



Committee on Accessible Transportation

2026 Annual Report



Building a more
accessible and
inclusive transit system
for all.

2026 Committee on Accessible Transportation Members



Jan Campbell



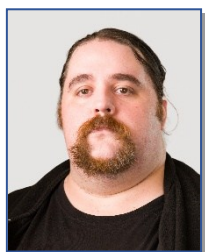
Claudia Robertson



Patricia Kepler



Annadiana Johnson



TJ Anderson



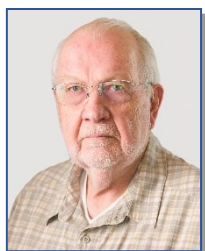
Ulysses Garcia



Sky McLeod



Abdelrahman Osman



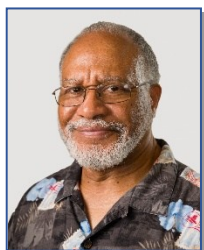
Dave Daley



Franklin Ouchida



Jason Jablow



Richard Hunter



TriMet's Committee on Accessible Transportation: Advancing Accessibility Through Partnership

The Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT) serves as TriMet's community advisory body on matters related to accessibility and inclusive mobility.

Established in 1985 to ensure that the perspectives of people with disabilities and older adults are incorporated into agency decision-making, CAT provides ongoing guidance and recommendations to TriMet leadership and staff, that help shape a more accessible transportation system for the region.

CAT's mission is twofold: First, they provide TriMet with valuable input on policies, programs, projects, and initiatives that impact the accessibility of public transportation. Second, CAT serves as an important communication link between TriMet and the broader community, ensuring the voices of riders with lived experience are heard and reflected in agency planning and operations.

The committee's role spans a wide range of topics, including transit infrastructure, customer information, vehicle design, paratransit services, pedestrian access, technology, safety, policy and more. Through the collective expertise of its members, CAT provides practical, experience-based insights that help TriMet identify barriers, improve services, and advance equitable access to transit.

Grounded in the principles and requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), CAT members draw upon both lived experience and professional knowledge to evaluate projects and initiatives through the lens of accessibility. Their contributions help ensure that accessibility considerations are integrated early in planning and decision-making processes, resulting in more effective and inclusive outcomes for all riders.

Throughout fiscal year 2026, CAT continued its longstanding partnership with TriMet by reviewing major capital projects, supporting accessibility initiatives, participating in operator training programs, engaging with community stakeholders, and advising on policies that affect mobility throughout the tri-county region. The accomplishments highlighted in this report reflect the committee's ongoing commitment to promoting independence, dignity, and equitable access to transportation for everyone in the communities TriMet serves.



Erin Graham
TriMet Board of
Directors

More information on each project follows.

Not Pictured: Madeline Temple &
Stella Moore

Celebrating the 35th Anniversary of the ADA

In FY2026, TriMet and CAT joined the nation in celebrating the 35th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a landmark civil rights law that transformed access, opportunity, and independence for millions of Americans with disabilities. The anniversary provided an important opportunity to reflect on the progress achieved over the past three and a half decades while reaffirming TriMet's commitment to advancing accessibility throughout the region's transportation system.

CAT played an active role in helping commemorate this milestone, recognizing both the historic significance of the ADA and the continued importance of ensuring that public transportation remains accessible to all riders. Throughout the year, CAT members worked with TriMet staff to highlight the contributions of disability advocates, celebrate accessibility achievements, and engage the community in conversations about the future of accessible transit.

Many of those advancements were captured in the video produced by TriMet: *Accessibility has a Name* which can be viewed on YouTube, here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZTSJgc69ZT0>

The anniversary served as a reminder of how the ADA has shaped TriMet's services and infrastructure. From accessible buses and trains to paratransit services, station improvements, customer information systems, and operator training programs, many of the accessibility features riders rely upon today are rooted in the principles established by the ADA.

CAT used the occasion to reflect on the substantial progress made since the law's passage while acknowledging that accessibility remains an ongoing journey requiring continual investment, innovation, and partnership with the disability community.

As part of the commemoration, TriMet highlighted numerous accessibility initiatives demonstrating TriMet's commitment to going beyond compliance and pursuing meaningful inclusion. Projects such as tactile transit center maps, expanded use of Aira Livestream Visual Wayfinding services, elevator access improvements, enhanced stop announcements,

accessible digital communications, and investments in safer and more accessible transit facilities illustrate how the spirit of the ADA continues to guide agency priorities.

The 35th anniversary also provided an opportunity to recognize the vital role that CAT has played in advancing accessibility throughout the transit system. For decades, committee members have served as advisors, advocates, and partners, helping ensure that the lived experiences of people with disabilities inform agency decisions. Their contributions have helped shape policies, infrastructure investments, technology deployments, and customer service improvements that benefit riders across the region.

Perhaps most importantly, the anniversary celebration focused not only on past accomplishments but also on the work that remains ahead. As the agency looks toward the future, the principles embodied in the ADA continue to serve as a foundation for building a transit network that promotes independence, dignity, and equitable access for all. Thirty-five years after the passage of the ADA, TriMet's partnership with CAT remains a powerful example of how meaningful engagement with the disability community can drive lasting improvements and help create a more accessible region for everyone.



Modernizing the Fleet: Retirement of Type 1 MAX Trains

In FY2026, TriMet continued the phased retirement of the original MAX Type 1 light rail vehicles, marking a significant milestone in the evolution of the agency's rail fleet. These vehicles, which served the region for decades, were foundational to the development and expansion of light rail service in the Portland metropolitan area. Their retirement represents both a symbolic and practical step forward in modernizing the system and improving the overall rider experience.



Annadiana Johnson and Franklin Ouchida at the Max Type 1 farewell event

CAT engaged with TriMet staff throughout this transition to ensure that accessibility considerations remained central to planning and implementation. Members reviewed how the retirement process would affect riders, particularly those who rely on familiar vehicle features, boarding patterns, and in-

vehicle orientation cues that had become established over time. CAT emphasized the importance of clear communication to customers about changes in vehicle design, platform experience, and boarding procedures as the new fleet enters service.

A key area of focus was the accessibility improvements offered by newer MAX vehicles compared to the retiring Type 1 fleet. CAT highlighted enhancements such as improved low-floor boarding consistency, more intuitive interior layouts, better visibility of priority seating areas, upgraded audio-visual stop announcement systems, and more accessible mobility device spaces. These improvements were framed as important steps toward reducing barriers for riders with disabilities and supporting a more predictable and comfortable travel experience.

