

Agency Activity Report

To: Board of Directors
From: Jordan Hess, CEO & General Manager
Date: October 23, 2025

The following is a summary of staff activities between September 16, 2025, and October 15, 2025

CEO & General Manager

Community-Facing Activities

- Participated in UTD governance study for Billings MET Transit
- Represented Mountain Line at Bus Coalition annual meeting
- Represented Mountain Line at APTA Small Operations Committee
- Led partnership efforts with community partners for recreation shuttle pilot
- Presented at Highway to Hydrogen Conference for Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub
- Hosted on-site meetings with concerned residents on Route 11 corridor
- Hosted quarterly land use and transit collaboration with City of Missoula, Missoula Redevelopment Agency, Missoula Economic Partnership
- Presented Brooks Street BRT and discussed Transit Strategic Plan with Southgate Triangle Neighborhood Council meeting
- Represented Mountain Line at City of Missoula Code Reform open house
- Represented Mountain Line on Midtown Association and Downtown Association boards
- Participated in six media interviews

Administrative & Financial Services

Human Resources

- Recruitment – Interviewed top 8 candidates out of 50 applicants for director of operation.
 - Scheduled 8 second-round interviews for October 16-17
 - Choosing finalists for in-person interviews to include a facility tour, meetings with the staff and board.
 - Accepting applications for November operator new hire class.
 - Received 14 applications and completed 4 first-round interviews with 3 more scheduled for the week of October 20.
 - 2 second-round interviews are scheduled and awaiting 2 additional assessments.
 - 4 applicants are employee referrals.

- Hired new service person, Tim Groninger (referred from former employee), pending pre-hire procedures.
 - Will assist current service person with cleaning, repairs and snow removal.
- Halter attended the Montana Arbitration Conference in Bozeman representing a valuable training and networking opportunity.
- Arbitration scheduled with Boone Karlberg.
- Labor and management committee scheduled for October 30.
- Performance management train-the-trainer sessions are scheduled for November.
- Family Medical Leave Act leaves – 8 active cases
 - 1 continuous and 7 intermittent (bus operators).

Finance

- Grants – Compiled draw #3 of \$1,156,391 for MT-2025-004 Low/No award
 - Started annual milestone project and federal financial reporting for all open federal awards
- NTD Reporting – Refined data for FY2025 reporting
- FY2025 Audit – Continued preparing documents in preparation for audit
- Gillig Warranty – Requested reimbursement for labor hours from five work orders through warranty billing.
- Accounts Payable – Made 100 payments totaling \$1,731,350 paid to 70 vendors and 10 employees.
 - Initiated EFT payments to 10 vendors to continue progress towards paperless processing
- Payroll – Processed 3 payrolls, health insurance & benefits for 116 employees, and quarterly attendance and safety incentives for the maintenance department.
- New Facility – Continued refining financing plan

Operations

Maintenance

- ABB representatives were on site to perform repairs on Charger #10
- The New Flyer buses have been re-flashed in accordance with recall specifications
- 1 of the Heliox chargers is experiencing technical issues possibly connected to the modem
- Preparing new supervisor vehicle for service
- Scheduling technician training with ABB (charging vendor)
- Waiting on dealer quote for parts and repairs on new lift
- Patching small portion of asphalt near the bus wash entry

Operations

- The two new dispatchers are working solo and have begun working weekends
- 1 driver is still in training and 1 soloed last week
- Training Supervisor Lyon-Delsordo participated in and presented at the WSTIP trainer's showcase

- Supervisors with PASS (Passenger Assistance, Sensitivity and Security) training certificates are working to update their certificates to reflect the recent launch of their refreshed training program
- Continuing interviews for November 10 operator training class
- The Transit to Trails shuttle continues to gain traction and is very favorable amongst drivers and riders

Communications

Events and Sponsorship

- Reached ~350 people during in-person events in September (Sunday Streets, ClimateFEST)
- Participated in UM Homecoming Parade (Oct. 11), featuring mascot and old bus design for theme “Party Like It’s 1995”

Marketing

- Distributed Marshall Mountain posters and postcards to businesses and partner organizations around town
- Local groups and content creators posted 10+ social media posts and videos; additional videos/promo planned with Slow Spokes
- ~33.5k views on Instagram since launching Marshall Mountain Line (64% non-followers)
 - 137% increase in Instagram link clicks vs. preceding month
 - 79 new Instagram followers
- Updated Mountain Line logo designs created for new supervisor vehicle
- Updated van designs in progress for new paratransit vans to be delivered this year

