateboards all crisscrossing on sidewalks and roadways. Be aware of your surroundings and especially for those that may not have as keen of use of their senses, so be aware for their safety as well. Another item of import, in addition to all of this, we have the introduction of more battery/electric

vehicles on the road, which are very quiet. This is why not only listening is important, but seeing what is around you is equally important. With the battery powered scooters and skateboards, they travel faster than most people expect, so it's imperative to be aware your surroundings at all time. The other issue is that at times our emotions can get into the way of being aware. This causes us to be distracted and our senses aren't as aware to what is going on.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments submitted and no public present that wished to speak.

D. SCHEDULE REVIEW

Mr. Dickey reviewed the schedule with the committee for 2022 Section 5310(FTA) funds. There is a window of time that we have to obligate these funds with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). This window of time gives us a little bit of latitude to be able to bring the projects to the TAC, allow for review and score them and then those projects once they have been scored by this group, a recommendation is then forwarded to the Special Transportation Fund Advisory Committee (STFAC), and then the STFAC approve a recommendation that will be provided to the Cherrits Board of Directors (BOD) at their June meeting for their direction. Once the BOD makes their decision, the Cherrits Grant Administrator will take those projects and then will submit those through the FTA's application process that is called TRAMS. That is how these funds become active and available for service. The amount available for 2022 Section 5310 Formula funds (\$252,229), and an additional availability of Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSAA) though the 5310 program in the amount of (\$42,464).

D. REVIEW SECTIONS OF THE COORDINATED PLAN

Mr. Dickey referenced sections of the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) to be reviewed by the members. The purpose of the Coordinated Plan is to assist with the decision-making process. For a project to be eligible for funding, it must be listed in the current version of the adopted Coordinated Plan. As a reminder, whenever this Committee is thinking about grant funding, the priorities for the District are determined in the Coordinated Plan. The sections provided to members for this meeting is Chapter 5, pages 48 through 53. The priorities that are listed here agree with the Special Transportation Fund (STF) and Section 5310 programs.

E. REVIEW PURPOSE AND INTENT OF 5310(FTA) PROGRAM

Mr. Dickey referenced the Purpose and Intent of the 5310 and Special Transportation Fund (STF) programs published in the ODOT STF Guidebook. The Purpose and Intent section of the guidebook provides guidance on eligible projects. All applications received

fall within the eligibility requirements listed in the Purpose and Intent document. These documents are to be used as resources to guide TAC members in the application ranking process. The goal of the 5310(FTA) program is to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities. The 5310(FTA) program is specifically for the Salem-Keizer urbanized area, there are no rural projects being considered. This funding program also has categories called "traditional" and "other". Each project will be defined in one of these two categories. Once the presentations are complete, members can distinguish which of the three projects are considered "traditional" and which are considered "other". This is significant because there is a provision stating that 55% of the grant has to go towards "traditional" projects and 45% can be spent on "other" projects, which is a federal requirement that goes along with this particular grant.

F. PRESENTATIONS AND QUESTIONS/ANSWER PERIOD:

1. Salem Area Mass Transit District

Presenter: Tom Dietz, Director of Operations

Salem Area Mass Transit District (Cherriots) is applying for funding to support three projects - Cherriots Shop and Ride Purchased Service, Cherriots Mobility Management Call Center and Cherriots Shop and Ride Preventative Maintenance. All these projects are in the 2019 Coordinated Public Transit- Human Services Transportation Plan. This presentation is for the Cherriots 5310(FTA) FY22 Grant Applications.

Cherriots Shop and Ride Purchased Service: This project will fund the purchase of service for Cherriots Shop and Ride. Shop and Ride provides Shopper Shuttle and Dial-a-Ride (demand responsive) transportation services to seniors age 60 and older and individuals with disabilities within the Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB) of Salem and Keizer. Scheduling is by reservation. Riders call the Cherriots Call Center up to two weeks in advance or within 24 hours of their requested trip to make reservations. Cherriots Shop and Ride is operated by a contractor, currently MV Transportation, Inc. Salem Area Mass Transit District (SAMTD) employs a Contracted Services Manager to oversee the Shop and Ride program. Services are available to any senior age 60 or older and individuals with disabilities; no application is required to qualify for services and all Shop and Ride vehicles are ADA-accessible.