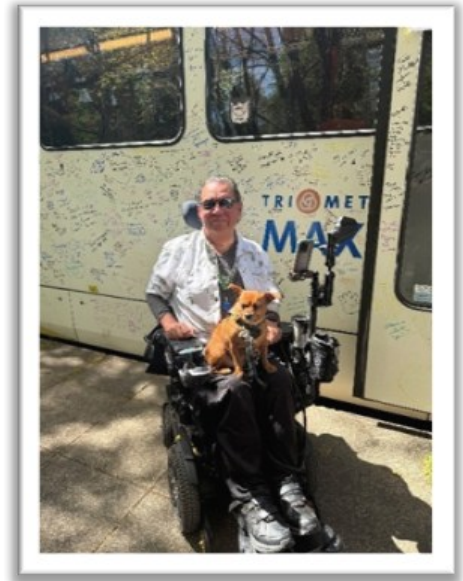
CAT also underscored the importance of transition planning for riders who depend heavily on tactile, auditory, and spatial familiarity when navigating transit vehicles. Members encouraged TriMet to provide advance notice, accessible communications, and clear on-board guidance to support riders adapting to the new fleet. This included ensuring that stop announcements, signage, and operator support remain consistent and accessible during the transition period.

In addition, CAT provided feedback on how the retirement process intersects with broader system accessibility goals, including reliability, maintenance practices, and customer confidence. Members emphasized that fleet modernization should not only introduce new technology but also strengthen the day-to-day usability of the system for riders with disabilities.

The retirement of the MAX Type 1 vehicles reflects TriMet's ongoing investment in modern, accessible, and reliable

transit infrastructure. Through its advisory role, CAT helped ensure that this transition was informed by the lived experience of riders and grounded in a commitment to maintaining continuity, minimizing disruption, and advancing accessibility across the entire rail system.

As TriMet moves toward a fully modernized MAX fleet, CAT's involvement continues to support a rider-centered approach to change—one that prioritizes accessibility, clear communication, and equitable access for all users of the system.



Franklin Ouchida at the Max Type 1 Retirement Celebration

Addressing ADA Pass-Ups: Strengthening Priority Seating & Securement Practices

In FY2026, CAT placed an emphasis on addressing ADA-related pass-ups and improving the effectiveness of priority seating across TriMet's bus and rail systems, considering a spike in ADA pass-ups on key bus routes. These issues are central to the lived experience of many riders with disabilities, particularly those who use mobility devices or require priority seating due to physical, sensory, or cognitive disabilities.

CAT worked closely with TriMet staff to better understand the conditions contributing to ADA pass-ups along high-demand corridors, including overcrowding, inconsistent recognition of mobility device securement needs, and variability in how priority seating is respected by the general riding public.

A key focus of CAT's work was reinforcing the importance of priority seating as a protected and necessary accommodation, not a discretionary convenience.

The committee emphasized that priority seating areas must be clearly identifiable, consistently maintained, and actively supported by both operator training and customer-facing communication. CAT also highlighted the need for continued public education to reinforce expectations that these spaces are intended for riders who need them most, including older adults and people with disabilities.

In addition to policy and messaging considerations, CAT provided input on vehicle design implications tied to ADA pass-ups. Members stressed that physical capacity constraints—particularly related to mobility device securement areas—can directly impact whether riders are able to board during peak service periods. This feedback informed broader discussions about future bus procurements and interior configurations that better balance competing onboard space needs while preserving accessibility.

CAT also supported TriMet in examining operational strategies to reduce pass-ups, including improved load management practices, better real-time communication about crowded conditions, and enhanced operator guidance for handling situations where multiple riders with mobility needs are present.

The committee underscored the importance of consistent decision-making frameworks that prioritize ADA-covered boarding requirements while maintaining fairness and transparency for all riders.

Priority seating preservation was another major area of focus. CAT members noted that even when physical spaces are available, they are not always effectively treated as accessible priority zones in practice. As a result, the committee advocated for stronger reinforcement through operator training, signage visibility, onboard messaging, and customer education campaigns to ensure that priority seating functions as intended.

Overall, CAT's work in FY2026 reflected a dual approach: addressing immediate operational challenges that lead to ADA pass-ups while also advancing longer-term system improvements that strengthen accessibility across fleet design, service planning, and rider behavior.

As the Portland–metro region continues to age at a rate that outpaces much of the country, CAT has consistently emphasized the urgency of designing a transit system that is ready to meet the needs of older adults and people with disabilities before they transition into higher levels of dependency on paratransit services.

Older adults travel differently, often relying on additional accessibility supports as mobility, vision, and stamina change over time. In this context, CAT has underscored a critical strategic reality: “We cannot paratransit our way out of this demographic shift.” Meeting the mobility needs of an aging population cannot be achieved through paratransit expansion alone.

Designing transit systems with older adults and people with disabilities in mind from the outset is essential to maintaining system sustainability, preserving independence, and ensuring that fixed-route transit remains a viable and preferred option as riders age.

Beaverton Transit Center Improvements: Building a model for Universally Accessible Transit Centers

Throughout FY2026, CAT worked closely with TriMet staff (Senior Project Manager Michael Corrente) and community partners to advance a comprehensive effort to improve accessibility for riders who are blind or have low vision at Beaverton Transit Center, one of the region's busiest and most complex transit hubs.

Recognizing the unique navigation challenges presented by a multi-modal transit center serving thousands of riders each day, CAT helped facilitate collaboration between TriMet, the Portland State University Orientation and Mobility Program, the Oregon Commission for the Blind, Northwest Regional Education Service District (NWRESD), and numerous riders with lived experience navigating the transit system with vision loss. Together, these partners conducted on-site assessments, reviewed existing wayfinding conditions, and identified opportunities to improve independent travel throughout the transit center.

CAT members and community stakeholders participated in walk-throughs and practical evaluations of the transit center, providing firsthand insight into the challenges that riders who are blind or have low vision encounter when locating platforms, navigating pedestrian pathways, identifying transit services, and transferring between bus and rail connections. These observations helped inform a series of accessibility improvements designed to make navigation more intuitive, predictable, and independent.



A major outcome of this collaboration was the development and implementation of tactile and Braille transit center maps, providing riders with accessible information about transit center layouts, platform locations, key landmarks, and available services. The project represents one of the most significant wayfinding enhancements undertaken by TriMet for riders with vision disabilities and serves as a model for future accessibility improvements throughout the system – and throughout the country.



In addition to physical wayfinding improvements, the partnership helped strengthen TriMet's understanding of how orientation and mobility principles can be incorporated into transit facility design and operations. By bringing together accessibility professionals, educators, mobility specialists, and transit riders with lived experience, the project demonstrated the value of col-

laborative problem-solving and user-centered design.

CAT's involvement ensured that the voices of riders who are blind or have low vision remained central throughout the planning and implementation process. The improvements at Beaverton Transit Center represent an important step toward creating a transit system that supports greater independence, confidence, and equitable access for all riders.



