



Notes: Meeting of the Connect to the Future Working Group

September 21, 2019

Overview of topics covered at the September 21 Working Group Meeting

The following major topics were covered during the meeting:

- Report-out from Focus Groups on their discussions and progress towards recommendations.
- Review of the timeline for the remainder of the Working Group process.
- Presentation on service and operations.
- Discussion of the goals of the system and for the recommendations report.
- Review of next steps.

Meeting Summary

In attendance

Chair Judy Buchanan – Connect Transit
Board Trustee
Tim Bassett
Linda Foster
Katy Killian

Kimberly Klepec
Steven P. Kossman
Jose Antonio Patino
Deb Presley
De Urban

Public Comment

No public comments submitted.

Status update from focus groups

Focus Group leaders reported out on their progress, summarizing their current findings, thinking, and challenges. The following are highlights from each group:

- Ridership and Access
 - Group members have completed template individually; the next step is to combine content, look for overlap, and identify conflicting ideas.
 - Agreement around focus on serving dependent riders.
 - Scope has broadened from the original charge.
- Integration of Public Transit into Land Use and Development — No report.
- Sustainable Funding
 - Comparing data to 5 Illinois communities; working to understand how Connect compares (i.e.: uses a lower percentage on operating).
 - With an increase in local funding, up to \$4 million in state funding is available.

- Reviewing Universal Access contracts.
- Connecting to The Future: Connect Transit as Economic Partner
 - Reviewed short-range plan and other planning documents.
 - Developed questions to refine the group's focus.
 - Developed list of partners to engage.

Following the report outs, the group requested to revisit the timeline and discuss further. Concerns were raised regarding time for Focus Groups to compare their work before integrating recommendations into a draft. The timeline was adjusted to reflect the requests for more time. This resulted in a clarification that the Focus Groups will share initial draft recommendations on October 12th and the next two meetings will focus on further developing recommendations, fitting them together, and defining outcomes and metrics. The full group accepted a revised timeline with the clarified deliverables.

Presentation & discussion: Service & Operations

Jennifer Sicks, a Transportation Planner, McLean County Regional Planning Commission presented on research conducted and the short range transportation plan.

Consensus from the group was that the information was valuable and Jennifer has been a valuable resource for building an understanding of how Connect Transit operates.

Discussion: Goals for the future

The facilitators shared a list of goals based on discussions from the August 17 meeting and led a discussion to review and refine the goals, which will serve as the foundation for the recommendations report. The list was revised and the fifth goal was added.

The full list of goals is provided below.

- ACCESS: Provide access to jobs and services (including for transit reliant and low-income residents)
- GROW RIDERSHIP: Among all residents, “become the mobility provider of choice”
- AFFORDABILITY: Provide affordable service for households of all income levels
- SAFETY: Provide safe overall riding experience and access to transit stops
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Ongoing and effective communications with all stakeholders, as well as marketing and promotion

Next steps

The facilitators reviewed the revised timeline and asked if there are additional materials or resources needed by Working Group members.

The following major actions will be taken before the next meeting:

- Connect to the Future Focus Groups will share their initial draft recommendations on October 12th.
- The facilitators will provide the slides, an article and resources from Jarrett Walker discussed at the meeting, and example recommendations to demonstrate an ideal range of detail/depth.
- The facilitators will provide materials at least one week in advance of the next meeting.
- Connect transit will share an updated contact information list.

The next Connect to the Future Working Group Meeting will be October 19, 2019.