The Dial-a-Ride service provides transportation from the rider's home and to any location within the UGB Monday through Friday 8 AM-5 PM for \$3.20 per time the bus is boarded. Medical appointments have priority when making trip reservations on Dial-a-Ride. The Dial-a-Ride service observes the same holiday closures as

Cherriots Local fixed routes. Riders can bring one additional passenger or personal care attendant when using Dial-a-Ride or Shopper Shuttle.

The Shopper Shuttle provides AM and PM shopping trips to predetermined stores within the Salem-Keizer UGB Tuesday through Friday 8:15 AM-5:15 PM for \$1.25 per time the bus is boarded. This origin-destination service offers a schedule for riders to choose from when reserving a trip. Riders are picked up from their homes and travel to the designated shopping location for that time and day. Stores have been selected with the criteria for one-stop shopping opportunities (groceries, pharmacy, bank, and household supplies). Each AM or PM trip is provided approximately 75 minutes at the store before riders are picked up in the front of the store and returned home. The Operator can assist riders with their grocery bags; four grocery bags per customer is allowed. Examples of shopping locations include Fred Meyer and Walmart.

Cherriots Shop and Ride provided approximately 3,460 trips from January-December 2020. This is 3,802 fewer trips than 2019 due to COVID-19 and the Governor's order to Stay Home Save Lives. All Shop and Ride services were temporarily suspended from March 23-May 29, 2020. Dial-a-Ride continues to provide trips for shopping, medical, and other daily living activities. Currently, the Shopper Shuttle remains suspended due to the limited capacity on vehicles for social distancing although SAMTD anticipates resuming the service when safe to do so. Volunteers will not be used for this service. Cherriots Shop and Ride is marketed through social media, the Cherriots website, targeted mailers, advertisements in local newspapers, and in-person promotion of services at informational tables and community presentations. Shop and Ride provides transportation for seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income populations, and senior housing communities, offering vital access to services and serving as a social outlet to many who may have limited means of transportation and are generally at home alone.

The total annual cost for Shop and Ride Purchased Service is \$140,000. The grant ask is \$112,000. Without this funding, Cherriots will be unable to provide this transportation service.

Cherriots Shop & Ride Preventative Maintenance: This project will fund the preventive maintenance (PM) for Cherriots Shop & Ride. The Shop & Ride fleet consists of five vehicles, four are in-service and one spare. PM is provided by Cherriots Maintenance staff located at 3170 Del Webb Maintenance facility. Shop

and Ride provides Shopper Shuttle and Dial-a-Ride (demand responsive) transportation services to seniors age 60 and older and individuals with disabilities within the Salem-Keizer Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB).

Scheduling is by reservation. Riders call the Cherriots Call Center up to 2 weeks in advance or within 24 hours of their requested trip to make reservations. Services are available to any senior age 60 or older and individuals with disabilities; no application is required to qualify for services and all Shop and Ride vehicles are ADA-accessible. The Dial-a-Ride service provides transportation from the rider's home and to any location within the UGB Monday through Friday 8 AM-5 PM for \$3.20 per time the bus is boarded. Medical appointments have priority when making trip reservations on Dial-a-Ride. The Dial-a-Ride service observes the same holiday closures as Cherriots Local fixed routes. Riders can bring one additional passenger or personal care attendant when using Dial-a-Ride or Shopper Shuttle. The Shopper Shuttle provides AM and PM shopping trips to predetermined stores within the Salem-Keizer UGB Tuesday through Friday 8:15 AM-5:15 PM for \$1.25 per time the bus is boarded. This origin-destination service offers a schedule for riders to choose from when reserving a trip. Riders are picked up from their homes and travel to the designated shopping location for that time and day. Stores have been selected with the criteria for one-stop shopping opportunities (groceries, pharmacy, bank, and household supplies). Each AM or PM trip is provided approximately 75 minutes at the store before riders are picked up in the front of the store and returned home. Dial-a-Ride continues to provide trips for shopping, medical, and other daily living activities. Volunteers will not be used for this service.