Major Capital Projects and Infrastructure Improvements

82nd Avenue Transit Project



CAT member Franklin Ouchida serves as the Chairperson of the 82nd Avenue Community Advisory Committee. CAT provided ongoing accessibility review and feedback for the 82nd Avenue Transit Project. Members emphasized the importance of expanded accessibility of articulated 60' buses used for service delivery, safe pedestrian connections, accessible boarding areas, way-finding, crossing treatments, and universal design elements to ensure the corridor serves riders of all abilities.

With the significant increase in ADA pass-ups along the 82nd Avenue corridor during FY2026, CAT emphasized the need for future bus procurements to incorporate greater flexibility within vehicle interiors. The committee advocated for additional mobility device securement areas, as well as adaptable space that can accommodate grocery carts, strollers, and other essential mobility-related needs, helping ensure that all riders can access service safely and reliably.

TV Highway Transit & Safety Improvements

CAT Member Annadiana Johnson serves as the Chairperson of the TV Highway Transit & Safety Project Community Advisory Committee. The TV Highway Transit & Safety Project aims to deliver TriMet FX[®] Frequent Express bus service for the Tualatin Valley Highway corridor in Washington County, Oregon. Use of existing bus service requires significantly more travel time than driving, and communities along the corridor—including Forest Grove, Hillsboro, and Beaverton—have long expressed concerns about safety on this high-crash roadway along Tualatin Valley Highway.



Within this effort, the TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT) has been actively advocating that the project do more than improve speed and safety—it must also materially raise the baseline of accessibility across the corridor so that older adults, riders with disabilities, and people with limited English proficiency can use FX service independently and safely from end to end.

CAT's accessibility priorities for the TV Highway corridor focus on a “whole trip” approach, not just the bus ride itself. That includes major improvements at bus stops, crossings, and pedestrian connections that determine whether riders can realistically reach the system.

Key accessibility improvements CAT is emphasizing include:

CAT is pushing for fully ADA-compliant station areas that go beyond minimum standards—level boarding platforms where feasible, firm and stable boarding pads at all stops, and consistent curb ramps that eliminate lip barriers that slow or block wheelchair and walker access. Where FX-style enhanced stops are built, CAT is advocating for wider boarding areas that allow mobility device maneuvering without forcing riders into adjacent traffic or vegetation zones.

On the street-crossing side, CAT has been focused on reducing the “first/last 200 feet problem” along Tualatin Valley Highway. That includes longer pedestrian crossing times at signals, leading pedestrian intervals, high-visibility crosswalks, and accessible pedestrian signals with audible and vibrotactile cues. Given the corridor's high-crash history, CAT has also emphasized safer mid-block crossing strategies only where fully signalized or grade-enhanced crossings are available.

At stops, CAT has recommended improved lighting, real-time arrival information displays with high-contrast and audible options, and shelters designed with both weather protection and clear sightlines. Seating that accommodates older adults and riders with limited stamina is a recurring priority, along with shelter designs that avoid tight turning radii and obstructed wheelchair maneuvering space.

A major theme in CAT's feedback is cognitive and sensory accessibility. That includes clearer wayfinding, simplified stop naming and signage, consistent visual language across FX stops, and audible stop announcements that remain understandable in noisy highway environments. CAT has encouraged TriMet to treat these as essential safety features rather than optional enhancements.

Finally, CAT has raised the importance of integrating accessibility into the corridor's broader safety redesign—ensuring that curb extensions, bus queue jump lanes, and signal priority systems are designed in ways that do not inadvertently increase crossing distances or create confusing pedestrian paths. The goal is a corridor where transit speed improvements and accessibility improvements reinforce each other rather than compete.



Taken together, CAT's position is that FX on TV Highway should be a model corridor: not only faster and more reliable, but demonstrably more usable for people who face the greatest barriers in the current system.

Elevator Access Improvements Expand to Seven New Locations



CAT continued advocating for reliable and accessible elevator access throughout the transit system. The committee provided feedback on the expansion of the agency's elevator access project, specifically on the timing for the elevator call button, auditory announcements and locations of validators. This was part of an expansion in which TriMet installed card readers at seven more locations. The readers limit elevator use to riders who have valid transit fare.

We first introduced secured elevators as a permanent feature of the Hollywood/NE 42nd Ave MAX station after a monthlong trial in 2023 showed that when people had to provide proof of fare to use the elevators, misuse of our elevators decreased. That in turn meant increased reliability for people who need them, including people using mobility devices, bicycles or strollers with children.

In 2025, we rolled out secured elevators at our NE 60th and NE 82nd avenue MAX stations. Since that time, elevator service calls at NE 60th dropped by more than half, from 25 in 2024 to 12 in 2025.

The goal of secured elevators is cleaner, more reliable elevator service for riders, including employees. If you see unacceptable behavior or conditions in or near our elevators or other properties, text or call 503-238-7433 (RIDE). For emergency matters that require police, contact 911 immediately.

Technology That Talks: Enhancing Transit Access for Riders with Low Vision

TriMet is making transit more accessible to more people with Connectpoint's Falcon devices. Installed on MAX platforms and at bus stops and transit centers, these devices provide audible service information at the touch of a button, allowing riders with visual impairments to hear arrival information.

By the end of June 2026, there will be close to 250 of these devices installed on our system.

If the name Connectpoint sounds familiar, it's probably because the company also makes the ePaper and service information digital displays you can find at many of our bus stops and MAX stations. The displays have earned praise from industry colleagues and from riders, who like the real-time scheduling information the devices provide.

We piloted the Falcons in 2024 and got positive comments from riders and the Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT). CAT members offered their feedback on the pace, tone, volume and verbiage of the announcements after reviewing a device we piloted near our Center Street facility.

How they work — and what comes next

The devices allow our riders with limited vision to get arrival times and other information for bus and MAX. One of the things we're also looking to add to the Falcon's functionality is automated voice announcements about how and where to tap Hop cards.

One complaint we hear frequently is that riders

— especially those who are blind or have low vision— experience difficulty in locating Hop validators, so the announcements would direct them to those devices.

Placards with raised lettering and Braille are being installed on the Falcons now, letting riders know that they just need to push the button on the devices to hear service information for the

stop. We're averaging around 10,000 presses on the Falcon devices per month. The Falcons join the 415 ePaper service information displays we have at bus stops and the 345 CPLED service information displays we have at MAX stations, on the FX2-Division bus line and in the Central Business district. Collectively, all these devices provide riders with accurate, up-to-date information that makes using our system easier.



CAT members Patricia Kepler, Sky McLeod and Jan Campbell working with TriMet staff on placement of the Falcon devices.



