



Friday, December 7th, 2022
Hood River County Transportation District
STIF Advisory Committee Meeting

224 Wasco Loop, Board Conference Room
Hood River, OR 97031
4:00pm – 5:00pm
Agenda

The Hood River County Transportation District STIF Advisory Committee meeting can now be attended live through Zoom conferencing technology. Members of the public can attend by computer <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84982320929?pwd=TzY1elh5dVMyc0N2Sm5zS1JqL09ndz09> or by calling (253)215-8782, Meeting ID: 849 8232 0929, Password: 886578

- 1) Call Meeting to Order – 4:00 p.m.**
- 2) Roll Call**
- 3) Confirm STIF Discretionary & Statewide Network Funding Projects**
 - Review project summaries
 - Prioritize projects
- 4) STIF Poverty Threshold for Hood River County**
 - Review existing threshold by Census Tracts
 - Confirm poverty threshold for Hood River County
- 5) STIF 23-25 Biennium Projects**
 - Review projects
 - Prioritize projects
 - Recommendation to Board for approval
- 6) Meeting Adjourned – 5:00pm**

To request a reasonable accommodation or language interpreter, including alternative formats and translation of printed materials, please contact CAT's Administration Office no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting at 541-386-4202 (voice) or 7-1-1 (TTY through Oregon Relay Service).

Take CAT to the Meeting! Call (541) 386-4202 for more information on routes and services that come to the CAT Administrative Offices. Masks are required to be worn while on CAT buses and at CAT offices.

Se Habla Español.



STIF DISCRETIONARY AND STATEWIDE NETWORK PROJECT SUMMARIES

Columbia Gorge Express Intercity Service (Staff Priority Recommendation 1)

Hood River County Transportation District (HRCTD) has submitted a letter of intent to apply for 2023-25 STIF Statewide Transit Network funds to preserve existing service levels on the Columbia Gorge Express (CGE). CGE has proven its role as an important part of the Statewide Transit Network and as a backbone for the transit service in the Columbia River Gorge. The CGE travels along the I-84 corridor between Hood River, Cascade Locks, Multnomah Falls, Troutdale, and Portland seven days a week. For this next biennium The Link/MCEDD will apply and operate the service between The Dalles, Mosier and Hood River which historically was done by CAT.

Almost more important than achieving local mobility goals, the State's investment in the CGE's frequent, reliable service in the I-84 corridor has changed the way that land managers and local decision makers are thinking about access management, land use, parking and traffic congestion efforts throughout the Gorge. Some examples include trailhead permit program (Dog Mountain), parking permits (Multnomah Falls), TOD planning (Cascade Locks); TDM strategies (downtown Hood River); transit hub/development (Hood River Port); Car-Free Tourism promotion (Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance) transit investment (CAT, LINK, MATS & Skamania Transit) and the development of a long-range vision and strategy for the regional transit system (MCEDD & Gorge Partners).

Continued investment will further reinforce:

- how transit can help shape viable and effective transportation/land use options for local communities;
- how local investments in alternative and active modes of transportation will be supported; and,
- how good regional transit and long-term efforts to preserve natural areas, ensure job growth and secure new affordable housing options are connected.

Intelligent Information Systems (Staff Priority Recommendation 2)

Hood River County Transportation District (HRCTD) submitted a letter of intent to apply for STIF Discretionary funds to procure and implement Intelligent Information Systems (ITS) including but not limited to APC's, upgraded dispatching software, real time passenger information systems, and dynamic fare payment solutions.

Ridership is currently collected manually by drivers and then collated by office staff. It is generally acknowledged that while the staff is diligent in tracking ridership and reviewing reporting that passenger trips are undercounted. The current process for tracking ridership allows for human error and the amount of fare revenue collected has been higher than what ridership numbers have reflected.

The projected outcome for this project is that APC's, upgraded dispatching software, and dynamic fare payment solutions would allow the district to have accurate ridership information and improved data for budget, planning, and reporting purposes. Additionally, there will be an improved user experience with enhanced Wi-Fi, improved trip scheduling, simplified payment systems and increased access to information for passengers.

