



Wednesday, December 21st, 2023
Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
of the Hood River County Transportation District

224 Wasco Loop, Board Conference Room
Hood River, OR 97031
4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting

The Hood River County Transportation District Board of Directors Meeting can be attended live through Zoom conferencing technology. Members of the public can attend by:

Calling- **(253) 215-8782, Meeting ID: 889 1616 0524, Password: 971345** or by visiting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88916160524?pwd=Y0tsOTV4Rmwzbld4aWxycnJ1dXNuQT09>

Board of Directors Meeting

- 1. Call Meeting to Order – 4:00 p.m.**
- 2. Roll Call:** Greg Pack - Chair, Megan Ramey – Vice Chair, Darrell Roberts – Secretary/Treasurer, Meghan Larivee, Lara Dunn, Jeff Helfrich, Leti Moretti.
- 3. Approval of November 16th, 2022, Meeting Minutes – Greg Pack- 4:05 p.m.**
- 4. Public Comment**
*Public Comment Note: This part of the agenda is reserved for members of the public to address the Board on any issue. **Please note the following instructions:***
 1. To indicate that you would like to provide testimony, please use the raise your hand button.
 2. For those attending via phone only, press *9 on your phone to raise your hand.
 3. When it is your time to speak, your name will be called.
 - For those attending via phone only, the last four (4) digits of your phone number will be called.
 4. Please state your name, city of residence, and whom you are representing for the audio recording.
 - Once you have provided testimony, your hand will be lowered. Please do not raise your hand again. Only one opportunity to speak is provided.
 5. For those unable or not wanting to speak publicly, testimony may be provided via e-mail at
Amy.schlappi@catransit.org
 6. Three (3) minutes per community member.
- 5. FY22 Financial Audit – A.J. Olson (Friends & Reagan) – 4:10 p.m.**
- 6. Gorge Regional Transit Strategy Presentation – 4:35 p.m.**
- 7. Resolutions & Action Items – 4:55 p.m.**
 - a. Approve STIF Plan
 - b. Approve Transfer from County Account
 - c. Winter Clothes Stipend



8. Operations Manager's Report – Ty Graves – 5:10 p.m.

- a. Performance Report
- b. Employee of the Month

9. Executive Director's Report – Amy Schlappi – 5:15 p.m.

- a. Transit Master Plan Preferred Options
- b. Open Board Positions

10. Discussion Items –5:25 p.m.

11. Upcoming Events –5:28 p.m.

- CAT will be closed on Sunday, December 25th for Christmas
- CAT will be closed on Sunday, January 1st for New Year's Day

12. Adjournment – 5:30 p.m.

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.



Wednesday, November 16th, 2022
Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
of the Hood River County Transportation District
224 Wasco Loop, Board Conference Room
Hood River, OR 97031
4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting

1. Call Meeting to Order

Greg called the Board of Directors Meeting to order at 4:11 pm.

2. Roll Call:

Tiah took roll call: Greg Pack (Chair), Darrell Roberts (Secretary/Treasurer), Meghan Larivee, Lara Dunn

Staff: Tiah Mayhew, Amy Schlappi, Ty Graves, Teresa Gallucci

Absent: Leti Moretti, Jeff Helfrich, Megan Ramey

3. Consent Agenda Changes:

Greg addressed the Board letting them know that staff requested changes to the consent agenda.

- Remove the Executive Session
- Remove the Board Member position opening
- Add an update for bus #56 & #57 to the Executive Director's Report.

Motion: Laura made a motion to approve the requested changes to the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Meghan L.

Approved By: Greg, Lara, Meghan L., Darrell

Opposed By: None

4. Approval October 19th of, 2022, Board of Directors Meeting Minutes:

Greg noted a change from section 9A Gorge to Mountain, Greg stated that Mt Hood Meadows agreed to contribute 10k towards the funds and didn't see that representation. Staff will make corrections

Motion: Darrell made a motion to approve the October Board Minutes. The motion was seconded by Lara.

Approved By: Greg, Lara, Meghan L., Darrell

Opposed By: None

5. Public Comment

No public comments were made



6. September Financial Report – Teresa Gallucci (Our Team Accounting)

Teresa gave a brief overview of the financial report. Cash on hand at the end of October was \$1.1 million, this is \$91k less than last month and \$106k less than last year. There are two main reasons for this, one being that grants receivable are much higher than last year and the second is the CIT account, it is \$271k more than last year. Account Receivable is \$26k, Tiah explained that this is reflective of the funds we are waiting for from Skamania County and the Forest Service, but they have been approved and we should receive them before the end of the month. Accounts Payable at the end of October was \$51k, Tiah explained that this reflects invoices that were received at the end of the month. Revenue at the end of October was roughly \$1 million, which is about \$290k more than this time last year, this is primarily due to the CARES ACT funds. Cost of goods at the end of October was \$225k. Fuel costs have increased from last year, but all other items are under budget. Administrative expenses are \$71k, which is \$8k under budget, Office Supplies are high due to a large print order but will level out as the year goes on. Personal expenses are \$491k, which is \$85k under budget. Net income at the end of October was \$234k and the budgeted amount was \$139k, which leaves a positive variance of \$94k. Grant reimbursements for the first quarter have been submitted so we should see those come in over the next several weeks.

7. Resolutions & Action Items:

- a. **Approval of Falls-to-Locks Service:** Amy requested Board approval for the Falls to Locks service to begin next year. CAT has been working with ODOT to find the best way to serve the I-84 corridor. Staff would like to offer expanded CGE service during the summer instead of adding an additional route. This would allow service to go from Portland all the way to Hood River as opposed to a service that only goes from Portland to Cascade Locks.

Motion: Lara made a motion to approve the expansion of the Columbia Gorge Express service to begin next year. The motion was seconded by Darrell

Approved By: Greg, Lara, Meghan L., Darrell

Opposed By: None

- b. **Approval of Grants Applications:** Amy requested approval from the Board to submit the following grants.
 - The first is the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund - Statewide Transit Network application for our Columbia Gorge Express, inner-city service. This includes service seven days a week, year-round as well as the expanded summer service. The total cost is about \$1.8 million with a 20% match which is roughly \$360k however, we do have the potential for a reduced match of 10%. The match will be paid utilizing local funds. Greg asked for clarification as to what would need to be done to get us to the 10% match. Amy explained that we would have to demonstrate that paying the 20% would have a negative financial impact on CAT.



Motion: Lara made a motion to approve Amy submitting the application for the Statewide Transit Network grant. The motion was seconded by Meghan L.

Approved By: Greg, Lara, Meghan L., Darrell

Opposed By: None

- The second grant that Amy is seeking Board approval on is the Statewide Improvement Funds which is a discretionary grant. This specific application is for Intelligent Information Systems, which will help us with automated passenger counters, dynamic payment solutions, real-time passenger information systems and upgraded dispatching software. MCEDD is not going to be joining us on this grant. The total cost is \$150K with a match of \$30k. Upgrading these systems will help us with accurate reporting and will improve rider experience. Greg asked what the ongoing cost might be with upgrading these systems. Amy explained that the only costs that would not be covered under this grant would be the monthly subscriptions, such as our dispatching software. Those fees would be paid with separate funds. Amy reminded the Board that we have been paying a substantially reduced rate for our current dispatching software, so we will see an increase for that service. The current program does not operate in ways that we need it to and the company we use has informed us that due to them not being able to support our services, they are ending our service with them in February. Amy requested that the Board remove the dispatching software from this grant application as we will have to use CARES funds or other funding sources for this project as it is an unexpected expense.

Motion: Darrell made a motion to approve Amy submitting the application for the Statewide Improvement Fund- Intelligent Information Systems grant. The motion was seconded by Lara.

Approved By: Greg, Lara, Meghan L., Darrell

Opposed By: None

a. Approval of STIF Advisory Committee Member:

Amy is asking the Board to approve Giselle Ayala's application to become a member of the STIF Advisory Committee. She works at One Community Health and would be a representative of low-income individuals, as well as seniors. She has been attending the last few Board meetings. If Giselle is approved, we will have 7 members of the STIF Advisory Committee.

Motion: Lara made a motion to approve Giselle Ayala as a member of the STIF Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Darrell.

Approved By: Greg, Lara, Meghan L., Darrell

Opposed By: None



8. Operations Manager's Report – Ty Graves

- a. **Employee of the Month:** Dennis Bloom is the driver of the month for November. Dennis has been with CAT for over a year, he came to us from Carson and is a long-time resident of Hood River. He is the employee of the month because you would have to physically restrain him from coming to work and doing his job to the fullest. Even if he is sick, he still wants to come in and always gets very nice reviews from the passengers.
- b. **Performance Report:** Our safety score went up a little bit from last month, we had no crashes and almost all of the Samsara reporting issues resolved. We started our winter service on October 1st which reduced our service level a bit, lowering our drive time and miles driven. On-time performance remained the same and our DAR on-time performance has come back to where it should be. Fuel costs have increased, our diesel usage has decreased but fuel usage has increased. We had two relatively large vehicle repairs on our International buses that we use for CGE services. Both buses needed hubs, axle seals, as well as wheels and tires replaced. Our cost per mile has increased again due to fuel prices. Ridership overall has increased; however, DAR and Upper Valley are lower than last month, but our overall ridership has increased. We are getting ready for the Gorge-to-Mountain service, readying the buses for winter weather.

9. Executive Director's Report – Amy Schlappi

- a. **Cat Appreciation Week:**

This week is Sparkle Week at CAT. Staff have been having a lot of fun with it, make sure to check our Facebook for pictures throughout the week.
- b. **Transit Master Plan Outreach:**

This item is informational only. As of today, we have 138 responses from the second Transit Master Plan survey. This does not include the 63 hard copy, Spanish surveys that we have received. We have extended the survey through Friday, November 18th as we have a couple more outreach opportunities. We will be reviewing the preferred options with the Board at the December Board Meeting.
- c. **Gorge to Mountain:**

This item is informational only. Mount Hood Meadows has confirmed \$10k towards G2M, the High School has also confirmed funds towards the service, but we are waiting for the finalized amount. ODOT has received our request and we are hoping to have additional information on approval and the funding amount by the end of the week.
- d. **Marketing Plan:**

This item is informational only. We will be issuing a couple press releases over the next couple of months. One will be for the Gorge-to-Mountain service and the other



will be for the 2023 Gorge Pass. We will begin pre-sales for the 2023 pass on December 15th and actual sales and digital passes will begin January 1st. We are doing the Downtown Employee Pass program again this year. We work with the city on this program to provide 150 passes to downtown businesses. We are also reviewing our Gorge Transit Connect program which provides fares to low-income individuals. We will also be ramping up on social media to remind people of these services.

e. Vehicle Issues:

This item is informational only. Vehicles 56 & 57 have been problematic for a long time now and we are not running them due to safety issues. They were supposed to have had re-man engines and transmissions when we received them. Amy spoke with ODOT today about possibly being able to dispose of the vehicles early which would allow us to sell them. If we sell those buses, we must use 80% of those funds for capitol purchases. For the Board to make a decision Amy thinks they need to have the knowledge of whether the buses can be disposed of early or not, she will continue to work with ODOT and bring it back to the Board at the beginning of the year.

10. Discussion Items:

Lara wanted to let staff know that she heard a comment that a driver was at the Gateway bus stop and denied a rider from boarding at that time, they were told that they needed to wait. Ty advised that we have had this arise before and when this occurs it is because the driver is on a mandatory break.

11. Upcoming Events:

CAT will be closed on Thanksgiving Day and operating weekend level service on Friday the 25th.

CAT will be participating in the Holiday Parade again this year. It will be Friday, December 2nd.

We will be having our Holiday Party on December 10th at 7pm.

12. Adjournment:

Motion Meghan L. made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:13 pm. The motion was seconded by Lara.

Approved By: Greg, Lara, Meghan L., Darrell

Opposed By: None

The Hood River County Transportation District Board of Directors meeting minutes are *prepared and presented in summary form. Audio recordings of the meetings are on file at CAT and are part of the approved minutes. If you would like to hear the recording from the meeting, please contact Tiah Mayhew accountant@catransit.org, or call (541) 386-4202.*



Prepared by: Tiah Mayhew, Office Manager

Approved by: Darrell Roberts, Secretary-Treasurer

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

HOOD RIVER COUNTY, OREGON

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>INTRODUCTORY SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Title Page	1
Table of Contents	2
Board of Directors and Administrative Officers	3
 <u>FINANCIAL SECTION</u>	
Independent Auditor's Report	5
Management Discussion & Analysis	9
 Basic Financial Statements:	
<u>Government-Wide Financial Statements:</u>	
Statement of Net Position	13
Statement of Activities	14
 <u>Fund Financial Statements:</u>	
Balance Sheet – Governmental Funds	15
Reconciliation of Balance Sheet – Governmental Funds to Statement of Net Position	16
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances – Governmental Funds	17
Reconciliation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures And Changes in Fund Balances – Governmental Funds to the Statement of Activities	18
 Notes to Basic Financial Statements	19
 <u>OTHER MATTERS</u>	
<u>Other Information:</u>	28
Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance – Budget and Actual – General Fund	29
<u>Other Required Reports:</u>	30
Independent Auditor's Report Required by Oregon State Regulations	31

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>TERM EXPIRES</u>
Lara Dunn	Chair	2023
Leti Moretti	Vice Chair	2023
Darrell Roberts	Secretary-Treasurer	2025
Megan Ramey	Director	2025
Meghan Larivee	Director	2025
Greg Pack	Director	2025
Jeff Helfrich	Director	2023

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS

Amy Schlappi	Executive Director
Tiah Mayhew	Office Manager

All addresses (unless otherwise noted) are as follows:
224 Wasco Loop
Hood River, OR 97031

FINANCIAL SECTION



FRIEND & REAGAN, P.C.
Certified Public Accountants

305 E. Fifth Street
The Dalles, OR 97058
phone [541] 296.2000
fax [541] 296.5636
www.friendreagan.com

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors
Hood River County Transportation District
The Dalles, Oregon 97058

Report on the Financial Statements

Opinions

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities and the major fund of Hood River County Transportation District, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2022, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the District's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities and the major fund of Hood River County Transportation District, as of June 30, 2022, and the respective changes in financial position for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of Hood River County Transportation District and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are

conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the District's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and, therefore, is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Hood River County Transportation District's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Hood River County Transportation District's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the

management's discussion and analysis on pages 9-11 be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise Hood River County Transportation District's basic financial statements. The General Fund budgetary basis fund financial statement is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the basic financial statements or to the basic financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the General Fund budgetary basis fund financial statement is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements as a whole.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information included in the annual report. The other information comprises the introductory section but does not include the basic financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinions on the basic financial statements do not cover the other information, and we do not express an opinion or any form of assurance thereon.

In connection with our audit of the basic financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and consider whether a material inconsistency exists between the other information and the basic financial statements, or the other information otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work performed, we conclude that an uncorrected material misstatement of the other information exists, we are required to describe it in our report.

Report on Other Legal and Regulatory Requirements

In accordance with Minimum Standards for Audits of Oregon Municipal Corporations, we have issued our report dated December 16, 2022 on our consideration of compliance with certain provisions of laws and regulations, including the provisions of Oregon Revised Statutes as

specified in Oregon Administrative Rules. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of compliance and the results of that testing and not to provide an opinion on compliance.



For Friend & Reagan, PC
The Dalles, OR 97058
December 16, 2022

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Our discussion and analysis of Hood River County Transportation District's financial performance provides an overview of the District's financial activities for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2022. The purpose is to help interpret the financial statements, highlight the major factors and impacts of the District's financial situation, and to explain significant changes from last year to this current year.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS:

- Total revenues were \$2,268,461 in 2022 which is an increase of \$55,325 from the prior year. The increase is mainly attributed to the increase in riders and fare revenue. Riders seem to be returning to public transit since the COVID-19 pandemic and choosing to use transit over other transportation modes (i.e. private vehicles). The increase in fuel may have also contributed to the ridership increase for choice transit riders.
- Total expenditures were \$2,322,263 in 2022, this is an increase of \$600,246 from the prior year. This is mainly attributed to the increased cost for preventive maintenance and fuel. Due to supply chain issues the District has been unable to obtain vehicles that were purchased causing the district to utilize vehicles that are past their useful life, resulting in increased repair bills. The crisis in Ukraine has led to an unprecedented increase in the cost of fuel.
- The District's Governmental Activities net position at June 30, 2022 year end was \$4,594,591.

Government-wide Statements:

The government-wide financial statements are designed to provide an overview of the District's finances, including the District's governmental activities. Local property taxes and grants finance most of these activities. The statement of Net Position includes all of the District's assets and liabilities. All of the current year's revenues and expenses are accounted for in the Statement of Activities regardless of when cash is received or paid. Net position is the difference between the District's assets and liabilities. Over time, increases or decreases in the District's net position may be an indicator of whether its financial health is improving or deteriorating.

The financial statements also include notes that explain some of the information in the financial statements and provide more detailed data. The statements are followed by a section of supplementary information that further explains and supports the information in the financial statements.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE DISTRICT'S FUNDS:

Governmental fund balances totaled \$1,488,339 on June 30, 2022, a decrease of \$14,712 from the prior year. Revenues for the General Fund were \$2,268,461. Expenditures for the General Fund were \$2,322,263. The increase again can largely be attributed to preventative maintenance and fuel expenses.

CAPITAL HIGHLIGHTS:

On June 30, 2022, the District had \$3,101,666 invested in capital assets net of accumulated depreciation. During the year ended June 30, 2022, the District purchased new buses and other equipment at a total cost of \$74,254. More detailed information about the District's capital assets is presented in the notes to the financial statement.

ECONOMIC FACTORS:

Operating grants and charges for services revenue are the main source of the District's operating revenue. The District also receives property tax revenue from Hood River County. All expenses for transportation services must be paid for by these sources.

The District did see an increase in passenger counts as the area was slowly opening back up after the height of the global pandemic and additional routes were added. The District was allocated continued funds through the Federal CARES ACT to alleviate some of the hardship that was felt due to the pandemic. The District had a significant increase in preventive maintenance costs as we utilized vehicles that were past their useful life due to the supply chain shortages. The District also saw an increase in staff wages to stay competitive and assist with employee retention.

FINANCIAL CONTACT:

The District's financial statements are designed to give the public a general overview of the District's accountability. If you have questions about financial matters please contact the District at 224 Wasco Loop, Hood River, OR 97031. The District telephone number is (541) 386-4202

BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

STATEMENT OF NET POSITION

JUNE 30, 2022

(all amounts are in dollars)

ASSETS:

Current Assets:

Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,116,140
Accounts Receivable	55,861
Property Taxes Receivable	5,549
Grants Receivable	549,291
Prepaid Expenses	17,840
Total Current Assets	<u>1,744,681</u>

Non-Current Assets:

Non-Depreciable, Land	436,003
Depreciable Capital Assets, net of accumulated depreciation	2,665,664
Total Non-Current Assets	<u>3,101,666</u>

TOTAL ASSETS 4,846,348

LIABILITIES:

Current Liabilities:

Accounts Payable	120,066
Accrued Payroll	115,026
Accrued Compensated Absences	16,665
	<u>251,757</u>

TOTAL LIABILITIES 251,757

NET POSITION:

Net Investment in Capital Assets	3,101,666
Unrestricted	1,492,924
	<u>4,594,591</u>

TOTAL NET POSITION 4,594,591

(SEE NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

(all amounts are in dollars)

<u>FUNCTIONS/PROGRAMS</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>PROGRAM REVENUES</u>			<u>Net Expenses/ Revenues and changes in Net Position</u>
		<u>Fees, Fines and Charges for Services</u>	<u>Operating Grants and Contributions</u>	<u>Capital Grants and Contributions</u>	<u>Total Governmental Activities</u>
Administration	(652,098)	-	-	-	(652,098)
Public Transportation	<u>(1,819,516)</u>	<u>247,794</u>	<u>1,807,244</u>	-	<u>235,522</u>
TOTAL GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES:	<u>(2,471,615)</u>	<u>247,794</u>	<u>1,807,244</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(416,576)</u>
General Revenues:					
Property Taxes					203,181
Interest Income					4,719
Miscellaneous					25,295
Gain (Loss) on Sale of Fixed Assets					<u>(8,887)</u>
Total General Revenues					<u>224,308</u>
Change in Net Position					(192,268)
Net Position -- Beginning of the Year					<u>4,786,859</u>
Net Position -- End of the Year					<u>4,594,591</u>

(SEE NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

BALANCE SHEET -- GOVERNMENTAL FUND

JUNE 30, 2022
(all amounts are in dollars)

	GENERAL FUND	TOTAL GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS
ASSETS:		
Current Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,116,140	1,116,140
Accounts Receivable	55,861	55,861
Property Taxes Receivable	5,549	5,549
Grants Receivable	549,291	549,291
Prepaid Expenses	17,840	17,840
Total Current Assets	<u>1,744,681</u>	<u>1,744,681</u>
 TOTAL ASSETS	 <u>1,744,681</u>	 <u>1,744,681</u>
 LIABILITIES:		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts Payable	120,066	120,066
Accrued Payroll	115,026	115,026
Accrued Compensated Absences	16,665	16,665
Total Current Liabilities	<u>251,757</u>	<u>251,757</u>
 TOTAL LIABILITIES	 <u>251,757</u>	 <u>251,757</u>
 DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES:		
Deferred Property tax Revenue	4,586	4,586
 TOTAL DEFERRED INFLOWS OF RESOURCES	 <u>4,586</u>	 <u>4,586</u>
 FUND BALANCES:		
Unassigned	1,488,339	1,488,339
 TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE	 <u>1,744,681</u>	 <u>1,744,681</u>

(SEE NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

RECONCILIATION OF THE BALANCE SHEET TO THE STATEMENT OF NET POSITION

JUNE 30, 2022

(all amounts are in dollars)

Total Fund Balance -- Governmental Funds	1,488,339
Amounts reported for governmental activities in the Statement of Net Position are different because:	
Capital assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources and therefore are not reported in the funds.	3,101,666
Tax revenues in the Statement of Activities that do not provide current financial resources are not reported as revenues in the funds.	<u>4,586</u>
Net Position of Governmental Activities	<u><u>4,594,591</u></u>

(SEE NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN
FUND BALANCE -- GOVERNMENTAL FUND

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

(all amounts are in dollars)

	<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>TOTAL GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS</u>
REVENUES:		
Taxes	206,158	206,158
Intergovernmental Revenue	1,807,244	1,807,244
Charges for Services	247,794	247,794
Interest	4,719	4,719
Miscellaneous	2,545	2,545
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Revenues	2,268,461	2,268,461
	<hr/>	<hr/>
EXPENDITURES:		
Current:		
Administration	652,098	652,098
Public Transportation	1,584,943	1,584,943
Capital Outlay	85,222	85,222
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Expenditures	2,322,263	2,322,263
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	(53,802)	(53,802)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES):		
Sale of Fixed Assets	16,341	16,341
Insurance Recoveries	22,749	22,749
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses):	39,090	39,090
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Change in Fund Balance	(14,712)	(14,712)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
FUND BALANCE - BEGINNING OF YEAR	1,543,649	1,543,649
	<hr/>	<hr/>
PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENT (SEE NOTE 10)	(40,598)	(40,598)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
FUND BALANCE - END OF YEAR	1,488,339	1,488,339
	<hr/>	<hr/>

(SEE NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

RECONCILIATION OF THE STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN
FUND BALANCE -- GOVERNMENTAL FUND TO STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

(all amounts are in dollars)

Net Change in Fund Balance -- Governmental Funds	(14,712)
Revenues in the Statement of Activities that do not provide current financial resources are not reported as revenues in the governmental funds.	
Current Year Change in Deferred Property Taxes	(2,976)
Capital asset additions are reported in the governmental funds as expenditures. However, in the Statement of Activities, the cost of those assets is capitalized and allocated over their estimated useful lives as depreciation expense.	
Less Depreciation Expense	(223,606)
Plus Capital Asset Additions	74,254
Less Unrecovered Cost of Disposals	<u>(25,228)</u>
Change in Net Position	<u><u>(192,268)</u></u>

(SEE NOTES TO THE BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS)

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES:

Hood River County Transportation District (the "District") is a subdivision of state government and functions as a local unit under the direction of a seven-member elected board of directors. The District was formed on July 1, 1993 and organized under the provisions of Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) Chapter 267, the District is authorized to levy taxes and charge fares to fund the operations of the District and issue general obligation bonds and revenue bonds.

The District is a primary government. The reporting entity consists of the primary government, any organization for which the primary government is financially accountable, and any other organizations that, because of the nature and significance of their relationship with the primary government, may not be excluded from the financial reporting entity.

All significant activities have been included in the basic financial statements. The District is financially independent of other state and local government units. Based on these criteria, the District is not a component unit of another entity, nor is any other entity required to be included in the financial statements of the District.

The accounting and reporting policies of Hood River County Transportation District conform to accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, as applicable to local governments. The District's financial statements are prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is responsible for establishing GAAP for state and local governments through its pronouncements (Statements and Interpretations). The more significant of the District's accounting policies are described below:

GOVERNMENT-WIDE STATEMENTS:

In the government-wide Statement of Net Position, the District's activities are presented and reported on the full accrual, economic resource basis, which recognizes all long-term assets and liabilities. Revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded when a liability is incurred, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. Property taxes are recognized as revenue in the year for which they are levied. Grants and similar items are recognized as revenue as soon as all eligibility requirements imposed by the provider have been met. The District's Net Position is reported in three categories – net investment in capital assets, restricted net position, and unrestricted net position.

The statement of activities reports the District's activities by function. The District's sole function is Hood River County transportation services. The statement of activities demonstrates the degree to which the expenses of each function are offset by program revenues. Direct expenses are those that are clearly identifiable with a specific function or segment. Program revenues include

1) charges to those who use or directly benefit from transportation services and
2) grants and contributions that are restricted to meeting the operating requirements of a particular function. Taxes and other items not properly included among program revenues are reported as general revenues. Expenses are recorded when incurred, even though actual payment or receipt may not occur until after the period ends.

The government-wide focus is on the sustainability of the District as an entity and the change in the District's net position resulting from the current year's activities.

FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:

The accounts of the District are organized on the basis of funds. A fund is an independent fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. Fund accounting segregates funds according to their intended purpose and is used to aid management in demonstrating compliance with finance-related legal and contractual provisions. The minimum level of funds is maintained consistent with legal and managerial requirements.

The fund financial statements use the current financial resources measurement focus and the modified accrual basis of accounting. Non-grant revenues are recognized when they become measureable and available as net current assets. Measureable means the amount of the transaction can be determined and available means collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to pay liabilities of the current period. For this period, the District considers revenues to be available if they are collected within 60 days of the end of the current fiscal period. Expenditures are recorded when the liability is incurred. Capital outlay is an expenditure when purchased and debt service is an expenditure when paid.

The operations of the District's only fund are accounted for with a set of self-balancing accounts that comprise its assets, liabilities, net position, revenues, and expenses. The fund is in the financial statements of this report, under one broad fund type as follows:

GENERAL FUND: The General Fund accounts for all activities except those required to be accounted for in other funds. The principal revenue sources are grants, charges for services, property taxes, and interest.

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS:

For the purpose of financial reporting, "cash and cash equivalents" include all demand and savings accounts, and certificates of deposit or short term investments with an original maturity of three months or less.

INVESTMENTS:

The District's investments consist of monies deposited with the Hood River County Investment Pool (HRCIP), which is not rated. The District's investments in the HRCIP is carried at cost, which approximates fair value. Authorized investments are prescribed in Oregon Revised Statutes. The HRCIP is not SEC

registered. Hood River County, including the investment pool, is audited annually in compliance with Oregon Revised Statutes.

PROPERTY TAXES:

Real property taxes are levied and attached as enforceable lien on property as of July 1 of each fiscal year. Real property taxes may be paid in full by November 15 with a 3% discount, or paid in three equal payments on November 15, February 15, and May 15. Hood River County, Oregon makes all assessments of property value and levies and collects property taxes for all levying districts within the County. The District considers all property taxes to be fully collectible and, therefore, no allowance for uncollectible property taxes has been made.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE:

Accounts receivable consists of fares invoiced for services rendered prior to year end that have not been received. No provision for uncollectable fares is considered necessary. Receivables also consist of revenue earned for operating grants for qualifying expenditures the District has incurred.

COMPENSATED ABSENCES:

The District's policies permit employees vacation and compensatory time credits. Accumulated unpaid vacation and compensatory time cannot exceed 176 hours and is accrued as earned at a rate between 3.09 to 6.74 hours per pay period (depending on years of service). Vacation benefits are intended to provide eligible employees with a period of paid rest and relaxation away from work. Accordingly, employees are encouraged to schedule vacations each year, and to use all earned vacation benefits. As such, all accrued compensated absences are considered a current liability by management. Sick leave is not payable upon termination, therefore no liability is reported for accumulated unpaid sick leave.

PREPAID EXPENSES:

Certain payments to vendors reflect costs applicable to future accounting periods and are recorded as prepaid expenses in the basic financial statements.

CAPITAL ASSETS AND DEPRECIATION:

Capital assets, which include property, plant and equipment, are stated at historical cost on the government-wide financial statements. The District defines capital assets as assets with an initial cost of more than \$5,000 and an estimated useful life in excess of one year. Donated assets are recorded at their estimated fair market value at the date of donation. The costs of normal maintenance and repairs that do not add to the value of the asset or materially extend the useful life of the asset are not capitalized.

Capital assets are depreciated using the straight-line method over the following estimated useful lives:

Multi-modal facility	40 years
Vehicles and buses	10 years

Office equipment

3-7 years

NET POSITION:

Net position comprises the various net earnings from operating income, nonoperating revenues and expense, capital contributions, and special items. Net position is classified in the following three components:

Net Investment in Capital Assets – This component of net position consists of capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation and reduced by the outstanding balances of any bonds, mortgages, notes, or other borrowings that are attributable to the acquisition, construction, or improvement of those assets. If there are significant unspent related debt proceeds at year-end, the portion of the debt attributable to the unspent proceeds are not included in the calculation of invested in capital assets, net of related debt. Rather, that portion of the debt is included in the same net position component as the unspent proceeds.

Restricted – This component of net position consists of constraints imposed by creditors (such as through debt covenants), grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments or constraints imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

Unrestricted Net Position – This component of net position consists of net position that does not meet the definition of “restricted” or “net investment in capital assets”.

USE OF RESTRICTED/UNRESTRICTED NET POSITION:

When an expense is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted net position is available, the District’s policy is to apply restricted net position first.

FUND BALANCE:

In the fund financial statements, Governmental Standards Board Statement No. 54 *Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions* (GASB 54) defines the different types of fund balance that a governmental entity must use for financial reporting purposes. GASB 54 requires the fund balance amounts to be properly reported within one of the five fund balance components listed below:

Nonspendable – Includes amounts that cannot be spent because they are either (1) not in spendable form or (2) legally or contractually required to be maintained intact.

Restricted – Consists of amounts that can only be used for the specific purpose stipulated by external resource providers, constitutional provisions, or enabling legislation.

Committed – Consists of amounts that can only be used for the specific purposes determined by a formal action of the District’s highest level of decision-making authority, which includes resolutions. Those committed amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the District removes or changes the specified use by taking the same type of action (resolution) it employed previously to commit those amounts.

Assigned – Consists of amounts that are intended to be used by the government for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed. The authority for assigning fund balance is expressed by the Board of Directors, or their designee.

Unassigned – Residual classification of fund balance that includes all spendable amounts that have not been restricted, committed, or assigned.

USE OF FUND BALANCE COMPONENTS:

When both restricted and unrestricted resources are available for use, it is the District's policy to use restricted resources first, then unrestricted resources (committed, assigned and unassigned) as they are needed. When unrestricted resources (committed, assigned and unassigned) are available for use it is the District's policy to use committed resources first, then assigned and then unassigned, as they are needed.

USE OF ESTIMATES:

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principals requires management to make estimates and assumptions that effect certain reported amounts and disclosures (such as estimated useful lives in determining depreciation expense). Actual results could differ from those estimates.

2. STEWARDSHIP, COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

Annual budgets for all funds are adopted on a basis consistent with Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS 294 – Local Budget Law). The budget is prepared on the current resources, modified-accrual basis of accounting for each fiscal year July 1 to June 30.

The budget process includes a series of notices and publications culminating with the budget hearing. After the public hearing has been held, the Board enacts the resolutions to adopt the budget, make appropriations, and declare the ad valorem tax levy for all funds. The Appropriations Resolution contains amounts for personal services, materials and services, capital outlay, debt service, interfund transfers and operating contingency. This is the level of control for authorized expenditures. The level of expenditures is monitored throughout the year. Transfers are made from operating contingency or between the major object classifications of the appropriation for each fund as required to prevent an over-expenditure. Unexpected additional resources may be added to the budget through the use of a supplemental budget and appropriations resolution. A supplemental budget requires hearings before the public, publication in newspapers, and approval by the Board of Directors. Original and supplemental budgets may be modified by the use of appropriations transfers between the level of controls. Such transfers require the approval of the Board of Directors.

Expenditures cannot legally exceed the appropriation levels. Appropriations for all funds lapse at the end of the fiscal year.

EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER APPROPRIATIONS:

The General Fund materials and services appropriation shows an excess of

expenditures over appropriations of \$34,568.

DEFICIT FUND BALANCES:

The District has no instances whereby any of its funds had a deficit fund balance as of June 30, 2022.

3. CASH AND INVESTMENTS:

The District's cash and investments (recorded at cost) are categorized as follows:

Checking and Savings Accounts	\$	217,334
Hood River County Treasurer		<u>898,806</u>
	\$	<u>1,116,140</u>

DEPOSITS:

Custodial Credit Risk—Deposits – Custodial credit risk for deposits is the risk that in the event of a bank failure, the government's deposits may not be returned to it. In order to minimize this risk, state statutes require banks holding public funds to become members of the Public Funds Collateralization Program (PFCP, a multiple financial institution collateral pool created by the Office of the State Treasurer.) To qualify, participating banks must pledge collateral against any public fund deposits in excess of deposit insurance. The amount of collateral is set by the PFCP between 10% and 110% of each bank's public fund deposits based on their net worth and level of capitalization. Although the PFCP creates a shared liability structure for participating bank depositories, it does not guarantee that all funds are 100% protected. At June 30, 2022, the District did not have any deposits exposed to custodial credit risk or a formal policy to address this type of risk.

Investments – Oregon Revised Statutes 294.035 authorizes the District to invest in general obligations of the U.S. government and its agencies, bankers' acceptances, commercial paper rated A-2 or better by Standard & Poor's Corporation or P-2 by Moody's Investors Service, and the State of Oregon Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP), among others. The only investments held by the District at June 30, 2022 were amounts deposited with the Hood River County Investment Pool (HRCIP), which is not rated.

The investments in the HRCIP have the general characteristics of a demand deposit account in that any participating entity may withdraw cash at any time without prior notice and the fair value of the position of the pool is the same as the value of the pool shares.

The District's position in the Pool at June 30, 2022 is stated at cost which approximates the fair value.

Foreign Currency Risk – Oregon Revised Statutes prohibit investments that are not U.S. Dollar-denominated; therefore, the District is not exposed to this risk.

Custodial Credit Risk—Investments – Custodial credit risk for investments is the risk

that, in the event of failure of the counterparty (e.g., broker dealer) to a transaction, a government will not be able to recover the value of its investment or collateral securities that are in possession of another party. At June 30, 2022, the District did not have any investments exposed to custodial credit risk or a formal policy designed to address this type of risk.

Credit Risk—Investments – Generally, credit risk is the risk that an issuer of an investment will not fulfill its obligation to the holder of the investment. This is measured by the assignment of a rating by a nationally recognized statistical rating organization. The District’s investments are unrated.

Concentration of Credit Risk—Investments – Concentration of credit risk is the risk of loss attributed to the magnitude of an entity’s investment in a single issuer. There are no investments in any one issuer that represent five percent or more of the District’s total investments. At June 30, 2022, The District did not have a formal policy designed to address this type of risk.

Interest Rate Risk—Investments – Interest rate risk is the risk that changes in interest rates demanded by the market will adversely affect the value of an investment. Generally, the longer the maturity of an investment, the greater the sensitivity of its value to changes in market interest rates. At June 30, 2022, the District did not have a formal policy designed to limit this type of risk.

4. CAPITAL ASSETS:

The following is a summary of property, plant, and equipment accounts, and related accumulated depreciation for the year-ended June 30, 2022:

	<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Additions</u>	<u>Deletions</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
Non-Depreciable				
Land	\$ 436,003	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 436,003
Depreciable				
Vehicles and Equipment	1,746,846	38,094	(275,608)	1,509,332
Buildings & Improvements	2,996,978	36,160	-	3,033,138
Subtotal	<u>5,179,827</u>	<u>74,254</u>	<u>(275,608)</u>	<u>4,978,473</u>
Accumulated Depreciation				
Vehicles and Equipment	(1,036,223)	(123,969)	250,380	(909,812)
Buildings & Improvements	(867,358)	(99,637)	-	(966,995)
Subtotal	<u>(1,903,580)</u>	<u>(223,606)</u>	<u>250,380</u>	<u>(1,876,807)</u>
TOTAL CAPITAL ASSETS	\$ <u>3,276,246</u>	\$ <u>(149,352)</u>	\$ <u>(25,228)</u>	\$ <u>3,101,666</u>

Depreciation expense of \$223,606 is recorded as a program expense in the accompanying Statement of Activities for the year ended June 30, 2022.

5. **LEASES:**
As of June 30, 2022 the District had no noncancelable leases subject to GASB 87 and, as such, no right to use asset and no lease liability has been accrued on the District's financial statements.
6. **RETIREMENT PLAN:**
The District has adopted a deferred compensation plan and a matching and contribution plan under sections 457(b) and 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC), respectively. The plan is administered by AIG Valic. Employees who complete one year of service and whose compensation is at least \$5,000 per year are eligible to participate in the plan. Eligible employees may elect to defer eligible compensation subject to limits established by IRC Section 567(b) immediately upon hire and the District matches employee deferrals up to 3% of annual compensation. The District Board of Directors has the authority to establish or amend the plan's provisions and contribution requirements. During the year ended June 30, 2022 the District contributed \$7,613 to the Plan. In the prior 2 years the District contributed \$2,854 and \$4,396. Employees contributed a total of \$12,912 for the year ended June 30, 2022.
7. **RISK MANAGEMENT:**
The District purchases commercial insurance policies to insure against most hazards. There have been no significant reductions in the District's insurance coverage, in any risk category, from coverage in the prior year. No losses were incurred during the prior three years ended June 30, 2022 that exceeded the District's insurance coverage.
8. **COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES:**
Amounts received or receivable from grantor agencies are subject to audit and adjustment by grantor agencies, principally the federal and state governments. Any disallowed claims, including amounts already collected, may constitute a liability of the applicable funds. The amount, if any, of expenditures which may be disallowed by the grantor agencies cannot be determined at this time although the District expects such amounts, if any, to be immaterial.
9. **SUBSEQUENT EVENTS:**
Subsequent events have been evaluated through the date of this financial statement with management. The date of this financial statement is also the issuance date. Management is not aware of any additional subsequent events requiring recognition or disclosure in the financial statements.
10. **PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENT:**
The District recorded a prior period adjustment in the current year to properly account for unearned grant revenue and prepaid expenses prior to July 1, 2021 in the Fund Statements. The effects of this restatement are as follows:

Governmental Funds:	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
July 1, 2021 Fund Balance -- Originally Reported	1,543,649	1,543,649
Prior Period Adjustment:		
Prepaid Expenses Adjustment	11,826	11,826
Accrued Compensated Absences	(29,924)	(29,924)
Unearned Grants Adjustment	<u>(22,500)</u>	<u>(22,500)</u>
Total Prior Period Adjustment	<u>(40,598)</u>	<u>(40,598)</u>
July 1, 2021 Fund Balance -- Restated	<u>\$ 1,503,051</u>	<u>\$ 1,503,051</u>

OTHER INFORMATION

HOOD RIVER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

SCHEDULE OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN
FUND BALANCE -- GENERAL FUND

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022
(all amounts are in dollars)

	<u>BUDGETED AMOUNTS</u>			
	<u>ORIGINAL</u>	<u>FINAL</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>VARIANCE</u>
<u>REVENUES:</u>				
Taxes	200,000	200,000	206,158	6,158
Intergovernmental Revenue	2,489,797	2,185,289	1,807,244	(378,045)
Charges for Services	180,000	180,000	247,794	67,794
Interest	-	-	4,719	4,719
Miscellaneous	45,000	65,000	2,545	(62,455)
TOTAL REVENUES:	<u>2,914,797</u>	<u>2,630,289</u>	<u>2,268,461</u>	<u>(361,828)</u>
<u>EXPENDITURES:</u>				
Current:				
Personnel Services	1,317,387	1,647,386	1,310,878	336,508
Materials & Services	691,269	891,595	926,163	(34,568)
Capital Outlay	863,500	231,902	85,222	146,680
Operating Contingency	62,641	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>2,934,797</u>	<u>2,770,883</u>	<u>2,322,263</u>	<u>448,620</u>
Excess of Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	(20,000)	(140,594)	(53,802)	86,792
<u>OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES):</u>				
Sale of Fixed Assets	-	-	16,341	16,341
Insurance Recoveries	-	-	22,749	22,749
TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES):	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>39,090</u>	<u>39,090</u>
Net Change in Fund Balance	(20,000)	(140,594)	(14,712)	125,882
FUND BALANCE - BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>1,410,091</u>	<u>1,543,649</u>	<u>1,543,649</u>	<u>-</u>
Prior Period Adjustment (See Note 10)	-	-	(40,598)	(40,598)
FUND BALANCE - END OF YEAR	<u>1,390,091</u>	<u>1,403,055</u>	<u>1,488,339</u>	<u>85,284</u>

OTHER REQUIRED REPORTS



**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
REQUIRED BY OREGON STATE REGULATIONS**

We have audited the basic financial statements of Hood River County Transportation District as of and for the year ended June 30, 2022, and have issued our report thereon dated December 16, 2022. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America.

Compliance

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Hood River County Transportation District's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants, including the provisions of Oregon Revised Statutes as specified in Oregon Administrative Rules 162-10-000 through 162-10-320 of the Minimum Standards for Audits of Oregon Municipal Corporations, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

We performed procedures to the extent we considered necessary to address the required comments and disclosures which included, but were not limited to, the following:

- Deposit of public funds with financial institutions (ORS Chapter 295).**
- Indebtedness limitations, restrictions, and repayment.**
- Budgets legally required (ORS Chapter 294).**
- Insurance and fidelity bonds in force or required by law.**
- Programs funded from outside sources.**
- Authorized investment of surplus funds (ORS 294).**
- Public contracts and purchasing (ORS Chapters 279A, 279B, 279C).**

In connection with our testing nothing came to our attention that caused us to believe Hood River County Transportation District was not in substantial compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants, including the provisions of Oregon Revised Statutes as specified in Oregon Administrative Rules 162-10-000 through 162-10-320 of the Minimum Standards for Audits of Oregon Municipal Corporations except as follows:

- 1) Expenditures exceeded appropriations as indicated in the notes to the financial statements.

- 2) The District budgeted a negative operating contingency amount in the board resolution adopting the 2022-23 budget.
- 3) The District should be appropriating by organizational unit or program according to Oregon Budget Law rather than using PS, MS, and CO expenditure classifications.

ORS 162-10-0230 Internal Control

In planning and performing our audit, we considered Hood River County Transportation District's internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Hood River County Transportation District's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control over financial reporting. However, we have reported to the District's Board of Directors other matters regarding internal controls in a separate letter to management, both dated December 16, 2022.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of Directors and management of Hood River County Transportation District and the Oregon Secretary of State and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these parties.



