



Transit Master Plan

Hood River County Transportation District
Final Report: Public Engagement Plan

April 2023
Prepared by: Cogito, LLC



INTRODUCTION

This summary reviews the CAT Transportation Master Plan's (TMP) public engagement process (PEP), its strategies, actions, communication tools, and the resulting broad, inclusive, and thoughtful community input.

To ensure that the public engagement represented the diverse community interests of Hood River County, the TMP staff implemented an extensive and inclusive process. Outreach efforts, tailored to reach people in practical and convenient ways, resulted in a broad spectrum of perspectives from current and potential system users, Hood River County's jurisdictions, tribes, local and regional businesses, social service agencies, educational institutions, and recreation stakeholders.

The primary operating tenet for TMP public engagement was to provide:

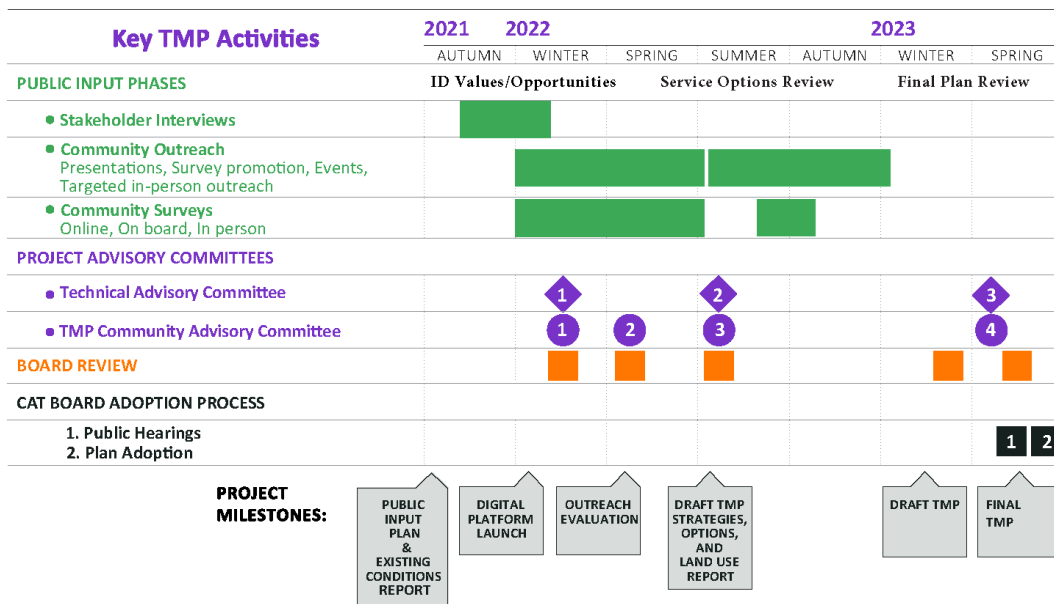
Hood River County stakeholders meaningful and easily accessible input opportunities throughout the TMP process with an intentional focus on broader involvement by historically marginalized communities, including but not limited to low-income individuals, youth, people with disabilities, seniors, immigrants, and Limited English Proficiency individuals.

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Before launching the outreach process, the CAT TMP staff contacted community stakeholders to affirm the proposed public engagement approach, explore additional opportunities for outreach leveraging, and understand the most appropriate and effective ways to reach historically underrepresented community voices. As a result, representatives from the following stakeholder groups enhanced, broadened, and deepened the TMP public reach:

- The Next Door
- Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District
- US Forest Service
- Mid-Columbia Housing Authority
- Port of Hood River
- City of Hood River
- Hood River County
- City of Cascade Locks
- Hood River County School District
- One Community Health
- Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
- Columbia Gorge Community College

The below figure provides an overview of the approach taken with three distinct phases and the jurisdictional and community advisors for the CAT Transit Master Plan Update.



PHASE ONE: IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY VALUES & OPPORTUNITIES

The CAT staff and TMP team began the public input process with two initial overarching questions to community members:

1. What value does transit bring to your community?
2. What are your priorities for transit and its future?

To gather this input, project staff developed an online bi-lingual Community Survey #1, open from February until July 2022, and available on the project website and via hard copy surveys. Examples of additional outreach occurred at public meetings, in-person outreach at coffee shops and grocery stores, intercept surveys on buses, and community partnerships to reach Hood River County's Spanish-speaking community members.

Community Survey #1 Summary is available in the TMP appendices and contains all the online and paper responses and English and Spanish paper versions.

