

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
December 17, 2025**

The Transportation Advisory Committee met on December 17, 2025, at 12:00 pm in the Mass Transit training room. The following were present:

Members:

Chris Franks, Chairperson (Teams)
Debra Hairston
Anna Kautzman
Tyrell Payne, Vice-Chairperson
Rhonda Spraggins

Staff and Other Participants:

Marc Adelman, Transportation Services Director
Lisa Bivens, Senior Administrative Asst.
Amanda Paez, Assistant to the City Manager

The Transportation Advisory Committee meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm by Chairperson, Chris Franks.

Public Comment

No public comments were received.

Approval of Minutes

Debra Hairston moved that the minutes of August 13, 2025, Transportation Advisory Committee meeting be accepted as presented and Anna Kautzman seconded the motion. All members in attendance were in favor and the motion passed.

Financial, Ridership and Employee Status update

Marc Adelman updated the Transportation Advisory Committee concerning financial data, ridership activity, and the transit system's employment status from July 2025 through October 2025. Total operating costs for the period were under budget at \$161,070 (10.7%). Salary and wage expenses were under budget at \$99,407 (15.2%) primarily due to driver availability issues and staffing levels. Overtime charges were over budget for the period by \$4,076 (9.5%) also due to driver availability issues. Vehicle maintenance is over budget for the period by \$16,325 (14.4%), primarily due to charges associated with completing major repairs related to the older fixed-route buses in the fleet.

Fuel costs were significantly under budget for the period by \$28,323 (25.3%) due to lower fuel prices and because less door-to-door service was provided due to driver availability issues. In addition, both passenger revenue and advertising revenue is under budget slightly for the period. Because the operating deficit is less than budgeted, the transit system was eligible to receive \$92,320 less in federal operating aid for the period. However, Danville Transit is \$67,118 under budget year-to-date for the city's local match requirement.

For the first six months of FY26 employment activity for bus operators remained stable. However, comparing August 2024 and December 2025 employment data the transit system lost a total of four (4) total full-time drivers.

Update on Service Planning Activities

Marc Adelman indicated that ridership activity levels for all service modes are very concerning. Trips completed for all operations decreased from July 2025 through October 2025 except for the Handivan service. Related data is identified below.

Comparison of FY2026 and FY2025 Year-to-date Ridership Data

FISCAL YEAR	FIXED ROUTE TRIPS	SENIOR TRIPS	RESERVE A RIDE TRIPS	HANDIVAN TRIPS	TOTAL TRIPS
July-October 2025	59912	3237	13165	1842	78156
July-October 2024	68358	5154	13712	1785	89009
DIFFERENCE	-12%	-37%	-4%	3%	-12%

FISCAL YEAR	FIXED ROUTE HOURS	SENIOR HOURS	RESERVE A RIDE HOURS	HANDIVAN HOURS	TOTAL HOURS
July-October 2025	5399	1098	3458	691	10646
July-October 2024	5401	1434	4331	637	11803
DIFFERENCE	0%	-23%	-20%	8%	-10%

Marc Adelman indicated that senior ridership also decreased for the period because fewer drivers are available to provide service and the Fresenius dialysis facility is only completing treatment on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays versus six days a week. The transit system is currently only providing meal site transportation on Thursday's instead of twice a week on Thursday and Friday. However, while service hours completed for the Reserve A Ride operation decreased by 20% the number of trips completed only decreased by 4%. The improved service efficiency level is primarily related to increased trips completed per hour for the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, which involves transporting groups to the same location for training activities. In addition, ridership and service hours increased for the Handivan service.

Marc Adelman discussed information with the Transportation Advisory Committee regarding planning activities to help address decreased ridership activity. The following items were identified as strategies to increase passenger trip activity for all service modes.

- Seek input from passengers – Complete a Focus Group and survey activities to obtain input concerning different strategies to increase ridership
- Increase Fixed Route Ridership Activity – Extend the Half-Fare Discount Period for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities and expand service along Riverside Drive
- Improve opportunities for the public to access door-to-door service – Modify the existing cancellation policy for subscription/standing reservation trips
- Generate support documentation for proposed service changes

Update on Service Planning Activities (Continued)

Marc Adelman discussed different approaches to improve fixed route ridership activity. He did not recommend certain strategies such as requiring passengers who use door-to-door service to use the fixed-route service after completing a detailed evaluation of door-to-door trips completed from July 14, 2025, through July 18, 2025. Related information concerning the possibility of requiring passengers to use the fixed route operation is identified below.

