

Access to Essential Services

GroveLink/TriMet Washington & Multnomah Counties



Kathy has never driven due to a unique vascular disease that limits

her vision and puts her at risk for a stroke. Instead, she is an avid transit user. For the last ten years, she and her husband have called Forest Grove home, 40 miles away from her medical appointments on Portland's southwest waterfront. "Sometimes I have two to three appointments in a week. I don't mind. I take the bus," she says. She uses the local service, GroveLink, to connect her with TriMet for her appointments in Portland.

Kathy understands her trip using transit might take a little longer or require transfers, but feels that it is more important to have a reliable and safe transportation option that she can use any day of the week, even if it is a little inconvenient.



Harney County Dial-a-Ride Harney County



In 2014, Dial-a-Ride received a competitive funding grant

from the state to expand hours, extend availability on Saturday and provide service on Sunday. These investments resulted in a one year ridership increase of more than 11 percent. Rides by seniors and passengers with disabilities increased 34 percent.

Angela Lamborn of Dial-a-Ride notes that "seniors are staying and living their lives in rural parts of Oregon; they have all of the needs of seniors in urban areas yet fewer services. Getting to them often takes creativity and partnerships, but our transportation system is a lifeline." Lamborn also noted the importance of good transportation options for low-income families and people facing mental health and financial challenges. "All of these people have needs, and without public transportation, helping them would be a huge burden on other resources."



Saving Money by Reducing Transportation Costs

Nearly 40% of households with an annual income of \$14,000 or less utilize transit at least once a week⁹

Public transportation is an important part of providing affordable transportation options to all Oregonians. An American Public Transportation Association (APTA) study found that 46 percent of millennials considered saving money important in determining how they traveled. APTA publishes a monthly Transit Savings Report that compares the cost of commuting by public transportation with the cost of owning and driving a vehicle (calculated with average national gas prices). It also compares national unreserved monthly parking rates versus using a monthly transit pass. The January 2016 Transit Saving Report found that a two person household in Portland would save \$818 per month or about \$9,817 annually.² These travel cost savings are essential for Oregonians with strains on household budgets, especially for those who are transportation disadvantaged.

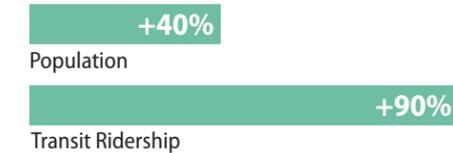
Public Transportation Connecting Communities

Public transportation is essential to the quality of life that Oregonians enjoy. Transportation networks across the state benefit Oregon's economy, the environment and our residents.

Mobility

Oregon's public transit providers serve every corner of the state, enhancing the efficiency of our transportation network and providing personal mobility and freedom for people from every walk of life. From students to seniors, Oregonians are using public transportation to get to work, school and other destinations. Employers seek to establish their businesses in locations that are well served by public transportation. **Transit ridership in the state has grown more than twice as fast as population since 1990.**

Statewide Increases, 1990–2015¹

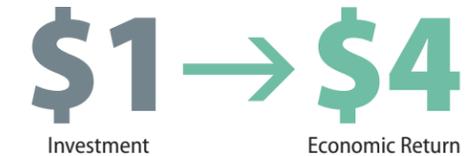


Public transportation also provides mobility for individuals who cannot or choose not to drive, allowing them to function independently. **Paratransit trips have more than quadrupled in Oregon since 1990.**¹ For our older residents, this facilitates aging in place.

