



Tuesday, August 6th, 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/88594765094?pwd=CNrGorvhbB8EaNW60kAnlCxcWw6bzV.1> or by calling (253)215-8782, Meeting ID: 885 9476 5094, Password: 503767

- 1) Welcome & Introductions – 4:00pm**
- 2) Committee Responsibility**
 - Review staff recommended Bylaw changes
- 3) Review FY24 STIF Report**
- 4) Potential STIF 25-27 Biennium Projects**
 - Review and discuss potential projects
- 5) 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.

Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) End of Year Report FY24

CAT has four projects as part of the 2023-2025 STIF program – these projects and their associated performance measures are detailed below. This report details their status and provides a general was accomplished between July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Project 1 –Service Operations

Existing services are vital to the community and need to be sustained.

Task 1: Targeted service to vulnerable populations within HR County, Cascade Locks Deviated Fixed Route, Upper Valley Deviated Fixed Route, Dial-A-Ride, ADA Complementary Paratransit, Portland Medical Shuttle, and Match for 5310 &5311.

In the Fall of 2023, the Cascade Locks deviated fixed route service was restructured to become part of the dial-a-ride service, allowing more flexibility to the riders. Cascade Locks has been identified as a high-poverty area in the STIF plan. Staff have been working with residents at the in-lieu sites to ensure they know how to use this service. Staff have seen an increase in Cascade Locks residents utilizing the Dial-A-Ride service. The regional Columbia Gorge Express service continued to provide fixed route service to Cascade Locks.

The Dial-A-Ride service operates from 8AM-5PM Monday – Friday and serves the cities of Hood River and Cascade Locks. In FY24, there were 4,314 boarded rides which when compared to the prior year’s 3,113 boarded rides was a 39% increase. This service meets ADA Complementary Paratransit services when operating, if this service is not operating Field Supervisor’s provide required rides for eligible riders. The District has applied for funds to expand Dial-A-Ride service to 7 days a week.

The Portland Medical Shuttle operates every Tuesday and Thursday on an as needed basis. Staff are looking at making the service available Monday-Friday.

The Upper Valley service operates 7 trips per day Monday – Friday. Service levels were maintained through FY24 and have not been changed. This service has seen a decline in ridership, in FY24 there were 4,610 boarded rides which when compared to the prior year was a 17% decrease. Staff’s understanding was that this decrease is due to low reliability (due to deviations) and inconvenient service times. The District has applied for grant funding that would allow for an additional Dial-A-Ride vehicle to service the Upper Valley. The deviated fixed route service would then be transitioned to a fixed route service only, the intent is to increase reliability and ensure service meets a wider range of use cases.

Quarter	Revenue Miles	Revenue Hours	Ridership	Changes
FY24 – Q1	19,445	1,147	2,711	Cascade Locks service was transitioned into

				Demand Response
FY24 – Q2	18,565	1,078	2,296	No changes
FY24 – Q3	14,516	1,055	1,911	No changes
FY24 – Q4	15,248	1,090	2,227	No changes
FY24 Total	67,774	4,370	9,145	

Task 2: Maintain Existing Services – Maintain funding for existing services (Hood River City, HR Connect) and match funds for operating grants to fund regional services (CGE & G2M).

The Hood River City Route operates on a 45-minute frequency and between 7:45AM – 7:15PM Monday-Friday and 10:05AM -7:15PM Saturdays and Sundays. This circulator route provides transfer opportunities to the Upper Valley, Columbia Gorge Express, The Dalles, Gorge-To- Mountain Express as well as to White Salmon via Mount Adams Transportation (or CAT on Summer Weekends). The same schedule and service level continued into Fall of 2023. We have continued to see growth in ridership and now consider this an established service. In FY24 ridership was 21,806 boarded rides compared to 18,719 boarded rides in the prior year which was an increase of 16%. During the summer of 2024 additional bus stops were added to the Hood River City route to formalize informal stops. CAT unfortunately has not been able to utilize a trolley for the past 2 summers due to availability and cost. The goal is to be able to start the purchasing process in FY25. The frequency or operating hours of this service have not been changed in FY24.

Due to low ridership on the Hood River Connect service it was canceled in the Fall of 2024. Staff is looking into options to improve the connection from the CAT transit center to Downtown Hood River.

During the Winter of 2023/24 the Gorge-to-Mountain Express service operated from 7:30AM – 9:10PM Wednesday – Saturday and 7:30AM – 5:10PM Sunday – Tuesday. The seasonal service started mid-December and ended March 31st. Ridership increased over prior year despite snow conditions being less than ideal. In FY24 there were 8,277 boarded rides compared to 7,190 boarded rides in the prior year which was an increase of 15%. CAT provided more options for night skiing to help serve locals and school ski/snowboard teams.

On April 27th the District started Spring/Summer route schedules which increased the Columbia Gorge Express frequency from 7 trips per day to 9 trips per day. This service operates between 6AM – 7:40PM 7 days a week. This increase offered more options for riders during the busy summer months and focused on improving connections with the other Gorge Transit Providers. In FY24 there were 38,842 boarded rides compared to 34,029 which was an increase of 14%. Staff has requested an additional stop through ODOT in Cascade Locks at Wa Na Pa and Forrest Lane to address resident needs on the east side of town.

