



**Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024**  
**Hood River County Transportation District**  
**STIF Advisory Committee Meeting**

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

The Hood River County Transportation District STIF Advisory Committee meeting can now be attended live through Zoom conferencing technology. Members of the public can attend by computer <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82719747336?pwd=6S9sFwqekAM8hutRjHHP5H0l8txzsu.1> or by calling (253)215-8782, Meeting ID: 827 1974 7336, Password: 977802

- 1) Call Meeting to Order – 4:00 p.m.**
- 2) Roll Call**
- 3) Confirm STIF Discretionary & Statewide Network Funding Projects**
  - Review project summaries
  - Prioritize projects
- 4) STIF Poverty Threshold for Hood River County**
  - Review existing threshold by Census Tracts
  - Confirm poverty threshold for Hood River County
- 5) STIF 25-27 Biennium Projects**
  - Review projects
  - Prioritize projects
  - Recommendation to Board for approval
- 6) Meeting Adjourned – 5:00pm**

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

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

*Se Habla Español.*



# STIF DISCRETIONARY AND STATEWIDE NETWORK PROJECT SUMMARIES

## Columbia Gorge Express Intercity Service (Staff Priority Recommendation 1)

Hood River County Transportation District (HRCTD) has submitted a letter of intent to apply for 2025-27 STIF Statewide Transit Network funds to preserve existing service levels on the Columbia Gorge Express (CGE). CGE has proven its role as an important part of the Statewide Transit Network and as a backbone for the transit service in the Columbia River Gorge. The CGE travels along the I-84 corridor between Hood River, Cascade Locks, Multnomah Falls, Troutdale, and Portland seven days a week, up to nine trips per day.

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

Continued investment will further reinforce:

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

## Expansion and Replacement Vehicles (Staff Priority Recommendation 2)

The majority of the District's fleet are past their useful life and the District is looking to expand local services in the FY25-27 Biennium. The District needs a large seasonal vehicle that is designed to accommodate recreational equipment for the Gorge-To- Mountain, Dog Mountain, and Explore services, low-floor vehicle for the local Hood River City Route, and a cutaway that can be used for local services.

The breakdown is listed below:

- a. 1 - 35 to 40 ft vehicle with space to accommodate recreational gear (1 - Expansion)
- b. 1 - 21 to 30 ft trolley buses for the Hood River City route (1 - Replacement)
- c. 1 - 22 - 30 ft Cutaway for local services (1- Replacement)

## Facility Site Development (Staff Priority Recommendation 3)

The District has outgrown its facilities and needs to relocate the current Park & Ride so that the location of the current Park & Ride can be re-developed into a bus storage and maintenance facility. Additionally, there is need for a larger regional transportation transfer facility located closer to Downtown City of Hood River. This project will consist of two phases and a consultant(s) to manage the project.

1. Phase 1: Acquisition of property and some construction of the Park & Ride will be covered in the mid-cycle grants that the District was awarded. The remainder which could include expenses incurred to meet NEPA requirements, design, engineering, and construction would be covered with this upcoming grant application.
2. Phase 2: Development of a regional transportation transfer facility with room for three to four vehicles to park at a time and amenities such as a shelter, seating, customer kiosk, and access to public restrooms. The intent will be to set this site up for electric charging in the future as funds allow. Some of these costs will be covered by the mid-cycle grant the District was recently awarded, the remainder will be covered by the pending grant application.

## Bus Stop Infrastructure (Staff Priority Recommendation 4)

The proposed project will include the purchase and installation of permanent signage and seating for up to 30 bus stop locations. The District is in the process of formalizing temporary signage at current bus stop locations and planning for the expansion of two routes.

The District serves a rural district and has several current bus stop locations without permanent signage or seating, the intent is to ensure these are formalized with permanent signage and seating. Additionally, staff is in the process of transitioning the City Route from a circulator route to a linear route and the Upper Valley route from a deviated fixed route to a fixed route which will require new bus stops.

Permanent signage and seats, and a contractor to install the infrastructure will need to be procured. The infrastructure will be installed per ODOT, City of Hood River, or Hood River County requirements.

## Columbia Gorge Explore – Transit to Trails Service (Staff Priority Recommendation 5)

This project will complete preliminary planning tasks needed in order to implement the Columbia Gorge Explore pilot service in the 27-29 biennium. The Columbia Gorge Explore would be a pilot service that allows access to recreation sites along the I-84 Corridor. The purpose of this service would be to reduce congestion at popular recreational sites that may not be accessible through the Columbia Gorge Express service, but also provide a frequency that would make it convenient for visitors to choose to use this service to access sites rather than personal vehicles. This service would provide access to popular sites between Hood River and Multnomah Falls with transfers to the Columbia Gorge Express available in Hood River, Cascade Locks, and Multnomah Falls. Potential trailheads or recreation sites served are Mitchell Point, Viento State Park, Wyeth State Park, Starvation Creek State Park, Herman Creek Trailhead, Eagle Creek, and Bonneville Fish Hatchery.

