

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT



11/2020

Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan
Update 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan Update 2020

The Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan was prepared by the Hood River County Transportation District (HRCTD) to serve state and federal Special Transportation Fund (STF) and 5310 agency requirements. This plan focuses on addressing the transportation needs of four target populations residing in Hood River County: seniors, low-income individuals, individuals with disabilities, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals.

The transportation plan looks at challenges and gaps in existing services to prioritize needs to assist in:

1. Improving transportation services for the four target populations by identifying opportunities to coordinate existing resources.
2. Providing a strategy to guide investment of financial resources.
3. Guiding the acquisition of future funds and grants.

This plan is developed as a tool to help local transportation providers and communities improve transportation services, increase efficiency of service delivery, and expand outreach to meet growing needs. It provides a framework to guide the investment of transportation resources.

As such a resource, this plan:

1. Evaluates existing community resources.
2. Assesses and documents transportation needs of the four target populations.
3. Identifies strategies to address gaps in transportation services as well as in efficiencies of service delivery.
4. Establishes relative priorities of the strategies.

This document is an update to the 2016-2020 Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan. The Hood River County Transportation Transit Master Plan, which is due for an update in 2021-2022, will use the information and priorities identified in this plan as part of that planning process. The Master Plan will work to further define, plan for, and develop strategies identified in this plan.

HRCTD staff working in coordination and partnership with the Hood River County Transportation District STF/STIF Advisory Committee, MCEDD, and regional partners prepared this plan update. It was updated using information collected from available demographic information, the HRCTD STIF Plan, MCEDD's Transportation Innovations Through Collective Impact Project, Coordinated Transportation Plans from neighboring counties (eg. Wasco, Skamania, Klickitat and Multnomah Counties), data from new surveys and outreach efforts, and an updated service resource analysis.

Coordinated Transportation Plan Priorities

The coordinated transportation plan is intended to define and prioritize general strategies that the transit service providers can use to address transportation challenges and gaps in existing service. The below graph displays the priorities which were identified by stakeholders and community members.

Identified Priorities	
INFORMATION – IMPROVED AWARENESS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES	Provide ongoing information regarding service, schedules, and routing.
	Ensure riders feel welcome and safe using public transit.
	Pursue outreach and partnerships with vulnerable populations.
SERVICES – MAINTAIN AND EXPAND SERVICES TO ENSURE EQUITY AND MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS	Sustain existing transportation services.
	Expand operating hours on evenings and weekends.
	Expand transit to meet the needs of seniors.
	Increase access to HWY 35 communities.
	Increase access to medical services outside of Hood River County.
	Increase access to transportation services within Cascade Locks.
	Improve access to Downtown The Dalles.
CAPITAL – MAINTAIN AND EXPAND CAPITAL ASSETS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND ENHANCE RIDER EXPERIENCE	Diverse CAT operations to better reflect the community.
	Ensure vehicle fleet safety and maintenance.
	Permanent shelters, seats, and signs at each bus stop.
	Increase stop accessibility for individuals with different levels of mobility.
	Improve dispatching technology.
	Improve the sustainability of the CAT fleet.
COORDINATION – PARTNER WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO CREATE CONNECTIONS AND DEVELOP A TRANSPORTATION NETWORK WITHIN THE GORGE AND BEYOND	Expand facility capacity.
	Continue fostering and growing transportation partnerships.
	Partner with employers, tourism organizations, and businesses.
	Access to other transportation services for vulnerable populations.
	Improved multi-modal options within Hood River County.
	Coordination of local and regional planning processes.

Performance measures linked to the above strategies were created to help the public transportation provider assess how it is meeting these strategies over time. This plan is intended to be updated in three years, or as conditions change.

INTRODUCTION

Why is a Coordinated Transportation Plan Needed?

The State of Oregon requires Special Transportation Fund agencies to prepare a coordinated transportation plan to guide the investment of Special Transportation Fund moneys. The State directs that this plan be utilized to maximize the benefit to the elderly and individuals with disabilities within that area. Correspondingly, with the passage of the Federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) transportation authorization, Congress required a “locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” intended to improve transportation services for individuals with disabilities, seniors, and low-income individuals. Any projects selected for funding under the Section 5310 program must be included in this locally developed plan. Additionally, the plan must be developed and approved through a process that included participation of the target populations and representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers.

Because Hood River, Wasco and Sherman Counties also have a higher than average number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals and many of these individuals also fall into one of the three categories, HRCTD began including LEP as a fourth focal point in the 2016 update.

The Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan Update 2020 meets both federal and state requirements for preparation and adoption of a Coordinated Transportation Plan.

Plan Purpose and Intent

The purpose of the plan is to meet federal and state requirements and to provide a framework for transportation providers and the Special Transportation Fund agency to maximize transportation investments to assist the four target populations: seniors, low-income individuals, individuals with disabilities, and LEP individuals. It covers a three-year timeframe (2020-2023) and is intended to be updated at least every three years or as conditions change. HRCTD staff expects to do a more extensive Hood River County Transportation District Transit Master Plan update in 2021-2022. The information and priorities identified in this plan will be used as part of the Master Plan planning process.

Planning Area

The planning area covered under this Coordinated Transportation Plan Update is Hood River County, Oregon. Hood River County is located on the northern border of Oregon along the Columbia River. The county covers 533.301 square miles (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017) with an average of approximately 43.84 people per square mile and a total estimated population of 23,382 (Quick Facts, 2019). The incorporated cities include Hood River (population 7,801) and Cascade Locks (population 1,144). Unincorporated communities can be found in the County’s “Upper Valley” (north of the Columbia River, south of Mount Hood). They include Parkdale CDP (population 311), Odell CDP (population 2,255), Dee CCD (population 1,083) and Mt. Hood CDP (population 286). The City of Hood River is the seat of the County government and is also the most populated city in the county. The nearest metropolitan area is Portland, Oregon, 62 miles to the west.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process included an outreach process that was driven by the involvement of key stakeholders within the target populations as well as agencies that serve the needs of or provide transportation services for seniors, low-income individuals, individuals with disabilities and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals.

STF/STIF Advisory Committee

For this Coordinated Transportation Plan Update, HRCTD Special Transportation Fund (STF) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Committees were combined to create the STF/STIF Advisory Committee. Committee Members are appointed by Hood River County Transportation District Board of Directors. The two committees were combined per ODOT recommendation, as the STF and STIF programs were merged into one transportation program by ODOT in 2019. Meeting minutes for both STF/STIF Advisory Committee meetings are in Appendix C. Members that agreed to participate in the update process included:

- Rita Rathkey – Opportunity Connections (Individuals with Disabilities Representative)
- Fran Finney – Rider and Aging in the Gorge (Seniors Representative)
- Amy Mallett – Hood River Adult Center (Seniors Representative)
- Kevin Liburdy – City of Hood River (Jurisdictional Representative)
- Jeff Hecksel – Hood River County (Jurisdictional Representative)
- Leticia Valle – CAT Board Member (Latino, Low-Income, Environmental and Public Transit Provider Representative)
- Rob Brostoff – Cascade Locks Resident and CAT Board Member (Community and Public Transit Provider Representative)
- Lexi Stickel – Pacific Source (Low-Income, Seniors, and Individuals with Disabilities Representative)
- Brittany Wilson – Volunteers in Action, Aging in the Gorge (Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Representative)
- Donald Benefield – Hood River Valley School District (Youth Representative)

List of Stakeholders

The following stakeholders participated in one on one phone calls, virtual meetings, or surveys designed to further refine the needs or gaps:

- **Hood River Valley Adult Care Center:** Assists seniors (age 60+), including those with low income, disabilities and/or Limited English Proficiency by providing health and food related services, and social activities.
- **Volunteers in Action:** Trains and matches volunteers with adults in Hood River and Klickitat Counties. Volunteers aid with rides, errands, friendly visits, respite care, light meal preparation, light housekeeping, and other neighborly support. Serves, seniors, veterans, low-income individuals, and other vulnerable populations.
- **Aging in the Gorge:** Identifies, discusses, and advocates for the needs of elders and caregivers in the Mid-Columbia Region. Serves the senior population.
- **Hood River County Health Department:** Health care provider. Serves low-income, senior, disabled and Limited English Proficiency populations.
- **Mid-Columbia Center for Living:** Focuses on behavioral and mental health and substance abuse services. Serves low-income, senior, disabled and Limited English Proficiency populations.

- **Mid-Columbia Community Action Council:** Promotes self-sufficiency in families and individuals within the low-income economic range. Serves low-income clients, including seniors and those with Limited English Proficiency.
- **Mid-Columbia Housing Authority:** Provides safe and affordable housing for low-income families in Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Skamania and Klickitat counties. Serves senior populations, persons with disabilities on fixed incomes, low-income individuals, and Limited English Proficiency individuals.
- **The Next Door, Inc.:** Focuses on meeting needs of high-risk youth and building healthy families. Serves low income and Limited English Proficiency individuals.
- **One Community Health:** A Federally Qualified Health Center. Serves low-income, senior, disabled and Limited English Proficiency populations.
- **Opportunity Connections:** Assists people with developmental disabilities to live as independently as possible while working and enjoying activities in their own communities. Serves those with disabilities.
- **Oregon Child Development Coalition:** Works to improve the lives of children and families through the Migrant Seasonal and Early Head Start programs. Serves low income and Limited English Proficiency individuals.
- **Oregon Department of Human Services:** Promotes self-sufficiency by offering help with food benefits (SNAP), Cash for families (TANF), Childcare assistance, and Refugee services. Serves low-income and Limited English Proficiency populations.
- **Oregon Department of Human Services:** Seniors and People with Disabilities. Services are designed to protect a person's individual independence, dignity, and choice. Serves seniors, people with physical disabilities and Limited English Proficiency Individuals.
- **Oregon Department of Human Services:** Vocational Rehabilitation. Assists individuals with disabilities in obtaining and keeping a job. Serves people with disabilities.
- **PacificSource Coordinated Care Organization (Columbia River Gorge):** Assists community members in getting the healthcare they need and convening partners for health improvement efforts. Serves low-income, senior, disabled and Limited English Proficiency populations.
- **Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital:** Hospital located within the City of Hood River. Serving all low-income, senior, disabled and Limited English Proficiency populations.
- **Veterans Service Office, Hood River County:** Serves all Veterans living in Hood River County including seniors, disabled, low-income individuals.
- **Hood River County School District:** K-12 public schools within Hood River County. Student population includes students from low-income and Limited English Proficiency families.
- **Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD):** Promotes the creation of family-wage jobs, the diversification of the economic base, and the growth, development and retention of businesses and industry within Sherman, Wasco, Hood River, Klickitat, and Skamania counties.
- **The Link Public Transit:** Public transit provider for Wasco County, Oregon.
- **Skamania County Transit:** Public transit provider for Skamania County, Washington which offers Dial-Ride and Fixed-Route services. Services are operated by Skamania County Senior Services.
- **Mt. Adams Transportation Services:** Public transit provider for Klickitat County, Washington offering Dial-A-ride and Fixed-Route services. Mt. Adams will transport passengers to The Dalles and Hood River, Oregon. Services are operated by Klickitat County Senior Services.
- **Sherman County Community Transit:** Public transit provider for Sherman County offering Dial-A-Ride and Fixed-Route services. Offers regularly scheduled routes to The Dalles and Portland.

Virtual Public Meetings

In support of state and federal guidelines for social distancing to help reduce the spread of COVID-19, HRCTD held all public meetings virtually by using Zoom Conferencing technology. Public meetings were held on the following dates for the plan update:

- July 15, 2020: Hood River County Transportation District Meeting, Columbia Area Transit, Hood River (Virtual)
- September 11, 2020: STF/STIF Advisory Committee Meeting, Columbia Area Transit, Hood River (Virtual)
- September 16, 2020: Hood River County Transportation District Meeting, Columbia Area Transit, Hood River (Virtual)
- October 12, 2020: STF/STIF Advisory Committee Meeting, Columbia Area Transit, Hood River (Virtual)
- October 21, 2020: Hood River County Transportation District Meeting, Columbia Area Transit, Hood River (Virtual)
- November 18, 2020: Hood River County Transportation District Meeting, Columbia Area Transit, Hood River (Virtual)

Public Process

An important part of ascertaining the target population's input as well as garnering participation from the public into the Coordinated Transportation Plan Update involved attending community meetings, community stakeholder interviews, rider surveys, representative agency surveys, and STF/STIF Advisory Committee Meetings. It should be noted that the public process coincided with the COVID-19 global health pandemic which created challenges connecting with representative organizations, target populations, and the distribution of surveys.

Representative Organization and Public surveys were distributed and collected between July 2020 – September 2020. Surveys were available on the CAT Website, in the CAT office, on CAT buses, and were distributed to the Hood River Valley Adult Center, Mid-Columbia Center for Living, the Next Door, Mid-Columbia Housing Authority, the Dethman House, and assisted living facilities within Hood River County. Surveys were available online and in paper format, written in English and in Spanish. 50 Public surveys and 6 Representative Organization Surveys were returned. The survey tools used to inform the plan can be found in Appendix A and highlights from the surveys and interviews in Appendix B. In addition to the public participation described above staff also referred to recent data collected by local organizations regarding transportation and community needs.

DATA ANALYSIS

Planning for special transportation services is contingent upon the need for the service, thus understanding County population demographics and future population projections are important. Data from the American Community Survey estimates, as well as 2010 U.S. Census were used to provide a larger snapshot of Hood River County's special needs populations. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, The Columbia Gorge Health Council's Community Health Assessment, CAT ridership data, MCEED's Transportation Innovations Through Collective Impact project and stakeholder information offered insight into key travel destinations for these populations. The following information was compiled to give a general overview of where the target populations for this study live and primary areas or corridors of travel.

This information will be used to help identify any critical service gaps as well as key transportation challenges.

Demographic Data Overview

Hood River County, Oregon is 62 miles east of Oregon's largest City, Portland, and bordered by Wasco County to the east, Klickitat County and Skamania County to the north, Clackamas County to the south, and Multnomah County to the east.

Covering 533.301 square miles, Hood River County, Oregon is the 35th-largest county in Oregon by area. The County has a median age of 39 and a median household income of \$62,935. The table that follows provides a general comparison between the County and the rest of Oregon.

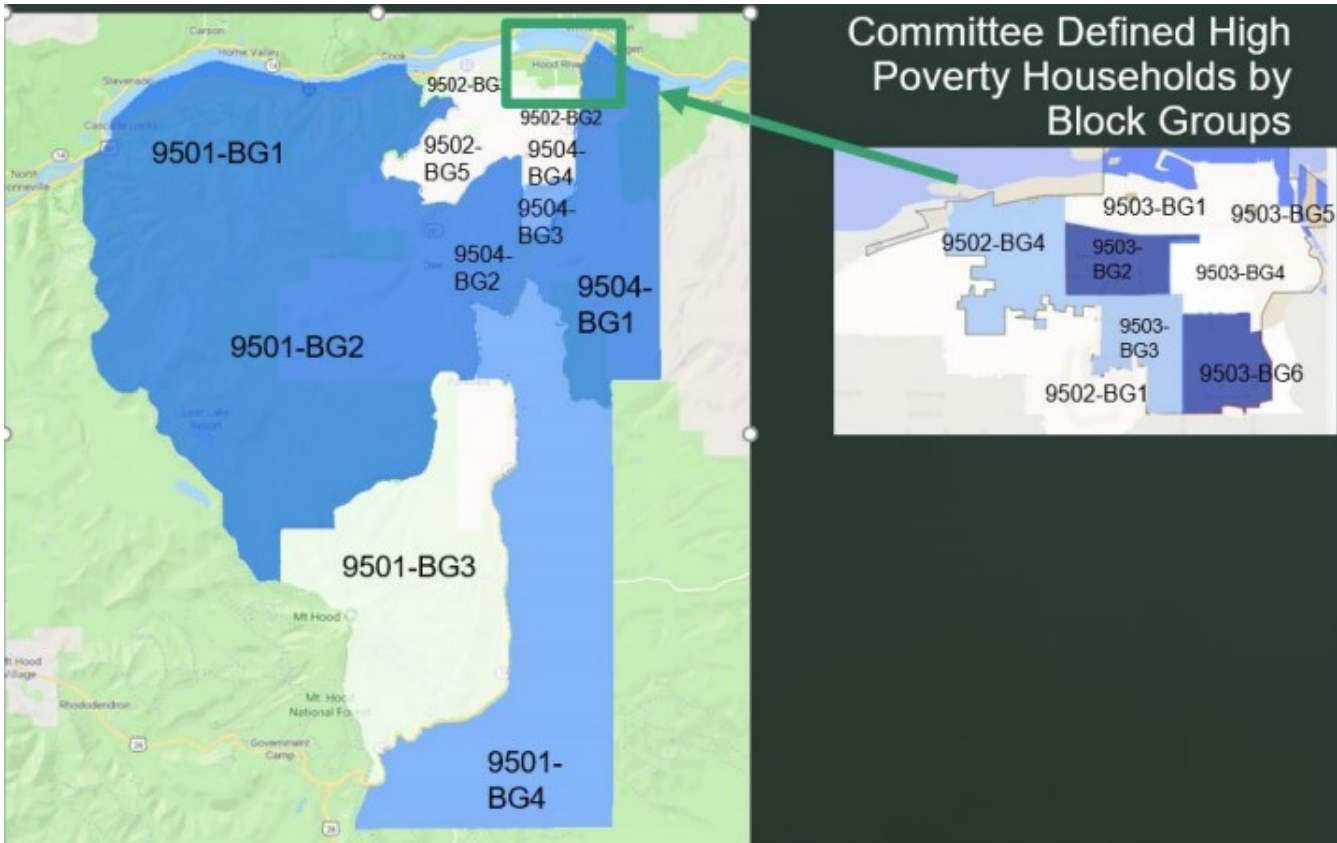
Population Estimates	Hood River County	Oregon
Total Population	23,382	4,301,089
% Growth since 2015	1%	6%
% of Seniors (individuals 65 years and Over)	15%	18%
% of Veterans	7%	8%
% Living Below Poverty	10%	13%
% of Hispanic/Latino	32%	18%
% who speak language other than English at Home	28%	16%
Median income	\$62,935	\$63,426

Since the previous Coordinated Transportation Plan Update (2016-2019), Hood River County has seen slightly slower growth than Oregon overall. While the percentage of seniors (individuals 65 years and over), veterans and those living in poverty is also slightly lower than statewide numbers a more nuanced look at census block group data, shows a broader picture of poverty levels within the county.

Poverty is defined by the Hood River County Transportation District Board of Directors in the STIF Plan as census block groups within the County that have 30% or more of households with an income level that is 200% or less of the federal poverty standards. The table that follows shows the poverty status in the past 12 months by Households. Those census block groups within the County that have 40% or more of households with an income level that is less than 200% of the federal poverty standards can be found in dark blue. Those with 30% or more households are found in light blue. A visual depiction of these block groups can be found in the below map.

POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY HOUSEHOLD

Census Tract	Numbers of Households by Level of Poverty								Total % of Households at Level of Poverty				
	Total	< .50	50% - 99%	100% - 124%	125% - 149%	1.50% - 1.85%	185% - 200%	> 200%	200%	150%	125%	100%	Median Income
Block Group 6, Census Tract 9503, Hood River County, Oregon	649	43	183	24	43	0	6	350	46%	45%	39%	35%	\$ 33,980.00
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9504, Hood River County, Oregon	507	30	2	43	102	29	21	280	45%	35%	15%	6%	\$ 59,607.00
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9503, Hood River County, Oregon	541	28	144	22	7	38	0	302	44%	37%	36%	32%	\$ 45,977.00
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9501, Hood River County, Oregon	534	32	35	25	73	53	17	262	44%	31%	17%	13%	\$ 34,375.00
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9501, Hood River County, Oregon	318	1	31	84	11	5	0	185	41%	40%	36%	10%	\$ 52,411.00
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9504, Hood River County, Oregon	615	32	42	15	71	57	9	389	37%	26%	14%	12%	\$ 57,798.00
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9504, Hood River County, Oregon	654	45	9	16	60	67	23	434	34%	20%	11%	8%	\$ 60,898.00
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9503, Hood River County, Oregon	161	0	27	0	7	11	7	108	33%	21%	17%	17%	-
Block Group 4, Census Tract 9502, Hood River County, Oregon	726	49	50	35	14	57	25	495	32%	21%	19%	14%	\$ 57,419.00
Block Group 4, Census Tract 9501, Hood River County, Oregon	275	6	0	59	0	18	0	180	30%	24%	24%	2%	\$ 88,875.00
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9503, Hood River County, Oregon	403	66	4	11	0	0	24	299	26%	20%	20%	17%	\$ 33,829.00
Block Group 2, Census Tract 9502, Hood River County, Oregon	229	12	0	0	6	32	7	171	25%	8%	5%	5%	\$ 55,815.00
Block Group 4, Census Tract 9504, Hood River County, Oregon	149	0	0	0	18	0	19	112	25%	12%	0%	0%	\$ 50,662.00
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9502, Hood River County, Oregon	525	47	0	56	0	24	0	399	24%	20%	20%	9%	\$ 71,733.00
Block Group 4, Census Tract 9503, Hood River County, Oregon	317	0	44	0	0	11	5	256	19%	14%	14%	14%	\$ 50,592.00
Block Group 1, Census Tract 9502, Hood River County, Oregon	507	0	0	14	54	8	18	413	19%	14%	3%	0%	\$ 58,125.00
Block Group 3, Census Tract 9501, Hood River County, Oregon	195	2	8	0	8	10	0	158	15%	9%	5%	5%	\$ 66,250.00
Block Group 5, Census Tract 9502, Hood River County, Oregon	616	72	0	10	0	6	0	528	14%	13%	13%	12%	\$ 81,569.00
Block Group 5, Census Tract 9503, Hood River County, Oregon	292	0	0	0	0	17	13	262	10%	0%	0%	0%	\$ 67,600.00
State of Oregon									35%	25%	21%	16%	\$ 57,532.00



Correlation between Poverty and Other Special Needs

There is a strong correlation between block groups with high percentages of Hispanic/Latinos and higher poverty rates particularly in and around Hood River, Odell, and east of Hwy 35 as identified in the State Transportation Improvement Plan. While some of these poverty concentrations are associated with low-income housing facilities in

Hood River (9503-BG6), others are associated with rural areas where farm workers, packing houses, and other agricultural jobs offer entry level employment (9504-BG1; 9504-BG3)

Populations of those individuals 65 and over are highest within the Cascade Locks area (9501-BG1), which also has one of the highest concentrations of low-income populations in the County. Over 21% of the population in the Cascade Locks community are seniors and over 46% of this community live below 200% federal poverty standards. Other pockets of older individuals are appropriately correlated with senior living facilities within the City of Hood River (9503-, BG2, BG4, BG6) where shopping, medical and other resources are close by. That these block groups are also correlated with lower-income households is reasonable, given that many seniors are reliant on retirement and other fixed-income assets.

Transit services that target access and mobility within the City of Hood River, the City of Cascade Locks and in and along Highways 35 and 281 in the Upper Valley will be critical to meeting the needs of these target populations.

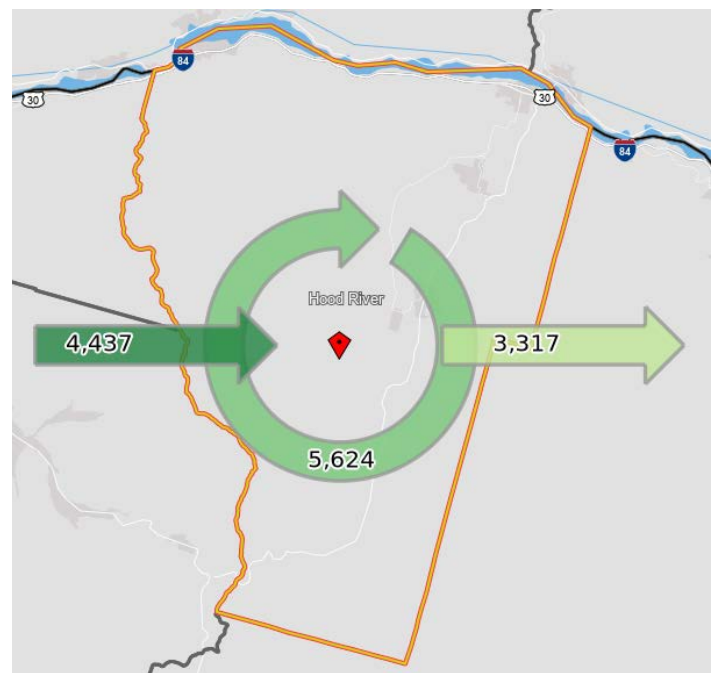
Travel Destinations

In addition to identifying where the target populations are located, it is also important to identify where these populations are travelling. Using census longitudinal employer, household, dynamic local, and regional activity centers, bus stop data and other information we have highlighted the key local or regional destinations for these target populations

Work

Approximately 23% of all jobs within Hood River County are entry level (earns \$1250 or less per month). About 30% of these jobs fall into Agriculture and are spread throughout the County with higher concentrations in Odell and Parkdale. 5% of all entry level jobs are associated with the Recreational Sector, the majority of which are found at Mount Hood Meadows Ski Resort. Another 40% of these entry level jobs fall into one of these categories: Accommodations and Food Service, Manufacturing, Retail trade and Health Care social services. Almost all of the entry level jobs in these four categories can be found within the City of Hood River.

Just over half of those who work in Hood River County also live within the county – indicating both regional and local connections are important for low-income workers in the County.



Medical

All medical services within Hood River County are in the City of Hood River. Large medical providers include:

- Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital
- Mid-Columbia Medical Centers
- One Community Health
- Mid-Columbia Center for Living

It is important to note that Hood River County residents will often need to travel to The Dalles or Portland for some of their medical needs. Residents may need to travel for specialists that are not available in Hood River and/or because their insurance requires them to receive covered medical care elsewhere.

Shopping

Grocery stores (Walmart, Safeway, Rosauers, Mercado Guadalajara) and home improvement centers (Tum-A-Lum, Ace) in Hood River County (can be found within the City of Hood River). Specialty retail can also be found in Hood River's downtown. Odell, Parkdale, and Cascade Locks all have smaller community markets that carry basic food items and a few specialty shops that are largely for tourists. Regionally, The Dalles offers the next closest access to national chains for grocery, clothing, and other shopping.

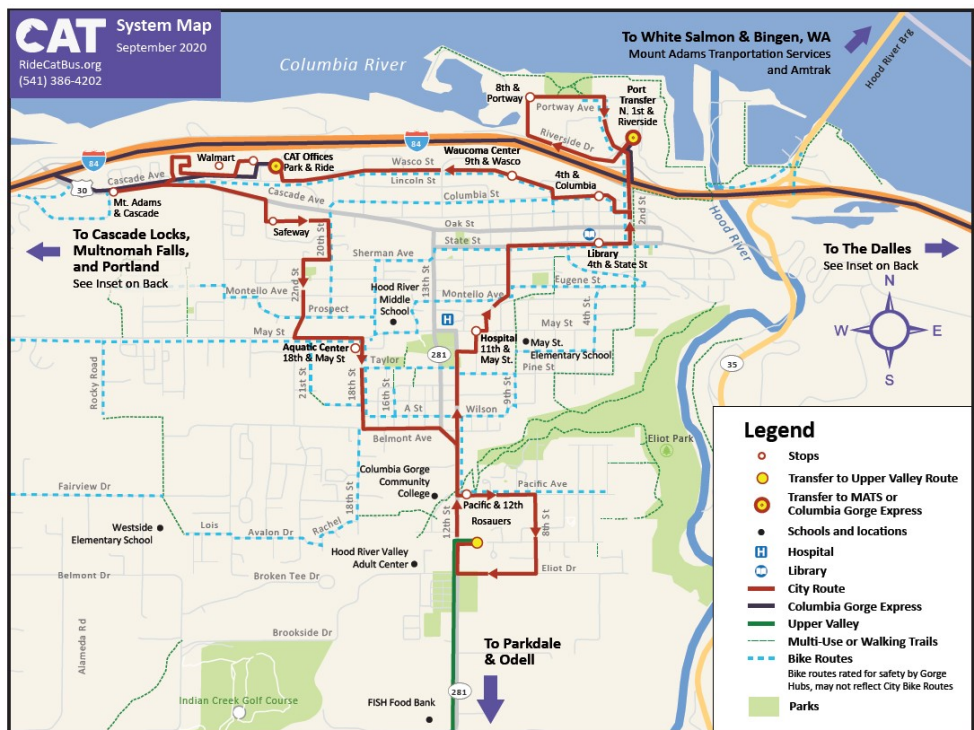
Many people also travel into the Portland Metro Area for furniture or other larger purchases. Online shopping has also become increasingly popular for a variety of purchases.

Recreational, Educational, and other Social Services

Movie theaters, performing arts, senior activities, food banks, employment assistance, higher education facilities, behavioral health, and other County services can all be found within the City of Hood River. In addition, the communities of Mt. Hood and Cascade Locks also have community centers where senior lunches, meals on wheels and the local food bank provide options.

In addition, the Portland Metro area offers a full array of recreational, educational, and social service opportunities that are not available in the Gorge.

The map below shows the general locations for key worksites, medical, shopping, and recreational activities within the City of Hood River. While not a comprehensive list, the map does offer a general overview of where popular origins and destinations are located and where they are in relation to existing transportation services.



Changing Conditions

Since the 2016 Hood River County Coordinated Transportation plan, Hood River County and the world has experienced changes that should be recognized as they have impacted transportation and will continue to do so overtime. The issues that have most impacted the transportation and planning in this three-year cycle include climate related wildfires, generational preference toward transportation alternatives, COVID-19 and associated impacts on safety and equitable access for persons of color. This plan, the priorities, and the associated strategies, have incorporated these concerns as they directly impact the target population. For more information on these topics and how they have or are impacting transportation choices, please see Appendix E.

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES

As a requirement of the Coordinated Transportation Plan, the following section describes the different transportation resources available within Hood River County.

Hood River County Public Transportation Provision

Columbia Area Transit (CAT)

Hood River County Transportation District provides public transportation services within Hood River County and along the I-84 corridor as Columbia Area Transit (CAT). Hood River County Transportation District is a Special District organized under Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 267. The major sources of funding include grants from the Federal Transit Administration, several different sources from the State of Oregon, local property tax, and user fees. The District was formed by a vote of Hood River County Residents in 1993.

CAT's mission is to provide safe, reliable, accessible public transportation services in Hood River County and between Gorge communities. To help meet the needs of our community and to assist the City of Hood River and ODOT in meeting Climate Change initiatives CAT offers a multitude of transportation options for Hood River County Residents, commuters from surrounding counties, and tourists.

Dial-A-Ride (DAR): Dial-a-ride, a demand response system, is a valuable transportation service for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those who cannot use the standard fixed route transit systems to travel to medical appointments, employment, school, buying groceries, or any other general need. Dial-A-Ride is provided on a first come, first serve/needs basis. The service provides transportation for several rural, remote, and low-income areas within the county including Cascade Locks, Odell, Parkdale, Dee, and Mt. Hood.

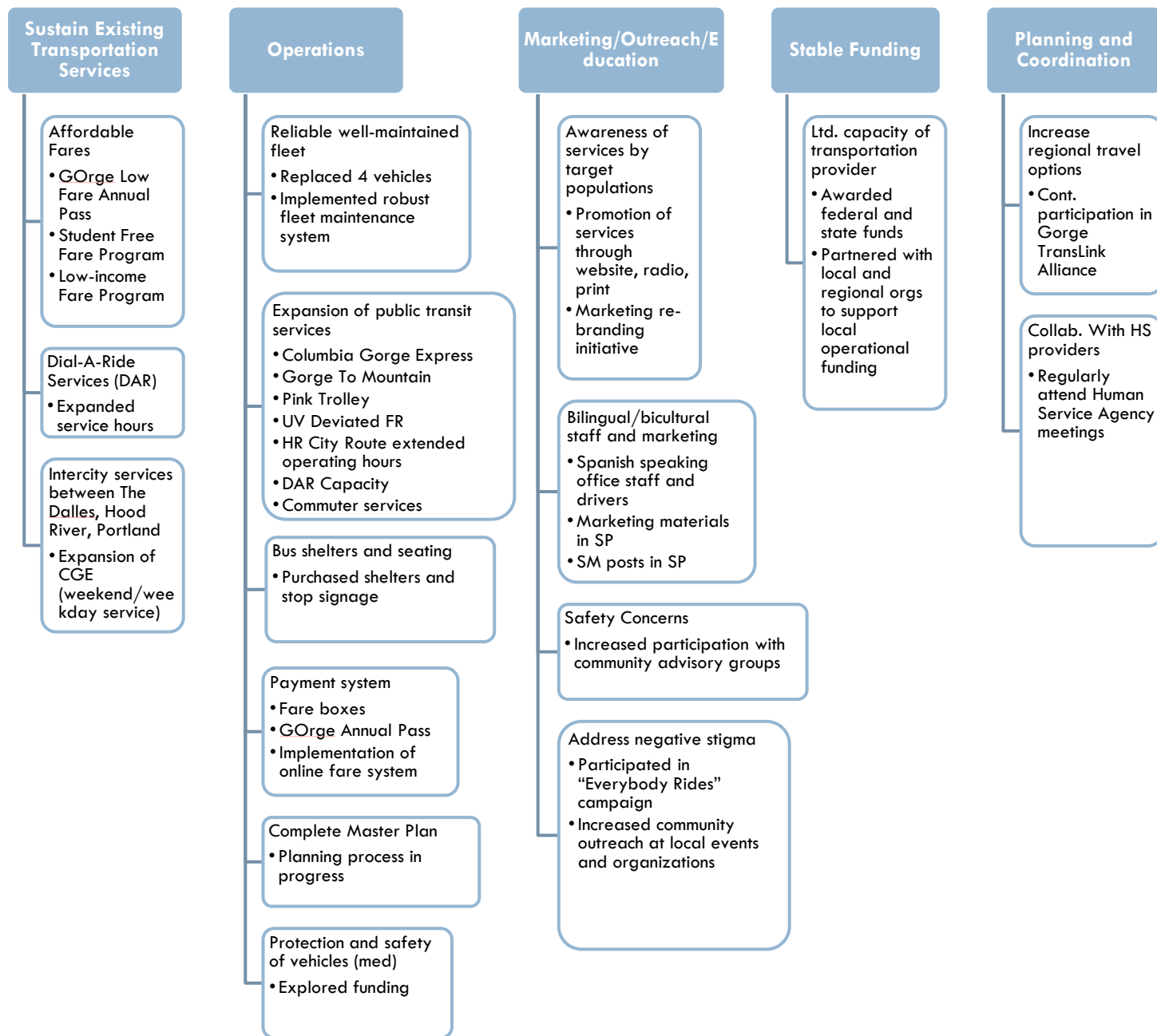
Fixed-Route: Defined as "a system of transporting individuals including the provision of designated public transportation service by public entities and the provision of transportation service by private entities, including, but not limited to, specified public transportation service, on which a vehicle is operated along a prescribed route according to a fixed schedule."

Deviated Fixed-Route: A hybrid of fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride services. With this type of service, the CAT bus stops at fixed points and keeps to a timetable but can deviate its course between two stops to go to a specific location for a pre-scheduled request.

Seasonal Service: Special seasonal service is offered to encourage car free travel and reduce traffic congestion during peak tourist seasons.

Services Offered				
Service	Type	Hours	Days	Service Area
Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	Demand Response	7:30AM – 5:30PM	Monday – Friday	Hood River County
Columbia Gorge Express	Fixed-Route	6:30AM - 6:40PM	Monday - Sunday	I-84 Corridor between The Dalles and Portland
Hood River City	Fixed-Route (flag stops are allowed)	7:00AM – 6:45PM	Monday - Friday	City of Hood River – connects the Westside, the Heights, Downtown, and the Waterfront
Upper Valley	Deviated Fixed-Route	8:20AM - 6:20PM	Monday - Friday	Connects the Upper Valley to the City of Hood River
Gorge To Mountain Express	Seasonal (Winter)	7:00AM – 10:00PM	Monday - Sunday	Hwy 35 corridor between Hood River and Mt. Hood Meadows
Pink Trolley	Seasonal (Summer)	9:00AM – 5:15PM	Friday – Sunday	City of Hood River – connects The Heights, Downtown, and the Waterfront

Since the 2016 Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan, CAT has expanded services, fleet capacity, payment programs, and community outreach efforts. The below graphic depicts the identified priorities from the 2016 Plan. The bullet points show the completed projects, which were designed to meet the identified priorities.



Transportation Agency Improvement Highlights:

Among the completed projects listed above it is important to highlight specific projects:

- Spanish speaking drivers and dispatchers were hired to reduce language barriers for Limited English Proficiency individuals.
- The GOrge Annual Transit pass was introduced on February 4, 2020 allowing for a low-cost fare option to travel within Hood River County and between Gorge communities on CAT services. Due to COVID-19 the Portland Marketing campaign was cancelled, which was expected to bring in additional revenue from the Portland market. Even with the pandemic and the reduced sales because of it, GOrge pass sales met expectations for the first year of the program.
- In 2019, Oregon Legislature enacted the Keep Oregon Moving Act (House Bill 2017 (HB 2017)). The bill included a small employee payroll tax dedicated to funding the expansion of public transportation services. One of the areas specifically identified by the legislature is transportation services for youth statewide. One percent of all funds allocated to transit agencies is to be spent on addressing the needs of young people. In January 2020, Columbia Area Transit partnered with the Hood River County School District to use these funds to start the Student Free GOrge pass program. This program allows for all Hood River County School District Middle and High School students to receive a free Student GOrge pass with a signed parent waiver and two new bus stops designed for student use.
- In conjunction with the GOrge pass program introduction, CAT created the Low-Income Pass program. The public and organizations have the opportunity to donate GOrge annual transit passes to low-income individuals. CAT then works with local partners to distribute the passes to Hood River low-income community members.
- Implementation of online fare payment system allows for riders to download the Token Transit application to their mobile devices and buy one-way fares or the GOrge Annual Pass. Riders must activate their digital ticket and show to the drivers each time they board the bus. No paper tickets or cash is needed.
- CAT went through an extensive rebranding and marketing outreach process. This included re-doing the logo, website, marketing materials, and increasing community outreach through social media, local advertising, and community events. All printed materials, website, and social media posts are also available in Spanish.
- CAT took over operations of the Columbia Gorge Express intercity service from ODOT on November 4, 2019. The service was expanded to 8 trips per day on weekdays and 6 trips per day on weekends. Stops include The Dalles, Mosier (by request), Hood River, Cascade Locks, Multnomah Falls, Troutdale (by request), and the Gateway Transit Center in Portland. The service connects locals and visitors to travel between the Gorge communities and Portland car free.