For FRIEND & REAGAN, PC
The Dalles, Oregon
December 16, 2022



FRIEND & REAGAN, P.C.
Certified Public Accountants

305 E. Fifth Street
The Dalles, OR 97058
phone [541] 296.2000
fax [541] 296.5636
www.friendreagan.com

Board of Directors

Hood River Transportation District
224 Wasco Loop
Hood River, OR 97031

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements of the governmental activities and the major fund of Hood River Transportation District as of and for the year ended June 30, 2022, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, we considered Hood River Transportation District's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Hood River Transportation District's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Hood River Transportation District's internal control.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the preceding paragraph and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and therefore material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. However, as discussed below, we identified certain deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses and other deficiencies that we consider to be significant deficiencies.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A material weakness is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. We consider the following deficiencies in internal control to be material weaknesses:

Finding 2022-01 Inaccurate Accruals

Condition: Audit procedures revealed a material understatement of grant revenue, a material understatement of accrued payroll expense, and an immaterial understatement of fuel expense. These misstatements were a result of ineffective monitoring controls over the review of accruals.

Effect: Had these accruals gone uncorrected, the financial statements would have been materially misstated. Please review the list of journal entries attached to our auditor's letter addressed to the Board of Directors for a detail of all adjustments.

Finding 2022-02 Inaccurate Bank Reconciliation

Condition: The District did not have effectively implemented controls over bank reconciliations to ensure all bank reconciliations were performed accurately and timely.

Effect: The District's ineffective bank reconciliations led to an incorrectly dated July 1st payroll run being recorded as an outstanding item on June 30th. The incorrect bank reconciliation resulted in cash being understated and accrued payroll liabilities being understated by an equal amount. There was no effect to revenues or expenditures. This was correct via audit adjustment and the financial statements have been updated with the correct balances.

A significant deficiency is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance. We consider the following deficiencies in internal control to be significant deficiencies:

Finding 2022-03 Preparation of Financial Statements

Condition: The District's accounting personnel do not possess the advanced training that would provide the expertise necessary to prepare the financial statements and related notes in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles.

Effect: District staff may not be able to prevent or detect a material misstatement in the preparation and disclosure of the financial statements. Misstatements in financial statements may include not only misstated financial amounts, but also the omission of disclosures required by GAAP. Consequently, they have contracted with our office to prepare those statements. The staff and management of the District has the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to take responsibility for the financial statements.

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of management, The Board of Directors and others within Hood River Transportation District, and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties.



For Friend & Reagan, P.C.
The Dalles, Oregon 97058
December 16, 2022



Summary of Revenues and Expenditures

Please refer to instructions on next page.

A. Municipal corporation information

Municipality name: Hood River County Transportation District

Address line 1: 224 Wasco Loop Reporting period: From 07/01/2021

Address line 2: _____ To 06/30/2022

City, state, ZIP: Hood River OR 97031 Report type: Audit

Check if new address: Opinion issued: Unmodified

If this is the final report, please enter the last date of operations: _____ Basis of accounting: GAAP

B. Financial statement audit – Reported deficiencies

1. Regarding internal controls over financial reporting, how many significant deficiencies and material weaknesses were reported?
3

2. Of those control deficiencies reported, how many resulted in the following:
Accounting errors/Misstatements: 2
Noncompliance: 0

3. How were deficiencies communicated? Check all that apply.
 Report issued in accordance with Government Auditing Standards
 Communication in accordance with Statements on Auditing Standards AU-C 265 "Communicating Internal Control Related Matters Identified in an Audit"
 Other (specify communication): _____
 No deficiencies

Per OAR 162-010-0230, a copy must be filed with Secretary of State.

C. Summary of revenues and expenditures

Revenues and/or receipts		Expenditures and/or disbursements	
a. Revenues from government-wide statement of activities:	\$ 2,279,346	a. Expenditures from government-wide statement of activities:	\$ 2,471,615
b. Fiduciary fund additions:		b. Fiduciary fund deductions:	
c. Gross revenues subtotal (a + b):	\$ 2,279,346	c. Gross expenditures subtotal (a + b):	\$ 2,471,615
d. Revenues of component units:		d. Component unit expenditures reported with primary government:	
e. Taxes, assessments and other collections to be distributed to other governments:		e. Turnovers to other municipal corporations:	
f. Exempt revenue subtotal (d + e):	\$ 0	f. Exempt expenditures subtotal (d + e):	\$ 0
g. Net revenues (c – f):	\$ 2,279,346	g. Net expenditures (c – f):	\$ 2,471,615

D. Filing fee: \$ 250

E. Submitted by

Auditor name: A.J. Olson Municipal license number: 1622

Firm name: Friend & Reagan, P.C. Date: 12/16/2020

Municipal contact name, title: Amy Schlappi, Executive Director Municipal phone: (541) 978-8066

Submit: Click the "Submit" button on the right to submit this form via email. Save a copy for your records.

Submit

Within 30 days of delivering the audit report to the municipal corporation, one copy of this summary must be filed with the Secretary of State, Audits Division, and one copy must be delivered to the municipal corporation. If deficiencies are communicated in a separate letter or in a report issued in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, a copy of that communication must also be filed. (OAR 162-010-0230)

Management Report

Columbia Area Transit

For the period ended November 30, 2022



Prepared by

Our Team Accounting, LLC

Prepared on

December 15, 2022

Columbia Area Transit
Financial Statements Variance Analysis
Period Ending: November 30, 2022

Balance Sheet

Cash Availability - Total available cash at the end of November 2022 was \$1.3m. This amount is \$168k more than October but approximately \$159k less than FY22 at this time. This can be attributed to the property tax allocation that was received in November which was roughly \$175k.

Accounts Receivable – Outstanding AR at the end of November was \$18k. Only one outstanding invoice is over 120 days old. The amount to be collected is \$10k. The remaining open invoices are current.

Grants Receivable – The total Grants Receivable balance at the end of November was \$671k. Although considerably higher than last year at this time, which was \$294k, this balance is representative of Q2 activity which has not yet been submitted for draws from the State of Oregon.

Prepaid Expenses – Total prepaid expenses at the end of November were \$17k. This total is \$5k less than last month but roughly \$2k more than FY22 at this point in the year and is due to the increased cost of Workman's compensation.

Accounts Payable – The amount due to vendors and not yet paid at the end of November was \$35k. All open invoices were paid with the first check run processed in December.

Income Statement

Revenue – Total revenue earned year to date through the end of November was \$1.3m, which is \$341k more than earnings at this time last year, but \$31k less than the amount budgeted. The variance is largely due to the timing of state discretionary funds not being received as planned.

COG Fuel – Fuel expenses YTD total \$128k at the end of November. The budgeted amount through the end of this period was \$120k, resulting in a \$8k negative variance YTD. The FY23 budgeted amount for the full year is \$288k. The FY22 amount spent at this point in the year was \$66k. The year over year negative variance is \$63k and may be in part attributed to increased fuel costs.

COG Operations - Preventative maintenance expenses, (tires, shop supplies and bus repair expenses) through the end of November totaled \$67k, which is \$15k more than the amount budgeted and \$6k more than the spending in FY22 at this time.

COG Communication – Dispatch, GPS software and cellular data expenses through the end of November was \$15k. This amount is equal to the amount budgeted and \$1k more than actual FY22 expense at the end of November.

COG Driver Expenses – As of the end of November, driver expenses were \$8k. This is \$6k more than the spending prior year at this time due to the purchase of uniforms that were included in the budget. Budget compared to actual spending is equal.

Advertising – Advertising expense so far in FY23 totaled \$85k. The budgeted amount for the end of November was \$98k, leaving a positive variance of \$37k.

Grant / Contract Match Funds – The Q1 MCEDD match posted in October in the amount of \$17k and represents service for The Dalles. This activity ceased once CAT became responsible for the service. The amount budgeted for this activity for the year was \$98k.

Gross Profit – Gross profit for activity through the end November was \$1m which is \$286k more than FY22 at this time but is equal to the amount budgeted.

Administrative Expense – Administration expenses through the end of October totaled \$71k which is \$10k more than last year at this time but \$8k less than the amount budgeted.

Personnel – Total personnel expense through the end of the period were \$595k which is \$103k more than last year at this time but \$125k less than the amount budgeted.

Capital Outlay – The purchase of buses have not yet occurred this year, however a trolley was leased resulting in \$13k of expense. Three buses have been sold resulting in cash received of \$28k. This is a positive variance of \$177k when compared to the amount budgeted for the end of November.

Net Income – Net income at the close of November was \$400k, which is \$205k more than FY22 at this time last year and \$316k more than the amount budgeted.

Columbia Area Transit

Statement of Financial Position

As of November 30, 2022

	TOTAL			
	AS OF NOV 30, 2022	AS OF NOV 30, 2021 (PY)	CHANGE	% CHANGE
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Bank Accounts				
1000 C. I. B. - Operating (6906)	116,624	179,839	(63,215)	(35.00 %)
1005 C. I. B. - Savings (3232)	29,998	393,957	(363,959)	(92.00 %)
1020 C. I. T. - H. R. County	1,122,646	855,493	267,153	31.00 %
1050 Petty Cash	100	(582)	682	117.00 %
Total Bank Accounts	\$1,269,368	\$1,428,708	\$ (159,340)	(11.00 %)
Accounts Receivable	\$17,967	\$4,220	\$13,747	326.00 %
Other Current Assets				
1205 Accounts Receivables - Property Tax Audit Adj	22,140	22,140	0	0.00 %
1210 Accounts Receivables - Grants	671,651	377,719	293,932	78.00 %
1270 Prepaid Expenses	17,290	14,812	2,479	17.00 %
1400 Accrued Revenue - Grants	0	0	0	
1998 Undeposited Funds	0	0	0	
1999 Uncategorized Asset	0	0	0	
Total Other Current Assets	\$711,082	\$414,671	\$296,411	71.00 %
Total Current Assets	\$1,998,417	\$1,847,598	\$150,818	8.00 %
Fixed Assets	\$2,888,304	\$2,888,304	\$0	0.00 %
TOTAL ASSETS	\$4,886,721	\$4,735,903	\$150,818	3.00 %
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY				
Liabilities				
Current Liabilities				
Accounts Payable	\$35,130	\$19,333	\$15,797	82.00 %
Credit Cards	\$ (1,652)	\$1,961	\$ (3,612)	(184.00 %)
Other Current Liabilities	\$72,467	\$108,227	\$ (35,760)	(33.00 %)
Total Current Liabilities	\$105,946	\$129,521	\$ (23,575)	(18.00 %)
Long-Term Liabilities	\$4,255,719	\$4,255,719	\$0	0.00 %
Total Liabilities	\$4,361,665	\$4,385,240	\$ (23,575)	(1.00 %)
Equity	\$525,056	\$350,663	\$174,393	50.00 %
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$4,886,721	\$4,735,903	\$150,818	3.00 %

Columbia Area Transit

Statement of Activity

July - November, 2022

	TOTAL			
	JUL - NOV, 2022	JUL - NOV, 2021 (PY)	CHANGE	% CHANGE
Revenue				
4001 Fare Revenue	88,915	85,047	3,868	5.00 %
4100 Contract Revenue	40,044	5,581	34,463	618.00 %
4200 Federal Funds	420,095	177,314	242,782	137.00 %
4700 State Funds	582,248	533,033	49,215	9.00 %
4870 Local Assistance	196,829	188,043	8,786	5.00 %
4900 Other Revenue	6,133	4,472	1,662	37.00 %
Discounts/Refunds Given		(690)	690	100.00 %
Total Revenue	\$1,334,264	\$992,799	\$341,466	34.00 %
Cost of Goods Sold				
5005 Vehicle Expense	14	912	(898)	(98.00 %)
5019 Fuel	128,514	65,720	62,794	96.00 %
5020 Operation Expenses	66,599	60,144	6,455	11.00 %
5100 Communication Expense	14,731	13,703	1,027	7.00 %
5200 Vehicle Insurance	15,867	7,933	7,934	100.00 %
5500 Driver Expenses	8,188	2,668	5,521	207.00 %
5600 Advertising & Marketing	12,693	35,071	(22,378)	(64.00 %)
5700 Grant/Contract Match Funds	17,371	21,586	(4,216)	(20.00 %)
5800 Partner Distributions - Gorge Pass	3,069	2,723	346	13.00 %
5899 COVID19 Expenses		677	(677)	(100.00 %)
Total Cost of Goods Sold	\$267,046	\$211,138	\$55,909	26.00 %
GROSS PROFIT	\$1,067,218	\$781,661	\$285,557	37.00 %
Expenditures				
7000 Administrative Expenses				
7003 Building Expenses	13,958	17,076	(3,119)	(18.00 %)
7100 Office Supplies & Expenses	12,294	7,729	4,565	59.00 %
7300 Professional Fees	53,111	49,351	3,760	8.00 %
7400 Other Administrative Expense	5,798	6,115	(317)	(5.00 %)
Total 7000 Administrative Expenses	85,160	80,271	4,889	6.00 %
8000 Personnel Expense				
8003 Administrative Personnel Expense	74,260	102,109	(27,849)	(27.00 %)
8103 Direct Service Personnel Expense	520,252	389,037	131,215	34.00 %
Total 8000 Personnel Expense	594,512	491,145	103,366	21.00 %
9000 Capital Outlay	(12,481)	14,747	(27,228)	(185.00 %)
Total Expenditures	\$667,190	\$586,163	\$81,027	14.00 %
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$400,028	\$195,498	\$204,530	105.00 %
NET REVENUE	\$400,028	\$195,498	\$204,530	105.00 %

Columbia Area Transit

Budget vs. Actuals: FY-23 Budget V2 - FY23 P&L

July - November, 2022

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Revenue				
4001 Fare Revenue	88,915	104,000	(15,085)	85.00 %
4100 Contract Revenue	40,044	15,000	25,044	267.00 %
4200 Federal Funds	420,095	234,148	185,948	179.00 %
4700 State Funds	582,248	791,850	(209,602)	74.00 %
4870 Local Assistance	196,829	196,800	29	100.00 %
4900 Other Revenue	6,133	23,858	(17,724)	26.00 %
Total Revenue	\$1,334,264	\$1,365,655	\$ (31,391)	98.00 %
Cost of Goods Sold				
5005 Vehicle Expense	14	3,000	(2,986)	0.00 %
5019 Fuel	128,514	120,000	8,514	107.00 %
5020 Operation Expenses	66,599	52,050	14,549	128.00 %
5100 Communication Expense	14,731	15,600	(869)	94.00 %
5200 Vehicle Insurance	15,867	14,500	1,367	109.00 %
5500 Driver Expenses	8,188	8,437	(249)	97.00 %
5600 Advertising & Marketing	12,693	50,000	(37,307)	25.00 %
5700 Grant/Contract Match Funds	17,371	28,675	(11,304)	61.00 %
5800 Partner Distributions - Gorge Pass	3,069	6,800	(3,731)	45.00 %
Total Cost of Goods Sold	\$267,046	\$299,062	\$ (32,016)	89.00 %
GROSS PROFIT	\$1,067,218	\$1,066,593	\$625	100.00 %
Expenditures				
7000 Administrative Expenses				
7003 Building Expenses	13,958	24,482	(10,524)	57.00 %
7100 Office Supplies & Expenses	12,294	6,500	5,794	189.00 %
7300 Professional Fees	53,111	54,500	(1,389)	97.00 %
7400 Other Administrative Expense	5,798	12,875	(7,077)	45.00 %
Total 7000 Administrative Expenses	85,160	98,357	(13,197)	87.00 %
8000 Personnel Expense				
8003 Administrative Personnel Expense	74,260	126,270	(52,010)	59.00 %
8103 Direct Service Personnel Expense	520,252	592,829	(72,577)	88.00 %
Total 8000 Personnel Expense	594,512	719,099	(124,587)	83.00 %
9000 Capital Outlay	(12,481)	165,190	(177,671)	(8.00 %)
Total Expenditures	\$667,190	\$982,646	\$ (315,456)	68.00 %
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$400,028	\$83,947	\$316,081	477.00 %
NET REVENUE	\$400,028	\$83,947	\$316,081	477.00 %

Columbia Area Transit

Statement of Cash Flows

July - November, 2022

	TOTAL
OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Net Revenue	400,028
Adjustments to reconcile Net Revenue to Net Cash provided by operations:	
1200 Accounts Receivable	37,894
1211 Accounts Receivables - Grants:Grant Receivable - 5310 Funds 35149	(18,362)
1212 Accounts Receivables - Grants:Grants Receivable - Medical Cares 34740	(155,384)
1213 Accounts Receivables - Grants:Grants Receivable 5311 CARES - 34976	(69,713)
1214 Accounts Receivables - Grants:Grants Receivable - STIF Discretionary 35102	(59,249)
1215 Accounts Receivables - Grants:Grants Receivable - STIF Formula 35033	(27,466)
1216 Accounts Receivables - Grants:Grants Receivable - Planning 3504 - 35131	4,890
1217 Accounts Receivables - Grants:Falls To Locks - 34976	28,931
1218 Accounts Receivables - Grants:Grants Receivable - 5311 Funds 34956	(8,740)
1273 Prepaid Expenses:PP - SDIS Vhcl & Gen Liab Insurance	14,466
1274 Prepaid Expenses:PP - SDIS Workers Comp	(13,286)
1275 Prepaid Expenses:PP - Fleetio Scheduler	(630)
1400 Accrued Revenue - Grants	182,733
2000 Accounts Payable	(38,082)
2105 Columbia Bank Visa (2801)	(12,687)
2001 Accounts Payable - Audit Adj	(18,299)
2500 Accrued Payroll	(34,439)
Total Adjustments to reconcile Net Revenue to Net Cash provided by operations:	(187,423)
Net cash provided by operating activities	\$212,604
NET CASH INCREASE FOR PERIOD	\$212,604
Cash at beginning of period	1,056,764
CASH AT END OF PERIOD	\$1,269,368

Columbia Area Transit

Bill Payment List

November 2022

DATE	NUM	VENDOR	AMOUNT
1000 C. I. B. - Operating (6906)			
11/02/2022		Carson	-12,938.31
11/11/2022	21874	Nick Herman Mobile Repair	-1,750.00
11/15/2022	21875	Lookin Dapper	-1,395.00
11/17/2022	21876	Amalgamated Transit Union	-249.26
11/17/2022	21877	Apple City Auto Body	0.00
11/17/2022	21878	Bohn's Printing	-98.65
11/17/2022	21879	Darrell Roberts	-30.00
11/17/2022	21880	Day Wireless Systems	-450.00
11/17/2022	21881	Friend & Reagan, P.C.	-3,000.00
11/17/2022	21882	Gorge Area Business Assistance	-549.20
11/17/2022	21883	Greg Pack	-30.00
11/17/2022	21884	Hometown Sales & Leasing	-2,500.00
11/17/2022	21885	Gorge Electric	-320.00
11/17/2022	21886	O'Reilly Automotive	-520.51
11/17/2022	21887	Oregon Screen Impressions	-288.60
11/17/2022	21888	Sign Media	-144.00
11/17/2022	21889	Jubitz Fleet Services	-375.71
11/17/2022	21890	Car Stereo Specialist	-134.98
11/17/2022	21891	HR Answers	-3,960.00
11/17/2022	21892	Nick Herman Mobile Repair	-2,105.00
11/17/2022	21893	VanKoten & Cleaveland, LLC	-682.50
11/17/2022	21894	Special Districts Insurance	-3,800.78
11/17/2022	21895	Napa Auto Parts	-1,645.74
11/17/2022	21896	Point S Tire & Auto Service	-6,571.16
11/17/2022	21897	Weatherly Printing	-576.74
11/17/2022	21898	Ortigoza	-1,090.00
11/17/2022	21899	Special Districts Association of Oregon	-2,097.27
11/25/2022		Spectrum Enterprise-Time Warner Cable	-361.94
11/21/2022		Our Team Accounting, LLC	-917.52
Total for 1000 C. I. B. - Operating (6906)			\$ -48,582.87
2105 Columbia Bank Visa (2801)			
11/30/2022		Samsara	385.20
Total for 2105 Columbia Bank Visa (2801)			\$385.20
Not Specified			
11/17/2022		Napa Auto Parts	0.00
Total for Not Specified			\$0.00

Columbia Area Transit

A/P Aging Summary

As of November 30, 2022

	CURRENT	1 - 30	31 - 60	61 - 90	91 AND OVER	TOTAL
Apple City Auto Body		1,800.00				\$1,800.00
Darrell Roberts	30.00					\$30.00
Day Wireless Systems	450.00					\$450.00
Gillig LLC	1,908.72					\$1,908.72
Greg Pack	30.00					\$30.00
Jubitz Fleet Services	258.70					\$258.70
Lara Dunn	30.00					\$30.00
MCEDD	100.49	17,084.00	3,824.24			\$21,008.73
Meghan Larivee	30.00					\$30.00
MIG	2,085.00					\$2,085.00
Mount Adams Transportation Service - MATS	94.00					\$94.00
Napa Auto Parts	615.60					\$615.60
Nick Herman Mobile Repair	1,527.50					\$1,527.50
Ortigoza	795.00					\$795.00
Our Team Accounting, LLC	1,271.60					\$1,271.60
Point S Tire & Auto Service		347.97				\$347.97
Ray Schultens Motors, Inc.	75.50					\$75.50
Skamania County	94.00					\$94.00
SST/Security Systems Technology		445.00				\$445.00
Two Dogs Plumbing & Drain Cleaning, Inc.	130.00					\$130.00
UniteGPS LLC		507.00				\$507.00
Weatherly Printing	1,244.75	351.36				\$1,596.11
TOTAL	\$10,770.86	\$20,535.33	\$3,824.24	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$35,130.43

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM #5

Date: November 30, 2022

Project #: 27091

To: Don Morehouse, Oregon Department of Transportation
 Kathy Fitzpatrick, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District
 Bill Baumann, Washington Department of Transportation

From: Susan Wright, PE; Amy Griffiths, EIT; Kittelson & Associates, Inc.

Project: Gorge Regional Transit Strategy (GRTS) Phase 2

Subject: Regional Transit Solutions

INTRODUCTION

This memorandum explores different strategies for regional transit service delivery, decision-making, organizational structures, funding, and engagement with partner organizations that achieve the regional Vision and Goals as established in Phase 1 and in Memo #4: Regional Transit Service Vision and Funding Opportunities. The information is presented primarily as a 'menu of options' and builds on prior tasks. A range of potential performance measures or methods to track outcomes is included.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Table of Contents.....	1
Project Vision and Goals	2
Menu of Options.....	4
Decision-Making and Organizational Structures	4
Funding Opportunities Across Scenarios.....	23
Service Opportunities	25
Monitoring Program	35
Next Steps.....	35



PROJECT VISION AND GOALS

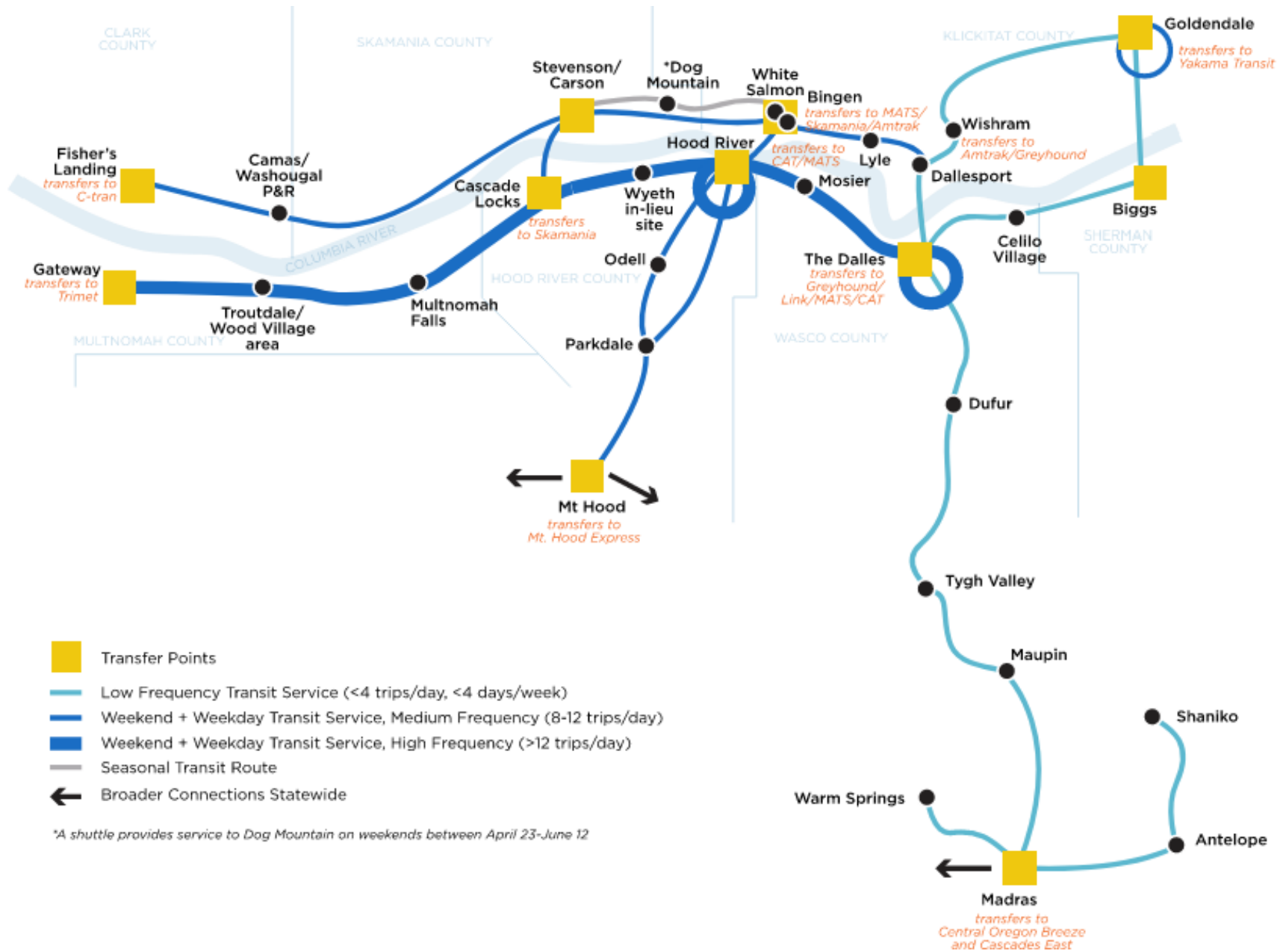
The Gorge Regional Transit Strategy Phase 1 developed a collective vision statement and goal areas that reflect the needs and values of the bistate region. That vision statement is as follows:

Public transit supports thriving Columbia River Gorge communities by providing access to critical services, higher education, jobs, and outdoor recreation while protecting the natural wonders of the Gorge.

Figure 1 illustrates the preferred vision map developed based on an analysis of gaps and opportunities and discussions with the project advisory committee and stakeholder advisory groups. Cities and communities that are already served by transit or that were included in adopted planning documents were included on the map. Additional key stop locations/communities to serve will be added through the vision refinement process conducted with advisory groups.

This preferred vision map includes service seven days a week on most routes, with 60-90 minute frequency service desirable along each route as well as a new direct connection from White Salmon to Dallesport. The increase to service seven days per week is a change for services in Washington, to Mt. Hood, and to stops in Mosier and Wyeth. To best support the regional vision, the recommendations expand local transit routes, coordinate timetables with local providers, increase area that can be reached by carshare, vanshare, carpools, and expand access to transportation network companies (like Uber, Lyft, and local taxis) to provide connections to/from regional transit.

Figure 1. Preferred Regional Transit Vision Map



MENU OF OPTIONS

This section presents the menu of options for regional transit service delivery, decision-making and organizational structures, funding, and engagement with partner organizations. For each of these options, the section includes considerations of the following:

- The degree to which an option will help achieve the Project Vision and Goals
- The short- and long-term capacity and budgetary implications for Partner Agencies
- The timeframe for implementation including 2-, 5- and 10-year horizons
- The constraints, including any Partner Agency policy conflicts, and proposed solutions for agency alignment

Decision-Making and Organizational Structures

In Technical Memo 4, the project team presented an overview of various organizational scenarios that the Alliance could implement to improve the regional decision-making process:

- Scenario 0: Status Quo
- Scenario 1: Enhanced Status Quo
- Scenario 2: Regional Transit Advisory Board
- Scenarios 3A and 3B: Joint transportation districts (Hood River/Wasco, and Skamania/Klickitat)
- Scenario 3C: Single-county transportation districts
- Scenario 4: Regional Cooperative (Co-Op) or Transportation Management Organization (TMO)
- Scenario 5: New Bi-State Governmental Agency

Technical Memo 4 also outlined criteria to be used to screen the different scenarios, based on input from the Advisory Committee. In this memo, we provide a preliminary rating of whether each scenario would be better, worse, or about the same as the status quo, using the screening criteria bulleted below.

Preliminary rating information in this draft is based on the consultant team's perspective. It is intended to be refined after discussion with the Advisory Committee, and again following discussions that include partner agency elected officials at an upcoming Key Initiatives Work Session.

Screening Criteria

- System Clarity for Customers and the General Public
 - Clarity of system information for different types of users (commuters, residents, tourists)
 - Clarity of regional roles and responsibilities
 - Identifiable regional brand
- Government Accountability, Oversight, and Policymaking
 - Elected official engagement in, and understanding of, regional transit matters
 - Consistency of rider policies across the region
 - Consistency of internal policies, such as contracting standards and employee compensation
 - Suitability of the scenario, given other local, regional, state, and natural resource policies in the Gorge

- Potential to align with land use planning processes
- Regional Equity
 - Ability to achieve balanced decisions that do not unduly favor the needs of some over others
 - Comparable voice/representation for residents in each county
 - Improved transit opportunities in each county
 - Avoiding disproportionate focus on the needs of people outside the region
- Operational Efficiency
 - Economy of scale for major purchases, such as maintenance facilities, fleet, other equipment, stop furnishings, etc.
 - Efficiency of administrative functions
 - Efficiency of maintenance activities
 - Streamlined communications and dispatching across the region
 - Efficiency and communication of day-to-day route, stop and scheduling decisions
 - Potential to streamline long-range transit development plans
 - Consistency of data collection and performance reporting processes
 - Access to resources for emergencies
- Agency Staff Burden and Expertise
 - Impact on existing agency labor burden
 - Access to skilled and experienced transit staff
- Funding
 - Potential for new revenue streams
 - Effect on current revenue streams
 - Legitimacy of the Alliance in the eyes of funders and legislators

The scale used to rate scenarios based on the criteria listed above is as follows:

Screening Ratings



Much better than status quo



Somewhat better than status quo



No effective change



Somewhat worse than status quo



Much worse than status quo

The complexity of the implementation process varies significantly between scenarios. So as a final screening activity, we rate the realistic potential for implementing each scenario, using the following scale:

Implementation Complexity Ratings

- 1** - Minimal or no barriers to implementation
- 2** - One or two complicating factors
- 3** - Several complicating factors
- 4** - Many complicating factors
- 5** - Not likely feasible to implement

The cost to implement each scenario will depend on many factors, including how much of the facilitation/formational effort can be absorbed by MCEDD and the partner agencies. For comparison purposes, the following high-level scale was used, assuming a full-service consulting team would be hired at market rates to facilitate implementation, with MCEDD and partner agency staff in advisory roles only.

Estimated Implementation Cost

- \$** - Under \$200,000
- \$\$** - \$200,000 to \$500,000
- \$\$\$** - \$500,000 to \$1,000,000
- \$\$\$\$** - Over \$1,000,000

Table 1 shows a high-level summary of how each scenario compares to the status quo using the rating scales described above. A detailed discussion of the reasons behind the ratings for each scenario follows the table.

Key takeaways:

- Scenarios which centralize regional operations (Scenarios 4 and 5) under one organization have the greatest potential to improve clarity of system information for customers and the general public.
- All organizational scenarios provide at least some level of improvement in overall government accountability, policymaking, and oversight; however, scenarios that establish a formal forum for interaction between elected officials (Scenarios 2, 4, and 5) would provide the largest benefits in this area.
- Under nearly all scenarios, the level of service possible in different geographic areas of the region is highly dependent on each county's financial position and how much each existing transit agency can afford to purchase for their residents. The exception to this is a new governmental bi-state agency (Scenario 5). Under that concept, all transit funding for the region would flow to and through a single entity, rather than routing through individual counties and transportation districts. So, the geographic distribution of transit service and programs could be less constrained by what each county can afford to buy.

- Scenarios that centralize operations under a single agency (Scenarios 4 and 5) would provide the greatest economy of scale for the region in nearly all aspects of transit program delivery: planning, purchasing, operating, contracting, maintenance, etc.
- Scenarios that create new agencies, such as new single-county service districts (Scenario 3C), a regional co-op or TMO (Scenario 4), or a new bi-state governmental agency (Scenario 5) would remove the administrative burden of transit programs from existing partner agencies. Of these, the centralized concepts for Scenarios 4 and 5 could give the partners access to potentially greater staff-level expertise than is currently possible since staff at county agencies must often wear multiple hats.
- Scenarios that create new transportation districts (such as Scenario 3C) have the potential to improve the region's transit funding outlook with new local revenue streams.
- Single-county transportation districts in Wasco, Skamania, and Klickitat counties (Scenario 3C) would be challenging, but feasible to implement, and many examples of single county transit districts exist in both Washington and Oregon. However, scenarios that involve joint districting of two or more counties under existing statutes, such as a joint Hood River County/Wasco County transportation district (Scenario 3A), or a joint Skamania County/Klickitat County transportation benefit district (Scenario 3B), would require successful public elections across two counties, are not likely feasible to implement.

Table 1. Organizational Scenario Screening Summary

Organizational Scenario	System Clarity for Customers and the General Public	Government Accountability, Oversight, and Policy-making	Regional Equity	Operational Efficiency	Agency Staff Burden and Expertise	Funding	Implementation Complexity	Estimated Implementation Cost
Scenario 1: Enhanced Status Quo							1	\$
Scenario 2: Regional Transit Advisory Board							1	\$\$
Scenario 3A&B: Joint Districting							5	\$\$\$\$
Scenario 3C: Single-County Districting*							3	\$\$\$
Scenario 4: Regional Co-op or TMO							2	\$\$\$\$
Scenario 5: Bi-State Governmental Agency							4	\$\$\$\$

Ratings above indicate each scenario’s likely impact *for the region overall*, not for individual counties.

Ratings Legend (with respect to the status quo):

Much better Somewhat better About the same Somewhat worse Much worse

Implementation complexity:

1 – Minimal or no barriers to implementation | 2 – One or two complicating factors | 3 – Several complicating factors | 4 – Many complicating factors | 5 – Not likely feasible

*Scenario 3C could be combined with Scenario 1, 2 or 4 to improve the funding outlook under those scenarios.

Scenario 0: Status Quo

Description. Scenario 0 is the baseline to which we are comparing all other scenarios. The status quo assumes no change to the current Gorge TransLink Alliance, which is governed by separate MOUs between each county and MCEDD. The MOUs designate MCEDD as the lead agency for the Alliance and include only high-level statements indicating each agency's broad intent to work with MCEDD. Regional communication and cooperation are ad hoc, without a defined decision-making process.

The current Alliance is a staff-level effort with no decision-making authority. There is no forum for interaction between regional elected officials. Recommendations are carried back to each individual transit agency's governing body for approval.

System Clarity for Customers and the General Public. The Gorge TransLink website provides a central point of information about transit services across the region, with schedule information available on all fixed routes on one site. Partner agencies maintain their own individual websites as well.

Multiple agencies operate service across the region, and buses may carry different branding depending on the operator.

Government Accountability Oversight and Policymaking. Coordination between current transit agency partners occurs at the staff level. There is currently no formal forum for interaction between elected policymakers at the regional level on transit matters.

Regional Equity. Because coordination is at the staff level, there is limited representation for members of the public in regional transit discussions. The type and frequency of transit service in each county varies and depends on each individual transit agency's financial position.

Operational Efficiency. Transit agency staff coordinate informally to streamline connections between service providers. Partners have entered into multiple agreements as needed to allow one partner to provide service within a neighboring jurisdiction and could continue to do so. Under the status quo scenario, the group has the ability to develop interagency agreements for any future services to be provided and could also explore things like joint procurement processes that could improve their collective purchasing power. Each agency collects its own data to serve its individual needs, and there is currently no regional performance reporting process.

Agency Staff Burden and Expertise. While the Hood River County Transportation District (doing business as Columbia Area Transit, or CAT) has dedicated transit staff, all other partner agencies have limited staff to manage transit operations, and some have other duties for their county in addition to their transit roles.

Funding Opportunities. Each partner agency currently determines its own budget for transit planning, operating, maintenance, and capital needs. Each does its own grant writing and grant administration. Only the Hood River County Transportation District has the authority to generate local transit revenue through taxes and fees.

Implementation Complexity: 1 – minimal or no barriers.

Implementation Timeline: None.


Implementation Cost: No cost.


Policy Conflicts: None known.

Scenario 1: Enhanced Status Quo


Description. Multiple existing MOUs would be replaced with a single Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Interagency Agreement (IGA) to clarify expectations of all partners and define decision-making protocols in writing. The group would establish membership dues to help cover the cost of administering and facilitating their joint activities. An annual work plan would be prepared, and the group would form subcommittees to tackle specific topics identified in the work plan, such as improving consistent policies for riders; coordinating day-to-day route, schedule and stop adjustments; regional data collection, etc.


Annually, a joint meeting or "summit" would be held with elected officials from all partner agencies, so that staff could keep policymakers apprised of progress on work plan tasks and solicit their input and direction on regional plans and programs.

 **System Clarity for Customers and the General Public.** Scenario 1 is likely to have limited benefits for public understanding of system information and agency roles and responsibilities. It may be possible to continue working toward branding of fixed route buses, stop locations, printed schedules, etc., with a single identifiable name and logo. However, some confusion for customers may be unavoidable if transit agencies with smaller vehicle inventories need to use vehicles interchangeably for fixed route and separately branded dial a ride services. While Scenario 1 could help to clarify interagency responsibilities for the agency partners themselves, roles and responsibilities will still seem complex to the average person.

 **Government Accountability Oversight and Policymaking.** The addition of an annual forum for limited interaction between elected officials could improve understanding of regional transit issues by policymakers. Scenario 1 could also convene a subcommittee to recommend ways to improve consistent policies in limited areas – for example, rider behavior policies. However, establishing consistent standards for contracting and consistent employee compensation packages for transit staff is not likely feasible under this scenario since those types of decisions are embedded in each county's agency-wide policies and procedures that apply to more than just transit.

Scenario 1 would not likely change the way transit programs currently fit within the Gorge's local, regional, state, and natural resource context, and land use planning processes.

 **Regional Equity.** Because the work of the alliance would still be done at the staff level, Scenario 1 would not change representation for regional residents on transit matters. The ability to ensure transit opportunities in all counties would be about the same as it is today. The existing push and pull between some partners' desire to focus principally on service for their own residents, and other partners' interest in attracting visitors to the Gorge would require more interaction between elected officials than Scenario 1 provides, so it is unlikely to be resolved under this scenario.

 **Operational Efficiency.** The basic way that fixed route service is provided would remain unchanged and only incremental improvements in coordinated operations would likely be possible under Scenario

1. For example, a staff-level subcommittee could be convened to develop recommendations for a joint procurement process, so that multiple partners could take advantage of a single procurement effort to buy new vehicles. (This could probably be done today under the status quo scenario, however.) More complex strategies for improving operational efficiency, like establishing shared maintenance facilities, for example, are still likely to be challenging.

The efficiency of administrative functions is unlikely to change since each existing transit agency would continue to manage its own transit program, requiring its own separate administrative staff. Multiple agencies would continue to provide fixed route service, and Scenario 1 would continue the practice of using multiple interagency agreements to allow transit agencies to provide select services in adjoining counties. The group could attempt to consolidate and reduce the number of service providers operating in the region, such as by having multiple partners contract with the same service provider. However, the result is likely to still be a “piecemeal” approach, as described by one Advisory Committee participant, albeit with perhaps fewer “pieces”.



Agency Staff Burden and Expertise. Scenario 1 is unlikely to significantly change the labor burden for existing transit agency partners, but additional staff capacity at MCEDD would be needed for a more robust coordination effort. Scenario 1 would not change the level of skill and experience in transit planning and operation that is currently available to each county. The group could explore shared training opportunities now, under the status quo, and Scenario 1 is not likely to appreciably improve those training opportunities.



Funding Opportunities. Scenario 1 would have no impact on current revenue streams or funding opportunities.

Implementation Complexity: 1 – Minimal barriers. The Enhanced Status Quo scenario would be straightforward to implement with a new MOU, or IGA. The chief complicating factor would be finding a way to incrementally increase resources for the ongoing facilitation effort.

Implementation Timeline: 6 months to develop a new MOU or IGA.

Implementation Cost: Under \$200,000

Policy Conflicts: None known.

Scenario 2: Regional Transit Advisory Board


Description. A board of elected officials (1 or 2 from each county) would be convened as a central policy body on regional transit matters. The board would be created with a new IGA signed by all partners that would define the board's roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authorities for the regional transit program.


The board's purpose would be to provide policy-level input on regional transit plans, programs, and initiatives; to prioritize regional transit projects; and to recommend plans and strategies for ultimate adoption by each county's decision-making body. Alternatively, the board could be vested with the authority to approve regional transit plans and projects outright. Bylaws would be written to describe board member eligibility and expectations, member dues, officers, meetings, and rules of procedure.

A Regional Transit Advisory Board could serve as a long-term policy-level forum for the region, or it could be used as a springboard to help form a new centralized transit organization for the region, such as a

regional cooperative, transportation management organization, or new bi-state governmental agency. (See Scenarios 4 and 5 below.)


The existing staff-level coordinating committee for the Alliance could continue in a technical advisory role to the regional board.

 **System Clarity for Customers and the General Public.** Like Scenario 1, Scenario 2 is likely to have limited benefits for customer and public understanding of system information and agency roles and responsibilities. It may be possible to continue working toward branding of fixed route buses, stop locations, printed schedules, etc., with a single identifiable name and logo. However, some confusion for customers may be unavoidable if transit agencies with smaller vehicle inventories need to use vehicles interchangeably for fixed route and separately branded dial-a-ride services. While Scenario 2 could help to clarify interagency responsibilities for the agency partners themselves, roles and responsibilities will still seem complex to the average person.


 **Government Accountability, Oversight and Policymaking.** Scenario 2 would significantly expand elected official engagement, allowing policymakers from partner counties to interact with each other. Frank discussions at the policy level on divisive issues could help policymakers understand the reasons behind each other's positions, increasing the chance of finding common ground or workable compromises. A board of elected officials would be subject to Oregon's or Washington's open meeting laws¹, thereby increasing public accountability.

A board of elected officials could help to vet strategies for streamlining policies that affect riders. Establishing consistent standards for contracting and consistent employee compensation packages for transit staff would likely remain challenging, though, since these topics are embedded in each county's governing philosophy and decisions in these areas affect more than just transit programs.

Because a regional transit board would be a forum for exchange of information and ideas at the elected level, it could help to confirm the suitability of transit proposals within the nexus of other local, regional, state, and natural resource policies in the Gorge. Scenario 2 would also provide a policy-level forum to better assess how transit projects and programs align with regional land uses.


 **Regional Equity.** A well-balanced regional transit board that includes elected officials from all partner counties would ensure that residents across the region are represented as transit plans and programs are developed. A policy-level board could discuss the needs of residents within the region alongside transit options that increase visitation and come to a joint position on an appropriate balance for the region.

A place at the table for policymakers from each partner county would also ensure that transit improvement opportunities are considered for all parts of the region, although services levels across the region would still depend on the resources available to each county.


 **Operational Efficiency.** A regional transit board would focus on high level planning and policy issues and would not likely provide operational direction. The way that transit service is provided would remain unchanged. Multiple agencies would continue to provide fixed route service with multiple interagency

¹ Open meeting laws would be used from the facilitator's state. Ex. If MCEDD continue to facilitate, Oregon's open meeting laws would be used.

agreements as they do today. The regional board could serve as a forum for better elected official understanding of joint maintenance, procurement and contracting issues and opportunities, but those issues and opportunities would be the same as the status quo scenario.

 **Agency Staff Burden and Expertise.** Scenario 2 is unlikely to appreciably change the labor burden for existing transit agency partners; however, the level of ongoing staff support provided by MCEDD to administer and facilitate the new board would significantly increase. (At least double today's effort, and likely more depending on the frequency of board and technical committee meetings and the complexity of issues undertaken by the board.)

Scenario 2 would not change the level of skill and experience in transit planning and operation that is currently available to each county.

 **Funding.** Establishing a regional transit board would not significantly change current or future revenue opportunities. A better coordinated, more efficient regional transit system could ultimately result in increased ridership and farebox revenue.