The Columbia Gorge Explore would operate Friday - Monday 6 times a day year-round. This equals 416 program days. This service will not operate on a holiday day unless that holiday falls on a regular program day and is not Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, or New Year's Day. The goal would be to operate with a frequency of every two hours. An additional driver and vehicle would need to be procured prior to implementation.



# Memo

**To:** HRCTD – STIF ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
**From:** Amy Schlappi, Executive Director  
**Date:** October 17, 2024  
**Re:** Definition of High Percentage of Low-Income Households

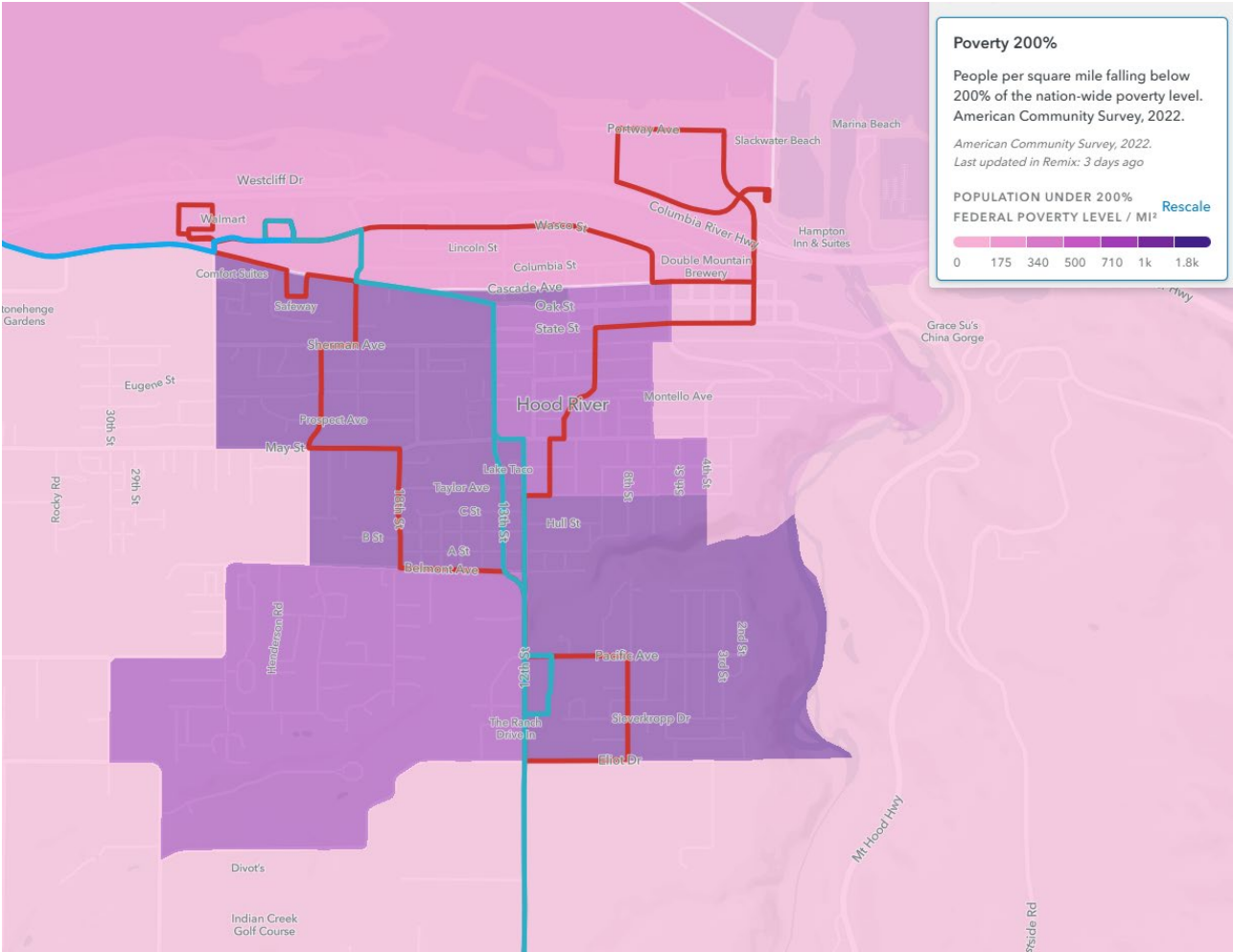
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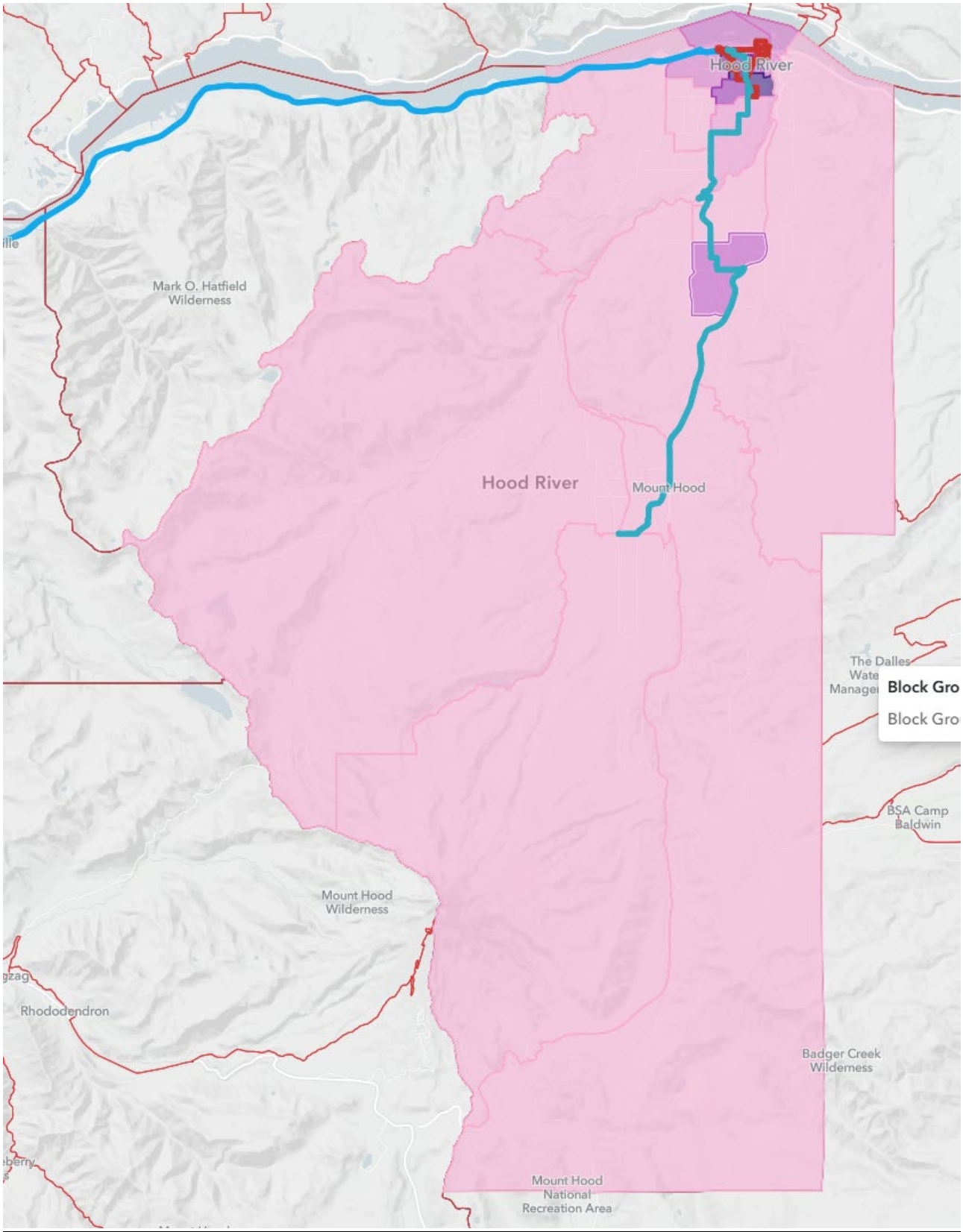
## **Background**

