

AMENDED COLUMBIA COUNTY TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE BYLAWS

(Effective July 1, 2023)

ARTICLE 1 Name

The name of this organization shall be the Columbia County Transit Advisory Committee.

ARTICLE 2 Citations

This Committee and these Bylaws are established to advise and assist Columbia County in carrying out the purpose of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF). This includes carrying out the requirements of ORS 184.758(1)(b), ORS 184.761, and OAR Chapter 732, Division 040.

This Committee shall therefore serve as the STIF Advisory Committee for Columbia County and the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners.

ARTICLE 3 Definitions

The following definitions shall apply to the terms used in these Bylaws:

1. "Areas of High Percentage of Low-Income Households" shall mean geographic areas within Columbia County that are determined to have a high percentage of low-income households.
2. "Bicycle and Pedestrian Advocates" shall be individuals representing either organizations or standing committees associated with local governments within Columbia County, which advocate for and promote bicycle and pedestrian-related issues, goals, projects, or interests, or which exist to advise local government elected officials on matters related to bicycle and/or pedestrian traffic safety and enforcement, pathways and travel lanes, project planning and development, and promote public events.
3. "Board" shall mean the Columbia County Board of Commissioners.
4. "Committee" shall mean the Columbia County Transit Advisory Committee, which serves as the STIF Advisory Committee for Columbia County.
5. "Employer Representative" shall mean any employee, supervisor, manager, or owner of a business enterprise legally operating within the boundaries of Columbia County.

6. "Environmental Advocates" shall be individuals representing either organizations or standing committees associated with local governments within Columbia County which advocate for any of a wide range of environmental issues, goals, projects, or interests, or which exist to advise local government elected officials on matters related to the environment or to environmental features of public property.
7. "Local Government Representative" shall mean an employee of Columbia County, or a municipal or special district governmental organization formed and organized under the Oregon Revised Statutes and operating within the jurisdictional boundaries of Columbia County.
8. "Low-Income Individuals" or "person with low income" shall mean individuals with an income at or below 200% of poverty guidelines for individuals updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2) for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia.
9. "Low-Income Households" shall mean households within Columbia County with a total household income at or below 200% of poverty guidelines for households updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2) for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia.
10. "Major Destination" shall mean a well-known and commonly recognized destination within Columbia County, which may either be at one physical location or a group of destination locations within an industry (ex. local wineries or craft beer breweries.) A "Representative of Major Destinations" may be an employee, manager or owner of a destination or representing a destination industry group, or a member of an organization that promotes tourism within Columbia County generally.
11. "Non-Profit Public Transportation Service Provider Representative" shall mean a representative of a non-profit transportation service engaged in providing public transportation services within the County, regardless of whether or not this entity receives public transportation funding.
12. "Person(s) with Disabilities" shall mean individuals with disabilities that limit or constrain any aspect of their daily life, and may include, but is not necessarily limited to, physical, intellectual, cognitive, developmental, and/or emotional disabilities.
13. "Persons With Limited English Proficiency" shall be persons as defined in Columbia County's Language Access Plan adopted by the Board of Commissioners, who did not speak English as their original language and who may have limited proficiency in either speaking or understanding written or spoken English, or both.

14. “Public Transportation Service Provider Representative” shall mean a representative of a publicly managed transportation service engaged in providing public transportation services.
15. A “Representative of Educational Institutions” shall mean a person who is employed by or on the Board of Directors of a K-12 public school; chartered or state-licensed private K-12 school, community college, university, private college, or trade school serving residents of Columbia County.
16. “Representative of Low Income Individuals” shall be a person representing the needs of low-income transportation system users, and who, through association with groups or individuals is familiar with special transportation needs of low-income users.
17. “Representative of Persons With Disabilities” shall be someone representing the needs of disabled transportation system users, and who, through association with groups or individuals, or facilities serving persons with disabilities, is familiar with the special transportation needs of disabled users.
18. A “Representative of Persons With Limited English Proficiency” shall be someone representing the needs of transportation system users with limited English proficiency, and who, through association with neighborhood groups, local school groups, social service or non-profit agencies, is familiar with the transportation needs of limited English proficiency users.
19. “Senior” or “Elderly” shall mean persons sixty (65) years of age or older. A “Senior Representative” shall be someone, who may also be a senior, representing the needs of elderly transportation system users, and who, through association with groups or individuals, or facilities serving seniors, is familiar with the special transportation needs of elderly users.
20. “Social and Human Service Provider Representative” shall mean a representative of a social services, human services, or health services agency operating within Columbia County. Said agency may be a public agency, a non-profit agency, or a not-for-profit institution such as a health center.
21. “Social Equity Advocates” shall be individuals representing either organizations or standing committees associated with local governments within Columbia County which advocate for equity for groups of persons who may be disadvantaged due to but not limited to ethnicity; income or other economic circumstances; limited English proficiency; homelessness; citizenship status; gender identity; sexual orientation; or which exist to advise local government elected officials on matters related to equity.
22. “Sub-Recipient” means any entity that has entered into an agreement with the County in order to complete one or more tasks specified in the STIF grant agreement between the Oregon Department of Transportation and the County.