Implementation Complexity: 2 – One or two complicating factors. The formational process requires only an IGA and written bylaws. This scenario would be straightforward to implement. The main complicating factor is identifying the resources needed to undertake the formational process, and to cover an increased ongoing facilitation effort.

Implementation Timeline: 6 months to develop a new IGA.


Estimated Implementation Cost: \$200,000 to \$400,000

Policy Conflicts/Solutions: No conflicts if the TAB's role is advisory only. If the partners wish the TAB to have decision making authority on select topics (such as approving regional plans, or prioritizing regional projects for funding), this authority would need to be vested in the advisory board by each existing governing body in the region. Any desired decision-making authorities for the new board could be addressed in the IGA.

Scenario 3A and 3B: Joint Districting

Description. This concept would create new two-county transportation districts for the Washington and Oregon sides of the Alliance. On the Oregon side, the existing Hood River County Transportation District (doing business as Columbia Area Transit, or CAT), would be expanded to annex Wasco County, or dissolved to create a new two-county special transportation district, under ORS 267. (Scenario 3A.) A Transportation Benefit District would be established under RCW 36.73 for Skamania and Klickitat Counties. (Scenario 3B.) Revenue generating authorities and board structures are different for Washington and Oregon districts, but the general concept is the same: in each two-county area, a new governing board of elected officials would be established to oversee all transit activities ranging from funding, planning, operations, and maintenance.

Either of these options could be combined Scenario 1, 2, or 4, but this evaluation considers them as stand-alone options, to compare to the status quo.

 **System Clarity for Customers and the General Public.** While transit functions would be consolidated in each two-county area, there would still be multiple agencies involved in the planning and delivery of transit programs and services at the regional level. So, Scenarios 3A and 3B are not likely to significantly

improve overall customer and public understanding of agency roles and responsibilities throughout the Gorge.



Government Accountability, Oversight and Policymaking. Joint districting would establish elected oversight boards focused solely on transit, which would increase elected official engagement within each new district's service area. Transit policies and standards would be more consistent than the status quo, since a single agency would be managing those issues for a two-county area. Contracting standards and employee compensation packages would be consistent across the two counties in each joint district, and no longer tied to all other county functions.



Regional Equity. Although each new district would have its own board of elected officials, giving residents within each new two-county district greater representation,² regional coordination would remain at the staff level under Scenarios 3A and 3B. So, these scenarios would not appreciably change the representation of regional residents on regional transit matters that affect more than one agency. The ability to ensure transit opportunities in all counties would be about the same as it is today.



Operational Efficiency. Scenarios 3A and 3B would consolidate operations in each two-county area, streamlining administrative and maintenance functions, and simplifying day to day route, stop and scheduling decisions within each two-county area. From a regional coordination perspective, there would be fewer agencies at the table, which should make the overall coordination effort easier.



Agency Staff Burden and Expertise. Consolidating the management and operation of services in two counties would remove transit responsibilities from existing county staff. Since the new district's staff would be focused solely on transit matters, it may be possible for them to develop a higher level of transit knowledge and expertise than is currently feasible for county staff who often wear multiple hats under the status quo.



Funding. Joint district scenarios would increase opportunities for local revenue generation when compared to the status quo. A Skamania/Klickitat Transportation Benefit District would have the authority (with voter approval) to levy a sales tax of up to 0.3%, establish a vehicle fee, levy property tax, or charge an impact fee on commercial or industrial development. On the Oregon side, a Hood River/Wasco transportation district would expand options for local revenue generation into Wasco County, including opportunities for voter-approved property taxes, business license fees, income taxes or employer payroll/self-employment taxes. These additional revenues could be used to directly fund transit service, and/or to leverage larger amounts of state and federal aid transit funding. Obtaining voter approval for tax levies for a Transportation District could present challenges depending on the

² There is a difference in representation between Transportation Benefit Districts in Washington state and Transportation Service Districts in Oregon. In Washington, a joint Transportation Benefit District would have a governing body of at least five members, including at least one elected official from each participating jurisdiction. This would include representatives from the elected boards of each county and each city where transit service is provided. In Oregon, Transportation service district board members are elected by a vote of the people within the service district boundary. Seven board members would be elected from the two-county area at large, so equitable geographic representation is less assured.

political environment of the area. For a tax levy to be voter-approved, the residents would have to understand the extent of the impact to their taxes as well as the benefits of establishing the levy. Demonstrated success of these transportation districts and clear communication to voters would be necessary.

Implementation Complexity: 5 – Not likely feasible. Both joint districting options are extremely challenging to implement and include complicating factors that are likely insurmountable. Each joint district would require votes of the people across a two-county area. Feasibility studies would be needed first to understand potential benefits and costs, and extensive public information campaigns would be needed to make the case to voters. These efforts may require multiple attempts over many years, with no guarantee of success. It is telling that the consultant team could not find suitably comparable examples of two-county districts in either Washington or Oregon. Due to implementation complexities, we have given these scenarios an implementation rating of “Not likely feasible to implement.”

Implementation Timeline: The formational process could take approximately one year, assuming it culminates in a successful elections process. In Oregon, where board members are elected rather than appointed from existing governing bodies, board elections could be concurrent with the election to form the district, or a subsequent election could be held adding 6 months to the timeline.

Once a joint district has been formed and board members elected or appointed, an additional 6-month startup period would be needed to help the new board with internal organization matters, such as hiring a manager, implementing an operational service plan, and developing internal policies and procedures. If the public vote to form a joint district is not successful (a highly likely scenario in the case of joint districts which would require a successful vote of the people across two counties) the implementation timeline would need to be extended through future election cycles.

Estimated Implementation Cost: Over \$1M

Policy Conflicts/Solutions: None known.


Scenario 3C: Single-County Districts


Description. This scenario would create a new transportation district in Wasco, Skamania and Klickitat Counties.³


³ Each state has more than one districting option. In Oregon, a Special Transportation District (ORS 267.520), requires a vote of the people to form, elect board members, and approve revenue levies. Alternatively, a County Service District (ORS 451.487) can be formed in Oregon by a resolution of the county commissioners but must be referred to the voters for approval, and any proposed levies must also be voter-approved. We are assuming the Special Transportation District option for our analysis because it has the advantage of an elected board focused only on transit.


In Washington a County Transportation Authority (RCW 36.57) can be created by a county and a Transportation Benefit District (RCW36.73.020) can be created by a city or county without a popular vote, and only the revenue levies need voter approval. We are using the Transportation Benefit District option for our analysis because it provides greater opportunities for participation by local cities. Within this memo, the generic term “transportation district” means either a Special Transportation District in Oregon, or a Transportation Benefit District in Washington.


Combining this scenario with either Scenarios 1, 2, or 4, would improve funding opportunities under those other three scenarios. However, this evaluation considers Scenario 3C as stand-alone option, to compare to the status quo.


 **System Clarity for Customers and the General Public.** Compared to the status quo, there would still be a separate agency with transit management responsibilities in each county, and the same issues that exist today related to clarity of system information, regional roles and responsibilities, and regional branding would remain unchanged.

 **Government Accountability, Oversight and Policymaking.** New single-county transportation districts would establish elected oversight boards in each county focused solely on transit, increasing elected official engagement on county-specific transit matters. Collaboration between partner agencies to address things like rider policies, uniform contracting standards and consistent compensation packages for transit employees would be somewhat easier since those issues would and no longer embedded within county government.

 **Regional Equity.** Although people within each new district would be represented by a board of elected officials, regional coordination would still be at the staff level under Scenario 3C. So, this scenario would not appreciably change the representation of regional residents on regional transit matters that affect more than one county. The ability to ensure transit opportunities in all counties would be about the same as it is today.

 **Operational Efficiency.** A separate transportation district in each county would not reduce the current coordination effort for the Alliance. Each new district would have its own administrative, planning, maintenance, and operations staff, perpetuating some of the redundancies that currently exist across the region. Multiple agencies would continue to provide fixed route service as they do today.

 **Agency Staff Burden and Expertise.** Creation of a new transportation district would remove the burden of managing transit activities from existing county staff. Additionally, since each new district's staff would be focused solely on transit matters, it may be possible for them to develop a higher level of transit knowledge and expertise than is currently feasible for county staff, who often wear multiple hats under the status quo.

 **Funding.** A significant advantage of this scenario is the potential to increase local revenue generation across the region. A Transportation Benefit District in Skamania or Klickitat County would have the authority (with voter approval) to levy a sales tax of up to 0.3%, establish a vehicle fee, levy property tax, or charge an impact fee on commercial or industrial development. A new transportation district in Wasco County would open opportunities for voter-approved property taxes, business license fees, income taxes or employer payroll/self-employment taxes. As with Scenario 3A and 3B, relying on voter approval for tax levies comes with significant barriers and risks in securing adequate funding.

These additional revenue streams could be used to directly fund transit service, and/or leverage larger amounts of state and federal aid transit funding. The creation of county-level Transportation Benefit Districts opens additional opportunities to obtain federal grants or access to federal financing programs available through FTA or FHWA.

Implementation Complexity: 4 – Many complicating factors. Votes of the people would be required to create each district and/or establish a tax/fee revenue structure. Financial and other feasibility analyses would be needed to determine benefits and costs in order to make the business case to the public. For districts on the Washington side, board members would be appointed from existing elected bodies, but in Wasco County on the Oregon side, a public election would be held to select new board members. These challenges notwithstanding, there are numerous examples of successful Transportation Benefit Districts in Washington state, and county-wide transportation districts in Oregon. So, despite an implementation rating of 4 – “many factors complicating implementation” – this is a feasible scenario.

Implementation Timeline: The formational process could take approximately one year, assuming it culminates in a successful elections process. In Oregon, where board members are elected rather than appointed from existing governing bodies, board elections could be concurrent with the election to form the district, or a subsequent election could be held adding 6 months to the timeline.

Once a joint district has been formed and board members elected or appointed, an additional 6-month startup period would be needed to help the new board with internal organization matters, such as hiring a manager, implementing an operational service plan, and developing internal policies and procedures. If the public vote to form a joint district is not successful, the implementation timeline would need to be extended through future election cycles.

Estimated Implementation Cost: \$500,000 to \$1M

Policy Conflicts/Solutions: None known.

Scenario 4: Regional Cooperative or Transportation Management Organization

Description. Scenario 4 would create a regional cooperative business entity (co-op), or a nonprofit transportation management organization (TMO). The new organization would have its own board and staff and could provide any or all transit services needed in the five-county region. For the purposes of this evaluation, we assume that the co-op or TMO would be a full-service organization responsible for all fixed route planning, transportation system development, and service delivery, providing a single central transit provider for the region.

The existing transit providers could jointly form the new organization and be “owners” in the case of a co-op, or “members” in the case of a TMO. Ownership or membership need not be limited to the current transit agencies. If desired, owner/member opportunities could be made available to others who may benefit from or help to fund transit service in the region. (For example, individual cities, state agencies, large employers, business and tourism groups, social service organizations and others.)

Different laws apply to the formation of co-ops and TMOs, but the general governance concept is similar for both. Owners/members would elect board officers from their ranks and fund the new agency through membership fees and by purchasing services from the new organization.

The board's responsibilities would include hiring a manager; adopting policies and procedures to be followed; developing long-range plans and business strategies; overseeing the organization's budget;

establishing internal controls to assure fiduciary responsibilities are met; and retaining auditors and legal counsel as needed.

The manager would be responsible for overseeing the agency's physical and financial resources, staff, and accounting system. The manager would also determine employee compensation levels and ensure the board has accurate and relevant information needed to make informed decisions.



System Clarity for Customers and the General Public. This scenario would consolidate all fixed route transit functions and responsibilities under a single entity, allowing consistent branding throughout the region and providing a single point of contact and source of information for customers and the public.



Government Accountability, Oversight and Policymaking. Much of the accountability, oversight, and policymaking responsibilities would shift to a new co-op or TMO board, which would be a business entity, not a unit of government. That said, the co-op or TMO board would include elected officials, so "government accountability" is still a valid consideration here. Also, much of the funding for the new organization would flow through existing governmental agencies, who would retain their current responsibilities for ensuring compliance with grant and funding requirements.

Scenario 4 would establish a single set of policies for riders and resolve current differences in other policy areas. For example, variations in employee compensation packages that currently place some agencies at a disadvantage in the labor market would be eliminated, and the consistency of wages for transit employees across the region could improve.

Differences in contracting standards would also be resolved. For example, existing transit agencies may have different financial incentives or penalties for contractor performance that affect contractors' risk and profit potential. During times when there is high demand for limited contracted services, agencies requiring less favorable contracting terms will be at a disadvantage in the marketplace. Disparities like this would be eliminated under Scenario 4.

A new co-op or TMO would provide a central forum for exchange of information and ideas between regional policymakers, so it could help to confirm the suitability of transit proposals within the nexus of other local, regional, state, and natural resource policies in the Gorge. Scenario 4 would also provide a single policy-level forum to better assess how transit projects and programs align with regional land uses.



Regional Equity. The co-op or TMO board could be structured to ensure all geographic areas and broad interests in the region are represented. Board voting methods and other rules of procedure could be structured to avoid unduly favoring the needs of some over others.

Compared to the status quo, a central organization would be in a better position to evaluate and attempt to resolve differences in transit improvement opportunities between counties. However, some opportunities would still be tied to funding flowing through each county. Because of this, some counties would still be able to afford a greater amount of service than others.



Operational Efficiency. A co-op or TMO as a regional service provider has significant advantages over the status quo for nearly all aspects of operational efficiency. Administrative functions could be centralized, eliminating existing redundancies. A single organization serving the entire region would wield more buying power than current partner agencies individually, providing an economy of scale for major purchases.

Maintenance functions would be streamlined, and operational practices would be consistent across the region. The regional fleet could be optimized, and backup vehicles and equipment more easily deployed to different parts of the region when needed.

Data collection, regional system performance monitoring and reporting would be streamlined under a central organization.



Agency Staff Burden and Expertise. A central co-op or TMO would remove the burden of managing transit activities from existing county staff. Additionally, Scenario 4 could give the entire region access to experts on staff with a significant depth and breadth of transit system management and technical experience.



Funding. A central co-op or TMO would allow the Alliance to speak about funding needs with one voice, potentially giving the region greater influence in transit funding decisions at the state level.

Responsibility for securing funding for transit programs and services across the region would likely be shared by existing governmental agencies and the new co-op or TMO. In some cases, the new regional organization may be eligible to apply for grant funding itself. For example, the Federal Transit Administration's non-urbanized area formula program ("5311" program) is commonly used to fund fixed route service outside of metropolitan areas. FTA's rules allow WSDOT or ODOT to award 5311 funds to private operators of public transportation services, such as a regional co-op or a TMO. Conversely, another common funding source for the Oregon side of the Alliance, Oregon's Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) program, would not permit a co-op or TMO to apply for funds directly. For that grant program, existing counties or transportation districts would still need to apply for funds, and then use them to purchase services from the co-op or TMO. A regional co-op or TMO could provide grant writing services and help with grant compliance reporting to lessen the burden, however. Given the relative ease of administration of this governance option, the additional funding opportunities and the ability to better coordinate applying for and obtaining these funds present significant benefit to Gorge TransLink partners.

A co-op or TMO could also help to raise funds for regional transit, for example by selling advertising or providing opportunities for regional businesses to sponsor certain transit services, activities, or events. With adequate support from the community that the co-op or TMO serves, implementation of these techniques requires minimal effort with a potentially significant capacity to raise revenue.

Implementation Complexity: 2 – One or two complicating factors. While the facilitation effort to create a new co-op would be significant, the implementation process is straightforward with few barriers. A public vote is not required. A financial feasibility analysis and business plan should be prepared to understand advantages and tradeoffs more thoroughly for the current agency partners. A legal review of statutes that govern co-ops and nonprofit organizations in both Washington and Oregon should also be done to help decide which type of entity would be most advantageous for the region, and where the new organization should be based.

Examples of complicating factors for implementing Scenario 4 are finding the resources needed to facilitate the formational effort; determining whether and how to transfer existing transit vehicles, equipment, and facilities to the new organization; and the need to be cautious about precluding the creation of a new bi-state governmental agency (see Scenario 5).

Implementation Timeline: The formational process could take approximately one year. During this time, legal research would be done to determine the most advantageous state statutes under which to organize. A business plan would also be prepared, for agreement by all parties, to determine board composition and staffing, operating plan, capital needs assessment, initial budget proposal, and funding responsibilities. Once formed, an additional six-month startup period would be needed for the new board to establish bylaws, hire staff, and develop policies and procedures for the new organization.

Implementation Cost: Over \$1M

Policy Conflicts/Solutions: A policy issue for scenario 4 is that there is currently no forum where current transit agency elected officials can interact to jointly discuss advantages and tradeoffs of regionalization and resolve differences. This could be addressed by first implementing Scenario 2.

Legal research beyond the scope of this project would be advisable before further implementation work occurs, to scan for potential conflicts within each partner agency's laws and rules for elected official service on a private organization's board.

Scenario 5: New Bi-State Government Agency

Description. Scenarios 1 through 4 are options available to the alliance today, under existing laws. Conversely, the creation of a new bi-state governmental agency is not possible within current legislation/regulations. This scenario would require new state legislation in both Washington and Oregon. A Congressional act may also be required to adequately fund it.

Like the co-op/TMO concept described above, Scenario 5 would establish a new centralized organization to take over regional transit activities, except that instead of a business or nonprofit entity, a new unit of government would be created.

A bi-state governmental agency would have its own governing board, with members determined by the formational legislation. Since there are no existing laws that prescribe or limit the structure of a new government agency, an endless number of permutations are possible. So, it is difficult to precisely describe this scenario.

Federal legislation was recently proposed by Oregon Senator Earl Blumenauer that, if enacted, would create a new Columbia River Gorge Access Committee to oversee multi-jurisdictional transportation strategies within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.⁴ This committee would have oversight responsibilities beyond just transit; however, the draft legislation leaves the door open for the Access Committee to create a sub-agency responsible for regional transit planning and operations.

For the purposes of evaluating this scenario, we assume that Senator Blumenauer's proposal will be enacted in some form. We further assume that the new Access Committee would set up a separate regional bi-state transit agency with the authority to fully manage and operate a regional transit system. While the National Scenic Area does not encompass the Gorge TransLink's entire geographic area, we assume it would be in the public interest (and agreeable to the existing transit partners) to expand the new transit agency's service area to include the entire Gorge TransLink area.

⁴ *Legislative Concepts: Recreation Enhancement, wildfire resiliency, and conservation for Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge (2022) Congressman Earl Blumenauer.* Available at: <https://blumenauer.house.gov/issues/environment-and-energy/mt-hood-and-gorge> (Accessed: November 10, 2022).

Under this scenario, the new transit agency would take over all aspects of transit system planning, operation, and management from the existing Gorge TransLink partners. The new bi-state transit agency could have a central board that includes either elected or appointed positions, or both. The board would in turn hire a manager.

Board and manager roles and responsibilities could be essentially the same as for a regional co-op or TMO scenario. That is, board responsibilities would include hiring the manager; adopting policies and procedures for the transit agency; developing long-range strategies; overseeing the organization's funding and budget; establishing internal controls; and retaining auditors and legal counsel as needed. The manager would be responsible to manage and oversee all the agency's physical and financial resources, staff, and accounting system. The manager would also determine employee compensation levels and ensure the board has accurate and relevant information needed to make informed decisions.

We further assume that Congress would provide designated funding that could be used to staff and manage the regional transit agency, and that as a governmental entity, the new transit agency would also be eligible to receive funding from existing state and federal funding programs.



System Clarity for Customers and the General Public. This scenario would consolidate all fixed route transit functions and responsibilities under a single service provider, allowing consistent branding throughout the region and providing a single point of contact and source of information for customers and the public.



Government Accountability, Oversight and Policymaking. Scenario 5 would establish a single set of policies for riders and resolve current differences in other policy areas. For example, variations in employee compensation packages that currently place some agencies at a disadvantage in the labor market would be eliminated, and a consistent pay scale would apply to transit employees across the region. Existing differences in contracting standards between current agencies would also be eliminated.

A new bi-state government agency would provide a central forum for exchange of information and ideas between regional policymakers, so it could help to confirm the suitability of transit proposals within the nexus of other local, regional, state, and natural resource policies in the Gorge. Scenario 5 would also provide a single policy-level forum to better assess how transit projects and programs align with regional land uses.



Regional Equity. The ability of a new governmental agency to make decisions that do not unduly favor the needs of some over others will depend on how the transit policy board is structured. Based on similar cases where new government agencies are created through federal legislation (like the rules that guide metropolitan planning organization formation, or legislation that created similar regional planning and transit agencies for the Tahoe area in California and Nevada), it is likely that a broadly inclusive transit policy board would be required, possibly supported by additional advisory committees to broaden participation opportunities even further.

Because Senator Blumenauer's draft legislation is focused on the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, it is logical to assume that any resulting bi-state transit agency could be asked to consider tourism and the needs of transit users from outside the region, which may be a controversial element for some

existing Alliance partners. A best-case scenario would allocate additional funding and resources to the new agency to permit a more robust tourism focus without diluting the needs of residents in the region.

Of all scenarios in our list, a new bi-state agency would likely be in the best position to ensure that transit opportunities are improved in each county. Because funding would flow directly to the new bi-state agency rather than routing through individual counties and transportation districts, the distribution of transit service and programs would be less constrained by what each county can afford to buy.



Operational Efficiency. Scenario 5 has significant advantages over the status quo for nearly all aspects of operational efficiency. All administrative and operating functions would be centralized, eliminating existing redundancies.

Maintenance functions would be streamlined, and operational practices would be consistent across the region. The regional fleet could be optimized, and backup vehicles and equipment more easily deployed to different parts of the region when needed.

Data collection, regional system performance monitoring and reporting would be streamlined under the new bi-state agency.



Agency Staff Burden and Expertise. A new bi-state governmental transit agency would remove the burden of managing transit activities from existing county staff. Additionally, Scenario 5 could give the entire region access to experts on staff with significant depth and breadth of transit system management and technical experience.



Funding. Depending on the legislation enacted to fund a new bi-state transit agency, this scenario has significant potential to increase the amount of funding available to the region. At a minimum, legislation should allocate sufficient state or federal funding to manage and staff the new agency and ensure the agency is eligible to receive funds from other existing state and federal funding programs. Legislation could also be enacted to authorize the new agency to generate local revenue through regional taxes or fees. If legislative barriers were removed, Scenario 5 would offer a feasible path to obtaining consistent and adequate revenue.

A new bi-state agency could have considerable “clout”, on par with large transit agencies in metropolitan areas. It would serve as a national model for regional transit system consolidation across more than one state and could help to shape future transit state and federal funding policies.

Implementation Complexity: 4 – Many complicating factors. Senator Blumenauer’s draft proposal for modernizing transportation in the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area elevates the feasibility of this scenario. However, there are numerous complicating factors. For example (this is by no means an inclusive list):

- Legislation would need to be written and enacted in both Washington and Oregon to create the new bi-state agency.
- A Congressional act would be needed to provide the new agency with access to federal aid funds.
- Formational legislation would need to identify a source of funding for staffing and administering the new bi-state agency.

- Formational legislation would need to determine how to treat existing transportation districts after the new bi-state agency is created. For example, if a new bi-state agency is vested with the authority to levy regional taxes or fees, that may conflict with local revenue structures already in place for CAT and any other county transportation districts that may be formed in the interim. Taking this point further, if a new bi-state agency is designated as the principal transit service provider for the region, there may no longer be a need or role for any local transportation districts in the region.
- Draft legislation under consideration appears to cover only the National Scenic Area along the Columbia River, meaning that only portions of counties within the Gorge TransLink's five county area would be covered. Creating a new decision-making body that bifurcates rather than encompasses the Alliance's existing service area could be awkward.
- At this time, there is no policy-level forum for transit agency elected officials to jointly review, evaluate, and help to shape a legislative proposal that could have extensive, far-reaching consequences for their constituents. (Implementing Scenario 2, Regional Transit Advisory Board, in the near term could help with this, however.)

Implementation Timeline: The formational process for this scenario could take approximately 1 to 3 years, or more. The timeline would be dependent on the speed with which Congress and each state legislature is prepared to act.

Under the current legislative proposal for the Gorge National Scenic Area, a parent agency, the Columbia River Gorge Access Committee, would be created first; then a new governmental transit agency could be subsequently formed under the Access Committee's authority.

A business plan could be prepared to determine board composition, staffing, operating plan, capital needs assessment, and initial budget. A funding plan would follow, which should include a plan for the continuation or dissolution of any existing transit agencies in the region. A public elections process may be needed to establish new local revenue streams, and possibly to elect policy board members that are not appointed positions.

Policy Conflicts/Solutions: A policy issue for scenario 5 is that there is currently no forum where current transit agency elected officials can interact to jointly discuss advantages and tradeoffs of regionalization and resolve differences. This could be addressed by first implementing Scenario 2.

Funding Opportunities Across Scenarios

All scenarios other than the current status quo (Scenario 0) present new opportunities for increasing coordination among the Gorge TransLink partners. Scenarios 1 and 2 offer better policymaking and government oversight potentially increasing public perception of the reliability of the transit systems. Scenarios 3-5 positively impact the operational efficiency and government oversight of the transit system. Scenario 3 would unlock the possibility for a significant amount of new revenue through district levies.

Additionally, Scenarios 4 and 5 improve system cohesion, supporting a more consistent approach to branding and marketing across the region. A transit system that is designed and managed more cohesively, operates more efficiently, and communicates services clearly to the public has the potential to attract more ridership and associated farebox revenue, advertising revenue, and donations.

Additionally, Scenarios 3 through 5 could meaningfully improve Gorge TransLink partners ability to leverage state and federal grant funds available from FTA and FHWA. Gorge TransLink partners have previously leveraged such funding as a designated sub-recipient.

Table 2 below, summarizes the funding opportunities potentially made available through each scenario. The table provides a qualitative assessment about the relative ease across scenarios of generating additional revenue from each source. This assessment does not include considerations about political viability or adequacy of specific revenue sources.

Table 2. Funding Opportunities Summary

Potential New Revenue Opportunity ¹	Scenario 1: Enhanced Status Quo	Scenario 2: Regional Transit Advisory Board	Scenario 3A&B: Joint Districting	Scenario 3C: Single-County Districting	Scenario 4: Regional Co-op or TMO	Scenario 5: Bi-State Governmental Agency
Opportunity to increase farebox revenues	Low	Low	Medium	Low	High	High
Opportunity to increase advertising and fundraising revenue	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	High
Introduction of Tax Levy	None	None	High	High	None	Unknown ²
Allocation of additional state or federal revenue	None	None	None	None	None	High
Opportunity to increase federal grant disbursements	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	High

¹Scenario 4 could be combined with 3A, 3B, or 3C to unlock tax levy revenue options in addition to the potential revenues identified for Scenario 4 alone.

² The potential to increase funding opportunities under a bi-state governmental agency would depend on future legislation and is uncertain at this time.

Additional Funding Sources

The Gorge TransLink service to the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area presents an opportunity for leveraging this funding source through a demonstration that public transportation in the region helps to sustain and increase access to national forests.

These programs include the congressionally-chartered National Forest Foundation's Innovative Finance for National Forest (IFNF) Grant program, the congressionally-chartered National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grants, the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) and others.

Innovative Finance for National Forest (IFNF) Grant program

In most cases, the objectives for these grants include improving not only the financial sustainability of these areas but also the economic and environmental benefits to communities and visitors. For example, the congressionally-chartered National Forest Foundation's Innovative Finance for National Forest (IFNF) grant program specifically seeks to improve the financial sustainability of the National Forest System to ensure its preservation and the benefits to visitors and communities. The task 4 memo

discusses some of the successful applications for these funds including the Inyo National Forest in California and Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in Washington to develop plans for financing infrastructure improvements to increase tourist access.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grants

Similarly, the congressionally-chartered National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grants seek to “sustain, restore, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats” with grants awarded to federal, state, and local governments, and nonprofit organizations, and whose previous grants have included supporting building green structures for public transit, reducing pollution to watersheds and increasing education around stormwater and watershed pollution.

Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)

The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) is part of the Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act which allocated \$11.6 million to Washington and \$37.8 million to Oregon to increase access to federal lands through improved roads and transit systems.

Service Opportunities

Table 3 summarizes the existing service level, vision for future service level, coordination needs, implementation needs, and paratransit requirements for each route according to the regional vision map illustrated in Figure 1. The primary themes are summarized below:

- The service vision includes adding lifeline service (<4 trips/day, <4 days/week) for the following routes:
 - The Dalles – Dufur – Tygh Valley – Maupin – Madras (with connections to Warm Springs, Shaniko, and Antelope)
 - The Dalles – Celilo Village – Biggs
 - Goldendale – Biggs
 - Bingen – Lyle – Dallesport
- Weekend fixed route service is only provided along routes from Hood River. Providing weekend service across routes and expanding service hours in the evening is a need for most routes.
- The only services with paratransit requirements are the local routes. Each county has a different method of meeting paratransit requirements. Mt. Adams Transportation Services (MATS) provides deviations along a route that could qualify as an intercity route, and therefore does not require complementary paratransit, to provide a wider coverage area.

Each route update includes a timeframe for implementation:

- The **2-Year Horizon** includes updates that could be implemented by redistributing resources, identifying smaller grants, or that are already planned for near-term updates by agencies.
- The **5-Year Horizon** includes high-priority updates that would require substantial additional funding, such as adding weekend and expanding evening service.
- The **10-Year Horizon** includes updates that require substantial additional funding and are secondary priorities.

Table 3. Coordination and Implementation for the Vision for Future Service

Route	Existing Service Level	Vision for Future Service Level	Coordination and Implementation Needs	Paratransit Requirements ⁵	Timeframe for Implementation (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Hood River – Local Routes	<i>Hood River</i> Everyday 7:45am-7:15pm 16 trips/day	Expand evening service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate major stops and schedules to facilitate transfers between services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local fixed route: Paratransit service is required Currently met by providing complementary paratransit 	5 Year
Hood River – Mosier – The Dalles	<i>The Dalles</i> Everyday 9:30am-3:50pm 4 trips/day	Add evening service Increase frequency to at least 12 trips/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate schedule to maximize efficiency transferring to the Columbia Gorge Express Identify funding to provide additional frequency and evening service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year
Hood River – Wyeth – Cascade Locks – Multnomah Falls – Troutdale/Wood Village – Portland	<i>Columbia Gorge Express</i> Everyday 5:30am-7:30pm 13 trips/day	Expand evening service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding and expand staff to extend evening service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	10 Year
Hood River – Odell – Parkdale	<i>Upper Valley</i> Weekdays 7:30am-6:15pm 8 trips/day	Add weekend service Expand evening service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding and expand staff to extend evening service and add weekend service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year
Hood River – Bridge of the Gods	<i>Cascade Locks</i> Everyday 5:30am-7:35pm 12 trips/day	Expand evening service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding and expand staff to extend evening service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year

⁵ Additionally details about how paratransit requirements can be met is provided in the following section.

Route	Existing Service Level	Vision for Future Service Level	Coordination and Implementation Needs	Paratransit Requirements ⁵	Timeframe for Implementation (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Hood River – Parkdale – Mt. Hood	<i>Gorge-To-Mountain Express</i> Seasonal ⁶	Provide year-round service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding and expand staff to provide year-round service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	2 Year
Hood River – Dog Mountain	<i>Dog Mountain Shuttle</i> Seasonal Weekends 7:30am-5:50pm 2 trips/day between Hood River—Dog Mountain, additional between Skamania Fairgrounds – Dog Mountain	Increase frequency between Hood River-Dog Mountain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more frequent service between Hood River-Dog Mountain Coordinate schedule to maximize efficiency transferring to and from the Columbia Gorge Express 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	2 Year
White Salmon – Bingen – Hood River	<i>White Salmon to Hood River Loop</i> Weekdays 7am-7pm 9 trips/day	Add weekend service Expand weekday service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate providers to contract weekend service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year
The Dalles – Local Routes	<i>Red Line, Blue Line</i> Weekdays 7:00am-5:40pm 9 trips/day (Red), 16 trips/day (Blue)	Add weekend service Expand weekday service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate major stops and schedules to facilitate transfers between services Coordinate schedule to maximize efficiency transferring to and from the Columbia Gorge Express 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local fixed route: Paratransit service is required Currently met by providing deviations 	5 Year
The Dalles – Dufur – Tygh Valley – Maupin	<i>South County Shuttle</i> Tuesdays 1 trip/week	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	N/A

⁶ CAT recently received a grant to convert this service to year-round.

Route	Existing Service Level	Vision for Future Service Level	Coordination and Implementation Needs	Paratransit Requirements ⁵	Timeframe for Implementation (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
The Dalles – Dufur – Tygh Valley – Maupin – Madras (with connections to Warm Springs, Shaniko, and Antelope)	-	Add service <4 trips/day, <4 days/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue funding for lifeline service, time to facilitate regional transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	10 Year
The Dalles – Celilo Village – Biggs	-	Add service <4 trips/day, <4 days/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue funding for lifeline service, time to facilitate regional transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	10 Year
Goldendale – Local Route⁷	<i>Goldendale City Green Route</i> Weekdays 7am-7pm 7 trips/day	Add weekend service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate providers to contract weekend service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local fixed route: Paratransit service is required Currently met by providing dial-a-ride 	5 Year
Goldendale – Biggs	-	Add service <4 trips/day, <4 days/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue funding for lifeline service, time to facilitate regional transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	10 Year
Goldendale – The Dalles	<i>Goldendale to The Dalles</i> Weekdays 7am-7pm 4 trips/day	Add weekend service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate providers to contract weekend service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year
Bingen – Vancouver	<i>Bingen - Stevenson - Vancouver Route</i> Weekdays 5:30am-8:00pm 7 trips/day	Add weekend service Increase frequency to at least 8 trips/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate providers to contract weekend service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required Deviations are still provided to expand service area 	5 Year
Bingen – Lyle – Dallesport	-	Add service <4 trips/day, <4 days/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue funding for lifeline service, time to facilitate regional transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year

⁷ Includes interlining service with Goldendale – The Dalles Route

Paratransit Requirements

Complementary ADA paratransit service or route deviation is required where local fixed route bus services are provided for the same service span of the fixed route and within ¼ mile of the route. Intercity routes do not trigger complementary ADA paratransit requirements, however if there are too many stops along a route the route then it may no longer be classified as an intercity route and complementary ADA paratransit would be required. FTA defines intercity bus service as regularly scheduled bus service for the general public which operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity. Typically, limited stops mean up to approximately three stops in an urban area. Different sections of the same route can be classified differently: for example, a route with many stops in two cities but only a couple of stops between could trigger the need for paratransit within ¼ mile of the stops in each city but not along the full route.

Paratransit requirements can be met by providing deviations from local transit routes or by providing complementary paratransit service (dial-a-ride).

Benefits and drawbacks of providing deviations along transit routes include:

Benefits	Drawbacks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complementary ADA paratransit is not required on either intercity or local transit routes if these routes deviate. This reduces potential financial liability to serve increasing demand for ride requests. ● Providing deviations can help expand the reach of a transit route: supporting first-mile/last-mile access to and from destinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing deviations can make it difficult to reliably maintain a fixed transit schedule, depending on the number of deviation requests. ● Buffering route schedules to allow for deviations increases the travel time.

Currently, Hood River County and Wasco County have separate local and intercity routes. Sherman County, Skamania County, and Klickitat County do not have separate intercity and local routes. In Hood River County and Wasco County, intercity routes do not need to deviate, especially as local routes are able to deviate to expand the reach of the transit system without impacting the schedule of the intercity route. In Skamania County, local and intercity service are provided on a single route, and deviations are currently used to expand the reach of the transit route.

Gaps and Opportunities

Table 4 outlines potential initiatives to address gaps and opportunities. It also identifies which governance model(s) facilitate these initiatives and the recommended timeframe for implementation.

Table 4. Gaps and Opportunities

Gap or Opportunity	Explanation	Opportunity	Initiatives	Governance	Timeframe (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
<p>Connections between Local Routes and Intercity Routes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some intercity routes currently have limited stop locations and stops located further outside the downtown core depending on the location of the transit center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity routes should include key stops at medical facilities, downtown areas, and colleges to increase connectivity to local routes and facilitate one-seat rides to popular destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate stop locations: serve multiple key stops in each city to support transfers between providers and increase the number of trips that do not require a transfer Coordinate with all five counties before moving the locations of these key stops to minimize potential disruptions to connecting routes 	<p>All</p>	<p>2-Year</p>
<p>First-Mile Last-Mile Access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is limited local transit and active transportation infrastructure supporting connections to regional transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dial-a-ride, park-and-rides, mobility hubs, electric bikes, electric carshares, transportation network companies, and carpools can help provide these connections and serve rural areas Improve active transportation infrastructure so that it is comfortable for people of all ages and abilities and meets Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with local government to prioritize transportation projects improving walking and biking facilities in connecting to transit routes Pursue grant funding to support electrification initiatives Partner with employers to facilitate carpool and vanpool programs Explore opportunities to construct park-and-rides or mobility hubs 	<p>All</p>	<p>2-Year</p>
<p>Timed Transfers to Columbia Gorge Express</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfers to/from the Columbia Gorge Express without excessive delays are critical to having a usable transit system providing access throughout the Gorge It is challenging to provide timed transfers when there is limited frequency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate transit timetables to maximize the efficiency of transfers for all providers to/from the Columbia Gorge Express 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify primary transit stop(s) in each community for transfers between services Coordinate schedules to maximize efficiencies of transfers. This coordination is limited in the near-term by current frequencies In the longer term, increase frequency to facilitate smooth transfers between services 	<p>All</p>	<p>2-Year</p>

Gap or Opportunity	Explanation	Opportunity	Initiatives	Governance	Timeframe (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Population Density	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low population density in rural areas of the region are difficult to efficiently serve with fixed route transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on providing dial-a-ride, supporting carpools and vanpools, and supporting first-mile last-mile connections to fixed route transit Promote transit-supportive land uses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to utilize a combination of routes and service types to support a balance of productivity and coverage Partner with local government to prioritize transit-supportive development patterns 	All	Ongoing
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many of the denser cities and recreation destinations are located along the SR-14 and I-84 corridor; however, many destinations are located off of these facilities and have safety, topographical, or ownership constraints Drive times along SR-14 and I-84 can vary significantly due to congestion and construction The Columbia River Gorge Natural Scenic Area is a protected area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase stops along existing intercity transit routes, and at the beginning and ends including stops in downtowns, to provide access to more communities and recreational destinations Add intercity routes to key urban areas along the SR-14 and I-84 area that are not currently serviced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create consistent policies regarding flag stops, call stops, and deviations, where possible. Clearly advertise these policies. Provide additional service and stops at cities and major destinations along the SR-14 and I-84 corridor. Coordinate with other agencies (such as parks and recreation) to ensure sufficient space for safe transit stops Build in buffer time at peak periods to account for congestion. Provide real-time vehicle arrival information so that riders can track buses that may be running behind schedule due to construction or congestion Add a connection between White Salmon and Dallesport serving Lyle and other destinations 	All However, Scenario 3 and Scenario 5 are supportive of the additional funding needed to accommodate the service expansion	5 -Year

Gap or Opportunity	Explanation	Opportunity	Initiatives	Governance	Timeframe (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Seasonality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism and recreation volumes and destinations differ between seasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase services or provide additional services during peak season for different destinations Provide service at peak season could support mode shift and reduce congestion at these times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As funding for services incrementally becomes available, start by providing new or increased services during peak seasons Seasonal permits provide opportunities to increase revenue and encourage transit use during peak season 	All	2-Year
Marketing and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit service would benefit from increased marketing, branding, and public awareness of existing services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage information sharing with Community-Based Partners, Employers, and continue building on recent marketing efforts from the Gorge TransLink Alliance In more rural areas where public transit may not be as prominent, clear marketing is important to increase ridership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue developing the Gorge TransLink website, working towards consolidating resources where riders can gather information across services on a single page that could be printed out Implement consistent branding of buses and bus stops Coordinate data collection across counties 	All	2-Year

Gap or Opportunity	Explanation	Opportunity	Initiatives	Governance	Timeframe (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Service Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited evening and weekend services are provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide weekend fixed route transit services across the network allowing residents and visitors in Wasco County, Klickitat County, and Skamania County to connect intercity routes with access to recreation, jobs and shopping on weekends. Weekend connections for cities in Washington, Mosier, and to Mt. Hood will greatly increase access to recreation for residents and visitors Expand evening service on both weekdays and weekends (stakeholder advisory group members particularly emphasized the need to expand evening and weekend service between the Cities of Hood River, Bingen, and White Salmon) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting with private and public providers can help provide staffing needed to expand service hours where current drivers are at maximum capacity. Providing weekend service across agencies supports connections across the counties for residents and tourists to access recreation, shopping, and employment. Expanding evening service supports access for people with later shifts or utilizing transit after standard work hours. Coordinate intercity and local transit schedules so that riders of intercity routes can connect locally to the first and last runs of the day. 	<p>Scenario 3 and Scenario 5 are needed to provide sufficient funding to accommodate the service expansion</p>	<p>5-Year</p>
Medical rides that are not reimbursable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers in various counties provide medical rides that do not qualify as reimbursable non-emergency medical rides (NEMT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner between agencies to provide these rides and support long-haul rides to Portland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance education about and support connections to the Columbia Gorge Express to better serve need for medical rides to Portland 	<p>All</p>	<p>2-Year</p>
Private Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate between public and private providers to serve congested tourism areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on partnerships with existing private shuttles to continue serving, or expand, access to popular destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract with private and public providers to expand transit service. Service can be contracted for evenings, weekends, or for all services Partner with private providers to facilitate transfers between public and private transportation services 	<p>All</p>	<p>5-Year</p>

Gap or Opportunity	Explanation	Opportunity	Initiatives	Governance	Timeframe (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Electrification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No transit vehicles for any provider of the Gorge TransLink Alliance are currently hybrid or electric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Converting vehicle fleets to hybrid and electric vehicles requires sufficient range and proper charging stations In the long term, electric vehicle fleets can help reduce both maintenance and fueling costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue grant funding to support electrification initiatives Construct charging and alternative fueling facilities to support the purchase of hybrid or fully electric vehicles 	All	10-Year
Staff Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of sufficient staffing (especially for drivers) makes it challenging to provide and increase service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligning compensation can help reduce competition and staff turnover Maximizing the increased economy of scale: help make staff time go farther by sharing resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate between agencies to align on compensation packages that reduce competition between counties and increase the appeal of the staff positions overall Under certain government scenarios, staff could be hired under the umbrella of an agency, facilitating ease of optimizing staff schedules 	All, especially Scenario 4 and Scenario 5	2-Year

MONITORING PROGRAM

Consistent data collection across the study area should be used to monitor both transit performance and the outcomes of implementing the Gorge Regional Transit Strategies recommendations over time. In many cases, these performance measures are already tracked as part of Federal Transit Administration reporting requirements. This program enables a dynamic system where service adjustments can be implemented and justified following performance evaluations. The relative importance of each metric may differ by county based on population demographics and needs.

- Regional Equity and Connectivity
 - Geographic coverage
 - Service Span
 - Service Frequency
 - Connections to other routes/providers
- Operational Efficiency
 - Rides per hour
 - Cost per ride
 - Cost per hour
 - Total capital costs
 - Total annual opportunity costs
 - System ease of use
- Accessibility and Connectivity
 - Bus stop amenities
 - Bicycle and pedestrian connections
 - Population served
 - Employment served
 - Transit-dependent populations served
 - Number of service request denials
- System Clarity for Customers and the General Public
 - On-time performance (Not currently available)
- Sustainability
 - Fleet fuel efficiencies
 - Annual energy consumption

NEXT STEPS

This memo will be revised to incorporate all revisions and comments received from the PMT. In addition to generalized edits provided during review, Revised Memo #5 will present a refined and recommended 'menu of options' and associated implementation strategies based on feedback received during review. Revised Memo #5 will also identify priority investments or options for implementation as identified by AC. The top 2-3 priority implementation strategies will be defined as Key Initiatives that are more fully defined with specific short- and mid-term action items, roles, and responsibilities. The information in Revised Memo #4 and Revised Memo #5 will inform the Key Initiatives Workshop.