The Link (MCEDD) is considering joining the request. This would allow for increased coordination between the two providers and consistent user experience for riders.

Gorge Regional Transit Network: Inclusive Outreach and Education Project (Staff Priority Recommendation 3)

The Link (MCEDD) submitted a letter of intent to apply for STIF Discretionary funds for the Gorge Regional Transit Network – Inclusive Outreach and Education Project. Hood River County Transportation District will contribute to the match. The Gorge TransLink Alliance is a partnership of five public transportation providers that serve a rural, bistate region. The regional fixed route transit network has recently expanded significantly, but surveys show that many residents are still unaware of or don't know how to use this important public resource. The primary goal of the Gorge Regional Transit Network Public Outreach and Education project is to increase ridership, especially among the transportation disadvantaged residents who live within the service area (includes Portland/Vancouver) of the providers by using culturally appropriate and engaging outreach and education strategies.

Through this project the below deliverables will be created.

- Co-create messaging and outreach activities with community-based organizations
- Develop new outreach communications targeting transportation disadvantaged populations in the regional transit service area using inclusive photography, events, guided transit trips, social media, printed materials including targeted itineraries & trip guides: Migrant/Seasonal Farmworkers, Limited English Proficiency, older adults, people with disabilities, houseless population, Native Americans
- Integrate gorgetranslink.com, gorgepass.com, Columbiagorgecarfree.com and review for accessibility
- Simplify all communications to present the local fixed route services as one regional network

- Expand the reach of the Gorge Equity fund, which provides free annual passes to low-income residents
- Communicate first mile/last mile/walk-roll options



Memo

To: HRCTD – STIF ADVISORY COMMITTEE
From: Amy Schlappi, Executive Director
Date: December 7, 2022
Re: Definition of High Percentage of Low-Income Households