Applications for the Committee on Accessible Transportation are open year round. If you or someone you know is interested in applying, the application is available online here:

<https://trimet.org/cat/membership.htm#apply>



Technology and Innovation

Enhancing Wayfinding for Riders Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision

In FY2026, TriMet launched its pilot with Aira, a visual interpreting service designed to support riders who are blind or have low vision in navigating the transit system with greater independence. CAT played an active role in supporting, evaluating, and refining this initiative, ensuring that the program reflects real-world travel conditions and the lived experiences of blind and low-vision riders.

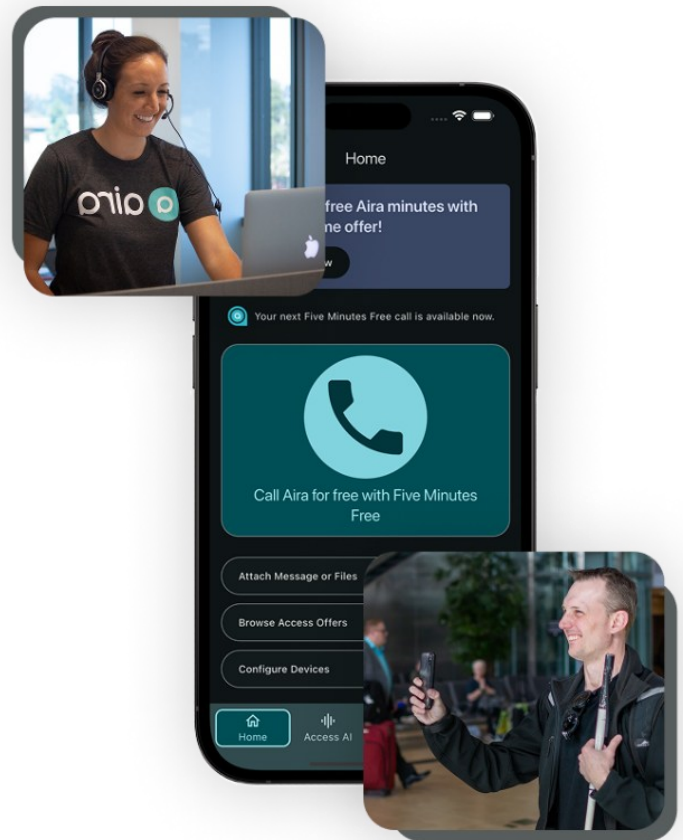
Aira provides on-demand access to trained visual interpreters through a smartphone application, allowing users to connect with a live agent who can describe surroundings, identify transit vehicles, transit amenities, bus stops, assist with navigation, and support trip-making decisions in real time. For many riders, this service can reduce uncertainty in complex environments such as transit centers, rail platforms, bus stops, and transfer points.

Throughout the pilot, CAT members worked closely with TriMet staff and riders with vision disabilities to assess how Aira functions in practical transit scenarios. Feedback focused on ease of use, reliability of connectivity, clarity of guidance provided by interpreters, and the ways in which the service integrates with existing accessibility tools such as stop announcements, tactile maps, and wayfinding systems.

CAT emphasized that Aira is most effective when positioned as part of a broader, layered accessibility ecosystem rather than a standalone solution. Members encouraged TriMet to ensure that riders are aware of the service, understand how and when to use it, and can access it without unnecessary barriers.

This included considerations around onboarding, customer education, and integration into travel training and accessibility outreach efforts.

The committee also highlighted the importance of consistency across environments, noting that the value of Aira increases when riders can rely on predictable transit information and accessible infrastructure. In this way, Aira complements—not replaces—physical and systemic accessibility improvements such as Braille signage, audible announcements, and improved station design.



CAT's involvement helped TriMet identify both strengths and opportunities for improvement in the pilot phase.

Riders provided direct feedback on scenarios where Aira was especially helpful, such as navigating unfamiliar transit centers or identifying correct boarding locations, as well as instances where connectivity or environmental factors affected the app's performance.

Overall, the Aira pilot represents an important step in TriMet's efforts to expand accessible technology options and support independent travel for riders who are blind or have low vision.

CAT's ongoing partnership ensures that the program continues to be shaped by user experience, grounded in accessibility best practices, and aligned with the broader goal of equitable, independent mobility for all riders.

Expanding Independent Navigation: Adding Tactile & Braille Transit Center Maps to Suite of Tools for Blind Riders

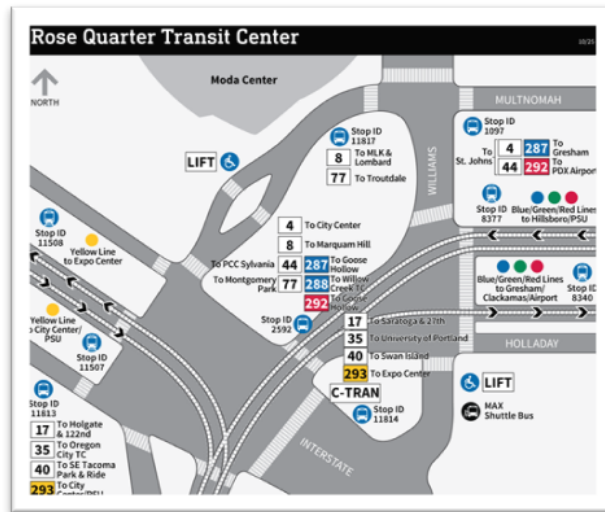
Throughout FY2026, CAT partnered with TriMet staff, orientation and mobility professionals, researchers, and members of the blind and low-vision community to advance one of the agency's most innovative accessibility initiatives: the development of tactile and Braille maps for c transit centers and major transfer facilities.

While many transit customers rely on visual signage, maps, and landmarks to navigate the system, riders who are blind or have low vision often face unique challenges when traveling through large, multi-modal transit centers with multiple platforms, entrances, pathways, and transfer opportunities.

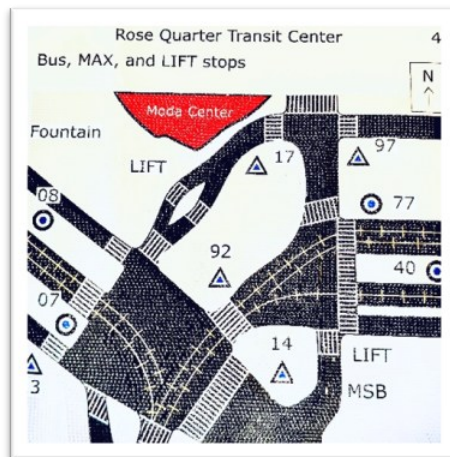
Recognizing these challenges, CAT worked with TriMet and Portland State University's (PSU) Orientation & Mobility Program to help design and evaluate tactile wayfinding tools that support greater independence and confidence when navigating some of the agency's busiest transit facilities.