Quarter	Revenue Miles	Revenue Hours	Ridership	Changes
FY24 – Q1	108,035	3,112	20,157	Summer expanded CGE

				service ended Labor Day
FY24 – Q2	87,209	2,698	14,284	Gorge-to- Mountain Express began.
FY24 – Q3	110,785	3,417	13,763	Gorge-to- Mountain Express ended.
FY24 – Q4	97,897	2,784	16,289	Spring/Summer expanded CGE service started.
FY24 Total	403,926	12,011	64,493	
FY25 Q1				
FY25 Q2				
FY25 Q3				
FY25 Q4				
FY25 Total				

Project 2 – Mobility Services

Provides fare assistance to low-income community members and students. Increase awareness and enhance outreach to vulnerable communities. Creation of vanpooling program and a variety of mobility services.

Task 1: Low-Income & Student Fare Program – Provide Gorge Passes to Hood River County students and fare assistance for low-income HR County residents through the Gorge Transit Connect program.

Staff met with key County Players in November & December 2019 with the goal to begin a low-income fare program in January 2020. A low-cost annual pass to be implemented in early 2020 was approved by the Board in December 2019.

The Gorge Pass remains \$40 Adult, \$20 Youth 17 & under, and \$80 for Dial-A-Ride. In the Fall of 2023 this pass transitioned from an annual pass good for a calendar year to an annual pass good for a year from the date of purchase. This change has been received well by the community. Free and discounted annual passes are available for eligible clients through the Gorge Transit Connect Program which works with local partner organizations who distribute the passes. CAT staff oversees the management of this program and helps fund the Travel Trainer position with MCEDD, a local transit partner organization to increase transit awareness and use among vulnerable populations. In FY24 the Travel Trainer continued to work closely with local partners to increase partnerships to ensure transit services are available to vulnerable populations. We have seen an increase in participation due to her efforts.

In the previous biennium staff worked with the Hood River Valley School District to provide free Gorge Passes to middle and high school students who requested them. For the 2023-2024 school year staff again worked with the Hood River Middle School, Wy'East Middle School, Options Academy, and Hood River Valley High School to distribute student passes to all students unless their parents opted out of the pass. Passes were distributed to the schools, and all were given to the students during open house

events in the Fall of 2023. Many of these students also come from low-income families. Staff are working on increasing opportunities to educate students on transportation services available. Throughout FY24 staff has continued to work with the school district to increase service awareness and provide passes to students. Staff created a poster for students that was posted at local schools and in downtown Hood River. A fun summer program was implemented for students of Cascade Locks, if they utilize CAT transit services they receive a prize. Posters to help increase awareness have been placed throughout Hood River County.

Task 2: Vanpool & Mobility Services – Implement a low-income vanpool program and mobility services (bike share, bike parking, car share, taxi-share etc.) near or at mobility hubs and bus stops)

The vanpool program was launched in FY24 Q2 and staff is working with local businesses to get them signed up for the program. The vanpool program page is live on www.ridecatbus.org. No businesses have yet signed up for these services.

Task 3: Outreach & Awareness of Services – Targeted outreach, marketing, and travel training to vulnerable populations. Increase community awareness of services. Match for 5310 Mobility Management Travel Trainer.

As mentioned in task 1, free and discounted annual passes are available for eligible clients through the Gorge Transit Connect Program which works with local partner organizations who distribute the passes. CAT staff oversees the management of this program and helps fund the Travel Trainer position in partnership with The Link. In FY24 the Travel Trainer continued to work closely with local partners to increase partnerships to ensure transit services are available to vulnerable populations. We have seen an increase in participation due to her efforts. CAT staff often refer riders who experience challenges when utilizing the transit system to the Travel Trainer for one-on-one travel training assistance. Those riders have gone onto being able to use the transit system without assistance and gained a new found sense of freedom and confidence.

Staff is working with Gorge Pass marketing staff and Travel Trainer to attend community events and do outreach to community-based organizations who work with low-income, individuals with disabilities, LEP individuals. The goal is to increase transit awareness and provide resources to vulnerable populations. The City of Hood River Downtown Employee pass program has gained a lot of traction over FY24, almost double the number of passes that were distributed compared to the prior year.

The CAT website was adjusted in FY24 to improve user experience by including a map and easier access to service alerts. Staff continues to see a steady amount of new users accessing the website each month. In FY24 an Administrative Assistant was hired, one of their responsibilities is to create content for the Districts variety of digital platforms and improve communication notices to riders.

Quarter	Student or low-Income Passes distributed	Impressions	Outreach Events	New Users	Vanpools Active
FY24 – Q1	308	2,550	4	1,233	0
FY24 – Q2	100	16,533	3	7,033	0
FY24 – Q3	282	35,823	4	16,203	0
FY24 – Q4	62	42,430	4	19,283	0

FY24 Total	752	97,336	15	43,752	0
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Project 3 – Capital Projects

Task 1: Capital Expansion & Replacement – Match for capital grants to purchase replacement vehicles. Match for vehicle purchase included from last biennium plan that were not utilized so have been carried over.

CAT has received federal funds for new buses, CAT intends to use STIF funds for grant match. These buses have not yet been delivered.

Task 2: ADA Access Improvements – ADA access improvements at or near mobility hubs and bus stops. CAT will be utilizing funds carried over from the prior biennium to assist with ADA access improvements. This has not yet been done. These funds can also be used for vehicle grant match funds.

Quarter	Reduction of per vehicle maintenance cost	ADA Access Improvements
FY24 – Q1	0	0
FY24 – Q2	0	0
FY24 – Q3	0	0
FY24 – Q4	0	0
FY24 Total	0	0

Project 4 – Program Reserve

Task 1: Cover unanticipated costs and additional funds for projects to maintain existing services and match funds for capital grants.

No reserve funds were used FY24 Q1 or Q2. In FY24 Q3 and Q4 the available reserve funds were utilized as match funds for federal grants.