PHASE TWO: SERVICE OPTIONS DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

Based on input from the Values & Opportunities phase, the CAT team developed a range of transit service options to share with the public. The options stemmed from the planning context of:

Cross tab Community Survey #1 data analysis from the five-focus areas

- Identified operational issues or concerns
- Local feedback on community-focused support strategies

To understand community preferences, **Community Survey #2** presented the potential service options by focus areas for review and input. As with the previous survey approach, the Community Survey #2 bi-lingual survey was available online and via paper survey copies. In addition to media releases, email updates, presentations, and community signage, and targeted outreach by project team members included going where the people were: on buses, at coffee shops, at work, libraries, and grocery stores.

Community Survey #2 Summary is available in the TMP appendices and contains all the online and paper responses and English and Spanish paper versions.



PHASE THREE: FINAL PLAN REVIEW

Before the formal Hood River County Transit District's (HRCTD) Board adoption, the CAT TMP staff presented the draft plan for review by its Technical Advisory Committee and the Citizen Advisory Committee. Additionally, CAT staff offered presentations to the Hood River County Board of Commissioners, the City of Hood River, the City of Cascade Locks, the Gorge Health Equity Collaborative, the Hood River Chamber, and The Next Door Board.

The public has two formal public hearing opportunities at the HRCTD Board meetings:

- April 17, 2023
- May 19, 2023

For broader input, CAT staff advertised review opportunities with public notices of HRCTD meetings, e-updates to the TMP interested parties list, and requests to the TMP's advisory bodies to assist with public notification of the draft TMP in May and April 2023.



ADVISING THE PLAN

With appreciation for the time dedicated to this process by jurisdictional staff and community members, the TMP process benefitted from the two advisory committees' expertise, experience, and enthusiasm for transit in Hood River County.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Comprised of CAT staff, regional jurisdictions, state and federal agencies, and quasi-public entities, the CAT Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) served as the plan's core technical advisors on project deliverables. Providing timely review and input toward the development of the draft and final HRCTD Transit Master Plan, the TAC met three times to review and discuss the following items:

Meeting #1: Project Overview, TAC Role, and Responsibilities, PEP Review, Existing Conditions

Meeting #2: Draft TMP Strategies, Options, and Land Use

Meeting #3: Draft TMP Plan

The TAC representation included:

- Dustin Nielsen, City of Hood River
- Jordon Bennett, City of Cascade Locks
- Stephan Elgart, U.S. Forest Service
- Jeremy Evans, Mt. Hood Meadows
- Valerie Egon, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)
- Genevieve Scholl, Port of Hood River
- Olga Kaganova, Port of Cascade Locks
- Eve Nilender, Multnomah County
- Dan Spatz, Columbia Gorge Community College
- Krystyna Wolniakowski, Columbia River Gorge Commission
- Todd Rainwater, Hood River County School District
- Kathy Fitzpatrick, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD)

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Appointed by the CAT Board, a group of community members with CAT Board representation served as advisors to TMP staff and CAT Board with the tasks of:

- Guiding the development of the TMP
- Assisting with public outreach
- Monitoring the scope of the public input
- Reviewing draft deliverables and input from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and other CAT committees' input

The CAC composition included representation from:

- Lara Dunn, HRCTD Board
- White Buffalo Calf Wannassay, Business
- Wendy Lin-Kelly, Current Rider
- Beth Hart, Current Rider
- Britta Wilson, Current Rider
- Melvin Richardson, Current Rider
- Jody Bahr, Real Estate
- Taylor England, Social Services
- Ivy Collins, Youth

The CAC met four times with the following tasks:

Meeting #1: Project Overview, TAC Role, and Responsibilities, PEP Review, Existing Conditions

Meeting #2: Public Outreach Evaluation

Meeting #3: Review of draft TMP Strategies, Options, and Land Use

Meeting #4: Review of draft TMP Plan

TMP OUTREACH MATERIALS

In addition to the TMP website, engagecatbus.org, bilingual online and paper surveys, press releases, e-updates, and media interviews, the CAT TMP staff went to where the people were and made input accessible, easy, and engaging. Bilingual outreach tools such as fact sheets, display boards, bookmarks, onboard rack cards, A-frame signage, and bus shelter stickers heightened the awareness of the planning process. These materials, coupled with the CAT TMP staff's inviting, bright, and magnetic energy to welcome all perspectives and share the importance of input, proved hugely successful. The result was broad representation and invaluable community relationship building. See the appendix for example outreach materials.