A significant focus of this work during FY2026 was the continued development of tactile maps for complex transit centers, including the Interstate/Rose Quarter Transit Center. As one of TriMet's major transfer locations, Interstate/Rose Quarter presents a variety of navigation challenges, with multiple MAX platforms, bus connections, pedestrian pathways, street crossings, and surrounding destinations. CAT members and riders with lived experience provided critical feedback on how information should be organized and presented to ensure that tactile maps are intuitive, useful, and meaningful for individuals navigating the facility without relying on visual cues.

The committee worked with staff to evaluate map layouts, tactile symbology, Braille labeling, orientation techniques, and the overall user experience. Work focused on helping riders understand the relationship between transit platforms, boarding locations, station amenities, street crossings, and key landmarks.



Static map image of Interstate/Rose Quarter Transit Center.



Braille and Tactile map of Interstate/Rose Quarter Transit Center.

Members emphasized the importance of providing information that allows riders to build a mental map of their surroundings and make informed travel decisions independently.

CAT also encouraged TriMet to view tactile maps as part of a broader wayfinding strategy rather than a standalone accessibility feature. Members advocated for integration with audible announcements, accessible signage, digital navigation tools, Aira Livestream visual wayfinding services, and consistent station design elements that work together to create a more seamless navigation experience for riders who are blind or have low vision.

A particularly valuable aspect of the project was the direct involvement of individuals with vision disabilities throughout the design and evaluation process. By testing prototypes, participating in site visits, and sharing real-world experiences, riders helped ensure that the maps reflected the practical needs of transit users rather than

relying solely on technical design assumptions.

As additional transit centers are evaluated for future implementation, the work completed at facilities Interstate/Rose Quarter and Beaverton Transit Center serve as models for how collaborative design, lived experience, and innovative thinking can come together to create more inclusive transportation environments for everyone.

Digital Accessibility

Advancing Digital Accessibility: WCAG 2.1 AA Compliance Efforts

In FY2026, TriMet significantly advanced its agency-wide efforts to achieve compliance with the U.S. Department of Justice requirement for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA conformance ahead of the April 2027 deadline. This work represents a major, cross-organizational initiative aimed at ensuring that all digital tools, communications, and customer-facing platforms are fully accessible to people with disabilities.

CAT provided feedback grounded in lived experience to help TriMet prioritize accessibility improvements that directly impact riders who rely on digital information to plan, access, and complete trips.

Members with expertise in disability access and assistive technology offered practical insight into barriers encountered by users of screen readers, voice over, magnification tools, voice navigation systems, alternative input devices, and other assistive technologies.

TriMet's compliance effort spans a wide range of digital platforms, including the agency website, trip planning tools, real-time arrival systems, mobile applications, service alerts, customer service portals, and PDF-based documents. Across these systems, TriMet has been working to address structural, technical, and content-related accessibility barriers, including issues related to navigation order, keyboard accessibility, color contrast, alternative text, form labeling, and compatibility with assistive technologies.

A major focus of FY2026 work has been the identification and remediation of legacy content and

systems that were not originally designed with modern accessibility standards in mind. CAT emphasized the importance of prioritizing high-impact customer pathways—such as trip planning, service disruption alerts, and paratransit information—so that riders who rely on accessible digital tools can independently access the most critical information needed for travel.

In addition to technical remediation, TriMet has invested in strengthening internal processes to ensure that accessibility is embedded into all stages of digital content creation and software development. This includes improved procurement standards, accessibility testing protocols, staff training, and the integration of accessibility requirements into vendor contracts and project specifications. CAT encouraged this shift toward “accessibility by design,” noting that sustainable compliance depends on systemic change rather than

one-time fixes.

CAT also provided feedback on the importance of plain language, consistency, and usability in digital communications. Members highlighted that compliance with WCAG standards must go beyond technical validation to include meaningful usability for people with cognitive disabilities, limited digital literacy, and those using older or lower-cost assistive technologies.

Another key area of focus was the accessibility of PDFs and downloadable documents, which remain widely used across TriMet communications. CAT emphasized the importance of ensuring these materials are properly tagged, readable by screen readers, and structured in a way that supports clear navigation for all users.



CAT members Patricia Kepler, Sky McLeod, Jan Campbell, and Ulysses Garcia working with TriMet staff.

Shaping the Future of Accessible Transit Stops: Next Generation Bus Shelters

Throughout FY2026, CAT played a significant role in helping TriMet evaluate, refine, and improve the design of its *Next Generation Bus Shelters*. Recognizing that bus stops are often a rider's first and last point of contact with the transit system, CAT worked closely with planning, engineering, and customer experience staff to ensure accessibility was integrated into shelter design from the earliest stages of development.

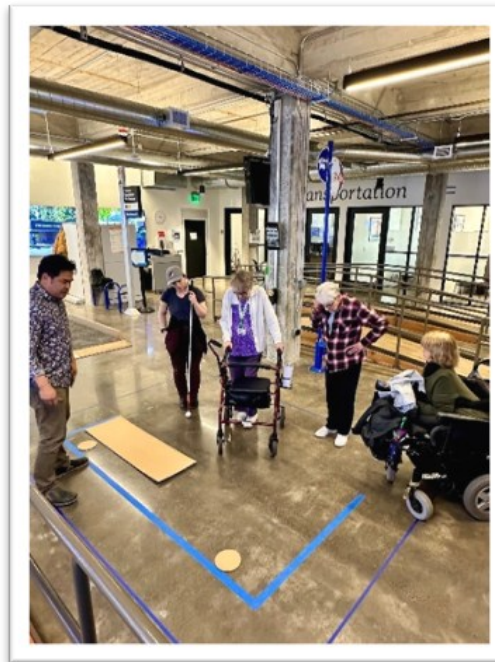
CAT reviewed shelter concepts, designs, and accessibility features intended to improve comfort, safety, usability, and independence for all riders. Members evaluated how shelter designs would function for individuals who use mobility devices, are blind or have low vision, are deaf or hard of hearing, have cognitive disabilities, or experience challenges related to balance, stamina, or sensory processing.

Committee feedback focused on several key areas, including accessible pathways of travel, boarding and alighting clearances, seating design, shelter placement, lighting, weather protection, wayfinding, and the integration of passenger information technologies. CAT members emphasized the importance of maintaining clear and unobstructed pedestrian routes, ensuring adequate maneuvering space for mobility devices, and designing shelters that support safe navigation for riders with vision disabilities.

Particular attention was given to the user experience of riders who are blind or have low vision.

CAT encouraged the incorporation of consistent shelter layouts, detectable features, and clear relationships between waiting areas, boarding locations, and passenger information to support independent travel. Members also provided insight into how shelter placement and surrounding infrastructure can either enhance or create barriers to accessibility.

CAT advocated for flexible spaces that accommodate the varied needs of transit customers. Recommendations included considerations for mobility devices, service animals, grocery carts, strollers, and other mobility-related equipment frequently used by riders.



