

2011 Annual Strategic Plan

Background

Spokane Transit's 2011 Strategy is to meet the challenge of the severe economic environment in a manner that postures the agency to emerge in a strong position when conditions improve. Our responsibility to taxpayers requires us to remain true to the tenets expressed in our mission statement. As such, the strategy in 2011 commits us to: 1. Maintain quality – at whatever level of service; 2. Preserve essential capital projects; 3. Maintain flexibility and; 4. Continue to implement a service plan that is sustainable given our forecasted revenue.

In 2011, we are required to accomplish two planning tasks at the same time. We must finalize the design of a near-term, phased service reduction and simultaneously coordinate a plan to enhance service in the future. By the end of 2011 we will be able to present three alternatives to the board, and public, if the board chooses. The first alternative achieves a service level that can be sustained with current funding. This plan would have us follow 2011 cuts with further reductions in 2012. The second alternative delineates the level of funding required to avoid further service reductions in 2012. The third alternative presents a package of options that can be achieved if Spokane Transit was funded at 0.9% sales tax level.

In 2011, this strategy also requires us to continue the same austerity measures that have been in place since the economic downturn began in 2008. Even with these austerity measures in place, we need to reduce staff positions. Staff reductions require reductions in service and the need to prioritize projects. Overall, the agency must achieve a reduction in operating costs of 4% compared to the 2010 Budget.

Service

Fixed Route

- By September 2011, reduce service by approximately 7% from the September 2010 service plan. These cuts will be taken in context with the guidance articulated in *Connect Spokane – A Comprehensive Plan for Public Transportation*. Near term route realignments will be consistent with the long-range vision of a network of High Performance Transit corridors.
- Plan to retain 85% of our 2009 level of ridership. This would equate to approximately 9.4 million fixed route rides in 2011.
- Pursue additional revenue to help minimize reductions throughout the service area including a request to the Washington State Department of Transportation to partially fund service to Medical Lake.

Paratransit

- Reduce service commensurate with the need to provide comparable service to Fixed Route.
- Plan to contain Paratransit ridership to zero growth from 2009 ridership.
- Add 5 vans to the Special Use Vanpool Program.

Vanpool

- Grow service in 2011 using the 10 additional vans received in late 2010. Vanpool vehicle inventory will include 108 Vanpool vans and 14 Special Use Vans.

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Major Projects

- Publish a Central City Alternatives Analysis Locally Preferred Alternative.
- Continue the Smart Bus Program. Milestones to achieve in 2011 are: 1. Complete the onboard camera project; 2. Implement Trapeze Operations package. The goal is to complete Trapeze Operations integration by second Quarter 2012 and be prepared to immediately begin the CAD/AVL integration.
- Achieve Award of Contract (AOC) for a Business Systems upgrade.
- Continue with Plaza Improvement Program. Milestones to achieve in 2011 are: 1. Redesign and construct exterior changes to accommodate operational requirements; finalize plan for interior changes to convert unproductive open space to functional space that supports transit and commercial activities.
- Initiate a radio system replacement program to comply with FCC narrow banding requirement and prepare for Fixed Route CAD/AVL. Completion date for this program must be no later than the end of 2012.
- Complete a facility master plan that is ready for implementation when economic conditions allow for service expansion. Interim facility needs will be accommodated in accordance with this plan.
- Complete the test of AVEGO software, issue RFP, and achieve AOC for vanpool software solution.
- Replace operational and service vehicles in accordance with the extended vehicle replacement plan. Major requirements are the replacement of 6 New Flyer coaches with hybrid-electric vehicles (delivery in 2012) and replacement of 27 Paratransit vans (delivery in 2011 & 2012).

Constraints

- No new positions will be added in 2011. This includes critical positions that were identified but have remain unfilled since 2008. One Information Systems position has been added to that list which will be necessary when the CAD/AVL phase of the Smart Bus program begins in 2012.
- Reduce the scope of Phase 2 of the Facility Camera Project to only cover Jefferson Park and Ride, Valley Transit Center, and the Fleck Service Center. The remaining portion of the project will become unfunded.
- Reduce all travel that is not directly associated with training by 20% from 2009 levels. Note that the 2009 level was already a reduction from normal travel requirements.
- Constrain training (and travel associated with training) to 2009 levels.

A paraphrase of a Chinese blessing says, “May you live in interesting times.” This upcoming year, we are truly blessed.