- A large percentage of passengers would be required to walk over 900 feet to a bus stop in various weather conditions
- In many cases there were no bus stops in the area near where passengers needed to board or disembark
- No fixed route service was provided during the time the passengers traveled
- Only 18% of the passengers required a walking time of less than 3 minutes to reach a bus stop
- Ride time would increase dramatically for door-to-door passengers if they were required to use fixed route service since only 15% of the trips could be completed within 15 minutes

To reduce capacity constraints to access door-to-door service, Marc Adelman recommended revising the cancellation policy because many passengers maintained standing reservations but frequently cancelled service, which did not allow other passengers to complete a trip at that time. During November 2025, forty-eight (48) non-disabled passengers maintained standing reservations. In addition, a significant percentage of passengers cancelled service frequently. The following Cancellation Policy changes were proposed for the Door-to-Door service:

- Passengers who maintain a standing reservation must complete 51% or more of their scheduled trips each month or they will be required to call in daily or weekly to reserve service.
- Standing reservation passengers would be notified in writing the week of the proposed policy change.
- It was proposed to initiate the new cancellation policy on February 2, 2026.
- Passengers who fail to complete 51% of the scheduled trips during January 2026 will be required to call in to reserve service beginning February 2nd.
- It was recommended that passengers be required to call two hours in advance to cancel a trip.

To improve fixed route ridership activity Marc Adelman indicated that he originally wanted to explore the possibility of adding an additional bus run that would require the service schedule to be modified. He explained that prior to the pandemic, fixed route ridership activity was so significant that it was challenging to keep the afternoon service on schedule since more time was needed to board and disembark passengers. Due to this situation a fixed-route bus run was eliminated, and more time was added to the afternoon bus runs so reliable service could be provided. However, since the pandemic fixed-route ridership activity has decreased significantly and the run time that was added to the fixed-route afternoon service is not presently needed and passengers must lay over at the Transfer Center for several minutes for most afternoon bus runs.

Update on Service Planning Activities (Continued)

Passengers were surveyed to learn if they would like the schedule changed to reduce the layover time at the Transfer Center, but most passengers indicated they did not want the schedule changed. Therefore, a possible schedule change for the afternoon fixed-route operation is not recommended.

Discussion was also completed regarding possible route modifications for Riverside #2 and #5 to increase ridership for these routes and to keep the buses on schedule in the mornings when there is less layover time available to offset possible service delays. Marc Adelman recommended extending the #2 and #5 Riverside routes 445 yards to the west along Riverside Drive to offer more convenient service to Aldi's, Sheetz, Buffalo Wild Wings, Cookout, Chik-Fil-a, Panda Express, and Popeye's. The proposed route modification would add an additional three to four minutes due to additional signal lights along the route path.

Arrival times at the Transfer Center were analyzed over a 27-day period to assess whether sufficient bus run time existed to extend the Riverside routes. It was learned there was insufficient time to extend the routes without adjusting them. Two low-ridership areas along the Riverside bus routes were monitored to determine how many passengers would be impacted if service was provided only by special request. These areas included the YMCA bus stop on River Street and the Piney Forest Road, Hairston Joplin route segment that serves Danville Pittsylvania Community Services and Long John Silvers. During the review period five trips were completed at the YMCA, and thirteen trips were completed along the Old Piney Forest Road segment. Based on the data analysis it was recommended that passengers should call the transit office to request bus operators to provide service to both areas.

It was recommended that passengers who were riding the bus could inform the driver whether they would like to disembark along the route segments and call the transit office when they would like to board at the bus stop locations. This service arrangement is currently completed for Janie's Hope Apartments and Centra. The proposed change is recommended to allow for sufficient time for the drivers operating the #2 and #5 Riverside routes to complete the extended service along Riverview Drive and Riverside Drive, especially during the morning when less bus run time is available to complete a roundtrip.

Marc Adelman also proposed extending the existing fixed-route Half-Fare Discount period from 6:00 am to noon to 6:00 am until 6:00 pm to increase ridership activity. He indicated that fixed-route bus operators counted the number of trips completed by disabled individuals and seniors who rode during the afternoon from December 10, 2025, through December 12, 2025, and approximately 60 trips were completed per day.

