

# Public Transportation System Overview

## Background

The public transportation system in Oregon is a complex network of various services provided by the public and private sectors. Public transportation is characterized primarily by being available to the public-at-large, and is provided by transit agencies, local governments, and private sector entities such as Amtrak, intercity transport contractors, and entities such as taxis and Uber. Large and small public sector providers deliver over 141,000,000 annual trips across the state. TriMet, in the urbanized Portland metropolitan area, offers a variety of services and provides about 82% of Oregon's trips by transit. Other urban and rural providers make up the remainder of trips. A fleet of more than 2,000 publically owned transit vehicles serve Oregon. Approximately 800 serve the Portland Metro area, 400 in other urban systems and 800 around the state in rural communities. ODOT resources have helped purchase about half of the vehicles.

Special transportation services are services designed to meet the transportation needs of special populations such as seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, etc. These are provided by nearly all of the public transit agencies, plus many public and private entities who serve their own clients, such as nursing homes, senior centers, and human service agencies. Regional and intercity public transit services are provided by private-sector transportation companies, such as Greyhound, and are supplemented by public transit services.

This document provides a broad overview of select public transportation information, including public transit, special transportation and intercity bus and passenger rail services in Oregon. This reference provides a snapshot of the current Oregon public transportation system including a high level summary of services, fleet and some performance data<sup>1</sup>.

## Public Transit and Special Transportation

In 2013 (the most recent year for which there are complete data sets) there were 53 agencies in Oregon receiving grant funds for public transit, in addition to intercity bus and special transportation providers. The public transit agencies have been divided into groups for comparison purposes. Information about the 53 public transit agencies in Oregon that receive grant funds is available in the chart titled "Oregon Public Transit Provider Information."

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<sup>1</sup> Included data is from two primary sources: USDOT National Transit Database (NTD) and Oregon's online grant reporting system, Oregon Public Transportation Information System (OPTIS). The majority of data is for Fiscal Year 2013, the most recent year with complete data sets. Where more recent data is available, it is reported and noted.

<b>Data for Public Transportation (Fiscal Year 2013)</b>	
Average number of annual local public transportation rides reported to FTA and ODOT (does not include special transportation rides provided by agencies providing exclusive special transportation )	Statewide rides: 32 annual trips/person
Vehicles reported to FTA and ODOT by public transit agencies	Total Statewide: approx. 2000 vehicles Large urban share: approx. 1400 vehicles
Annual Miles of Service	Statewide: 59.76 million miles Large urban: 46.9 million miles (78%)
Annual Hours of Service	Statewide: 4,233 million hours Large urban: 3,474 million hours (82%)

ODOT has grant agreements with 18 agencies providing service primarily for special populations; available data for special transportation services is limited to agencies with agreements with ODOT. One agency, Ride Connection, Inc. of Portland, represents about 40 additional special transportation agencies and reports for the group.

<b>Data for Special Transportation (Fiscal Year 2015)</b>	
<i>ODOT Key Performance Measure: Average number of annual public transportation rides per person by elderly and disabled Oregonians in 2015 provided by public and private sector transportation agencies reporting to FTA and ODOT.<sup>2</sup></i>	Statewide: 19 rides per senior and person with a disability
Special Transportation – Data from 18 entities provided by agencies providing exclusive special transportation reporting to ODOT	Statewide rides: 700,000 rides/year Fleet: 150 vehicles

## Passenger Rail and Intercity Bus

Intercity service refers to public transportation between communities, usually over longer distances. Connections between communities in Oregon and beyond are composed of a network of passenger rail, intercity bus, and regional connections operated by both public and

<sup>2</sup> Data from OPTIS. Combines fixed route and demand response trip counts. Elderly and disabled fixed route ride estimates are from survey data provided by transit agencies.

private agencies. Information about the independent private sector providers of public transportation (such as Greyhound) is not available.

<b>Data for Regional and Intercity Transportation (Fiscal Year 2015)</b>	
<i>ODOT Key Performance Measure:</i> Percent of Oregon Communities with a population of 2,500 or more with intercity bus or rail passenger service	95%

### Passenger Rail Services

Passenger rail includes commuter rail, light rail, streetcar and intercity passenger rail. In Oregon, there is one commuter rail line (WES) and light rail and streetcar systems are located in Portland.