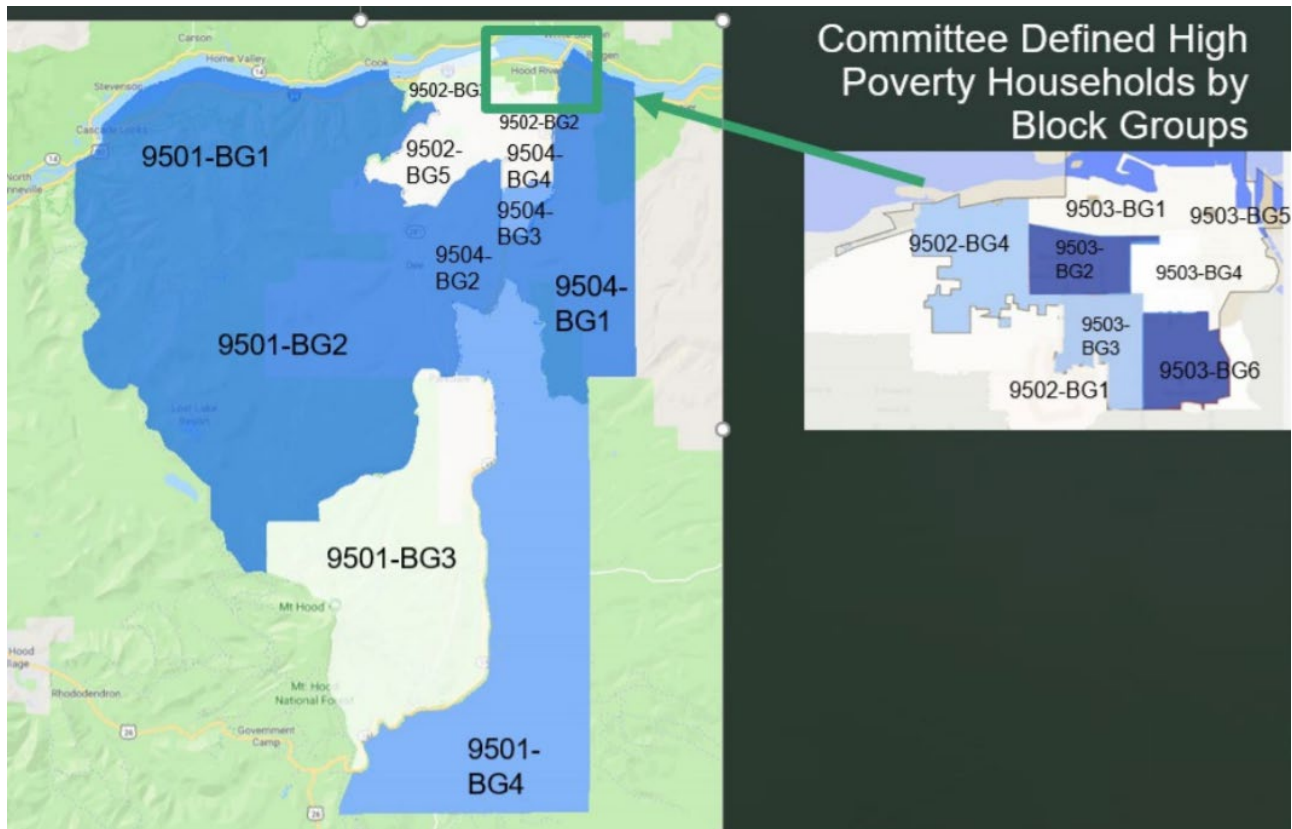
Background

Per the STIF Advisory Committee Bylaws and pursuant to OAR 732-040-0035(2)(a), it is the responsibility of the Advisory Committee to determine what percentage of low-income individuals in a specific geographic area is required to be considered a “high percentage of low-income households”. Low-Income Household is defined by a household total income of which does not exceed 200% of the poverty guidelines updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C 9902(2) for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia.

For the 2021-2023 Biennium STIF Plan the STIF Advisory Committee chose to make the threshold for Hood River County to be defined 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. This is visually depicted in the graph and image below.

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%	150% - 185%	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



For the 2023 – 2025 Biennium staff are using Remix, an ODOT recommended tool, to map the poverty rate threshold. Remix looks at the poverty threshold of each census block group instead of only the percentage of individuals who reside in the block group that earn a household income of 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) or less. Per the U.S. Census Bureau the poverty threshold is defined by: “Following the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive 14, the Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family’s total income is less than the family’s threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The official poverty definition uses money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps). “

The below graph shows the block groups and the percentage of individuals who earn a household income of 200% of the FPL or less and people per square mile falling below the poverty threshold. The dark orange color depicts a higher number of individuals who are below the poverty threshold by block group. As you can see the data set is a bit confusing because a block group that has a high percentage of individuals within 200% of the FPL has a lower amount of people who fall below the poverty threshold. For example, tract 9501 block group 4 has 52% of people who earn a household income within 200%, but does not have a large amount of people per square mile who fall below the poverty threshold.

Tract	Block Group	% of people within the 200% of the poverty threshold
9501	4	52
9501	3	48.7
9503	3	45.3
9503	2	44.8
9501	1	36.6
9504	3	32.9
9501	2	32.6
9504	1	30.8
9503	1	27.9
9502	1	21.7
9503	3	19
9504	2	18.3
9503	2	16.2
9503	1	15.5
9502	1	12.5
9504	4	11.6
9502	3	9.5
9502	2	8.8
9502	2	1.8

