

Board of Trustees

Annual Meeting

April 3, 2025

Agenda

- Call to Order
- Roll Call
 - Attendance by Other Means/Virtual – Roll Call Vote
- Receive Nominations for the Following Officers:
 - Chair
 - Vice-Chair
 - Secretary
 - Close Nominations
 - Election of Officers (Roll Call Vote)
- Adjournment of Annual Meeting

Board of Trustees

Regular Session

April 3, 2025



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

- a) Approval of Transit Center Update Workshop Minutes for February 25, 2025
 - b) Approval of Regular Session Minutes for February 25, 2025
 - c) Approval of Executive Session Minutes for February 25, 2025
 - d) Approval of Financial Information for February 2025
 - e) Monthly Statistical Reports for February 2025
 - f) Cardinal Infrastructure; Federal Report
 - g) Cornerstone; Illinois Weekly Update Roll Call Vote
-
- Roll Call Vote

Committee Reports

Operations & Planning Committee:

Trustee Foster
Trustee Rao

Finance Committee:

Vice Chair Hile

Marketing & Communications Committee:

Trustee Buchanan
Mark Huffman

New Business

- a) Recommendation for Property & Casualty Insurance Brokerage Services – Roll Call Vote
- b) Recommendation for Employee Benefits Insurance Brokerage Services – Roll Call Vote
- c) Recommendation for Zero-Fare Days – Roll Call Vote
- d) Recommendation to Authorize FTA Application Filing – Roll Call Vote
- e) Recommendation to Approve FY26 Budget – 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	Partially Complete	* Presented to Board in July 2024 * Outline updated April 2025
	Implement marketing plan.	July 2024 – June 2026	Pending	* New Marketing Manager hired/started 9/19/2024
	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
	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	* August workshop for Communication Protocols * January workshop on Transit Center design * Resumed weekly highlight for Board
	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 & 2025 * Veteran's Parkway Evaluation * Next Move Illinois (State Public Transportation Plan) participation * Town of Normal Sustainability Plan participation * Salvation Army Good Cities program participation * Chamber InterCity Leadership Visit to Grand Rapids * Table Captain for Chamber's RAMP Event. * Coordinating with McLean County and IDOT to evaluate the potential of serving rural McLean County. * Participating on the Veterans Parkway Corridor Study Steering Committee * Initial meeting to plan for service to new ISU Campus on GE Road. * Initiated meeting with Rivian to discuss Universal Access Agreement for their employees to precede expansion in summer 2025. * Met with Lifelong Access to develop operating partnership to improve communication between our agencies. * Attended Unit 5 Foundation Luncheon
	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 * Met with Chestnut Health to support their grant to assist people at major transit stops and to educate staff on CT services. * Conducted Fare Collection Equipment summit with non-profit and social service providers to understand their needs prior to Board recommendation

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	* Developing plan for ad-hoc groups of students needing public service hours to assist with outreach events.
	Conduct transit center outreach.	July 2024 – December 2026	In process	* Workshops held that included community members that might be affected including: Accessibility, Stakeholders, Safety and Security * Stakeholder Workshop #2
	Activities	Timeline	Status	Notes
Goal 2: Ensure Long-Term Financial Sustainability.				
Objective 1: Continue to Secure Federal, State, and Local Dollars.				
X	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 * EDC One Voice trip in 2024 * Active on IPTA Legislative Committee * Testified to State Senate Transportation Committee to discuss Downstate Funding Needs. * Participated with IPTA to draft a request and provide funding options. * Participated with IPTA Leg. Committee to fine tune request to State of Illinois legislature to provide financial security for DOAP and improve ability to meet local needs. * Attended Special Hearing of the Senate Transportation Committee concerning
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 * FLEX Celebration with Congressman Sorenson, Mayor. * Sent congratulatory letters to Mayoral election winners and new Council members inviting them to visit CT and be introduced to our services and projects.
	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 * Bus and Bus Facilities Grant was unsuccessful * Earmark requests was included in Federal FY25 Budget * Seeking available sources for state funding for solar microgrid
	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. * Earmark request was included in Federal FY25 Budget 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 * Transferred funds into interest bearing Illinois Funds account. This account has earned over \$87,000 in interest since it was opened in May.
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			
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	Complete	* A&E contract recommended for award, and approved by Board 8/8/2024 and IDOT * Kick-off meeting held 9/18-19/2024
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	In process	* Sent invitations to participate in Stakeholder Group * Met with Stakeholders including members of the Downtown business and social service community on 10/10/24 & 2/20/25
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.
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Notes</i>
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.			
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	In process	* Consultant analysis of radio system for assistance with RFP (Durbin earmark funds) * Evaluating technology pilot programs relating to facility security and on-board safety and security. Prepared RFP for radio system pending IDOT concurrence.
Objective 3: Position Connect Transit to Provide Solutions for Changing Service Demands.			
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. * Evaluating the efficiency/effectiveness of routes and services prior to FY26 Budget preparation. * Prepared service alternatives for new route to ISU's GE Road Campus

