



CDTA COMMITTEE AGENDA

Strategic and Operational Planning Committee

Thursday, February 20, 2020 | 12:00 PM | 110 Watervliet Avenue, Albany

Committee Item	Responsibility
Call to Order	Mike Criscione
Ascertain Quorum	Mike Criscione
Agenda Approval	Mike Criscione
Approve Minutes of Thursday, January 23, 2020	Mike Criscione
Consent Agenda Items	
• Authorize WWBRT Financial Commitment	Ross Farrell
• Approve RRS Parking Rate Hearing and Recommendation	Jonathan Scherzer
Administrative Discussion Items	
• FY 2021 Budget Development*	Mike Collins
Executive Session	
• No Items Scheduled	

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 19, 2020, 12:00pm at 110 Watervliet Ave, Albany

Adjourn

** Indicates Material (Or Additional Material) Will Be Provided at Meeting*

Capital District Transportation Authority
Strategic and Operational Planning Committee
Meeting Minutes – January 23, 2019 at 12:00pm; 110 Watervliet Avenue, Albany

In Attendance: Mike Criscione, Jayme Lahut, Pat Lance, Mark Shaeffer, Dave Stackrow, Carm Basile, Amanda Avery, Mike Collins, Christopher Desany, Lance Zarcone, Jaime Watson, Jon Scherzer, Thomas Guggisberg, Ross Farrell, Jeremy Smith, Phil Parella, Jack Grogan, Stacy Sansky, Sarah Matrose, Adam Slade, Rich Fantozzi, Ed Murphy, John Rich, Vanessa Salamy

Meeting Purpose

Regular monthly meeting of the Strategic and Operational Planning. Committee Chair Mike Criscione noted that a quorum was present. Minutes from the December 12, 2019 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Consent Agenda Items

Authorize Payment for Uncle Sam Parcels

- As we have been discussing for some time, the location of the Uncle Sam Garage is of strategic importance for the construction of the Blue Line (River) BRT. The acquisition process has been under way since late 2017 and after a long series of legal actions, we have been awarded the property as per eminent domain procedure law. This action was authorized by the Board in February of 2018.
- In summary, the acquisition consists of 14 parcels which are composed of four purchases, three permanent easements, and seven temporary easements.
- Authorizing staff to make the \$387,000 payment to the property owner, Uncle Sam Garages LLC (David Bryce) for the Uncle Sam acquisition will be recommended to the Board for approval.

Administrative Discussion Items

FY 2021 Budget Development

- Work continues as we shape the FY 2021 budget. Driving forces in the plan include commitments to adding two new services, a contractual wage increase, health benefits, and increased costs for purchased transportation services. The budget anticipates adding up to 40 new positions to operate our two new services, and it also incorporates our successful bike share program into our regular budget.
- On the revenue side, we are currently planning for no increase in MRT, a \$1.8M increase in customer revenue, a \$0.4M increase in facilities income, and a \$1.7M increase in STOA. It also includes a new operating grant to help offset expenses to the new River BRT line. We are also evaluating how much federal maintenance to allocate to operations.
- The current spending plan is \$100M with a \$4.25M gap. As we work through the next couple of months, we will look to refine expense projections, look at other revenue opportunities, and continue our advocacy efforts. We expect to significantly reduce the current projected budget gap by the February committee meeting.

Cybersecurity Update

- To ensure a safe and reliable operating environment, the integrity of our networks and data assets is of paramount importance. CDTA maintains an extensive cybersecurity program that focuses on people, processes and tools and is based on industry standard frameworks and protocols.
- We discussed threat response protocols, cybersecurity management in the organization, threat detection and mitigation, and the importance of the employee's role in cybersecurity.
- Our top cybersecurity risks were also reviewed, along with tactics used to address them.

Capital Project Update

- Capital construction projects continue to be a busy area for the organization. We reviewed recently completed projects including electric bus infrastructure, the RRS top deck, operations department renovations, and the Crossgates Mall stop relocation.
- Projects under way include River BRT stations, the Troy garage, the Bokland property and the wellness center. Future projects include ETEC and the downtown campus on the Washington/Western BRT, Albany and Schenectady garage expansions, and the concepts of a consolidated operations facility and an Albany transportation center.
- We also reviewed a long list of other projects that focus on improvements for employees, green infrastructure upgrades, and investments at the rail stations.

Executive Session

- No items scheduled.

Next Meeting

Thursday, February 20, 2020 at 12:00pm at 110 Watervliet Avenue, Albany

Memorandum

February 20, 2020

To: Strategic & Operational Planning Committee

From: Christopher Desany, Vice President of Planning and Infrastructure

Subject: Washington-Western BRT Local Financial Commitment

Background:

The Washington-Western Bus Rapid Transit (WWBRT) line continues to be progressed by staff through the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Small Starts program. Small Starts, a funding source provided by the Federal Transit Administration primarily for BRT lines, was recently awarded to the River Corridor BRT. We submitted a Project Rating Package (aka grant application) for the WWBRT, which received a “Medium” rating and is therefore eligible for CIG funding.

A key step of the Small Starts process is documenting that the candidate/applicant is committed to funding the non-CIG portion of the project. This is a requirement for FTA staff to recommend a project for funding to USDOT administration.

The WWBRT project under Small Starts is currently estimated to cost \$81.2 million dollars. This is split between \$60.9 million (75%) from CIG Small Starts and \$20.3 million (25%) from non-CIG sources.

