



**CAT LIFT Sub-Committee Minutes**  
**Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024**  
**9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

**Recording Link:**

<https://tmshare.webex.com/recordingservice/sites/tmshare/recording/playback/d1029b2b5bf7103d97d36683157ba37b>

**Password:** Urbq8Dc4

---

**Minutes**

---

**CAT Member**

Jan Campbell  
Annadiana Johnson  
Tre Madden  
Claudia Robertson  
Patricia Kepler  
TJ Anderson

**TriMet**

Justin Rossman, Sr. Community Engagement  
Kittie Kong, Sr. Community Engagement  
Patricia Tezer, Mgr LIFT Cust. Service  
Jonathan Lewis, Gen. Mgr Transdev  
Charlie Clark, Mgr Service Delivery  
Eileen Turvey, Dir. Accessible Transportation  
Andrew Wilson, Sr. Analyst LIFT

**A. Call to Order and Introductions – Committee Chair, Patricia Kepler**

**B. Instacart Pilot Update- Justin Rossman**

In January TriMet mitigation strategy for price increases – helped to create two programs:

- Fixed Route Honored Citizen Pilot and Instacart Pilot program.
- InstaCart – 200 riders in pilot – 3 month membership towards delivery of groceries, pet food, prescriptions and even restaurants and approximately 50 retailers around the Portland Metro area. We used several different approaches to get our riders notified of this program. On the first day we had 375 riders that responded. We chose those riders we felt had a greater need like people with visual impairments and those who go to several of the Instacart locations. The previous program that TriMet used did not allow people to use EBT, we were happy to partner with Instacart as they do take EBT benefits.

TriMet provided a 3 month membership where the rider receives free deliveries, but there are some charges that the rider may still have to pay. There are some service charges and in-store pricing may not be the same and then the tip option on the end. We trained our customer service team on how the pilot works, gave everyone a startup guide and Instacart provides a 1-800 number specifically for seniors to call for help. We watched paratransit use decline rapidly, for the people going to those Instacart locations. We've been doing this pilot for 6 months now (2 Qtrs) and we do a survey for feedback from those in the pilot. Asking if the program is working for them, how often they use it, and several other questions. In the first quarter we saw about 1,005 deliveries which equated to 2010 round trip LIFT rides. In the second quarter there were 1449 deliveries which resulted in 2898 round trip LIFT trips. So in the first 2 quarters, just under 5000 total LIFT rides.

### **C. Questions and comments**

- Eileen Turvey – Before Instacart, people were only allowed 2 bags, with Instacart they can get a larger delivery that could have been 4 – 6 trips previously. We saw LIFT ridership decline for more than just these number of trips.
- Patricia Kepler – I noticed with using Instacart – there is a wide variety of stores and you can even buy at Costco without a membership.
- Tre Madden – The price difference on many items can be a detriment to those who are living on a fixed income. Also, I have not been able to use the OTC card (Medicare) on Instacart even though I can use the EBT.
  - Justin Rossman said he will follow up with Instacart on this card. Some people left the pilot because they didn't feel it was working for them for whatever reason. We have been looking for other Instacart type programs and wondering if there are better options out there.
- Claudia Robertson- Does membership fees cover delivery. How does this increase LIFT ridership for cost effectiveness. If we're losing rides are we adding others. I think this is a great program but again I worry about the social isolation.
  - Eileen Turvey – It's giving riders a choice if they don't feel like going shopping that day, or you need to go to the Dr. but you

need groceries too. We also heard from riders that they couldn't afford to travel as much as they wanted to with this option they can take away a required trip for them. Some stores have coupons or a \$10 promotion off the cost of their groceries. We will also be reaching out to customers and highlight some of the other amenities that are part of the program, especially with the holidays coming up, to get gifts delivered.

- Patricia Kepler shared that her use of Instacart also includes text exchanges with the shopper. They provide information such as if the item is not available or ask them to add something. They also drop the stuff up on her porch and tell her "3 bags today". It's really become very helpful.
- AnnaDiana Johnson shared that Walmart has a program with free delivery that costs \$49 for the year.
  - Justin shared in response to Claudia's concern about people not getting out to socialize. Part of the pilot program survey addressed this concept. Out of 142 that responded, 138 felt little to no more social isolation since starting this program. Some people surveyed said it gave them more time to go do other social activities that they wanted to do, like go to a friend's house or out to lunch. We had several wonderful comments about this program.
  - Justin Rossman shared that LIFT is actually getting an innovation award from APTA the American Public Transit Association for this Instacart pilot and Eileen will be accepting the award. And we are creating a deck for other transit agencies to copy this program with their riders.
  - Eileen Turvey – I'm doing a presentation at the Innovation Summit conference so that everyone will be able to learn about this and do it within their own programs.
  - Justin Rossman also talked about collaborating with PSU and the City of Portland to gather resources and host focus groups to see if we can remove barriers for transportation folks.