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

The intent of defining graphical areas where there is a high percentage of low-income households is to ensure STIF formula funds are serving vulnerable community members. For the 2023 – 2025 Biennium the STIF Advisory Committee chose to reduce the threshold to Census block groups within the County that have 15% or more of households with an income level that is 200% or less of the federal poverty level (FPL). This decision was made to recognize that the cost of living has increased, and additional households could benefit from an updated definition.

The maps below include all census block groups within the county that have 15% or more of the population within 200% of FPL and considered below the poverty threshold. The dark purple color depicts a higher number of individuals who are below the poverty threshold by block group. The block group with the highest percentage of low income individuals (51%) is north of Cascade Avenue between Exit 62 and 64.







**Action Required**

The STIF Advisory Committee must determine what percentage of low-income individuals in a specific geographic area is required to be considered a high percentage of low-income households. Based on committee members' knowledge of the community they may choose to keep the current definition or suggest a change.

**Staff Recommendation:**

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



## Potential Projects for 25-27 Biennium

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

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

Whether the project would:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Draft 25-27 Biennium STIF Plan Projects				
		100%	120%	150%
Project	STIF Plan	\$ 653,116	\$ 783,739	\$ 979,674
1. Service Operations				
1.1	Maintain Operations - Match for City, UV, DAR, Columbia Gorge Express, Gorge-to-Mountain Express		\$ 696,449.04	
2. Mobility Services				
2.1	Low Income & Student Passes - Pays for Low income & student (Middle & High School) passes		\$ 3,000.00	
2.2	Outreach & Awareness of Services - Marketing and match for Travel Trainer and mobility management services		\$ 50,000.00	
3. Capital Projects & Expansion				
3.1	Facility Site Development Projects - Match for Facility Site Development Projects (Construction, Design)		\$ 10,000.00	
3.2	Vehicle Purchases - Match for the purchase of replacement and expansion vehicles		\$ 10,000.00	
4. Program Reserves				
4.1	Unanticipated Costs - Cover unanticipated costs for maintaining services and Capital Projects and expansion		\$ 14,290.00	\$ 195,935.00