

RiverCities Transit Public Participation Plan

RIVERCITIES TRANSIT IS OPERATED BY THE CITY OF LONGVIEW
PREPARED BY RCT STAFF

Public Participation Plan



RiverCities Transit
PO Box 128, Longview, WA 98632
360.442.5663 (TTY Relay: 711)
customerservice@rctransit.org
www.rctransit.org

RiverCities Transit operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Any person who would like more information on our Title VI Program and non-discrimination obligations or believes he or she has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI and would like to make a complaint may contact the RiverCities Transit Title VI Compliance Coordinator. The contact information is listed above.

Introduction

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) is a living document that outlines RiverCities Transit's engagement of the public in transportation decisions. It outlines ways to participate in transit planning activities, projects and meetings carried out by the agency. The purpose of the plan is to ensure continued use of relevant and effective means of providing information to and receiving input from the public and interested parties. It will be updated at least once every four years to reflect new tools, platforms, and methods used to engage and inform the public. RiverCities Transit (RCT) is also committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

RiverCities Transit's Structure

RiverCities Transit serves the communities of Longview and Kelso. Incorporated under authority of Chapter 36.57A of the Revised Code of Washington, the Cowlitz PTBA is governed by the Cowlitz Transit Authority (CTA), a five-member board consisting of two members of the Longview City Council, two members of the Kelso City Council, one Cowlitz County Commissioner, and one non-voting union representative. The CTA functions as a taxing authority only, and has contracts for legal counsel and utilizes the services of the Cowlitz County Treasurer, but has no other staff. The CTA contracts all transit operations, maintenance, and capital improvement related functions including management, administration, drivers, and maintenance, to the City of Longview (Figure 1). The City of Longview subcontracts to provide the required complementary paratransit services. The City of Longview and the CTA jointly govern the public transportation system, which operates under the name RiverCities Transit (RCT).

In 2009 the CTA adopted the following mission:

"To enhance the quality of life in our area, the Cowlitz Transit Authority provides safe, reliable, and efficient transit services that link people, jobs and communities."

In order to carry out that mission while meeting federal, state and local requirements, the RCT staff work closely with the CTA Board on ways to most efficiently provide transit service in our community. Public engagement throughout is a key piece of ensuring we continue to link people, jobs, and our communities.

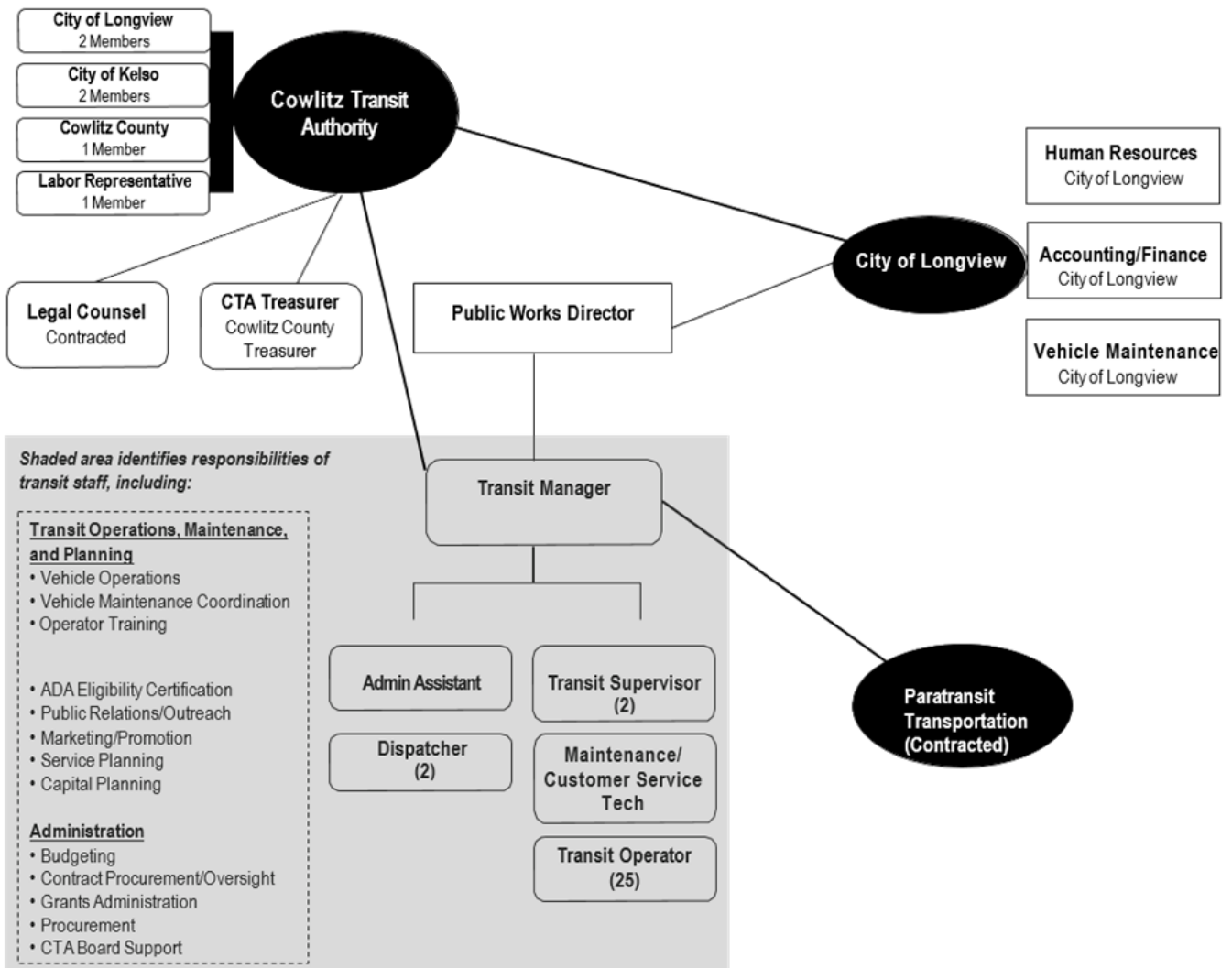


Figure 1. Cowlitz Transit Authority and City of Longview Governance Structure

RiverCities Services

Fixed Route

RCT operates seven (7) fixed routes within the urban areas of Longview and Kelso. RCT System Map and Schedule (Figure 2) illustrates the 2019 fixed route service area. This service area encompasses approximately 27 square miles and contains a population of approximately 50,000 people. RCT's fixed routes circulate through most urbanized neighborhoods in Longview and Kelso Monday – Friday 6:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Five routes operate Saturday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. RCT designed six routes to complete a round trip in fifty minutes, allowing them to operate on sixty-minute headways, and to provide transfer connections at the Transit Center, Kelso Multimodal Center, or Three Rivers Mall. This provides simplicity and convenience for customers, allowing them to travel between almost any two points in the

Longview-Kelso region with a maximum of one transfer and little wait time for transfers. Our most heavily travelled route offers service every 40 minutes Monday through Friday. RCT added Route 30 this fall to provide 30-minute service to our busiest stops.

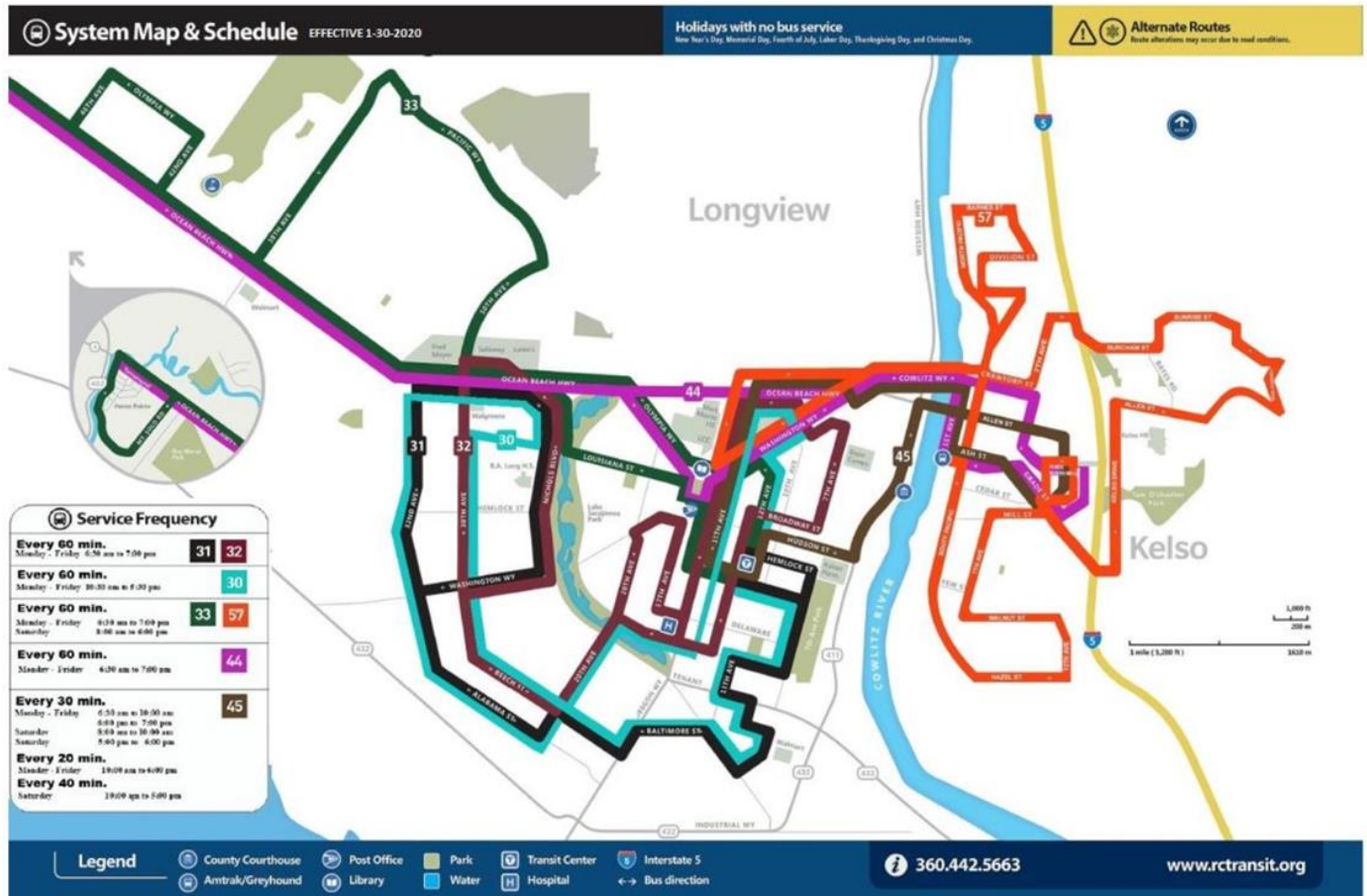


Figure 2. RCT Fixed Route Service Map

RiverCities LIFT

RCT also provides federally mandated complementary paratransit service within $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of all fixed routes in accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (see Figure 3 for service area map). This service operates under the name RiverCities LIFT. The City of Longview contracts with Paratransit Services Inc. to operate LIFT. Paratransit Services Inc. is a non-profit organization headquartered in Bremerton, Washington. They provide drivers and scheduling/dispatch staff. The City of Longview owns and provides the vehicles.

To qualify for LIFT, individuals must complete an application process and be certified as unable to utilize

regular fixed route transportation because of their disability. LIFT provides paratransit service on a next-day reservation basis. In addition, LIFT offers same-day response as a "premium" service at an additional cost. LIFT operates on the same schedule as fixed route service weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. LIFT provides trips for any purpose and does not limit the number of trips an individual may take.

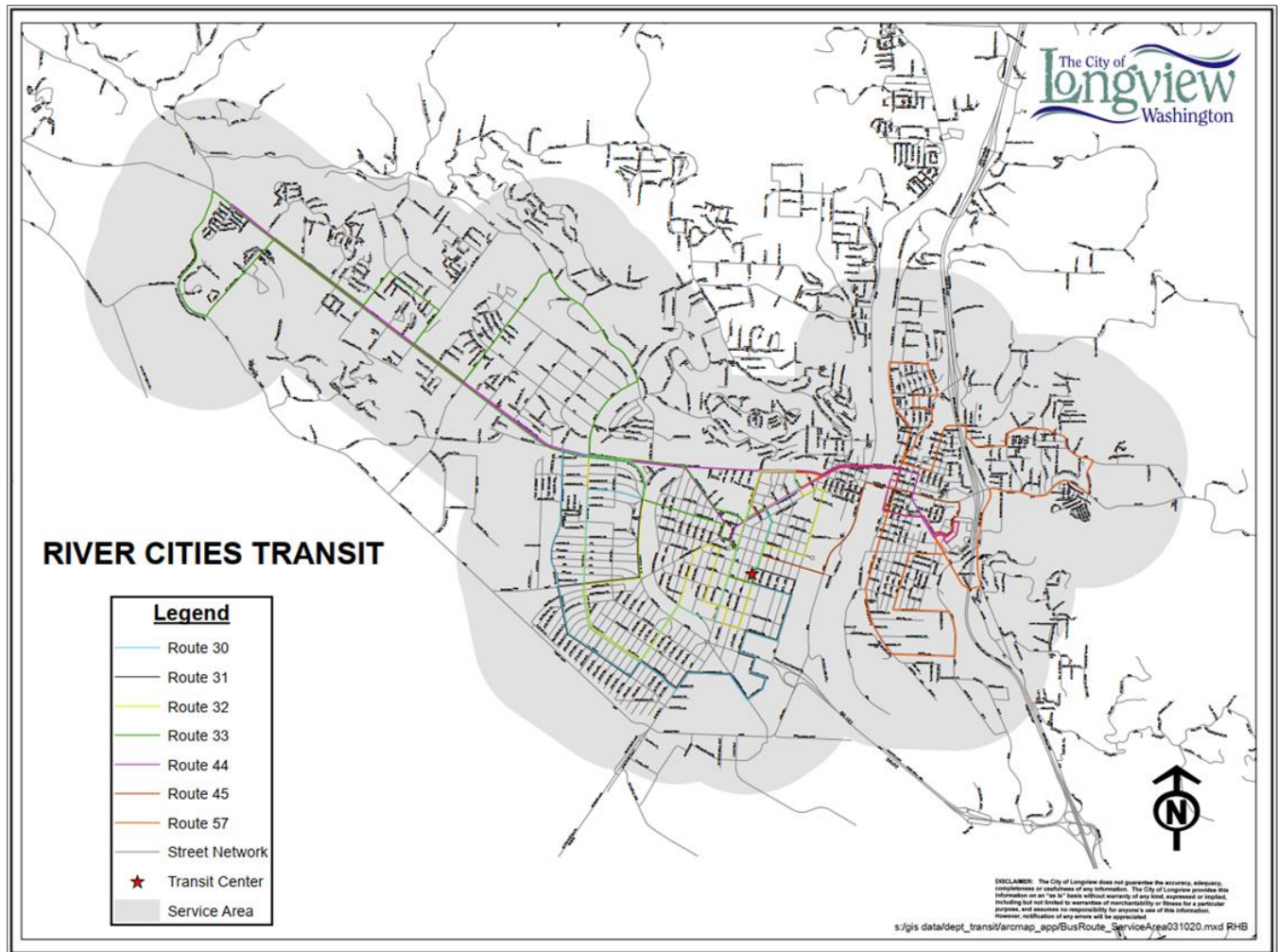


Figure 3. RiverCities LIFT ADA Service Area Map

Fares

RiverCities Transit uses paper bus passes and transfer tickets for those seeking an annual, monthly or day pass. Passes can be purchased at the following locations beginning on the 25th of every month. Passes expire on the 5th of the month following the valid pass. For example, if you purchase a July bus pass, it doesn't expire until August 5th. This is to allow riders time to get to a pass outlet to purchase a pass.

Longview Transit Center | 1135 12th Avenue, Longview WA 98632

- All passes available.

Longview City Hall | 1525 Broadway Street, Longview WA 98632

- Monthly and Quarterly passes available.

Kelso City Hall | 203 S Pacific Avenue, Kelso WA 98626

- Monthly and Quarterly passes available. *Drive-thru Open

Fares and pass prices for both fixed route and LIFT are listed in Figures 4 and 5.

	One Way	Daily Pass	Monthly Pass	Quarterly Pass	Annual Pass
Adult	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$14.00	\$42.00	\$168.00
Student*	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$7.00	\$21.00	\$84.00
Reduced**	\$0.50	\$1.00	\$7.00	\$21.00	\$84.00
LIFT Approved	Free	-	-	-	-
PCA***	Free	-	-	-	-
LCC Students and Faculty****	Free	-	-	-	-

Figure 4. Fixed route fares

*Student passes are available to children between six and 18 years of age or those who have a student ID showing the holder is currently attending classes and earning college credit at an accredited school of higher education.

*Student Summer Passes are issued at twice the rate of a monthly student pass and are valid June 1st

through August 31st of each calendar year. These passes entitle holders to unlimited rides during this timeframe.

**Reduced fare is available to citizens age 65 or older, Medicare cardholders, and people with disabilities. Applicants are required to show proof of age, Medicare Card, and/or fill out an application for a reduced fare permit.

Transfers are free with a one-way fare payment and valid for one use only on the day of purchase.

***A personal care attendant (PCA), someone designated or employed to assist the LIFT eligible individual.

****LCC pays an annual fee based on prior year's ridership for their students and faculty.

	One Way Fare	Monthly Pass	5 Ride Punch Card	20 Ride Punch Card
LIFT Approved	\$1.00	\$15.00	\$5.00	\$10.00
PCA	Free	-	-	-

Figure 5. LIFT fares

Public Participation Approach

RiverCities Transit's public communications are targeted to a broad social, ethnic, age and economic spectrum that make up the population of our service area. RCT routinely uses a variety of communication tools in an effort to engage as many members of the community as possible. Agency communication tools used to maximize public engagement include the following:

- RiverCities Transit Website**
 RiverCities Transit's website, www.rctransit.org, was recently re-designed with the transit rider in mind. A map of our system with prominent rider alerts guides riders to our most up to date announcements. The website features Google Translate that will translate the page into several different languages. Major announcements are translated into Spanish using City staff translators. It is also ADA compliant and mobile friendly.
- Social Media**
 Announcements and alerts are published regularly on the City of Longview and RiverCities Transit Facebook pages. RCT has 480 followers and the City has over 3,800 followers and posts are shared widely among followers and local community groups.
- Mobile Applications**
 Push notifications are published on our mobile app Route Shout. We also use Flash Alert to notify the public of emergencies and last minute snow route changes.
- Public Access Television**
 All CTA Board meetings are broadcast on local access television and are archived on

www.kltv.org

- **Zoom**

In response to the global pandemic, COVID, that shut down most in-person Board meetings, RiverCities Transit began using Zoom to host virtual public meetings. Members of the public are encouraged to attend and are given access to the meeting information when the agenda is published each month.

- **Non-website** communication and engagement tools that foster public participation

- Advertising on local **radio stations** is used regularly to remind riders of new services, upcoming changes, or seasonal reminders.
- **Board meetings.** The Cowlitz Transit Authority Board meets the second Wednesday of every month at 4PM. These meetings are open to the public and include an opportunity to provide public comment at every meeting. Meeting notices are sent to the board, media outlets, and posted to the RCT website prior to the meeting as per Washington State Law. Archived meeting agendas may be found on the City of Longview's website at <https://www.mylongview.com/129/Agendas-Minutes>.
- **Press releases** are distributed via the City of Longview to the local newspaper. These press releases are also included in the City's City Info Weekly publication that reaches all City Staff and local subscribers.
- Advertising **on the bus** using channel cards, audible announcements, and scrolling visual text both inside and outside the bus
- **Surveys** via paper, print, web or telephone
- In person **presentations** to schools, community organizations, employers and civic groups
- **Focus groups** are occasionally used when more in depth feedback and sharing of information is needed, such as a system overhaul of all routes, re-branding, or introducing a new service.
- Community outreach **booths** are used at local events in an effort to engage people verbally who are both riders and non-riders. RCT regularly participates in Project Homeless Connect, the Veterans Stand Down, Earth Day, Extreme Machines, Senior Connections Fair, Building Bridges local business fair, and the local community college campus events.
- **Paid advertisements** in the local newspaper, City of Longview Parks and Recreation guide, or local high school sports publications
- Through messaging delivered verbally by **staff**. This has been done during emergencies

such as the immediate reduction of service during COVID. Staff rode the bus or drivers would verbally notify each passenger boarding.

- RiverCities Transit's **System Map & Schedule** is available on buses, at our Downtown Transit Center in Longview, Longview City Hall, Kelso City Hall, Lower Columbia College Student Center, Longview Library and Kelso Library.
- The Downtown Transit Center uses a **public messaging TV** mounted in the lobby.
- **Customer Comment** Opportunities include customer comment cards, in-person opportunities at the Transfer Center, Longview City Hall, RCT business office, by phone, email, public meetings, and Facebook.
- Example of opportunities for participation in the public comment process are provided in this document's *Appendix A – Sample of Communication Tools*.

Public Noticing

Public notices will be posted for the following changes to service, schedules, events, and planning and programming documents that occur on a regular schedule. This list may not include all events or documents.

Fare Changes and Service Changes

The Cowlitz Transit Authority (CTA) has an established Fare and Service Changes Policy (Appendix C). The public will be notified of any fare or major service changes to be considered via the local newspaper and at pass sale locations and in vehicles ninety (90) days prior to their effective date. Public comment will be heard or received and considered at a public hearing held by the CTA Board at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of fare or major service changes. Major service changes as defined by the CTA Bylaws include any change in transit service routes amounting to a change in excess of 20% of the total distance of any one route.

On occasion, there have been emergency reductions in service due to an immediate and unforeseen staffing shortage or major disrupting event (such as COVID) that has resulted in the need to shorten the noticing timeline. On these occasions, RCT has provided noticing as soon as practicable, usually more than a week in advance, and via multiple outlets beyond the newspaper and on vehicles.

Planning and Programming

Annually, the Cowlitz Transit Authority adopts its budget at their meeting in November or December. The Authority also adopts a Transit Development Plan (TDP) annually. It serves to fulfill both RCW's 35.58.2795 and 35.58.2796 which requires the creation of a Public Transportation System Six-Year Transit Plan and Annual Report, respectively. The Washington State Department of Transportation is required to develop an annual report that summarizes the status of public transportation systems in the state for the previous calendar year. RiverCities Transit is required to submit this annual report to assist in the development of that statewide plan. The report also serves as a tool to communicate past

accomplishments and future goals for our transit system to the community. It outlines our organizational structure, transportation services, major accomplishments, and proposed future action strategies and a program for funding those strategies. The CTA Board holds a public hearing on the TDP annually at their August Board meeting.

The Transit Improvement Program or TIP is a Program of Projects (POP) that outlines federally funded and planned projects to occur over the next six years. It includes those projects outlined in the Transit Development Plan and has an extensive public involvement process. The planned and funding secured projects are listed in the City of Longview's TIP, which is typically adopted at a public hearing held by the Longview City Council in June each year. Projects with secured federal funds are then forwarded to the Metropolitan Planning Organization for inclusion in their six year TIP. This TIP includes federally funded projects from the Metropolitan Planning Area of Longview and Kelso. That TIP is adopted by the Cowlitz Wahkiakum Council of Governments annually at their August board meeting. Projects from their TIP are then forwarded to the Washington State Department of Transportation for inclusion in the Statewide TIP, adopted annually in January. Amendments follow the same process. Projects that are not included in these TIPs do not receive their granted federal funding.

Community Events and Fare Free Days

RiverCities Transit is committed to serving the communities of Longview and Kelso. The Cowlitz Transit Authority has made participation in community events a priority by granting several 'Fare Free' days throughout the year such as Project Homeless Connect and the Veterans Stand Down. Staff will announce those days on social media at a minimum as that provides the greatest reach to the general community.

Appendix A

Sample of Communication Tools

**It's Time
Apply for your
FREE 2021 Youth Pass Now**



**Forms Available at the Transit Center
and at rctransit.org**

*** Proof of Publication ***

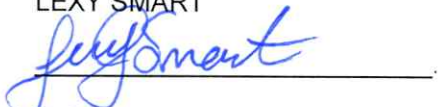
IN THE MATTER NOTICE OF PUBLICATION

LEXY SMART being duly sworn says that she is the CHIEF CLERK of THE DAILY NEWS. And that THE DAILY NEWS, published in Cowlitz County, has been approved as a Legal newspaper by order of the Superior court of the State of Washington of Cowlitz County, and that the Annexed printed copy is a true copy of the notice in the above entitled matter as it was printed in the regular entire issue of said paper and online at www.tdn.com, for publication dates as listed below, and that said newspaper was regularly distributed to its subscribers during all of said period, and that said notice was published in said paper and not in a supplement form. That the full amount of the fee charged for said forgoing publication is as listed below, and is \$3.50 per line for the first insertion and \$3.00 per line for each subsequent insertion. There is also an additional charge of \$10.00 for every additional affidavit copy over two copies.

RIVER CITIES TRANSIT
LEGAL ACCOUNT
254 OREGON WAY
LONGVIEW WA 98632

ORDER NUMBER 40847

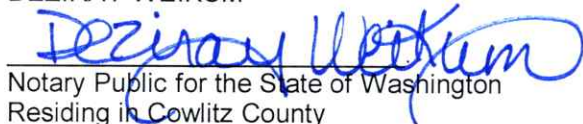
LEXY SMART



Subscribed and sworn to before me this

9 day of Nov, 2020

DEZIRAY WEIKUM



Notary Public for the State of Washington
Residing in Cowlitz County

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
COWLITZ TRANSIT AUTHORITY
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, in accordance with RCW Chapter 42.30, that the Cowlitz Transit Authority will hold a virtual Zoom Public Hearing on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 4:00p.m. The purpose of the hearing is to receive any comments concerning the adoption of the 2021CTA Budget. Any person interested may attend and be heard on said matter via a moderator. For information about Zoom accessibility, please contact the Clerk of the Board's Office at (360) 442-5664. Please click the link below to join the webinar:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82364522643>
Dial any of the following numbers:
1253 215 8782
1408 638 0968
1669 900 6833
1346 248 7799
1312 626 6799
1646 876 9923
1301715 8592
Webinar 10:823 6452 2643
No Registration Required
DATED at Longview, Washington, this 14th day of October 2020.
Dennis Weber
Chair
Cowlitz Transit Authority
Published: November 6, 2020 in the Longview Daily News

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Section: Legals

Category: 0599 Legals

PUBLISHED ON: 11/06/2020

TOTAL AD COST: 136.50

FILED ON: 11/9/2020

*** Proof of Publication ***

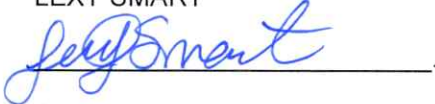
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City of Longview

NOTICE of PUBLIC HEARING 2019 – 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Transit Program of Projects (POP)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing will be held by the City Council, City of Longview, City Hall Council Chambers, Longview, Washington, at **7:00 p.m., July 12, 2018**, to consider the **2019 – 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Transit Program of Projects of the City of Longview** for the ensuing six years. This public notice satisfies the Program of Projects requirements for RiverCities Transit. The proposed Program of Projects will be the final Program of Projects unless amended.

Any person interested may appear and be heard on said matter. City Hall is accessible for persons with disabilities. Special equipment is available for the hearing impaired. Please let us know forty-eight (48) hours in advance if you will need any special accommodations to attend the meeting by calling 360.442.5004.

DATED at Longview, Washington, this 26th day of July, 2018.

THE CITY OF LONGVIEW

Kaylee L. Cody, City Clerk

Published: July 1, 2018

Posted: Longview City Hall
Longview Public Library
Longview Post Office
Kelso/Longview Chamber of Commerce

cc: City Manager
Tammi/Exec
The Daily News
City Engineering Dept.

https://tdn.com/news/local/rivercities-breaks-ground-on-downtown-transit-center/article_bd67e8bf-d132-5fec-81fa-cbbb34250201.html

RiverCities breaks ground on downtown transit center

TheDaily News 1 hr ago

TRY 1 MONTH FOR 99¢

RiverCities Transit on Monday will break ground on its expansion of the downtown transit center located at 1135 12th Ave.

Longview contractor JH Kelly, LLC, will construct the center.

Improvements include making drive aisles and berths that are more efficient and safe, new passenger shelters, more efficient site lighting and added site fencing, according to City of Longview press release.



0:00 / 0:00

LIVE



better
every week



Customize even the smallest entry into a mini mudroom with style and function

COMING 01.06.19



THE DAILY NEWS

A temporary transit center will be located at 1050 11th Ave. during the year-long project. The temporary site is expected to be completed by Feb. 20, according to the city.

This project is largely funded by a \$4.1 million grants from the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration, with local matching funds provided by the local transit sales tax.

TheDaily News





Date: January 7, 2019
Contact: Amy Asher, Transit Manager
Phone: 360-442-5661



Contact: Ivona Kininmonth, Staff Engineer
Phone: 360-442-5208

For Immediate Release

RiverCities Transit Set to Break Ground on Transit Center Expansion

RiverCities Transit is set to break ground Monday on a long awaited expansion of their Downtown Transit Center located in Longview at 1135 12th Ave. RiverCities Transit is operated by the City of Longview, who has contracted with JH Kelly, LLC to construct the Center. The improvements include replacement of the transit center building to accommodate additional drivers and provide for administrative staff being relocated to the new transit center; reconfigure the bus drive aisles and berths for more efficient and safe bus circulation; provide new passenger shelters; provide more efficient site lighting; and add site fencing to provide better visibility and increase safety on site. The project will begin with installation of a temporary transit center facility at 1050 11th Ave to be used during the year-long construction project. The temporary site is expected to be completed by February 20th. At that time, transit riders will be directed to the temporary site to purchase bus passes and catch RiverCities buses as well as connections to CAP, Wahkiakum on the Move, and CC Rider. This project is largely funded by \$ 4.1 million in grants provided by the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration, with local matching funds provided by the local transit sales tax.

#####

Editor's Note: Please contact Ivona Kininmonth, Staff Engineer for questions regarding construction. Transit operations related questions may be directed to Amy Asher, Transit Manager.

RiverCities Transit se prepara para empezar a construir la expansión del Centro de Tránsito

RiverCities Transit está listo para comenzar construcción el lunes en una tan esperada expansión de su Downtown Transit Center ubicado en Longview en 1135 12th Ave. RiverCities Transit es operado por la Ciudad de Longview, que ha contratado a JH Kelly, LLC para construir el Centro.

Las mejoras incluyen el reemplazo del edificio del centro de tránsito para acomodar a conductores adicionales y proporcionar la reubicación del personal administrativo al nuevo centro de tránsito; la reconfiguración de los pasillos y los muelles de los autobuses para lograr una circulación de autobuses más eficiente y segura; proporcionar nuevas paradas de pasajeros; proporcionar iluminación del sitio más eficiente; y añadir cercas al sitio para proveer una mejor visibilidad y aumentar la seguridad en el sitio.

El proyecto de un año de duración comenzará con la instalación de un centro de tránsito temporal en 1050 11th Ave para ser utilizado durante el proyecto de construcción.

Se espera que el sitio temporal se complete el 20 de febrero. En ese momento, los pasajeros de tránsito serán dirigidos al sitio temporal para comprar pases de autobús y tomar los autobuses de RiverCities, así como las conexiones a CAP, Wahkiakum on the Move y CC Rider.

Este proyecto es financiado en gran parte por \$4.1 millones en subvenciones proporcionadas por la Administración Federal de Tránsito y la Administración Federal de Carreteras, con fondos locales equivalentes proporcionados por los impuestos de ventas de tránsito local.

#

Nota del editor: Por favor, comuníquese con Ivona Kininmonth, Ingeniera de equipo, si tiene preguntas sobre la construcción. Las preguntas relacionadas con las operaciones de Tránsito pueden ser dirigidas a Amy Asher, Gerente de Tránsito.

Route 30 Time Point Alignment Effective 11/02/2020

Posted on [October 29, 2020](#) by [Tabitha Hayden](#)

New Times!

Route 30

Monday - Friday





NEW 11/2/2020

POPULAR STOPS

Starting at 10:30 AM	
Transit Center	:30
9th and Washington	:34
LCC	:38
St John's Hospital	:42
32nd and Maryland	:53
30th and Larch	:58
Beech and 19th	:02
7th Ave Wal-Mart	:09
7th and Delaware	:13

To allow Route 30 a smoother connection with Route 45, RiverCities Transit has adjusted Route 30's time points. Please see the above picture for updated times.

[Local Congresswoman Visits Longview Transit Center](#)

[The Daily News recognizes RCT Bus Drivers as Frontline Heroes.](#)

Appendix C

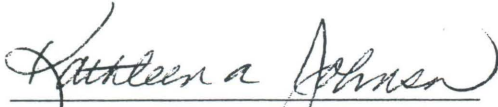
CTA Fare and Service Change Policy

POLICY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON FARE AND SERVICE CHANGES

The Cowlitz Transit Authority (CTA) Board will solicit and consider public comment before changing fare amounts or implementing major increases or decreases in services for the Community Urban Bus Service.


The following public participation process will be adhered to:

- The public will be notified that fare or major service changes are being considered in the local newspaper and in notices posted at all pass sale locations and in all CTA public transportation vehicles ninety (90) days prior to their effective date. The notice will invite the public to contact staff, either by telephone, e-mail or in writing, to comment on the proposed changes.
- Public comment will be heard or received and considered at a public meeting of the Cowlitz Transit Authority Board at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of fare or major service changes. Public comment may be taken at a regular meeting of the CTA Board, or at a special meeting of the Board called for such purpose.
- Notice of the public meeting will be posted in the local newspaper and at all pass sale locations and in all CTA public transportation vehicles at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting.
- The CTA Board will consider all comments and may take action at that same meeting, or may postpone any action to a later meeting, which meeting shall be at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of such fare or major service changes. The CTA Board shall base its decisions on the best interests of the transit system.


Kathleen Johnson, Chair
Cowlitz Transit Authority

11/27/02
Date

Attested by:


Sharon West, Transit Secretary