CAT Members Sky McLeod, Kathryn Woods, Claudia Robertson and Jan Campbell evaluating new shelter footprint



CAT members Franklin Ouchida and Abdelrahman Osman evaluating a new shelter with TriMet staff Ben Baldwin

The committee also highlighted the importance of accessibility beyond ADA minimum requirements, encouraging TriMet to adopt universal design principles that benefit all riders. Through thoughtful review and collaborative problem-solving, CAT helped ensure that accessibility, equity, and customer experience remained central considerations in the development of future bus stop infrastructure.

CAT's partnership in the Next Generation Bus Shelter program reflects the committee's ongoing commitment to creating a transit system that is not only compliant with accessibility

standards, but welcoming, intuitive, and usable for everyone. The resulting designs will help shape the rider experience for years to come and serve as an important investment in accessible transit throughout the region.

Blue Light Emergency Phones—Expanded to Additional Locations

During FY2026, TriMet continued to invest in customer safety through the expansion of Blue Light Emergency Phones across the transit system. As part of this effort, CAT worked closely with TriMet staff to ensure that accessibility considerations remained central to the design, placement, and implementation of these important safety features.

Blue Light Phones provide riders with a direct connection to emergency assistance and serve as a visible, recognizable safety resource on transit platforms and at key transit facilities. CAT recognized that while these phones are often viewed primarily as a security enhancement, they also play an important role in accessibility by providing an additional means of communication for riders who may need assistance while navigating the transit system.

Throughout the planning and deployment process, CAT members reviewed proposed locations and provided feedback on how riders with disabilities would interact with the devices. The committee emphasized the importance of ensuring that phones are accessible to individuals who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices, can be easily located by riders with low vision, and are positioned in predictable and highly visible locations throughout transit facilities.

CAT also encouraged TriMet to consider how riders who are blind, have low vision, are deaf or hard of hearing, or have cognitive disabilities might access and use emergency communications during stressful situations.

Committee members highlighted the value of clear signage, intuitive operation, consistent placement



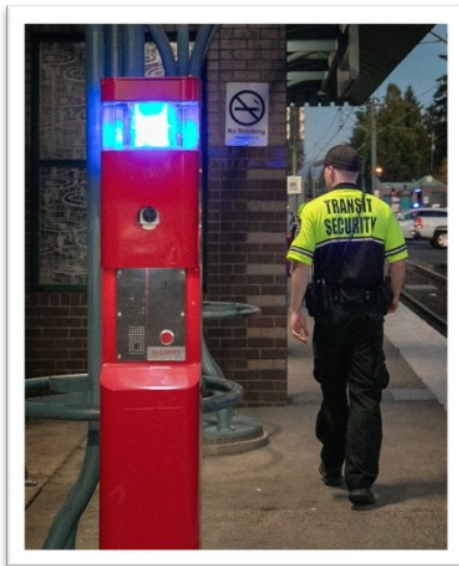
CAT members TJ Anderson, Richard Hunter, and Franklin Ouchida with TriMet staff Shawna Huffman, Pat Williams and Chad Knowles.

standards, and integration with other accessibility and wayfinding features throughout the system.

The expansion of Blue Light Phones complements TriMet's broader efforts to improve customer confidence and create a transit environment where riders feel safe, supported, and connected to assistance when needed. For many riders with disabilities, the visible presence of emergency communication devices can provide an added sense of security and independence, particularly when traveling alone or during off-peak hours.

CAT's involvement helped ensure the Blue Light Phone program was evaluated not only through a safety lens, but also through the experiences of riders who rely on accessible infrastructure to navigate the transit system independently. The committee's recommendations reinforced the principle that safety and accessibility are closely connected, and that investments in one often strengthen the other.

As deployment continues throughout the transit network, the Blue Light Phone program represents another example of TriMet's commitment to creating a transit system that is safe, accessible, and welcoming for all riders.



Improving the Rider Experience

Strengthening Onboard Information Through Enhanced Stop Announcements

Throughout FY2026, CAT strongly supported TriMet's continued enhancements to onboard stop announcement systems as a core component of an accessible and equitable transit experience. Clear, consistent, and reliable stop announcements are essential for many riders, particularly individuals who are blind or have low vision, riders with cognitive disabilities, those who are new to a route, and customers who rely on auditory cues to confirm their location and navigate the system with confidence.

During the year, TriMet advanced significant improvements to ensure automatic stop announcements were provided on all buses for all stops. CAT members emphasized the importance of system-wide consistency, noting that partial or inconsistent deployment can create barriers to independent travel and reduce rider confidence. The move toward full-route automation represents an important step in reducing variability between operators and ensuring that every rider receives the same level of accessible information, regardless of route, time of day, or vehicle assignment.

CAT provided ongoing feedback to TriMet staff on the importance of accuracy, clarity, and timeliness in stop announcements. Members highlighted that effective auditory wayfinding depends not only on the presence of announcements, but also on their reliability, synchronization with actual stop locations, and ease of understanding in real-world travel conditions. The committee's input helped reinforce the need for continuous monitoring and refinement of the system as it is deployed across the network.

In addition to expanding coverage, TriMet implemented a measurable increase in announcement volume of approximately 8 decibels. CAT strongly supported this enhancement, noting that audibility is a critical factor in ensuring accessibility, particularly in noisy onboard environments, during peak travel periods, and for riders with varying degrees of hearing ability. The increase helps ensure that essential travel information is consistently perceptible over ambient vehicle noise, crowd activity, and external environmental conditions.

CAT also emphasized the broader customer experience benefits of improved stop announcements. Beyond accessibility compliance, clear auditory information contributes to a more predictable and less stressful travel experience for all riders. It reduces uncertainty, supports wayfinding for visitors and occasional users, and strengthens overall system usability.

Throughout FY2026, CAT's engagement with TriMet on stop announcement improve-

ments reflected a shared commitment to universal design principles—ensuring that information is delivered in multiple accessible formats and that no rider is required to rely on visual cues alone to navigate the system.

These enhancements represent a meaningful advancement in TriMet's accessibility infrastructure and reinforce the agency's commitment to providing accurate, consistent, and accessible rider information across all modes of transit.



CAT members on an Electric bus: from left to right: Jan Campbell, Ulysses Garcia, Sky McLeod, TriMet Staff Justin Rossman, Janine Delaunay, and Franklin Ouchida.

Accessibility Leadership

Developing an Agency-Wide Accessibility Policy

In FY2026, TriMet staff and the Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT) advanced a foundational effort to develop a comprehensive, agency-wide accessibility policy for leadership consideration. This initiative represents a significant step toward formalizing accessibility as a core organizational value embedded across all departments, programs, and decisions.

The development of the policy was shaped through sustained collaboration between CAT members and TriMet staff, with a focus on ensuring that the document reflects both regulatory requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and broader principles of universal design, equity, and customer-centered service.