Poverty   

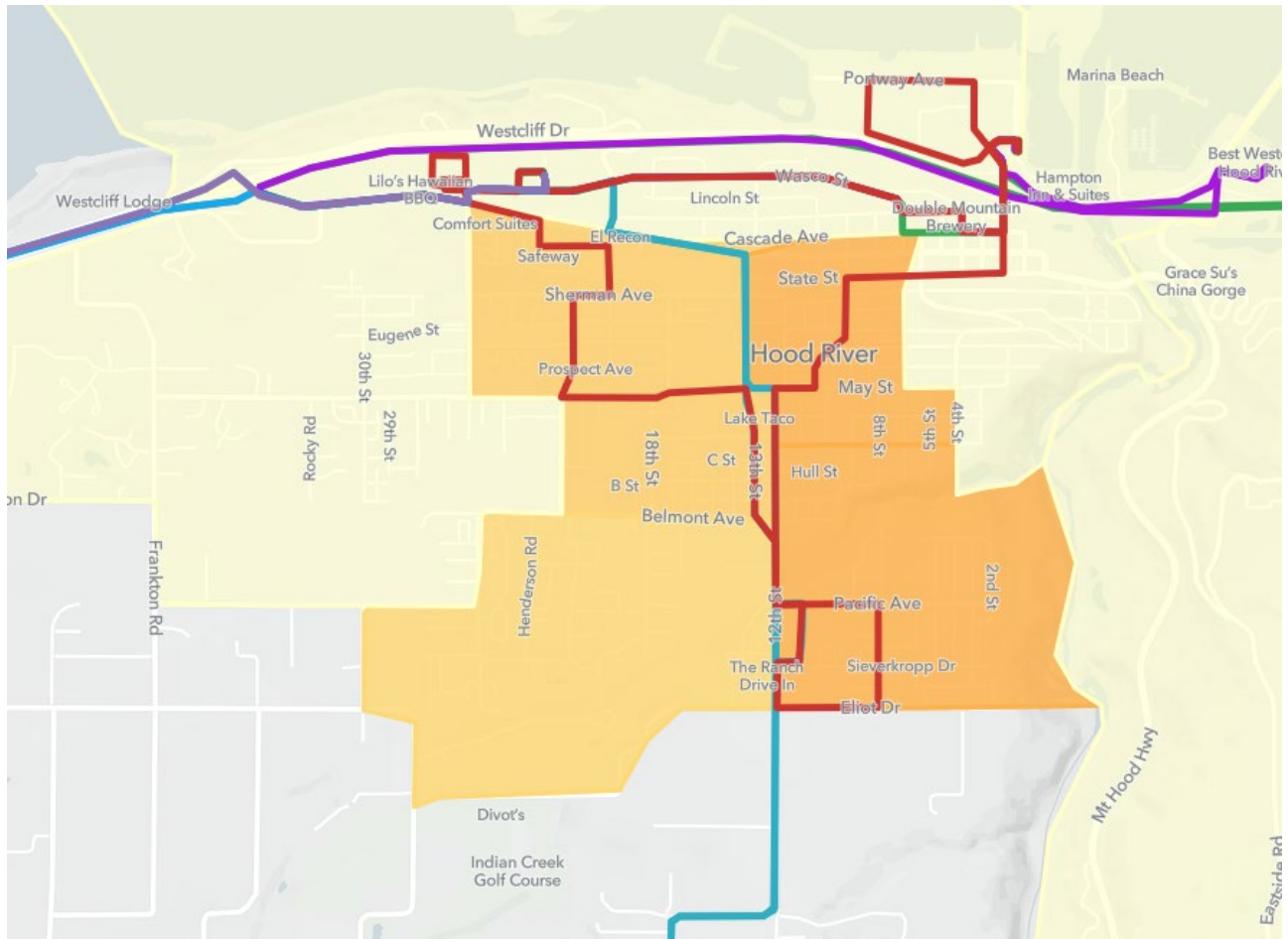
People per square mile falling below the [poverty threshold](#), by block group.

Last updated in Remix: 4 months ago



The maps below include all census block groups within the county that have 15% or more of the population within 200% of FPL and considered below the poverty threshold. The dark orange color depicts a higher number of individuals who are below the poverty threshold by block group.





Impact

The intent of defining graphical areas where there is a high percentage of low-income households is to ensure STIF formula funds are serving vulnerable community members.

Action Required

The STIF Advisory Committee must determine what percentage of low-income individuals in a specific geographic area is required to be considered a high percentage of low-income households.