Cherriots Shop and Ride is marketed through social media, the Cherriots website, targeted mailers, advertisements in local newspapers, and in-person promotion of services at informational tables and community presentations. Shop & Ride provided service January-December 2020 with 3,460 trips; this is 3,802 fewer trips than 2019 due to COVID-19. Service was temporarily suspended March 23-May 29, 2020, when service resumed but only for Dial-a-Ride. The Shopper Shuttle remains suspended due to limited capacity on buses and will resume when safe to do so. Shop and Ride provides transportation for seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income populations, and senior housing communities, offering vital access to services and serving as a social outlet to many who may have limited means of transportation and are generally at home alone.

The total annual cost of the Preventative Maintenance is \$17,500. The grant ask is \$14,000. This amount does not include fuel cost. Without this funding, Cherriots will be unable to provide this transportation service.

Cherriots Mobility Management Call Center: This project will fund a portion of the Cherriots Call Center costs that directly benefit seniors and individuals with disabilities in Marion and Polk counties. The project serves residents within the Salem-Keizer Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) utilizing the Cherriots LIFT and Cherriots Shop and Ride transportation services. Efforts have been developed and implemented to ensure that public transportation services in Marion and Polk counties are not duplicated, including services identified in the current adopted Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan.

The Cherriots Call Center schedules trips for riders on Cherriots LIFT, Cherriots Shop and Ride as well as for deviations on the Cherriots Regional Route 45 in Polk County (NOTE: The PCF has been replaced with the Route 45 fixed route with deviations). Customer Care Representatives answer caller's questions on transportation services that are available regionally in addition to scheduling trips for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Customer Care Representatives also schedule trips for individuals that are traveling to and from their worksites through a collaboration with Marion County. This collaboration is called DD53 and is included in the Cherriots LIFT calls as LIFT is the transportation service that is utilized to provide the trips.

There are six (6) employees in the call center: 1 Scheduler; 1 Team Lead, 3 Customer Care Representatives, and the General Manager. Cherriots Call Center hours are Monday-Friday 6 AM-6 PM and Saturday/Sunday 8 AM-4 PM. Volunteers are not utilized for this service.

The call center service is marketed via social media, cherriots.org, the Cherriots LIFT Eligibility Office, publicly posted and shared informational materials, mobility management outreach presentations, and project staff participation in community meetings throughout the region. January-December 2020 the call center answered 31,135 total calls: LIFT calls - 23,040; Regional calls - 1,561 (PCF); and Shop and Ride - 2,908.

Performance measures have been created for the partnership and call center project. The Cherriots Call Center manager evaluates performance measures on a quarterly and annual basis.

Performance measures are adjusted for quality and cost effectiveness. The Cherriots Call Center meets and exceeds the Federal Transit Administration - FTA/ADA Guidance for Call Center Telephone Hold Times. Speed of answer under 30 seconds; Calls abandoned 0%; Call handling time under 5 minutes.

The total annual cost for the Mobility Management Call Center is \$157,786. The Grant ask is \$126,229. Without this funding, Cherriots will be unable to provide a community resource and coordination service for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

2. Salem Area Mass Transit District

Presenter: Tom Dietz, Director of Operations

Salem Area Mass Transit District (Cherriots) is applying for funding for Cherriots COVID-19 Relief and Response. This presentation is for the CRRSAA FY22 Grant Application.

Cherriots COVID-19 Relief and Response: he project will fund the COVID-19 relief and response needed to sustain Cherriots Shop and Ride service. Shop and Ride provides Shopper Shuttle and Dial-a-Ride (demand responsive) transportation services to seniors age 60 and older and individuals with disabilities within the Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB) of Salem and Keizer. Scheduling is by reservation. Riders call the Cherriots Call Center up to two weeks in advance or within 24 hours of their requested trip to make reservations. No application is required to qualify for services and all Shop and Ride vehicles are ADA-accessible. Cherriots Shop and Ride provided approximately 3,460 trips from January-December 2020. This is 3,802 fewer trips than 2019 due to COVID-19 and the Governor's order to Stay Home Save Lives. Currently, the Shopper Shuttle is suspended due to the limited capacity on vehicles for social distancing although SAMTD anticipates resuming the service when safe to do so. Dial-a-Ride continues to provide trips for shopping, medical, and other daily living activities.

