

**Rogue Valley Transportation District
Accessible Transportation Working Group Meeting
December 17th, 2025, 3:00pm – 4:00pm – Via Zoom Video Conference**

Attended:

- George Adams
- Robin Kissel
- Stanley Littrell
- Adrienne Boutin
- Stephen Slavik
- Mickie Miner

Staff:

- Maria Carrillo, Accessible Transportation Coordinator
- Cory Benton, Translink Operations Manager
- Tim Fountain, Accessible Transportation Manager
- Paige West, Planning & Strategic Programs Manager
- Edem Gomez, Associate Planner

Absent:

- Adrienne Boutin

Welcome:

Meeting called order at 3:01pm.

Roll Call:

Roll call conducted 6 members were in attendance during roll call.

Review and Approve August 4th, 2025 Minutes:

Stanley Littrell made the motion to introduce August 4, 2025 minutes, Robin Kissel 2nd, all in favor, motion passed at 3:03pm.

New Software Update:

Tim reported that Valley Lift is on track to launch its new software in the first quarter of 2026, with a goal of going live around March. He said Valley Lift has been meeting with RideCo every Monday to go over the layout and how the new system will work. The new software will move the application process online, turning it into a digital form

instead of doing it by hand. However, paper applications will still be available. The system is also expected to handle most of the scheduling. Drivers will not know who they are picking up next until they finish their current ride.

Tim said he's been working with maintenance to get the vehicles ready by adding new tablet mounts. Valley Lift also plans to start using four-door electric Bolt vehicles to give rides to ambulatory passengers. They hope to begin using this after the new software is launched.

He also shared that RideCo recently signed a contract with New York, one of the largest transit agencies in the United States.

Tim asked if any committee members would be interested in testing the new app. Stanley said he is interested.

George asked if riders will still need to have their photo taken for Valley Lift ID renewals. Tim said yes, riders will still need to come in for their ID cards.

Mickie asked if there would be any changes to PLUS referrals. Tim said there will be no changes, and PLUS clients will continue using the same process. The updates only affect the Valley Lift program.

George asked if the new software would replace the Valley Lift Coordinator. Tim said no, it will not replace that position.

Robin asked if rides still need to be booked one day in advance. Tim said yes for now, but in the future, the system may allow same-day scheduling.

George also asked if the software would be used for NEMT services. Tim said no, not at this time. Although it has been discussed, the system currently does not support NEMT transportation.

RVTD Budget Update:

Paige gave a brief update on the budget. She explained that both Valley Lift and fixed route services are funded by local property taxes, along with state and federal funding. She reminded the group that in September, RVTD reduced services, and they are now about three months into those changes.

These cuts also reduced ADA service coverage. The decision to reduce service was made for several reasons. Costs have been increasing over time, including wages, health insurance, and the cost of goods.

Another major issue was the temporary suspension of federal funding in Oregon due to its status as a sanctuary state. Although the federal funds were eventually received in late August, RVTD had already prepared for possible funding shortages by reviewing its

cash flow budget. This type of budget focuses on how much money is coming in each month, rather than over a full year.

Because of these challenges, RVTD now operates a much smaller transit service. They have cut 10 routes, changed or replaced some routes, and suspended Saturday service. Now the agency is trying to decide what steps to take next.

Paige explained that the local property tax levy, which helps fund services, will expire in 2026. This levy has been renewed by voters in 2016 and 2021, and it will go back to voters again in May 2026. This funding is important for maintaining services like Saturday routes and weekday evening service.

At the same time, the federal transportation bill, which usually lasts 6 to 7 years, will also expire in 2026. Because both funding sources are uncertain, RVTD is currently in a holding pattern.

Paige said that without new funding, RVTD can only maintain its current level of service on Monday through Friday routes for about four more years.

If the levy passes, RVTD hopes to restore Saturday service and weekday evening service. Surveys show that about 30% of riders use transit six days a week, making Saturday service a top priority. If the levy does not pass, services will remain at their current levels, with no additions.

Paige also mentioned that many managers at RVTD will not receive cost of living (COLA) or wage increases for some time.

Robin shared concerns that current bus services do not meet the needs of many riders. She pointed out that many people do not work traditional 9-to-5 jobs, especially those in restaurant or service industries, and said RVTD is not serving those groups well.

Robin added that if RVTD receives more funding, it should review ridership differently and focus more on people with lower incomes who rely heavily on transit.

Paige explained that RVTD conducted a survey in October with fixed route passengers. The survey asked riders how they would like funding to be used and collected information such as age, income, ethnicity, gender, employment status, veteran status, and disability.

Stanley noted that there was no survey specifically for Valley Lift riders.

Tim responded that they are working on one and hope it will be included in the new app.

Paige added that there was also an online survey available.

Stanley pointed out that online surveys can be difficult for people who are visually impaired.

Stephen asked whether RVTD had received all of its federal funding. Paige said that most of it has been received, but they are still waiting on the 5310 funds.

Software Impacts to Valley Lift Services:

Tim said that there will be some changes to Valley Lift because of the new software. One change involves no-shows. The new system will automatically handle no-shows by sending letters to clients. When a no-show happens, the system will create and send the letter without staff needing to do it manually.

Ride booking will also change. Subscription trips can be scheduled up to 21 days in advance. Regular one-time trips can be scheduled up to 14 days in advance.

There will also be a new program called DNLA.

Tim added that they are planning to include a new survey in the app so riders can share their feedback.

DNLA Program:

Tim explained that this new program was created because it is needed. Many riders must be received by someone when they arrive at their destination. In some cases, no one is there to receive them, and the driver is left responsible for the rider.

This new program will set clear guidelines for riders who need to be received. A guardian or person with power of attorney (POA) will need to sign an agreement. This agreement will explain how the program works. It will also include emergency contact numbers and an alternate drop-off location in case no one is available.

The agreement also explains the rules for no-shows. If a rider is not received:

- The first time, they will get a warning letter with no penalty.
- The second time, they will receive a 14-day suspension.
- The third time, they will be removed from the program.

Tim said the DNLA agreement has been sent to Living Opportunities for feedback. Tim also asked the committee for feedback on the letters that will be sent to clients who are not received.

Robin said Tim did a great job on the letters. She said that guardians and programs should be responsible for these riders, not the drivers. She added that drivers should not be expected to babysit clients.

Stephen said he reviewed the letters and thought they were clear, detailed, and well written.

Next Meeting on:

Next meeting will be on March 18th, 2026.

Next Meeting Agenda Items:

Any other agenda items will have to be sent to Maria via email.

Comments, Questions, Or Concerns:

George suggested sending newsletters to Valley Lift clients on new changes.

Paige stated due to a tight budget we will not be mailing any newsletters. If anything, we will post it on the RVTD website.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 4:35pm

Maria Carrillo

Maria Carrillo
Recording Secretary