TMP OUTREACH LOCATIONS

Over the course of the planning process, the CAT TMP staff tirelessly and enthusiastically went to the following locations¹ for in-person outreach, to set up information stations, present TMP information, and promote and conduct intercept surveys:

Regional

- Wasco County Health Fair
- Columbia Gorge Health Council
- CAT Rider Appreciation Day at Mt. Hood Meadows
- Gorge Native American Collective
- Gorge Regionally Houseless Committee
- Emergency Preparedness for Vulnerable Populations
- Covid-19 Vaccination Clinic
- Gorge Transit Connect
- MCEDD
- Columbia Gorge Express Route
- Chenoweth Family Night, The Dalles
- Native Youth Trunk and Treat, Bingen, Washington



¹ * Indicates two or more outreach sessions at location

Cascade Locks

- Cascade Locks CAT westbound/eastbound stops
- Cascade Locks City Hall
- Cascade Locks Food Bank
- Thirsty Coffee Shop
- Best Western Cascade Locks
- Bridgham Fish Market
Cascade Locks
- Bridge of the Gods RV/Motel
- KOA*
- Thunder Island Brewery
- Kaile'a Coffee Company
- Port Office
- Sternwheeler Cafe/offices
- Pacific Trail Days

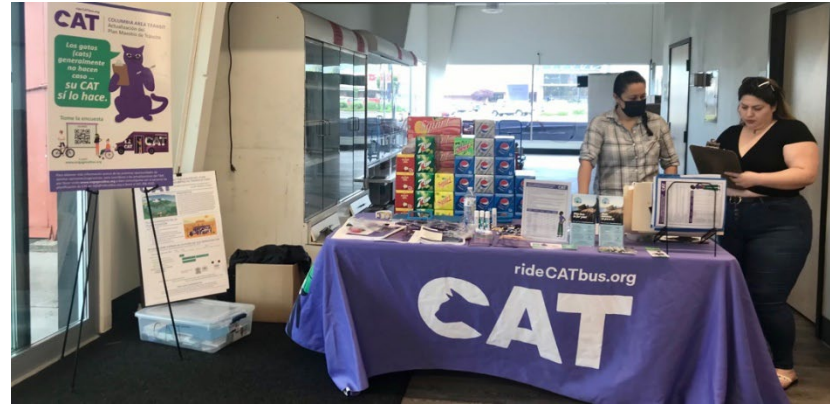


Hood River

- Dog River Coffee*
- Hood River Public Library
- CAT bus stops
- Best Western*
- Starbucks
- Shell Gas Station
- Pine Street Bakery
- Double Mountain
- Elks Club
- Hood River Food Bank
- Rosauers Supermarket *
- Mercado Guadalajara *
- CAT Transfer Lobby
- One Community Health Bus Stop
- Westside Elementary Family Night
- Westside Elementary Immigrant Family Night
- Saturday Market
- Marco Sports

Odell/Parkdale

- Chevron Gas Station
- La Mexicana Carniceria
- Gustavo's Auto Repair
- Odell Fire House
- Mid Valley Elementary School
- Pour Girls Espresso
- Solera Brewery
- Parkdale Public Library
- Odell Mobile Home Park
- La Michoacan



- Parkdale Laundry Place
- Odell Mid-Valley Market
- Upper Valley CAT Route
- One Community Health clients
- The Next Door clients

COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND COLLABORATION

In addition to the HRCTD Board, the TAC and CAC, CAT staff, and drivers, and interviewed stakeholders, the TMP engagement's success is primarily due to the efforts of the



shared CAT/MCEDD Mobility and Travel Training Program Manager, Sara Crook, and Celeste Peralta from the Next Door, Inc. Their commitment and dedication to gathering input and encouraging participation by those familiar and unfamiliar with how an individual can shape their community's future is worthy of high praise and sincere recognition.



APPENDIX

TMP OUTREACH MATERIALS

rideCATbus.org

CAT

Cats usually don't listen to you ... your CAT does.



Your CAT is curious.
Curious about where you go in your community, throughout the county, and region.
Curious about how transit can help get you there and help create healthy and vibrant Hood River County communities.

For more info contact CAT planning staff at info@ridecatbus.org or 541-386-4202.

Share with CAT your ideas about the places that make your community great and how CAT can be a part of it.
Take the CAT Transit Master Plan Survey today.

SCAN



OR VISIT

engage.ridecatbus.org

rideCATbus.org

CAT

Los gatos (cats) generalmente no hacen caso. ... Su CAT sí lo hace.