The COVID-19 relief and response will ensure operations continue by providing funds for operational and payroll expenses and sanitization of public spaces and buses. This support is especially important for the vulnerable population served by Shop and Ride. The project maintains employment without furloughs, a commitment Cherriots has made since the beginning of the pandemic, ensuring employees are ready to serve and supporting continuity of service. Many changes were implemented to respond to the pandemic such as limited seating on vehicles

to ensure social distancing, screening of new employees (temperature check), and a temporary halt of fare collection (since March 2020).

It is more important than ever for seniors and individuals with disabilities to have access to safe, reliable transportation options designed for their needs and access to healthcare as well as to continue daily activities. The project also ensures the safety of customers and employees by providing high levels of sanitization to remove or reduce exposure to COVID-19. Vehicles are sanitized after each run and deep cleaned 1-2 times per week. Other COVID-19 expenses include signage to inform customers of safety protocols, personal protective equipment, and COVID-related leave. Cherriots also supports vaccinations by providing stipends for eligible employees who receive the vaccine. Additionally, to support the safety of customers and employees, Cherriots will procure advanced air purification systems that will continuously sanitize the air in buses and many high-traffic indoor areas. The total grant ask for the Covid-19 Relief and Response is \$42,464.

In conclusion, Cherriots Shop and Ride is a much-needed transportation service that fills the gap between Cherriots local services and Cherriots LIFT services, specifically for seniors and individuals with disabilities that no other transportation service available provides. This service is unique and does not duplicate services. Cherriots Shop and Ride connects riders to their individual communities as well as vital services such as Doctors appointments, counseling, human and social service appointments, physical therapy, senior activities, prescriptions, and social gatherings. The total grant ask for all three applications is \$252,229 for FTA 5310 and \$42,464 for CRRSAA.

Questions: Vice Chair Hammill stated that he knows the Shop and Ride was shut down at the beginning of the COVID pandemic, is the service back in operation at this time? Mr. Dietz stated that Cherriots is not back to full service, but that the hope is that full service will resume as of the new fiscal year.

Ms. Odenthal asked if Cherriots had resumed collecting fares. Mr. Dietz stated that fare collection has not yet resumed, but he is hopeful that it will happen soon. Ms. Odenthal shared that she noticed in the application that the costs per year are approximately \$75,000, but the ask for the Shop and Ride Preventative Maintenance is only \$14,000. Is that because the \$14,000 is what was left after the other grant asks or is the rest of the project funded elsewhere? Mr. Dickey explained that this grant is only a small percentage of the funding for this program. The rest of the funding required to perform the service is acquired elsewhere.

Chair Harding pointed out that these service lines are expensive, and this is the reason why we have STF funding to help subsidize the increase cost of some of these specialized services for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Chair Harding stated that he is often the one evaluating the service per the cost, but unfortunately in transit, cost is not always the overriding factor in the service. Otherwise we would just have a very urbanized core of service.

Vice Chair Hammill thanked the staff and thought the presentations were well done.

G. REVIEW AND RANK APPLICATIONS

When reviewing the applications, the TAC members considered the following: Chair Harding explained that there are three applications to consider. Purchased Service, Mobility Management Call Center, and Preventative Maintenance. Purchased Service is considered an “other” project. Mobility Management Call Center and Preventative Maintenance are considered “traditional” projects. Mr. Dickey shared that the 55/45 split is mandated under the program rules and has to be a minimum 55% “traditional” that receives the funding, as long as a maximum of 45% of the funds are allocated to the remainder of what would be classified under the federal definitions as “non-traditional”.

MAKE RECOMMENDATION TO STF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- H.** As a result of the above discussion, Ms. Odenthal motioned to recommend funding of all four of the grant applications as submitted. Chair Hammill seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously among voting members.

ADJOURN

- I.** Chair Harding adjourned the meeting at 2:58. The STFAC members will reconvene at 3:30 PM for the STFAC meeting.
Chair Harding adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM.