



**King County**

**Transit Advisory Commission**

**MEETING AGENDA**

**August 21, 2018**

**King Street Center, Metro GM Conference Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**201 South Jackson, Seattle**

**6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

- 6:00 p.m. Welcome, introductions**
- 6:15 p.m. Dion Graham, ADA accessibility coordinator**  
Brief introduction
- 6:30 p.m. Deputy General Manager Terry White**  
Opportunity for TAC to give feedback on how to work with Metro's leadership team
- Update on Metro's division to department transition
- 7:30 p.m. Update on Access Task Force\***  
DeAnna Martin  
\*depending on progress of the group's draft charter
- 7:50 p.m. Other Business**  
Schedule for the rest of the year
- 8:00 p.m. Adjourn**



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## **Transit Advisory Commission**

### **TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING**

**August 21, 2018**

**King Street Center, Metro GM Conference Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**201 South Jackson St., Seattle**

**6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

**Attendance (new members pending confirmation; current members):** Preston Sahabu, Aaron Morrow, Steve Ferreira, Linwood Robinson, Cristal Peña, Cheryl Harrison, ChrisTiana ObeySumner, Angela Theriault, Gale Shinozaki, Judy Stenberg, Bobby Wooten, Peter Rubin

**King County Metro Transit Staff:** Cindy Chen (Community Relations), DeAnna Martin (Public and Employee Engagement Manager), Terry White (Deputy General Manager), Dion Graham (ADA services administrator)

### **Introduction to Dion Graham, ADA (American Disabilities Act) services administrator**

Dion Graham, the ADA Accessibility coordinator at Metro introduced himself. He comes with experience at C-Tran (Clark County, Washington), TriMet (Portland) and now at Metro Transit. He is developing ADA liaisons in each division of Metro to ensure their policies comply with the ADA. If policies are not in compliance, he will work with each division to create a transition plan to bring them into compliance. He committed to working with the Transit Advisory Commission to get input on issues and regulations, or how to apply or implement a certain policy.

Two commission members asked whether he had a budget. Graham stated that he did not have a budget, and that it is challenging to find the funds to fix problems when there are violations. He hopes to hire a consultant to assist with developing the program. There is one other ADA administrator at Metro on the Access/Paratransit side.

A member asked if he works on issues with intersectionality between disabilities, race and gender. Graham said not yet, but if it comes up, he would work with Anita Whitfield, Metro's Equal Employment Opportunity/Diversity and Inclusion Manager.

Graham also addressed concerns from the commission about accessibility regarding bus stop shelters and accessibility issues in semi-rural areas of the county like Vashon Island. He noted that there are regulations for ADA compliance at bus stops, and he is actively working with King County's local jurisdictions and agency partners like the city of Seattle to coordinate with their ADA coordinators.

Another commission member asked about the relationship between other transit agencies like Sound Transit. Graham has already met with Sound Transit's new ADA coordinator. The ADA coordinator at the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is convening all the ADA coordinators to work together to serve all the customers.

Two commission members had concerns about how operators treated riders with disabilities (particularly riders whose disabilities are not visible). They asked how Metro plans to improve bus operator training as well as how Metro holds drivers accountable. Graham stated that leadership in the



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organization, including General Manager Rob Gannon and Deputy General Manager Terry White, have made it clear that accountability and treating people with disabilities with respect is a priority. He mentioned an example in Los Angeles where they only made changes to their system after a lawsuit. He is actively working with the training department to improve training and ensure they are able to communicate effectively and address the needs of people with different disabilities and different needs.

Commission members also asked several questions about Access. One asked about improvements to communication between Access drivers and dispatchers. Under the current Access contract, three different contractors manage drivers and dispatchers. The new Access Request for Proposals will have one contractor to manage all aspects of Access.

Graham answered a question from a member about the biggest accessibility challenge in Seattle. The steepness of the hills and the age of the facilities and sidewalks create accessibility challenges.

### **Update from Deputy General Manager Terry White**

Terry White, Deputy General Manager, introduced himself. He has been at Metro for 31 years and will manage the operations side of Metro, which includes vehicle maintenance, facilities, rail and the marine division. His goal is to ensure that the operations groups do not operate in silos and are operating in an integrated way.

He asked the group to share what issues they would like to work on with Metro.

Commission member 1 is completely transit dependent and wanted to develop a communications process between the TAC and the Access Task Force to work on first and last mile service between transit centers. White responded that first and last mile is a popular topic for mobility, and it is in the works. Some possibilities may include automated vehicles or partnering with transportation network companies like Lyft.

Commission member 2 asked about how Metro restructures service when light rail expands. They worried about the impact of eliminating heavily used routes. White responded that there is a finite amount of money, which limits how much Metro is able to do. Metro conducts research, solicits feedback from customers and the TAC to find the best solution. There are three service changes a year to tweak things as needed, and Metro is constantly seeking new funding to fix pockets of service gaps. Metro must serve all parts of the community and be open minded to other opinions.

Commission member 3 said that many people were interested in giving him feedback when they heard he was serving on the commission. He envisions members of the TAC as voices of their communities to amplify their concerns and opinions.\* White responded and said that the best, holistic solution often does not serve one person; it must serve different communities.

Commission member 4 said that the affordability of buses was their biggest concern. The fare simplification was a step in the right direction, but the ORCA LIFT application is a big barrier for people for a variety of reasons (immigration status, fear of government). White responded that Metro knows there are still underserved populations that Metro is trying to reach to talk about fares. Transportation is a human right.



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Commission member 4 has served for several years and asked for a more formal process into Metro's decision-making process around new routes, ADA issues, and more. She would like the TAC to be a sounding board and is particularly interested in east-west connections, which are lacking. White noted that east-west travel has been the bane of Metro's existence. Metro is working with partner agencies to free up lanes to create those routes in a more efficient way, but Seattle's layout is not conducive to east-west travel. White said he would send ideas through the TAC for feedback.

Commission member 5 asked for expanded transit into the rest of King County (outside of Seattle), as they are unable to reach many parts of the county by bus. They asked for greater advocacy and awareness of people with invisible disabilities, greater empathy for riders and better bus culture. White responded Metro is taking a hard look at customer service. Metro is looking to change the culture so that frontline staff treat customers respectfully, whether or not they know their specific needs or disability.

Commission member 6 asked about the need for more service for the Issaquah Transit Center, which Metro only serves during the weekday peak times. Sound Transit serves it all day. She expressed that Metro leadership should be at meetings as often as possible and that the minutes be shared with Metro's leadership. White agreed that he wanted to make internal processes within Metro more effective and when the TAC recommends something, there is a clear point of contact designated to respond.

Commission member 7 lives in a semi-rural area of King County with one bus route. He is primarily concerned about integration between transportation agencies and alternative services in rural areas. He also mentioned that the operators are often put in difficult positions when people do not have fare to pay. White said that Metro is working on these issues and trying to figure out better policies around fares as it is always humiliating to have to ask for fares when you do not have the money.

Commission member 8 pointed out that operators often do not know how to accommodate DeafBlind riders. Voice announcements and reader board alerts are not accessible. Sudden route changes are also not helpful; texting alerts would be better for these populations. Other transit systems have texting services. She was also interested in interagency coordination and collaborative efforts with light rail. White responded that he wants to work with internal and external stakeholders to make sure all voices are being heard. He said the vast majority of operators do their jobs well, but the small minority who do not will need to bring their service up to the level Metro expects.

Metro operators drive most of Sound Transit's buses and their light rail. Metro works very closely with Sound Transit and strives to continue improving that relationship. There are 39 local jurisdictions within King County and it is important to work with them as well as explore public/private partnerships.

Commission member 9 is new to the group and asked how the TAC members can be helpful to Metro in terms of political advocacy. White responded that he wants to hear good ideas from the TAC and is excited to see what the group proposes. Community input and groups like the TAC help Metro see blind spots.



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Commission member 10 is dependent on Access and started using Access in 2002. White responded that he would like to make travel as easy as possible for people.

Commission member 11 asked what Metro would do with the older buses (with old lifts/ramps) as technology improves. He also had another concern about a past situation where Metro staff redirected several times after an incident with an operator. He wanted to know why it took so long to get one response, and how operators are held accountable when they disrespect wheelchair users or people with disabilities.

Metro will be adding new fleet that will be more electric buses or battery-operated buses. As new equipment comes in, Metro will retire old fleet and expand resources like another bus base, labor and new technology. White expressed that there is always room for improvement. Metro leadership will invest in frontline staff to be consistent, fair and do not want to tolerate bad behavior by operators. The bus community should also improve over time to help step in when things happen.

Commission member 12 asked how the TAC could share feedback about issues in particular communities, congested areas, or suggestions for better connections. White listed several ways:

- Customer service takes comments seriously.
- TAC can make recommendations as a group to Metro.
- Metro is looking for ways to improve feedback mechanisms for customers
- Update on Metro's division to department transition.

### **Update on the Access Task Force charter**

DeAnna Martin, Public and Employee Engagement Manager, attended the Access Task Force charter meetings in August. She reported back on the group's progress on the charter. The Access Task Force wants to build a relationship with the TAC and help refer issues of system-wide accessibility to the TAC, since their focus is on Access Paratransit service. The task force meets monthly. Aaron Morrow, who serves on both the TAC and the Access Task Force, will give an update at the September meeting about the content and status of the charter.

### **Housekeeping/Other business**

Cindy Chen proposed a schedule for the rest of the year's meetings. The group approved of this schedule.

September: Briefing on North Eastside Mobility Project

October: Fare Enforcement policy changes, RapidRide (tentative)

November: Equity and Social Justice training

December: New member orientation (adjust to first or second week of December)



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Action item	Responsible party	Resolution	Priority	Date resolved
Create clear processes for how the TAC gives recommendations to Metro, and the feedback loop and response from Metro (June meeting)	Cindy Chen	<i>Cindy discussed this with Terry White on Aug. 20. When the TAC finalizes a recommendation, Cindy will guide the group in naming a specific division or staffer at Metro to be the point of contact. The TAC should include a specific ask and deliverable as well as a deadline for the Metro response to ensure accountability.</i>	High	8/21/18
Share TAC meeting minutes with Metro leadership.	Cindy Chen	<i>Cindy is working with DeAnna to determine the best method of distributing.</i>	ongoing	9/7/18
TAC members with low vision want to help test new products and apps.	Cindy Chen	<i>Cindy connected Cheryl and Jacob to Matt Hansen on Chris O’Claire’s Mobility division team and they made contact on 8/15.</i>	resolved	8/15/18
Keep TAC informed about outreach activities in their communities.	Cindy Chen	<i>Cindy will send a report out to the group prior to the September meeting and get feedback.</i>	ongoing	Cindy sent 9/7/18, will update with dates.
Best practices guide for representing the interests of TAC members’ communities*	Pete	<i>TAC members should self-select to work on this. Cindy sent email to TAC on 9/7/18 asking for volunteers. Pete volunteered.</i>	Ongoing	Pete will lead a 20 min. brainstorming session in the Oct. meeting.
TAC to determine what data they want to look at	Preston and ChrisTiana	<i>Mobility division director Chris O’Claire said data is available at any time from the Mobility division; TAC is welcome to ask for specific data at any time via Cindy.</i>	ongoing	
Revisions to work program 2018	TAC members	<i>TAC to send feedback to Cindy (ongoing)</i>	ongoing	