Economy

Individual Oregonians and our statewide economy benefit from public transportation. Transportation costs are the second highest household expense after mortgage or rent. **Households can save an average of \$8,000 annually by choosing transit as a primary mode of transportation**—even more as the price of fuel rises.² By taking public transportation, Oregonians make available money for other goods and services, creating a positive impact on the overall economy. **Studies have found that investment in public transportation infrastructure and operations has a return on investment of \$4 for every \$1 spent.**

Economic Returns of Public Transportation²



In 2014, Oregon's public transportation systems brought in more than \$500 million in federal funds. This investment creates jobs and boosts our economy.¹ In fact, the Portland region saves \$150 million per year in congestion costs because of TriMet buses and trains.³

Environment

Oregon is healthier because of the environmental benefits of taking public transportation. Taking public transportation encourages physical activity and reduces air pollution. **A single commuter switching his or her commute to public transportation can reduce a household's carbon emissions by 10 percent, and up to 30 percent if he or she eliminates a second car.**² Studies have shown that households near public transit drive an average of 4,400 fewer miles than households with no access to public transit.²

In the Portland area, TriMet reports that people choosing public transportation eliminate more than 200,000 car trips a day.⁴

Operationally, the public transportation industry is shifting to electric buses. Several agencies, including Lane Transit District and TriMet, are purchasing battery-operated buses. Soon, this type of technology will be commonplace and will continue to contribute to a greener, healthier Oregon.



Prepared by:



Sources:

- ¹ National Transit Database. <https://www.transit.dot.gov/ntd>
- ² APTA. <https://www.apta.com/Pages/default.aspx>
- ³ Texas A&M Transportation Institute. <https://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/>
- ⁴ TriMet. <https://trimet.org/about/>
- ⁵ ODOT. 2013. FY2013 Oregon Transportation Needs and Issues: Final Report. <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/programs/researchdocuments/TNIS2013.pdf>
- ⁶ Amtrak. 2014. Amtrak's Contributions to Oregon. <https://www.amtrak.com>
- ⁷ ODOT. 2014. Oregon State Rail Plan. <https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Planning/Documents/OSRP.pdf>
- ⁸ Amtrak Cascades. <https://www.amtrakcascades.com/>
- ⁹ ODOT. Transportation Planning and Analysis Unit. 2012. Oregon Household Activity Survey. <https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Planning/Pages/default.aspx>



Our Hometown Stories

More than just moving people, public transportation supports a connected community. Oregonians share their stories of using public transportation—from visiting friends to getting to work, to picking up groceries and reaching important medical appointments—showing how transit is connecting citizens and communities across our state.

Access to Workforce, Jobs and Schools

85% of Oregonians find that transit is important in cities⁵

20% of Oregon households use transit at least once a week³

Lane Transit District (LTD) Eugene/Springfield

 The Group Pass program allows organizations to purchase bus passes for all of their employees, students or residents at a low rate. The program helps alleviate parking issues and traffic congestion. Currently, 92 organizations representing 43,556 members are part of the Group Pass Program. This includes students at the University of Oregon who pay for their transit service through student fees. LTD now carries 8,500 students to the campus on a daily basis.



Quail Trail Public Transit The Klamath Tribal Administration

 On average, Klamath County gets nearly 10 inches of snow a month during the winter season, creating poor driving conditions. The Klamath Tribal Administration's transportation service,

Quail Trail Public Transit, provides free public transportation five days a week, Monday through Friday, with five routes per day between Chiloquin and Klamath Falls. Service is provided year round, which is particularly necessary for many users during the winter months. Many employees of the Klamath Tribal Administration rely on Quail Trail Public Transit to get them the nearly 30 miles between Chiloquin and Klamath Falls for work during the winter.



TriMet Portland

 The CEO of Elemental Technologies considered transportation when selecting a location for his business. He noted, "We located our business in downtown Portland in part because of access to great public transit. It's a tremendously valuable benefit for recruiting and retention."

Many Portland residents avoid traffic congestion by relying on public transportation to get to and from work. One of the many reasons businesses locate in Portland's downtown core are the numerous public transportation options including buses, streetcar, and MAX light rail. TriMet found that 45 percent of commuters going into downtown Portland arrive and depart via transit.