It is estimated that if seniors and disabled persons receive a half-fare discount during the afternoon, but don't ride more frequently, less cash fare revenue would be received in the amount of \$9,000 per year. Marc Adelman mentioned that a percentage of the lost revenue could be offset by increased federal operating aid since funding levels are determined based on the transit system's operating deficit. The proposed fare change must be approved by City Council which also requires a public hearing.

After discussion Anna Kautzman made a motion to approve the discussed recommendations for route modifications and the extended half-fare discount period as presented. Tyrell Payne seconded the motion; all members in attendance were in favor and the motion passed.

Review of the FY2027 Operating Budget Highlights

Marc Adelman reviewed FY2027 Operating budget information with the Transportation Advisory Committee, which are identified below.

- Based on the most recent information received from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, federal and capital operating assistance levels are not expected to change during FY2027.
- The Salary and Wage adjustment expense is expected to decrease by 18% or \$17,580.
- Workers Comp Insurance is expected to increase by 20% or \$20,000.
- Outside Services was increased by \$13,000 to support recruitment services for the Transportation Services Director's position due to his planned retirement in July 2027.
- Vehicle maintenance expense is expected to be similar for FY27 compared to the FY26 budget (expected delivery of eight new buses during FY26 and a second mechanic).
- Proposed to maintain the FY26 budget amount for fuel in case of a price spike.
- Administration Cost Allocation charges are expected to be reduced by 4% or \$30,260.

Review of the FY2027 Capital Budget Project Recommendations

Marc Adelman reviewed the projects included in the proposed FY2027 Capital budget with the Transportation Advisory Committee for approval as identified below.

- Replace a 10-passenger van with lift - \$95,691
- Replace a minivan with an SUV - \$50,000
- Replace a pickup truck - \$54,000
- Replace 1, 28-passenger bus - \$279,450
- Convert 28-passenger bus for propane usage - \$7,950
- Purchase and install new benches (4) - \$2,480
- Purchase and install new trash cans (4) - \$2,300
- Rehabilitate the south parking lot area due to rutting pavement - \$100,000

After discussion, a motion was made by Debra Hairston and seconded by Anna Kautzman to approve the proposed FY2027 operating and capital budgets as presented. All members in attendance were in favor and the motion passed.

Capital Projects Update

- Eight new buses are expected to be delivered by the end of March 2026. Three new 28-passenger buses and five new 14-passenger buses should be placed in service before the end of the current fiscal year.
- Four new bus shelters were delivered this month and are expected to be installed this spring. One of the four concrete pads has been installed.

Capital Projects Update (Continued)

- The parking lots will be crack sealed and seal coated this spring.
- The administrative/maintenance facility roof will be seal coated this spring.

Marc Adelman informed the Transportation Advisory Committee that the new bus shelters have been delivered. Chris Franks provided an update on the site prep construction activities. He mentioned that the city's on-call contractor feels like everything can be completed by the end of May 2026.

Discussion to establish four (4) recurring meeting dates

Marc Adelman informed members that the City Code identifies that the Transportation Advisory Committee will meet four times a year and he encouraged members to establish recurring dates to complete four meetings per year. Marc Adelman asked for input from members regarding this issue.

Several Transportation Advisory Committee members agreed the proposed meeting arrangement would be helpful and said that Thursdays were the best day of the week for them. After further discussion, it was decided to move forward to schedule meetings on Thursdays during the third week of the month during September, December, March, and June. It was also discussed that meeting dates could be changed as necessary to accommodate holidays and other conflicts that may arise.

2027 Black History Bus Wrap discussion

Amanda Paez was present during the meeting and stated she is working with the city's Communications Team, and the plan is to do a full citywide promotional effort during Black History Month. Generating recommendations for the bus wrap would be developed as part of that effort. She indicated that the Danville Public Library typically takes the lead with city programming with regards to Black History month and currently they have not set their schedule but as soon as they do plans can begin. Ms. Paez mentioned that the question that will be asked is, "Who inspires you?" versus who you would like to see on the bus wrap? She stated that after the submissions are received the idea is to present a list to the Transportation Advisory Committee to make final decisions on who would be included on the bus wrap. Discussion continued.

Meeting adjourned at 1:39 pm.