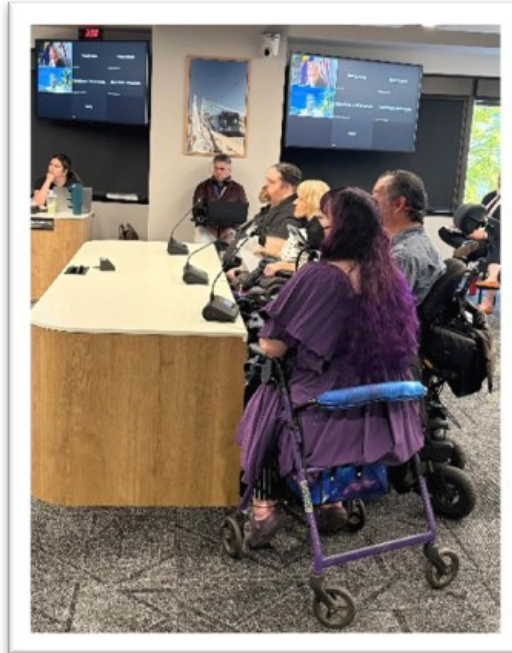
Throughout FY2026, CAT engaged in structured review sessions and iterative feedback cycles with agency staff. These discussions addressed key policy elements such as definitions of accessibility, roles and responsibilities across departments, expectations for service delivery, infrastructure planning standards, customer communications, procurement practices, and accountability mechanisms.

Members emphasized the importance of clearly defining accessibility as a shared responsibility across the entire agency rather than a function limited to a single department or compliance office.

A central theme in CAT's contributions was the need for proactive, system-wide integration of accessibility considerations. Rather than addressing barriers after they arise, the committee advocated for an approach in which accessibility is embedded at the earliest stages of planning, design, procurement, and implementation.

This includes ensuring that new services, capital projects, technology systems, and policy changes are evaluated through an accessibility lens from inception through ongoing operations.

CAT also emphasized the importance of accountability and measurable outcomes within the policy framework.



CAT members testifying at a TriMet Board Meeting, from top to bottom: TJ Anderson, Jan Campbell, Franklin Ouchida and Madeline Temple.

Another key focus of the policy development process was consistency across the agency. CAT highlighted the need for standardized accessibility practices in areas like wayfinding, customer information, operator training, digital communications, and facility design. By establishing agency-wide expectations, the policy aims to reduce variability in rider experience and ensure that accessibility is delivered consistently across all modes and locations.

CAT's role as a standing advisory body ensured that policy development remained grounded in practical experience, helping bridge the gap between regulatory compliance and everyday usability for transit riders.

As the policy moves toward leadership consideration, it represents a milestone in TriMet's ongoing commitment to accessibility. The framework developed through this effort has the potential to guide long-term decision-making, strengthen organizational alignment, and reinforce accessibility as a defining characteristic of the agency's mission and service delivery.

CAT's continued partnership with TriMet staff ensures that the final policy will reflect not only best practices in accessibility, but also the lived realities of the riders who depend on the system every day. This work lays the foundation for a more consistent, accountable, and fully integrated approach to accessibility across the entire transit network.

Training and Workforce Development

Operator Accessibility and Sensitivity Training

CAT members continued their longstanding partnership with TriMet's training department by participating in and supporting accessibility training programs for Bus, MAX, and LIFT operators.

Through direct interaction with operators, CAT members shared lived experiences and preferences related to:

- Disability awareness
- Effective communication techniques
- Mobility device securement
- Customer assistance practices
- Service animal interactions
- Accessibility features and equipment
- Inclusive customer service

These trainings help foster a culture of respect, understanding, and accessibility across the transit system. With operators routinely reporting that CAT's input, guidance and suggestions empower them to better serve their riders daily.



Sam Hartman, Franklin Ouchida, Natalie Maloney, Jan Campbell & Leon Chavarria at LIFT Operator Training.

Conference Presentations and Community Outreach

Throughout FY2026, CAT members expanded the committee's outreach efforts by sharing their expertise, lived experiences, and innovative accessibility initiatives at transportation and mobility conferences across the Pacific Northwest. These presentations provided opportunities to highlight TriMet's commitment to accessibility, elevate the voices of people with disabilities, and contribute to broader industry conversations about equitable mobility and inclusive transportation planning.

CAT members served as ambassadors for both the disability community and TriMet, demonstrating how meaningful engagement with riders can lead to better transportation outcomes. Through presentations, panel discussions, and peer exchanges, members shared lessons learned from TriMet's accessibility initiatives and showcased the value of incorporating lived experience into transportation planning, policy development, and service design.



Lisa Strader (PBOT), Annadiana Johnson, Patricia Kepler and Jan Campbell at the OATS conference.

Key highlights of the year were CAT's participation in the Oregon Transit Association (OTA) Conference in Bend, and the Street Trust's Active Transportation Summit, contributing to discussions focused on creating more accessible and inclusive transportation networks for people of all ages and abilities. Presentations emphasized the importance of viewing accessibility as an essential component of active transportation planning, including pedestrian infrastructure, transit access, first- and last-mile connections, and community design.

In addition to showcasing TriMet's accessibility efforts, these conferences provided valuable opportunities for CAT members to learn from peer organizations, disability advocates, researchers, planners, and transportation professionals. Members brought new ideas and emerging best practices back to the committee, helping inform future recommendations and strengthening CAT's role as a leader in accessibility advocacy.

LIFT Service Policy Review and Continuous Improvement

Throughout FY2026, CAT continued to serve as an important advisor on policies for TriMet LIFT. CAT provided feedback on proposed policy updates and operational practices to help ensure that LIFT services remain accessible, equitable, and responsive to the evolving needs of the community in light of the current budgetary constraints at the agency.

As TriMet evaluated service policies and procedures, CAT reviewed proposed changes through the lens of rider experience, ADA compliance, operational effectiveness, and equitable access. Members consistently emphasized the importance of balancing system efficiency with the need to preserve independence, dignity, and mobility for riders who depend on paratransit services to access employment, education, healthcare, community activities, and essential daily needs.