Memo

To: HRCTD - BOARD OF DIRECTORS
From: Amy Schlappi
Date: December 21, 2022
Re: Gorge Regional Transit Strategy

Background

As discussed in the October Board Meeting, the Gorge Regional Transit Strategy, which is being managed by the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District is in Phase II. During Phase I a vision statement was created:

“Public Transit supports thriving Columbia River Gorge communities by providing access to critical services, higher education, jobs, and outdoor recreation while protecting the natural wonders of the Gorge.”

Phase II focuses on implementation of that vision. So far in Phase II a public involvement plan has been created, existing conditions report completed, gaps and opportunities have been identified, and different governance models for the Gorge Transit Network to carry out the vision of a connected gorge has been highlighted. Kathy Fitzpatrick (MCEDD) will be giving a presentation at the December Board Meeting on the status of the project. One of the big topics that has been identified during Phase II is does having four different public transit providers operating in the Mid-Columbia Gorge with different designations make the most sense. More specifically, would having a different governance model help public transit serve the community more efficiently and effectively? During Kathy’s presentation there will be time to discuss the different issues that are trying to be solved with a potential new governance model and which model(s) would be the most beneficial to the district. Attached you will find the Gorge Regional Transit Strategy Phase II Technical Memo #5 which discusses different strategies for regional transit service delivery, decision making, organizational structures, funding, and engagement with partner organizations to achieve the regional vision and goals as identified in Phase I.

Issues

Since the district is a Transportation District HRCTD does have access to more resources than some of the other public transit providers in the Columbia River Gorge. For the district to make a governance shift staff feels that the following should be addressed and improved to justify modifications:

- Increased access to administrative support for people management, business development, employee benefits, IT support, facilities management, accounting, and general administrative assistance.
- Increased resources to ensure timely vehicle repairs and readily available mechanical expertise.
- Improved user experience, including but not limited to:
 - Similar branding of vehicles
 - Easy to understand schedules and transfers
 - Improved amenities at bus stops so they are consistent and meet rider needs
 - Reduction of different policies
 - Same fares
 - Coordinated naming conventions of route names
 - Improved communication
 - 1 website
 - 1 customer assistance phone number
- Increased operational efficiencies
 - Utilization of same dispatch programs, fare technology, and communication tools
 - Vehicle and route integration (reduce redundancies)
 - Weekend operations
 - Access to wider pool of drivers to meet operational needs
- Access to additional funding opportunities

The attached Gorge Regional Transit Strategy Phase II Technical Memo #5 discusses the different governance structures. Below staff has listed the options that seem most beneficial to HRCTD.

- Scenario 1 – Enhanced Status Quo pg. 10
- Scenario 2 – Regional Transit Advisory Board pg. 11
 - It would need to be very clear as to when the HRCTD board overrules potential RTAB decisions if it is in the best interest of the district. Conflict may arise between HRCTD board and the RTAB if they are granted decision making authorities.
- Scenario 3A – Joint Districting pg.13
 - Based on the consultant’s review this sounds like a very challenging option to implement, but in theory would allow for more funding opportunities.
- Scenario 5 – New Bi-State Governmental Agency pg. 20

Action Required

It is important for board members to be on the same page for what criteria needs to be met to change the governance structure or what governance structures are most beneficial for the district/Hood River County. One board member will be asked to represent the HRCTD board at an upcoming Gorge Regional Transit Strategy stakeholder meeting and needs to have clear direction from the board as to what is wanted.



Recommendation

I have highlighted the issues that district staff feel should be addressed and what governance models would be the most beneficial for the district, but I feel it is important that the board discuss the options and come to a group decision on how to move forward.

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM #5

Date: November 30, 2022

Project #: 27091

To: Don Morehouse, Oregon Department of Transportation
 Kathy Fitzpatrick, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District
 Bill Baumann, Washington Department of Transportation

From: Susan Wright, PE; Amy Griffiths, EIT; Kittelson & Associates, Inc.

Project: Gorge Regional Transit Strategy (GRTS) Phase 2

Subject: Regional Transit Solutions

INTRODUCTION

This memorandum explores different strategies for regional transit service delivery, decision-making, organizational structures, funding, and engagement with partner organizations that achieve the regional Vision and Goals as established in Phase 1 and in Memo #4: Regional Transit Service Vision and Funding Opportunities. The information is presented primarily as a 'menu of options' and builds on prior tasks. A range of potential performance measures or methods to track outcomes is included.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Table of Contents.....	1
Project Vision and Goals	2
Menu of Options.....	4
Decision-Making and Organizational Structures	4
Funding Opportunities Across Scenarios.....	23
Service Opportunities	25
Monitoring Program	35
Next Steps.....	35



PROJECT VISION AND GOALS

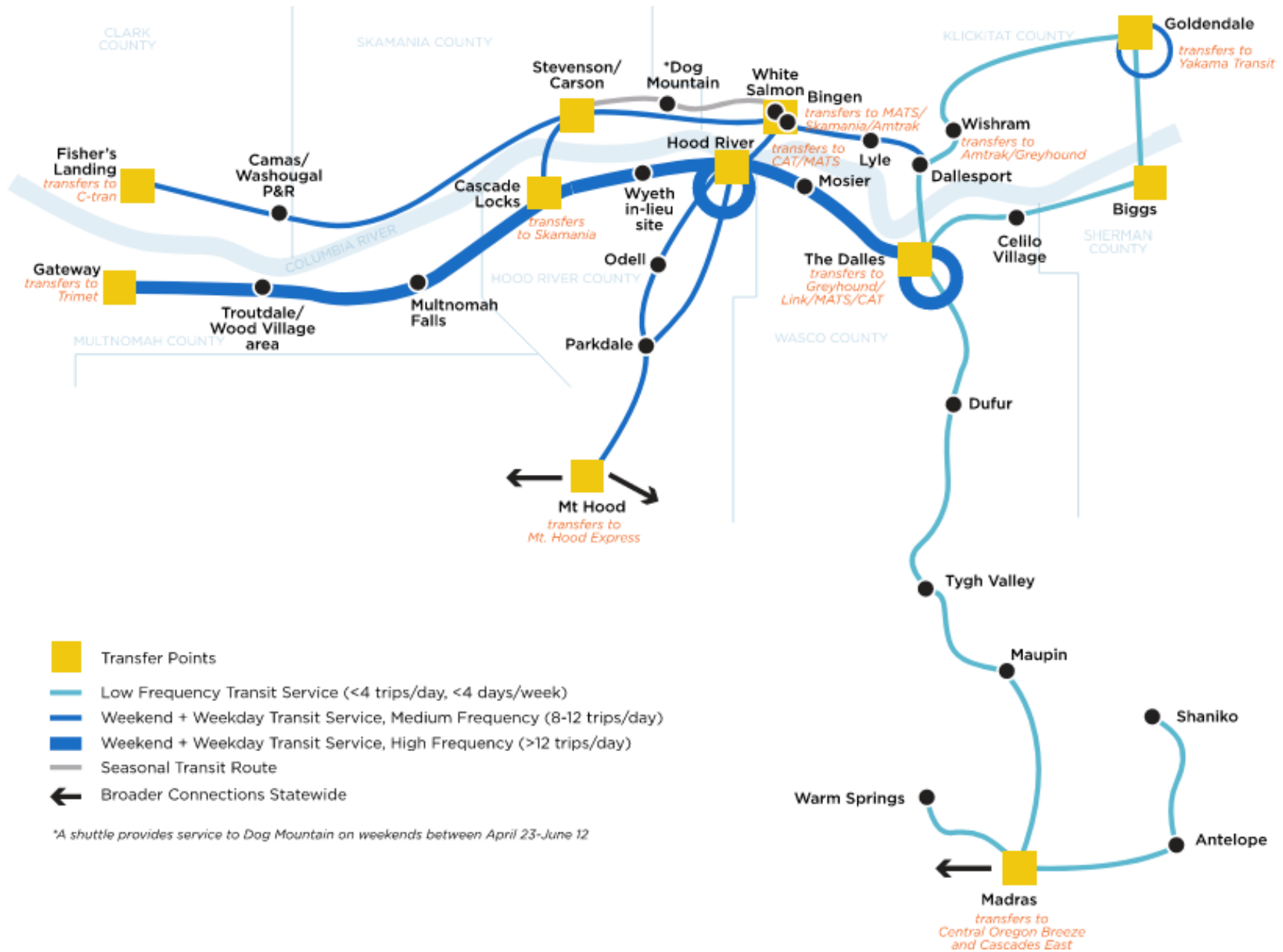
The Gorge Regional Transit Strategy Phase 1 developed a collective vision statement and goal areas that reflect the needs and values of the bistate region. That vision statement is as follows:

Public transit supports thriving Columbia River Gorge communities by providing access to critical services, higher education, jobs, and outdoor recreation while protecting the natural wonders of the Gorge.

Figure 1 illustrates the preferred vision map developed based on an analysis of gaps and opportunities and discussions with the project advisory committee and stakeholder advisory groups. Cities and communities that are already served by transit or that were included in adopted planning documents were included on the map. Additional key stop locations/communities to serve will be added through the vision refinement process conducted with advisory groups.

This preferred vision map includes service seven days a week on most routes, with 60-90 minute frequency service desirable along each route as well as a new direct connection from White Salmon to Dallesport. The increase to service seven days per week is a change for services in Washington, to Mt. Hood, and to stops in Mosier and Wyeth. To best support the regional vision, the recommendations expand local transit routes, coordinate timetables with local providers, increase area that can be reached by carshare, vanshare, carpools, and expand access to transportation network companies (like Uber, Lyft, and local taxis) to provide connections to/from regional transit.

Figure 1. Preferred Regional Transit Vision Map



MENU OF OPTIONS

This section presents the menu of options for regional transit service delivery, decision-making and organizational structures, funding, and engagement with partner organizations. For each of these options, the section includes considerations of the following:

- The degree to which an option will help achieve the Project Vision and Goals
- The short- and long-term capacity and budgetary implications for Partner Agencies
- The timeframe for implementation including 2-, 5- and 10-year horizons
- The constraints, including any Partner Agency policy conflicts, and proposed solutions for agency alignment

Decision-Making and Organizational Structures

In Technical Memo 4, the project team presented an overview of various organizational scenarios that the Alliance could implement to improve the regional decision-making process:

- Scenario 0: Status Quo
- Scenario 1: Enhanced Status Quo
- Scenario 2: Regional Transit Advisory Board
- Scenarios 3A and 3B: Joint transportation districts (Hood River/Wasco, and Skamania/Klickitat)
- Scenario 3C: Single-county transportation districts
- Scenario 4: Regional Cooperative (Co-Op) or Transportation Management Organization (TMO)
- Scenario 5: New Bi-State Governmental Agency

Technical Memo 4 also outlined criteria to be used to screen the different scenarios, based on input from the Advisory Committee. In this memo, we provide a preliminary rating of whether each scenario would be better, worse, or about the same as the status quo, using the screening criteria bulleted below.

Preliminary rating information in this draft is based on the consultant team's perspective. It is intended to be refined after discussion with the Advisory Committee, and again following discussions that include partner agency elected officials at an upcoming Key Initiatives Work Session.

Screening Criteria

- System Clarity for Customers and the General Public
 - Clarity of system information for different types of users (commuters, residents, tourists)
 - Clarity of regional roles and responsibilities
 - Identifiable regional brand
- Government Accountability, Oversight, and Policymaking
 - Elected official engagement in, and understanding of, regional transit matters
 - Consistency of rider policies across the region
 - Consistency of internal policies, such as contracting standards and employee compensation
 - Suitability of the scenario, given other local, regional, state, and natural resource policies in the Gorge

- Potential to align with land use planning processes
- Regional Equity
 - Ability to achieve balanced decisions that do not unduly favor the needs of some over others
 - Comparable voice/representation for residents in each county
 - Improved transit opportunities in each county
 - Avoiding disproportionate focus on the needs of people outside the region
- Operational Efficiency
 - Economy of scale for major purchases, such as maintenance facilities, fleet, other equipment, stop furnishings, etc.
 - Efficiency of administrative functions
 - Efficiency of maintenance activities
 - Streamlined communications and dispatching across the region
 - Efficiency and communication of day-to-day route, stop and scheduling decisions
 - Potential to streamline long-range transit development plans
 - Consistency of data collection and performance reporting processes
 - Access to resources for emergencies
- Agency Staff Burden and Expertise
 - Impact on existing agency labor burden
 - Access to skilled and experienced transit staff
- Funding
 - Potential for new revenue streams
 - Effect on current revenue streams
 - Legitimacy of the Alliance in the eyes of funders and legislators

The scale used to rate scenarios based on the criteria listed above is as follows:

Screening Ratings



Much better than status quo



Somewhat better than status quo



No effective change



Somewhat worse than status quo



Much worse than status quo

The complexity of the implementation process varies significantly between scenarios. So as a final screening activity, we rate the realistic potential for implementing each scenario, using the following scale:

Implementation Complexity Ratings

- 1** - Minimal or no barriers to implementation
- 2** - One or two complicating factors
- 3** - Several complicating factors
- 4** - Many complicating factors
- 5** - Not likely feasible to implement

The cost to implement each scenario will depend on many factors, including how much of the facilitation/formational effort can be absorbed by MCEDD and the partner agencies. For comparison purposes, the following high-level scale was used, assuming a full-service consulting team would be hired at market rates to facilitate implementation, with MCEDD and partner agency staff in advisory roles only.

Estimated Implementation Cost

- \$** - Under \$200,000
- \$\$** - \$200,000 to \$500,000
- \$\$\$** - \$500,000 to \$1,000,000
- \$\$\$\$** - Over \$1,000,000

Table 1 shows a high-level summary of how each scenario compares to the status quo using the rating scales described above. A detailed discussion of the reasons behind the ratings for each scenario follows the table.

Key takeaways:

- Scenarios which centralize regional operations (Scenarios 4 and 5) under one organization have the greatest potential to improve clarity of system information for customers and the general public.
- All organizational scenarios provide at least some level of improvement in overall government accountability, policymaking, and oversight; however, scenarios that establish a formal forum for interaction between elected officials (Scenarios 2, 4, and 5) would provide the largest benefits in this area.
- Under nearly all scenarios, the level of service possible in different geographic areas of the region is highly dependent on each county's financial position and how much each existing transit agency can afford to purchase for their residents. The exception to this is a new governmental bi-state agency (Scenario 5). Under that concept, all transit funding for the region would flow to and through a single entity, rather than routing through individual counties and transportation districts. So, the geographic distribution of transit service and programs could be less constrained by what each county can afford to buy.

- Scenarios that centralize operations under a single agency (Scenarios 4 and 5) would provide the greatest economy of scale for the region in nearly all aspects of transit program delivery: planning, purchasing, operating, contracting, maintenance, etc.
- Scenarios that create new agencies, such as new single-county service districts (Scenario 3C), a regional co-op or TMO (Scenario 4), or a new bi-state governmental agency (Scenario 5) would remove the administrative burden of transit programs from existing partner agencies. Of these, the centralized concepts for Scenarios 4 and 5 could give the partners access to potentially greater staff-level expertise than is currently possible since staff at county agencies must often wear multiple hats.
- Scenarios that create new transportation districts (such as Scenario 3C) have the potential to improve the region's transit funding outlook with new local revenue streams.
- Single-county transportation districts in Wasco, Skamania, and Klickitat counties (Scenario 3C) would be challenging, but feasible to implement, and many examples of single county transit districts exist in both Washington and Oregon. However, scenarios that involve joint districting of two or more counties under existing statutes, such as a joint Hood River County/Wasco County transportation district (Scenario 3A), or a joint Skamania County/Klickitat County transportation benefit district (Scenario 3B), would require successful public elections across two counties, are not likely feasible to implement.

Table 1. Organizational Scenario Screening Summary

Organizational Scenario	System Clarity for Customers and the General Public	Government Accountability, Oversight, and Policy-making	Regional Equity	Operational Efficiency	Agency Staff Burden and Expertise	Funding	Implementation Complexity	Estimated Implementation Cost
Scenario 1: Enhanced Status Quo							1	\$
Scenario 2: Regional Transit Advisory Board							1	\$\$
Scenario 3A&B: Joint Districting							5	\$\$\$\$
Scenario 3C: Single-County Districting*							3	\$\$\$
Scenario 4: Regional Co-op or TMO							2	\$\$\$\$
Scenario 5: Bi-State Governmental Agency							4	\$\$\$\$

Ratings above indicate each scenario’s likely impact *for the region overall*, not for individual counties.

Ratings Legend (with respect to the status quo):

Much better Somewhat better About the same Somewhat worse Much worse

Implementation complexity:

1 – Minimal or no barriers to implementation | 2 – One or two complicating factors | 3 – Several complicating factors | 4 – Many complicating factors | 5 – Not likely feasible

*Scenario 3C could be combined with Scenario 1, 2 or 4 to improve the funding outlook under those scenarios.

Scenario 0: Status Quo

Description. Scenario 0 is the baseline to which we are comparing all other scenarios. The status quo assumes no change to the current Gorge TransLink Alliance, which is governed by separate MOUs between each county and MCEDD. The MOUs designate MCEDD as the lead agency for the Alliance and include only high-level statements indicating each agency's broad intent to work with MCEDD. Regional communication and cooperation are ad hoc, without a defined decision-making process.

The current Alliance is a staff-level effort with no decision-making authority. There is no forum for interaction between regional elected officials. Recommendations are carried back to each individual transit agency's governing body for approval.

System Clarity for Customers and the General Public. The Gorge TransLink website provides a central point of information about transit services across the region, with schedule information available on all fixed routes on one site. Partner agencies maintain their own individual websites as well.

Multiple agencies operate service across the region, and buses may carry different branding depending on the operator.

Government Accountability Oversight and Policymaking. Coordination between current transit agency partners occurs at the staff level. There is currently no formal forum for interaction between elected policymakers at the regional level on transit matters.

Regional Equity. Because coordination is at the staff level, there is limited representation for members of the public in regional transit discussions. The type and frequency of transit service in each county varies and depends on each individual transit agency's financial position.

Operational Efficiency. Transit agency staff coordinate informally to streamline connections between service providers. Partners have entered into multiple agreements as needed to allow one partner to provide service within a neighboring jurisdiction and could continue to do so. Under the status quo scenario, the group has the ability to develop interagency agreements for any future services to be provided and could also explore things like joint procurement processes that could improve their collective purchasing power. Each agency collects its own data to serve its individual needs, and there is currently no regional performance reporting process.

Agency Staff Burden and Expertise. While the Hood River County Transportation District (doing business as Columbia Area Transit, or CAT) has dedicated transit staff, all other partner agencies have limited staff to manage transit operations, and some have other duties for their county in addition to their transit roles.

Funding Opportunities. Each partner agency currently determines its own budget for transit planning, operating, maintenance, and capital needs. Each does its own grant writing and grant administration. Only the Hood River County Transportation District has the authority to generate local transit revenue through taxes and fees.

Implementation Complexity: 1 – minimal or no barriers.

Implementation Timeline: None.


Implementation Cost: No cost.


Policy Conflicts: None known.

Scenario 1: Enhanced Status Quo


Description. Multiple existing MOUs would be replaced with a single Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Interagency Agreement (IGA) to clarify expectations of all partners and define decision-making protocols in writing. The group would establish membership dues to help cover the cost of administering and facilitating their joint activities. An annual work plan would be prepared, and the group would form subcommittees to tackle specific topics identified in the work plan, such as improving consistent policies for riders; coordinating day-to-day route, schedule and stop adjustments; regional data collection, etc.


Annually, a joint meeting or "summit" would be held with elected officials from all partner agencies, so that staff could keep policymakers apprised of progress on work plan tasks and solicit their input and direction on regional plans and programs.

 **System Clarity for Customers and the General Public.** Scenario 1 is likely to have limited benefits for public understanding of system information and agency roles and responsibilities. It may be possible to continue working toward branding of fixed route buses, stop locations, printed schedules, etc., with a single identifiable name and logo. However, some confusion for customers may be unavoidable if transit agencies with smaller vehicle inventories need to use vehicles interchangeably for fixed route and separately branded dial a ride services. While Scenario 1 could help to clarify interagency responsibilities for the agency partners themselves, roles and responsibilities will still seem complex to the average person.

 **Government Accountability Oversight and Policymaking.** The addition of an annual forum for limited interaction between elected officials could improve understanding of regional transit issues by policymakers. Scenario 1 could also convene a subcommittee to recommend ways to improve consistent policies in limited areas – for example, rider behavior policies. However, establishing consistent standards for contracting and consistent employee compensation packages for transit staff is not likely feasible under this scenario since those types of decisions are embedded in each county's agency-wide policies and procedures that apply to more than just transit.

Scenario 1 would not likely change the way transit programs currently fit within the Gorge's local, regional, state, and natural resource context, and land use planning processes.

 **Regional Equity.** Because the work of the alliance would still be done at the staff level, Scenario 1 would not change representation for regional residents on transit matters. The ability to ensure transit opportunities in all counties would be about the same as it is today. The existing push and pull between some partners' desire to focus principally on service for their own residents, and other partners' interest in attracting visitors to the Gorge would require more interaction between elected officials than Scenario 1 provides, so it is unlikely to be resolved under this scenario.

 **Operational Efficiency.** The basic way that fixed route service is provided would remain unchanged and only incremental improvements in coordinated operations would likely be possible under Scenario

1. For example, a staff-level subcommittee could be convened to develop recommendations for a joint procurement process, so that multiple partners could take advantage of a single procurement effort to buy new vehicles. (This could probably be done today under the status quo scenario, however.) More complex strategies for improving operational efficiency, like establishing shared maintenance facilities, for example, are still likely to be challenging.

The efficiency of administrative functions is unlikely to change since each existing transit agency would continue to manage its own transit program, requiring its own separate administrative staff. Multiple agencies would continue to provide fixed route service, and Scenario 1 would continue the practice of using multiple interagency agreements to allow transit agencies to provide select services in adjoining counties. The group could attempt to consolidate and reduce the number of service providers operating in the region, such as by having multiple partners contract with the same service provider. However, the result is likely to still be a “piecemeal” approach, as described by one Advisory Committee participant, albeit with perhaps fewer “pieces”.



Agency Staff Burden and Expertise. Scenario 1 is unlikely to significantly change the labor burden for existing transit agency partners, but additional staff capacity at MCEDD would be needed for a more robust coordination effort. Scenario 1 would not change the level of skill and experience in transit planning and operation that is currently available to each county. The group could explore shared training opportunities now, under the status quo, and Scenario 1 is not likely to appreciably improve those training opportunities.



Funding Opportunities. Scenario 1 would have no impact on current revenue streams or funding opportunities.

Implementation Complexity: 1 – Minimal barriers. The Enhanced Status Quo scenario would be straightforward to implement with a new MOU, or IGA. The chief complicating factor would be finding a way to incrementally increase resources for the ongoing facilitation effort.

Implementation Timeline: 6 months to develop a new MOU or IGA.

Implementation Cost: Under \$200,000

Policy Conflicts: None known.

Scenario 2: Regional Transit Advisory Board


Description. A board of elected officials (1 or 2 from each county) would be convened as a central policy body on regional transit matters. The board would be created with a new IGA signed by all partners that would define the board’s roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authorities for the regional transit program.


The board’s purpose would be to provide policy-level input on regional transit plans, programs, and initiatives; to prioritize regional transit projects; and to recommend plans and strategies for ultimate adoption by each county’s decision-making body. Alternatively, the board could be vested with the authority to approve regional transit plans and projects outright. Bylaws would be written to describe board member eligibility and expectations, member dues, officers, meetings, and rules of procedure.

A Regional Transit Advisory Board could serve as a long-term policy-level forum for the region, or it could be used as a springboard to help form a new centralized transit organization for the region, such as a

regional cooperative, transportation management organization, or new bi-state governmental agency. (See Scenarios 4 and 5 below.)


The existing staff-level coordinating committee for the Alliance could continue in a technical advisory role to the regional board.

 **System Clarity for Customers and the General Public.** Like Scenario 1, Scenario 2 is likely to have limited benefits for customer and public understanding of system information and agency roles and responsibilities. It may be possible to continue working toward branding of fixed route buses, stop locations, printed schedules, etc., with a single identifiable name and logo. However, some confusion for customers may be unavoidable if transit agencies with smaller vehicle inventories need to use vehicles interchangeably for fixed route and separately branded dial-a-ride services. While Scenario 2 could help to clarify interagency responsibilities for the agency partners themselves, roles and responsibilities will still seem complex to the average person.


 **Government Accountability, Oversight and Policymaking.** Scenario 2 would significantly expand elected official engagement, allowing policymakers from partner counties to interact with each other. Frank discussions at the policy level on divisive issues could help policymakers understand the reasons behind each other's positions, increasing the chance of finding common ground or workable compromises. A board of elected officials would be subject to Oregon's or Washington's open meeting laws¹, thereby increasing public accountability.

A board of elected officials could help to vet strategies for streamlining policies that affect riders. Establishing consistent standards for contracting and consistent employee compensation packages for transit staff would likely remain challenging, though, since these topics are embedded in each county's governing philosophy and decisions in these areas affect more than just transit programs.

Because a regional transit board would be a forum for exchange of information and ideas at the elected level, it could help to confirm the suitability of transit proposals within the nexus of other local, regional, state, and natural resource policies in the Gorge. Scenario 2 would also provide a policy-level forum to better assess how transit projects and programs align with regional land uses.


 **Regional Equity.** A well-balanced regional transit board that includes elected officials from all partner counties would ensure that residents across the region are represented as transit plans and programs are developed. A policy-level board could discuss the needs of residents within the region alongside transit options that increase visitation and come to a joint position on an appropriate balance for the region.

A place at the table for policymakers from each partner county would also ensure that transit improvement opportunities are considered for all parts of the region, although services levels across the region would still depend on the resources available to each county.


 **Operational Efficiency.** A regional transit board would focus on high level planning and policy issues and would not likely provide operational direction. The way that transit service is provided would remain unchanged. Multiple agencies would continue to provide fixed route service with multiple interagency

¹ Open meeting laws would be used from the facilitator's state. Ex. If MCEDD continue to facilitate, Oregon's open meeting laws would be used.

agreements as they do today. The regional board could serve as a forum for better elected official understanding of joint maintenance, procurement and contracting issues and opportunities, but those issues and opportunities would be the same as the status quo scenario.

 **Agency Staff Burden and Expertise.** Scenario 2 is unlikely to appreciably change the labor burden for existing transit agency partners; however, the level of ongoing staff support provided by MCEDD to administer and facilitate the new board would significantly increase. (At least double today's effort, and likely more depending on the frequency of board and technical committee meetings and the complexity of issues undertaken by the board.)

Scenario 2 would not change the level of skill and experience in transit planning and operation that is currently available to each county.

 **Funding.** Establishing a regional transit board would not significantly change current or future revenue opportunities. A better coordinated, more efficient regional transit system could ultimately result in increased ridership and farebox revenue.

Implementation Complexity: 2 – One or two complicating factors. The formational process requires only an IGA and written bylaws. This scenario would be straightforward to implement. The main complicating factor is identifying the resources needed to undertake the formational process, and to cover an increased ongoing facilitation effort.

Implementation Timeline: 6 months to develop a new IGA.


Estimated Implementation Cost: \$200,000 to \$400,000

Policy Conflicts/Solutions: No conflicts if the TAB's role is advisory only. If the partners wish the TAB to have decision making authority on select topics (such as approving regional plans, or prioritizing regional projects for funding), this authority would need to be vested in the advisory board by each existing governing body in the region. Any desired decision-making authorities for the new board could be addressed in the IGA.

Scenario 3A and 3B: Joint Districting

Description. This concept would create new two-county transportation districts for the Washington and Oregon sides of the Alliance. On the Oregon side, the existing Hood River County Transportation District (doing business as Columbia Area Transit, or CAT), would be expanded to annex Wasco County, or dissolved to create a new two-county special transportation district, under ORS 267. (Scenario 3A.) A Transportation Benefit District would be established under RCW 36.73 for Skamania and Klickitat Counties. (Scenario 3B.) Revenue generating authorities and board structures are different for Washington and Oregon districts, but the general concept is the same: in each two-county area, a new governing board of elected officials would be established to oversee all transit activities ranging from funding, planning, operations, and maintenance.

Either of these options could be combined Scenario 1, 2, or 4, but this evaluation considers them as stand-alone options, to compare to the status quo.

 **System Clarity for Customers and the General Public.** While transit functions would be consolidated in each two-county area, there would still be multiple agencies involved in the planning and delivery of transit programs and services at the regional level. So, Scenarios 3A and 3B are not likely to significantly

improve overall customer and public understanding of agency roles and responsibilities throughout the Gorge.



Government Accountability, Oversight and Policymaking. Joint districting would establish elected oversight boards focused solely on transit, which would increase elected official engagement within each new district's service area. Transit policies and standards would be more consistent than the status quo, since a single agency would be managing those issues for a two-county area. Contracting standards and employee compensation packages would be consistent across the two counties in each joint district, and no longer tied to all other county functions.



Regional Equity. Although each new district would have its own board of elected officials, giving residents within each new two-county district greater representation,² regional coordination would remain at the staff level under Scenarios 3A and 3B. So, these scenarios would not appreciably change the representation of regional residents on regional transit matters that affect more than one agency. The ability to ensure transit opportunities in all counties would be about the same as it is today.



Operational Efficiency. Scenarios 3A and 3B would consolidate operations in each two-county area, streamlining administrative and maintenance functions, and simplifying day to day route, stop and scheduling decisions within each two-county area. From a regional coordination perspective, there would be fewer agencies at the table, which should make the overall coordination effort easier.



Agency Staff Burden and Expertise. Consolidating the management and operation of services in two counties would remove transit responsibilities from existing county staff. Since the new district's staff would be focused solely on transit matters, it may be possible for them to develop a higher level of transit knowledge and expertise than is currently feasible for county staff who often wear multiple hats under the status quo.



Funding. Joint district scenarios would increase opportunities for local revenue generation when compared to the status quo. A Skamania/Klickitat Transportation Benefit District would have the authority (with voter approval) to levy a sales tax of up to 0.3%, establish a vehicle fee, levy property tax, or charge an impact fee on commercial or industrial development. On the Oregon side, a Hood River/Wasco transportation district would expand options for local revenue generation into Wasco County, including opportunities for voter-approved property taxes, business license fees, income taxes or employer payroll/self-employment taxes. These additional revenues could be used to directly fund transit service, and/or to leverage larger amounts of state and federal aid transit funding. Obtaining voter approval for tax levies for a Transportation District could present challenges depending on the

² There is a difference in representation between Transportation Benefit Districts in Washington state and Transportation Service Districts in Oregon. In Washington, a joint Transportation Benefit District would have a governing body of at least five members, including at least one elected official from each participating jurisdiction. This would include representatives from the elected boards of each county and each city where transit service is provided. In Oregon, Transportation service district board members are elected by a vote of the people within the service district boundary. Seven board members would be elected from the two-county area at large, so equitable geographic representation is less assured.

political environment of the area. For a tax levy to be voter-approved, the residents would have to understand the extent of the impact to their taxes as well as the benefits of establishing the levy. Demonstrated success of these transportation districts and clear communication to voters would be necessary.

Implementation Complexity: 5 – Not likely feasible. Both joint districting options are extremely challenging to implement and include complicating factors that are likely insurmountable. Each joint district would require votes of the people across a two-county area. Feasibility studies would be needed first to understand potential benefits and costs, and extensive public information campaigns would be needed to make the case to voters. These efforts may require multiple attempts over many years, with no guarantee of success. It is telling that the consultant team could not find suitably comparable examples of two-county districts in either Washington or Oregon. Due to implementation complexities, we have given these scenarios an implementation rating of “Not likely feasible to implement.”

Implementation Timeline: The formational process could take approximately one year, assuming it culminates in a successful elections process. In Oregon, where board members are elected rather than appointed from existing governing bodies, board elections could be concurrent with the election to form the district, or a subsequent election could be held adding 6 months to the timeline.

Once a joint district has been formed and board members elected or appointed, an additional 6-month startup period would be needed to help the new board with internal organization matters, such as hiring a manager, implementing an operational service plan, and developing internal policies and procedures. If the public vote to form a joint district is not successful (a highly likely scenario in the case of joint districts which would require a successful vote of the people across two counties) the implementation timeline would need to be extended through future election cycles.

Estimated Implementation Cost: Over \$1M

Policy Conflicts/Solutions: None known.


Scenario 3C: Single-County Districts


Description. This scenario would create a new transportation district in Wasco, Skamania and Klickitat Counties.³


³ Each state has more than one districting option. In Oregon, a Special Transportation District (ORS 267.520), requires a vote of the people to form, elect board members, and approve revenue levies. Alternatively, a County Service District (ORS 451.487) can be formed in Oregon by a resolution of the county commissioners but must be referred to the voters for approval, and any proposed levies must also be voter-approved. We are assuming the Special Transportation District option for our analysis because it has the advantage of an elected board focused only on transit.


In Washington a County Transportation Authority (RCW 36.57) can be created by a county and a Transportation Benefit District (RCW36.73.020) can be created by a city or county without a popular vote, and only the revenue levies need voter approval. We are using the Transportation Benefit District option for our analysis because it provides greater opportunities for participation by local cities. Within this memo, the generic term “transportation district” means either a Special Transportation District in Oregon, or a Transportation Benefit District in Washington.


Combining this scenario with either Scenarios 1, 2, or 4, would improve funding opportunities under those other three scenarios. However, this evaluation considers Scenario 3C as stand-alone option, to compare to the status quo.


 **System Clarity for Customers and the General Public.** Compared to the status quo, there would still be a separate agency with transit management responsibilities in each county, and the same issues that exist today related to clarity of system information, regional roles and responsibilities, and regional branding would remain unchanged.

 **Government Accountability, Oversight and Policymaking.** New single-county transportation districts would establish elected oversight boards in each county focused solely on transit, increasing elected official engagement on county-specific transit matters. Collaboration between partner agencies to address things like rider policies, uniform contracting standards and consistent compensation packages for transit employees would be somewhat easier since those issues would and no longer embedded within county government.

 **Regional Equity.** Although people within each new district would be represented by a board of elected officials, regional coordination would still be at the staff level under Scenario 3C. So, this scenario would not appreciably change the representation of regional residents on regional transit matters that affect more than one county. The ability to ensure transit opportunities in all counties would be about the same as it is today.

 **Operational Efficiency.** A separate transportation district in each county would not reduce the current coordination effort for the Alliance. Each new district would have its own administrative, planning, maintenance, and operations staff, perpetuating some of the redundancies that currently exist across the region. Multiple agencies would continue to provide fixed route service as they do today.

 **Agency Staff Burden and Expertise.** Creation of a new transportation district would remove the burden of managing transit activities from existing county staff. Additionally, since each new district's staff would be focused solely on transit matters, it may be possible for them to develop a higher level of transit knowledge and expertise than is currently feasible for county staff, who often wear multiple hats under the status quo.

 **Funding.** A significant advantage of this scenario is the potential to increase local revenue generation across the region. A Transportation Benefit District in Skamania or Klickitat County would have the authority (with voter approval) to levy a sales tax of up to 0.3%, establish a vehicle fee, levy property tax, or charge an impact fee on commercial or industrial development. A new transportation district in Wasco County would open opportunities for voter-approved property taxes, business license fees, income taxes or employer payroll/self-employment taxes. As with Scenario 3A and 3B, relying on voter approval for tax levies comes with significant barriers and risks in securing adequate funding.

These additional revenue streams could be used to directly fund transit service, and/or leverage larger amounts of state and federal aid transit funding. The creation of county-level Transportation Benefit Districts opens additional opportunities to obtain federal grants or access to federal financing programs available through FTA or FHWA.

Implementation Complexity: 4 – Many complicating factors. Votes of the people would be required to create each district and/or establish a tax/fee revenue structure. Financial and other feasibility analyses would be needed to determine benefits and costs in order to make the business case to the public. For districts on the Washington side, board members would be appointed from existing elected bodies, but in Wasco County on the Oregon side, a public election would be held to select new board members. These challenges notwithstanding, there are numerous examples of successful Transportation Benefit Districts in Washington state, and county-wide transportation districts in Oregon. So, despite an implementation rating of 4 – “many factors complicating implementation” – this is a feasible scenario.

Implementation Timeline: The formational process could take approximately one year, assuming it culminates in a successful elections process. In Oregon, where board members are elected rather than appointed from existing governing bodies, board elections could be concurrent with the election to form the district, or a subsequent election could be held adding 6 months to the timeline.

Once a joint district has been formed and board members elected or appointed, an additional 6-month startup period would be needed to help the new board with internal organization matters, such as hiring a manager, implementing an operational service plan, and developing internal policies and procedures. If the public vote to form a joint district is not successful, the implementation timeline would need to be extended through future election cycles.

Estimated Implementation Cost: \$500,000 to \$1M

Policy Conflicts/Solutions: None known.

Scenario 4: Regional Cooperative or Transportation Management Organization

Description. Scenario 4 would create a regional cooperative business entity (co-op), or a nonprofit transportation management organization (TMO). The new organization would have its own board and staff and could provide any or all transit services needed in the five-county region. For the purposes of this evaluation, we assume that the co-op or TMO would be a full-service organization responsible for all fixed route planning, transportation system development, and service delivery, providing a single central transit provider for the region.

The existing transit providers could jointly form the new organization and be “owners” in the case of a co-op, or “members” in the case of a TMO. Ownership or membership need not be limited to the current transit agencies. If desired, owner/member opportunities could be made available to others who may benefit from or help to fund transit service in the region. (For example, individual cities, state agencies, large employers, business and tourism groups, social service organizations and others.)

Different laws apply to the formation of co-ops and TMOs, but the general governance concept is similar for both. Owners/members would elect board officers from their ranks and fund the new agency through membership fees and by purchasing services from the new organization.

The board's responsibilities would include hiring a manager; adopting policies and procedures to be followed; developing long-range plans and business strategies; overseeing the organization's budget;

establishing internal controls to assure fiduciary responsibilities are met; and retaining auditors and legal counsel as needed.

The manager would be responsible for overseeing the agency's physical and financial resources, staff, and accounting system. The manager would also determine employee compensation levels and ensure the board has accurate and relevant information needed to make informed decisions.



System Clarity for Customers and the General Public. This scenario would consolidate all fixed route transit functions and responsibilities under a single entity, allowing consistent branding throughout the region and providing a single point of contact and source of information for customers and the public.



Government Accountability, Oversight and Policymaking. Much of the accountability, oversight, and policymaking responsibilities would shift to a new co-op or TMO board, which would be a business entity, not a unit of government. That said, the co-op or TMO board would include elected officials, so "government accountability" is still a valid consideration here. Also, much of the funding for the new organization would flow through existing governmental agencies, who would retain their current responsibilities for ensuring compliance with grant and funding requirements.

Scenario 4 would establish a single set of policies for riders and resolve current differences in other policy areas. For example, variations in employee compensation packages that currently place some agencies at a disadvantage in the labor market would be eliminated, and the consistency of wages for transit employees across the region could improve.

Differences in contracting standards would also be resolved. For example, existing transit agencies may have different financial incentives or penalties for contractor performance that affect contractors' risk and profit potential. During times when there is high demand for limited contracted services, agencies requiring less favorable contracting terms will be at a disadvantage in the marketplace. Disparities like this would be eliminated under Scenario 4.

A new co-op or TMO would provide a central forum for exchange of information and ideas between regional policymakers, so it could help to confirm the suitability of transit proposals within the nexus of other local, regional, state, and natural resource policies in the Gorge. Scenario 4 would also provide a single policy-level forum to better assess how transit projects and programs align with regional land uses.



Regional Equity. The co-op or TMO board could be structured to ensure all geographic areas and broad interests in the region are represented. Board voting methods and other rules of procedure could be structured to avoid unduly favoring the needs of some over others.

Compared to the status quo, a central organization would be in a better position to evaluate and attempt to resolve differences in transit improvement opportunities between counties. However, some opportunities would still be tied to funding flowing through each county. Because of this, some counties would still be able to afford a greater amount of service than others.



Operational Efficiency. A co-op or TMO as a regional service provider has significant advantages over the status quo for nearly all aspects of operational efficiency. Administrative functions could be centralized, eliminating existing redundancies. A single organization serving the entire region would wield more buying power than current partner agencies individually, providing an economy of scale for major purchases.

Maintenance functions would be streamlined, and operational practices would be consistent across the region. The regional fleet could be optimized, and backup vehicles and equipment more easily deployed to different parts of the region when needed.

Data collection, regional system performance monitoring and reporting would be streamlined under a central organization.



Agency Staff Burden and Expertise. A central co-op or TMO would remove the burden of managing transit activities from existing county staff. Additionally, Scenario 4 could give the entire region access to experts on staff with a significant depth and breadth of transit system management and technical experience.



Funding. A central co-op or TMO would allow the Alliance to speak about funding needs with one voice, potentially giving the region greater influence in transit funding decisions at the state level.

Responsibility for securing funding for transit programs and services across the region would likely be shared by existing governmental agencies and the new co-op or TMO. In some cases, the new regional organization may be eligible to apply for grant funding itself. For example, the Federal Transit Administration's non-urbanized area formula program ("5311" program) is commonly used to fund fixed route service outside of metropolitan areas. FTA's rules allow WSDOT or ODOT to award 5311 funds to private operators of public transportation services, such as a regional co-op or a TMO. Conversely, another common funding source for the Oregon side of the Alliance, Oregon's Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) program, would not permit a co-op or TMO to apply for funds directly. For that grant program, existing counties or transportation districts would still need to apply for funds, and then use them to purchase services from the co-op or TMO. A regional co-op or TMO could provide grant writing services and help with grant compliance reporting to lessen the burden, however. Given the relative ease of administration of this governance option, the additional funding opportunities and the ability to better coordinate applying for and obtaining these funds present significant benefit to Gorge TransLink partners.

A co-op or TMO could also help to raise funds for regional transit, for example by selling advertising or providing opportunities for regional businesses to sponsor certain transit services, activities, or events. With adequate support from the community that the co-op or TMO serves, implementation of these techniques requires minimal effort with a potentially significant capacity to raise revenue.

Implementation Complexity: 2 – One or two complicating factors. While the facilitation effort to create a new co-op would be significant, the implementation process is straightforward with few barriers. A public vote is not required. A financial feasibility analysis and business plan should be prepared to understand advantages and tradeoffs more thoroughly for the current agency partners. A legal review of statutes that govern co-ops and nonprofit organizations in both Washington and Oregon should also be done to help decide which type of entity would be most advantageous for the region, and where the new organization should be based.

Examples of complicating factors for implementing Scenario 4 are finding the resources needed to facilitate the formational effort; determining whether and how to transfer existing transit vehicles, equipment, and facilities to the new organization; and the need to be cautious about precluding the creation of a new bi-state governmental agency (see Scenario 5).

Implementation Timeline: The formational process could take approximately one year. During this time, legal research would be done to determine the most advantageous state statutes under which to organize. A business plan would also be prepared, for agreement by all parties, to determine board composition and staffing, operating plan, capital needs assessment, initial budget proposal, and funding responsibilities. Once formed, an additional six-month startup period would be needed for the new board to establish bylaws, hire staff, and develop policies and procedures for the new organization.

Implementation Cost: Over \$1M

Policy Conflicts/Solutions: A policy issue for scenario 4 is that there is currently no forum where current transit agency elected officials can interact to jointly discuss advantages and tradeoffs of regionalization and resolve differences. This could be addressed by first implementing Scenario 2.

Legal research beyond the scope of this project would be advisable before further implementation work occurs, to scan for potential conflicts within each partner agency's laws and rules for elected official service on a private organization's board.

Scenario 5: New Bi-State Government Agency

Description. Scenarios 1 through 4 are options available to the alliance today, under existing laws. Conversely, the creation of a new bi-state governmental agency is not possible within current legislation/regulations. This scenario would require new state legislation in both Washington and Oregon. A Congressional act may also be required to adequately fund it.

Like the co-op/TMO concept described above, Scenario 5 would establish a new centralized organization to take over regional transit activities, except that instead of a business or nonprofit entity, a new unit of government would be created.

A bi-state governmental agency would have its own governing board, with members determined by the formational legislation. Since there are no existing laws that prescribe or limit the structure of a new government agency, an endless number of permutations are possible. So, it is difficult to precisely describe this scenario.