Enhancing Statewide Connectivity and Multi-Modal Linkages

80% of Oregonians believe transit is important between cities⁵

Amtrak Statewide

 Amtrak operates three passenger rail routes in Oregon, the Coast Starlight, Amtrak Cascades and the Empire Builder. There are seven stations in Oregon where over 410,000 riders get on or off the train annually.⁶ Every station is served by an Amtrak Thruway bus connection and all but one is serviced by local transit service.⁷ This allows travelers to continue their public transportation trip to their final destination if needed. Amtrak Cascades service is jointly owned, managed and funded by the states of Oregon and Washington.⁸ ODOT is responsible for Amtrak Cascades service in Oregon and owns two of the passenger trainsets used for the service.

A customer survey found that if Amtrak were not available in Oregon, 12 percent of the riders would not travel. Of those that choose to take Amtrak, 52 percent are tourists, adding over \$3.3 million to our state's economy.⁶ One Amtrak rider is Ted, who moved to be within walking distance of Portland's Union Station. He is an attorney with the Oregon Department of Justice who lives in Portland and rides Amtrak Cascades to Salem for work. Ted notes that people traveling between Portland and Salem "have a great travel option with the Amtrak Cascades and this is

an important service for Oregonians and those visiting Oregon." Ted enjoys the hands-free travel time where he can work, read a book or relax without the stress of driving. To save some money, he uses a transportation pre-tax account to purchase his ten-ride pass.



Transit and Bikes Statewide

Many of Oregon's public transportation systems, including Amtrak, allow riders to bring their bikes with them on the bus or train, thereby extending the locations accessible by transit.

The Oregon Household Activity Survey found that roughly 35 percent of households that walk and bicycle as modes of transport also regularly use transit at least once per week, and 62 percent of individuals who are members of a car-share program regularly use transit.⁹



The Loop, Morrow County Transportation Morrow County

 In 2015, The Loop service in Morrow County received a \$45,000 grant through the Highly Rural Transportation Grants program which supports transportation for veterans in rural areas to VA medical centers and other

health care facilities. Morrow County is one of only ten counties in Oregon that are eligible for this grant program because it has fewer than seven people per square mile. The grant funds have allowed The Loop to expand veterans service while improving service to all Morrow County residents. The County has used funds to purchase a new minivan for transporting veterans, freeing up additional vehicles to meet ridership needs for all residents. Further, the grant has allowed The Loop's one full time staff, the director, to continue to serve Morrow County full time and allow dollars to be spent in other areas of the program.

Curry Public Transit Curry County

 Jane lives in the coastal town of Bandon and no longer drives. Her close friend, Mary, lives in Brookings, 80 miles away. With Jane's limited mobility, these long-time friends were not able to spend much time together. Mary asked if Curry Public Transit could help, and together, they reached a transportation solution that would allow Jane to travel more frequently to Brookings. Now, Jane's daughter helps her board the Coastal Express bus in Bandon and she reaches Brookings in just a few hours. Jane often arrives on a Friday and enjoys the weekend with her friend. Mary then takes Jane to catch the Monday afternoon bus back to Bandon, where her daughter meets her.

"You have no idea how grateful people are who ride our buses. With service, they are able to continue to live independently in an area they love and not be forced to move elsewhere. This is good for the individual and for the local economy. The transit system also provides jobs for locals, especially those who prefer to work part time."

Joanne Wasbauer, Board of Directors, Curry Public Transit

Access to Essential Services

20% of residents over the age of 65 use transit regularly³

The Connector, Salem-Keizer Transit Salem

 Cherriots, a transit provider in Salem, offers a flexible, on-demand service in west Salem called the Connector. When riders book a trip online or on the phone, the Connector takes them to a point that links to regular Cherriots routes or takes them to their final destination. "A lot of districts face the same issues we do: a limited budget and growing demand for service," said Allan Pollock, Cherriots' general manager. "Innovative technology means we can provide better service in a new way, connecting more people to the places they want to go."

People Mover Grant County

 Gerald is a senior with Parkinson's disease who lives in rural Grant County, a mile past the end of the county road. He doesn't drive, and with limited resources to provide rides nearby, he relies on the People Mover to get him to and from medical appointments. It would be impossible for Gerald to live where he does and get the care he needs if it weren't for the People Mover.