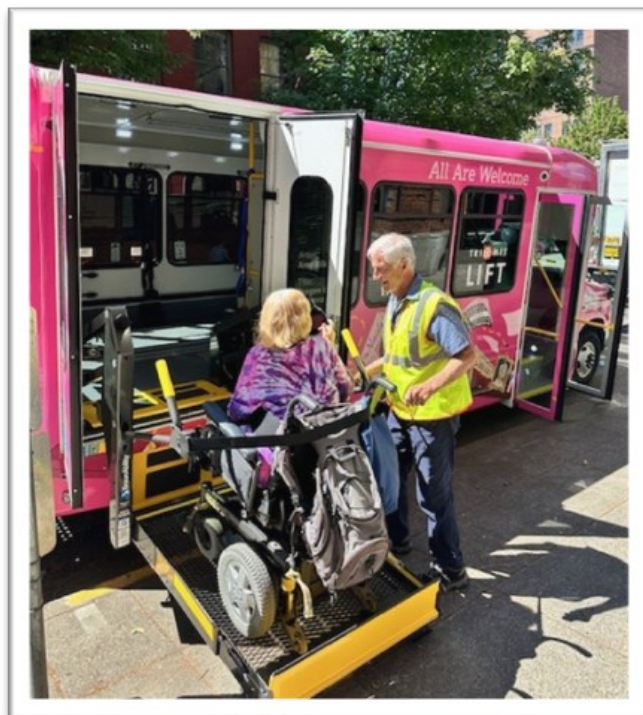
A significant focus of CAT's work involved evaluating how policies are experienced by riders in practice. Committee members shared firsthand perspectives and community feedback regarding trip scheduling, service reliability, customer communications, subscription service management, no-show policies, paratransit eligibility and the overall ease of navigating the LIFT program. This feedback helped staff better understand the real-world impacts that policy decisions can have on riders' daily lives.

CAT also provided input on efforts to improve clarity and transparency in customer-facing policies and communications. Members emphasized the importance of ensuring that riders can easily understand service expectations, eligibility requirements, appeal processes, and available transportation options. The committee encouraged the use of accessible language and multiple communication formats to support customers with diverse disabilities and communication needs.

As demand for paratransit services continues to grow, CAT engaged in discussions regarding long-term service sustainability and the role of mobility management strategies in expanding transportation options for riders. Members encouraged TriMet to continue exploring ways to support customer choice while maintaining strong ADA protections and preserving high-quality service for those whose disabilities require paratransit.

The committee also reviewed policy considerations related to conditional eligibility, travel training, and the integration of complementary transportation programs that can help riders use the most appropriate service for a given trip. Throughout these discussions, CAT consistently reinforced the principle that mobility solutions should be individualized and responsive to each rider's functional abilities and travel needs.

CAT's ongoing partnership with TriMet reflects a shared commitment to continuous improvement in paratransit service delivery. By providing thoughtful, rider-centered feedback on policy development and operational practices, the committee helps ensure that LIFT continues to meet the transportation needs of people with disabilities while advancing TriMet's broader goals of accessibility, equity, and customer service excellence.



Jan Campbell boarding a LIFT bus with Operator Scott Oja

Looking Ahead: FY2027 Priorities

As TriMet and the Portland metropolitan region prepare for a future shaped by significant demographic change, CAT's work in FY2027 will focus on a central question: **How do we ensure that the fixed-route transit system remains accessible, usable, and welcoming for a growing population of older adults and people with disabilities?**

The Portland region continues to age at a rate that exceeds many peer metropolitan areas. Over the coming decade, thousands of current fixed-route riders will experience age-related changes in mobility, vision, hearing, cognition, balance, and stamina. At the same time, many older adults will seek to maintain their independence and continue using transit as an essential connection to healthcare, employment, social activities, and community life.

CAT recognizes that the region cannot meet these mobility needs through paratransit services alone. The long-term sustainability of the transportation system depends upon creating a fixed-route network that remains accessible throughout a person's lifespan. For this reason, FY2027 will include a renewed focus on advancing accessibility improvements that benefit both today's riders and the next generation of older adults who will increasingly depend on public transportation.

Preparing the Fixed-Route System for an Aging Population

CAT will continue working with TriMet staff to identify and remove barriers that may prevent older adults from successfully using fixed-route transit. Areas of focus will include:

- Improving accessibility and usability of bus stops and transit centers
- Enhancing wayfinding and navigation tools for riders with vision, hearing, and cognitive disabilities
- Expanding accessible customer information systems
- Improving boarding and alighting experiences
- Addressing ADA pass-ups and vehicle capacity constraints
- Strengthening priority seating policies and public awareness efforts
- Evaluating operator practices that support riders with mobility limitations

Continuing to improve elevator reliability and accessible pathways throughout the transit system

CAT will also continue advocating for universal design principles that benefit all riders, recognizing that accessibility improvements often enhance the transit experience for parents, caregivers, visitors, and occasional riders in addition to people with disabilities.

Supporting Riders with Cognitive Disabilities

As awareness of neurodivergence, dementia, traumatic brain injuries, intellectual disabilities, and other cognitive conditions continues to grow, CAT intends to expand its work in understanding how transit systems can better support riders whose disabilities may not be immediately visible.



CAT members Franklin Ouchida, Annadiana Johnson, Kathryn Woods, Patricia Kepler and Jan Campbell at the State Capitol.

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FY2027 priorities will include exploring industry best practices related to:

- Simplified wayfinding and navigation systems
- Consistent and predictable customer information
- Accessible trip planning tools
- Operator training focused on cognitive and behavioral disabilities
- Improved customer communication during service disruptions
- Environmental design that reduces confusion and cognitive overload

Strategies to support independent travel for riders with intellectual and developmental disabilities

CAT recognizes that many transit systems across North America are only beginning to address these emerging accessibility challenges and intends to help position TriMet as a leader in this important area of work.

Emergency Preparedness and Accessible Evacuation Planning

One of the committee's most significant areas of focus in FY2027 will be the intersection of accessibility and emergency preparedness.

While transit agencies have made substantial progress in improving everyday accessibility, CAT believes the industry has more work to do in understanding how riders with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with cognitive impairments are supported during emergencies and service disruptions. This is particularly true in situations involving emergency evacuations from buses, trains, transit centers, tunnels, bridges, or other transportation facilities.

CAT plans to conduct a deeper review of industry practices and emerging research regarding accessible emergency management and evacuation procedures. Key questions include:

CAT intends to engage with emergency management professionals, disability organizations, and peer transit agencies to better understand current practices and identify opportunities for innovation. The committee expects this work to inform future recommendations related to operator training, emergency communications, vehicle design, evacuation equipment, and agency preparedness planning.

Building a Universally Accessible System for Lifelong Mobility

At its core, CAT's FY2027 work will be guided by the principle of lifelong mobility—the idea that transit systems should be designed to support people through every stage of life and every level of ability.

Whether addressing the needs of an aging population, advancing digital accessibility, improving wayfinding, strengthening emergency preparedness, or enhancing rider information systems, CAT remains committed to ensuring that accessibility is not viewed as a specialized feature, but as a fundamental component of a successful transportation network.

The committee believes that the decisions made today will determine whether future generations of older adults can continue to travel independently and remain connected to their communities. By helping TriMet prepare now for demographic changes that are already underway, CAT is working to ensure that the region's transit system remains accessible, resilient, and welcoming for all riders in the years ahead.