#### **D. Honored Citizen Fixed Route Pilot Update – Justin Rossman**

The other fare mitigation pilot that happened with the help of CAT, very similar format. Selected 500 riders that use LIFT but also had taps on Fixed Route. So

these are people who use Bus, Max and Streetcar. We used all methods of communication to let them know about this opportunity. Phone calls, emails and letters. We immediately offered our travel training program to help them be successful. Things like how to be safe on the system, where to stand, how to transfer – all those good things within the travel training program. We started the pilot about May 1<sup>st</sup> and we've had 50,000 fixed route taps. We lost a few people, so we were down to 488 people due to tying institutional accounts to HOP being difficult. The results through September have been encouraging. The taps have increased every month, however the number of people in the pilot using the program has decreased.

There was a survey as well as several very favorable comments. The next priority is to check with the team to see how this affects the LIFT usage. Based on the feedback we've received, we think this is a program that we want to advocate be pushed out to all LIFT riders in the future.

- Eileen Turvey commented about the seasonal usage of LIFT and Fixed route. Summer you see a dip in ridership due to the heat. Fall is typically the highest ridership for both fixed route and paratransit. It will be interesting to see how the numbers change with moderate weather, over the next couple of months.
- Tre Madden shared that he received a 40 page report (OPAL) on fareless programs across the United States and how we might implement them here in Portland. How it might involve some sort of tax through the legislature, but he would like to share with Justin. He would like to see it at least starting with LIFT users and have it become a more expansive program.
- Eileen Turvey would like to add to Tre's point that there have been a lot of conversations with TriMet's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team who is working on a national study to identify ways that we could subsidize transit service for low income riders. This is the direction TriMet is exploring and this option for LIFT is definitely part of that investigation. As soon as we get that report we will make sure we share it with the committee.
- Tre Madden said he would be interested in comparing notes between the two reports OPAL/IDEA.
- Eileen Turvey – Transit Equity Advisory committee is coordinating the work with the IDEA team. There are members of OPAL that are part of that work within the focus group meetings. But I would like to see what you have as well and compare notes.

- Claudia Robertson questioned if it is the same as the HOP card. LIFT riders have always been able to use the fixed route, but Fixed route passes are not used on LIFT. I don't understand a whole new program of free rides when they are paying the honored citizen.
  - Charlie Clark – They are not free. They still have to pay the citizen fares. There is a further subsidized pass that is a definite advantage for folks who can travel more frequently without having to spend as much.
  - Eileen Turvey – You can't directly buy a LIFT monthly pass anymore. If you have \$74 loaded you earn the cap so you don't need to pay anymore for the month. If you don't use the full \$74 it just rolls over to the next month. So we give them a free honored citizen path that gives them unlimited taps on fixed routes that doesn't relate to their LIFT usage.
- Claudia Robertson then asked about Travel Training and how many trainers do we have. Travel Training was supposed to be part of Transdev's new contract.
  - Eileen Turvey – We started Travel Training in January
- Claudia Robertson – Always happy to hear people using fixed route. It's still much more flexible and really gives an independence.
  - Eileen Turvey – Yes we are trying to make fixed route more acceptable so we can continue removing barriers and make fixed route more acceptable for everyone.
- Annadiana Johnson – On Fixed route there are people who verbally attack me if I asked to be secured. We need better education to inform riders of the needs of our seniors and disabled community.
  - Justin Rossman shared that TriMet has a campaign called Do the Ride Thing. It's about proper ways to ride the system. He thinks we should put this information in as a topic to pass to our creative team to think of something to help.

## **E. Questions and comments**

## **F. Committee Member Feedback & Discussion**

- Uber conversation
- TransPro survey follow-up and additional questions to ask next time
- Option of moving LIFT subcommittee to quarterly

- Open topics
  - Annadiana Johnson shared that she attends meetings of a group called Go Lloyd in the Lloyd District. It primarily focused on biking and walking – They were completely unaware that the transit mobility center was opening there. They asked if TriMet could reach out. Maybe be part of the opening celebration and would like to be included in their efforts around what TriMet is doing and help make this a big event.
    - Justin Rossman thanked Annadiana and asked for the information to create local connections in that area.
  - Claudia Robertson brought up the Environmental Impact survey on the Interstate Bridge project. It effects both Fixed Route and LIFT.
  - Patricia Kepler brought up the Uber pilot.
    - Charlie Clark shared that there were 297 LIFT customers who have opted in for the LIFT Plus Program, which includes Uber. We are sending them over trips every day and from the feedback it sounds like it has been successful. There’s definitely a cost advantage as those rides are significantly cheaper than our other service offerings. It does still remain a pilot. There are still a few problems that need to be worked on with things like surge pricing but still remain a cheaper source.
  - Claudia Robertson asked Charlie Clark if, when we were looking into Uber, we had looked into Lyft as well.
    - Charlie Clark responded that we had looked into Lyft, but the biggest problem for TriMet is they were not willing to share trip data and that is just a no for us.
- Justin Rossman thanked Patricia Kepler and TJ Anderson for stepping in to help today while Jan Campbell couldn’t be here and also welcoming you both to helping lead the LIFT Sub Committee as we move forward.

**G. 11:00 - Adjourn**