Federal legislation was recently proposed by Oregon Senator Earl Blumenauer that, if enacted, would create a new Columbia River Gorge Access Committee to oversee multi-jurisdictional transportation strategies within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.⁴ This committee would have oversight responsibilities beyond just transit; however, the draft legislation leaves the door open for the Access Committee to create a sub-agency responsible for regional transit planning and operations.

For the purposes of evaluating this scenario, we assume that Senator Blumenauer's proposal will be enacted in some form. We further assume that the new Access Committee would set up a separate regional bi-state transit agency with the authority to fully manage and operate a regional transit system. While the National Scenic Area does not encompass the Gorge TransLink's entire geographic area, we assume it would be in the public interest (and agreeable to the existing transit partners) to expand the new transit agency's service area to include the entire Gorge TransLink area.

⁴ *Legislative Concepts: Recreation Enhancement, wildfire resiliency, and conservation for Mt. Hood and the Columbia River Gorge (2022) Congressman Earl Blumenauer.* Available at: <https://blumenauer.house.gov/issues/environment-and-energy/mt-hood-and-gorge> (Accessed: November 10, 2022).

Under this scenario, the new transit agency would take over all aspects of transit system planning, operation, and management from the existing Gorge TransLink partners. The new bi-state transit agency could have a central board that includes either elected or appointed positions, or both. The board would in turn hire a manager.

Board and manager roles and responsibilities could be essentially the same as for a regional co-op or TMO scenario. That is, board responsibilities would include hiring the manager; adopting policies and procedures for the transit agency; developing long-range strategies; overseeing the organization's funding and budget; establishing internal controls; and retaining auditors and legal counsel as needed. The manager would be responsible to manage and oversee all the agency's physical and financial resources, staff, and accounting system. The manager would also determine employee compensation levels and ensure the board has accurate and relevant information needed to make informed decisions.

We further assume that Congress would provide designated funding that could be used to staff and manage the regional transit agency, and that as a governmental entity, the new transit agency would also be eligible to receive funding from existing state and federal funding programs.



System Clarity for Customers and the General Public. This scenario would consolidate all fixed route transit functions and responsibilities under a single service provider, allowing consistent branding throughout the region and providing a single point of contact and source of information for customers and the public.



Government Accountability, Oversight and Policymaking. Scenario 5 would establish a single set of policies for riders and resolve current differences in other policy areas. For example, variations in employee compensation packages that currently place some agencies at a disadvantage in the labor market would be eliminated, and a consistent pay scale would apply to transit employees across the region. Existing differences in contracting standards between current agencies would also be eliminated.

A new bi-state government agency would provide a central forum for exchange of information and ideas between regional policymakers, so it could help to confirm the suitability of transit proposals within the nexus of other local, regional, state, and natural resource policies in the Gorge. Scenario 5 would also provide a single policy-level forum to better assess how transit projects and programs align with regional land uses.



Regional Equity. The ability of a new governmental agency to make decisions that do not unduly favor the needs of some over others will depend on how the transit policy board is structured. Based on similar cases where new government agencies are created through federal legislation (like the rules that guide metropolitan planning organization formation, or legislation that created similar regional planning and transit agencies for the Tahoe area in California and Nevada), it is likely that a broadly inclusive transit policy board would be required, possibly supported by additional advisory committees to broaden participation opportunities even further.

Because Senator Blumenauer's draft legislation is focused on the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, it is logical to assume that any resulting bi-state transit agency could be asked to consider tourism and the needs of transit users from outside the region, which may be a controversial element for some

existing Alliance partners. A best-case scenario would allocate additional funding and resources to the new agency to permit a more robust tourism focus without diluting the needs of residents in the region.

Of all scenarios in our list, a new bi-state agency would likely be in the best position to ensure that transit opportunities are improved in each county. Because funding would flow directly to the new bi-state agency rather than routing through individual counties and transportation districts, the distribution of transit service and programs would be less constrained by what each county can afford to buy.



Operational Efficiency. Scenario 5 has significant advantages over the status quo for nearly all aspects of operational efficiency. All administrative and operating functions would be centralized, eliminating existing redundancies.

Maintenance functions would be streamlined, and operational practices would be consistent across the region. The regional fleet could be optimized, and backup vehicles and equipment more easily deployed to different parts of the region when needed.

Data collection, regional system performance monitoring and reporting would be streamlined under the new bi-state agency.



Agency Staff Burden and Expertise. A new bi-state governmental transit agency would remove the burden of managing transit activities from existing county staff. Additionally, Scenario 5 could give the entire region access to experts on staff with significant depth and breadth of transit system management and technical experience.



Funding. Depending on the legislation enacted to fund a new bi-state transit agency, this scenario has significant potential to increase the amount of funding available to the region. At a minimum, legislation should allocate sufficient state or federal funding to manage and staff the new agency and ensure the agency is eligible to receive funds from other existing state and federal funding programs. Legislation could also be enacted to authorize the new agency to generate local revenue through regional taxes or fees. If legislative barriers were removed, Scenario 5 would offer a feasible path to obtaining consistent and adequate revenue.

A new bi-state agency could have considerable “clout”, on par with large transit agencies in metropolitan areas. It would serve as a national model for regional transit system consolidation across more than one state and could help to shape future transit state and federal funding policies.

Implementation Complexity: 4 – Many complicating factors. Senator Blumenauer’s draft proposal for modernizing transportation in the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area elevates the feasibility of this scenario. However, there are numerous complicating factors. For example (this is by no means an inclusive list):

- Legislation would need to be written and enacted in both Washington and Oregon to create the new bi-state agency.
- A Congressional act would be needed to provide the new agency with access to federal aid funds.
- Formational legislation would need to identify a source of funding for staffing and administering the new bi-state agency.

- Formational legislation would need to determine how to treat existing transportation districts after the new bi-state agency is created. For example, if a new bi-state agency is vested with the authority to levy regional taxes or fees, that may conflict with local revenue structures already in place for CAT and any other county transportation districts that may be formed in the interim. Taking this point further, if a new bi-state agency is designated as the principal transit service provider for the region, there may no longer be a need or role for any local transportation districts in the region.
- Draft legislation under consideration appears to cover only the National Scenic Area along the Columbia River, meaning that only portions of counties within the Gorge TransLink's five county area would be covered. Creating a new decision-making body that bifurcates rather than encompasses the Alliance's existing service area could be awkward.
- At this time, there is no policy-level forum for transit agency elected officials to jointly review, evaluate, and help to shape a legislative proposal that could have extensive, far-reaching consequences for their constituents. (Implementing Scenario 2, Regional Transit Advisory Board, in the near term could help with this, however.)

Implementation Timeline: The formational process for this scenario could take approximately 1 to 3 years, or more. The timeline would be dependent on the speed with which Congress and each state legislature is prepared to act.

Under the current legislative proposal for the Gorge National Scenic Area, a parent agency, the Columbia River Gorge Access Committee, would be created first; then a new governmental transit agency could be subsequently formed under the Access Committee's authority.

A business plan could be prepared to determine board composition, staffing, operating plan, capital needs assessment, and initial budget. A funding plan would follow, which should include a plan for the continuation or dissolution of any existing transit agencies in the region. A public elections process may be needed to establish new local revenue streams, and possibly to elect policy board members that are not appointed positions.

Policy Conflicts/Solutions: A policy issue for scenario 5 is that there is currently no forum where current transit agency elected officials can interact to jointly discuss advantages and tradeoffs of regionalization and resolve differences. This could be addressed by first implementing Scenario 2.

Funding Opportunities Across Scenarios

All scenarios other than the current status quo (Scenario 0) present new opportunities for increasing coordination among the Gorge TransLink partners. Scenarios 1 and 2 offer better policymaking and government oversight potentially increasing public perception of the reliability of the transit systems. Scenarios 3-5 positively impact the operational efficiency and government oversight of the transit system. Scenario 3 would unlock the possibility for a significant amount of new revenue through district levies.

Additionally, Scenarios 4 and 5 improve system cohesion, supporting a more consistent approach to branding and marketing across the region. A transit system that is designed and managed more cohesively, operates more efficiently, and communicates services clearly to the public has the potential to attract more ridership and associated farebox revenue, advertising revenue, and donations.

Additionally, Scenarios 3 through 5 could meaningfully improve Gorge TransLink partners ability to leverage state and federal grant funds available from FTA and FHWA. Gorge TransLink partners have previously leveraged such funding as a designated sub-recipient.

Table 2 below, summarizes the funding opportunities potentially made available through each scenario. The table provides a qualitative assessment about the relative ease across scenarios of generating additional revenue from each source. This assessment does not include considerations about political viability or adequacy of specific revenue sources.

Table 2. Funding Opportunities Summary

Potential New Revenue Opportunity ¹	Scenario 1: Enhanced Status Quo	Scenario 2: Regional Transit Advisory Board	Scenario 3A&B: Joint Districting	Scenario 3C: Single-County Districting	Scenario 4: Regional Co-op or TMO	Scenario 5: Bi-State Governmental Agency
Opportunity to increase farebox revenues	Low	Low	Medium	Low	High	High
Opportunity to increase advertising and fundraising revenue	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	High
Introduction of Tax Levy	None	None	High	High	None	Unknown ²
Allocation of additional state or federal revenue	None	None	None	None	None	High
Opportunity to increase federal grant disbursements	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	High

¹Scenario 4 could be combined with 3A, 3B, or 3C to unlock tax levy revenue options in addition to the potential revenues identified for Scenario 4 alone.

² The potential to increase funding opportunities under a bi-state governmental agency would depend on future legislation and is uncertain at this time.

Additional Funding Sources

The Gorge TransLink service to the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area presents an opportunity for leveraging this funding source through a demonstration that public transportation in the region helps to sustain and increase access to national forests.

These programs include the congressionally-chartered National Forest Foundation's Innovative Finance for National Forest (IFNF) Grant program, the congressionally-chartered National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grants, the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) and others.

Innovative Finance for National Forest (IFNF) Grant program

In most cases, the objectives for these grants include improving not only the financial sustainability of these areas but also the economic and environmental benefits to communities and visitors. For example, the congressionally-chartered National Forest Foundation's Innovative Finance for National Forest (IFNF) grant program specifically seeks to improve the financial sustainability of the National Forest System to ensure its preservation and the benefits to visitors and communities. The task 4 memo

discusses some of the successful applications for these funds including the Inyo National Forest in California and Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in Washington to develop plans for financing infrastructure improvements to increase tourist access.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grants

Similarly, the congressionally-chartered National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grants seek to “sustain, restore, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats” with grants awarded to federal, state, and local governments, and nonprofit organizations, and whose previous grants have included supporting building green structures for public transit, reducing pollution to watersheds and increasing education around stormwater and watershed pollution.

Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)

The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) is part of the Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act which allocated \$11.6 million to Washington and \$37.8 million to Oregon to increase access to federal lands through improved roads and transit systems.

Service Opportunities

Table 3 summarizes the existing service level, vision for future service level, coordination needs, implementation needs, and paratransit requirements for each route according to the regional vision map illustrated in Figure 1. The primary themes are summarized below:

- The service vision includes adding lifeline service (<4 trips/day, <4 days/week) for the following routes:
 - The Dalles – Dufur – Tygh Valley – Maupin – Madras (with connections to Warm Springs, Shaniko, and Antelope)
 - The Dalles – Celilo Village – Biggs
 - Goldendale – Biggs
 - Bingen – Lyle – Dallesport
- Weekend fixed route service is only provided along routes from Hood River. Providing weekend service across routes and expanding service hours in the evening is a need for most routes.
- The only services with paratransit requirements are the local routes. Each county has a different method of meeting paratransit requirements. Mt. Adams Transportation Services (MATS) provides deviations along a route that could qualify as an intercity route, and therefore does not require complementary paratransit, to provide a wider coverage area.

Each route update includes a timeframe for implementation:

- The **2-Year Horizon** includes updates that could be implemented by redistributing resources, identifying smaller grants, or that are already planned for near-term updates by agencies.
- The **5-Year Horizon** includes high-priority updates that would require substantial additional funding, such as adding weekend and expanding evening service.
- The **10-Year Horizon** includes updates that require substantial additional funding and are secondary priorities.

Table 3. Coordination and Implementation for the Vision for Future Service

Route	Existing Service Level	Vision for Future Service Level	Coordination and Implementation Needs	Paratransit Requirements ⁵	Timeframe for Implementation (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Hood River – Local Routes	<i>Hood River</i> Everyday 7:45am-7:15pm 16 trips/day	Expand evening service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate major stops and schedules to facilitate transfers between services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local fixed route: Paratransit service is required Currently met by providing complementary paratransit 	5 Year
Hood River – Mosier – The Dalles	<i>The Dalles</i> Everyday 9:30am-3:50pm 4 trips/day	Add evening service Increase frequency to at least 12 trips/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate schedule to maximize efficiency transferring to the Columbia Gorge Express Identify funding to provide additional frequency and evening service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year
Hood River – Wyeth – Cascade Locks – Multnomah Falls – Troutdale/Wood Village – Portland	<i>Columbia Gorge Express</i> Everyday 5:30am-7:30pm 13 trips/day	Expand evening service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding and expand staff to extend evening service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	10 Year
Hood River – Odell – Parkdale	<i>Upper Valley</i> Weekdays 7:30am-6:15pm 8 trips/day	Add weekend service Expand evening service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding and expand staff to extend evening service and add weekend service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year
Hood River – Bridge of the Gods	<i>Cascade Locks</i> Everyday 5:30am-7:35pm 12 trips/day	Expand evening service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding and expand staff to extend evening service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year

⁵ Additionally details about how paratransit requirements can be met is provided in the following section.

Route	Existing Service Level	Vision for Future Service Level	Coordination and Implementation Needs	Paratransit Requirements ⁵	Timeframe for Implementation (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Hood River – Parkdale – Mt. Hood	<i>Gorge-To-Mountain Express</i> Seasonal ⁶	Provide year-round service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding and expand staff to provide year-round service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	2 Year
Hood River – Dog Mountain	<i>Dog Mountain Shuttle</i> Seasonal Weekends 7:30am-5:50pm 2 trips/day between Hood River—Dog Mountain, additional between Skamania Fairgrounds – Dog Mountain	Increase frequency between Hood River-Dog Mountain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more frequent service between Hood River-Dog Mountain Coordinate schedule to maximize efficiency transferring to and from the Columbia Gorge Express 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	2 Year
White Salmon – Bingen – Hood River	<i>White Salmon to Hood River Loop</i> Weekdays 7am-7pm 9 trips/day	Add weekend service Expand weekday service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate providers to contract weekend service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year
The Dalles – Local Routes	<i>Red Line, Blue Line</i> Weekdays 7:00am-5:40pm 9 trips/day (Red), 16 trips/day (Blue)	Add weekend service Expand weekday service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate major stops and schedules to facilitate transfers between services Coordinate schedule to maximize efficiency transferring to and from the Columbia Gorge Express 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local fixed route: Paratransit service is required Currently met by providing deviations 	5 Year
The Dalles – Dufur – Tygh Valley – Maupin	<i>South County Shuttle</i> Tuesdays 1 trip/week	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	N/A

⁶ CAT recently received a grant to convert this service to year-round.

Route	Existing Service Level	Vision for Future Service Level	Coordination and Implementation Needs	Paratransit Requirements ⁵	Timeframe for Implementation (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
The Dalles – Dufur – Tygh Valley – Maupin – Madras (with connections to Warm Springs, Shaniko, and Antelope)	-	Add service <4 trips/day, <4 days/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue funding for lifeline service, time to facilitate regional transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	10 Year
The Dalles – Celilo Village – Biggs	-	Add service <4 trips/day, <4 days/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue funding for lifeline service, time to facilitate regional transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	10 Year
Goldendale – Local Route⁷	<i>Goldendale City Green Route</i> Weekdays 7am-7pm 7 trips/day	Add weekend service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate providers to contract weekend service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local fixed route: Paratransit service is required Currently met by providing dial-a-ride 	5 Year
Goldendale – Biggs	-	Add service <4 trips/day, <4 days/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue funding for lifeline service, time to facilitate regional transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	10 Year
Goldendale – The Dalles	<i>Goldendale to The Dalles</i> Weekdays 7am-7pm 4 trips/day	Add weekend service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate providers to contract weekend service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year
Bingen – Vancouver	<i>Bingen - Stevenson - Vancouver Route</i> Weekdays 5:30am-8:00pm 7 trips/day	Add weekend service Increase frequency to at least 8 trips/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate providers to contract weekend service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required Deviations are still provided to expand service area 	5 Year
Bingen – Lyle – Dallesport	-	Add service <4 trips/day, <4 days/week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue funding for lifeline service, time to facilitate regional transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity route: Paratransit service not required 	5 Year

⁷ Includes interlining service with Goldendale – The Dalles Route

Paratransit Requirements

Complementary ADA paratransit service or route deviation is required where local fixed route bus services are provided for the same service span of the fixed route and within ¼ mile of the route. Intercity routes do not trigger complementary ADA paratransit requirements, however if there are too many stops along a route the route then it may no longer be classified as an intercity route and complementary ADA paratransit would be required. FTA defines intercity bus service as regularly scheduled bus service for the general public which operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity. Typically, limited stops mean up to approximately three stops in an urban area. Different sections of the same route can be classified differently: for example, a route with many stops in two cities but only a couple of stops between could trigger the need for paratransit within ¼ mile of the stops in each city but not along the full route.

Paratransit requirements can be met by providing deviations from local transit routes or by providing complementary paratransit service (dial-a-ride).

Benefits and drawbacks of providing deviations along transit routes include:

Benefits	Drawbacks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complementary ADA paratransit is not required on either intercity or local transit routes if these routes deviate. This reduces potential financial liability to serve increasing demand for ride requests. ● Providing deviations can help expand the reach of a transit route: supporting first-mile/last-mile access to and from destinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing deviations can make it difficult to reliably maintain a fixed transit schedule, depending on the number of deviation requests. ● Buffering route schedules to allow for deviations increases the travel time.

Currently, Hood River County and Wasco County have separate local and intercity routes. Sherman County, Skamania County, and Klickitat County do not have separate intercity and local routes. In Hood River County and Wasco County, intercity routes do not need to deviate, especially as local routes are able to deviate to expand the reach of the transit system without impacting the schedule of the intercity route. In Skamania County, local and intercity service are provided on a single route, and deviations are currently used to expand the reach of the transit route.

Gaps and Opportunities

Table 4 outlines potential initiatives to address gaps and opportunities. It also identifies which governance model(s) facilitate these initiatives and the recommended timeframe for implementation.

Table 4. Gaps and Opportunities

Gap or Opportunity	Explanation	Opportunity	Initiatives	Governance	Timeframe (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
<p>Connections between Local Routes and Intercity Routes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some intercity routes currently have limited stop locations and stops located further outside the downtown core depending on the location of the transit center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercity routes should include key stops at medical facilities, downtown areas, and colleges to increase connectivity to local routes and facilitate one-seat rides to popular destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate stop locations: serve multiple key stops in each city to support transfers between providers and increase the number of trips that do not require a transfer Coordinate with all five counties before moving the locations of these key stops to minimize potential disruptions to connecting routes 	<p>All</p>	<p>2-Year</p>
<p>First-Mile Last-Mile Access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is limited local transit and active transportation infrastructure supporting connections to regional transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dial-a-ride, park-and-rides, mobility hubs, electric bikes, electric carshares, transportation network companies, and carpools can help provide these connections and serve rural areas Improve active transportation infrastructure so that it is comfortable for people of all ages and abilities and meets Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with local government to prioritize transportation projects improving walking and biking facilities in connecting to transit routes Pursue grant funding to support electrification initiatives Partner with employers to facilitate carpool and vanpool programs Explore opportunities to construct park-and-rides or mobility hubs 	<p>All</p>	<p>2-Year</p>
<p>Timed Transfers to Columbia Gorge Express</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transfers to/from the Columbia Gorge Express without excessive delays are critical to having a usable transit system providing access throughout the Gorge It is challenging to provide timed transfers when there is limited frequency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate transit timetables to maximize the efficiency of transfers for all providers to/from the Columbia Gorge Express 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify primary transit stop(s) in each community for transfers between services Coordinate schedules to maximize efficiencies of transfers. This coordination is limited in the near-term by current frequencies In the longer term, increase frequency to facilitate smooth transfers between services 	<p>All</p>	<p>2-Year</p>

Gap or Opportunity	Explanation	Opportunity	Initiatives	Governance	Timeframe (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Population Density	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low population density in rural areas of the region are difficult to efficiently serve with fixed route transit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on providing dial-a-ride, supporting carpools and vanpools, and supporting first-mile last-mile connections to fixed route transit Promote transit-supportive land uses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to utilize a combination of routes and service types to support a balance of productivity and coverage Partner with local government to prioritize transit-supportive development patterns 	All	Ongoing
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many of the denser cities and recreation destinations are located along the SR-14 and I-84 corridor; however, many destinations are located off of these facilities and have safety, topographical, or ownership constraints Drive times along SR-14 and I-84 can vary significantly due to congestion and construction The Columbia River Gorge Natural Scenic Area is a protected area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase stops along existing intercity transit routes, and at the beginning and ends including stops in downtowns, to provide access to more communities and recreational destinations Add intercity routes to key urban areas along the SR-14 and I-84 area that are not currently serviced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create consistent policies regarding flag stops, call stops, and deviations, where possible. Clearly advertise these policies. Provide additional service and stops at cities and major destinations along the SR-14 and I-84 corridor. Coordinate with other agencies (such as parks and recreation) to ensure sufficient space for safe transit stops Build in buffer time at peak periods to account for congestion. Provide real-time vehicle arrival information so that riders can track buses that may be running behind schedule due to construction or congestion Add a connection between White Salmon and Dallesport serving Lyle and other destinations 	All However, Scenario 3 and Scenario 5 are supportive of the additional funding needed to accommodate the service expansion	5 -Year

Gap or Opportunity	Explanation	Opportunity	Initiatives	Governance	Timeframe (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Seasonality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism and recreation volumes and destinations differ between seasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase services or provide additional services during peak season for different destinations Provide service at peak season could support mode shift and reduce congestion at these times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As funding for services incrementally becomes available, start by providing new or increased services during peak seasons Seasonal permits provide opportunities to increase revenue and encourage transit use during peak season 	All	2-Year
Marketing and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit service would benefit from increased marketing, branding, and public awareness of existing services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage information sharing with Community-Based Partners, Employers, and continue building on recent marketing efforts from the Gorge TransLink Alliance In more rural areas where public transit may not be as prominent, clear marketing is important to increase ridership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue developing the Gorge TransLink website, working towards consolidating resources where riders can gather information across services on a single page that could be printed out Implement consistent branding of buses and bus stops Coordinate data collection across counties 	All	2-Year

Gap or Opportunity	Explanation	Opportunity	Initiatives	Governance	Timeframe (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Service Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited evening and weekend services are provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide weekend fixed route transit services across the network allowing residents and visitors in Wasco County, Klickitat County, and Skamania County to connect intercity routes with access to recreation, jobs and shopping on weekends. Weekend connections for cities in Washington, Mosier, and to Mt. Hood will greatly increase access to recreation for residents and visitors Expand evening service on both weekdays and weekends (stakeholder advisory group members particularly emphasized the need to expand evening and weekend service between the Cities of Hood River, Bingen, and White Salmon) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting with private and public providers can help provide staffing needed to expand service hours where current drivers are at maximum capacity. Providing weekend service across agencies supports connections across the counties for residents and tourists to access recreation, shopping, and employment. Expanding evening service supports access for people with later shifts or utilizing transit after standard work hours. Coordinate intercity and local transit schedules so that riders of intercity routes can connect locally to the first and last runs of the day. 	<p>Scenario 3 and Scenario 5 are needed to provide sufficient funding to accommodate the service expansion</p>	<p>5-Year</p>
Medical rides that are not reimbursable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers in various counties provide medical rides that do not qualify as reimbursable non-emergency medical rides (NEMT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner between agencies to provide these rides and support long-haul rides to Portland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance education about and support connections to the Columbia Gorge Express to better serve need for medical rides to Portland 	<p>All</p>	<p>2-Year</p>
Private Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate between public and private providers to serve congested tourism areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on partnerships with existing private shuttles to continue serving, or expand, access to popular destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract with private and public providers to expand transit service. Service can be contracted for evenings, weekends, or for all services Partner with private providers to facilitate transfers between public and private transportation services 	<p>All</p>	<p>5-Year</p>

Gap or Opportunity	Explanation	Opportunity	Initiatives	Governance	Timeframe (2-, 5-, and 10-Year Horizons)
Electrification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No transit vehicles for any provider of the Gorge TransLink Alliance are currently hybrid or electric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Converting vehicle fleets to hybrid and electric vehicles requires sufficient range and proper charging stations In the long term, electric vehicle fleets can help reduce both maintenance and fueling costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue grant funding to support electrification initiatives Construct charging and alternative fueling facilities to support the purchase of hybrid or fully electric vehicles 	All	10-Year
Staff Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of sufficient staffing (especially for drivers) makes it challenging to provide and increase service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligning compensation can help reduce competition and staff turnover Maximizing the increased economy of scale: help make staff time go farther by sharing resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate between agencies to align on compensation packages that reduce competition between counties and increase the appeal of the staff positions overall Under certain government scenarios, staff could be hired under the umbrella of an agency, facilitating ease of optimizing staff schedules 	All, especially Scenario 4 and Scenario 5	2-Year

MONITORING PROGRAM

Consistent data collection across the study area should be used to monitor both transit performance and the outcomes of implementing the Gorge Regional Transit Strategies recommendations over time. In many cases, these performance measures are already tracked as part of Federal Transit Administration reporting requirements. This program enables a dynamic system where service adjustments can be implemented and justified following performance evaluations. The relative importance of each metric may differ by county based on population demographics and needs.

- Regional Equity and Connectivity
 - Geographic coverage
 - Service Span
 - Service Frequency
 - Connections to other routes/providers
- Operational Efficiency
 - Rides per hour
 - Cost per ride
 - Cost per hour
 - Total capital costs
 - Total annual opportunity costs
 - System ease of use
- Accessibility and Connectivity
 - Bus stop amenities
 - Bicycle and pedestrian connections
 - Population served
 - Employment served
 - Transit-dependent populations served
 - Number of service request denials
- System Clarity for Customers and the General Public
 - On-time performance (Not currently available)
- Sustainability
 - Fleet fuel efficiencies
 - Annual energy consumption

NEXT STEPS

This memo will be revised to incorporate all revisions and comments received from the PMT. In addition to generalized edits provided during review, Revised Memo #5 will present a refined and recommended 'menu of options' and associated implementation strategies based on feedback received during review. Revised Memo #5 will also identify priority investments or options for implementation as identified by AC. The top 2-3 priority implementation strategies will be defined as Key Initiatives that are more fully defined with specific short- and mid-term action items, roles, and responsibilities. The information in Revised Memo #4 and Revised Memo #5 will inform the Key Initiatives Workshop.



Memo

To: HRCTD - BOARD OF DIRECTORS
From: Amy Schlappi
Date: December 21, 2022
Re: STIF Formula Project Plan for the 23-25 Biennium

Background

Section 122 of House Bill 2017 Transportation Funding Package established a dedicated source of funding for improving or expanding public transportation service in Oregon. Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) monies are available through allocated automatically distributed (formula) funds to Qualified Entities and discretionary funds for projects that must be applied for through ODOT.

For the STIF Formula Project Fund monies to be distributed a STIF Plan must be submitted by the Qualified Entity to the Oregon Transportation Commission and be approved. The plan for the STIF Formula Project funds must first be approved by the STIF Committee of the Qualified Entity and then the appropriate governing body. In HRCTD's case the plan needs to be approved by the HRCTD STIF/STIF Committee and then approved by the HRCTD Board before it is submitted to ODOT.

During the December 7, 2022 STIF Advisory Committee Meeting, Committee Members voted to recommend the attached STIF projects (Excel document) be funded with the STIF Formula Project funds for the FY23-25 Biennium. Please note that the funding amounts are based on the district receiving 150% of the projected allocation. ODOT economists are projecting that more than 100% of allocation will be available and for the district to receive the funds a higher amount needs to be approved.

STIF Formula Projected Allocation			
FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25
100%	150%	100%	150%
\$ 651,259.00	\$ 976,888.50	\$ 680,144.00	\$ 1,020,216.00



Action Required

The Board must approve or request changes to the Draft STIF Plan which will be submitted to ODOT after the Board has approved it during the January Board Meeting.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board approve the attached STIF Plan (Excel document).

STIF Project List 23-25 Biennium

AC Priority #	Proj #	Project Name	Project Description	Priority Criteria Project Addresses	Local Plan Name	FY24	FY25
4	1	Low-Income & Student Fare Program	Provides passes to Hood River County students and low-income passes for Hood River County Residents.	Reduce Fares, Expand Student Services, Coordination with other providers	CTP2020, TMP	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 27,000.00
3	2	Targeted Service to vulnerable populations	Match funds for 5311 & 5310, PDX Medical Shuttle, targeted service for vulnerable populations within Hood River County.	Enhance services for older adults and individuals with disabilities, Expand bus routes and bus services	CTP2020, TMP	\$ 140,000.00	\$ 140,000.00
7	3	Outreach and awareness of services	Targeted outreach, marketing, and travel training to vulnerable populations. Increase community awareness of services. Match for 5310 Mobility Management Travel Trainer.	Enhance services for older adults and individuals with disabilities, Expand Student Services, Coordination with other providers	CTP2020, TMP	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
1	4	Maintain Existing Services	Maintain existing services and match for other funding sources.	Improve freq and reliability, Enhance services for older adults and individuals with disabilities, Expand Student Services	CTP2020, TMP	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 620,000.00
8	5	Vanpool and mobility services	Implement a low-income vanpool program and mobility services (i.e. bike share, bike parking, car share, taxi-share etc.) near or at mobility hubs and bus stops.	Expand bus routes and bus services	CTP2020	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
5	6	Program Reserve	Cover unanticipated costs and additional funds for projects to maintain existing services and match funds for capital grants.	Improve freq and reliability	CTP2020, TMP	\$ 112,000.50	\$ 113,216.00
2	7	Capital Expansion & Replacement	Match funds for capital grants.	Improve freq and reliability	CTP2020, TMP	\$ 17,888.00	\$ 40,000.00
Subtotal w/o Rollover						\$ 976,888.50	\$ 1,020,216.00
2	7	Capital Expansion & Replacement - Rollover	Match funds for capital grants.	Improve freq and reliability	CTP2020, TMP	\$ 52,457.00	\$ -
6	8	ADA Access Improvements - Rollover	ADA access improvements at or near mobility hubs and bus stops.	Enhance services for older adults and individuals with disabilities	CTP2020, TMP	\$ 92,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
Total w/ Rollover						\$ 1,121,345.50	\$ 1,120,216.00



Memo

To: HRCTD - BOARD OF DIRECTORS
From: Tiah Mayhew
Date: 12/13/2022
Re: Transfer funds from the County account to Savings account at Columbia Bank

Background

CAT has received our yearly property tax allocation leaving the balance of our County account at roughly \$1,122,646. Staff would like to request that \$450,000 be moved from the County account into our savings account at Columbia Bank. Doing this allows the funds to be easily accessible to be utilized for our grant match obligation as well as allows for immediate access to funds for upcoming bus purchases while we await reimbursement.

Action Required

The Board would need to approve the transfer of \$450k from the County account to the Savings account at Columbia Bank.

Recommendation

CAT staff is recommending that the funds be transferred.



Memo

To: HRCTD - District Board of Directors
From: Tiah Mayhew, Office Manager
Date: 12/13/2022
Re: Winter Clothing Reimbursement for G2M Drivers

Background

As you know CAT is operating the G2M service again this year. This route has a high potential of requiring the driver to be outside of the bus placing chains in inclement weather. CAT would like to provide the assigned G2M drivers with the ability to receive up to \$100 reimbursement for winter clothing or boots.

Issues or Impact

To ensure that drivers on this route have proper winter attire to utilize when performing job functions that require them to be exposed to winter conditions.

Action Required

To authorize up to a \$100 reimbursement for winter clothing for G2M drivers.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board of Directors approve the \$100 reimbursement.

Attachment:

None.

Operations Report



September

Safety and Statistics

Operations Report

SAFETY AND STATISTICS
SAMSARA SAFETY SCORE

	November	October	September	August
Safety Score	99	98	97	96
Crashes	0	0	0	0
Harsh Events reported	4	22	27	19
Harsh Events actual	0	1	2	0
Drive Time	1,147:44	1,213:54	1,260:15	1,487:10
% Over speed limit	1%	1.1%	2.1%	3.7%
Miles Driven	38,403 mi	40,407 mi	43,933 mi	54,142 mi

*Harsh Events Caused by removal of devices from vehicles

ON TIME PERFORMANCE

	November	October	September	August	July
Fixed OTP 5 mins	95%	93%	92%	93%	90%
Fixed OTP 15 mins	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
DAR OTP 5 mins	86%	87%	81%	90%	89%
DAR OTP 15 mins	99%	99%	99%	98%	97%

OTP= On time performance.

On time performance of 5 mins = if the bus is there within 5 mins of the set time its considered on time. On time performance of 15 mins = bus is on time if its there within 15 mins of the scheduled time

OTHER STATISTICS

	November	October	September	August	July
Fuel Used (Gas)	4993.21	1869.86	1686.85	3133.63	2739.54
Fuel Used (Diesel)	15843.29	3721.39	3991.59	4006.54	4131.19
Total Fuel Cost	\$20,836.5	\$24,808.21	\$22,538.45	\$27,950.93	\$30,703.36
Vehicle Repairs	1	2	0	1(Trolley)	0
Customer Complaints	0	0	0	0	1
Cost Per Mile	\$0.54	\$0.61	\$0.51	\$0.51	\$0.62

Driver of The Month:

Dan Devers

City Route

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Rides	879	1070	857	951	1093	1209	1396	1453	1757	1974	1665	1467	1296
Hours	319	319	230	208	230	242	403	390	360	360	360	334	314
Boarded Ride/ Hour	2.8	3.4	3.7	4.6	4.8	5	3.5	3.7	4.8	5.5	4.6	4.4	4.1

DAR

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Rides	330	358	269	220	320	274	263	289	237	205	236	228	216
Hours	83	83	65	56	77	72	64.5	70	78	75.5	74.7	63	39
Boarded Ride/ Hour	4	4.3	4.1	4	4.2	3.8	4	4.1	3.1	2.8	3.2	3.6	5.5

Cascade Locks

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Rides	91	129	47	65	70	66	51	51	68	137	27	39	53
Hours	125	125	70	66.5	70	72	66	63	63	61	62	42	38
Boarded Ride/ Hour	0.7	1	0.7	1	1	1	1	1	1	2.2	0.4	1	1.4

Upper Valley

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	May	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Rides	491	514	502	429	460	464	427	480	476	523	384	436	399
Hours	160	160	180	176	207	180	190	198	189	180	180	178	165
Boarded Ride/ Hour	3.1	3.2	2.8	2.4	2.3	2.6	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.9	2.2	2.5	2.4

The Dalles

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Rides	285	270	261	248	344	271	385	379	356	349	388	347	324
Hours	90.61	115	99	89	99	98	106	104	106	104	102.4	114	110
Boarded Ride/ Hour	3.1	2.4	2.6	2.8	3.5	2.8	3.6	3.7	3.4	3.4	3.9	3	2.9

Columbia Gorge Express

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Rides	1247	1206	947	926	1727	1488	2633	2921	3708	4983	3393	2944	2086
Hours	308	308	327	306.5	327	349	597	624	672.5	672.5	658	542.5	507.5
Boarded Ride/ Hour	4.1	4	2.9	3	5.3	4.3	4.4	4.7	5.5	7.4	5.2	5.4	4.1

Seasonal Service

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Rides	0	0	787	1016	941	20/92	1216	396	465	538	95	0	0
Hours	0	0	375	337.5	375	13/76	180	39	196	228	48	0	0
Boarded Ride/ Hour	0	0	2.1	3	2.5	1.5/1.2	6.8	10	2.4	2.4	2	0	0

All Routes

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Rides	3232	3547	3670	3855	4955	3628	6371	5969	7,067	8709	6191	5511	4374
Hours	1085.61	1110	1346	1239.5	1358	829	1606.5	1425	1664	1680.5	1485	1273	1173.5
Boarded Ride/ Hour	3	3.2	2.72	3.1	3.7	4.4	4	4.2	4.2	5.2	4.2	4.3	3.7



Memo

To: HRCTD - BOARD OF DIRECTORS
From: Amy Schlappi
Date: December 21, 2022
Re: Transit Master Plan Preferred Options

Background

At the December 21, 2022 board meeting I will be presenting the preferred service options and will be asking the board to approve or suggest changes to the 10-Year Vision. To aid in that discussion I have attached the service options presented to the community in the second Transit Master Plan survey and the Goals, Service Scenario and Preferred Option Memo which describes the 10-Year Vision and preferred service options in detail.

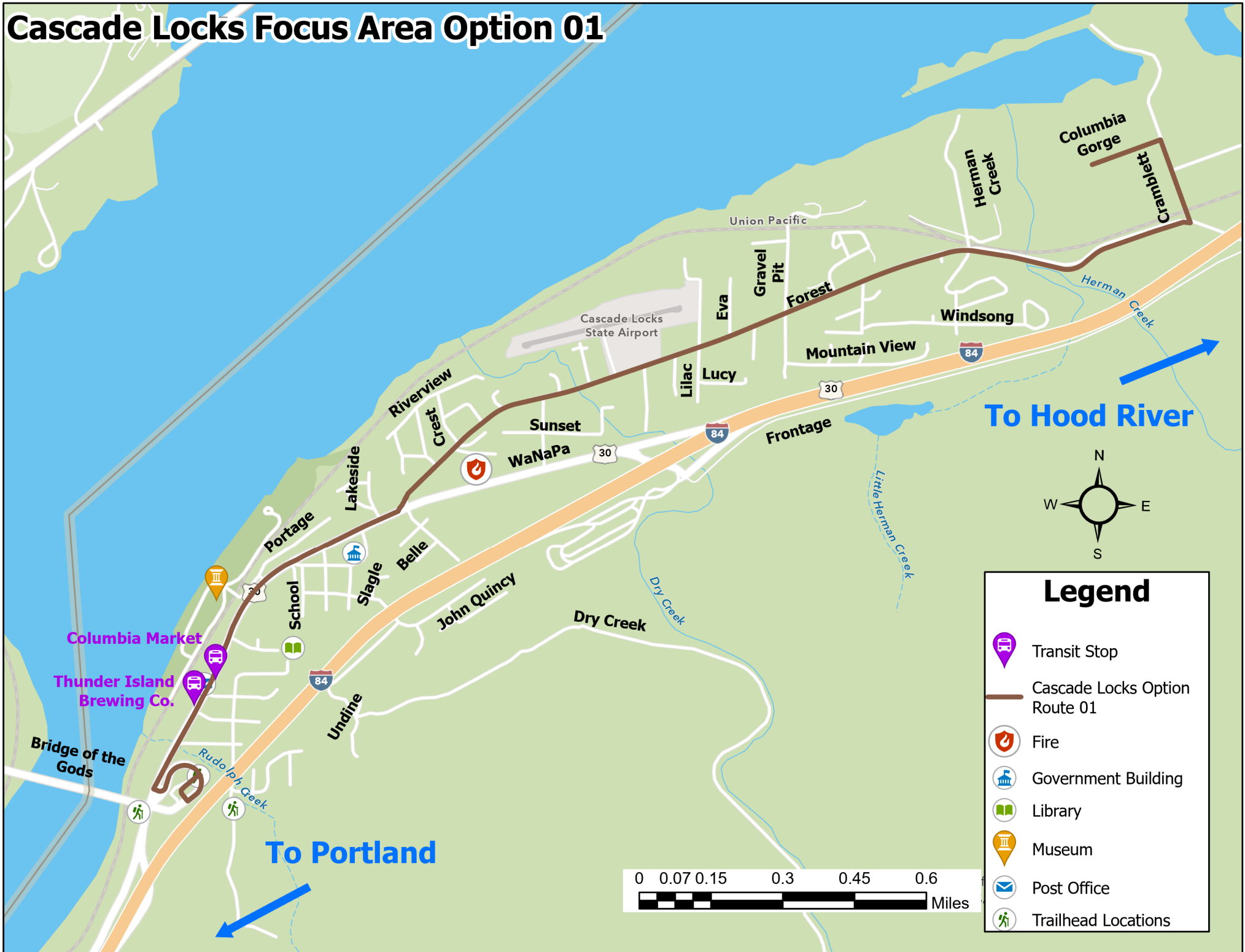
Action Required

Approve or suggest changes to the 10-Year Vision.

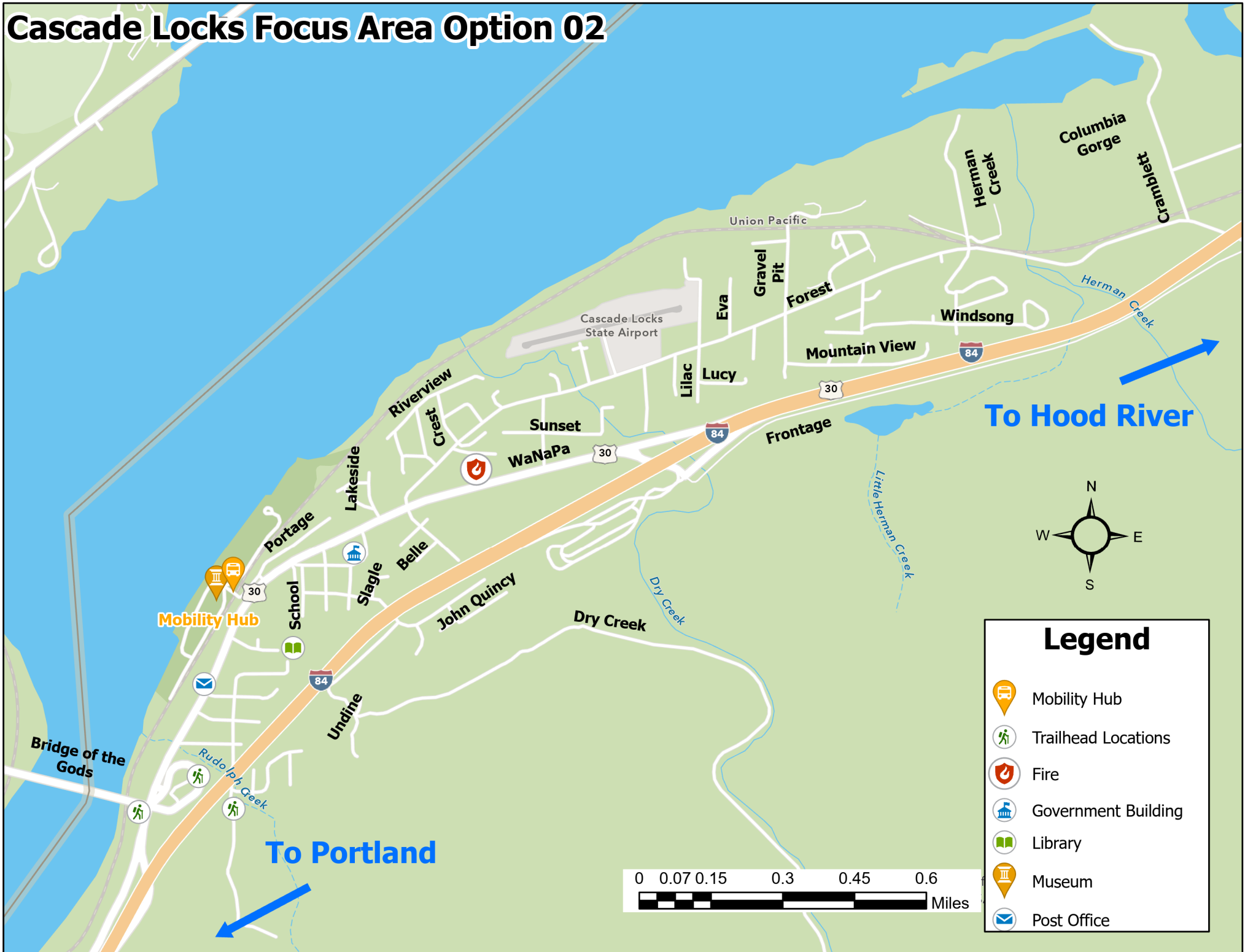
Recommendation

Staff recommends that the board approves the 10-Year Vision as presented.