<b>Data for Commuter, Light Rail and Streetcar (Fiscal Year 2015)</b>	
Commuter Rail (Westside Express, Beaverton-Wilsonville)	3 Powered cars and 1 control trailer 14.7 Miles of track
Light rail cars (TriMet) Miles of light rail track	145 Vehicles 59.7 Miles of track
Portland Streetcar Vehicles Miles of track	17 Vehicles 16 Miles of track

Amtrak operates three routes in Oregon: Amtrak Cascades, the Coast Starlight and the Empire Builder. Amtrak Cascades, operating between Portland and Eugene, is part of the federally designated Northwest High Speed Rail Corridor, which extends to Vancouver, British Columbia. In 2013, the federal government shifted the fiscal responsibility for the Amtrak Cascades to the states through which it runs. This is as a result of federal legislation which requires states to pay for routes of less than 750 miles.

The Amtrak Cascades passenger rail service is supported by Cascades Point *Thruway* bus service and provides increased frequency along the Cascades route. Passenger rail is also supported by various connector services such as local transit and regional intercity bus services. These services provide access to rail services to those communities not directly served.

For the long distance services, the Coast Starlight and the Empire Builder, Amtrak has responsibility for their operations with costs covered by a combination of passenger fares and federal support.

<b>Amtrak Passenger Rail Services Data (Fiscal Year 2015)</b>	
Amtrak Cascades (Vancouver B.C.-Seattle-	4 Daily round trips (Seattle-Portland)

Portland-Eugene)	2 Daily round trips (Portland-Eugene)
Coast Starlight (Seattle-Eugene-Klamath Falls-Los Angeles)	1 Daily round trip (Seattle-Klamath Falls) continues to Los Angeles
Empire Builder (Portland-Spokane-Chicago)	1 Daily round trip (Portland-Spokane) continues to Chicago

<b>Oregon Train Station Boardings and Deboardings (Fiscal Year 2015)</b>				
<b>STATIONS</b>	<b>Cascades</b>	<b>Coast Starlight</b>	<b>Empire Builder</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Albany	19,507	13,448		32,955
Chemult		2,407		2,407
Eugene	51,680	47,440		99,120
Klamath Falls		16,283		16,283
Oregon City	13,415			13,415
Portland	54,009	64,490	54,710	173,209
Salem	38,614	19,783		58,397
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>177,225</b>	<b>163,851</b>	<b>54,710</b>	<b>395,786</b>

## Intercity Bus Service

Intercity bus service is operated by a network of local, regional, and national transportation providers. Since deregulation the national intercity bus companies, such as Greyhound, have reduced their services to the most productive routes and reduced the number of stops. Now they serve communities primarily along the interstate highway system. As a result of the reduction of routes and stops, regional private carriers and public transit agencies have started to fill the gaps in the network.

For more information about regional and intercity public transportation, see the map titled “Intercity Bus and Rail Routes 2014”.

National intercity bus operators include:

- Greyhound bus and Bolt (subsidiary of Greyhound) with
  - 51 Stations in Oregon
  - 2 Routes
    - Portland to Salt Lake City – along I-84
    - Sacramento to Seattle – along I-5
- Bolt Bus (Subsidiary of Greyhound)
  - Eugene to Seattle – along I-5

Other private sector providers feed into these main routes to connect more people to longer-distance travel, such as:

- Porter Stage Lines
- Valley Retriever
- Various airport shuttle services, such as HUT Shuttle and Central Oregon Breeze.

ODOT, through service contracts with private sector transit operators, provides the POINT services that operate in rural areas of the state and along the I-5 corridor between Portland and Eugene.

