

Board of Trustees

Regular Session

June 25, 2024



Agenda

- Call to Order
- Roll Call
 - Attendance by Other Means/Virtual – Roll Call Vote
- Pledge of Allegiance and Mission Statement
 - Connect Transit provides safe, reliable transportation and access to opportunity to strengthen and enrich individual lives, our community, the economy, and the environment.
- Public Comments

Consent Agenda

- Approval of Regular Session Minutes for *May 28, 2024*
- Approval of Executive Session Minutes for *May 28, 2024*
- Approval of Financial Information for *May 2024*
- Approval of Statistical Reports for *May 2024*
- Cardinal Infrastructure Federal Report
- Cornerstone – Illinois Weekly Update

- Roll Call Vote

Committee Reports

Finance Committee:

Trustee Singer
Vice Chair Hile

Operations & Planning

Committee:

Trustee Foster
Trustee Rao

Marketing & Communications

Committee:

Trustee Buchanan

Operations and Planning Committee Update

Connect FLEX Service

- Discussed the challenge of short trips on the FLEX service
- Discussed other potential modifications
 - FLEX expansion
 - FLEX zone changes
- Asked for further information before modifications are proposed

Marketing & Communications Committee Update

Rider Story Collection

- ✓ March 26: Shared a few rider stories at the Board meeting.
- ✓ June 12: Sent over 5,000 emails for story collection.
- ✓ June 21: Over 55 stories collected.
- ✓ June 25: Five extended rider interviews conducted (two with video).
- **July 15: Begin weekly rider story postings on socials, website, and additional ad locations.**

“Without Connect Transit, Bloomington-Normal would be barren.” – Barbara T.

“Connect Transit plays a major role in my life; I couldn't get around Bloomington-Normal like I do. I take it to work, to the stores, home. It is part of my everyday life.” – Karen P.

Physical Assets

- **Bus Wrap**
 - Finalizing design.
 - Collecting quotes and timelines.
 - Looking to host an “unveiling” event in August in conjunction with another event.
- **Shelter Ads**
 - Shelter locations confirmed (8).
 - Design finalized.
 - Sent to production team.
 - ETA – XXX.
- **Event Pop-Up Banner**
 - Sent to production 6/17.
 - Will aid in additional story collection efforts.
- **Rider Story Posters**
 - Combining rider stories with stock images.
 - Will take to events/use on socials.
- **CornBelters Partnership June 1**
 - Field signage.
 - PA announcements.

Digital Assets

- Website #2
 - Working towards “go-live”
 - Will be up by July 15
- Pre-Roll Videos
 - Gathering quotes
 - CTV, OTT, YouTube, etc.
- Social Media
 - Combining rider stories with stock images
- Rider Story Articles
 - Will be posted on Website #2
 - Repurposed for socials
 - 1-Pager leave behinds
- Internal Communications
 - Combining rider stories with stock images

New Business

- Recommendation for FY25 Property & Casualty Insurance Renewal – Roll Call Vote
- Recommendation for Tire Lease Contract Extension – Roll Call Vote
- Recommendation for FLEX Service Modification – Roll Call Vote