Dial-A-Ride (DAR): CAT DAR provides access to medical appointments, employment, school, buying groceries, or any other general need, however, the highest percentage of trips are going to or from medical or health related appointments. Below is a graph depicting specific locations traveled to or from in 2018-2019. Trips in 2020 were not included due to disruption of services caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Destination	Type of Service	% of Total Trips in 2018-2019
Hood River Care Center	Nursing and rehabilitation center	15
Mid-Columbia Center for Living	Mental Health	14
Roseauer's	Grocery	4
Safeway	Grocery	4
Opportunity Connections	Resource center	2
Providence Family Medicine Clinic	Medical	2
Mid-Columbia Adventist School	School	2
Ashley Manor	Nursing and rehabilitation center	2
Arrends Place	Affordable housing	2
Providence Memorial Hospital	Medical	2

Ridership: Ridership on CAT fixed-route services have been steadily rising the past several years due to an increase in service and demand. The graph shows the ridership for 2019 as that was when CAT services saw the largest expansion. 2020 was not included due to the disruption of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Route	2019
City Route	8,172
Upper Valley	5,089
Columbia Gorge Express	15,339
Dial-A-Ride (DAR)	9,222
Seasonal Service	9,225
Total	47,047

Columbia Area Transit and Public Transportation Funding:

Columbia Area Transit receives funding through Federal, State, and Local sources, and fare revenue. These funds are required to be used for different services as depicted in the graph below. By far the largest new influx of dollars came from the passage of HR 2017 in the 2017 Legislative session. HR 2017 or the State Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) provide a new dedicated source of funding to expand public transportation to access jobs, improve mobility, relieve congestion, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions around Oregon. A focus of the funding was to increase mobility and access for low-income population across the State.

Hood River County is expected to receive over \$400,00 dollars each year for the next two years to enhance transit services, purchase capital or implement programs that will enhance transit for the residents of Hood River County community.

This plan, as well as the 2017 Transit Master Plan will help identify top priorities and fund critical strategies over the STIF FY 21-23 Planning period.

Type of Funding	Funding Source	Purpose	FY18-19 Revenue	FY 19-20 Revenue
Federal	FLAP Funds	All transit purposes for services that access federal lands	\$0	\$165,834
	5310	PM, Capital, Mobility Management for Services that target Seniors and Persons with Disabilities	\$136,093	\$62,395
	5311	Rural populations (deviated fixed route, DAR)	\$160,282	\$426,610
	Mass Transit PYRL	Public Transit Services	\$18,533	\$23,676
State	STF Formula	Seniors, Individuals with disabilities	\$0	\$84,625
	STIF Project Formula	Enhance public transportation services	\$23,9175	\$454,892
	STIF Discretionary	Intercity Service	\$0	\$765,018
Local	Property Tax	Public Transit Services in Hood River County	\$170,074	\$187,891
Other	Contract	Medicaid, Seasonal services	\$136,065	\$95,272
	Fare	Fare from riders, Employer pass program	\$259,467	\$147,633
	Interest/other		\$19,480	\$12,894
Total			\$1,350,341	\$2,426,740

Public Transportation Providers in Surrounding Counties

Several small public transportation providers operate in neighboring counties. TRIMET, which operates in the Portland Metro area is the largest provider. Columbia Area Transit shares several stops with TRIMET for the Columbia Gorge Express service. The Link, Mt. Adams, and Skamania County Transit all have routes that stop at designated Columbia Area Transit transfer stops. Clackamas County operates the Mt. Hood Express, which travels to Mt. Hood and stops at Timberline and Government Camp. While no direct connection is currently made with the Mount Hood Express, CAT & Clackamas County are currently working this ODOT to identify coordination opportunities on the Mountain.

Transportation Provider	Service Type	Hours	Days	Service Area
The Link Public Transportation, Wasco County	Dial-a-Ride, Deviated Fixed-Route, Shopping bus, NEMT	6am-6pm 9am-4pm (Sat)	Monday – Friday, Saturdays	City of the Dalles, and select areas in Wasco County
Mt. Adams Transportation District, Klickitat County	Fixed-Route, Dial-A-Ride	8am-5pm	Monday-Friday	White Salmon area and Goldendale area *fixed-route has been suspended due to COVID-19
Skamania County Transit, Skamania County	Fixed-Route, Dial-A-Ride	8am-4:30pm	Monday-Friday	Skamania County and select surrounding areas
TRIMET	Fixed-Route, LIFT Paratransit, Portland Streetcar, Light Rail, Commuter Rail	24-hour	Monday-Sunday	Portland Metropolitan Region
Sandy Transit	Fixed-Route, Deviated Fixed-Route, Shopping bus, Dial-A-Ride	5:30am-9:55pm 5:30am-10:25pm (Saturday) 7am-10pm (Sunday)	Monday-Sunday	City of Sandy and select surrounding areas (including Government Camp and Timberline)

Human Services Transportation Providers

Transportation is an important component for Columbia Gorge Region community-based organizations and their clients. For the Bridges to Health program, transportation related expenses are the biggest expense items they incur to serve their clients. Opportunity Connections and Mid-Columbia Center for Living have fleet vehicles that they use to provide transportation to clients, but also encourage clients to use CAT services when appropriate. It is important to note that before the COVID-19 pandemic most organizations were removing themselves from providing transportation for clients and encouraging clients to use public transportation options instead. A table which outlines the extensive number of human service providers in the Hood River Area is available in Appendix F.

Other Transportation Providers

There are several other transportation providers who operate within Hood River County. These providers offer a wide range of types of services, everything from taxis to retirement home shuttles to carpool/vanpool options for work trips. The full list can be found in Appendix G.

Transit Access Amenities, Walking, and Biking

Roughly one-third of the U.S. population cannot drive or does not have access to a private vehicle. This includes youth, seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, and those who choose not to have access to a car. Transportation access can become difficult for these demographics when community infrastructure does not promote walking, biking, public transit, or wheelchair rolling.

Within Hood River County there is a wide variety of walkability and bike infrastructure. In the more affluent neighborhoods, the walkability tends to be higher because of development and in the less affluent neighborhoods they are lower.

Area within Hood River County	Walk Score	Bike Score
City of Hood River, Downtown	67 (Somewhat walkable – some errands can be accomplished by walking)	46 (Somewhat bikeable – minimal bike infrastructure)
City of Hood River, The Heights	86 (Very Walkable – most errands can be accomplished by walking)	55 (Bikeable – some bike infrastructure)
City of Hood River, Westside	17 (Car dependent – difficult to access essential needs by walking)	37 (Somewhat bikeable – minimal bike infrastructure)
Odell	33 (Car dependent – difficult to access essential needs by walking)	34 (Somewhat bikeable – minimal bike infrastructure)
Parkdale	33 (Car dependent – difficult to access essential needs by walking)	40 (Somewhat bikeable – minimal bike infrastructure)
Cascade Locks	42 (Car dependent – difficult to access essential needs by walking)	34 (Somewhat bikeable – minimal bike infrastructure)

(Walk Score, 2020)

A reoccurring theme during completed surveys, discussions with riders, human service agency meetings attended by staff, and stakeholder interviews was that it can be difficult or unsafe to walk or roll to bus stops due to lack of sidewalk infrastructure within Hood River County.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES COORDINATION

Within the past three to five years there has been a large amount of strategic work done to improve regional multi-modal transportation access. Several organizations within the Columbia Gorge Region have identified the need of Multi-Modal transportation options and car-free options to travel between and within the Gorge communities. The various projects, plans and programs that are working toward enhanced coordination are outlined in Appendix H.

While CAT has tried to have an active voice in regional coordination, staff has been most actively involved with the Gorge Translink Alliance and the Gorge Regional Transit Strategy believing an integrated gorge wide transit approach has the most opportunity to advance the needs of the transit dependent population in the Gorge.

IDENTIFIED TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES AND SERVICE GAPS

A variety of agencies, community stakeholders and community members offer individual and unique perspectives on transit, challenges, and service gaps. Across all target populations it was clear that having no permanent shelter or place to sit at bus stops is the biggest challenge. Additionally, more information is needed about existing public transportation services in English and Spanish at key sites throughout Hood River County. Through surveys (Public and Representative Organization Agency), one on one interviews, STF/STIF Advisory Committee meetings, Human Services Agency meetings (including, regular CGHC Community Advisory Committee and Gorge Native American Community Partner Collaboration meetings), and previous projects completed the below transportation challenges and service gaps were identified. To see the detailed survey responses and all data collected, please refer to Appendix B and C.

Information	Improve transportation service information including the location of bus stops, schedule, and route. Additional efforts are needed to get printed materials in English and Spanish distributed at key sites throughout the County which target Limited-English Proficiency individuals, seniors, Native Americans, students, and veterans.
	Increase awareness and ridership of the Student Free Fare and Low-Income Fare Programs.
	Increase multicultural awareness and bi-lingual staff.
	Riders need to feel safe and secure at bus stops and while riding the bus due to COVID-19, racism, etc.
	Increase comfortability of riders making transfers and in general riding the bus through Travel Training.
	Improve coordinated outreach and needs assessment within different communities to ensure CAT is meeting the needs of target populations.
Services	Extension of operating hours (evenings and weekends) on DAR, City Route, and Upper Valley services.
	On-going funding for Hwy 35 Services to allow for increased frequency.
	Deviated fixed-route service to improve access for seniors to essential needs and the Hood River Valley Adult Center in the City of Hood River.
	Community shuttle within the City of Cascade Locks to improve access for residents.
	Access to medical services in The Dalles and in Portland at OHSU.

	Cascade Locks students and students in Odell or Parkdale have difficulty participating in internships within the community and attending school dance or games because they do not have transportation.
	Add CAT stops in The Dalles, which are closer to downtown.
	Other transportation services for vulnerable populations including door through door service.
Capital	Permanent shelters, sign, and seating needed at each bus stop. Increased bus stops along the Hood River City Route to make it easier to use for those with limited mobility and cannot walk long distances.
	Improve dispatching technology designed for fixed-route and DAR services with mobile booking capabilities.
	Increase stop accessibility for those walking or using a wheelchair (multi-modal system). Difficult to walk or roll a wheelchair within Hood River County due to lack of sidewalk infrastructure and ADA compliant curb cuts.
	Improve fleet sustainability by increasing number of electric vehicles.
	Expand CAT facility by coordinating with low-income, senior, and disabled housing facilities.
Coordination	Continued participation in various Transportation Alliances (Gorge TransLink Alliance, Mt.Hood Transportation Alliance, NEMT)
	Improve NEMT Coordination with OHA, Pacific Source, and the Columbia Gorge CCO.
	Encourage additional Multi-Modal Transportation options within Hood River County.
	Work with employers, tourism organizations, and businesses to encourage car free travel.
	Coordinate local and regional planning processes, including the Transit Master Plan and transportation outreach surveys and questionnaires.

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IDENTIFIED TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES AND SERVICE GAPS

After the transportation challenges and service gaps were identified based on survey responses, community meetings attended, discussions with riders, stakeholder interviews and recently completed community-based organization projects were gathered the STF/STIF Advisory Committee met twice. Once to establish the top priorities for the next 3 years and then to define the specific objectives, strategies, and performance measure for each of these priorities. The outcome of these two meetings is the following tables:

PRIORITY: INFORMATION - IMPROVED AWARENESS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Objectives	Strategies	Resource Capacity	Performance Measure
Provide ongoing information regarding service, schedules, and routing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute updated service collateral and print media locally and regionally at key sites. Collaborate with partners on digital platform media. Maintain and expand presence through different platforms (i.e. social media, digital, radio, etc). Display easy to read, multilingual information regarding service, schedules, and routing at key sites. Improved CAT staff presence at multi-cultural and bilingual community group gatherings. Explore effective opportunities to better promote services offered. 	<p>Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track increase in ridership Measure use of services by target populations and the effectiveness of the transportation program changes. Number of connection points and partners established.
Ensure riders feel welcome and safe using public transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address health, safety and security concerns voiced by vulnerable populations. Effectively communicate safety mitigation measures taken to keep the public safe from COVID-19, racism, violence, etc. Address stigma and negative perceptions of the transportation system through additional outreach and education, continuing "Everybody Rides" campaign. Provide sensitivity training for staff. Develop programs to teach individuals from targeted populations how to use public transit by using leadership and community members to lead the training (travel training and travel ambassadors). Develop volunteer champion programs. 	<p>Apply for grants that will fund operations. Work with community partners who can lead the program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracks sensitivity trainings attended by staff. Measure use of services by target populations and the effectiveness of the transportation program. Communication provided to riders about safety measures taken.
Pursue outreach and partnerships with vulnerable populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage community-based organizations to conduct in-depth needs assessment to better connect underserved communities to essential needs and resources. Increase awareness of Student and Low-Income fare programs within Hood River County. Address existing language and cultural barriers by working with community-based partners on marketing of services and outreach. Increase connections to Community Health Workers (CHW) and other frontline staff who work directly with clients. Provide marketing materials and information; provide education at training events. 	<p>Apply for grants that will fund operations. Work with community partners who can lead the program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track amount of student and low-income passes distributed. Assess community outreach events effectiveness. Track ridership increase of target populations.

PRIORITY: SERVICES – MAINTAIN AND EXPAND SERVICES TO ENSURE EQUITY AND MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Objectives	Strategies	Resource Capacity	Performance Measure
Sustain existing transportation services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Dial-A-Ride transportation options. Maintain Columbia Gorge Express intercity service. Maintain the Upper Valley Deviated Fixed-Route Service. Maintain the City Route Fixed-Route service. Maintain Seasonal services Gorge to Mountain Express and The Pink Trolley. Conduct regularly scheduled reviews of service to ensure needs of target populations are being met. Maintain Student and Low-income fare programs. Maintain affordable fares and pass option. Continue offering mobile payment options. 	<p>Administration Capacity exists. Financial resources likely available to fund operations. Apply for grants to continue funding the CGE, G2M, and Pink Trolley.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track ridership for dial-a-ride services. Track ridership of local and regional fixed-route services. Track passes donated to students and low-income individuals. Track Gorge pass sales.
Expand operating hours on evenings and weekends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restore and Expand local routes during evenings and weekends. 	<p>Apply for grants to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess operational ability to operate during evenings and on weekends. Track ridership of services which operate on weekends.
Expand transit to meet the needs of seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore additional services to meet senior needs. Explore adding fixed-route bus stops near long term care facilities. 	<p>Administration Capacity exists. Financial resources likely available to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track riders using DAB services to get to the senior center or other essential services.
Increase access to HWY 35 communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore options to enhance fixed-route and deviated fixed-route to meet community needs. Seek state, federal, and local funding that would allow for year-round funding of the Gorge to Mountain Express. 	<p>Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track ridership and demand for Upper Valley service. Assess funding opportunities available. Measure feasible options ability to meet needs of locals and tourists.
Increase access to medical services outside of Hood River County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide access to medical services in Portland for targeted populations. Improve ease of access to medical services in The Dalles for targeted populations. 	<p>Apply for grants to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New services established
Increase access to transportation services within Cascade Locks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore expansion of services to address need for a Community Shuttle within Cascade Locks. 	<p>Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New services established
Improve access to Downtown The Dalles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional stops on or improve connections to the Columbia Gorge Express in Downtown The Dalles. 	<p>Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New stops established.
Diverse CAT operations staff to better reflect the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with schools and organizations to create training and/or internship programs. Post job opportunities within target communities. 	<p>Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New training programs established. Hiring of employees from target population communities.

PRIORITY: CAPITAL – MAINTAIN AND EXPAND CAPITAL ASSETS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND ENHANCE RIDER EXPERIENCE

Objectives	Strategies	Resource Capacity	Performance Measure
Ensure vehicle fleet safety and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide for replacement of vehicles that have exceeded their useful life. Provide funding for ongoing and timely preventative vehicle maintenance to ensure the safety and reliability of the transportation services. Seek funding for additional vehicles required for any service expansion. 	<p>Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available through federal and state sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track vehicle mileage and vehicle replacement. Track vehicle maintenance.

Permanent shelters, seats, and signs at each bus stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the different governing bodies to install permanent shelters, seats, and/ or signs at each bus stop. 	<p>Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track bus stops with permanent structures. Track amount of complaints and incidents at bus stops.
Increase stop accessibility for individuals with different levels of mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for accessible sidewalks and bike paths to allow for a multi-modal transportation system. Recognizing that the city, state, and/or county are responsible for the development of sidewalks, CAT will be an active partner and provide resources where appropriate to meet joint goals of improved accessibility. 	<p>Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with city staff for more accessible sidewalks.

Improve dispatching technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt improved dispatching and real time bus tracking technologies that improve rider experience and operations. 	<p>Apply for grant to fund operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess increased efficiency of operations. Assess ease of use for riders and reduction of rider frustration as to when buses will arrive.
Improve the sustainability of the CAT fleet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace aging vehicles with fuel efficient vehicles. Explore the use of electric and other alternative fuel vehicles. Install electric charging station at facility. 	<p>Administration capacity exists. Apply for grants to expand electric vehicles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electric charging stations installed. Track vehicle mileage and replacement.

Expand facility capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address need for additional administrative and operational space with a particular focus on secure vehicle storage. Look for ways to partner with other community partners. 	<p>Administration capacity exists. Apply for grants for operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New facility. Ease of use for target populations to access transportation.
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PRIORITY: COORDINATION – PARTNER WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO CREATE CONNECTIONS AND DEVELOP A TRANSPORTATION NETWORK WITHIN THE GORGE AND BEYOND

Objectives	Strategies	Resource Capacity	Performance Measure
Continue fostering and developing transportation partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue being a part of the Gorge Translink partnership to create a more streamlined, efficient, and coordinated regional public transit system. Participate in the Mt. Hood Transportation Alliance. Develop a system of communication and accountability between transportation agencies and health agencies. Create universal fare system for all transportation providers. 	Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend at least 4 of the 6 bimonthly Gorge Translink Alliance meetings annually. Attend human service agency meetings regularly.
Partner with employers, tourism organizations, and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand employer pass program locally and regionally. Partner with tourism organizations and businesses to encourage car free travel and support the public transportation system. 	Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track number of employers enrolled in the employer Gorge pass program. Track ridership on the Columbia Gorge Express.
Access to other transportation services for vulnerable populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate discussion on door through door with community members regarding providers funding and specific need. Attend regular public Human Service organization meetings to maintain strong relationships and ability to respond to emerging needs or changing conditions. 	Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend human service agency meetings regularly. Action plan created for door through door.
Improved multi-modal options within Hood River County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for multi-modal transportation options within Hood River County. Collaborate with the City, County (for Parkdale and Odell), and development community to provide more multi-modal transportation options. 	Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More transportation mode options within Hood River County.
Coordination of local and regional planning processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the 2017 Transit Master Plan. Coordinate with local and regional partners for transportation outreach, surveys, and questionnaires. 	Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Transit Master Plan. Creation of outreach events, surveys, and questionnaires.