Outreach

- Met with Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) to discuss collaboration opportunities
- Met with community member inquiring about potential memorial efforts for frequent bus riders
- Meeting scheduled with local influencer to discuss potential video collaborations

Other Communications

- Interim map update approved, production in process
- New route map designs, route colors in design process
- Admin staff training in new templates, Word styles continuing

Press & Media

- Four Marshall Mountain stories picked up by local outlets

Capital Projects, Planning, and Technology

Projects and Procurement

- Transfer Center Interior Renovation – RFP is published and closes on November

- See Agenda Item 5.6 staff report
- Maintenance Operations Administration Base – See Agenda Item 5.3 staff report regarding financing update
 - Purchase sale agreement – Met all conditions and county approval and recording pending
- Soliciting staff feedback on 60% design following the same effort at 30%
 - Compiling collected information this week for including in the 90% design set
- Shared Infrastructure – Refining design and approach to shared infrastructure with DJ&A based on feedback from the city
 - Addressing phasing potentials in internal team work sessions and externally in a meeting with the Prolo team on October 20
- Developing shared infrastructure RFP for January 14, 2026, release, but additional work in scoping is anticipated
- Electrification
 - Awaiting announcement regarding FY2026 low-no grant application
 - Budgeted and started procurement process with contract graphic designer for the bus stop improvement plan
 - Given the scope and estimated cost, seeking quotes and anticipating onboarding in November
 - The Hometown battery electric Villager trolley (identified two years ago with CMAQ funding allocated in the TIP and expenditure required by the end of the federal fiscal year) is proceeding with final review and quality control
 - Trolley will be procured from a Georgia state contract
 - Updated trolley has a new battery pack and management system following Volvo's purchase of that part of Proterra
 - The maintenance team will go to Wilsonville, Oregon to evaluate and confirm the Freightliner chassis and build are solid.
 - The current charge management software with ChargePoint expires February 1, 2026.
 - RFP is being prepared for an October 23 release
 - Targeting a selection and contract in December
 - Deploying in January

Planning and Data

- Bus Stop Improvement Plan
 - Drafting operator survey
 - Scoping graphic design, illustration, and layout
 - See Agenda Item 5.5 regarding contract amendment for scoping Route15 survey, design and construction
 - Stop permitting round 2 and research alternate locations based city and neighborhood feedback
- Ridership Report – See Agenda Item 4.2

- NTD Reporting – Compiled required quarterly updates to National Transit Database used in evaluating agency performance and award funding
- Electrification KPI Dashboard – Acquired Tableau software and attended training
 - Initiated CTE dashboard handoff
 - Targeting presenting to the board in February 2026
- Automated Passenger Counter Certification and Swiftly Implementation – Software start is 1-2 weeks behind schedule with an estimated launch in early December
 - On track for certification submission on Dec 1
- System Improvements and Clever Database Update – Completed CleverWorks training
 - Preparing to update route, stop, head sign, and announcement data
 - e.g. Route 11 changes
 - Identifying needs for internal processes and documentation
 - Estimating deployment to fleet in early November

IT Activity Report

- Teams Channel Migration – Most departments and teams are fully operational in the new Teams workflow
- Land Mobile Radio – Waiting to hear from city regarding space available at Waterworks Hill location
- New Facility Networking – Developing VLAN structure
- Paratransit Laptop Deployment – Setting up and planning for docking stations
- Abila/EWS Ongoing Updates – Several updates have been deployed and the maintenance window for the next update has been scheduled
- Cybersecurity Policy & User Training – Improving and implementing better online security training leveraging an existing training platform, KnowBe4, in early stages
- Bus Work – 7 open tickets regarding head signs in Clever Devices
- Safety Vision – Investigating requirements requiring 30 days of footage stored on buses and ability to remotely view and download footage.
- Digital Signage - Troubleshooting issues with some of the players not communicating with server
- MUTD Infrastructure – Performed preventative mitigations regarding a security incident with 3rd party vendor.
 - <https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/sonicwall-firewall-configs-stolen-for-all-cloud-back...>
- Tickets – 64 new internal tickets submitted in last 30 days
 - Troubleshooting Teams issues with Microsoft on multiple tickets