Chairman's Report

Managing Director's Report

Strategic Plan Scorecard

	Activities	Timeline	Status	Notes
	Goal 1: Gain Public and Political Support.			
	Objective 1: Create and Define a Community Wide Communications Plan.			
	Develop a messaging plan with themes that can be used to encourage support of transit among multiple groups of constituents.	January 2024 – March 2024	Complete	Presented to and approved by Board, February 2024
X	Develop a marketing plan with campaign target, campaign purpose, communications strategies (media, events, etc.) to be used, and campaign timeline.	March 2024 – June 2024	In process	Plan to kick off in June 2024
	Implement marketing plan.	July 2024 – June 2026	Pending	
	Objective 2: Expand the Board's Role to Advocate on Behalf of Connect Transit.			
	Establish committee structure.	January 2024 – March 2024	Complete	Presented to and approved by Board, February 2024
	Codify strategic goals.	Mar-24	Complete	Presented to and approved by Board, March 2024
X	Develop Board Handbook to provide a central location for Board information.	Jul-24	Complete	* Draft to Board in May * 1:1 Meetings * Presented to Board in June
	Communicate “talking points” to the Board concerning Connect Transit services and issues facing Connect.	Monthly and as needed.	In process	
	Develop “speakers bureau” to speak to groups (philanthropic, neighborhood, business, non-profit) in our service area and to communicate a consistent message.	July 2024 – June 2027	Pending	
	Objective 3: Develop and Expand Community Partnerships.			
X	Identify opportunities or partnerships that benefit Connect Transit, partners, and our community.	May 2024 – June 2025	In process	* EDC One Voice trip in 2024 * Veteran's Parkway Evaluation * Next Move Illinois (State Public Transportation Plan) participation * Town of Normal Sustainability Plan participation * Salvation Army Good Cities program participation
X	Conduct “summit” meetings to gather partners with similar interests together (business, education, non-profits, medical community, ADA community, transportation providers, arts community, etc.) to identify opportunities and methods to meet need, if any. Develop on-going relationship with community partners.	May 2024 – June 2025 and on-going as needed.	In process	* Convened meeting with Normal Township, Agency on Aging, VA and others to discuss need for adult day programming with potential of using downtown lease space. * Facilitating meeting with Salvation Army, Lifelong Access and Chestnut to identify service needs in Downtown. * EV Industry Collaborative and Open House - Speaker and tour of CT
	Objective 4: Expand Opportunities for the Community to Engage			
	Continue attempts to develop “Ambassadors” and ad-hoc focus groups to provide insight into issues faced by the transit system (route changes, fares, campaigns, transit centers).	July 2024 – December 2024	Pending	
	Conduct transit center outreach.	July 2024 – December 2026	Pending	

	Activities	Timeline	Status	Notes
	Goal 2: Ensure Long-Term Financial Sustainability.			
	Objective 1: Continue to Secure Federal, State, and Local Dollars.			
	Participate in structured legislative groups and trips to Washington, DC, and Springfield.	When legislatures are in session 2024 – 2027	In process	*Attended IPTA "Transit Day" at the State Legislature, APTA Legislative Conference and EDC * * EDC One Voice trip in 2024
X	Provide elected officials with opportunities for tours, speaking engagements, ribbon cuttings, ground breakings, etc.	2024 – 2027	In process	* Congressman Sorenson visit in January 2024 * Senator Durbin quote in press release 5/2024 * Planning August FLEX Celebration with Sorenson.
X	Aggressively pursue funding opportunities from federal, state, and local funding agencies, as well as non-traditional sources.	2024 – 2027	In process	* RAISE Grant was unsuccessful * Pending Bus and Bus Facilities Grant and Earmark requests for 2024
X	Use federal and state funds to provide a broader benefit to more constituents.	As grants are prepared and awarded: 2024 – 2027.	In process	* Actively pursuing project with Heartland CC and IDOT to extend storage and training center grants. * Applied for 2025 Earmark for solar battery
	Objective 2: Diversify Revenue Streams.			
	Identify non-traditional methods to increase local operating revenues without adding burden to the City and Town.	FY25 – FY27	In process	Developing solar microgrid plans, and other non-governmental sources of funding
	Objective 3: Continuously Evaluate Cost Management Strategies.			
	Identify methods to reduce operating costs without having an impact on our ability to serve the needs of passengers and the community.	FY25 – FY27	In process	Developing solar microgrid plans
	Objective 4: Regularly Evaluate Fare Structure for Long-Term Sustainability.			
	Evaluate subsidy per passenger against other revenue streams.	Annually at the beginning of each fiscal year	Pending	
	Consider the effect of fare and fare collection changes on ridership and revenue.	Annually at the beginning of each fiscal year	Pending	