23. “Transit Dependent User” shall mean an individual who is dependent on public transportation for mobility due to economic reasons or due to other special transportation needs.

ARTICLE 4 Function

Section 1. Purpose: The Committee shall assist the Board in tasks and duties supporting local and regional transportation services funded through the State Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) and allocated to Columbia County, for distribution to Public Transportation Service Providers within and adjacent to Columbia County. The Committee’s functions also include promoting and educating the public on the acceptance and usage of the transit system.

Section 2. Major Tasks:

1. The Committee’s tasks shall be, as follows:
 - (a) To review and advise staff on the development of the local STIF Plan, consistent with the guidelines promulgated by State administering agencies;
 - (b) To review and prioritize all projects proposed for inclusion within the STIF Plan;
 - (c) To develop a process for monitoring and evaluating projects to ensure that Public Transportation Providers that have received funds are applying the funds in accordance with and for the purposes described within their project proposal; and
 - (d) If requested, and in the manner directed by the Board, review and advise staff on the methodology for distribution of STIF Formula Program monies allocated to Columbia County; and
 - (e) To make recommendations to the Board on other matters relating to the provision of special transportation services in Columbia County, including:
 1. Identifying the transportation needs of Columbia County residents who are veterans, seniors, commuters, students, persons with disabilities, and other users of public transportation;
 2. Identifying and coordinating the use of available resources;
 3. Recommendations regarding general public transportation services;
 4. Advocating for new and expanded public transportation services in Columbia County;
 5. Planning for public transportation services; and
 6. Making the most productive use of all available public transportation funds.

Section 3. STIF Plan Duties: In addition to the major tasks described, above, the Committee shall perform the following STIF Plan duties consistent with the administrative requirements set forth under OAR Chapter 732, Division 040, as defined by Columbia County:

- (a) Hold public meetings to assist and advise staff with the development of the County's local STIF Plan, including components of the Plan developed by or for other Public Transportation Service Providers within the County;
- (b) Gather data and seek public input regarding low-income households within the County, including those within the corporate limits of municipalities within the County, and make and publish a determination of where those communities exist for purposes of guiding the STIF Plan;
- (c) Review every project proposed for inclusion in the County's STIF Plan and make a determination whether to recommend inclusion or rejection of the project for the STIF Plan;
- (d) Advise and assist staff by recommending projects to be included in the STIF Plan and the priority of each project in the Plan, consistent with the County's allocation process for the distribution of Formula Fund moneys;
- (e) Consider the criteria established under OAR Chapter 732, Division 040 when identifying Projects for inclusion in the STIF Plan, including but not limited to: expanded service and frequency in areas with a high percentage of low income households; improved service connections between communities; reduced fragmentation of service and closure of service gaps; maintenance of existing services; and other factors such as geographic equity;
- (f) Advise staff regarding the opportunities to coordinate STIF funded projects in the Plan with other local or regional transportation programs and services;
- (g) Recommend to the Board of Commissioners a STIF Plan which includes the prioritization of projects proposed for funding within the Plan;
- (h) Develop processes for review and monitoring of ongoing funded projects and local Plans, which may include reporting and site visits to local public transportation providers receiving STIF project funding; and
- (i) If appropriate, propose to the Board changes to policies or practices to ensure that Sub-Recipients apply the monies received in accordance with and for the purposes described in the STIF Plan or project proposal, and that the project does not unduly fragment the provision of public transportation services.