Cascade Locks Focus Area Option 01

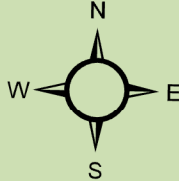


Cascade Locks Focus Area Option 02



To Hood River

To Portland



Legend












- Mobility Hub
- Trailhead Locations
- Fire
- Government Building
- Library
- Museum
- Post Office

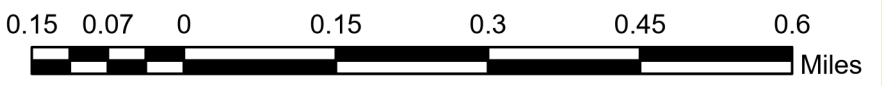


Hood River East Focus Area Option 01

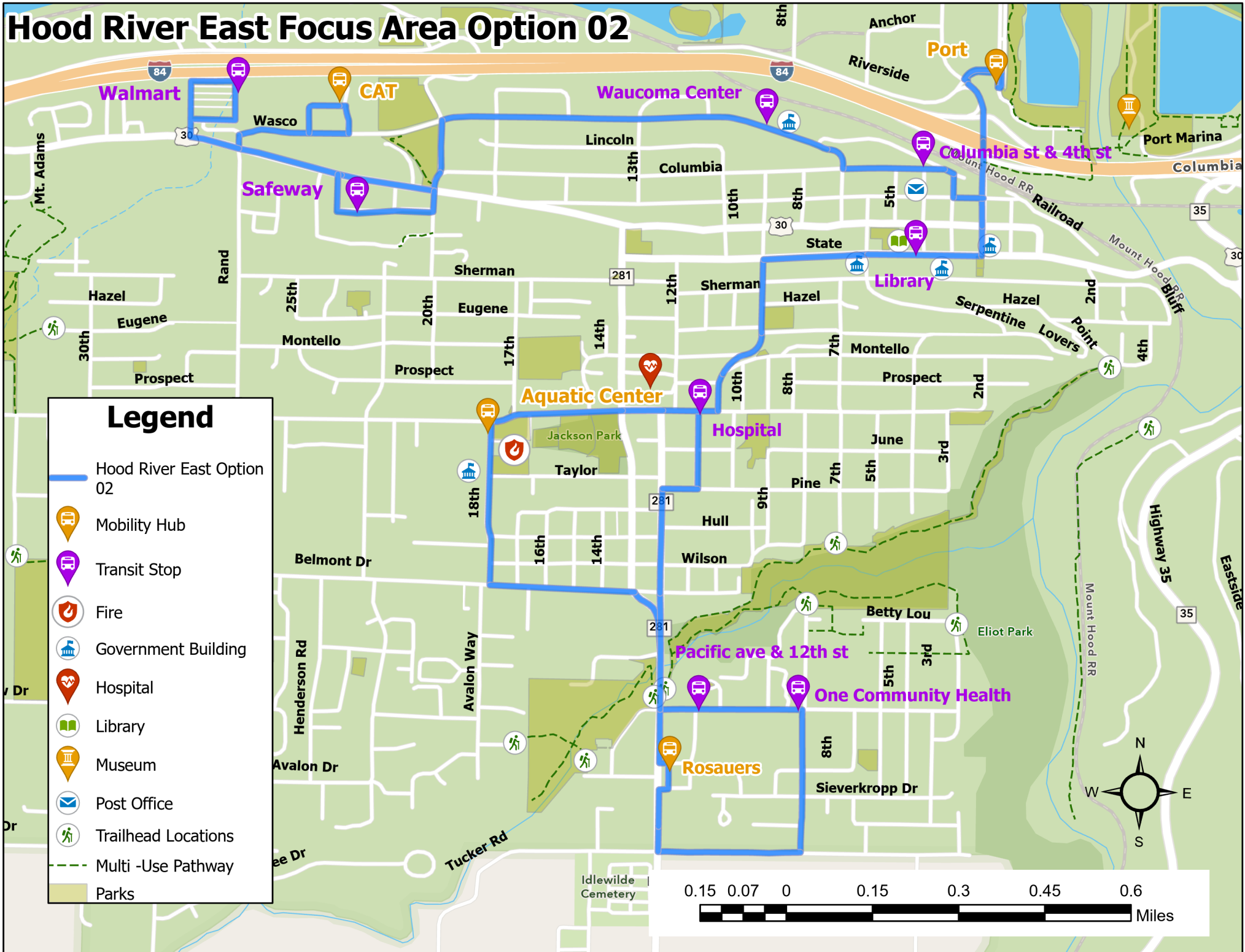


Legend

-  Hood River East Option 01
-  Current Hood River Route
-  Mobility Hub
-  Transit Stop
-  Fire
-  Government Building
-  Hospital
-  Library
-  Post Office
-  Trailhead Locations
-  Multi-Use Pathway
- Parks

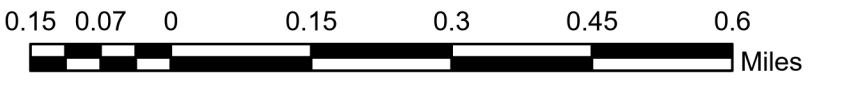


Hood River East Focus Area Option 02

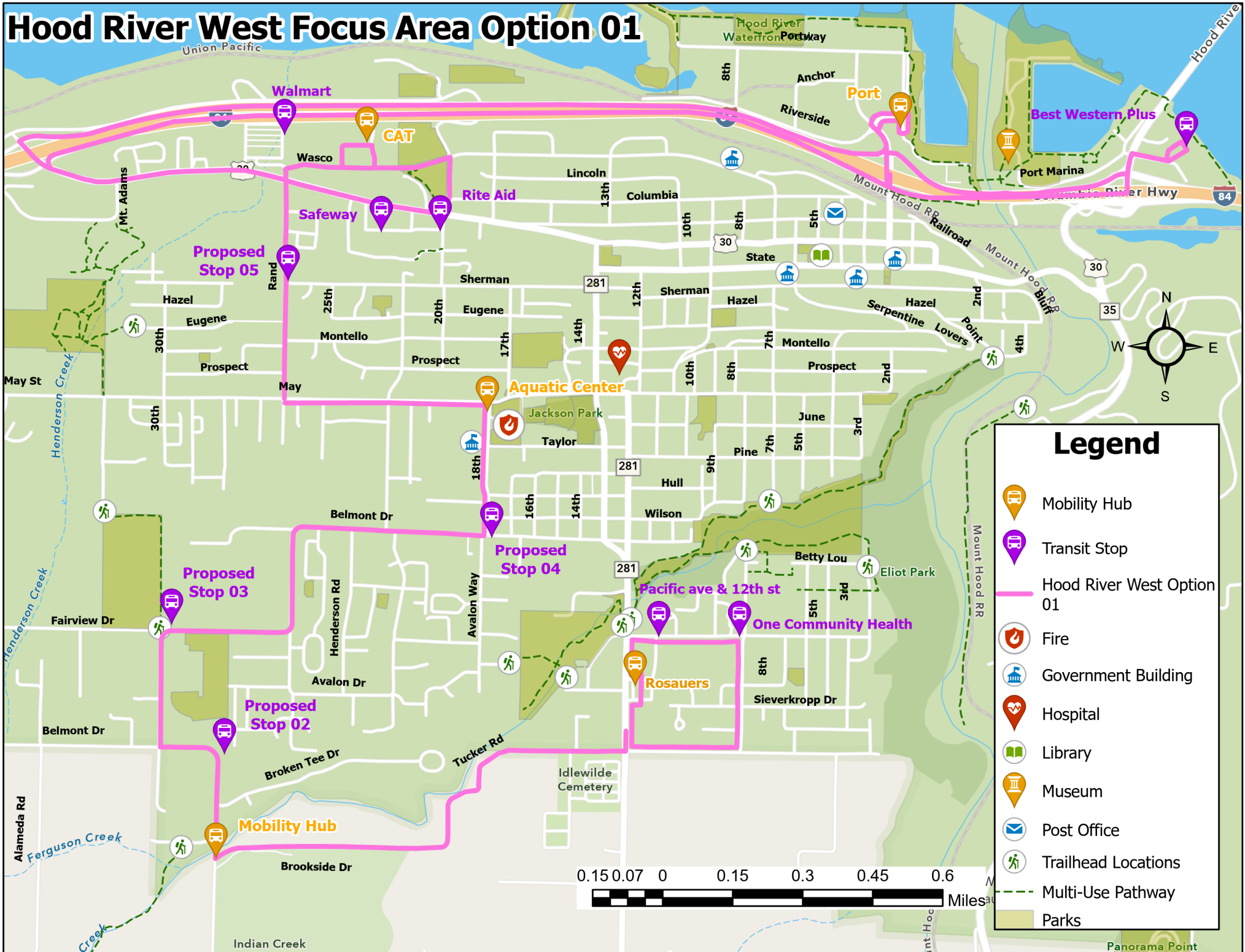


Legend

- Hood River East Option 02
- Mobility Hub
- Transit Stop
- Fire
- Government Building
- Hospital
- Library
- Museum
- Post Office
- Trailhead Locations
- Multi-Use Pathway
- Parks



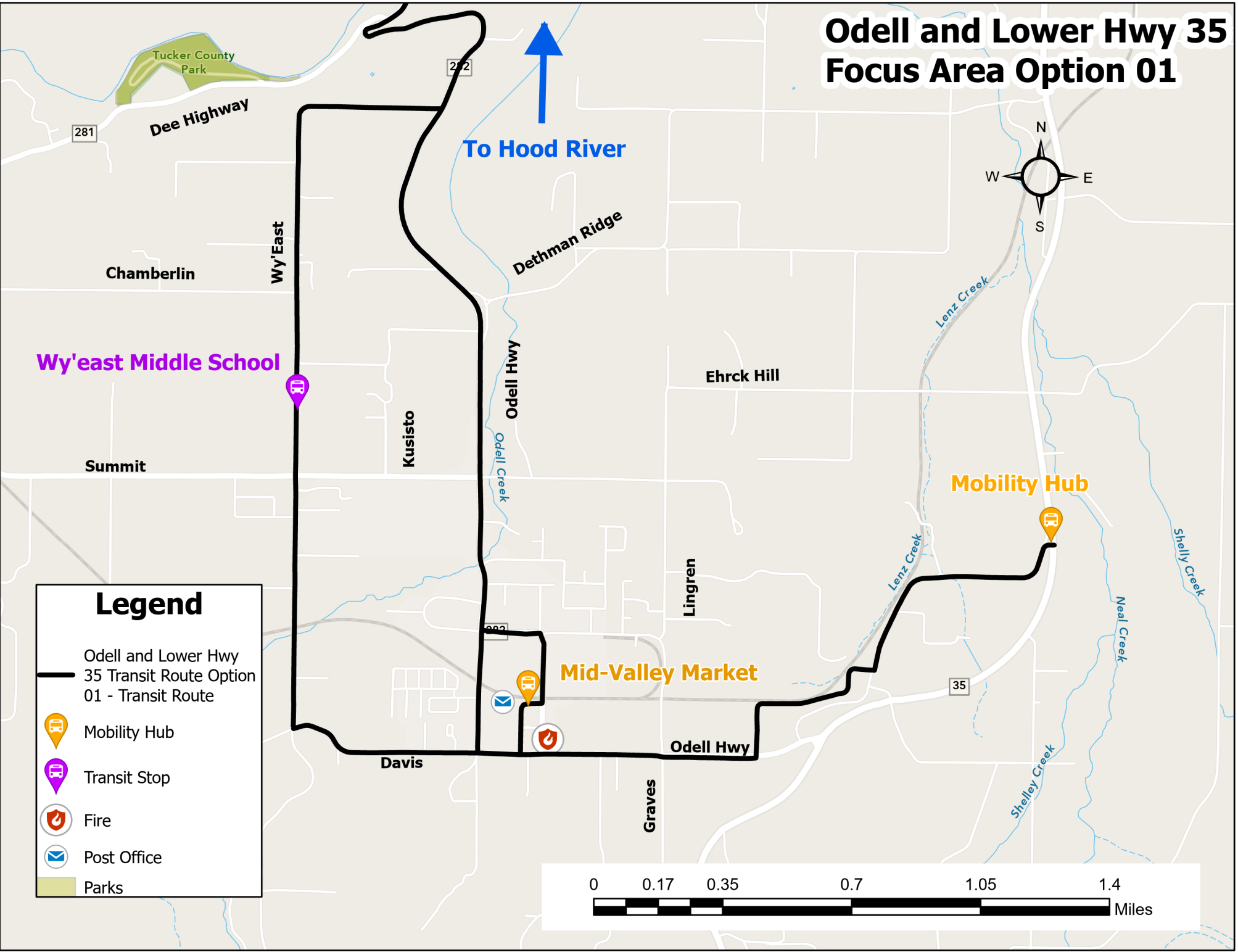
Hood River West Focus Area Option 01



Legend

- Mobility Hub
- Transit Stop
- Hood River West Option 01
- Fire
- Government Building
- Hospital
- Library
- Museum
- Post Office
- Trailhead Locations
- Multi-Use Pathway
- Parks

Odell and Lower Hwy 35 Focus Area Option 01



To Hood River



Legend

- Odell and Lower Hwy 35 Transit Route Option 01 - Transit Route
- Mobility Hub
- Transit Stop
- Fire
- Post Office
- Parks



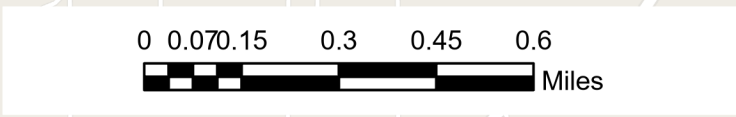
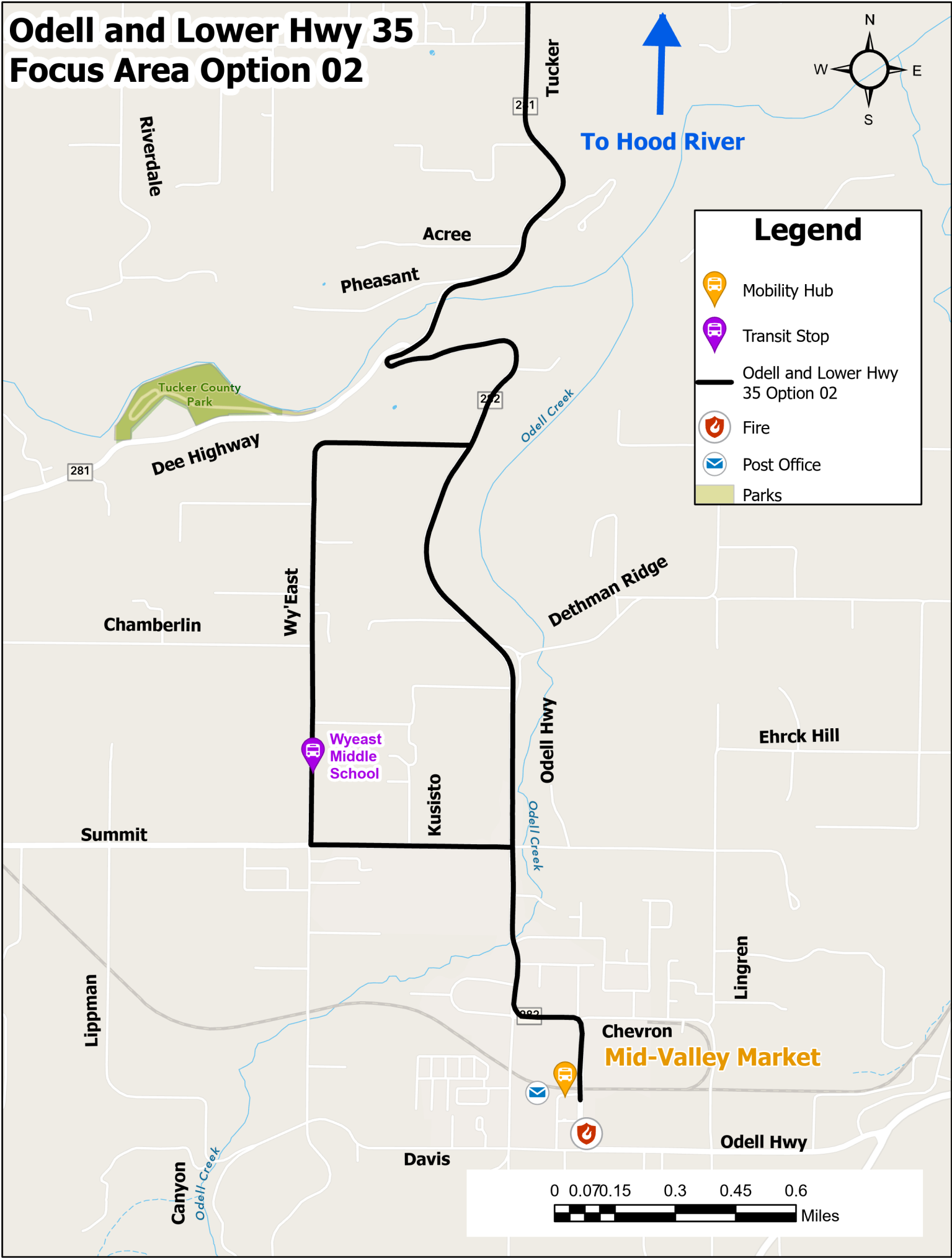
Odell and Lower Hwy 35 Focus Area Option 02



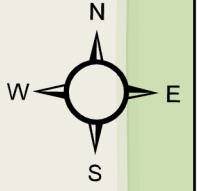
To Hood River

Legend

- Mobility Hub
- Transit Stop
- Odell and Lower Hwy 35 Option 02
- Fire
- Post Office
- Parks

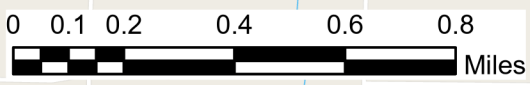


Parkdale and Upper Hwy 35 Focus Area Option 01



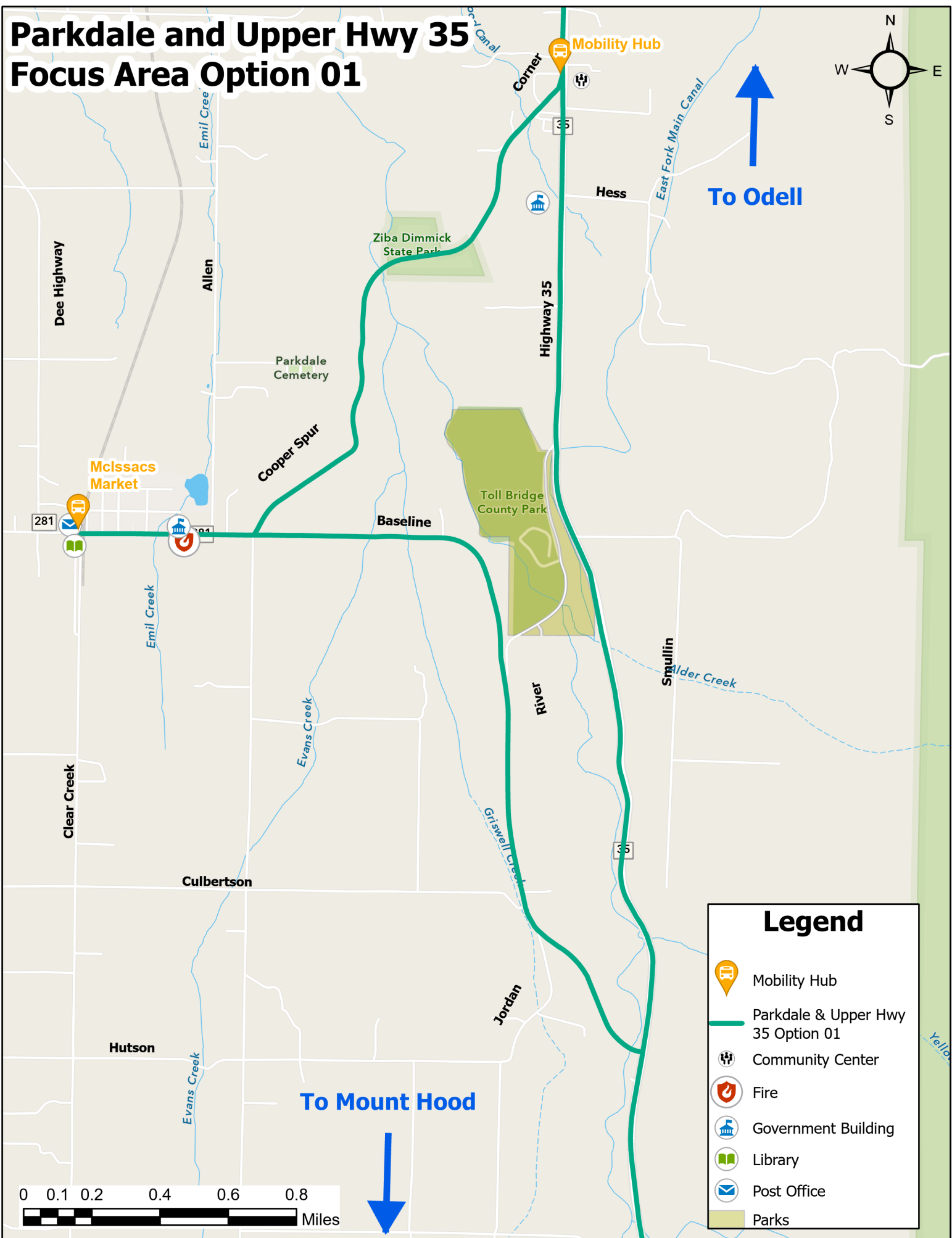
To Odell

To Mount Hood

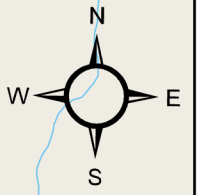


Legend

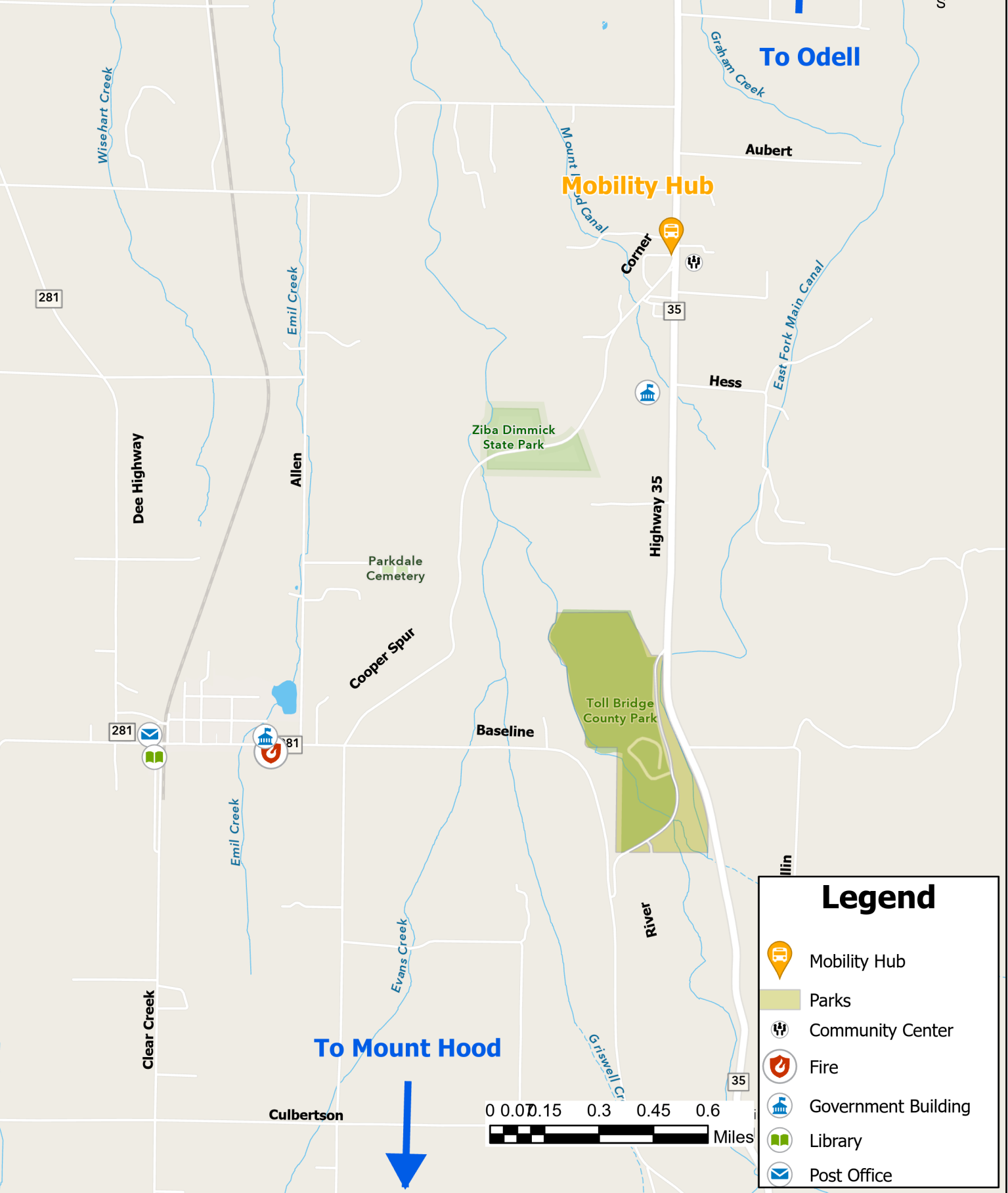
- Mobility Hub
- Parkdale & Upper Hwy 35 Option 01
- Community Center
- Fire
- Government Building
- Library
- Post Office
- Parks



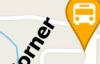
Parkdale and Upper Hwy 35 Focus Area Option 02



To Odell



Mobility Hub



Corner

35

Hess

Ziba Dimmick State Park

Highway 35

Parkdale Cemetery

Cooper Spur

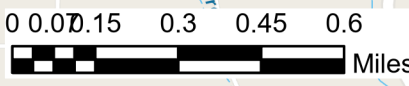
Baseline

Toll Bridge County Park

River

Allen

To Mount Hood



Legend

- Mobility Hub
- Parks
- Community Center
- Fire
- Government Building
- Library
- Post Office



Transit Master Plan

Second Memo – Goals, Service Scenarios & Preferred Option

December 15, 2022

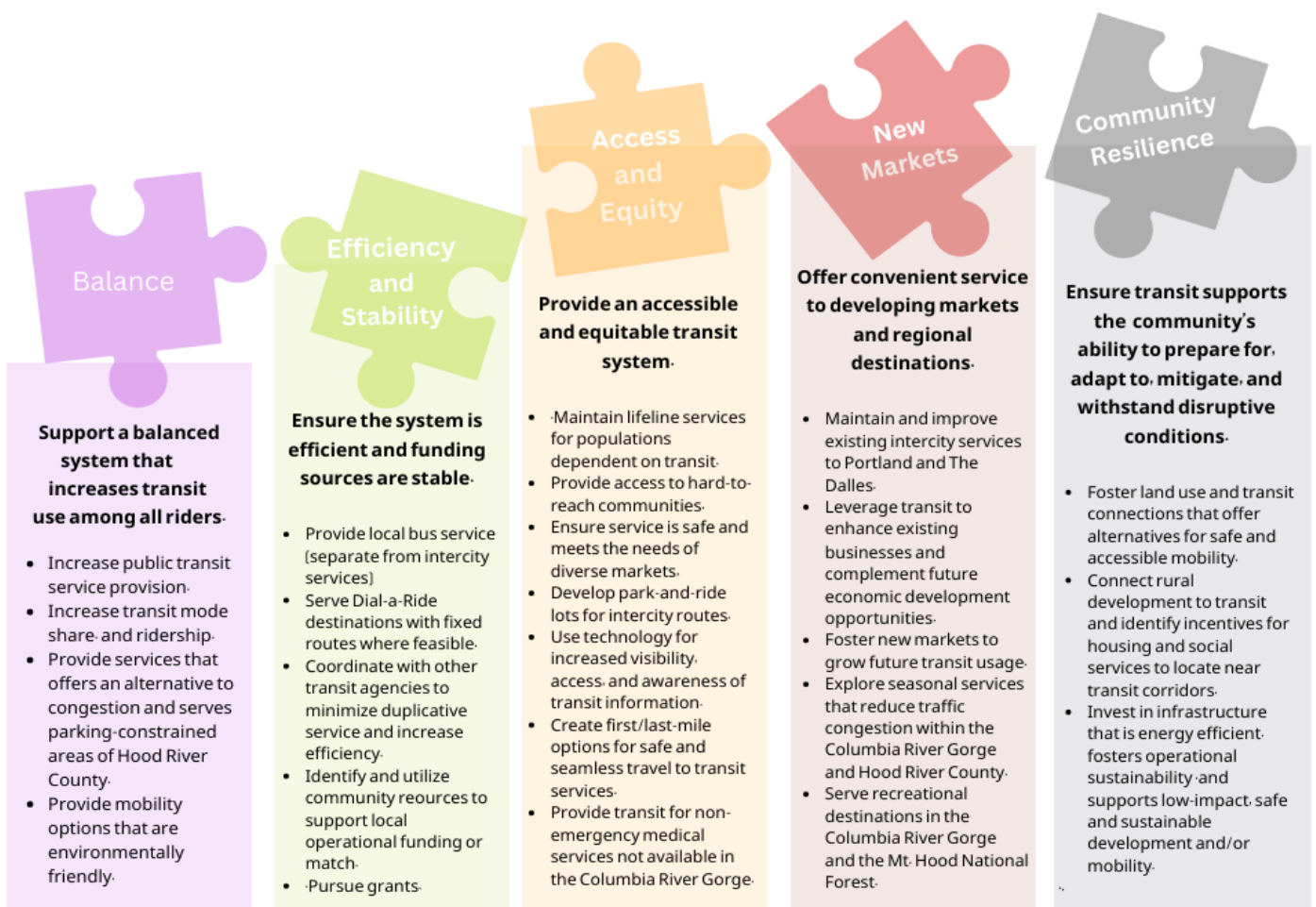
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Plan goals and Objectives	2
Transit support strategies	3
Transit Supportive Land Use Strategies	4
Cascade Locks	4
Hood River East.....	6
Hood River West	8
Odell and Lower Hwy 35	10
Parkdale and Upper Hwy 35	11
Fare and Pricing Adaptation Strategies	13
Bus Stops and Amenities	14
Marketing and Information	15
Micro-Mobility or Last Mile Options	16
Non-Peak Shift or Off Hour Options	16
Community Input and Service Scenarios	17
Phase one: identification of Community values and Opportunities	18
Survey #1 Response Summary	20
Phase Two: Service Options Development and Review	21
Survey #2 Results: Community Service Scenarios	24
Cascade Locks	25
Hood River East.....	26
Hood River WEST	26
Odell / Lower Hwy 35.....	28
Parkdale / Upper Hwy 35	29
Regional – Columbia Gorge Express	29
Regional - Gorge-to-Mountain.....	30
Mobility Hubs in the Community.....	31
10-Year Service Vision	32
Mobility Hubs and Locations	35
Phased Implementation	38
Phase I – Immediate Implementation (0-1 year)	39
Phase 2– Short-term Implementation (1-4 years)	41
Phase 3 – Mid-term Implementation (4-8 years)	49
Phase 4 – Long-term Implementation (8+ years)	50

PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE OPTIONS AND THE SELECTION OF THE FINAL VISION FOR THE 10-YEAR PLAN.

The Transit Master Plan Advisory Committees were asked to review the goals and objectives of the 2017 Transit Master Plan. After making some updates and changes, the committees sent their recommendations to the Hood River County Transportation Board for approval. The Board approved the plan goals and associated objectives, including the addition of a Community Resilience goal, at their June 2021 Board Meeting.



TRANSIT SUPPORT STRATEGIES



TO SHIFT MORE TRIPS TO TRANSIT THERE NEEDS TO BE A COMPREHENSIVE SET OF SUPPORT STRATEGIES THAT ALLOW A SEAMLESS, HIGH-QUALITY TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

Transit support strategies connect transit to the broader community, provide frequent and consistent access, create attractive and safe transfers between options, and use local channels and educational programs to ensure customers have access to the information needed to change their travel habits.

In short, transit support strategies are designed to complement, bind, and integrate transit services with broader community needs.

They support the use of transit by riders either directly or through tools that enhance rider access or improve the overall experience with the transit system.

Typically, transit support strategies can be categorized into six principal areas:

- Land Use Support Strategies
- Fare & Pricing Adaptations
- Stops & Amenities
- Marketing & Information
- Micro-Mobility or First/Last-Mile Options
- Non-Peak Shift or Off-Hour Options

The following is a general overview of individual strategy types. The overview outlines the areas where specific strategies might be implemented to complement proposed service improvements.

TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE LAND USE STRATEGIES

Transit-supportive land use strategies are based on the idea that convenient access to transit can foster benefits for the developer but also may accomplish other goals, including reducing sprawl, reducing congestion, increasing pedestrian activity, increasing economic development potential, realizing environmental benefits, and building sustainable communities.

Transit-supportive land uses are most often part of a coordinated planning effort. This most often begins with the identification of locations along transit routes where higher density is desirable or where the integration of transit and land use planning can offer higher benefits for the community and development project overall. (E.g., development that may be supported by transit and that, in turn, may support transit.)

As part of the Transit Master Plan, an initial analysis was conducted of land use issues and opportunities related to the “transit-oriented” or “transit-supportive” developments within Hood River County. This full analysis as well as a tool kit for local planners can be found on the CAT TMP Website at www.engagecat.org.

The following provides a summary of the potential locations within each of the five focus areas that may offer the opportunity for some simple transit-supportive planning strategies that can link new development more effectively to transit or more complex strategies like transit-oriented or joint-development projects.

CASCADE LOCKS

Land within the Cascade Locks UGB has a wide range of zoning designations. Portions of the City are developed, though there are areas of vacant land that have significant opportunity for future development.

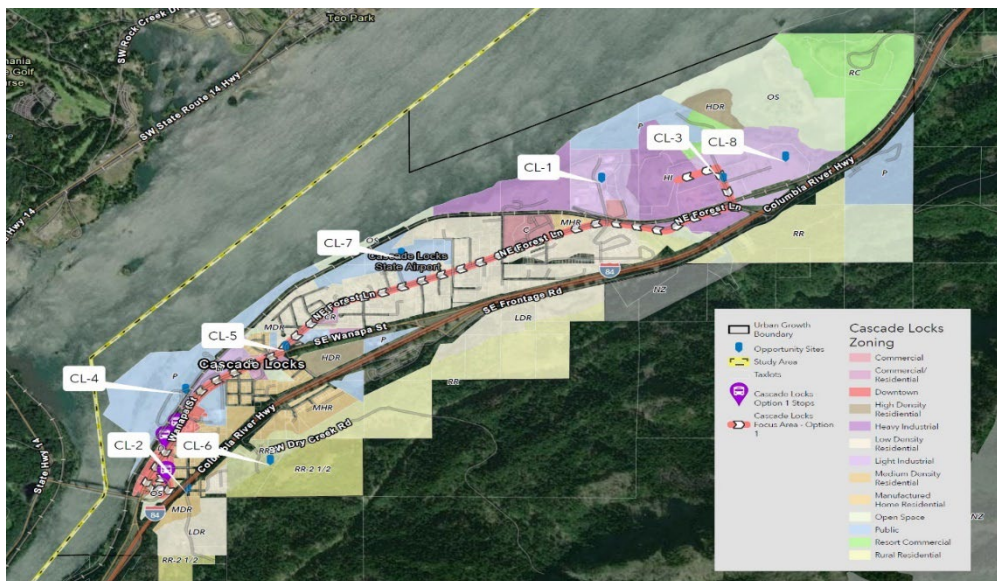
The City of Cascade Locks is part of a set of State-run Enterprise Zones in Hood River County. The City and Port sponsor the Cascade Locks Enterprise Zone, which was designated on July 2, 2021 and will end on June 30, 2025. Local property taxes are abated for new businesses in this zone for a specified number of years.

Opportunity for Transit Supportive Development in Cascade Locks

The current and future opportunities for transit-oriented development in Cascade Locks are listed and identified in the map on the following page:

- **CL-1.** Grain Integrative Healthcare. Currently operating several days a week.
- **CL-2.** Bridge of the Gods Trailhead. Popular recreational destination, new parking area permitting underway.
- **CL-3.** Ongoing development of Bear Mountain Business Park, largely industrial users.
- **CL-4.** Marine Park entrance. Popular recreational destination.
- **CL-5.** WaNaPa Street/Forest Lane. Modest infill and development likely along Forest Lane, including new group homes. Existing subsidized units on Belle Street/Edgewood Avenue.
- **CL-6.** Dry Creek Road, where approximately 80 acres could potentially be developed for housing, roughly doubling the City's housing stock. These units are likely to be high-value homes.
- **CL-7.** Airport area, where there are approximately 20 developable acres in the long term.

MAP 1: POTENTIAL TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE SITES IN IN CASCADE LOCKS



HOOD RIVER EAST

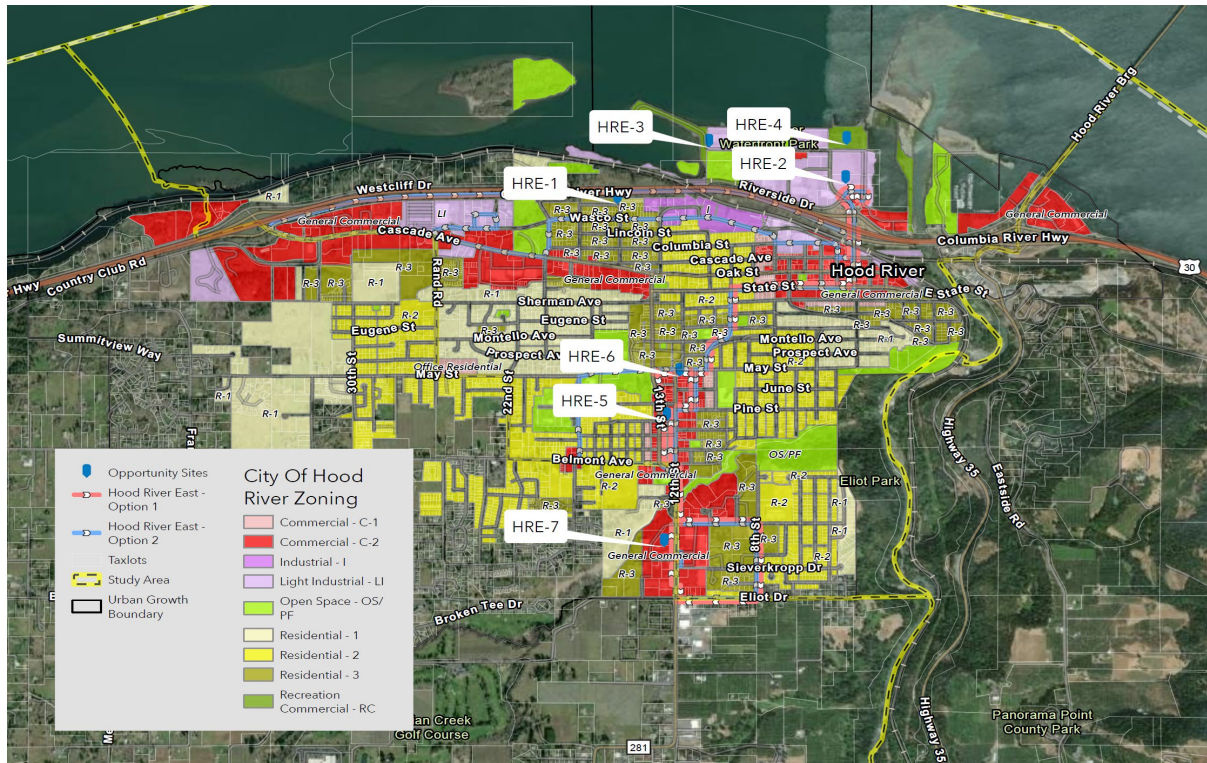
The Hood River East contains the central and eastern portions of the City of Hood River, It is roughly coterminous with the City's eastern and southern UGB. The focus area is approximately 2,500 acres in size.

Opportunity for Transit Supportive Development in Hood River East

The current and future opportunities for transit-oriented development in Hood River East are listed below and identified in the map on the following page:

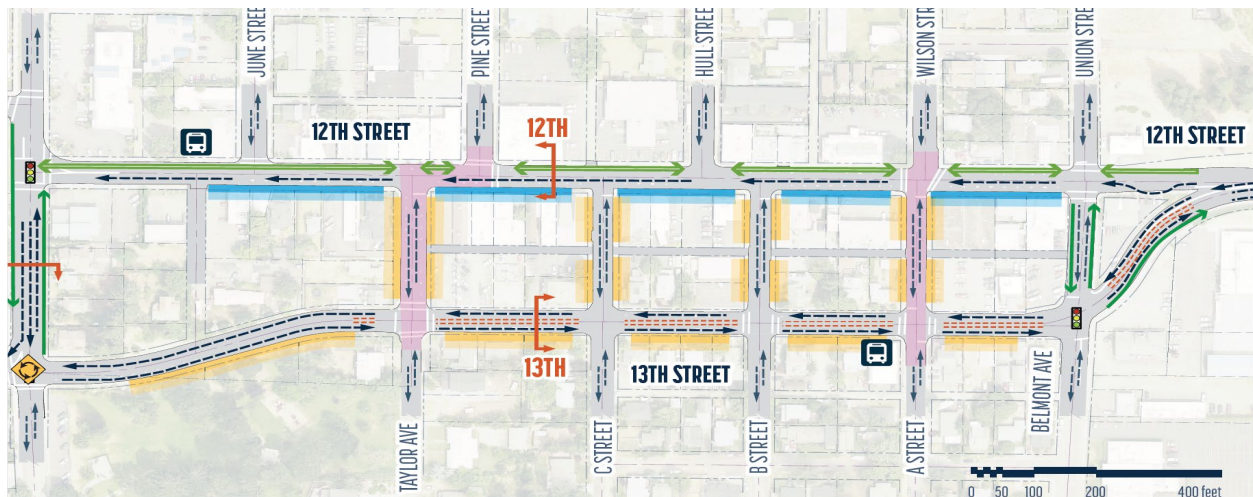
- **HRE-1. HRE 1** – An MCHA affordable housing development (Rio Bella) on Hope Avenue at Wasco Street is more than a half mile from the nearest existing stops. A stop near this location could improve transit access.
- **HRE-2-4.** Hood River Waterfront, home to many large employers and vacant port-owned land slated for additional employment/hospitality growth. “Lot 1” is perhaps the most significant development opportunity in this area and a mobility hub is envisioned there. Also on the Hood River Waterfront, the west end of Portway features warehousing and recreation. Particularly for the westernmost reaches of Portway used for recreation, Port staff suggested considering extending weekend service to this area. Given the large amount of recreation on the Waterfront – especially at the Event Site, where there is limited parking – the question arose about whether new or modified transit vehicles could accommodate more gear (e.g., bikes, water and wind sport gear).
- **HRE-5-7.** The Heights Streetscape Plan area, 12th and 13th Streets from May Street to Belmont Avenue – The plan addresses potential future bus stops and crossing alignments this planning area should be tracked for transit-supportive development and redevelopment opportunities. The Heights district and nearby commercial land to the south is designated as an Enterprise Zone and is the subject of current planning using City urban renewal funds, which could be a boon to potential transit-supportive development in the area. The preferred alternative for the Heights Streetscape Plan is shown on the following page.

MAP 2: POTENTIAL TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE SITES IN HOOD RIVER EAST



HOOD RIVER HEIGHTS STREETScape PREFERRED DESIGN

Below is the preferred alternative for the Heights Streetscape and is the alternative upon which the Final Plan will be based.



HOOD RIVER WEST

The Hood River West Focus Area contains about 17,500 acres. Most of the land in the focus area is unincorporated county land, much of which is within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area and does not currently have any significant development and is not expected to experience any significant growth during the Transit Master Plan time horizon. Thus, the focus on land use conditions in this area is targeted to the area within and adjacent to the Hood River UGB.