Su CAT tiene mucha curiosidad.
Curiosidad por saber a dónde viaja usted por su comunidad, por todo el condado y por la región.
Curiosidad acerca de cómo el tránsito público puede ayudarlo a llegar allí y ayudar a crear comunidades saludables y vibrantes en el Condado Hood River.

Para obtener más información comuníquese con el personal de planificación de CAT en info@ridecatbus.org o bien al llame al 541-386-4202.

Comparta con CAT sus ideas acerca de los lugares que hacen que su comunidad sea excelente y cómo CAT puede ser parte de ella.

Tome hoy mismo la encuesta del Plan Maestro de Tránsito CAT.

ESCANEE



O VISITE

www.engagecatbus.org



El Distrito de Transporte del Condado Hood River (HRCOTD, por sus siglas en inglés), el cual opera bajo el nombre Columbia Area Transit (CAT), se encuentra actualizando su Plan Maestro de Tránsito (TMP, por sus siglas en inglés) de 2017. Desde principios de 2022 y hasta la primavera de 2023, se invita a las comunidades del Condado Hood River a revisar, reflexionar y brindar dirección renovada a los servicios de tránsito que les brindan servicios. La actualización del TMP es el momento oportuno para poder abordar los cambios del Condado Hood River, tales como su creciente población, el aumento en el volumen de visitas de recreación y turismo, la expansión de opciones de empleo locales y regionales y las oportunidades de nuevas y disponibles opciones de transporte (por ejemplo, bicicletas compartidas, camionetas compartidas, *scooters* electrónicos, bicicletas eléctricas, etc.).

- ✓ Permitir que la participación sea fácil y significativa
- ✓ Priorizar las necesidades del pasajero
- ✓ Participar en asociaciones con reciprocidad
- ✓ Integrar oportunidades regionales
- ✓ Identificar mejoras a corto plazo que avancen hacia la visión a largo plazo
- ✓ Enfoque en la implementación



Consulte a continuación las próximas oportunidades para aportar opiniones/sugerencias al TMP.

*Todas tenemos un lugar donde estar...
CAT se encuentra formulando una mejor manera de llegar allí.
Únase a la conversión acerca de dónde, cuándo y cómo.*

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CAT TRANSIT MASTER PLAN (TMP) UPDATE

*Cats usually don't listen to you ...
your CAT does.*

PURPOSE

The Hood River County Transportation District (HRCTD), operating as Columbia Area Transit (CAT), is updating its 2017 Transit Master Plan (TMP). Between early 2022 and spring 2023, Hood River County communities are invited to review, reflect, and provide refreshed direction for the transit services that serve them. The TMP update is timely to address changes in Hood River County such as its growing population, increasing recreation and tourism draw, expanding local and regional employment choices and opportunities for new and available transportation options (e.g., bike sharing, vanpools, e-scooters, e-bikes, etc.).

PLANNING APPROACH

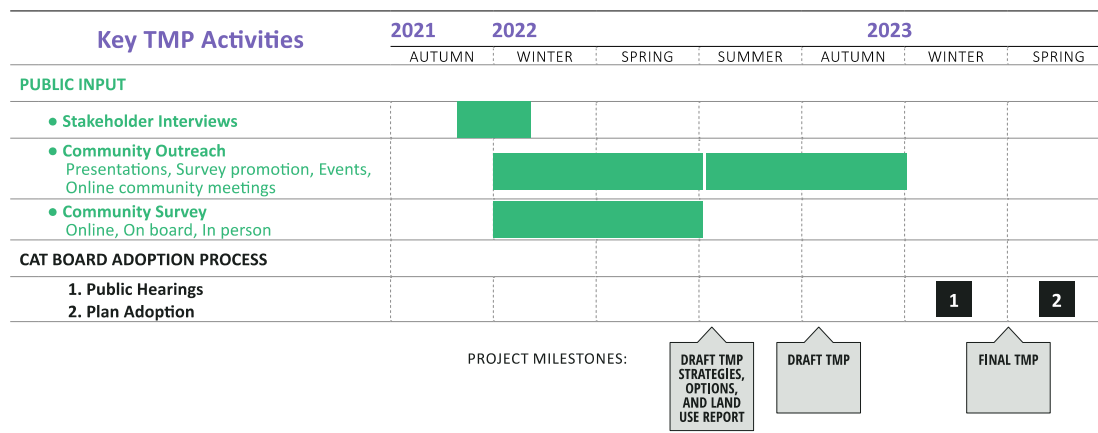
CAT will lead the process using six core TMP planning principles:

- ✓ **Make participation easy and meaningful**
- ✓ **Put the passenger first**
- ✓ **Engage partnerships with reciprocity**
- ✓ **Integrate regional opportunities**
- ✓ **Identify short-term improvements that move towards the long-term vision**
- ✓ **Focus on implementation**



HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF YOUR CAT SERVICES

See below upcoming TMP input opportunities.