ARTICLE 5 Membership

Section 1. Number, Qualifications, and Selection of Members: The Committee shall consist of no less than five (5), and no more than seven (7) members, appointed directly by the Board, as follows:

- (a) To be qualified to serve on the Committee, an individual must:
 - 1. Reside or work in Columbia County; and
 - 2. Be knowledgeable about the public transportation needs of residents or employees located within or traveling to and from the County.
 - 3. Be a person who is a member of or represents one or more of the following:
 - a. Local governments, including land use planners;

- b. People with disabilities;
- c. Veterans;
- d. Low-income individuals;
- e. Social equity advocates;
- f. Environmental advocates;
- g. Black, indigenous, and people of color;
- h. Bicycle and pedestrian advocates;
- i. People with limited English proficiency;
- j. Public health, social and human service providers;
- k. Transit users who depend on transit for accomplishing daily activities;
- l. Individuals age 65 or older;
- m. Educational institutions;
- n. Public Transportation Service Providers;
- o. Non-profit entities which provide public transportation services;
- p. Neighboring Public Transportation Service Providers;
- q. Employers; or
- r. Major destinations for users of public transit.

(b) In accordance with requirements in OAR 732-040-0035(6), the Committee must include at least one member from each of the following groups:

- 1. A low-income individual; and
- 2. A person 65 years or older; and
- 3. A public transportation service provider representative; and
- 4. A person with a disability.

(c) The Board will seek to appoint Committee members who represent the diverse interests, perspectives, geography, and the demographics of the County. Consideration may also be given to individuals within these categories who are users of public transportation services provided within the County.

Section 2. Ex Officio Members: The Committee may additionally consist of any the following ex officio members, appointed by the Board of Commissioners as follows:

- (a) One (1) County representative;
- (b) Any additional representatives which the Board of Commissioners deems appropriate.

Section 3. Terms of Office: Terms shall be three (3) years. Any member may serve two (2) successive terms if reappointed by the Board of Commissioners. Terms begin on July 1 and end on June 30. Terms shall be staggered, with either two or three members' terms expiring each year.

Section 4. Member Responsibilities: Member responsibilities are as follows:

- (a) All Committee members shall attend meetings of the Committee and any meetings of work groups to which they are appointed, and shall fulfill other duties as appointed by the Chairman;
- (b) Meeting attendance is mandatory unless previously arranged with the County Transit Administrator. Proxy representation is not permitted; and
- (c) All Committee members shall come prepared to achieve meeting objectives described in the published agenda, focus on the agreed scope of the group operation, and listen to and appreciate a diversity of views and opinions.

Section 5. Termination of Membership:

The Board of Commissioners may remove Committee members as follows:

- (a) The Board of Commissioners may declare a member's position vacant when the member has had three (3) unexcused absences in one year or no longer meets a membership requirement;
- (b) For cause following public hearing, for reasons including, but not limited to commission of a felony, corruption, intentional violation of open meetings law, failure to declare conflict of interest, or incompetence

Section 6. Vacancies: The Board of Commissioners shall make appointments to fill vacancies as they occur. Such appointments shall be for the duration of the unexpired term of that position.

**ARTICLE 6
Officers**

The following officers shall be elected from the Committee membership during the first meeting of each calendar year:

Chair: The Chair shall have the responsibility of conducting all meetings and hearings in an orderly manner. The Chair may not initiate a motion, but may second, and shall vote on each issue after the question is called. However, in the event the Chair's vote shall create a tie, the Chair shall refrain from voting.

Vice Chair: The Vice Chair shall be responsible for conducting the meetings and hearings in the absence of the Chair.

ARTICLE 7
Work Groups

Section 1. Creation of Work Groups: The Committee shall have the power to create work groups with such responsibilities as the Committee directs.

Section 2. Naming of Work Groups: The Chair shall appoint and charge each work group with its responsibilities, shall appoint the members of the work group who may or may not be members of the Committee, and shall appoint the chair of the work group in the event the work group consists of more than one person. The work group chair shall be responsible for scheduling meetings, assigning specific tasks within the mandate of the work group, and reporting to the Committee concerning the work of the work group.

Section 3. Work Group Meetings: Work group meetings shall be conducted in the same manner as provided for Committee meetings under Article 9.

ARTICLE 8
Advisors

The Committee and the work groups may call on lay citizens and professionals as advisors without voting rights to provide technical assistance, expert guidance and advice, data support and analysis, provide information for and testify in deliberations, and attend meetings to the extent deemed appropriate and approved by the Committee and the Chair.