Opportunity for Transit Supportive Development in Hood River West

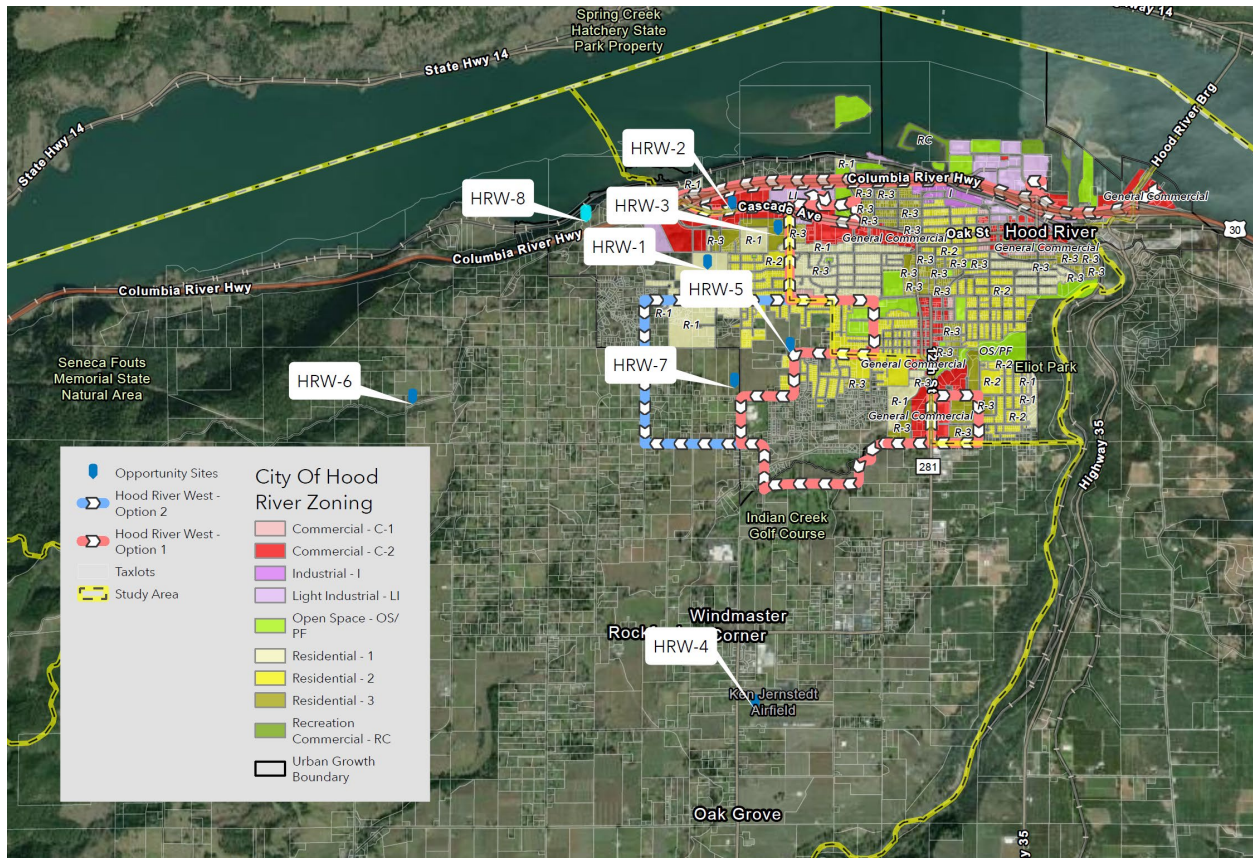
The current and future opportunities for transit-oriented development in Hood River West are listed below and identified in the map on the following page:

HRW-3. Hood River West also includes the Cascade Avenue Streetscape Plan area, a corridor from I-84 Exit 62 to 13th Street that serves as the western gateway to Hood River and as the main street for nearby neighborhoods. The plan recommended implementation measures such as one lane in each direction for most of the corridor, continuous sidewalks, separated bicycle facilities, raised medians to provide protected crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists, and transit/bus stop design specifications. Project staff have reported that most of the mixed-use and transit-oriented development opportunities are anticipated in the west end of this corridor.

- **HRW-4.** Ken Jernstedt Airfield. The airfield was identified as a potential site for modest employment growth that may be appropriate for a potential bus stop on the Upper Valley service. The site also includes the Western Antique Aeroplane and Automobile Museum (WAAM). When events bring a large number of people to the airfield in summer and fall, that is a time when service to the airfield could serve both staff and visitors.
- **HRW-5.** Belmont Extension. Street extension to Post Canyon Drive. Plans detailed in the City's Transportation System Plan. This extension may have implications for future routing/stop locations.
- **HRW-6.** Post Canyon Seven Streams Trailhead. Post Canyon is a recreational amenity that faces parking challenges at times of peak demand. The site may be appropriate for transit service focused on moving hikers and mountain bikers (and their equipment).

- **HRW-7.** Westside Park. The Hood River Parks & Recreation District has acquired 20 acres of land on the west side of Hood River for future park use.¹
- **HRW-8.** Ruthton Park and Ruthton Point. Just west of the City of Hood River, north of I-85, a section of the Historic Columbia River Highway is planned to connect to the Historic Highway State Trail. This trail segment would extend eastward from Mitchell Point, cross underneath I-84, and proceed east to Hood River. Ruthton Park may be an opportunity for transit connections to the Historic Highway State Trail.

MAP 3: POTENTIAL TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE SITES IN HOOD RIVER WEST



¹ <https://hoodriverparksandrec.org/westside-park>

ODELL AND LOWER HWY 35

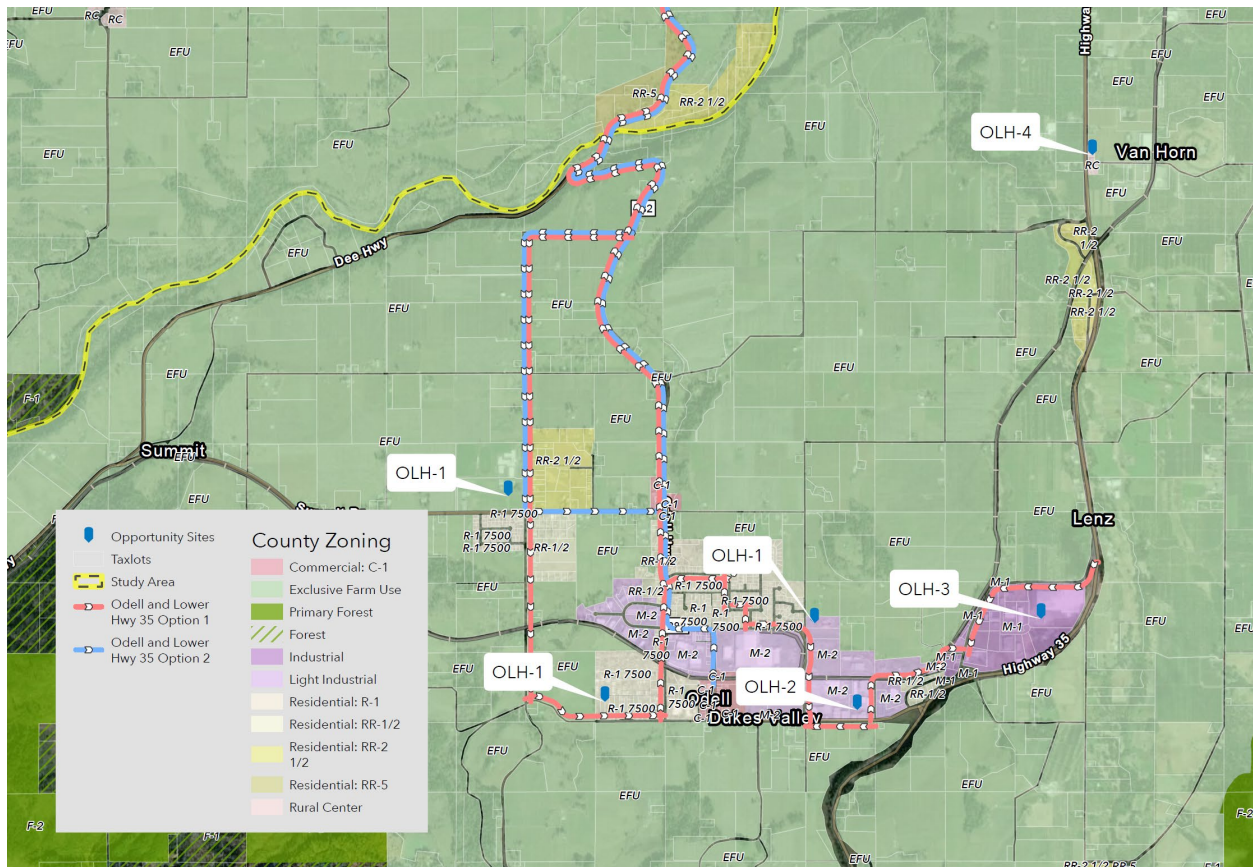
The Odell/Lower Hwy 35 area features the Census Designated Place (CDP) and the unincorporated community of Odell, which has a population of roughly 2,400. Pine Grove, an unincorporated community with a small commercial area, is also found in this focus area. Land in the area is otherwise mostly farmland – zoned Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) and largely in fruit production.

Opportunity for Transit Supportive Development in Odell and Lower Hwy 35

The current and future opportunities for transit-oriented development in Odell / Lower Hwy 35 are listed below and identified in the map on the following page

- **OLH-1.** Depending on the types of employers that locate in Odell, new development could present an opportunity for new transit service as well as an opportunity to provide transit amenities that serve Odell more broadly. A circulator loop has been suggested by stakeholders. There are also several residential parcels that remain unplatted on the east side of Odell Highway, and near Wy'east Middle School. These sites represent the possibility for a modest increase in housing and population in Odell. The MCHA Executive Director also indicated interest in ongoing coordination with the County regarding affordable housing development in Odell, which would benefit from being transit-supportive development served by transit.
- **OLH-2 and OLH-3.** There are potentially several sites in Odell that could be developed or redeveloped with significant employment uses. This includes the Neal Creek industrial area on the east end of Odell, which currently features large employers such as Cardinal Glass. Additionally, the Port of Hood River owns and has remediated a former mill site adjacent to rail and is expected to be redeveloped in the future.
- **OLH-4.** A rail line extends from Downtown Hood River to Pine Grove, mostly as a tourist/visitor service and periodically as a commercial service. Depending on the scale and popularity of the visitor service, some measure of transit-oriented development – a stop, supportive development, and amenities – may be warranted.

MAP 4: TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE SITES IN ODELL AND LOWER HWY 35



PARKDALE AND UPPER HWY 35

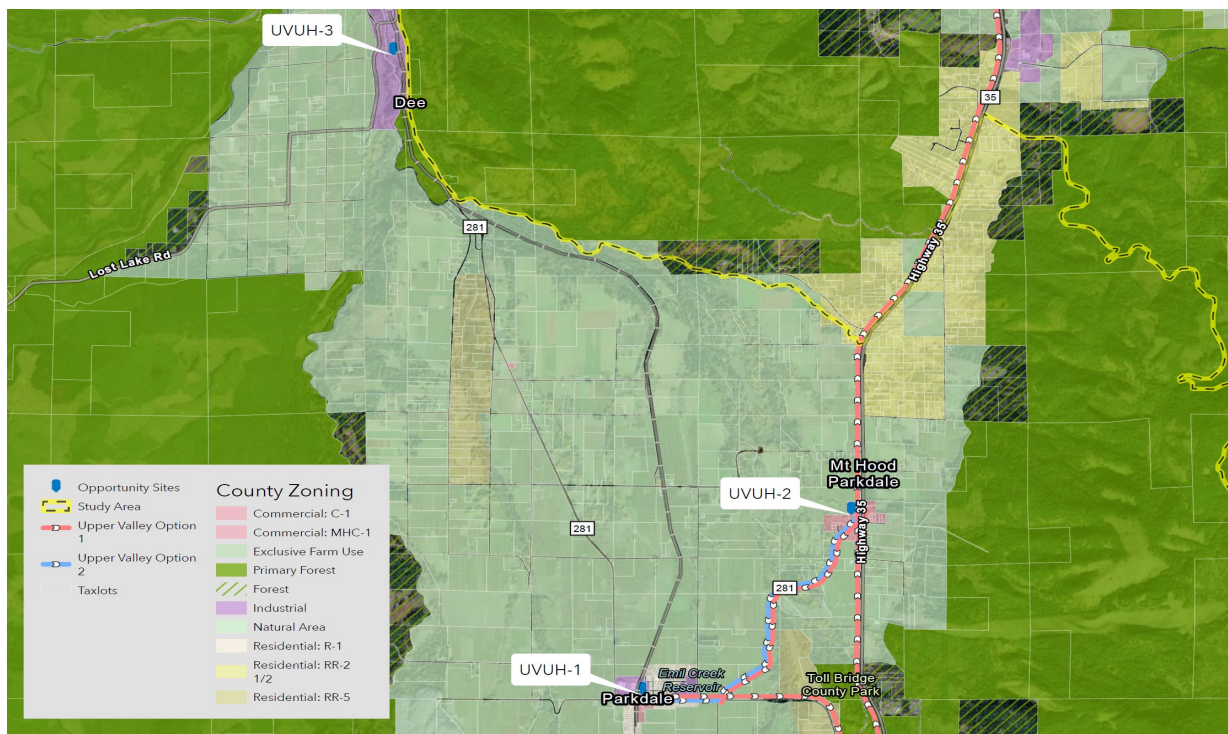
Parkdale / Upper Hwy 35 focus area contains the southernmost portion of Hood River County, including the unincorporated communities of Parkdale and Mt. Hood, and several ski destinations in the vicinity of Mt. Hood. Parkdale has a population of roughly 300 people, as does the community of Mt. Hood.

Opportunity for Transit Supportive Development in Parkdale and Upper Hwy 35

The current and future opportunities for transit-oriented development in Parkdale and Upper Hwy 35 are listed below and identified in the map on the following page

- UVUH-1.** Due to the rural nature of Focus Area 5, significant new development is unlikely. In the Parkdale area, modest redevelopment of employment uses and small-scale residential development may occur over time. In Parkdale, there are several large residential parcels that could be subdivided under their current zoning designation; however, infrastructure constraints and other factors may limit this development. In addition, land in the vicinity of Baseline Drive and Clear Creek Road/2nd Street in Parkdale has commercial C-1 zoning, though parcels south of Baseline Drive have agricultural or residential uses today. Some additional commercial development in this area, which could be transit-oriented in a small community manner, is possible.
- UVUH-2.** Consider a stop for the community of Mt. Hood, at its junction with Highway 35.
- UVUH-3.** In the very long term, County staff suggested monitoring the small community of Dee for potential transit service and stop (for employees) if the mill site there is redeveloped.

MAP 5: TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE SITES IN PARKDALE AND UPPER HWY 35



FARE AND PRICING ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

Fare and pricing adaptation strategies alter the absolute or relative price or cost of transit services for existing or prospective riders; and/or make transit fares easier to use/access. While a few fare or pricing programs can be targeted to specific areas or target markets (as noted in the examples below) most of the fare and pricing adaptation strategies would require systemwide implementation.

CAT has implemented several of these types of strategies over the last five years including:

- **Deep-discounted passes:** CAT implemented the CAT Annual GORge Pass in 2020 and subsequently expanded the annual pass program to a Gorge-wide program in 2021. This was followed by the CAT Day Pass in 2021 which was coordinated with the Multnomah Falls permit program. Both programs have been widely successful and increased overall revenue by 300%.
- **Expansion of sales outlets (online):** In 2018 CAT implemented an online fare program, which allowed CAT riders for the first time to purchase fares online using a credit card. Today 70% of CAT riders use online fare technology over physical passes or individual fares.
- **Cooperative programs:** CAT has developed a wide variety of cooperative programs with local businesses organizations, and agencies—including the Hood River Valley School District Free Student Pass Program, the Gorge Transit Connect Program for low-income residents (with local partner organizations) and the Downtown Pass Program with the City of Hood River. These programs have allowed CAT to meet specific mobility goals for targeted markets and address unique community goals for specific areas.

CAT could look further enhance or expand fare and pricing strategies that can enhance access, increase awareness, and foster new ridership, including:

- **Onboard dynamic fare payment program.** A dynamic-fare payment option allows people to use a credit card or prepay fare card to purchase their fares. This type of program can also link with other local initiatives (parking management, bridge tolls, e-bikes, neighboring transit agencies, etc.) to offer incentives for transit use and/or to create comprehensive transportation or “mobility as a service” options.
- **Free-fare transit for local trips (e.g., trips within Hood River County)** – Free fare transit may enhance local ridership, but, if implemented, should focus on local Hood River routes and not the more costly long-distance or intercity routes.
- **Cooperative programs in focus areas.** Cooperative programs could be pursued with other agencies, businesses, or communities to bolster or facilitate the implementation of new services throughout Hood River County.

BUS STOPS AND AMENITIES

Bus stops are the front door to the CAT fixed-route system. They are where most riders board or wait for services. Great bus stops are visible, friendly, comfortable places to wait, and are surrounded by safe and accessible walking conditions. Numerous studies show how important stops are to:

1. Overall customer satisfaction,
2. Marketing the existence and quality of services, and
3. Creating spaces that offer and connect transit to the community served.

The approach to bus stop placement and amenities has moved at a much slower pace than transit expansion. Stops within Hood River County are few, and those that are considered permanent or formalized bus stops are even fewer. In large part this has been driven by a lack of clear and consistent policy direction from local jurisdictions on where and how to place stops, and because CAT has never established a bus stop plan that clearly establishes our goals or interests.

The following outlines typical stop criteria, amenities, and maintenance considerations that can be detailed in a bus stop and amenities plan.

TABLE 1: CRITERIA FOR PLACEMENT OF BUS STOPS IN HOOD RIVER

Stop Type	Criteria	Basic Amenities	Other Amenities	Maintenance
Standard Stop	Every stop that is not sheltered.	Pole & sign, schedule information	Garbage can, bench, real-time information	As needed
Shelter Stop	Minimum of 10 BR/day or 5/BR if serving seniors or business is willing to sponsor stop	Pole & sign, real-time schedule information, shelter, bench & garbage can	Sidewalk access, curb cuts, ADA pad, bike racks.	At least twice a month garbage removal & cleaning. More frequently if required
Mobility Hub	2 or more routes serve stop & 15BR/day or linkages with 2 or more first/last mile options	Pole & sign, real-time schedule information, shelter, bench, garbage can, bus layover, bike parking	Sidewalk & bike lane access, curb cuts, ADA pad, bus pull out, indoor waiting, restrooms, park & ride	Bi-weekly garbage removal & cleaning. More frequently if required.

MARKETING AND INFORMATION

Often overlooked in the day-to-day of transit operations is the importance of providing information and marketing transit to the broader community. This not only ensures that the community knows what services are available to them, but also how those services can meet their specific needs.

From employees to senior citizens, recreationalist to cost savers, youth to environmentalists, everyone has a unique reason to travel. Identifying the need and channeling the transit “brand” to capture the community’s attention around key values helps to build trust in transit

Key Elements of a Transit Marketing Plan

Branding

Agency branding including logos, colors, and taglines, are the foundation of any on-going marketing program. CAT's 2018 rebranding efforts made the buses and network of services more visible within the Hood River County community.

Digital Presence

A digital presence is a critical part of the information age we live in. Even in a largely rural county like Hood River, most people get their information from their phone, tablet or computer.

Outreach

CAT has actively used community outreach events, targeted outreach campaigns, and other types of community engagement strategies to reach riders. Flexible outreach strategies targeted to a particular community are used more generally to build ridership and overall awareness and can reinforce CAT's broader marketing themes.

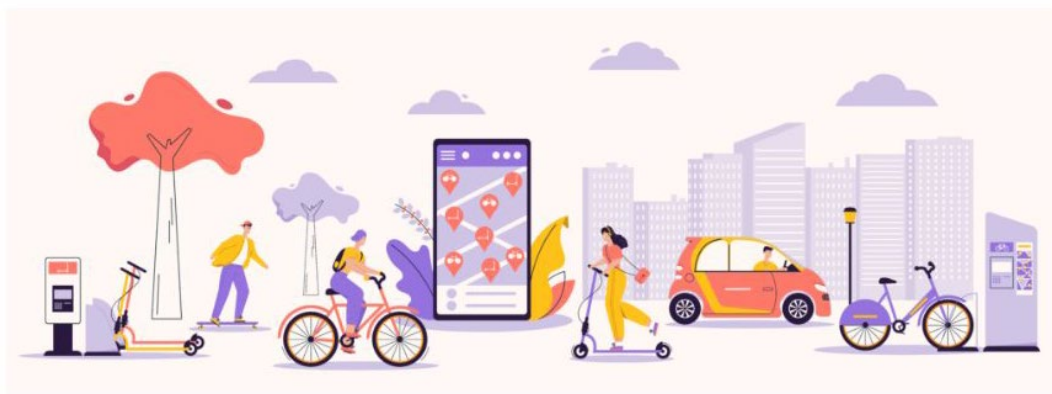
- **Brand reinforcement** - Build on and reinforce this new look by ensuring that every aspect of the on-street presence (signage, shelters, benches, etc.) further help to promote the agency and raise awareness throughout the community.
- **Website Improvements** - As part of the rebranding campaign CAT did a formal upgrade to its website. Keeping it fresh, easy to use, and relevant is key to the agency's strategy going forward.
- **Social media campaigns** - Social media campaigns offer an effective way to communicate agency news, service updates, and seasonal changes. A formalized social media plan, which incorporates larger agency messaging, could be an effective part of a long-term marketing strategy.
- **Outreach events** - Outreach events can focus on a broad or narrow portion of CAT's service area. Some events, like Hops Fest or Cider Fest, may cater to both local and regional markets.
- **Individualized marketing** - Individualized marketing in transit provides a way to leverage data and technology to deliver specific information and options about services directly to individual households within an area.
- **Regional Marketing campaigns** - CAT has collaborated with partners to launch a wide variety of specific regional or corridor campaigns around transit (e.g., Gorge Pass, Waterfall Corridor Action Plan, etc.). This type of larger targeted regional marketing campaign can complement and reinforce more specific agency goals.
- **Travel Training** - Travel training can be used to help train riders and potential users feel comfortable riding the bus. Training programs teach how to read a schedule, what fare to pay, what a stop looks like, or how to flag a bus down. A travel training program can either be implemented at individual sites or developed as a "train the trainer" program for those that work with target groups.
- **Transportation Coordinator** - Employer or organization transportation coordinator programs create, manage, and promote commuter benefits to employees throughout their worksite or organization. This may include everything from facilitating ride-matching programs to providing incentives for alternative transportation use, to trip planning or working with transit agencies or city staff to advocate for additional services.

MICRO-MOBILITY OR LAST MILE OPTIONS

Micro-mobility strategies include options like walking, biking, or the use of small low-speed motorized vehicles such as scooters, EV bikes, kickboards etc. to get to or from a transit center or hub.

First/last-mile strategies include more formalized programs like vehicle sharing (including carshare, bike or e-bike share, micro-transit, ride-hailing, or autonomous shuttles).

For the community to embrace micro-mobility or first/last-mile options it is critical that neighbors have an opportunity to weigh in on what options could look like in their area.



NON-PEAK SHIFT OR OFF HOUR OPTIONS

In rural Hood River County, fixed-route public transit may not be appropriate for serving early or late-night travel needs. Shift or off-hour options in this rural area may be best served with private providers who are supported either through public technology, infrastructure, or operational resources.

Some examples of mobility options that address these “hard to serve” needs include:

Carpool/vanpool programs - CAT supports MCEDD’s Mobility Management and Commute Options program to manage ride-matching services, offer vanpool subsidies, and provide services such as guaranteed ride home.

Taxi subsidy programs - Taxi subsidies use public funds to support private transportation providers to offer shared-ride services at specific times of day or to specific users for localized use.

COMMUNITY INPUT AND SERVICE SCENARIOS

TO ENSURE THIS DOCUMENT REPRESENTED THE DIVERSE COMMUNITY INTERESTS OF HOOD RIVER COUNTY, THE TRANSIT MASTER PLAN (TMP) DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED AN EXTENSIVE AND INCLUSIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS.

Outreach efforts were tailored to reach people in practical and convenient ways as to reflect the opinions from the wide spectrum of current and potential system users, Hood River County's jurisdictions, tribes, local and regional businesses, social service agencies, educational institutions, and recreation stakeholders.

Gaining input through diverse methods and strategies included partnering with local human service organizations to reach historically underrepresented voices, going to where people gathered (school events, grocery stores, places of work, coffee shops, public meetings, and community gatherings) and capturing current transit riders on-board intercept surveys.

The complete TMP Public Outreach Summary (including survey results and data) may be found at the CAT TMP Website: www.engagecatbus.org.

The public involvement goal for the TMP process 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.



Six Core Operating Principles for Public Involvement on the Transit Master Plan

The Transit Master Plan Public Involvement process had three distinct phases:

- Identification of Community Values & Opportunities
- Service Options Development and Review
- Draft and Final Plan Review

The table on the following page illustrates the phases and associated methods to reach Hood River County communities and visitors

PHASE ONE: IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY VALUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

CAT staff and their public involvement consultant launched 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 survey, 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, through in-person outreach at coffee shops and grocery stores, intercept surveys on buses, and via community partnerships to reach Hood River County's Spanish speaking community members.

On the following page is a summary that highlights the dominant themes from responses to the Community Values & Opportunities Survey.

The full report may be found on the CAT TMP website: engagecatbus.org. It is important to note that integrated into the report finding are the

PUT THE PASSENGER FIRST

Defining the community needs and matching them with the best-suited opportunities to enhance access, reliability, frequency, safety, and simplicity, resulting in ride comfort and quality.

MAKE PARTICIPATION EASY AND MEANINGFUL

Providing accessible, unique, and tailored strategies to engage community members — with a focus on those historically marginalized in past planning efforts — with creative ways to help CAT define the public transit issues and concerns that matter most.

ENGAGE PARTNERSHIPS WITH RECIPROCITY

Engaging current and potential partners to help shape the future of transit services to help them achieve their goals in the Gorge including cities, counties, Ports, Business Associations, Chambers, Gorge Tourism Alliance, neighborhood groups, and other regional players like State and Federal Agencies Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD), TriMet and Portland Metro.

INTEGRATE REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Identifying critical regional coordination and integration opportunities, with a focus on significantly enhancing the linkages between current bike and pedestrian initiatives, the Hood River Bridges, local communities, and regional transfer centers. The update will also address regional coordination and integration strategies between HRCTD and other local providers.

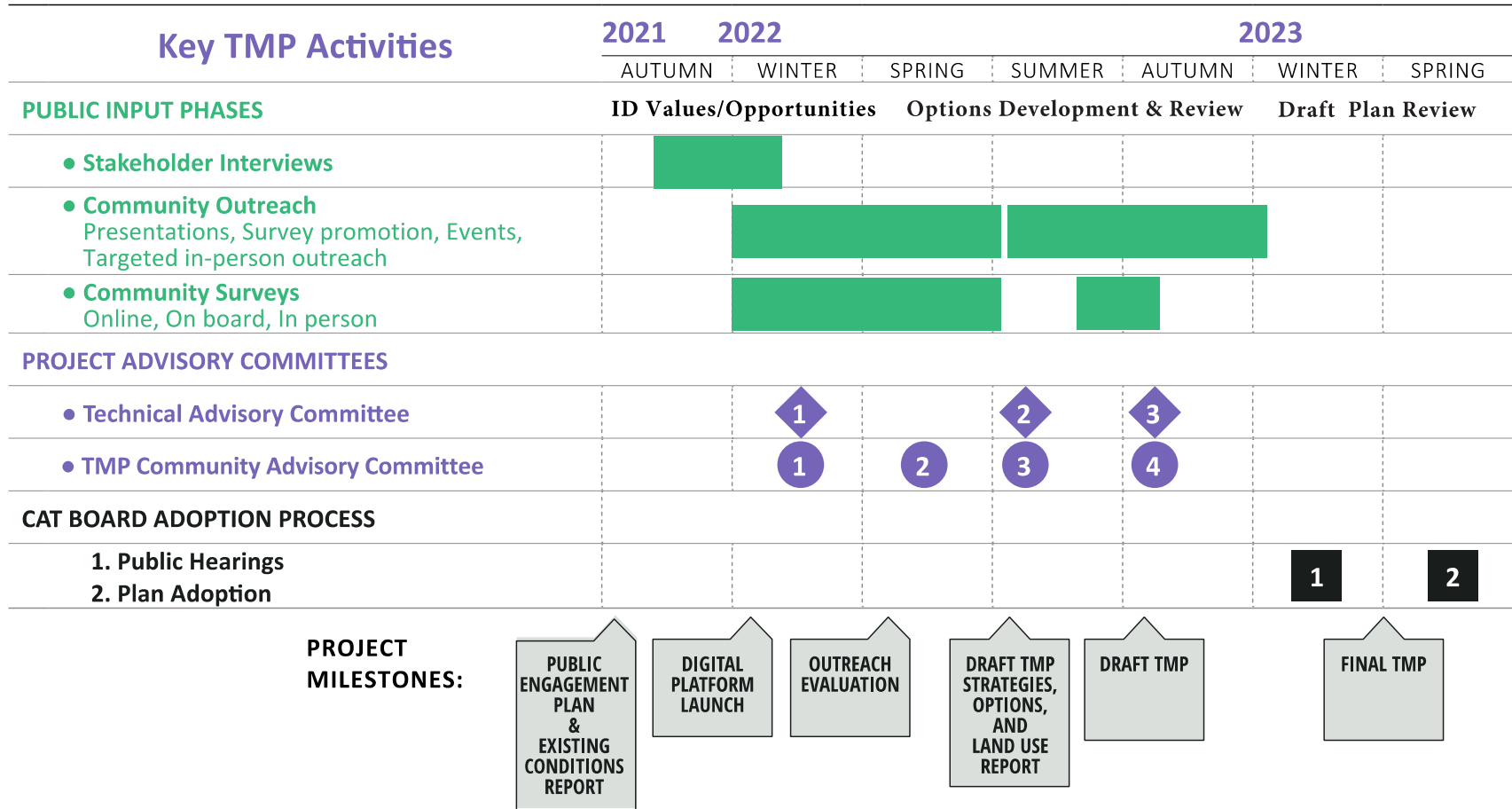
IDENTIFY SHORT-TERM IMPROVEMENTS THAT REFLECT THE LONG-TERM VISION

Modifying the transit network in Hood River County must also logically integrate with the longer-term *vision and strategies*.

FOCUS ON IMPLEMENTATION

Create a plan that provides a clear direction and concrete actionable goals.

TABLE 2: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS FOR THE HRCTD TRANSIT MASTER PLAN



responses from paper surveys. The paper surveys required a few of the online questions to be streamlined, combined, or omitted to make it easier for paper respondents. Copies of both the online and paper survey questions are available upon request.



SURVEY #1 RESPONSE SUMMARY

The most valued community elements that resonated throughout each of the five focus areas included:

- Access to recreational opportunities,
- A vibrant local business community, and
- Strong civic engagement and connections throughout the County

Respondents felt the current transit system supported these values by:

- Offering safe and climate-friendly ways to travel and
- Allowing people to connect with others in Hood River County.

481	Total Respondents
60%	Live in Hood River County
34%	Non-White
83%	Between ages of 25-64

In the future respondents felt transit should focus on allowing residents and visitors to move throughout the community without a car. To get there, respondents felt CAT should focus on:

- Expanding routes throughout the County,
- Increasing service hours and days
- Making bus stops more visible and safer to access.



OTHER IMPORTANT TAKE AWAYS

- Regional access was an important concern for most respondents, either through expanding services to areas outside Hood River County or increasing the hours or frequency of service.
- Information on routes, schedules, and bikes on buses needs to be an ongoing focus for the district.
- Transportation options (e.g., bike-share, car-share, or shared-ride taxi and vanpools) should be considered throughout the County for a variety of travel needs.

PHASE TWO: SERVICE OPTIONS DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

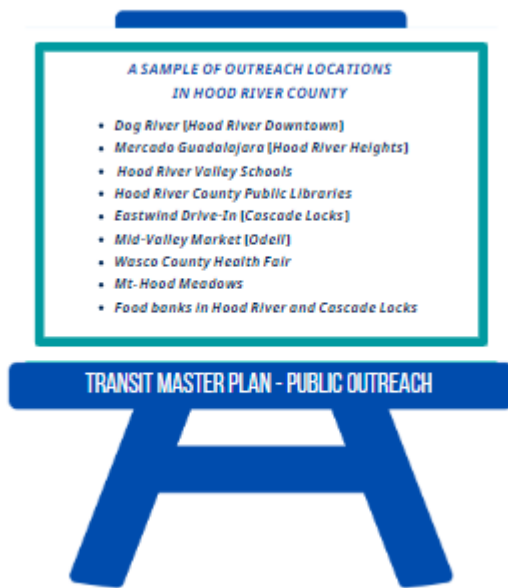
Based on input from the Values & Opportunity phase, the CAT team developed a range of transit service options. The options stem from the planning context of:

- Community Survey #1 crosstab and data analysis from the five-focus areas
- Staff identified operational issues or concerns
- Local feedback on community-focused support strategies

Highlighted in table on the following page are the key considerations staff used in the development of transit service options. Each focus area offered two service options to select from.

























To understand community preferences, Survey #2: Community Service Scenario presented the potential service options by focus areas for review and input. Maps of service options by focus areas and the associated survey questions can be found on the CAT TMP Website at www.engagecatbus.org.



Adhering to the previous survey approach, the online bi-lingual survey was available online and via paper survey copies. In addition to media releases, email updates, presentations, and community signage, targeted outreach by project team members included to go again where the people were: on buses, at coffee shops, at work, libraries, and grocery stores.

The full data summary and copies of the online and hard paper copies may be found on the CAT TMP Website at www.engagecatbus.org.

TABLE 3: LOCAL SERVICE SCENARIOS AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES OPTION DEVELOPMENT TABLE

HOOD RIVER EAST	HOOD RIVER WEST	ODELL / LOWER HWY 35	PARKDALE / UPPER HWY 35	CASCADE LOCKS
<p>Community Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended service hours - evenings (6-10pm) & weekends. More identifiable bus stops - formalize on-street bus stops. More frequent service - focus on AM/PM commute times 	<p>Community Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded services - more routes in unserved areas. Extended hours - particularly weekend service More identifiable bus stops - formalize on-street bus stops. 	<p>Community Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded service - directly serve more destinations on westside. Extended hours - commute times, weekends, and evenings. More identifiable bus stops - formalized bus stops on-street. More frequent service - focus on AM/PM commute times 	<p>Community Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded services - directly serve more areas in the upper valley. More frequent service and extended hours - increase the number of weekday trips. More identifiable bus stops - formalize on-street bus stops. 	<p>Community Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded hours (intercity) - expand commute & evening service on CGE services More frequent service (intercity) - increase frequency on CGE services. More identifiable bus stops - formalize on-street bus stops.
<p>Operational Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulator route - creates unnecessary trip length. Realigned eastside services could allow for higher frequency levels and allow for easier expansion throughout Hood River as the area grows 	<p>Operational Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulator route - creates unnecessary trip length. Realigned services could allow for easier expansion in westside as the area grows Constrained by lack of formalized intersection at Rand Road & stop signs at key westside intersections 	<p>Operational Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ridership is limited by deviated nature of the existing service and the lack of formalized stops. Current service area may be too large to serve Odell effectively 	<p>Operational Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small rural nature of community makes area hard to serve efficiently. Micro-mobility or first/last mile options could offer more flexible and efficient local access for the community. 	<p>Operational Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional service have done well in Cascade Locks, but localized services are not well used. More identifiable stops may help, but micro-mobility or first/last mile options could offer more flexible and efficient local access for the community.
<p>Potential Support Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Integrate TOD into City development toolkit & create five mobility hubs.  Formalize bus stops & amenities at hubs & key stops.  Establish (ETC) programs in downtown  Enhance access at five mobility hubs with micro-mobility & last mile options..  Establish off-shift & local late night transportation options. 	<p>Potential Support Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Integrate TOD into development toolkit & create one mobility hub.  Formalize bus stops & amenities at hub & key stops.  Create individualized marketing program for new service areas  Enhance access at the mobility hub with micro-mobility & last mile options.. 	<p>Potential Support Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Create 2 mobility hubs in Odell & Odell at Hwy 35.  Formalize bus stops & amenities at hubs & key stops.  Create individualized marketing program for new services  Enhance access at the mobility hubs with micro-mobility & last mile options..  Establish off-shift transportation options for orchards & packing houses 	<p>Potential Support Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Create 2 mobility hubs in Parkdale & Mt.Hood at Hwy 35 .  Formalize bus stops & amenities at mobility hubs.  Enhance access at the mobility hubs with micro-mobility & last mile options..  Establish off-shift transportation options for orchards & packing houses 	<p>Potential Support Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Integrate TOD into City development toolkit & create one mobility hub.  Formalize bus stops & amenities at hub & key stops.  Create individualized marketing program for new services  Enhance access at the mobility hubs with micro-mobility & last mile options.

REGIONAL SERVICES

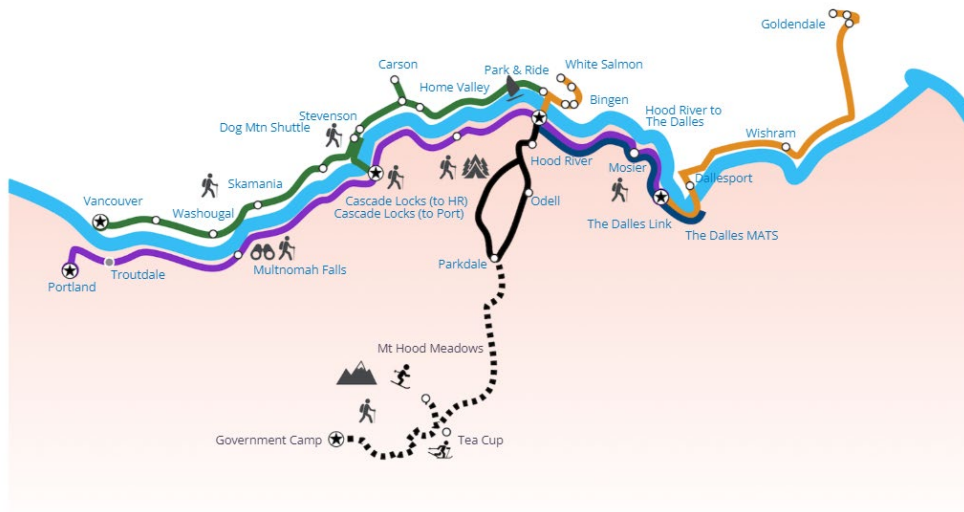
As noted, CAT runs services on two regional corridors: Hwy. I-84 – (Columbia Gorge Express) and Hwy. 35 (Gorge-to-Mountain Express). For these services CAT currently receives federal and state funds (with a limited local match). Ridership on both these routes has been increasing rapidly.

Community Priorities - As has been clear by our ridership trends, CAT regional services are a key part of mobility and access in the Columbia River Gorge. Survey results reinforced the importance of these two regional routes. In fact, we received the most responses from the community on these two services.

The three main community priorities for these regional routes included:

- Extended hours – overwhelming priority was for later evening service (weekdays and weekends).
- Frequency of service – increased service frequency throughout the day.
- More identifiable bus stops – focus was on new or formalized stops at trailheads

Operational Issues – The focus regarding both regional corridors will be on stops and frequency. It should be noted that the more stops that are made on a corridor the longer it will take to reach destinations down the line, and the cost to serve the corridor can increase. Alternatively, CAT can work with partners to provide options at the existing stops and offer micro-mobility or first/last-mile options to access other areas.



SERVICE SCENARIOS FOR OTHER GORGE COMMUNITIES

The CAT service area is Hood River County. However, the Board and staff have been aware that coordination and access within the Gorge is key to the district's current and growing ridership.

In FY2019 State and Federal resources were made available and CAT assumed the role of regional service provider for the I-84 and Hwy. 35 corridors. In addition, CAT has provided temporary and limited services across the river when requested and partner funds were available for such services

CAT is open and ready to explore a larger more expansive role for transit service provision in the Gorge but cannot do so using resources that are dedicated to Hood River County.

If a more cohesive and comprehensive set of services in the Gorge are to be successful, joint, and coordinated efforts between CAT, neighboring transit providers, and local decision-makers will need to offer viable and win/win solutions. Solutions that can ensure all Gorge areas are effectively contributing long-term to expansion efforts. CAT hopes such guidance will come from MCEDD's Gorge Regional Transit Strategy.

SURVEY #2 RESULTS: COMMUNITY SERVICE SCENARIOS

The second TMP survey asked people to select and comment on the service scenarios for the focus areas where they used (or would like to use) transit.

For each focus area that was selected the survey takers were provided a brief overview of the planning context CAT used to develop the options,

descriptions of each option, and the primary difference to today's service.

229

Total Respondents

28%

Non-White

75%

Between ages of 25-64

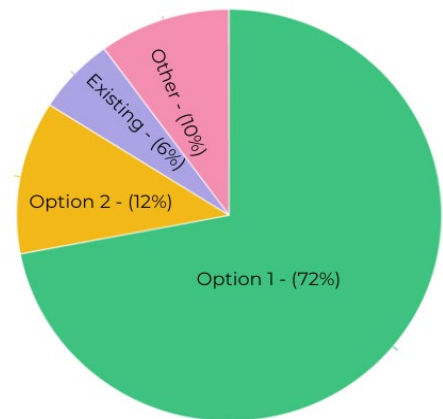
The graph shows the number of survey respondents that weighed in on the proposed options in the five focus areas.



Outlined below are the community preferences by focus area that were reflected in survey responses as well as a sample of the qualitative comments.

CASCADE LOCKS

Survey respondents overwhelmingly chose what was Option #1: the Formalized Local Deviated Fixed Route for Cascade Locks as they believed a local deviated fixed-route option would offer the most flexibility and access for the community.



Comments from Cascade Locks Survey Respondents

Why people liked Option 1: Deviated Fixed-Route

- Easy access to multiple trails.
- A number of locals work at the downtown business and live on the other end of town. If they were able to know they could get a ride at certain times to and from work I think it would be helpful. Most of them walk or ride their bikes.
- I prefer the idea of a local bus service to Cascade Locks from Hood River. Once the bike path adjacent to the highway is finished, it would be great to be able to ride the bus rather than fight headwinds on a bicycle.
- Adding a few more stops would be great because some people may not be able to get to the 2 stops that they have.
- I believe dependability and reliability will retain current riders. The visibility this provides will work to attract additional customers. They will be reminded there is a route in Cascade Locks and might choose to regularly utilize the service as costs for housing, food and transportation continue to rise.

HOOD RIVER EAST

Survey respondents were split between options 1 and 2 in Hood River East. Slightly more respondents believed Option 2: Linear Route Option would allow for increased frequency and improve access to downtown.

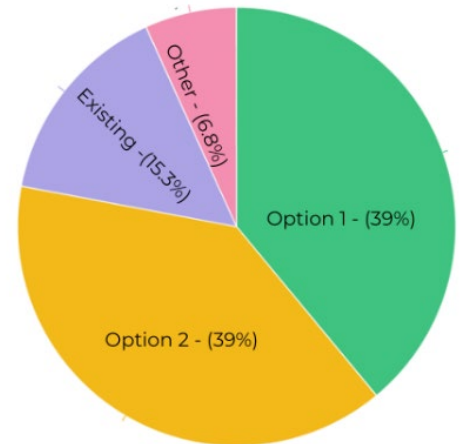
Comments from Hood River East Survey Respondents

Why people liked Option 1: Existing Loop with Peak Express

- Expanded hours
- Express times
- I don't currently use CAT but I see using it in the next few years.
- It would be a lot easier for me especially if I work late up on the heights.
- The 40+ min return time is often why I choose to drive instead of ride the bus. I'll often ride down and walk up because it is faster to walk than ride the bus. The commuter option fixes that.
- I live on the east side. Most frequent need is travel between heights, downtown, waterfront. I live on the east side.

