



Benton County
Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund
Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2024

Hybrid Meeting, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Committee Members Present

Chair Heidi Henry, Environmental Advocate
Kate Hunter-Zaworski, Representative of People with Disabilities
Kristin Jocums, Representing Transit Riders
Greg Gescher, Public Transportation Service Provider
David Rabinowitz, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advocate
Gary Stockhoff, Ex-Officio

Absent

Sarah Bronstein, Representative of Educational Institutions
Vice-Chair Janeece Cook, Representative of Low-Income Persons

Staff

Lisa Scherf, Public Transportation Services Supervisor
Charlene Pech, Special and Rural Transportation Coordinator
Tiffany Plemmons, Transit Program Assistant

Guests

Jeff Babbitt, City of Albany
Peggy Cogswell, City of Corvallis
Cassie Cruz, Grace Center
Corum Ketchum, Oregon Cascade West Council of Governments

1. Call to Order/Introductions

Chair Henry called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Henry outlined two action items before the Committee at today's meeting:

- a) To review and modify, deny and/or provide a recommendation for funding the STIF Population-Based Projects to the Benton County Board of Commissioners.

- b) To review, modify, prioritize, and if deemed appropriate, provide a recommendation to approve the FY25-27 Benton County STIF Payroll-Based Project Plan to the Benton County Board of Commissioners.

2. Public Comments

No public comments were received.

3. Review of STIF funding status for FY25-27 (see staff report)

Scherf provided an overview of the FY25-27 STIF funding allocations and financial projections, as presented in the staff report. Projecting ahead to the end of the biennium, staff estimates that biennial expenses will total \$5,581,791. Once the biennium allocation of STIF Formula funds have been received and reimbursements paid to providers, staff anticipates there will be \$2,611,988 in Payroll funds remaining. This amount will be carried over to the FY25-27 estimated Formula Fund Payroll allocation of \$4,653,828 for a total forecasted amount of \$7,265,816 available to sustain current projects and begin new service in FY25-27, as well as to maintain a modest reserve.

4. STIF Population Project Recommendation (see staff report)

Scherf continued the review of the staff report. STIF Population-Based projects are 100% allocated to support the public transportation needs of seniors and those with disabilities in Benton County. These funds are meant to be fully expended by the end of the biennium, without a reserve. At its November 4, 2024 meeting, the Committee heard presentations from four local agencies/non-profits that had submitted project applications. It is not necessary to rank these projects in a particular order.

Committee Member Rabinowitz moved to approve all FY25-27 STIF Formula Population projects as presented in Attachment A. Committee Member Gescher seconded; motion passed 5-0.

5. STIF Payroll Project Ranking (see staff report)

Scherf noted that as discussed earlier, with projected allocations and remaining funds from the current biennium, the amount available for projects totals approximately \$7.2 million. The award of Discretionary grants is still pending recommendation from ODOT. Attachment C in the packet present a project funding allocation summary in two scenarios: 1) assuming all Discretionary grants are

successful and only match is needed; and 2) assuming no Discretionary grants are successful and Formula funds are used to cover them in full. In the second scenario, there would not be funds for all the projects, with a shortage of approximately \$600,000.

The Committee discussed project ranking methodology, including concerns about how to use weighting to evaluate projects for matching funds. Rabinowitz asked about service utilization and priorities for expanded services, specifically for the North Albany Expanded Service. Gescher questioned the ranking of microtransit vehicles vs. microtransit pilot service and pointed out a mislabeling of project numbers on Attachment F. Hunter-Zaworski inquired about alternative funding sources, including potential increases in STIF allocations from legislative action. Scherf emphasized the importance of leveraging matching grants, which some committee members felt were underprioritized. Stockhoff indicated that although the total of all projects appears to exceed the available FY25-27 STIF Plan revenues, it is unlikely that BAT 12, Self-Perform Operations, will begin in FY25-27, and if self-performing happens at all, would be more likely in FY27-29.

Following the discussion on existing operations and new project proposals for the allocation of FY25-27 STIF Formula Payroll funds, there was a recommendation to move BAT-12 (Self-Perform Operations) to the bottom of the prioritization list and move BAT-6 (STIF Discretionary Match; Bus Purchases) to the original priority level assigned to BAT-12.

Rabinowitz moved to approve the STIF Formula Payroll prioritization list with BAT-12 as the lowest priority. Gescher seconded; motion passed 5-0.

6. Adjournment

Chair Henry called the meeting adjourned at 11:54 am.