	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Notes</i>
	Goal 3: Leverage Projects and Initiatives for a Positive Customer Experience.			
	Objective 1: Complete a State-of-the-Art Downtown Bloomington Transit Center With Modern Facilities			
X	Select A&E with transit experience that understands the needs of transit operations and has experience with transit facilities in an urban environment.	May-24	Past	A&E contract negotiations pending City of Bloomington plans. Expected recommendation in June 2024
	Establish a Downtown Transit Center Steering Committee with whom to share thoughts and ideas for feedback relating to business, social service, customer amenities, and vehicle movements.	July 2024 – June 2026	Pending	To kick off in conjunction with A&E project kick-off
	Objective 2: Optimize the User Experience.			
	Investigate and pursue ways to make riding easier, more convenient, and more understandable.	FY25 – FY27	In process	RFP for fare collection system prepared and distributed.
	Goal 4: Operate Efficiently Without Sacrificing Service Quality.			
	Objective 1: Maintain a Positive Culture of Safety.			
	Develop and implement initiatives that maintain safety at the “top of mind”.	FY24 – FY27	In process	
	Objective 2: Regularly Evaluate and Utilize Technology and Data Driven Solutions for Long-Term Optimization.			
X	Create a technology policy and plan that documents the age of hardware and software, defines a process of documenting and resolving technology issues, and evaluating the effectiveness of the technology based on frequency of failure/downtime, vendor support, and impact on passengers and employees.	FY25 – FY27	Pending	* Consultant analysis of radio system for assistance with RFP (Durbin earmark funds)
	Objective 3: Position Connect Transit to Provide Solutions for Changing Service Demands.			
X	Continually analyze service performance, City and Town growth plans, large employer locations and work shifts, and changing demographics to identify appropriate methods to meet various needs, as necessary and practical.	FY24 – FY27	In Process	* Communications with Rivian employees concerning service and shift times. * Proposal to modify FLEX service to reduce short trips.

Connect Mobility

- 2024 New Applications
 - 165 processed
 - 112 approved
 - 18 denials
 - 35 pending (waiting on professional verification)
- 2024 Recertifications:
 - 277 processed
 - 203 approved
 - 9 denials
 - 65 pending (waiting on professional verification)
- There have been 69 clients identified for travel training.

Board Handbook



Connect Transit Board of Trustees Handbook

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June 2024

Board Handbook

- Change log since draft:
 - Included Vision, Mission, and Values within first pages.
 - Included City and Town as partners on the partners list, alphabetized partners list.
 - Spelled out IGA acronym and included it in the glossary.
 - Modified Policy Roles & Media sections.
 - Added date of adoption to Strategic Plan.
 - Added a summary of our funding resources.
 - Added Board Orientation and Development section.
 - Added date of handbook creation or date of document approval to each page.
- To be modified:
 - Organizational Chart

Community

• Outreach:

- CornBelters Game
- Special Olympics
- YouthBuild Presentation
- Heartland/IGEN EV Industry Collaboration Events
- Participation in Salvation Army Good Cities program
- Brightpoint Thrive Breakfast
- Family facility tour
- Environmental Resource Center - Letter of Support for Grant

• Employee Morale:

- June employee birthdays & work anniversary celebrations
- Internal messaging campaign launch cookout



Professional Development

- Maintenance staff:
 - Inspection and repair of heavy-duty air brake systems.
 - FREE on-site training from brake parts supplier.
- Transport Ticketing Conference:
 - FREE educational conference in Chicago.
 - Attended by Pat, Steve, & Aubrey.
 - The fare policy should drive the technology, not the other way around.
 - Fare simplification before implementation is easier on agency and vendor.
 - Open architecture system
 - Helps with future proofing, multiple systems work as one - more options, more maneuverability.
 - Must verify API is versatile and reliable.
 - Need to include API ownership in our agreements.
 - A reliable provider is critical to maintain operating costs.
 - There will still be unbanked, so need to support cash payments.
 - Education is important and will take a long time.
 - Build strong FAQs.
 - Equip CSRs and Operators with the knowledge they need and materials to assist with education and communication.



Recruiting

- Positions Open
 - Bus Operator
 - Dispatcher
 - Maintenance Supervisor
 - Marketing & Social Media Coordinator
 - Marketing Intern
 - Mechanic
 - Operations Supervisor
 - Procurement Manager
 - Scheduler
 - Service Technician
 - Technology Support Specialist
 - Transit Planner
 - Travel Support Specialist



Recruiting

- Positions Filled
 - Bus Operator
 - Dispatcher
 - Microtransit Operator
 - Service Technician



Reminders

- Updated/New Board Photos
 - Please set up an appointment with Board Clerk

Agenda

- Trustee Comments
- Executive Session – N/A

Agenda

- Adjournment
 - Roll Call Vote
- Next Meeting: July 23, 2024