Calling of advisors by the Committee will be coordinated by the Chair or work group chairs through County staff assigned to the Committee.

ARTICLE 9
Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings: Meetings shall be held a minimum of two times per year, as required by statute, but may be held more frequently to carry out the purposes of the Committee. These meetings shall be held in publicly accessible facilities, and shall take place during transit operating hours, to facilitate attendance of interested individuals. Meetings shall simultaneously be webcasted using virtual meeting technology such as GoToMeeting or Microsoft Teams.

Section 2. Special Meetings: Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by the Board of Commissioners by giving the members and the press written or verbal notice at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Section 3. Quorum: A simple majority of the appointed, and filled, voting membership shall constitute a quorum. All business conducted with a majority vote of the quorum shall stand as the official action of the Committee.

Section 4. Voting: Each Committee member, except ex officio members, shall have one vote. In the event the Chair's vote shall create a tie vote, the Chair shall refrain from voting. A Committee member shall not vote on any funding decision in which they are an applicant for funds.

Section 5. Staff: Administrative staff to the Committee shall be determined by the Board.

Section 6. Agenda: The Chair, with the assistance of the County-provided staff, shall prepare the agenda of items requiring Committee action, and shall add items of business as may be requested by individual Committee members and/or the Board of Commissioners. Agendas of all meetings shall be posted in advance as required under existing County policy and filed with the Board.

Section 7. Notice: All members shall be given written or verbal notice of time, date, location, and purpose of the meetings at least three (3) days before a regular Committee meeting and written or verbal notice one (1) day before a special meeting. In the event a member is provided with less than three (3) days notice of a regular meeting, or less than one (1) day notice of a special meeting, and objects to the proceedings based on a lack of adequate notice, all business conducted at that meeting shall be reconsidered at the next regular meeting or at a special meeting called with adequate notice.

Section 8. Minutes: Minutes recording all motions and subsequent action including the number of yes or no votes on each issue shall be taken. In addition, all conflicts of interest shall be noted. Minutes of all meetings shall be posted following all meetings as required under existing County policy and filed with the Board.

ARTICLE 10

Public Records & Meeting Law and Public Engagement

Section 1. Public Records and Meeting Law: The Committee and work groups, if any, are considered a public body for the purposes of ORS Chapter 192, and are subject to the statutory procedures related to Oregon public records and meetings. Pursuant to OAR 732-040-030(5)(b), written copies of agendas, minutes, and Bylaws shall be made available to the public and shall be retained in compliance with the requirements of the applicable Secretary of State record retention rules.

Section 1. Public Engagement: Pursuant to OAR 735-040-0035, the Committee shall strive to seek public engagement in all its deliberative processes, with particular regard to the selection of projects for inclusion and funding in the County STIF Plan. The Committee will work with County staff resources such as the County Public Information Officer to publicize key meetings and hold public forums as needed to ensure maximum public access to information and public participation in priority-setting exercises.

ARTICLE 11
Parliamentary Procedure

The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Committee where not inconsistent with these Bylaws or any special rules of order the Committee shall adopt.

ARTICLE 12
Conflict of Interest

A potential or actual conflict of interest shall be declared by any member who has or may have a conflict of interest as defined by Oregon law (ORS 244.020), prior to taking any action on the matter causing the conflict. No member shall vote upon any motion that requires declaration of an actual conflict of interest.

ARTICLE 13
Bylaws and Amendments

Section 1. Bylaws: The Committee shall maintain written Bylaws pursuant to OARS 732-040-035 that include, but are not limited to, name and purpose, committee membership criteria, appointment process, terms of office for the committee members, general procedures of the committee, member duties, meeting schedule, public noticing requirements and engagement processes, and the STIF Plan development process and general decision-making criteria.

Section 2. Review of Bylaws: The Committee shall periodically review its Bylaws and update them as required, but no less frequently than every three (3) years. Committee Bylaws will be reviewed by the County Counsel and presented to the Board for adoption. The Board may also elect to review Committee Bylaws at any time.

Section 3. Amendments: Committee Bylaws may be amended by the Board upon its own motion. Prior to an amendment, the Board may request a recommendation from the Committee which may recommend changes at any regular meeting of the Committee by a two-thirds vote of the appointed and filled membership, provided that the recommended amendment has been submitted in writing to the Committee members no later than three days before the regular meeting.