Messaging Implementation Update

- **DRAFT Marketing/Messaging Plan**

- Outline prepared
- DRAFT written plan will be provided to Board of Trustees by 4/22/25 meeting, including:
 - Timeline of potential events and sponsorships.
 - Campaign/Marketing schedule.
 - Anticipated media to be used.
 - For the remainder of this year and next.
- Monthly Marketing and Communications Committee Meeting

Community

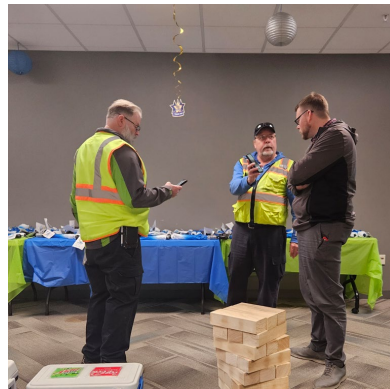
- **Outreach:**

- ISU Redbird Express Rides for prospective students coordinated with Admissions
- Heartland Student Engagement and International Students
- Senior Services Luncheon at Life CIL
- ISU Housing meeting
- ISU Graphic Design Reception



- **Employee Morale:**

- March employee birthdays & work anniversary celebration
- April employee birthdays & work anniversary celebration
- National Transit Employee Appreciation Week
- Employee retirement celebration



Professional Development

- FTA Triennial Review Workshop
 - Chicago, IL; 3/12/25 – 3/13/25
 - Attended by:
 - Ashley Strupek, Procurement Manager
 - Pat Kuebrich, Finance Director
 - Brady Lange, Deputy Managing Director
 - The Triennial Review happens every three years with the FTA to review our procedures and policies that we have in place.
 - The workshop focused on the Contractor's Manual and on compliance areas with a high number of findings from past reviews of all agencies.
 - Of the 23 compliance topic areas, the workshop focused on; Procurement, Maintenance, Financial Management and Capacity, Title VI, ADA, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Safety Plans.
 - We were also able to connect with our FTA representative about future grants.
 - We networked with other Central Illinois agencies and discussed how to fully prepare for the review.

Professional Development

- FTA Drug and Alcohol Conference
 - Kansas City, MO; 3/18/25 – 3/20/25
 - Attended by:
 - Dave White, Safety and Training Director
 - Norm Ellison, Safety and Training Coordinator
 - Sessions included:
 - Beginner DAPM (Ellison)
 - Advanced DAPM (White)
 - Employee Onboarding Under Part 655 (White)
 - Non-Negative Tests and How to Handle Them (White)
 - Well-Run Post-Accident Testing Programs (White and Ellison)
 - How to Become Your Own Collector (White and Ellison)
 - Trends in Cannabis Use and Continued Impacts on Transit Operations (White and Ellison)
 - FTA Random Testing (White and Ellison)

Professional Development

- Illinois Rural Transit Assistance (RTAC) Conference
 - Springfield, IL; 3/18/25 – 3/20/25
 - Attended by:
 - David Braun, Managing Director
 - Patrick Kuebrich, Finance Director
 - Shelly Moss, Operations Director
 - Carrie Bailey, Operations Analyst
 - Sessions included:
 - IDOT Update
 - Grantee Compliance
 - “Managing System Costs: Operational and Capital Cost Management at Rural and Small Urban Transit Systems” by Texas A&M
 - Foundational concepts in cost management (i.e., transit cost drivers, cost analysis and reporting).
 - Managing directly operated labor and fuel costs.
 - Specific strategies for demand response cost management.
 - Specific strategies for fixed route cost management.
 - Managing vehicle costs, including maintenance and replacement.
 - Engaged in interactive discussions, exercises, and networking events

Recruiting

- Positions Open

- Bus Operator (6)
- Maintenance Supervisor (1)
- Mechanic (3)

- Positions Filled

- Bus Operator (4)
- Mechanic (1)



Reminders

- SEI Filers Confirmed
 - Please complete by 5/1/25.

Agenda

- Trustee Comments
- Executive Session
 - (ILCS 120/2.06) (d) – Review of Closed Session Minutes
 - (ILCS 120/2 (c) (1) – Personnel Matters

**The Board of Trustees is in
Executive Session.**

New Business

- Recommendation for *Managing Director's Annual Salary Increase* –
Roll Call Vote

Agenda

- Adjournment
 - Roll Call Vote
- Next Meeting: April 22, 2025