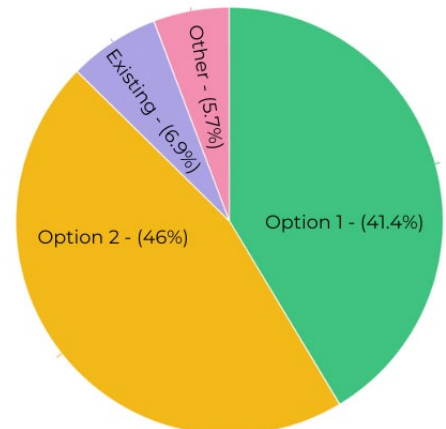
Why people liked Option 2: Linear Fixed-Route with 30 minute service all day.

- It seems to hit all the important stops in Hood River
- Extended hours are good. I am mainly interested in routes that serve the community college
- Service every 30 minutes



HOOD RIVER WEST

Survey respondents were split between options 1 and 2 in Hood River West. Slightly more respondents believed Option 2: Westside Rural Access offered greater mobility and access to Hood River West.



Comments from Hood River West Survey Respondents

Why people liked Option 1: Fixed-Route in Developed Area of Westside

- More service to businesses on east side.
- Hilly. Can't walk to town. Can't park downtown. Like bus to go there."
- This would add access for critical neighborhoods.
- The developed areas are far denser, and more likely to have a higher volume of people taking transit. It seems like a better idea to serve more people than a wider area.
- It appears Option 1 will bring the option of using Transit to more folks which is a priority for me. I don't expect to use this much, but I could by linking it with the east side service.
- Option 1 covers more shopping & service areas as well as the denser population.

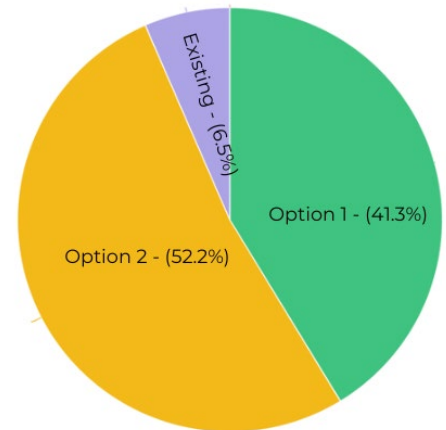
Why people liked Option 2: Fixed-Route in Rural, Outer-Westside

- Looks like this would provide more service to the elderly or people with disabilities.
- Definitely like the idea of more transit to the "rural" westside areas, which probably won't stay that way in the future.
- More access for the people in the rural areas.
- The far west side of town is a transportation desert.
- People in the west side developed area have better access to stops on the west side rural route than people in the west side rural area have access to stops in the west side developed route.
- Walking within the west side of Hood River can be difficult and inaccessible. Having a route through there would be really helpful.

ODELL / LOWER HWY 35

The majority of survey respondents the Odell/Lower Hwy 35 focus area liked Option 2: Fixed Route with Shared Mobility Services though it was closely followed by Option 1: Odell Focused Deviated Fixed Route.

Comments from Odell / Lower Hwy 35 Survey Respondents



Why people liked Option 1: Focused Deviated Fixed Route

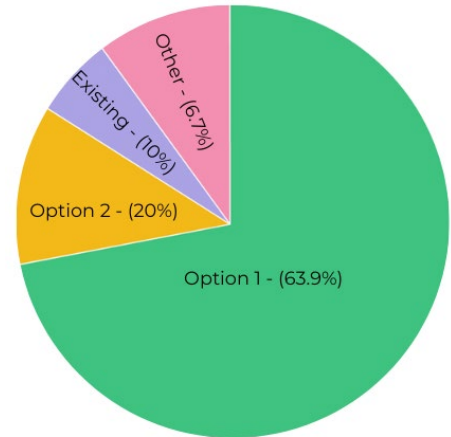
- I live on Lippman Road and use the pickup service frequently. A stop at the corner of Lippman and Wyeast would be a great option
- Soon my daughter and her husband will live off WyEast Rd - maybe that could work for her

Why people liked Option 2: Fixed Route with shared mobility services

- Time savings.
- I would use this more often.
- Fixed route with stops is better
- Odell has great places to leave a car.
- The frequency. We need more than every hour for this to be a desirable form of transportation.
- It is better to keep fixed routes again with flexibility, people change routes because their needs
- With a fixed route - the schedule would be known and expected.

PARKDALE / UPPER HWY 35

The majority of survey respondents preferred Option 1: Fixed Route with Shared Mobility Services and Mobility Hubs. However, it should be noted that several respondents noted they did not fully understand the options as described in the survey. Staff believes additional outreach is warranted before changes are made to the service in this area.



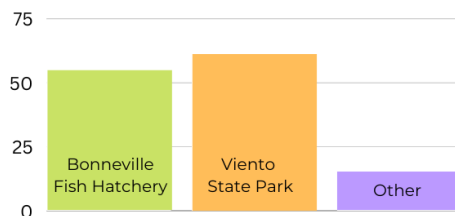
Comments from Parkdale / Upper Hwy 35 Survey Respondents

Why people liked Option 1: Fixed Route with shared mobility services

- Earlier morning pick-up times for northbound bus and later evening drop-off for southbound bus between Parkdale and Hood River to accommodate people who commute to work.
- Set schedules and consistency.
- Because a fixed route would guarantee that the bus was at a certain point at a certain time and it would be reliable.
- Year-round service and longer evening hours

REGIONAL - COLUMBIA GORGE EXPRESS

Survey respondents were asked to weigh in on three proposed stops for the Columbia Gorge Express (I-84 Corridor) and any thoughts on additional stops. Results for the proposed stops in the survey are outlined in the graph below. Other stops proposed by respondents are listed on the following page.

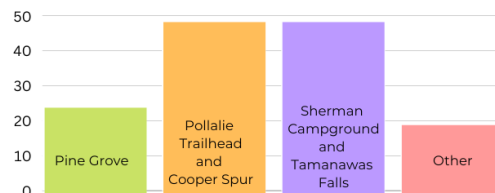


Other Stops Proposed by Survey Respondents

- Starvation Creek State Park as an eastbound route stop
- PDX Airport
- Rooster Rock State Park
- PDX (instead of just Gateway), one less obstacle to transfer
- Start of Historic Hwy (John B Yeon)
- Lewis and Clark State Park
- EAGLE CREEK!! One or two more waterfall corridor sites. We get a LOT of requests for Horsetail Falls and Latourell Falls at our Visitor Center
- Horsetail Falls, Eagle Creek Trailhead

REGIONAL - GORGE-TO-MOUNTAIN

Survey respondents were asked to weigh in on three proposed stops for the Gorge-to-Mountain (Hwy 35) and any thoughts on additional stops. Results for the proposed stops in the survey are outlined in the graph below. Other stops proposed by respondents are listed below.

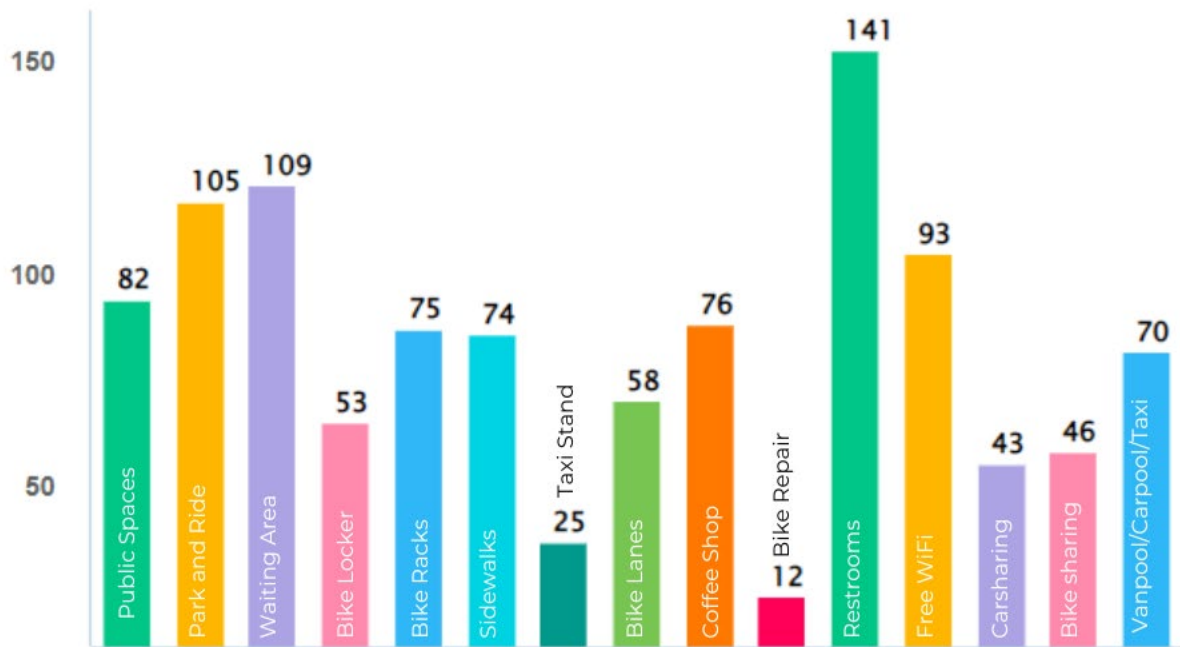


Other Stops Proposed by Survey Respondents

- Sledding parks
- Hood River Meadows parking lot at Mt Hood Meadows (for cross-country skiers)
- Pollalie Trailhead would be very confusing for people who think they're going to Cooper Spur. That's a long walk! One or two of the Fruit Loop stands
- Hood River Valley High
- Trailheads

MOBILITY HUBS IN THE COMMUNITY

The final question asked survey respondents to identify the type of amenities and services they would like to see at a mobility hub near them. The graph below shows the priority for those responding. However, it's important to note that more planning and community input will be needed on services and amenities as specific hubs are located.





10-YEAR SERVICE VISION

THE 10-YEAR VISION IS BASED ON A COMPREHENSIVE NETWORK OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL SERVICES.

Each route within the 10-year vision is designed to build upon the others to create an integrated system for all residents and visitors – thereby creating a network that not only support local mobility and access goals within the County but offers a sustainable visitor experience and creates new economic opportunities within Gorge communities.

The 10-year service vision as well as the placement of critical community support infrastructure are presented in the map on the following page.

The map incorporates the community preferences for routing including revising options to better meet concerns. Included in the vision are two new routes within the City of Hood River, routing modifications and frequency improvements on four existing routes (Columbia Gorge Express, City Route, Upper Valley and Gorge to Mountain) Two new flexible service options within the communities of Cascade Locks & Parkdale as well several seasonal partnership including the fruit loop shuttle, expanded winter service on Gorge to Mountain, expanded summer service on Columbia Gorge Express and the Dog Mountain shuttle.

In addition, the map identifies additional critical out-of-district transit options that given political interest and funding could easily be incorporated into CAT's regional network including White Salmon/Bingen, The Dalles and Skamania County. Should this be an outcome of the Gorge Regional Transit Strategy, CAT will look to amend this plan to address these services.

MAP 6: 10-YEAR PLAN

TABLE 4: SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Route	Days & Hours of Service	Frequency	Vehicles Required	Annual Service Hours	Proposed Changes	Days & Hours of Service	Frequency	Vehicles Required	Annual Service Hours
Columbia Gorge Express (Year Round)	Weekdays: 6:30 am - 6:30pm Weekends: 6:30 am - 7:30pm	Every 90 min.	2	7800	No Changes			2	7800
Gorge to Mountain (Year Round)	No Current Service					Weekdays: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm Weekends: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Every 120 min	1	3600
Upper Valley	Weekdays: 7:00 am - 6:30pm	Every 60 min.	1	2150	Limits deviations & formalizes route & stops	Weekdays: 6:00 am - 7:30pm Saturday Only: 10:00am - 6:30pm	Every 60 min.	1	3300
Hood River City Route	Weekdays: 7:45 am - 7:15pm Weekends: 10:00 am - 7:15pm	Every 45 min	1	4750	Route is split into Hood River East & Hood River West Services				
Hood River Connect	Weekdays: 9:30 am - 4:00pm Weekends: 9:30 am - 4:00pm	Every 90 min.	1	650	Route is replaced by HR East & HR West				
Hood River City East	No Current Service				Creates linear route on Eastside of Hood River	Weekdays: 6:30 am - 6:30pm Weekends: 10:00 am - 6:30pm	Every 30 min	1	4300
Hood River City West	No Current Service				Creates linear route on Westside of Hood River	Weekdays: 6:30 am - 6:30pm Saturday Only: 6:30 am - 6:30pm	Every 30 min	1	3600
Outer Westside Hood River	No Current Service				Provides peak hour service to outer westside neighborhoods, high school and connects westside to other services)	Weekdays: 7:30 am - 10:30 am and 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm	Every 60 min.	1	1800
Cascade Locks	Weekdays	2 trips daily	1	Included in DAR	Localized flexible services	Weekdays	Varies		
Parkdale	Weekdays	3 trips daily	1	Included in Upper Valley	Localized flexible services	Weekdays	Varies		
Countywide Dial-A-Ride	Weekdays: 8:00 am - 5:00pm	Scheduled	1	2880	Add weekends	All days	Scheduled	2	2880
The Dalles	Weekdays: 6:45 am - 6:15pm Weekends: 7:00 am - 5:15pm	4 trips weekdays	1	1200	The Dalles	Weekdays: 6:45 am - 6:15pm Weekends: 7:00 am - 5:15pm	4 trips weekdays	1	1200
Current Totals			10	18230	Proposed Totals			9	27280
Seasonal Service									
Seasonal Service	Days & Hours of Service	Frequency	Vehicles Required	Annual Service Hours	Proposed Changes	Days & Hours of Service	Frequency	Vehicles Required	Annual Service Hours
Hood River City East	No Current Service				Provides later service in the evening during the summer.	Weekdays: 6:30 am - 9:30pm Saturdays: 10:00 am - 9:30pm	Every 30 min	1	300
Winter Gorge to Mountain (December - March)	Weekdays: 6:30 am - 6:30pm Weekends: 6:30 am - 6:30pm	Every 60 min peak; every 2 hrs off peak	2	1600	Becomes a supplement service to year-round G2M	Weekdays: 6:30 am - 6:30pm Weekends: 6:30 am - 6:30pm	Every 30 min peak; every 2 hrs off peak	1	1600
Columbia Gorge Express Summer Enhancements to Cascade Locks (April through September)	Weekdays: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm Weekends: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm	approx 60 min	1	2000	Provides additional frequency to the CGE during peak tourist months - runs all the way to Hood River	Weekdays: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm Weekends: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm	Every 45 min.	2	3900
Dog Mtn Shuttle	Weekends 8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Every 30 min	2	750	No Changes				
Fruit Loop Shuttle	No Current Service				Coordinate shuttle with Odell Service	Weekdays 10am- 4pm	Every	1	500
Current Totals			5	3600	Proposed Totals			7	5500
Other Gorge Services									
Other Gorge Services	Days & Hours of Service	Frequency	Vehicles Required	Annual Service Hours	Proposed Changes	Days	Frequency	Vehicles Required	Annual Service Hours
White Salmon /Bingen	No Current Service				CAT willing to look at contract options as political interest and funding is made available				
The Dalles	No Current Service				CAT willing to look at contract options as political interest and funding is made available				
Stevenson / Skamania County	No Current Service				CAT willing to look at contract options as political interest and funding is made available				

MOBILITY HUBS AND LOCATIONS

First and last mile and micro-mobility strategies refer to services, programs, and facilities aimed at increasing access to transit within an area by expanding the reach of transit service. Mobility Hubs provide focus for transportation options within a community and work to provide easy connections between different types of options, including transit, micro-mobility, and on-demand services.

Mobility hubs may be co-located with transit centers or at stops where routes intersect. In each case, the mobility hub offers a clear access point for transit within the surrounding community. Additional mobility options presented at these hubs expand access to transit, and hubs typically include physical amenities and digital information or fare options that make access to these services seamless and easy to navigate.

The different types of mobility hubs referenced in this plan include:

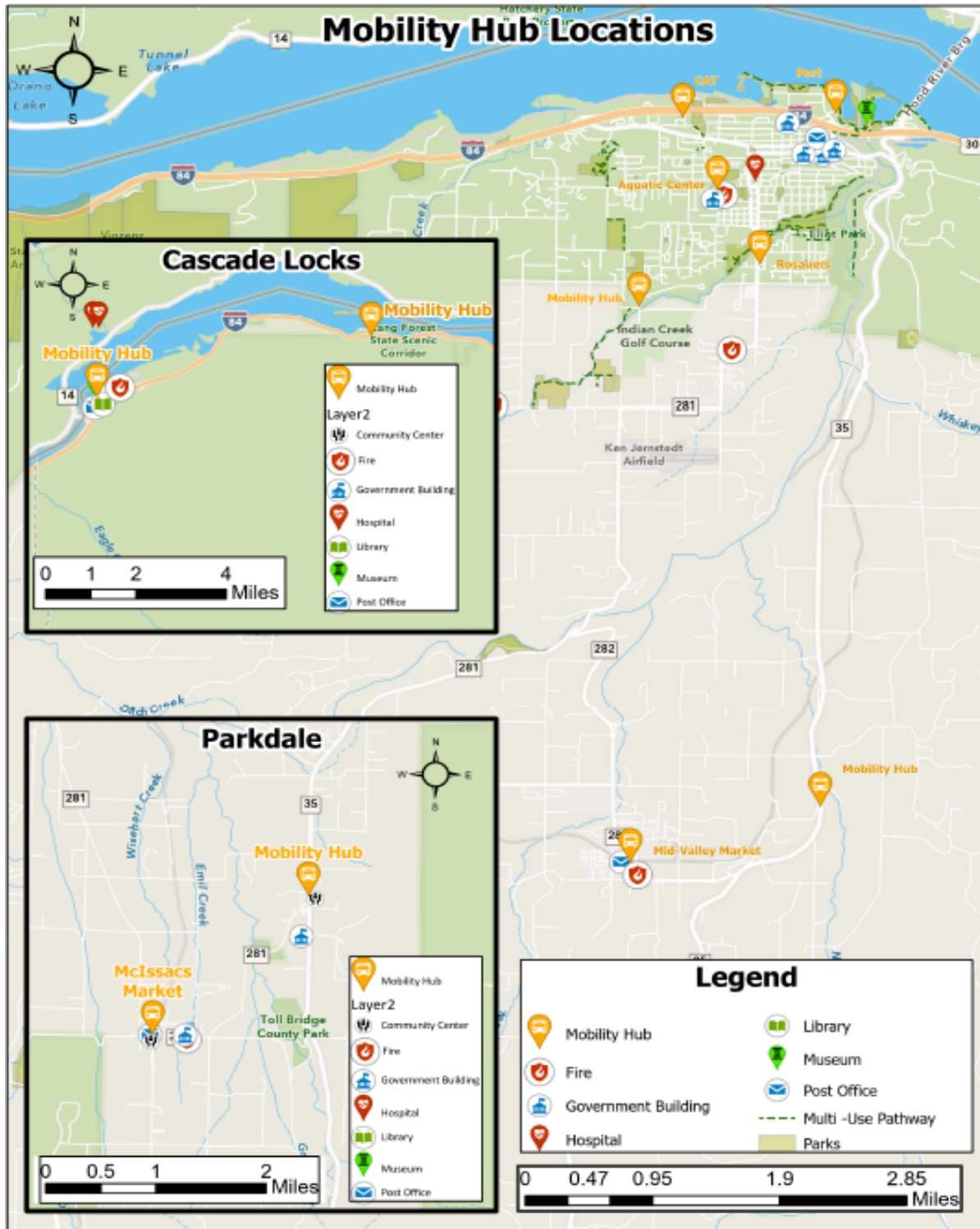
- **Transit Center-mobility hubs** are the primary locations where bus routes converge, and buses can layover between trips. Most frequently transit centers are located on land owned by the transit agency or other public facilities.
- **Regional mobility hubs** provide additional transfer locations along major corridors— typically they provide a higher level of amenities than community mobility hubs including park and rides, restrooms, bike lockers, etc. Regional mobility hubs may be created in association with public facilities or may be established through a cooperative agreement or joint-development agreement with a private landowner.
- **Community mobility** hubs typically can be found where two or more routes intersect – they are designed to be a focal point for neighborhoods or community areas within a 1-mile (20-minute walk) radius. Given their location, the focus is likely to be on bikes and pedestrian amenities and may be a good area for car-sharing, bike-sharing, or taxi pick-up area.

The table on the following page outlines the general locations and types of mobility hubs proposed for each of the five areas and identified on the map on page X.. The proposed services directly reflect the input received from the community on the types of services or amenities they'd like to see in their area.

TABLE 4: LOCATION OF HUBS

Location	Type	Associated Land Use	Examples of Mobility Services	Technology
CAT - 224 Wasco Loop	Transit Center	Primary Transit Center for CAT. Serves all routes and connections to other regional partners.	Park & ride, drop off area, shared mobility options (car-sharing, bike share), pedestrian/bike path connections, long-term bike parking, indoor waiting area with restrooms, and bus layover space	WiFi, Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system, customer service and in-person ticket sales
Port Transfer 2nd & Anchor Way	Regional Hub	Regional transfer center for multiple transit providers, out of district routes and local routes. Key access point for Hood River Event and businesses	Bus layover space, passenger waiting area with shelters and benches, art, pedestrian/bike path connections, short-term bicycle parking and with vehicle parking available nearby.	WiFi, Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system, customer service and in-person ticket sales
4th & State	Community Hub	Downtown activity center	Passenger waiting areas with shelters and benches, pedestrian/bike path connections, shared mobility options (car-share, bike share), and short-term bike parking	Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system
Aquatic Center (May near 18th)	Community Hub	Focal point for May Street Neighborhoods	Passenger waiting areas with shelters and benches, pedestrian/bike path connections, shared mobility options (car-share, bike share), and short-term bike parking	Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system
Rosauers (12th Avenue & Hood River Mall Area)	Regional Hub	Transit Center and focal point for Sieverkropp Neighborhood	Bus layover space, passenger waiting area with shelters and benches, art, pedestrian/bike path connections, short-term bicycle parking and with vehicle parking available nearby.	Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system
Indian Creek & Arrowhead	Community Hub	Focal point for Indian Creek Road Neighborhood & HRVSD High School	Passenger waiting areas with shelters and benches, pedestrian/bike path connections, shared mobility options (car-share, bike share), and short-term bike parking	Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system
Odell (Mid-Valley Market Area)	Community Hub	Focal point for the community of Odell	Passenger waiting areas with shelters and benches, pedestrian/bike path connections, shared mobility options (car-share, bike share), and short-term bike parking	Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system
Neal Creek Road (Hwy 35 & Neal Creek Area)	Regional Hub	Connects Odell with Hwy 35 and quick access to downtown Hood River	Transit Oriented Development - Industrial Park & ride, drop off area, shared mobility options (car-sharing, bike share), pedestrian/bike path connections, long-term bike parking, indoor waiting area with restrooms, and bus layover space	WiFi, Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system, customer service and in-person ticket sales
Parkdale (McIssacs Market Area)	Community Hub	Focal point for community of Parkdale	Passenger waiting areas with shelters and benches, pedestrian/bike path connections, shared mobility options (car-share, bike share), and short-term bike parking	Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system
Mt Hood (Mt Hood Towne Hall Area)	Regional Hub	Transfer Center for Parkdale and Gorge to Mountain buses. Quick access to downtown Hood River.	Transit Oriented Development - Mixed Use, park & ride, drop off area, shared mobility options (car-sharing, bike share), pedestrian/bike path connections, long-term bike parking, indoor waiting area with restrooms, and bus layover space	WiFi, Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system, customer service and in-person ticket sales
Wyeth (I-84 & Wyeth Exit Area)	Community Hub	Focal point for Wyeth State Park and Native American In Lieu of Site	Passenger waiting areas with shelters and benches, pedestrian/bike path connections, shared mobility options (car-share, bike share), and short-term bike parking	Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system
Cascade Locks (Wa-Pa-Na Downtown Area)	Regional Hub	Focal point for the community of Cascade Locks	Gateway to Hood River County Transit oriented Development - mixed use, bus layover space, passenger waiting area with shelters and benches, art, pedestrian/bike path connections, shared mobility (car-share, bike share, taxis), short-term bicycle parking and with vehicle parking available nearby.	WiFi, Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system, customer service and in-person ticket sales
Cascade Locks (Forest Lane)	Community Hub	Focal point for the Port of Cascade Locks Business Park	Passenger waiting areas with shelters and benches, pedestrian/bike path connections, shared mobility options (car-share, bike share), and short-term bike parking	Real-time, dynamic onboard fare payment system

MAP 8: MOBILITY HUB LOCATIONS



0-1 year
IMMEDIATE

Preparing for
growth

1-4 years
SHORT-TERM

Route and
frequency
improvements

4-8 years
MID-TERM

Community
connections and
hub development

8 + years
LONG-TERM

Looking toward
the future

PHASED IMPLEMENTATION

THE PHASED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRANSIT MASTER PLAN OFFERS A BLUEPRINT FOR THE GROWTH AND EVOLUTION OF THE TRANSIT NETWORK IN HOOD RIVER COUNTY AND BEYOND

Four implementation phases have been proposed to allow for a logical sequencing of the services:

- Immediate (0-1 year)
- Short-term (1-4 years)
- Mid-Term (4-8 years)
- Long-term (8+ years)

The changes outlined on the following page also highlight what elements will be needed for implementation to occur. Some changes will be more challenging than others, either based on required jurisdictional partnerships or the need to secure funding.

Each phase has a focused strategy as noted in the phasing diagram to the left.



PHASE I – IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION (0-1 YEAR)

The focused strategy for the first year of the plan implementation is to ensure processes, funding, partnerships, and infrastructure are in place to allow the district to move forward with plan goals.

Some critical projects for focus in the immediate term include:

- Real-time Signage on key bus stops
- On-Board Dynamic Payment
- Formalized bus stops at Hood River downtown & heights sites
 - 4th & Cascade
 - 4th & State
 - 12th & Hood River Shopping Mall
 - Port Transfer site
- Work with the cities and county of Hood River to establish a standard operating procedure and decision-making process for the designation of bus stops in each community area.
- Enhancements for Passenger Boarding & ADA stop infrastructure
 - CAT Transit Center
 - Mid-Valley Market
- Secure Planning Grants
 - New Corridor Stop Identification Planning and Pre-Engineering of Bus Stop Options for Hwy 35 and I-84
 - Mobility Hub & Individualized Marketing Plan Planning
 - TOD Planning for Parkdale, Cascade Locks & Odell
- Secure Vehicle Replacements and Other Infrastructure
 - FTA 5339, 5310 & 5311 Grants
 - No and No-Low Emissions
 - Blue Sky Grants

Transit Service Enhancements

Hood River East - Interim Peak Hour Service (Map on the following page)

Enhancements to the Hood River East route during peak commute hours with a 15-minute frequency between Rosauers and the Port of Hood River. This is a precursor to split the route between Hood River East and Hood River West route which will be made in the short-term

Implementation is dependent on:

- The City's approval of formalized stops for the north & south side of State Street at 4th.

MAP 9: HOOD RIVER EAST - INTERIM



PHASE 2- SHORT-TERM IMPLEMENTATION (1-4 YEARS)

The focus for the short-term implementation strategy is on frequency enhancements and changes to existing fixed-route services both within Hood River County and regionally that can be done within existing or identified resources

In addition, the short-term will begin planning and securing funding for infrastructure, hub, and flexible first/last and micro-mobility service development.

Some critical projects for focus in the short-term include:

- Formalize bus stops & infrastructure improvements for new routes or new stops
- Develop individual plans and identify partnerships, infrastructure, and funding for the implementation of:
 - Mobility Hub & Individualized Marketing Plan Planning
 - TOD Planning for Parkdale, Cascade Locks & Odell
- Explore options for flexible first/last and micro-mobility development
- Identify local (or statewide) public/private transportation partnership opportunities.
- Secure Vehicle Replacements and Other Infrastructure
 - 5339 Grants
 - No and No-Low Emissions

Transit Service Enhancements

Columbia Gorge Express

CAT will enhance summer services on the Columbia Gorge Express with additional stops at Bonneville Fish Hatchery (exit 40) and Viento State Park (exit 56) and a 45-minute frequency from Portland to Hood River.

Implementation is dependent upon:

- Partnerships with ODOT, and other State and Federal Partners to secure bus stop site at Viento & Bonneville Hatchery exits
- ODOT funding for service enhancements on the I-84 corridor.

Hood River – Odell Route (Map with hub locations follows)

CAT will shorten and formalize the Upper Valley deviated fixed route which will provide more stops along Hwy 281 and increase stops within the community of Odell. Coupled with these changes will be more frequent midday Dial-A-Ride options within

the Parkdale / Dee area. This will maintain connections for these residents to Hood River.

Implementation is dependent on:

- The identification & development of formalized stops along Hwy 281 and within the Odell community as well as turn-around options & associated stops near the Hospital in Hood River.
- In coordination with other agencies (e.g. The Next Door, Hood River Valley School District, One Community Health, etc), the development and implementation of a strategic individualized transit marketing plan for the Upper Valley area associated with changes slated for late FY24 launch.

Parkdale/Dee/Odell - Deviated Fixed (Map with proposed hub locations)

With the implementation of the new Hood River – Odell Route, CAT will also offer limited deviated fixed-route service from Parkdale/Dee area to the Odell stop during the midday.

Implementation is dependent on

- Implementation of the Hood River – Odell Route

Gorge to Mountain

CAT will begin all-year service with a 2-hour frequency from Hood River to Government Camp

Implementation is based on

- Identification with ODOT & US Forest Service of formalized stops along Hwy 35 and/or at a minimum some proposed temporary stop placements at key summer destinations along Hwy 35.
- FHWA flap grant funding approval for the year-round enhancements.

Hood River East (Map with proposed hub locations)

The Hood River East route is a split of the current City Route at a 30-minute frequency. This new split route would serve from Rosauers to CAT via the Port of Hood River.

Implementation is dependent upon:

- The City's approval of formalized stops at the north & south side of Cascade Street at 4th
- New stop identification & placement along the rest of the route

-
- In coordination with other agencies (e.g. City, Mid-Columbia Housing Authority, Chamber & downtown businesses, etc), the development, and implementation of a strategic individualized transit marketing plan for the Hood River East/West area associated with the new East / West Hood River routes.

Hood River West (Map with proposed hub locations)

The Hood River West route is the second half of the split City Route which also would offer a 30-minute frequency. This split route would serve Rosauers to the Port via CAT on the westside of town.

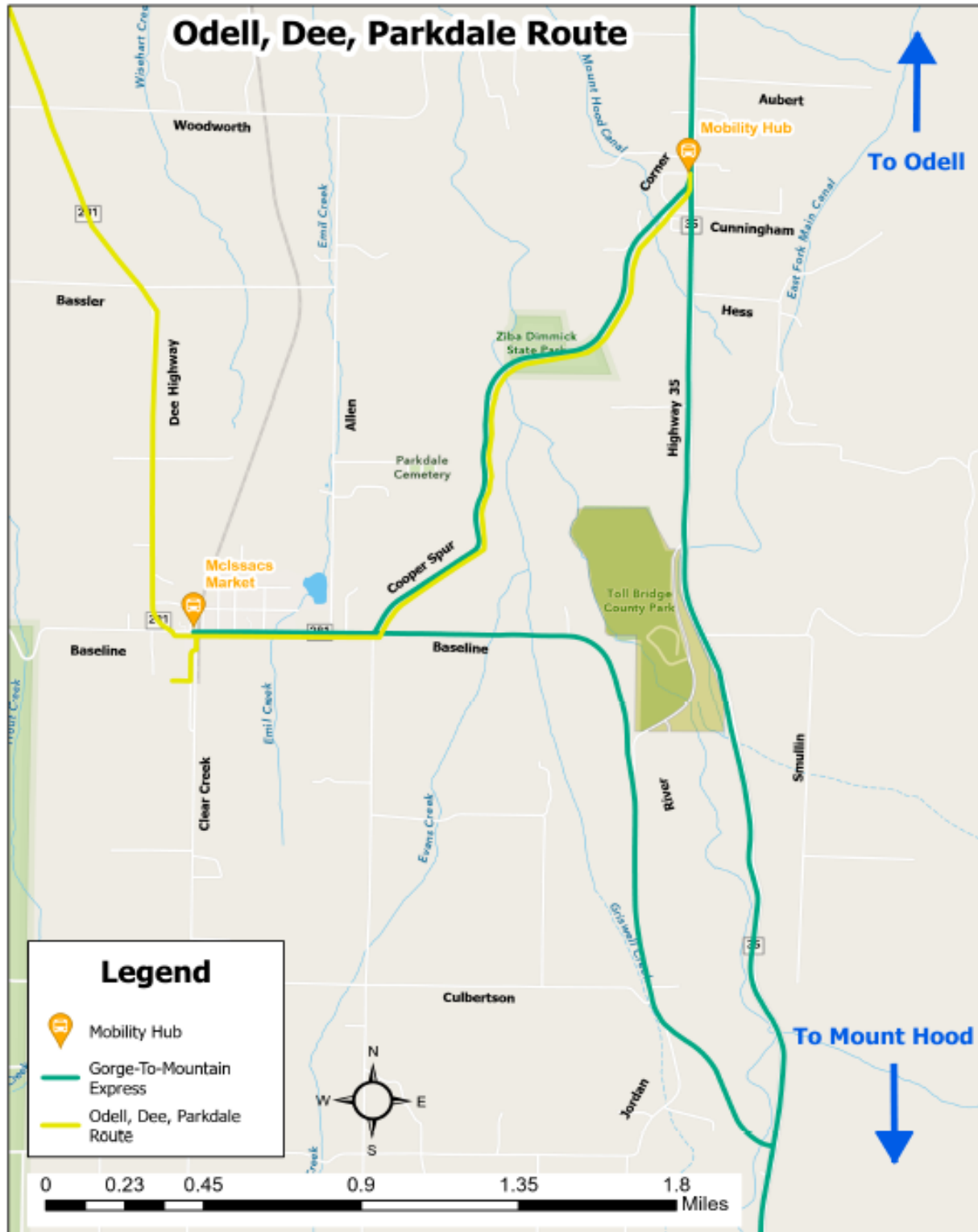
Implementation is dependent upon:

- Completion of Rand / Cascade Intersection Improvements
- New stop identification & placement along the route
- Stops sign or turning safety improvements at
 - May & Rand
 - Belmont and 22nd
 - Indian Creek Road & Brookside
- In coordination with other agencies (e.g.. City, Food Bank, Hood River Valley High School, Columbia Gorge Community College, Senior Center, etc.) the development, and implementation of a strategic individualized transit marketing plan for the Hood River East/West area associated with the new East / West Hood River routes.

MAP 10: HOOD RIVER - ODELL ROUTE & HUB LOCATIONS



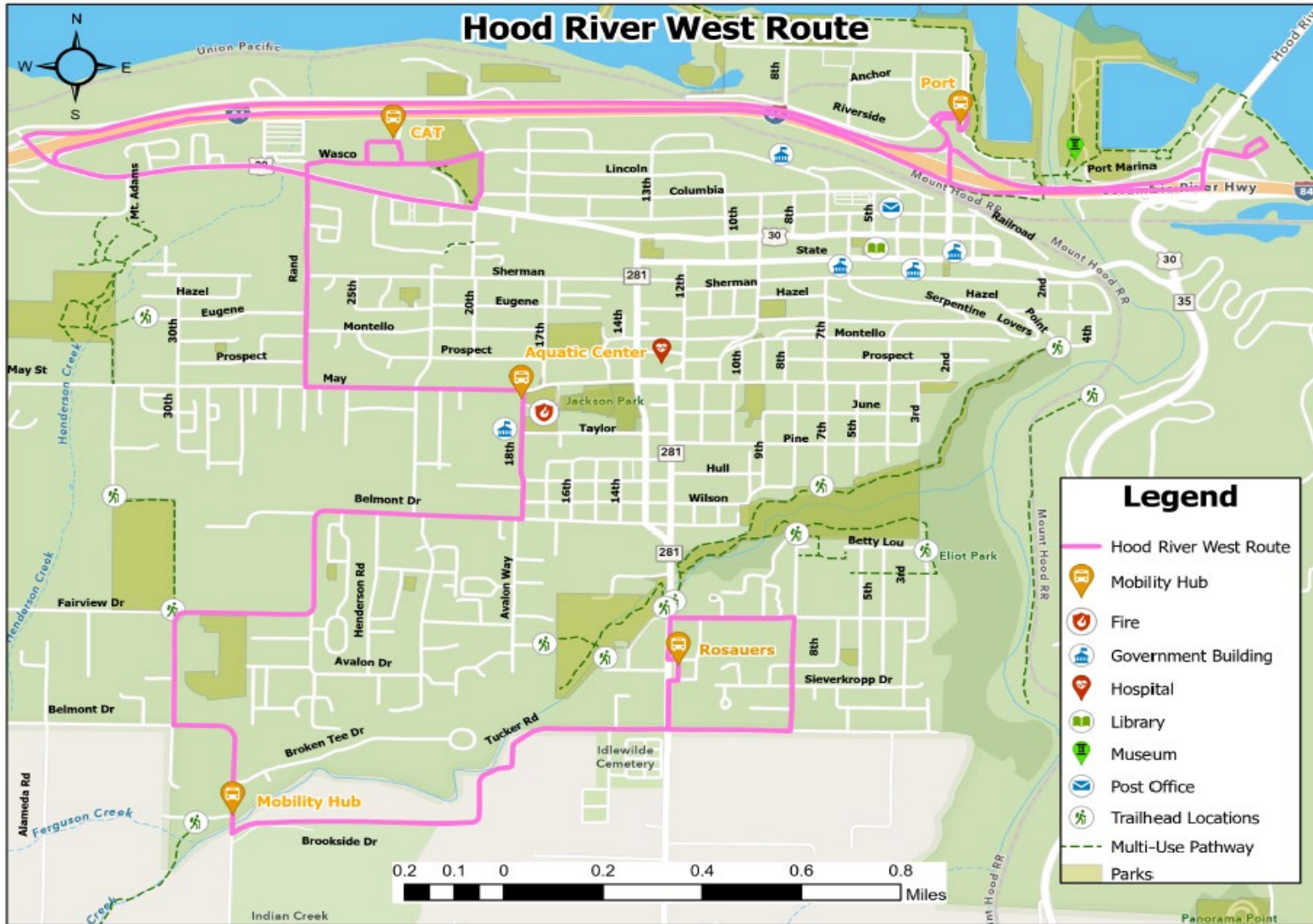
MAP 11: PARKDALE/DEE/ODELL - DEVIATED FIXED ROUTE



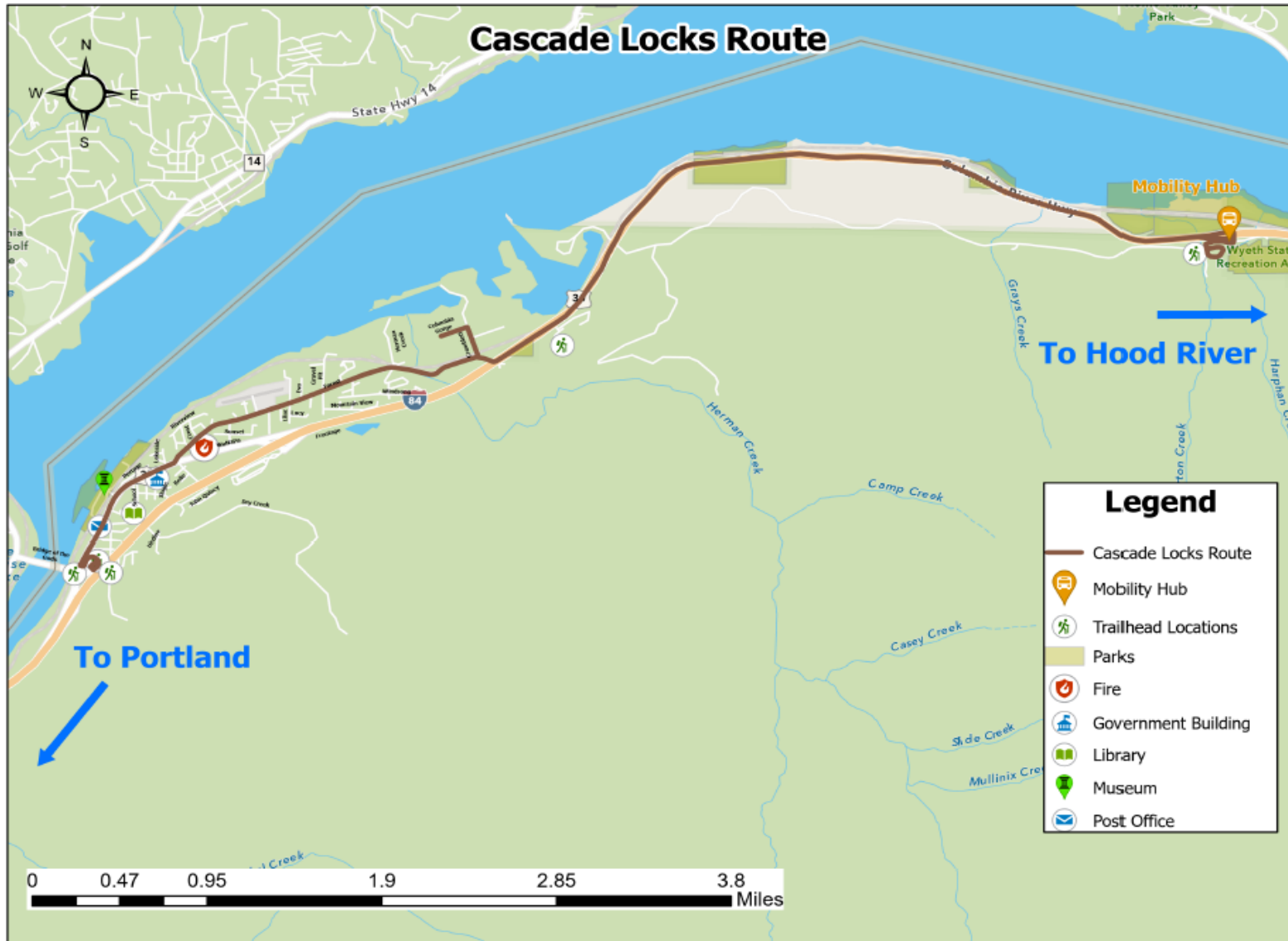
MAP 12: HOOD RIVER EAST ROUTE



MAP 13: HOOD RIVER WEST (MAP WITH PROPOSED HUB LOCATIONS)



MAP 14 CASCADE LOCKS COMMUNITY ROUTE



PHASE 3 – MID-TERM IMPLEMENTATION (4-8 YEARS)

The focus of the mid-range implementation strategy will be on ensuring the transit system links services to the community and supports and enhances the economic development of each of the five areas. This includes:

- Formalizing implementation of hubs and working with developers planning for TOD infrastructure associated with the service areas
- Supporting and working with local businesses, private providers, and community agencies to secure and access funds to foster hub development.
- Envisioning, securing funds and implementing micro-mobility and first/last mile options for the hubs that enhance mobility and complement existing transit services at the hub areas.
- Secure Vehicle Replacements and Other Infrastructure
- Finalize plans for Cascade Locks and Parkdale routes long-term

Transit Service Enhancements

No new services or service changes are planned for the mid-range implementation phase, though CAT may opt to enhance route frequency on adjust existing routes to meet demand or provide additional focus at hub locations.



PHASE 4 – LONG-TERM IMPLEMENTATION (8+ YEARS)

The focus of the long-range implementation strategy will be on planning for the future. Key to that strategy will be reviewing ridership data, assessing development and growth, and gauging the potential opportunities for transit services expansion along new routes or lines including options with the Hood River Railway to Odell/Parkdale or passenger rail along the Gorge Union Pacific line.

Any service enhancement, route adjustments, or system expansions are likely to follow local development patterns and ridership demand. The only planned expansion during this timeframe is highlighted below:

Transit Service Enhancements

Outer Westside Hood River

The outer westside route would run from the High school to the Port during weekday peak commute hours along Hood River’s outer westside area.

Implementation dependent upon:

- Increased residential development
- Community demand for services



MAP 15: OUTER WESTSIDE ROUTE