This coming April, FTA will hold a workshop at CDTA to complete a review of the project’s status. Prior to this “risk/readiness review”, evidence of CDTA's local financial commitment is required via a Board resolution. The following are possible funding sources:

1. Land sale of CDTA property in Saratoga – up to \$1.685 million
2. NYSDOT Transit Capital Funding – up to \$12.0 million
3. Land value via easement donation for stations and busway constructed on property of New York State – minimum of \$1.25 million
4. Financing of bus purchase – up to \$16.4 million

As is standard practice for all CDTA capital projects, we will continue to identify additional funding sources to meet the match as the project progresses.

Staff Recommendation

I am recommending that the Board adopt a resolution that establishes CDTA's non-CIG local financial commitment for the Washington-Western Bus Rapid Transit project, and that staff be authorized to submit the resolution to the Federal Transit Administration for CIG Small Starts funding.

Cc: Carm Basile, Chief Executive Office

Memorandum

February 20, 2020

To: Strategic & Operational Planning Committee

From: Jonathan Scherzer, Director of Marketing

Subject: RRS Parking Rate Proposal

Background

Parking rates at Rensselaer Rail Station were last increased in April 2013. At that time, we agreed that rates would be reviewed for adjustment every few years. The Board adopted this as a good business practice. Staff reviewed the rate structure against similar facilities and found that our rates were in line to be adjusted. The proposed rate structure is projected to yield about \$400,000 in additional revenue annually.

Proposed Rensselaer Rail Station Parking Rate Changes

- **Garage Rates** – the daily rate will increase from \$12.00 to \$14.00. The rate for 7 consecutive days will be \$70.00.
- **Surface Lot A** – the daily rate will increase from \$8.00 to \$10.00. The rate for 7 consecutive days will be \$50.00.
- **Surface Lot B** – the daily rate will increase from \$7.00 to \$10.00. The rate for 7 consecutive days will be \$50.00.
- **Surface Lot C** – the daily rate will increase from \$8.00 to \$10.00. The rate for 7 consecutive days will be \$50.00.
- **Customers with Disabilities** – pay half for both the daily and 7 consecutive day rates.

Customers can park on the Top Deck free of charge for up to two hours, while the station will continue to offer free parking in the garage and surface lots for the first hour. After this grace period, parking in the garage and surface lots costs \$2 per hour until the daily maximum is reached.

Public Hearing

We held a public hearing on January 29, 2020 to give customers an opportunity to comment on our proposal. We also accepted comments over the phone, via mail and email through February 15, 2020. There were two speakers at the public hearing, and we received 19 written comments (summary attached). Most of the comments are against any increase; a few supported the proposal with requests that revenue be used to upgrade facility amenities. All comments will be included in the public record of the hearing on the matter.

Recommendation

After reviewing testimony and considering our proposal, we recommend an increase in the parking rates at Rensselaer Rail Station as planned. The new rate structure would take effect on or about Monday, April 6, 2020.

Cc: Carm Basile, Chief Executive Officer
Senior Staff
Phil Parella, Director of Finance
Jeremy Smith, Director of Facilities

RRS Rate Restructure Public Hearing Comment Summary

A total of 19 comments were submitted regarding the proposal to increase the parking rate structure at the Rensselaer Rail Station. They came mostly through the CDTA website with a few speakers at the public hearing, and additional commentary through public communications channels. A majority of the comments were not supportive of the increase with a sub sample that did not object to rate increases as long as they go toward specific station improvements.

Comments Included:

- I would very much like to see the additional funds used to add automated exit gates utilizing credit cards and/or EZPass. It's unbelievable that it is 2020, and we're still relying on parking attendants to process dozens of cars.
- The cost of the long term / economy lot at \$10 / day is high. The airport economy lot is \$6 / day and they have the cost of shuttle vans and drivers. The \$10 lot at the airport gets you valet parking if you want it.
- I travel from the train station to NYC for medical treatment, which occurs several times a month. Although a couple dollar increase does not seem like a lot- traveling to seek care is expensive and the increases matter. Amtrak has partnered with others to reduce fares for those seeking care. Could CDTA do something similar?
- My comment is for you to live more within your means. Shave the increase way down, if raised at all. 25 and 48 percent increases in fees are totally out of line.
- As a person who has parked each week in the garage for many years, I have coped with the constant repairs that I assumed were caused by faulty construction, materials and/or maintenance practices. There is a stark difference between the parking garage (clean, well maintained, up to date technology to pay and exit quickly) and customer experience at the airport and the parking garage (dusty, bird droppings, water leaks causing havoc with the paint on cars) and customer experience at the rail station.
- At a time when we're trying to encourage more people to take public transit to reduce traffic and help protect the environment, you're encouraging more people to avoid taking the train.
- You are making the cost of parking for MEGABUS riders, who are (by definition) cheap, almost as expensive as the ride itself. If there was a good alternative, similar to the RED BusPlus going to Greyhound, then this would not be an issue. Slightly unrelated, but is parking still free in Schenectady?

Improvement Suggestions Included:

- Update the entry/exit point with automated, technological improvements
- Cover the passenger walkway to the train station.
- Improve the overall customer experience at the station's public touch points
- Consider reduced fare structure on weekends
- Be sure to print new rate card for rail lobby areas.
- Install EZ-PASS as an option for payment where applicable