<b>POINT Bus Line</b>	<b>Annual Ridership</b>	<b>Route Miles (one way)</b>
Cascade Point (Portland & Eugene) – supplementing Amtrak Cascades	91,529	123 Miles
NorthWest Point (Astoria & Portland)	23,765	105 Miles
Eastern POINT (Bend and Ontario)	3,861	271 Miles
HighDesert POINT (Redmond and Chemult)	4,269	85 Miles
SouthWest POINT (Klamath Falls to Brookings via Medford and Grants Pass)	7,930	249 Miles

Oregon public transit agencies also provide regional connections to major destinations, such as Portland and Salem, connecting smaller communities to larger communities and to other transportation providers such as Amtrak and Greyhound. Examples include:

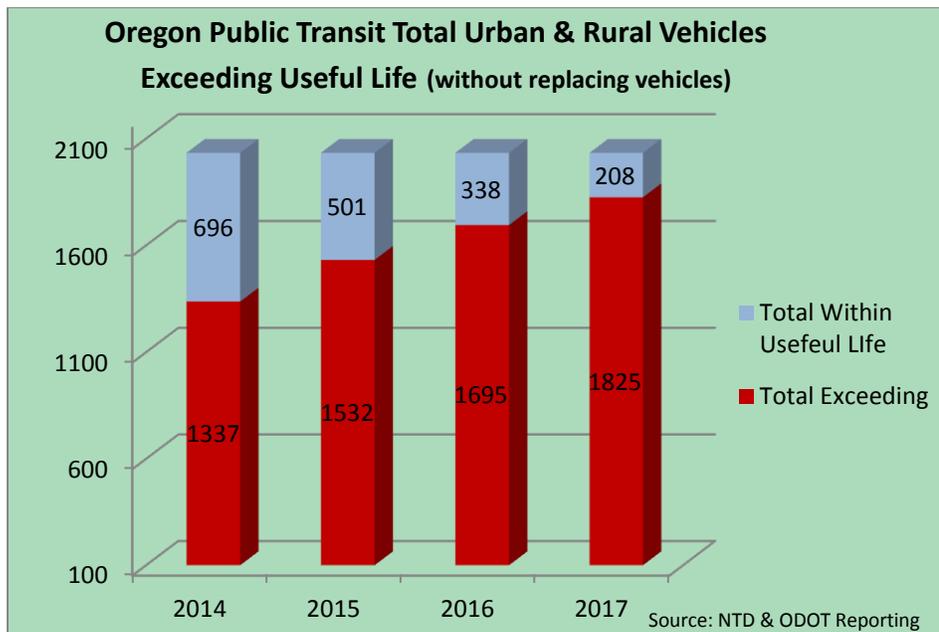
- Tillamook County Transportation district, operating between Lincoln City and Salem, and between Tillamook and Portland.
- Curry Public Transit operating between Crescent City, California and Coos Bay.
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation operates a regional transit system (called Kayak) connecting La Grande, Pendleton, Hermiston, and the Tri-Cities and Walla Walla in Washington.

### **Public Transit Fleet Inventory Condition**

A challenge for public transit agencies is to maintain an appropriate number of vehicles to serve their needs and to schedule vehicle replacement cost effectively, before increased maintenance costs become a poor investment. The most effective investment strategy is to replace the vehicles within a year of high maintenance or rebuild costs. Typically, transit agencies do not have sufficient funding from all sources to support both transit operations and to replace vehicles. Most transit agencies depend on competitive grant programs for vehicle replacements.

The goal for vehicle operational and safe condition is referred to as “State of Good Repair.” State of Good Repair<sup>3</sup> is a condition in which assets are fit for the purpose for which they were intended. There are approximately 2,000 actively-used transit vehicles in Oregon, of which about a 1,000<sup>4</sup> were purchased with ODOT grant funds. Recent funding programs (e.g. the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and state Jobs and Transportation Act, and more recently the ODOT Enhance program) assist to maintain the public fleet in a State of Good Repair and add much needed transit capacity. Oregon will lose the accomplishments of the stimulus programs if buses are not replaced, which will result in a loss of service.

**Fiscal Year 2013**



<sup>3</sup><http://www.apta.com/gap/fedreg/Documents/Defining.a.transit.asset.management.framework.to.achieve.a.state.of.good.repair.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Data source: OPTIS (FY 13)