



## West Eugene EmX

### The Problem

The community is growing and the transportation system needs to grow with it

- The community will grow by approximately 30,000 people in the next 20 years. There is a need for the transportation system to expand to accommodate the growth.
- Traffic problems on W 11<sup>th</sup> are at or nearing capacity at several locations; something needs to be done to prevent this important commercial corridor from becoming a traffic problem area that people avoid.
- Adding an additional traffic lane would cause significant property impacts and only help in the short-term.
- The community is averse to expanded roads (examples: Ferry St. Bridge widening; new bridge over the Willamette, WEP)
- A long-term solution is needed as a compromise between doing nothing to solve the growing transportation problems, and over building improvements that would result in excessive short-term impacts to businesses.

Climate change and peak oil issues mandate that we reduce auto use

- We can expect continued federal and state mandates to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption
- Transportation contributes about 50 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in our community (38 percent in the state)
- Productive transit service is an effective tool to decrease emissions. Transit releases 95 percent less emissions on a per passenger-mile basis than private automobiles.
- Gasoline will become more expensive and, possibly, in short supply. A high-capacity efficient transit system needs to be in place to accommodate the resulting increase in transit ridership.

EmX is needed for efficient transit operations and cost control

- Conventional transit service is deteriorating. LTD travel times increase an average of 1 percent per year due to traffic congestion. This increases annual operating costs by an average of about \$150,000 per year
- Increased travel time makes the system less attractive to users and reduces ridership and fare revenue.
- EmX on Franklin Boulevard can operate 10 minute service with four buses. It would take five buses to operate 10-minute service using conventional service, at an added cost of about \$300,000 per year. The travel time difference (and costs) would increase in the future.
- Modeling indicates that EmX in West Eugene would reduce year 2031 travel time by 47 percent compared to the No-Build option. That translates into about \$900,000 per year in savings for service along the West 11<sup>th</sup> corridor (in current dollars and assuming identical service frequencies).

Need to proceed now

- Implementing EmX now will be much less costly and have less disruption than after the community has grown and developed.
- Many examples of communities that have waited to implement rapid transit solutions and wish that they had implemented sooner.

### **LTD and EmX is the Correct Way to Address this Problem**

Bus Rapid Transit is a key regional strategy

- Proven successful transit solution to growing traffic problems in our community
- EmX can greatly increase corridor capacity. An EmX lane can carry more people than a traffic lane.
- The 2001 TransPlan and two Regional Transportation Plan updates adopted in 2004 and 2007 include BRT as a key strategy in addressing the community's transportation needs.
- The plan is approved by the two City Councils, the Board of County Commissioners, and the LTD Board.

As the designated transit agency in our community, LTD is the appropriate and proven capable agency to implement the community's transit program.

### **EmX is the Right Solution**

Options considered and evaluated

- The TransPlan planning process included consideration of a conventional bus system, and enhanced bus system, BRT, and rail. BRT was determined to be the most effective transit option for our community.
- There was significant public involvement in the TransPlan process, and the clear preference was for the EmX option.

EmX is cost-effective

- Cost is about 10 percent the cost of a light rail line.
- Cost is appropriate for a community of our size.
- Modeling indicates that EmX is among the most cost-effective rapid transit projects funded by the Federal Transit Administration.

EmX has been remarkably successful

- The Franklin EmX exceeded 20-year ridership projections in the first year and has grown since that first year
- 25 percent of riders are new to transit
- Operating goals for travel time and safety have been met
- EmX has won awards and drawn national and international interest as a successful, innovative transit system

#### EmX is flexible

- A primary advantage of EmX compared to rail is that it has a more flexibility in design. While a rail line cannot operate until every foot of track is connected, EmX can operate as a conventional bus as needed to avoid impacts or reduce costs.
- The EmX right-of-way could be used for a rail system at some point in the future if/when becomes a cost-effective option for our community.

#### EmX implementation has been sensitive to adverse impacts

- No business or residential displacements in first two corridors. Expect to accomplish that with West Eugene.
- All property acquisitions on first two corridors have been negotiated (two remain to be completed)
- Construction has been sensitive to business impacts. Access to business during construction has been maintained and construction phasing is used to reduce impacts in any one area.

#### **LTD is Listening**

##### There has been extensive outreach

- Newsletters
- Open houses
- Listening sessions
- Committees (EmX Steering Committee, West Eugene EmX Corridor Committee, Citizen's Advisory Committee)
- Property owner meetings (80+ to date)

##### Designs have been revised in response to concerns

- LTD does not want to harm businesses and makes great efforts to avoid adverse impacts
- Original design used an "avoid and minimize" process to reduce impact
- Modifications to the original design are being pursued to address impacts
- LTD will be issuing a comprehensive mitigation design soon