PLAN REVIEW AND ADOPTION

A review of the Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plans history and adoptions can be found in Appendix I.

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APPENDICES

Representative Organization Survey

Hood River County Transportation District who does business as Columbia Area Transit (CAT), is updating their Coordinated Transportation Plan, which is focused on the transportation needs of seniors, low-income individuals, individuals with disabilities and Limited English Proficiency individuals and Hood River County residents in general. Your responses will help us learn what is important to meet transportation needs of the community.

1. What organization do you work for?
2. Is your organization located in Hood River County?
 - a. Yes
 - b. Other: _____
3. Where do most of the individuals you serve live in Hood River County?
 - a. City of Hood River (Downtown)
 - b. City of Hood River (The Heights)
 - c. City of Hood River (Other)
 - d. Odell
 - e. Parkdale
 - f. Dee
 - g. Mt. Hood
 - h. Cascade Locks
 - i. Other: _____
4. Are the individuals you serve aware of public transportation services available within Hood River County and do they use them?
 - a. Yes, they are aware and use public transit services
 - b. Yes, they are aware, but they do not or rarely use them
 - c. No, my clients are not aware of public transportation services available
5. What services do the individuals you serve usually use public transportation to get to?
 - a. Medical Care
 - b. Social Services
 - c. Shopping
 - d. School
 - e. Recreation
 - f. Work
 - g. Social Activity
 - h. Other: _____
6. In which city or cities are these services typically located?
 - a. The Dalles
 - b. Hood River
 - c. White Salmon/ Bingen
 - d. Cascade Locks
 - e. Portland
 - f. Other: _____
7. Are there any services that individuals you serve would like to get to using public transportation, but cannot? If so, please let us know where they are located.
8. Does your organization provide or pay for transportation costs for individuals that you serve?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I do not know
9. What are barriers for using public transportation that the individuals you serve face?
 - a. The bus does not go where they want to go.
 - b. Inadequate information about existing public transportation services.
 - c. Bus driver or dispatcher does not speak their language.
 - d. Bus transfers are required to get to popular destinations.
 - e. Bus does not go to places where they want to go.
 - f. It is difficult to get to a bus stop for accessibility reasons.
 - g. Individuals do not know where the bus stops are.
 - h. There is no shelter or place to sit at the bus stop.
 - i. Other
10. Of the individuals you serve, are they generally satisfied or dissatisfied with public transportation?
 - a. Satisfied
 - b. Dissatisfied
 - c. I do not know
11. Is there anything else that you would like us to know? (Optional)
12. Would you like a follow up call to discuss transportation issues within Hood River County? If so, please enter your contact information.

CAT Public Survey

Columbia Area Transit (CAT), is updating the Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan, which is focused on the transportation needs of seniors, low income individuals, individuals with disabilities and Limited English Proficiency individuals and Hood River County residents in general. Your responses will help us learn what is important to meet transportation needs of the community. Please circle all answers that apply.

13. Where do you live in Hood River County?

- a. City of Hood River (Downtown)
- b. City of Hood River (The Heights)
- c. City of Hood River (Other)
- d. Odell
- e. Parkdale
- f. Dee
- g. Mt. Hood
- h. Cascade Locks
- i. Other: _____

14. Are you over 60 years old?

- a. Yes
- b. No

15. Are you eligible for any low-income assistance programs?

- a. Yes
- b. No

16. Do you have a disability that might make it difficult for you to use the bus?

- a. Yes
- b. No

17. Do you have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English?

- a. Yes
- b. No

18. Are you aware of public transportation services available within Hood River County?

- a. Yes
- b. No

19. How frequently do you use public transportation services within Hood River County?

- a. Daily
- b. Weekly
- c. Monthly
- d. Yearly
- e. Never

20. What services do you usually use public transportation to get to?

- a. Medical Care
- b. Social Services
- c. Shopping
- d. School
- e. Recreation
- f. Work
- g. Social Activity
- h. Other: _____

21. In which city or cities are these services typically located?

- a. The Dalles
- b. Hood River
- c. White Salmon/ Bingen
- d. Cascade Locks
- e. Portland
- f. Other: _____

22. Are there any services that you would like to get to using public transportation, but cannot? If so, please let us know what they are and where they are located.

23. What barriers for using public transportation do you face?

- a. The bus does not go where I want to go.
- b. I need more information about existing public transportation services.
- c. Bus driver or dispatcher does not speak my language.
- d. I must make bus transfers to get where I want to go.
- e. Bus does not operate when I want to go.
- f. It is difficult to get to a bus stop.
- g. I do not know where the bus stops are.
- h. There is no shelter or place to sit at the bus stop.
- i. Other: _____

24. Have you noticed a difference in your ability to access public transportation in Hood River County in the past 3 years?

- a. Yes
- b. No

25. Is there anything else that you would like us to know? (Optional)

Please return to the CAT office at 224 Wasco Loop or Driver.

CAT Encuesta Pública

El Distrito de Transporte del Condado de Hood River, que hace negocios como Columbia Area Transit (CAT), está actualizando su Plan de Transporte Coordinado, que se enfoca en las necesidades de transporte de personas mayores, personas de bajos ingresos, personas con discapacidades y personas con dominio limitado del inglés y residentes del condado de Hood River en general. Sus respuestas nos ayudarán a aprender qué es importante para satisfacer las necesidades de transporte de la comunidad. Porfavor circule todas las respuestas que apliquen.

1. **¿Dónde vives en el condado de Hood River?**
 - a. Ciudad de Hood River (Centro)
 - b. Ciudad de Hood River (The Heights)
 - c. Ciudad de Hood River (Otro)
 - d. Odell
 - e. Parkdale
 - f. Dee
 - g. Mt. Hood
 - h. Cascade Locks
 - i. Otro: _____
2. **¿Tienes más de 60 años?**
 - a. Si
 - b. No
3. **¿Es usted elegible para algún programa de asistencia de bajos ingresos?**
 - a. Si
 - b. No
4. **¿Tiene una discapacidad que podría dificultarle usar el autobús?**
 - a. Si
 - b. No
5. **¿Tiene una capacidad limitada para leer, hablar, escribir o comprender inglés?**
 - a. Si
 - b. No
6. **¿Conoce los servicios de transporte público disponibles en el condado de Hood River?**
 - a. Si
 - b. No
7. **¿Con qué frecuencia utiliza los servicios de transporte público dentro del condado de Hood River?**
 - a. Diario
 - b. Semanal
 - c. Mensual
 - d. Annual
 - e. Nunca
8. **¿A qué servicios utiliza habitualmente el transporte público?**
 - a. Atención médica
 - b. Servicios sociales
 - c. Compras
 - d. Escuela
 - e. Recreación
 - f. Trabajo
 - g. Actividad social
 - h. Otro: _____
9. **¿En qué ciudad o ciudades se encuentran estos servicios típicamente?**
 - a. The Dalles
 - b. Hood River
 - c. White Salmon/Bingen
 - d. Cascade Locks
 - e. Portland
 - f. Otro: _____
10. **¿Hay algún servicio al que le gustaría llegar usando el transporte público, pero no puede? Si es así, háganos saber dónde se encuentran.**
11. **¿Qué barreras para usar el transporte público enfrenta?**
 - a. El autobus no va a donde quiero ir.
 - b. Necesito más información sobre los servicios de transporte público existentes.
 - c. El conductor del autobús o el despachador no habla mi idioma.
 - d. Debo hacer traslados en autobús para llegar a donde quiero ir.
 - e. El autobús no funciona cuando quiero ir.
 - f. Es difícil llegar a una parada de autobús.
 - g. No sé dónde están las paradas de autobús.
 - h. No hay refugio ni lugar para sentarse en la parada del autobús.
 - i. Otro: _____
12. **¿Ha notado una diferencia en su capacidad de acceder al transporte público en el condado de Hood River en los últimos 3 años?**
 - a. Si
 - b. No

¿Cualquier otro cosa que podamos mejorar

APPENDIX B – HIGHLIGHTS FROM STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS AND SURVEYS

Stakeholder	Discussion highlights
Eric Akin (Hood River County Veterans Service Office)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAV Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has a non-accessible vehicle ○ Very little driver availability • There are no great options to get to veteran's medical services in Portland or Vancouver <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any new service would take about a year to gain ridership and trust ○ 2 to 3 times a week/ 3 times a day (early morning, afternoon, and evening) service needed • Many veterans also access medical care in The Dalles but it is very difficult to get there using public transit • Transfers are difficult for veterans and they have issues with having to call two different providers to book a trip <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Would be helpful to have one number to call for both providers • Most veterans are over 65 and a large percentage live at Hawk's Ridge • Different communication channel which reach veterans include: VSO, Mid-Columbia Community Action Council, Radio, Elks, The Next Door, Hood River Valley Adult Center, Newspaper, Grocery stores (Roseauer's, Safeway, McIsacs, Mercado Guadalajara), Gorge Resource Book • Demographic typically hates leaving voicemails as they feel like they do not get answered and do not like being put on hold • Veterans enjoy when advertisements are directed specifically at them • No DAR service on weekends is a barrier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If offered on the weekends during the day this would free up ambulances from doing NEMT services • Would be great if a partnership could be created between CAT and NORCOR where recently released inmates could get access to the Columbia Gorge Express
Amy Mallet (Hood River Valley Adult Center)	<p>Senior challenges to using public transportation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferring to different routes or providers • Feel unsafe when at the Port or The Link transfer stops • Information regarding services available and where the routes go • Lack of seating at bus stops • Not sure how to use the service <p>Senior needs in short-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAR Services • Access to daily hot lunches at the adult center • Drop off weekly meals at door to rural seniors who are at high risk for contracting COVID-19

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will need help during the winter specifically to get food to seniors in Parkdale & Odell <p>Senior needs long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel training • Coordinated bus outings • Ensure schedules are posted at grocery stores, the newspaper, newsletters, etc. • Distribute service maps and guide which explains how to use CAT services
Wendy Herman, Kate Wurster (Hood River School District)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High School Students who live in Cascade locks often cannot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attend dance, games, or other school functions due to a lack of transportation to or from home ○ Partake in internships in Cascade Locks due to lack of transportation • Needs access to transportation services for after school activities • Potential internship opportunities at CAT for High School Students
Marla Harvey (MCEDD/Energy Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency management – How would critical facilities operate without access to gas? • Electric vehicle benefits -reduction of sound, cost, and toxic air emissions • Think about how alternative fuels in general could be used • transportation can solve social vulnerabilities

Public Transportation Provider

In August 2020, the Hood River County Transportation District Board of Directors held a retreat to review goals for the agency. With those goals in mind, Columbia Area Transit staff assessed current operations and worked with the Gorge Translink providers to identify the below transportation challenges and service needs.

- On-going funding for Hwy 35 Services to allow workers to commute to jobs in Odell and Parkdale.
- More extensive outreach and marketing to strengthen partnerships with Hispanic/Latino, Native American, and veteran communities.
- Service enhancements, stops, pedestrian access and amenities at key destinations.
- Deviated fixed-route service to improve access for seniors to essential needs and the Hood River Valley Adult Center in the City of Hood River.
- Community shuttle within the City of Cascade Locks to improve access for residents.
- Service to OHSU in Portland for medical services during the week.
- Increase awareness and ridership of the Student Free Fare and Low-Income Fare Programs.
- Improved NEMT Coordination with OHA, Pacific Source, and the Columbia Gorge CCO.
- Improved dispatching technology designed for fixed-route and DAR services and would include mobile bookings.
- Improve ease of booking CAT and The Link services for one trip between Hood River and Wasco Counties.
- Encourage and improve access to active transportation within Hood River County.

- Increase number of diverse Multi-Modal transportation options within Hood River County.

Target Populations

Through the public surveys that were distributed in English and Spanish and community meetings that were attended by CAT staff, insight was gained as to what the biggest challenges to using Public Transportation were.

The below graph shows the identified transportation challenges by each target population showing that different populations have varying needs.

Identified Transportation challenge	Seniors	Low-Income	Disabled	Limited English Proficiency
The bus does not go where I want to go.	13.6%	14.8%	11.1%	11.1%
I need more information about existing public transportation services.	9.1%	0%	0%	33.3%
I must make bus transfers to get where I want to go.	9.1%	7.4%	11.1%	11.1%
The bus does not operate when I want to go	13.6%	22.2%	22.2%	0%
It is difficult to get to a bus stop.	9.1%	14.8%	11.1%	0%
I do not know where the bus stops are.	13.6%	3.7%	11.1%	22.2%
There is no shelter or place to sit at the bus stop	27.3%	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%
Other	4.5%	14.8%	11.1%	0%

When asked if there are additional transportation challenges faced responses included:

- Safety due to COVID-19 Pandemic
- Lack of bus stops
- Mobility

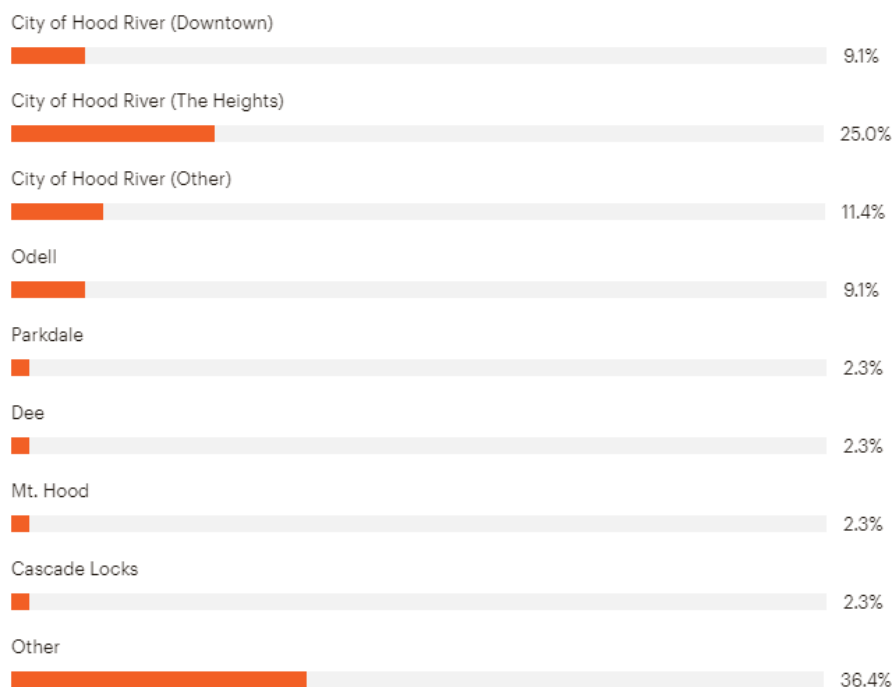
When asked if there are any services that they would like to get to using public transportation, but unable to the responses included:

- More service to The Dalles,
- OHSU in Portland
- Hood River Valley Adult Center
- Direct service to the Portland Airport
- Church

In general, when asked if there was anything else that we needed to know the senior population was very happy with CAT services.

Responses from the Public Survey – English for each individual question are below:

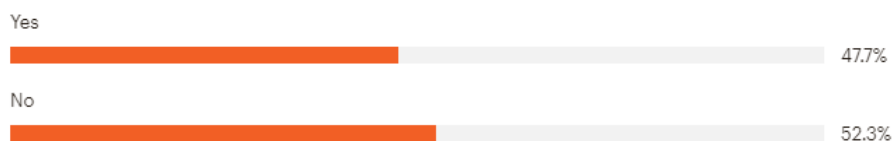
Q: Where do you live within Hood River County?



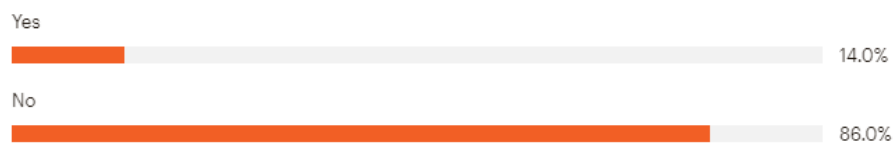
Q: Are you over 60 years old?



Q: Are you eligible for any low-income assistance programs?



Q: Do you have a disability that might make it difficult for you to use the bus?



Q: Do you have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English?



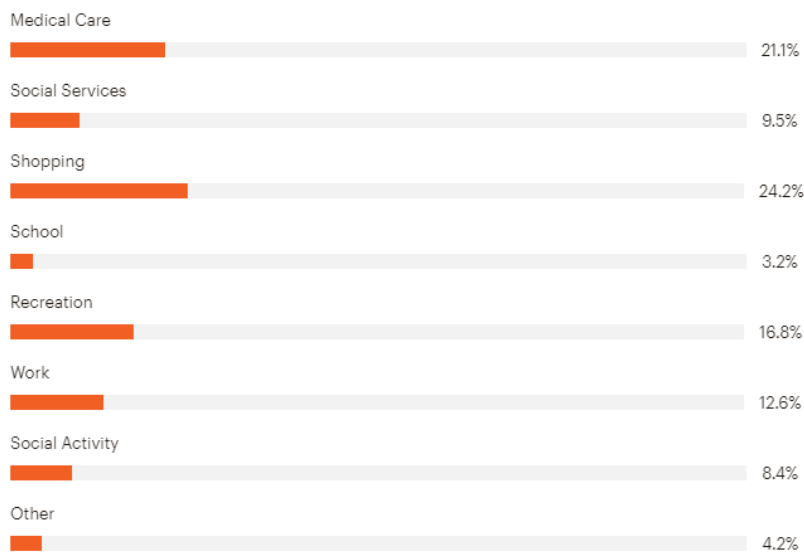
Q: Are you aware of the public transportation services available within Hood River County?



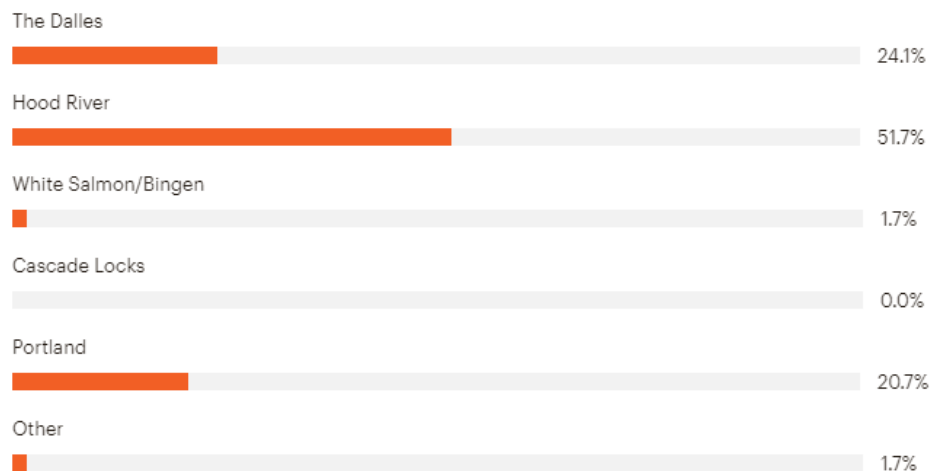
Q: How frequently do you use public transportation services within Hood River County?



Q: What services do you usually use public transportation to get to?



Q: In which city or cities are these services typically located?



Q: Are there any services that you would like to get to using public transportation, but cannot? If so, please let us know where they are located.

“College the dalles”

“When people need to go to appointments before 10:45am”

“To work”

“Mt. Hood National Forest/ Campgrounds”

“Earlier & later buses to the Upper Valley (Parkdale)”

“Transportation to Portland and OHSU”

“Updated schedule”

“Can you stop at the Troutdale outlets?”

“If LINK will let you could you please stop at Fred Meyer in the Dalles on the way to the LINK stop and pick up there on the way back to Hood River. I would like to shop in that whole .5 mile area around and in Fred Meyer. The thought of driving past it to the Link stop and scheduling a bus back to that area sound tedious. Therefore can't enjoy that outing.”

“Work in Hood River - this is not a limitation with stops but the bus does not run early enough or late enough to use it for commuting. “

“It would be so nice to have a later bus on Friday/Saturday evenings to use to go out to dinner, even 8pm would be late enough. “

“It is difficult to get to downtown The Dalles on the CAT bus. It requires a transfer to the LINK, which requires extra fare and often a long wait. This makes it impossible for me to commute between The Dalles and Hood River via public transportation.”

“The Dalles Medical Center”

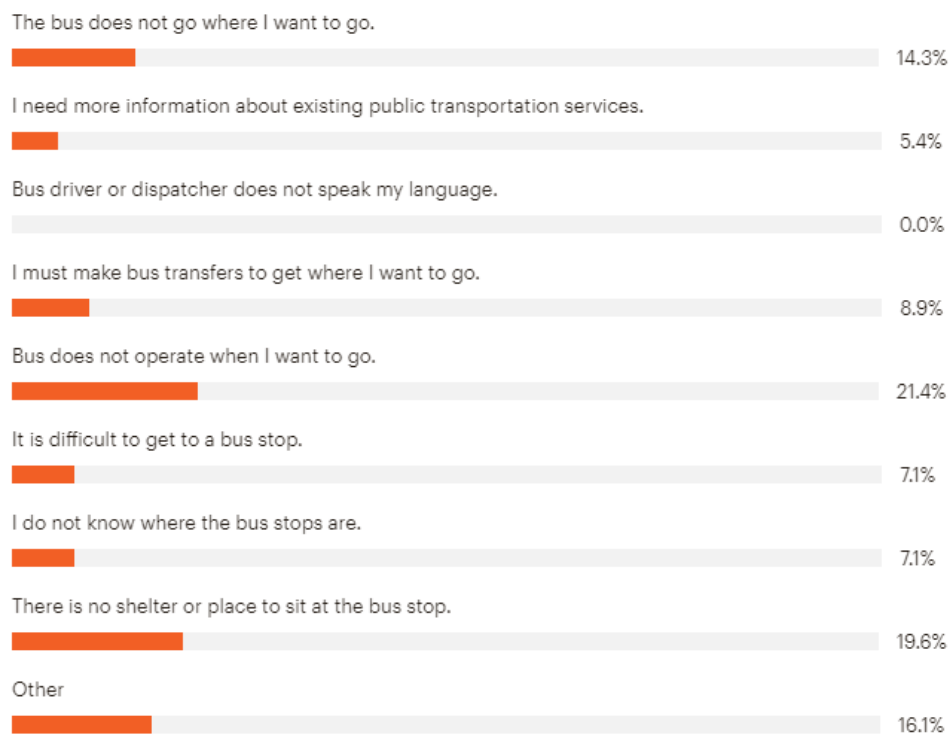
“Increase the Dalles runs”

“Hiking Trails, weekend service”

“More stops in between bus stops”

“Earlier & Later buses to Upper Valley (Parkdale)”

Q: What barriers for using public transportation do you face?



Responses to other:

“I’m waiting until I can feel safe traveling again when the pandemic is controlled.”

“The routes and times are not posted with enough clear information at all bus stops and on the website. Because the routes and times change every quarter, it is difficult to plan my life around. I would like to be using the bus to commute, but I cannot count on it because the schedule is inconsistent. Online, the exact addresses for stops are hard to find. This is particularly challenging if you’re trying to make a transfer or are unfamiliar with the area.”

“Emotional Handicap”

"I cannot stop at a bus stop I need it to go to my home."

"Bus does not come often enough"

"Bus isnt on time and this is from CaT bus barn"

"my mobility"

"I really need CAT to leave the bus barn on time at the 6:30 am time slot. I don't understand why they cannot leave on time rather 6:35 or 6:40-6:42am"

Q: Have you noticed a difference in your ability to access public transportation in Hood River County in the past 3 years?



Q: Is there anything else that you would like us to know?

"Thank you for providing transportation through the Gorge."

"More stops in Troutdale + the outlet mall"

"Thank you for this public form of transportation. I like it."

"I would really like more options to ride all the way through from The Dalles to Portland, including weekday mornings, evenings, and weekends."

"I used CAT frequently to get between The Dalles, Hood River, and Portland before the pandemic disrupted everything. When the bus ran frequently and had a stop downtown The Dalles, it worked very well for me. Currently there is no stop downtown The Dalles (it is way out west out of walking distance) and even though the bus comes to The Dalles, it is often not possible to actually get to Portland because the schedules do not align. I feel that CAT has changed its schedule and operations so frequently that I feel I cannot rely on it. I have actually acquired a car because CAT was no longer able to meet my needs, although it did previously. If services were improved for my needs, I would be very happy to start riding the CAT again. I love this bus system and want to see it grow to serve the region."

"Would like shelters at stops where there are currently none."

"the changing of routes and stops quarterly is crap just sayin"

"I like the yearly passes"

"Your service sucks"

"thank you for being here and providing these services"

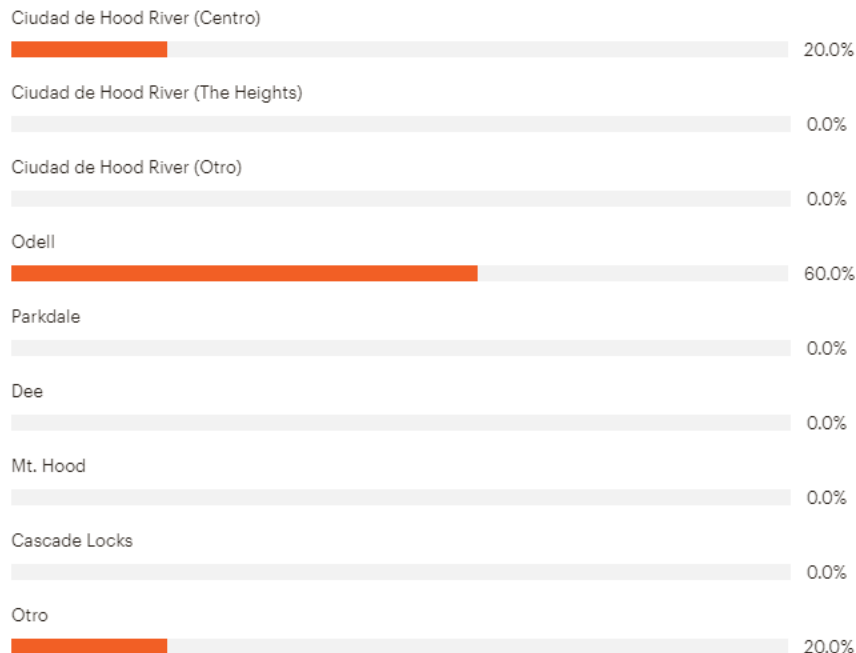
"Bus Maintenance"

"the board email address comes back undeliverable. I am extremely frustrated at the reliability and professionalism of CAT bus system."

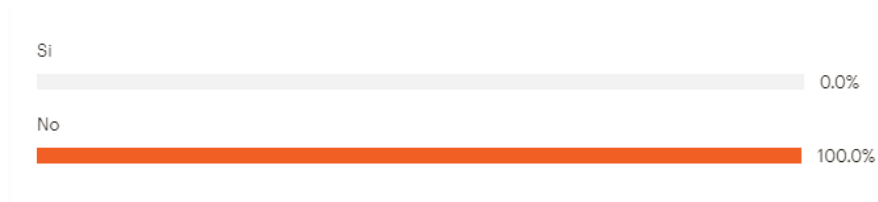
*"Your drivers are great and we look forward to going by your busses weither it's portland or around hood rive
...THANK YOU SO MUSH FOR BEING HERE FOR OUR COMMUNITY..."*

Responses from the Public Survey – Spanish for each individual question are below:

Q: ¿Dónde vives en el condado de Hood River?



Q: ¿Tienes más de 60 años?



Q: ¿Es usted elegible para algún programa de asistencia de bajos ingresos?



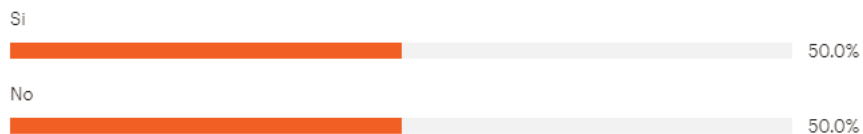
Q: ¿Tiene una discapacidad que podría dificultarle usar el autobús?



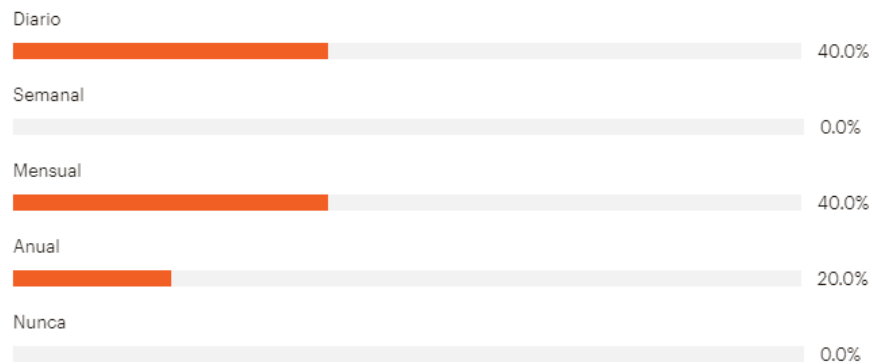
Q: ¿Tiene una capacidad limitada para leer, hablar, escribir o comprender inglés?



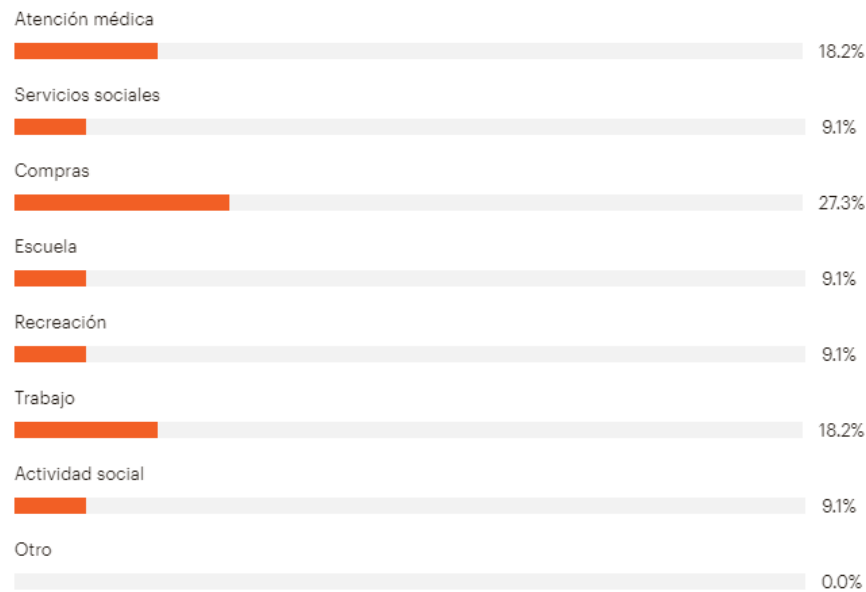
Q: ¿Conoce los servicios de transporte público disponibles en el condado de Hood River?



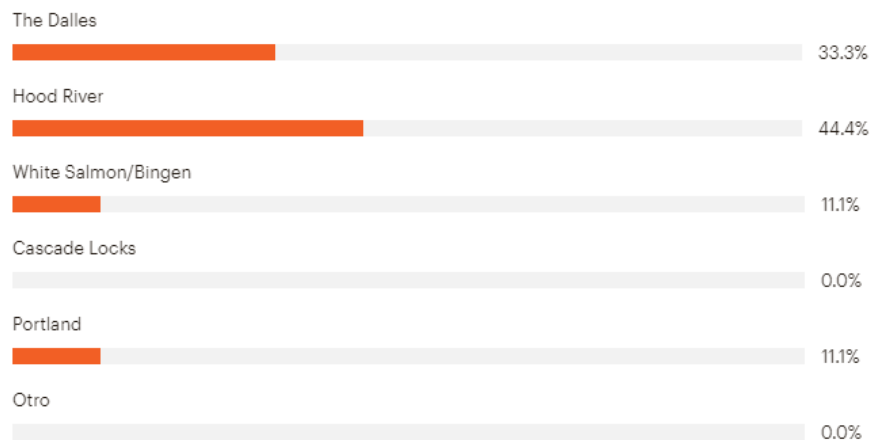
Q: ¿Con qué frecuencia utiliza los servicios de transporte público dentro del condado de Hood River?



Q: ¿A qué servicios utiliza habitualmente el transporte público?



Q: ¿En qué ciudad o ciudades se encuentran estos servicios típicamente?

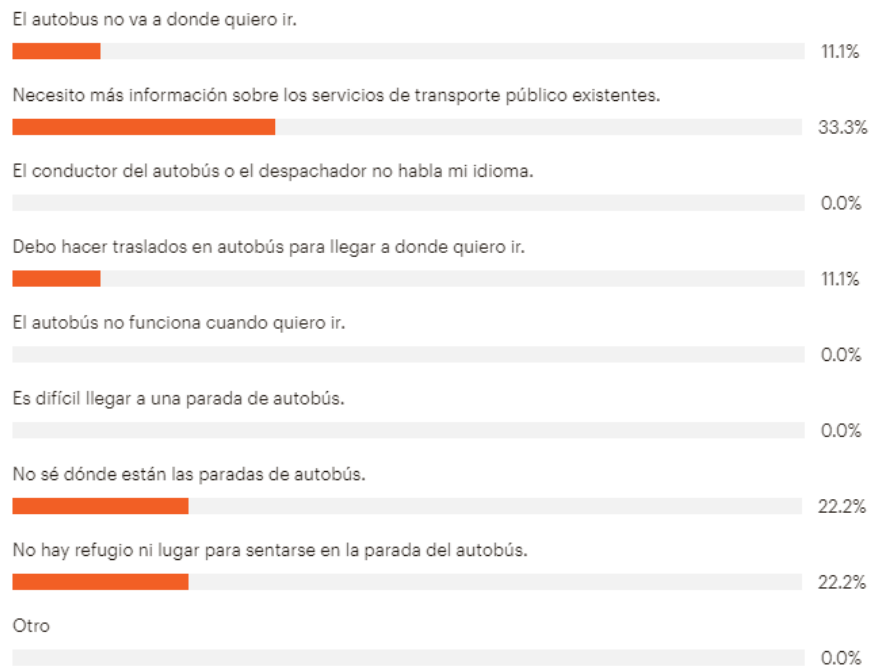


Q: ¿Hay algún servicio al que le gustaría llegar usando el transporte público, pero no puede? Si es así, háganos saber dónde se encuentran.

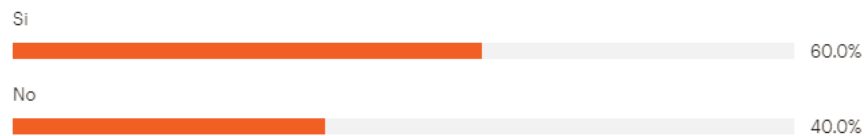
“Ala Iglesia”

“Aeropuerto directo”

Q: ¿Qué barreras para usar el transporte público enfrenta?



Q: ¿Ha notado una diferencia en su capacidad de acceder al transporte público en el condado de Hood River en los últimos 3 años?



Human Services Agency and Community Stakeholders

Respondents of the Representative Organization survey reported that individuals not knowing where the bus stops are was the largest barrier to using public transportation within Hood River County. During the STF/STIF Advisory Committee Meeting and Human Service Agencies meetings attended by CAT staff, this was attributed to the fact that there are very few prominent, permanent bus stops within Hood River County and more outreach and communication of available services is needed. Seniors have a difficult time understanding where the bus routes are and how to get to specific locations. Additional efforts are needed to get printed materials in English and Spanish distributed at key sites throughout the County which target Limited-English Proficiency individuals, seniors, Native Americans, students, and veterans. There are still many unknowns regarding transportation services needed within the Latino, migrant farm worker, Native American, and veteran communities. To get a good grasp with what those needs are and to increase ridership, outreach within these vulnerable communities are needed through community-based organizations who are already immersed within the specific communities.

While transfers being required to get to end destinations was tied as a transportation challenge with several others in survey responses, it was also a common theme during stakeholder interviews. Many veterans often go between The Dalles and Hood River, but have a hard time navigating two different transportation providers. Specifically, making the transfer from CAT to The Link services or vice versa and having to call two different providers to book Dial-A-Ride services if needed is daunting. Ensuring a seamless transition with more coordination between CAT and The Link would make it easier for users to travel between Hood River and The Dalles for medical services and other needs. Transfers are difficult for seniors and they feel unsafe when having to complete a transfer to a different bus. The Port and The Link transfer bus stops were specifically identified as transfers spots where seniors feel unsafe. During the STF/STIF Advisory Committee Meeting and human service agency meetings attended by CAT staff, safety during transfers was also discussed in addition to transfers in general being a for being a challenge when using public transportation.

Walking or rolling a wheelchair within Hood River County can be difficult due to lack of sidewalk infrastructure and ADA compliant curb cuts. Representative Organizations responded in surveys that clients have a difficult time getting to bus stops due to accessibility reasons and find that having no place to sit at bus stops is a barrier to using public transportation. The targeted populations that are mostly affected by this are seniors and individuals with disabilities. Seniors who would like to use the fixed-route service are forced to use DAR services because it is either difficult for them to walk to the bus stop or they need a spot to rest while they wait.

While CAT services have expanded greatly over the past three years and the Columbia Gorge Express has allowed for greater connectivity between The Dalles, Hood River, Cascade Locks, and Portland there are still access issues. During human services agency meetings, the STF/STIF Advisory Committee meetings, and stakeholder interviews the following potential services were identified as opportunities:

- Access to medical services in The Dalles and in Portland at OHSU.
- Cascade Locks students and students in Odell or Parkdale have difficulty participating in internships within the community and attending school dance or games because they do not have transportation.
- Increased awareness of Student Free Fare program is needed.
- Native American transportation needs are widely unknown, and outreach is needed by community-based organizations.

- Transportation access for farmworkers workers who need to get to Parkdale or Odell for work.
- Seniors who have aged out of Medicaid and are now covered by Medicare do not have NEMT benefits and sometimes cannot afford DAR.
- Access to the Hood River Valley Adult Center on the fixed-route.
- Travel training for vulnerable populations.

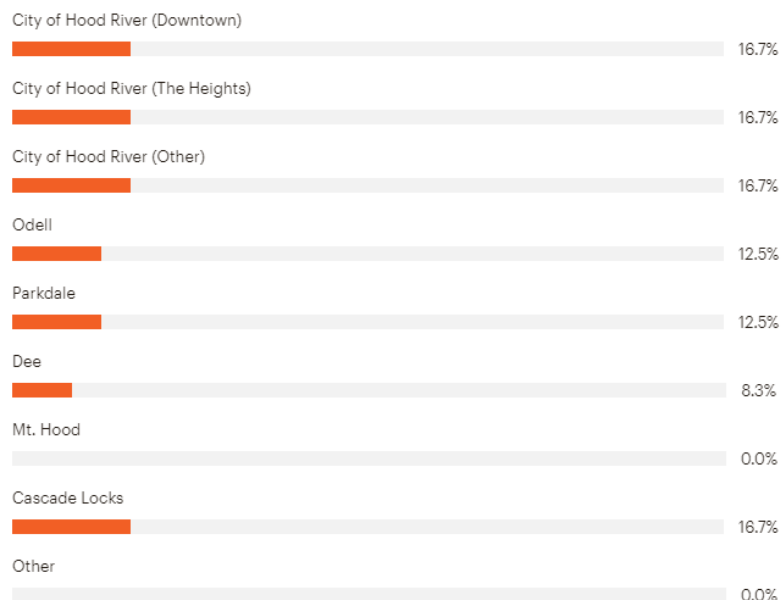
Through the Representative Organization survey, most respondents believed that their clients were dissatisfied with current public transit services. Identifying a major need for coordinated outreach and needs assessment within different communities to ensure CAT is meeting the needs of the target populations.

The below graph shows the Representative Organization identified transportation challenges based on survey responses.

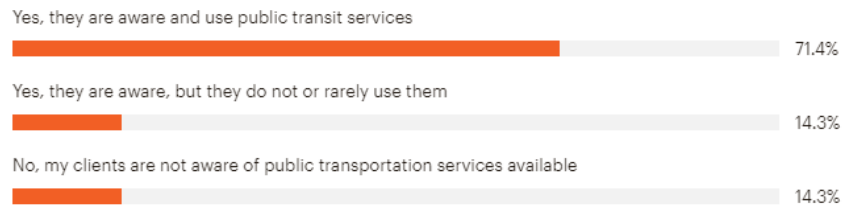
Identified Transportation Challenge	%
Inadequate information about existing public transportation services	11.8
Bus driver or dispatcher does not speak their language	5.9
Bus transfers are required to get to popular destinations	11.8
Bus does not go to places where they want to go	11.8
It is difficult to get to a bus stop for accessibility reasons	11.8
Individuals do not know where the bus stops are	29.4
There is no shelter or place to sit at the bus stop	11.8
Other	5.9

The responses from the Representative Agency Organization Survey for each individual question are below:

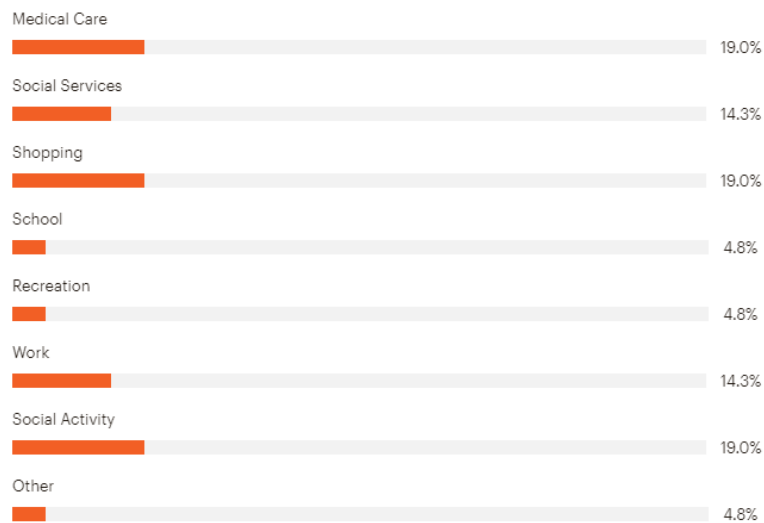
Q: Where do most of the individuals that you serve live in Hood River County?



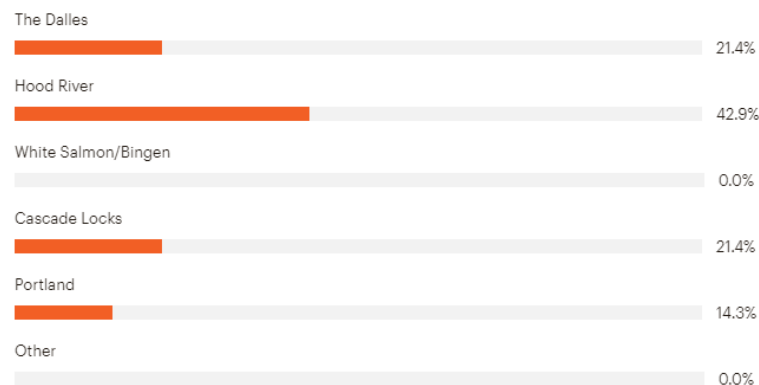
Q: Are the individuals you serve aware of public transportation services available within Hood River County and do they use them?



Q: What services do the individuals you serve usually use public transportation to get to?



Q: In which city or cities are these services typically located?



Q: Are there any services that individuals you serve would like to get to using public transportation, but cannot? If so, please let us know where they are located.

“To work in Hood River for those living in Cascade Locks area. Limited routes for those who have a regular work schedule in Hood River.”

“Unknown, but likely additional shopping options outside of Hood River”

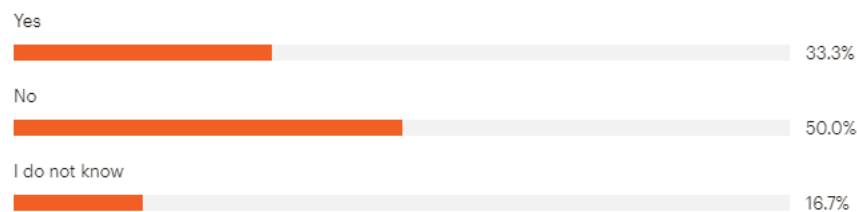
“Residents have complained about feeling safe on the CAT buses and that trips to The Dalles take all day”

“Cascade Locks, Odell, Parkdale”

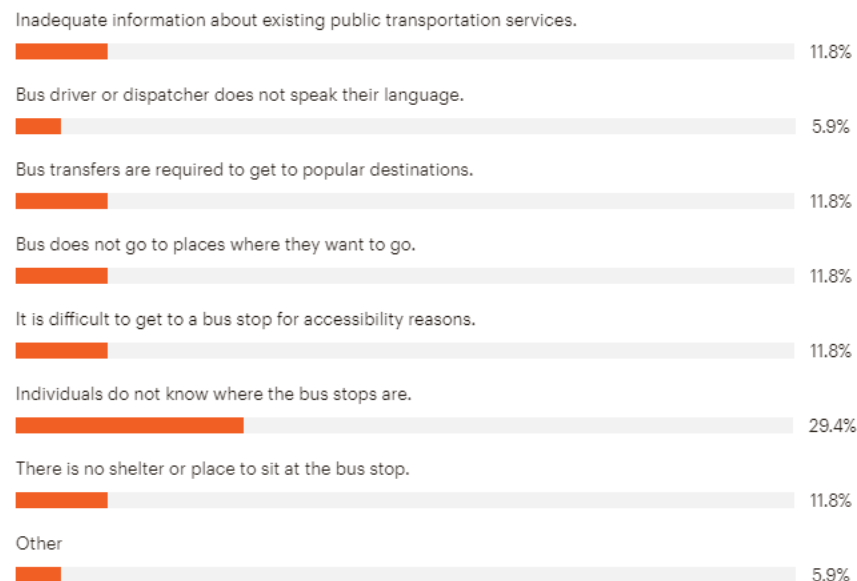
“Cascade locks residents have a hard time getting to work on time. Adding the Portland Route limited them and made it harder for IDD clients.”

“The Adult Center”

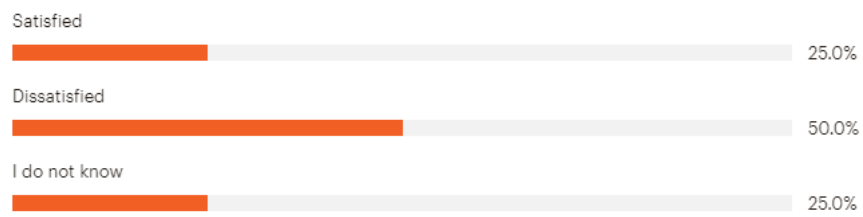
Q: Does your organization provide or pay for transportation costs for individuals that you serve?



Q: What are barriers for using public transportation that the individuals you serve face?



Q: Of the individuals you serve, are they generally satisfied or dissatisfied with public transportation?



APPENDIX C – STF/STIF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Friday, September 11th, 2020
Hood River County Transportation District
Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan Advisory Committee
224 Wasco Loop, Board Conference Room
Hood River, OR 97031
3:30pm – 5:00pm

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Advisory Committee Members: Kevin Liburdy (City of Hood River), Lexi Stickel (PacificSource CCO), Britta Wilson (Providence Hood River, Volunteers in Action, Aging in the Gorge Alliance), Leti Valle (HRCTD Board Member)

Staff: Patty Fink, Amy Schlappi

Public: Jason Kelly (ODOT), Kathy Fitzpatrick (MCEDD)

Amy Schlappi started the meeting at 5:35pm.

Welcome and Introductions

Amy Schlappi welcomed the group and explained that for the Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan Advisory Committee staff combined the Hood River County Transportation District Special Transportation Fund (STF) Committee and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund Committee per recommendation by ODOT. Each attendee introduced themselves and explained the entity and population they represent.

Review of CAT and Transportation Services

Amy Schlappi quickly reviewed the different services provided by Columbia Area Transit (CAT). She reviewed the different services that CAT provides and showed a map detailing the service area.

Overview of the Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan Update

Amy discussed the purpose of the Coordinated Transportation Plan Update by highlighting:

- That Coordinated plan which addresses the needs of seniors, disabled individuals, low-income individuals, and Limited English Proficiency individuals is a requirement of our federal and state funding.
- The plan must be consistent and coordinated with any other required plans that the Hood River County Transportation District has including the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan, and the Transit Master Plan.
- The plan must highlight how our services are coordinated with other local and regional services and updated every three year.

Amy also explained that our 2016 Coordinated plan should have been updated last year, but CAT was granted an extension by ODOT due to service expansion occurring in 2019.

She then highlighted the priorities that were identified in the 2016 plan and the services or changes that have been implemented since the plan was adopted.

She also outlined the different requirements of a Coordinated Transportation Plan including:

- Updated demographic data
- Engagement of stakeholders
- An Inventory of current Public Transportation services
- Identification of transportation challenges and gaps in existing services
- Identification of coordination opportunities with stakeholders and other transportation providers
- A prioritized list of Public Transportation Needs and Projects

Discuss Community Feedback Collected

Amy explained that since the community outreach portion began near the onset of COVID-19 there were challenges reaching target populations for feedback. She reviewed the ways in which staff has engaged the community, including:

- Rider surveys
- Interviews with Community Stakeholders
- Community Meetings
- Organizations invited to participate

Priorities for the Next 3 Years

The transportation challenges and gaps in existing services identified by target populations, representative agencies, and transportation agencies fell into four categories. Those four categories were: information, services, capital, and coordination. She went through each individual category and asked committee members to add anything they felt was missing and to place topics in the order that they felt staff should focus on. There was a large amount of discussion regarding the priorities and the appropriate order they should be focused on.

The group created the below prioritized list Public Transportation Needs and Projects:

Information:

- Bus stop locations
 - Route schedule information at the bus stops
- Safety
 - Covid-19 & Transportation (Transportation is safe – communicate)
 - Safe and welcome for everyone (no racism, or incidents towards specific demographics)
- Outreach
 - Communication of public transportation services available
 - Extensive outreach and partnership with Latino, Native American, and Veteran Communities (different for each population – local and regional)
 - Increase ridership and awareness of Student and Low-Income fare programs
 - Language barrier
 - Comfortability of making transfers/ travel training

Services:

- Extended operating hours (evenings, weekends)
 - DAR
 - City Route/ UV
 - Ability to do evening activities
- Expanded access to senior services
 - Adult center
 - Hawks Ridge/One Community Health (back side across street from Hawks Ridge)
- Ongoing funding for HWY 35 services
 - Upper Valley Route frequency
- Access to medical services
 - Portland
 - The Dalles
- Community shuttle in Cascade Locks
- Additional stops in The Dalles (closer to downtown)
- Other vulnerable population transportation services
- Training/Internship program within target population communities
 - Posting of job opportunities

Capital:

- Permanent shelters, seats, and signs at bus stops
- Stop accessibility
 - Partnership with city and county to implement
 - Multi-Modal system
- Improved and more efficient dispatching technology
- Fleet Sustainability
 - Fleet Electrification
- Facility Expansion – Coordinated with low income, senior, disabled housing facilities

Coordination:

- Transportation Alliances
 - Gorge TransLink Alliance
 - Link/CAT
 - Skamania/Klickitat/CAT
 - Mt. Hood Transportation Alliance
 - Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)
- Employers, Tourism & Businesses
- Multi-Modal transportation options
- Coordinate local and regional planning processes
 - Transit Master Plan
 - Coordinate on transportation outreach surveys and questionnaires

Next Steps

Amy Schlappi will send out a Doodle Poll for the next Advisory Committee meeting which will be the beginning of October. The goal for this meeting is to review the strategies created to staff to address the identified priorities.

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03pm.

Monday, October 12th, 2020
Hood River County Transportation District
Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan Advisory Committee
224 Wasco Loop, Board Conference Room
Hood River, OR 97031
3:30pm – 5:00pm

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Advisory Committee Members: Lexi Stickel (PacificSource CCO), Britta Wilson (Providence Hood River, Volunteers in Action, Aging in the Gorge Alliance), Leti Valle (HRCTD Board Member), Rob Brostoff (HRCTD Board Member), Jeff Hecksel (Hood River County Administration), Rita Rathkey (Opportunity Connections)

Staff: Patty Fink, Amy Schlappi

Amy Schlappi started the meeting at 3:35pm.

Welcome

Amy welcomed the group and explained that the goals for today's meeting were to confirm that the draft strategies created by staff accurately reflect the discussion at the first Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting that took place on September 11, 2020. Discuss any changes which should be made to make the draft strategies more effective to create beneficial change within the community and to review the next steps in the Coordinated Transportation Plan process.

Jeff asked to confirm that if the group approves the strategies, would they be brought to HRCTD Board for final approval. Amy confirmed that is correct and expanded that after the TAC approves the strategies, the draft Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan (including the strategies) will be made available for the TAC to review and public comments to be made before it is presented to the Board at the November 18th meeting. There should be about a month where the draft plan will be available for the Public and the TAC to review.

Patty explained that by law CAT is required to create a Coordinated Transportation Plan (reflects specific target populations), the Transit Master Plan (reflects general needs within the county), and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) plan which is essentially the implementation of those two plans. The next step for the TAC after the Board approves the Coordinated Transportation Plan is for another meeting in early December to decide the funding strategy for implementation and what priorities will be floated to the top to be funded for the next two years. Before the meeting you will receive an update on the projects that were part of the last STIF plan. At the meeting, staff will present priorities that they think are important based on the Coordinated Transportation Plan, the Transit Master Plan, and the previous STIF plan.

Strategies for Identified Priorities

Amy asked those committee members who had not attended the previous meeting if they needed any background information. Rita and Jeff responded that they felt the meeting materials sent out beforehand were thorough and felt caught up.

There was general discussion as to what the best way would be to review the priorities and discuss any changes that needed to be made. Ultimately the group decided that they felt like they had enough time to review the strategies beforehand and felt comfortable with just discussing comments made by committee members. Kevin Liburdy who was unable to make the meeting had submitted five comments beforehand. The group went through each comment submitted and made changes to the strategy graphs to reflect the appropriate changes.

- First Comment: In the Information section, with regard to safety, responding to concerns about COVID-19 isn't called out specifically (vulnerable populations obviously are mentioned). Should plan strategies address COVID-19 specifically?
 - Discussion: Staff felt it was important to keep the strategy vague enough so that if there were funding opportunities for a variety of different health and safety issues that may pop up, CAT could apply for that funding. CAT cannot apply for funding if the topic is not discussed in a plan. However, staff feels that there is a way to make the strategy more specific about COVID-19 without being too specific. The group felt it was important to specifically state COVID-19 within the strategy and that it might actually make it easier to apply for some funding if COVID-19 is specifically called out.
- Second Comment: In the Capital section, with regard to permanent shelters and seating, I'm wondering if it makes any sense to include a Performance Measure about complaints/incidents at bus stops. I am not advocating for hostile architecture but, rather than simply establishing an objective of more shelters and seating, it seems important to make these improvements in a manner that does not result in a different set of problems such as may occur when people sleep in shelters.
 - Discussion: Staff felt this is an important Performance Measure and will add it. All committee members agreed.
- Third Comment: In the Capital section, with regard to increasing stop accessibility, this is intended to promote ADA accessibility ("levels of mobility") rather than access to stops for users traveling via different modes, correct? Patty mentioned that CAT may have access to financial resources and the ability be a partner when development occurs. In most cases new sidewalks are constructed by developers of property. New sidewalks and curb ramps must meet ADA standards. Rather than simply advocating, maybe the strategy could be for CAT to collaborate with the City, County and development community to improve accessibility to and around stops. For example, the City/County may not be able to compel a developer of a site in the middle of a block to fix/install a curb ramp at an intersection that's some distance away but perhaps CAT can find funds and work with the developer to add that curb ramp when improvements to the site's frontage are engineered and constructed. Performance measures might include the number of new ADA curb ramps that are installed at street intersections within a certain distance from stops (or anywhere along routes). If this objective is more about accessibility to stops by different modes, it certainly makes sense to collaborate on construction of bike paths and perhaps bike storage facilities too.
 - Discussion: Staff suggest adding "Recognizing that the City, County, and State are responsible for the development of sidewalks within Hood River County, CAT will be an active partner and provide resources where appropriate to meet joint goals of improved accessibility." All committee members agreed.

- Fourth Comment: In the Coordination section, under the objective for improved multi-modal options within Hood River County, the strategy also may be to collaborate with the City, County and development community to provide more multi-modal transportation options.
 - Discussion: Staff and committee members agreed this should be added. Jeff added that Odell and Parkdale specifically should be called out in the strategy.
- Fifth Comment: In the Coordination section, under the objective to coordinate with local and regional planning processes, is the strategy to develop a Transit Master Plan or update the 2017 plan?
 - Discussion: The answer is updating the 2017 plan.

Patty let the group know the process for updating the 2017 Transit Master Plan will begin within the next year and that we would like to collaborate with the county during the outreach portion of the plan and ask any questions the county deems important.

After all comments were discussed Amy asked if there were any other questions or concerns regarding the draft strategies. No comments were made. The group felt comfortable with moving forward with the draft strategies and the discussed amendments.

Next Steps

Amy will reach out to the group within the next week or so with the draft Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan for them to review. She will also inform them as to how the public will be able to provide public comment on the plan due to the restrictions placed on the process due to COVID-19. A doodle poll will be sent out to the group to setup a meeting to discuss the STIF plan in early December.

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55pm.

APPENDIX D – COLUMBIA AREA TRANSIT FLEET INVENTORY

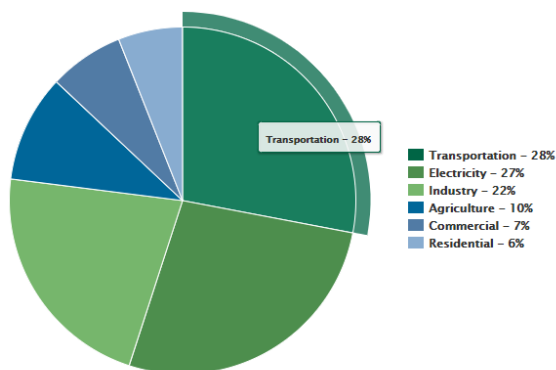
Operator	Model/Year	Mileage Estimate	ADA Accessible	Remaining Useful Life (Years)	Seating Capacity
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Toyota Sienna 2011	55,855	No	0	6
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Ford Elkhart E-450 2013	16,7992	Yes	1	14 or 12/2
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Ford Elkhart E-450 2013	209,732	Yes	0	18 or 16/2
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Ford Elkhart E-450 2015	112,816	Yes	0	18 or 16/2
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Ford Elkhart EC2 E-450 2016	91,904	Yes	1	14 or 12/2
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Ford Elkhart EC2 E-450 2016	81,822	Yes	1	14 or 12/2
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Ford E-450 2019	19,554	Yes	4	18 or 16/2
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Ford E-450 2019	17,644	Yes	4	18 or 16/2
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Chevrolet Arbo G4500 2014	38,733	Yes	3	12/3
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Chevrolet Arbo G4500 2014	35,292	Yes	3	12/3
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	Ford F550 2015	106,007	Yes	4	26/2
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	MCI J4500 2006	921,905	Yes	8	56/2
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	MCI D4500 2004	6,015	Yes	9	56/2
Columbia Area Transit (CAT)	MCI D4500 2003	12,877	Yes	9	56/2

APPENDIX E – CHANGING CONDITIONS

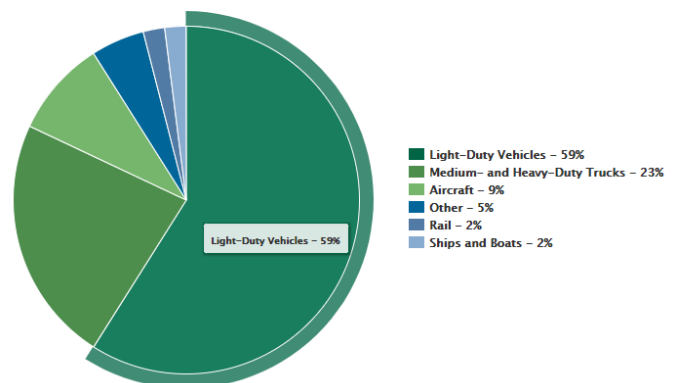
Regional Climate Change Goals: Climate Change and the creation of a more environmentally sustainable community continues to be a high-priority item within Hood River County, The Columbia Gorge Region, and more broadly at the State level. Public transportation like many other industries can be impacted by Climate Change through extreme weather events, flooding, rising sea levels, landslides, and increased wildfire risks causing providers to shut down service and aid emergency management operations instead. During the 2020 fire season in Oregon, several public transportation providers throughout the state were asked by officials to help evacuate vulnerable populations in impacted areas. In recent years, this has become more of a trend than an unusual event.

Transportation is the largest contributor (roughly 28%) of total U.S. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, which is the leading cause of Climate Change. 59% of the GHG emissions caused by transportation is caused by light duty vehicles (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2020). Encouraging people to switch from using private vehicles for personal travel to public transit or telecommuting could have an impact on GHG's. If one person uses public transportation instead of a private vehicle for a 20 mile round trip commute they could reduce their annual CO₂ emissions by 4,800 pounds per year (American Public Transportation Association, 2008). Within the Columbia Gorge region, the I-84 corridor is heavily trafficked and connects Gorge communities with Portland. By increasing ridership and services as needed on the Columbia Gorge Express service which operates along the I-84 corridor, CAT has the ability to continue to reduce GHG emissions that normally would be caused by visitor or local private vehicle trips.

2018 U.S. GHG Emissions by Sector



2018 U.S. Transportation Sector GHG Emissions by Source



(U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2020)

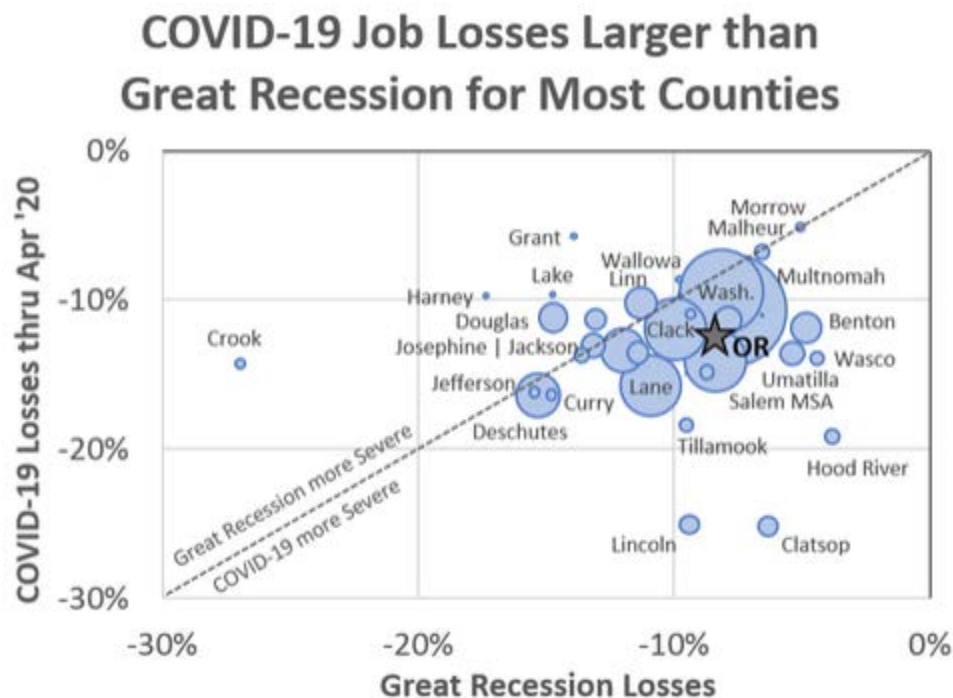
In the 2020 City of Hood River Work Plan, it highlighted three projects which would help manage stormwater runoff, establish a baseline of energy use and emissions for all City owned buildings and equipment, and look at trees on private property. The goal of these projects is to create a more environmentally sustainable community and supports Resolution 2019-16 Climate Change.

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is working to reduce the amount of greenhouse gasses admitted through operations and management of the state's transportation system. More specifically, through ODOT's The Oregon Sustainable Transportation Initiative (OSTI), which is a statewide effort to reduce greenhouse gas and emissions from transportation. The goal being to create healthier, more livable communities and allowing for greater economic opportunity. OSTI is working on this goal by development and

Implementation of the Statewide Transportation Strategy, which examines the transportation of people and goods and identifies strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (ODOT).

Generational Change in Transportation Preference: Younger generations (born after 1982) have grown up during times of economic disturbance and massive technological advances. According to the American Public Transportation Association, history shows that because of technological advances (radio, television, smartphone) during large world events (The Great depression, WWII, Great Recession) major shifts in societal behavior occur. Within the past decade there has been a reduction in the number of miles Americans drive and a shift towards other transportation modes (U.S. PIRG Fund, Frontier Group, 2014). “Millennials & Mobility: Understanding The Millennial Mindset”, states that Millennials are Multi-Modal whether they live in urban or suburban areas and the decision to change their transportation modes are often based on lifestyle and the need to save money. Additionally, the study found that when it comes to public transportation Millennials want more reliable systems, real-time updates, easy access to Wi-Fi and user-friendly transportation experiences. Even though the Columbia Gorge region is rural and has a large population of seniors, Hood River County will need to take into account the change in travel preference of millenials as it continues to grow in population and develop within cities and urban growth areas.

COVID-19 Global Pandemic: On January 31, 2020 the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) global health crises. The Governor of Oregon, Kate Brown, declared a State of Emergency on March 8, 2020 due to the threat to public health and safety caused by the virus under ORS 401.025(1). On March 23, 2020, Governor Kate Brown issued Executive Order 20-12, Stay Home Save Lives, ordering Oregonians to stay at home, closing specified retail businesses, requiring social distancing measures for other public and private facilities, and imposing requirements for outdoor areas and licensed childcare facilities to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Due to these closures COVID-19 job losses within Hood River County were greater than job losses seen during the Great Recession. The graph below depicts job losses compared with other counties in the State of Oregon.



Source: Oregon Employment Department, Oregon Office of Economic Analysis

In May and June of 2020, select Oregon counties (including Hood River County) that had met certain criteria were able to open their economies in a phased approach. However, in July there was a concerning increase in the number of new COVID-19 cases reported across the nation and in Oregon. Hood River County, having reached Stage II of reopening, was put on the “watch list” early in July due to several workplace outbreaks.

CAT and other regional transportation agencies stopped operating fixed-routes and only operated the Dial-A-Ride services for essential trips only. Not only did the Executive Order and the pandemic create a sharp downturn in the economy in 2020, but will change work, travel, and social behavior of community members for years to come. Many of those behavioral changes are unknown at this time and transportation will need to adapt to the needs of the community as the effects are fully realized.

CAT continued to operate Dial-A-Ride services for essential trips only until June 1, 2020 when limited fixed-route services between Portland and the Gorge communities resumed. Since then CAT has continued to gradually resume public transportation services which were offered before the onset of COVID-19. All service levels are expected to reach near pre-pandemic levels by early November 2020. CAT has followed the State of Oregon’s guidance for public transportation providers, which included sanitation procedures, physical distancing for riders, extra protections for drivers, and mask requirements. Additionally, CAT has required all Columbia Gorge Express riders to make a reservation until COVID-19 is not deemed a threat to public health and safety. Reservations are required temporarily to ensure there is a seat available for riders due to reduced capacity. Additionally, in the event there was a COVID-19 outbreak rider information would be given to Public Health Officials for contact tracing purposes.

The COVID-19 Pandemic highlighted how important it is for transit agencies to have Coordinated Emergency plans and to have strong partnerships with other local agencies and the county’s Emergency Management office. Having those strong partnerships in place during times when there is no emergency allows for quick connections between agencies in times of an emergency. Additionally, when organizations continuously update their Emergency Action Plans it allows for plans to be current and include learnings from previous emergencies (i.e. what to do if there is a COVID-19 workplace outbreak) to ensure that the organization as a whole will be more resilient to future emergencies.

State of emergencies affect different populations disproportionately. During the current health crisis, seniors, low-income individuals, disabled individuals, homeless, Native Americans, veterans, and farmworkers have experienced difficulties meeting basic needs. Transit agencies were used to help individuals get access to food or other essential needs by partnering with food banks and other organizations. As we move forward as a community transportation services may need more flexibility in services provided to continue to meet those needs as the economy re-opens. Equity is an important issue during times of emergencies and consistently needs to be advocated for.

Safety: Consistent and effective communication regarding safety within the community and while using public transportation is key. During the current climate, riders, and the community at large need to be reassured that it is safe to use public transportation. Originally when the COVID-19 pandemic began, people greatly reduced the number of trips they took by using public transit for fear of contracting the virus. In the months that have followed current studies show that public transportation systems which have put in place COVID-19 mitigation measures (i.e. required masks to be worn, reduced capacity, etc.) are not “super spreaders”.

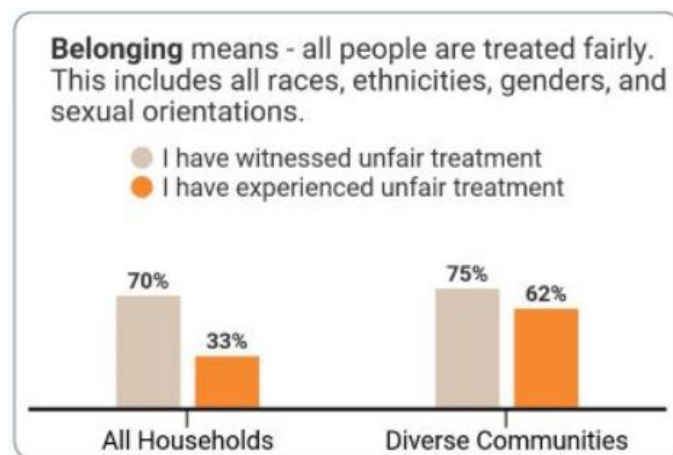
Riders also need to be reassured that they will be safe from individuals on drugs and ICE when using public transit. Systemic racism and discrimination have caused minority groups to be cautious and untrusting of public transit for fear of deportation and other safety concerns. Constant ongoing communication showing the public how transit agencies are operating to keep them safe is needed to rebuild ridership.

The months long national and international police brutality protests which were sparked by the death of George Floyd by police, have caused a collective recognition that racism remains prevalent in today's society. The renewed commitment by Oregon Governor, Kate Brown, to serve the most vulnerable populations, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, has brought new resources and more focused attention to chronic inequities in the state. The Governor created a Racial Justice Council in July 2020 and developed an "Equity in Response and Recovery" plan to center public health, education, and economic support activities on these vulnerable communities during the COVID-19 pandemic and after. Transportation challenges will be addressed in the economic support category.

The 2019 Community Health Assessment survey asked two questions about discrimination:

1. Have you experienced unfair treatment some, most, or all the time because of race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation?
2. Have you witnessed others receiving unfair treatment because of race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation?

In Hood River County, the representative population sample indicated that 39% of county residents have had personal experience with unfair treatment because of discrimination and 67.4% have witnessed this discrimination. Region wide, 61.8% of self-identified persons of diverse communities state that they have personally experienced discrimination and 75.3% have witnessed discrimination towards another person.



The COVID-19 pandemic has also exacerbated racial tensions nationwide. In Hood River County the virus has disproportionately affected migrant workers, the majority of whom are Hispanic/Latino. This has also stoked more incidents of discrimination within the broader Hood River County community, as reported by public health practitioners and by community leaders.

An interview with Transit Rights consultant and Civil Rights attorney Jonathan Ostar highlighted these potential action steps for a transit agency to establish trust and relationships with minority communities:

1. Develop a statement of belief that welcomes all people and post it conspicuously.
2. Distribute information about civil rights relevant to using public transit with other transit information.

3. Train drivers and frontline staff in techniques to de-escalate situations regarding rider discrimination or violation of rights (discrimination de-escalation toolkit).
4. Require relevant staff training.

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination against racial or ethnic groups (protected classes) by any federal financial recipient and is enforced by U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) civil rights regulations which provides that “[n]o person or group of persons shall be discriminated against with regard to the routing, scheduling, or quality of service of transportation service furnished as a part of the project on the basis of race, color, or national origin.”

APPENDIX F – HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

Transportation Provider	Service Type	Hours	Days	Service Area
PacificSource, CCO Contracts with Logisticare, a Non Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Brokerage	Non-Emergent Medical Transportation (NEMT) for eligible clients.	7am-5pm	Monday-Friday	Hood River, Wasco counties.
Volunteers in Action – Providence Hood River Hospital	Hospital Volunteer Program	As needed	As needed	Hood River County, Western Wasco County (Mosier)
The Next Door, Inc	Client Transportation (Klahre House Students)	As needed	As needed	Hood River and Wasco Counties
Eastern Oregon Support Services Brokerage	Reimbursement program for client public or private transportation expenses.	As needed	As needed	Hood River and Wasco Counties (plus 11 other counties in Eastern Oregon)
Opportunity Connections	Client transportation for outings, employment, medical services, etc.	As needed	As needed	Hood River and Wasco Counties
Mid-Columbia Center for Living	Client transportation for the Supported Employment program and other programs.	As needed	As needed	Hood River, Sherman, and Wasco Counties
Hood River Adult Center (Meals on Wheels)	Delivers cooked meals to those who are over 60 and have diverse abilities.	9AM-5PM	Monday-Friday	Hood River County
Veterans Administration	Serves eligible veterans only. Reimbursement and beneficiary travel program for Medical transportation expenses. Medical transportation.	As needed	As needed	Columbia Gorge Region and Portland
Bridges to Health	Reimbursement program for public or private transportation expenses.	As needed	As needed	Hood River and Wasco Counties
Disabled American Veterans (DAV)	Veterans transportation to Portland for Medical Care. Fixed-Route only. Not ADA accessible.	As needed	Depends on driver ability	Columbia Gorge Region and Portland

APPENDIX G – OTHER TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

Transportation Provider	Service Type	Hours	Days	Service Area
The Dalles Explorer (Blue Bus)	Partnership of The Dalles Chamber of Commerce, The Dalles Dam Visitor Center, Grayline of Portland – Visitor focused seasonal	Varies	Monday-Friday, Summer only	Hood River to The Dalles and The Dalles Dam
Gorge Taxi	Taxi with door to door service	Varies	Monday - Sunday	Hood River County, Columbia River Gorge and Surrounding Areas
Hood River Pedicab & Taxi	Taxi with door to door service	Varies	Monday-Sunday	City of Hood River and Portland
Providence Brookside Manor	Client transportation	As scheduled/needed	As scheduled/needed	City of Hood River
Providence Down Manor	Client transportation	As scheduled/needed	As scheduled/needed	City of Hood River
Hawks Ridge Senior Living	Client transportation	As scheduled/needed	As scheduled/needed	City of Hood River
Parkhurst Place	Client transportation	As scheduled/needed	As scheduled/needed	City of Hood River
Greyhound	Bus – Fixed-Route	By schedule	Monday - Sunday	I-84 Corridor
Drive Less Connect	Carpool/ Ride share	As arranged	As Arranged	State of Oregon (ODOT)
Commute with Enterprise	Vanpool	As arranged	As arranged	City of Hood River, City of The Dalles, and Portland Metro
Get There Oregon	Carpool/Ride Share/Trip Planner – Free to Participate	As arranged	As arranged	State of Oregon (ODOT)

APPENDIX H – REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION

ODOT's Transportation Options

ODOT's Transportation Options (TO) program is the implementation of the Oregon Transportation Options Plan. The goals of the plan include:

- manage demand across the transportation system,
- educate students and the public on travel options and how to safely use them,
- connecting veterans, low-income individuals, communities of color, and other vulnerable populations with ways to travel to and from work or school, and
- supporting vanpooling and more.