Options

Based on committee members' knowledge of the community they may choose one of the options below or adjust the definition as appropriate:

1. Keep Status Quo – Keep the threshold 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.



2. Reduce the Threshold – Due to the current inflation and increasing gas prices the committee may choose to reduce the threshold to Census block groups within the County that have 15% or more of households with an income level that is 200% or less of the federal poverty standards. The intent would be to recognize that the cost of living has increased, and additional households could benefit from an updated definition.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends reducing the threshold to 15% of the block group of households with an income level that is 200% or less of the federal poverty standards.

Potential Projects for 23-25 Biennium

It's the Advisory Committee's responsibility to approve or reject project proposals and to recommend project prioritization. All proposed projects must include the contents described in OAR 732-042-0015(3).

The Advisory Committee should consider the following criteria when reviewing project proposals:

Whether the project would:

- Increase the frequency of bus service to communities with a high percentage of low-income households
- Expand bus routes and bus services to serve communities with a high percentage of low-income households
- Reduce fares for public transportation in communities with a high percentage of low-income households
- Result in procurement of buses that are powered by natural gas or electricity for use in areas with a population of 200,000 or more
- Improve the frequency and reliability of service connections between communities inside and outside of the Qualified Entity's service area
- Increase the coordination between Public Transportation Service Providers to reduce fragmentation in the provision of public transportation service
- Expand student transit services for students in grades 9 through 12
- Enhance services for older adults and people with disabilities
- Whether the project would maintain an existing service
- The extent to which the project goals meet public transportation needs and are a responsible use of public funds
- The extent to which the project might benefit or burden historically- or currently-marginalized communities both now and in the long term
- Other factors to be determined by the Qualified Entity or Advisory Committee (e.g., geographic equity)

Qualified Entities are required to identify how each STIF Plan project is consistent with Oregon Public Transportation Plan goals and policies and are encouraged to review and consider these goals prior to selecting projects that will be included in their STIF Plan.

Goal 1: Mobility – Public Transportation User Experience People of all ages, abilities, and income levels move reliably and conveniently between destinations using an affordable, well-coordinated public transportation system. People in Oregon routinely use public transportation to meet their daily needs.

Goal 2: Accessibility and Connectivity – Getting from Here to There Riders experience user-friendly and convenient public transportation connections to and between services and travel modes in urban, suburban, rural, regional, and interstate areas.

Goal 3: Community Livability and Economic Vitality Public transportation promotes community livability and economic vitality by efficiently and effectively moving people of all ages to and from homes, jobs, businesses, schools and colleges, and other destinations in urban, suburban, and rural areas.

Goal 4: Equity Public transportation provides affordable, safe, efficient, and equitable transportation to jobs, services, and key destinations, improving quality of life for all Oregonians.

Goal 5: Health Public transportation fosters improved health of Oregonians by promoting clean air, enhancing connections between people, enabling access to services such as health care and goods such as groceries, and by giving people opportunities to integrate physical activity into everyday life through walking and bicycling to and from public transportation.

Goal 6: Safety and Security Public transportation trips are safe; riders feel safe and secure during their travel. Public transportation contributes to the resilience of Oregon communities.

Goal 7: Environmental Sustainability Public transportation contributes to a healthy environment and climate by moving more people with efficient, low-emission vehicles, reducing greenhouse gases and other pollutants.

Goal 8: Land Use Public transportation is a tool that supports Oregon's state and local land use goals and policies. Agencies collaborate to ensure public transportation helps shape great Oregon communities providing efficient and effective travel options in urban, suburban, and rural areas.

Goal 9: Funding and Strategic Investment Strategic investment in public transportation supports the overall transportation system, the economy, and Oregonians' quality of life. Sustainable and reliable funding enables public transportation services and infrastructure to meet public needs.

Goal 10: Communication, Collaboration, and Coordination Public and private transportation providers and all levels of government within the state and across state boundaries work collaboratively and foster partnerships that make public transportation seamless regardless of jurisdiction.