*Everyone's got a place to be ...
CAT's creating a better way to get there.
Join the discussion on where, when, and how.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION: To learn about upcoming input opportunities, sign up for TMP updates, please visit ridecatbus.org/tmp or contact CAT planning staff at info@ridecatbus.org or 541-386-4202.



COLUMBIA AREA TRANSIT Transit Master Plan Update

*Cats usually
don't listen
to you ...
your
CAT
does.*



Take the survey



To learn about upcoming input opportunities, sign up for TMP updates, please visit engage.ridecatbus.org or contact CAT planning staff at info@ridecatbus.org or 541-386-4202.

Future CAT Service Options

Tell us your preferences so CAT can get you where you need to go!



Take Survey #2

Beginning in early 2022, Hood River County residents and visitors have shared their thoughts on how CAT can best meet their transportation needs to inform the update to CAT's 2017 Transit Master Plan.

Please review the potential transit service options based on community input from CAT Survey #1.

Step 1

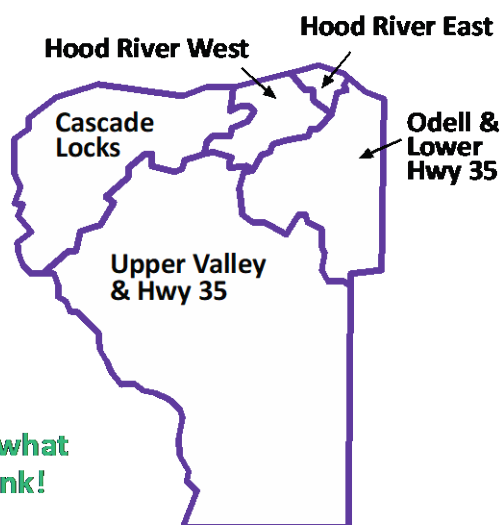
Identify where you use CAT services

Step 2

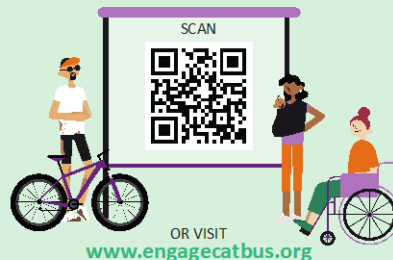
Review the proposed transit service options for that area

Step 3

Tell us what you think!



Take the survey



Opciones Futuras del Servicio CAT

¡Díganos sus preferencias para que CAT
pueda llevarlo a su destino!

rideCATbus.org



Tome la Encuesta #2

A partir de principios de 2022, los residentes y visitantes del Condado Hood River han compartido sus opiniones y sugerencias acerca de cómo CAT puede satisfacer mejor sus necesidades de transporte para informar la actualización del Plan Maestro de Tránsito de 2017 de CAT.

Por favor repase las posibles opciones de servicio de tránsito basadas en las aportaciones de la comunidad de la Encuesta CAT #1.

Paso 1

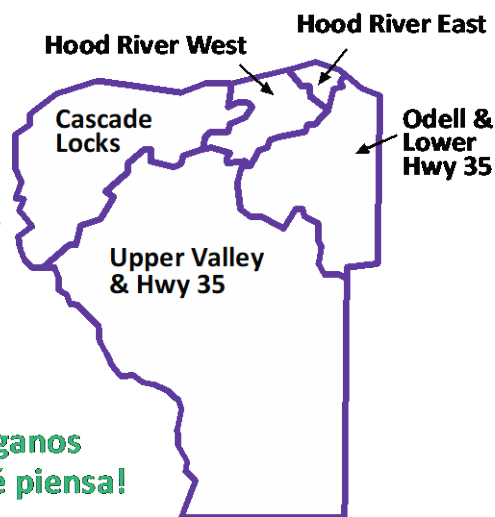
Identifique dónde
usted utiliza los
servicios CAT

Paso 2

Repase las opciones
de servicio de
tránsito propuestas
para esa área

Paso 3

¡Díganos
qué piensa!



Tome la encuesta