Through the TO users are connected to different transportation choices, allowing them to bike, walk, take transit, drive, share rides, and telecommute. Capital infrastructure or service investments (sidewalks, bike, lanes, and transit service) are not included within this program. TO provides information and resources to understand and use the different travel options available (ODOT). By investing in different transportation options, the community in general can reduce costs, improve health, mitigate congestion, and increase safety.

ODOT is the leader of numerous statewide efforts to support and encourage transportation options, however the programs are implemented by local partners. It is up to the local partners to ensure the program meets the needs of the population, geography, transit services, and infrastructure available. MCEDD and Commute Options support the TO programs located within Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman Counties.

Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance

The Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance, a non-profit organization made up of businesses and organizations focuses on how tourism can positively impact local communities while protecting natural resources. One of their six focuses for the next 15 years is for a multi-modal “integrated region-wide transportation system which allows visitors to come, travel, explore, and connect – all without needing a car” (Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance). In order to do this they collaborate and connect public and private transportation providers to help visitors explore the Gorge by foot, bike, bus, or train through the Columbia Gorge Car Free (www.columbiagorgecarfree.com) website.

The Gorge TransLink Alliance

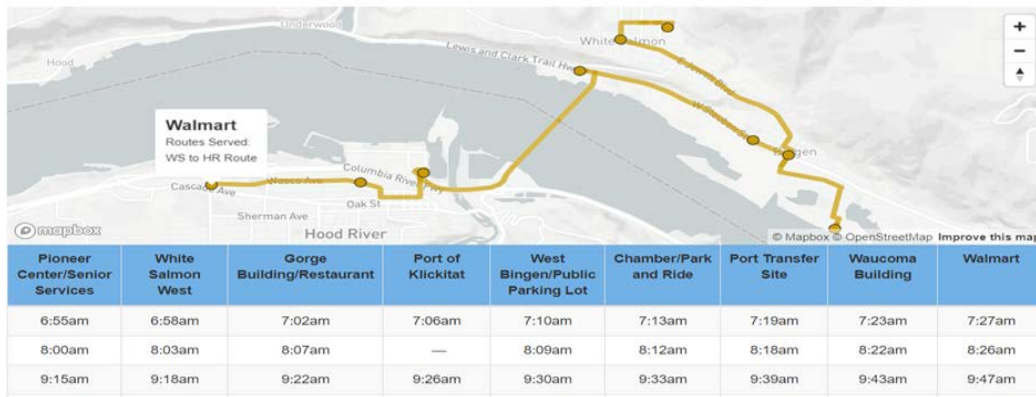
Columbia Area transit is an active participant of the Gorge TransLink Alliance. This is an alliance between the transportation providers of Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Klickitat, and Skamania Counties and is facilitated by MCEDD's Mobility Manager. The Mobility Manager works with the Alliance members and other partners to consider local and regional transportation services, service gaps, costs, funding needs, available funding sources, and appropriate technology enhancements. Additionally, this individual conducts community outreach and identifies collaboration and coordination opportunities between potential partners. The five transportation providers meet quarterly to address regional transportation concerns. The Mobility Manager position is grant funded and is supported by Gorge TransLink members through Agency Resolutions, memos of understanding, match, and in-kind assistance.

Projects completed:

GorgeTransLink.com Website Redevelopment: In 2019, the Gorge TransLink website was launched (www.gorgetranslink.com). This new website is rider-focused with a trip planner, interactive regional route map, timetables, and interactive local maps for each Alliance member. The website helps riders understand bus routes, schedules, payment options, and navigate transfers between multiple providers.

White Salmon to Hood River Route

White Salmon – Bingen – Hood River / Monday - Friday —



The GorgeTransLink.com website won a National Association for Development Organization award for this innovative project.

Everybody Rides/ ¡Todos Arriba! Marketing Campaign: The goal of the Everybody Rides/ ¡Todos Arriba! Marketing Campaign was to increase awareness of public transportation resources throughout the Columbia Gorge Region. This campaign received a National Association of Development Organizations Impact Award and the Transportation Options Group of Oregon Best Program of the Year award. It was funded by grants from the Columbia Gorge Health Council and ODOT. The following was achieved through this project:

- Campaign branding was created, including a logo and style guide for printed materials and social media.
- Stylized and easy to read regional transportation system map.
- Six fun videos featuring local organizations and character of the diverse five counties. Videos were in English and Spanish.
- English and Spanish rack cards explaining regional transportation services available
- Developed Gorge TransLink accounts and content on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Snap Chat in English and Spanish.
- Spanish Language Radio programming (1 and 2 hour programs), advertising, and live radio interviews.
- Conducted a community challenge with local prizes awarded.

Outreach Metrics	
Video (total views)	103,354
Facebook Total Reach (unique users)	134,735
Page Viral Reach (page shared with others)	86,210
Display Ads (total impressions)	384,378
Display Ads (Engagements - Spanish 51, English 49%)	681

Adoption of a Mobile Fare Application: By 2019 CAT, Mt. Adams Transportation and The Link had all adopted a Mobile Fare Application. The goal was originally for all providers to use HopThru so that users could use the same application for all Gorge TransLink providers. However, due to technology limitations of HopThru CAT switched to Token Transit when launching the GOrge Pass in early 2020.

The Gorge Commuter Pass Program: The Gorge Commuter Pass program allows employers to purchase annual transit passes for all their employees at a reduced rate. Insitu was the first employer to join the program which offers unlimited access to CAT and Mt. Adams fixed-route services.

Gorge Transit Strategy

The Gorge Regional Transit Strategy, being led by Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) is building recommendations from existing transportation plans to establish a foundation for a comprehensive transit strategy which would serve the bi-state, 5-county (including Hood River County), MCEDD region. This project is funded through ODOT'S Statewide Transportation Improvement Intercommunity Discretionary Fund. The overall goal being to address regional challenges (workforces mobility, affordable housing, tourism and outdoor recreation, traffic congestion and safety, access to higher education, jobs, social, medical, recreational) through improved transportation options (Mid-Columbia Economic Development District).

The Gorge Transit Strategy will consist of two phases:

- Phase 1: Review of existing transportation plan recommendations to create a foundation for a comprehensive transit strategy for the MCEDD region.
- Phase 2: Implementation strategy which will include additional data analysis, ridership forecasts, financial planning, and operational assessment.

This strategy is planned to be adopted by the MCEDD Board in March 2021. All Gorge Transit Regional Materials can be found at <https://gorgetranslink.com/gorge-transit-strategy/>.

Improved public transportation options can help address regional challenges:

- Workforce Mobility
- Affordable Housing
- Tourism and Outdoor Recreation
- Traffic Congestion and Safety
- Access to Higher Education, Jobs, Social, Medical, Recreation
- Environmental

Project Partners:

- Public Transportation Service Providers
- Local, State, Fed Government
- Tribal Representatives
- State and Fed Agencies
- Health and Wellness Organizations
- Higher Education
- Local Employers
- Local and Regional Planning entities
- Tourism and Outdoor Recreation
- Active Transportation

Transportation Innovations Through Collective Impact

The Transportation Innovations Through Collective Impact project was funded through a grant from Providence Health & Services, and PacificSource Community Solutions (Coordinated Care organization of the Columbia Gorge Region) to engage transportation providers and health and wellness organizations in a collaborative process to identify key regional transportation gaps and innovative transportation solutions. Four group sessions facilitated by the National Policy Consensus Center and spread over five months discussed improved mobility access to essential services that would help increase the quality of life for vulnerable populations. The group agreed that initiatives should focus on those populations not eligible for transportation subsidies and/or not covered for non-medical ‘wellness’ destinations.

The two graphs below list the mobility barriers identified and the and prioritized strategies.

Mobility Barriers Identified	
Navigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of First mile/last mile/bus stop infrastructure • Riders have difficulty making transfers from one bus or service to the next • Lack of Education, Training, Confidence of the Rider • Extended Service hours needed: weekends, early or late hours, holidays • Fare transactions are difficult to manage
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gorge residents need a “hospital van”: a vehicle that provides direct medical trips from Gorge region to Portland hospital facilities • Intercity Medical Trips (focus between The Dalles and Hood River) • Providers have difficulty serving people who live in remote rural areas • Vehicles have great difficulty accessing higher elevations in poor weather conditions
Communication and Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to make transfers from one bus or service to the next • Poor hospital staff to transportation staff discharge communication after medical appointments and hospitalization • Riders have difficulty with information discovery and use (website, paper schedules) • Language and literacy, cultural differences are significant barriers • Better Transportation and Health Agency coordination and communication needed
Door Through Door Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique challenges in Oregon to serve those who need door through door service • Institutional barriers include Oregon Health Authority policies and liability challenges • Transit drivers are not trained or provided liability coverage to serve clients inside the home (door through door).

Prioritized Strategies	
Better Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a system of communication and accountability between transportation agencies and health agencies. • Transportation agencies will continue to work together on a regional system • Coordinate a special service to Portland for medical appointments. • Strengthen health and wellness partnerships through the Gorge TransLink Alliance.
Travel Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop programs to teach both agency staff and riders how to use public transit (travel training and travel ambassadors). • Develop volunteer champion programs.
Fare System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a universal fare system for all transportation providers. • Develop fare mechanisms that can be purchased by social service or other organizations for their clients.
Door Through Door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a third-party system for door through door assistance, using existing volunteer and human service programs. • Coordinate “travel assistant” program with the transit providers.

Columbia Gorge Health Council's 2019 Community Health Assessment

The Columbia Gorge Health Council (CGHC) is a 501 (c)3 non-profit focused on the health and wellness of the Medicaid population in Hood River and Wasco Counties. CGHC works in partnership with the regional Coordinated Care Organization, PacificSource Community Solutions (Columbia Gorge Region), local health care leaders, human service agencies, providers, and community members to serve the needs of the low-income individuals and other vulnerable populations. The CGHC works with multiple regional organizations to every three years to complete a regional Community Health Assessment (CHA). The 2019 CHA was the third collaborative iteration of the assessment within the Columbia Gorge Region (Klickitat, Skamania, Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, and Wheeler counties).

Most of the data collected from the community was done through the consumer survey (mailed and hand-fielded surveys) and helped the region gain a common understanding of the health needs. This broad definition of health includes food, housing, transportation, sense of community, and access in addition to physical, dental, and mental health. The purpose of the Community Health Assessment was to:

1. Provide a statistically valid estimate of health and health needs by having a representative population sample and mail-based survey.
2. Supplement mailed surveys with hand-fielded surveys targeted toward underrepresented communities whose residents may change address often or do not have a traditional mailing address.

The 2019 CHA found that transportation is the highest unmet need in the Columbia Gorge Region. The combined Survey responses showed that a lack of transportation reduced access to health care, food, childcare, social activities, and exercise. Of low-income households, 26% reported going without transportation, which is an increase of 4.3% from the 2016 update.



Transportation barriers means people go without transportation when they really need it or go without basic needs like healthcare and food due to transportation or distance. Transportation is the highest unmet need.

% of Households going without Transportation



10% of Households said



6% of Households said



8% of Households said



Transportation issues were not experienced equally among different income groups. The 2019 Community Health Assessment found that a household of four living on a total of \$49,200 a year (or 200% Federal Poverty Level) is 15 times more likely to struggle with transportation needs than households earning more than 200% FPL (Columbia Gorge Health Council, 2019). Below are selected answers from the CHA based on community members location of residence. These answers show the variety of needs throughout Hood River County.

Selected answer to question	Hood River County	Cascade Locks, Dee, Parkdale	HR Westside	HR Downtown & The Heights	Odell, Mid-Valley, Pine Grove
Went without transportation due to lack of money.	11.5%	13.9%	5.8%	16.4%	6.0%
I have housing of my own, but I am worried about losing it.	9.3%	20.3%	3.8%	9.4%	4.0%
Went without food or meals due to lack of money	8.3%	13.9%	2.6%	8.3%	10.1%
Went without food or meals because of no transportation or the distance too far.	6.9%	9.7%	5.1%	8.0%	2.0%
Went without healthcare because of no transportation or the distance too far.	5.2%	8.3%	5.1%	4.3%	2.0%
Went without childcare because of no transportation or the distance too far.	1.8%	1.4%	2.6%	0%	4.0%
Went without social activities because of no transportation or the distance too far.	13.2%	20.7%	6.4%	15%	8.1%
Went without exercise or sports because of no transportation or the distance too far.	9.2%	19.3%	3.8%	6.0%	10.1%

Coordinated Care Organizations and Non-Emergency Medical Transportation

A Coordinated Care Organization is defined as a network of all types of health care providers (physical health care, addictions and mental health care and dental care providers) who work together in their local communities to serve people who receive health care coverage under the Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid). Hood River County's CCO is PacificSource. As a CCO PacificSource focuses on prevention and help people manage chronic conditions to reduce unnecessary emergency room visits and support healthy lifestyles. In 2019, the Oregon Health Authority enacted new requirements to reduce the cost of Oregon's Medicaid program and improve medical care of OHP members. This has become known as CCO 2.0.

As part of these new requirements, CCO's (PacificSource) must focus on Governor Brown's four priority areas (improve behavioral health system, increase value and pay for performance, focus on social determinants of health, and maintain sustainable cost growth) through January 1, 2024. Additionally, new requirements were also put in place for contracted transportation brokerages who setup non-emergency medical transportation

(Medicaid benefit) and the direct transportation providers. Logisticare contracted with PacificSource in late 2019 to become the current transportation brokerage.

Conflicting goals are a fundamental challenge to human services and public transportation coordination. Public transportation goals involve transporting as many people as possible in the most cost-effective way possible. Public transportation goals include serving the entire community. For the CCO, transportation is a benefit provided only to eligible clients, with a focus on individual needs, not general public or community needs.

These conflicting goals were highlighted by the 2013 Transportation-Human Services Coordination Study, a collaborative effort by ODOT's Public Transit Division (PTD) and the Oregon Department of Human Services. The study examined the opportunities and barriers for improved coordination of public transportation and human services in Oregon. A primary conclusion of the study was that the greatest potential for improved coordination is at the state agency level. However, currently there is no state mandate for coordination and, with exceptions, coordination among state agencies is limited at best. The 2013 study noted that the absence of a statewide policy forum for discussion of how transportation services will be provided in the State's new Coordinated Care Organizations (CCO) model was an example of the need for collaboration among state agencies and regional and local service providers on coordination policy and implementation.

As was noted in the 2013 ODOT Transportation-Human Services Coordination Study, better coordination and communication between DHS, OHA, the CCOs, Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs, and public transportation providers should be established in order to create a coordinated, efficient, and effective transportation system that serves the entire community. The study recommended establishing a Statewide Transportation-Human Services Coordination Initiative to accomplish these objectives:

1. Identify actions to overcome regulatory, jurisdictional, geographic, and cultural barriers to coordination.
2. Identify opportunities to improve regional and out-of-region connectivity in public transportation and human services.
3. Identify opportunities to leverage public transportation funding and resources at the state and local levels to achieve cost efficiencies and strengthen the public transportation system.
4. Engage service providers, including Coordinated Care Organizations, in order to increase their awareness about the most efficient and effective transportation service options.
5. Identify opportunities for interagency coordination with veterans programs and public transportation services, barriers to veterans transportation and strategies to address them, and opportunities to improve coordination with brokerages for veterans transportation.

A more recent study published by the Eno Center for Transportation in 2020 also points to the need for coordination between NEMT, the second largest publicly funded transportation program after public transit. Medicaid NEMT costs were estimated at \$3 billion in 2014, which are less than 1 percent of total Medicaid costs, but equal to about 25 percent of total federal transit expenditures that year (Eno Center for Transportation, 2020). This study also highlights the need for coordination between the largest subsidized transportation programs in the US: Public Transit, Medicaid NEMT, and VA transportation.

In the short-term, the CAT and other public transportation providers have the opportunity to work with the CCO and OHA to clarify OHA's goals and intentions and to continue to communicate the consequences and impacts of those requirements on public transportation providers. Additionally, CAT and The Link Public Transit can work with the brokerage to identify strategies for better coordination and support for public transportation services.

APPENDIX I – OVERVIEW OF COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN ADOPTIONS

2007-2010 Coordinated Transportation Plan Adoption

The first draft of this coordinated transportation plan was presented to the Hood River County Special Transportation Fund committee on January 8, 2007 and to the Hood River Transportation District Board of Directors on January 10, 2007. It was discussed at both meetings. The draft plan was approved for submission to the Oregon Department of Transportation with the applications to the Public Transit Division Discretionary Grant Program. The final plan was completed in April 2007.

2009-2012 Coordinated Transportation Plan Update

Under contract with Association of Oregon Counties, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District began updating the plan for 2009-2012. A draft was presented to the Hood River County Special Transportation Fund committee in January and March 2009 and to the Hood River Transportation District Board in February 2009. The draft plan was also posted on MCEDD's website (<http://www.mcedd.org>) for public review between February 2009 and March 2009. Stakeholders were encouraged to provide feedback. The final plan was approved by the Hood River County Special Transportation Fund committee in March 2009 and by the Hood River Transportation District Board on April 8, 2009.

2016-2019 Coordinated Transportation Plan Update

Under an ODOT subcontract with the Hood River County Transportation District, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District began updating the plan for 2016-2019. A draft was presented to the Hood River County Special Transportation Fund committee on August 31, 2016 and October 6, 2016 and to the Hood River Transportation District Board on October 12, 2016. The draft plan was also posted on MCEDD's website (<http://www.mcedd.org>) for public review between August and September 2016. Stakeholders were encouraged to provide feedback. The final plan was approved by the Hood River County Special Transportation Fund committee on October 6, 2016 and by the Hood River Transportation District Board on October 12, 2016.

2020-2023 Coordinated Transportation Plan

Hood River County Transportation District updated the plan for 2020-2023. A draft was distributed to the Hood River County Transportation District Transportation Advisory Committee and Board of Directors on October 28th, 2020. The draft plan was posted to the Columbia Area Transit website October 2020 through November 2020 for public review. The final plan was approved by the Hood River County Transportation District Board of Directors on November 18, 2020.

Future Plan Reviews:

This plan is designed to be reviewed and updated at least once every three years. It should be reviewed and updated by 2023/24.