



LCOG Transportation Program Overview February 2024

Introduction

The Transportation Program at the Lane Council of Governments has three functional areas: serving as the Central Lane MPO, serving as the Link Lane public transit provider, and performing contractual work in transportation and other infrastructure planning. This attachment summarizes work performed and ongoing in 2023 in the latter two areas.

LINK LANE

As a Public Transportation Service Provider (PTSP) LCOG provides the Link Lane transit service currently running two routes, Eugene to Florence and Florence to Yachats. Link Lane originated and is operating to fill a critical public transportation need to connect coastal communities with each other and the Eugene urban area. The Florence to Yachats route filled the only gap in public transit on the Oregon coast, and the Eugene to Florence route connects the entire central coast to the Willamette Valley.

In operation now for approximately four years, the Link Lane service exhibited stronger than expected ridership from the beginning and has grown and maintained that level of service. Throughout 2023 Eugene to Florence ridership averaged more than 600 passengers per month, with high ridership months recording around 900 passengers. Ridership on the Florence to Yachats route grew significantly in 2023, nearing 400 passengers per month, up from an average of 150 in 2022.

Funded largely by a Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) grant from the state, LCOG recently completed work on the first Link Lane Public Transit Development Plan (TDP). The TDP is a long-range plan to 1) define Link Lane as a PTSP under Oregon law; 2) understand community needs; 3) identify transportation barriers, 4) develop implementation strategies to address identified barriers, and 5) identify funding opportunities consistent with the implementation strategies.

In 2023 LCOG transportation staff continued to work with the City of Cottage Grove and Lane Transit District to reorganize the provision of transit in southern Lane County. LCOG has assumed management of rural service in the southern part of the County outside of Cottage Grove.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

The following work was part of the Transportation Program's activities during 2023:

- Through June, 2023, manage and staff the Lane Area Commission on Transportation (ACT). The ACT is an advisory body to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC).
- Manage and staff the Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC). Formed by LCOG in 2005, OMPOC brings together representatives from all of Oregon's eight MPO Policy Boards to discuss and coordinate areas of common interest.
- Manage and staff the Safe Lane Coalition. The coalition is a collaborative group of individuals, organizations, and governmental agencies that are working to reduce fatalities and severe injuries from crashes in Lane County.
- Staff the Lane Transit District (LTD) Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) process. The STIF program was established in Section 122 of House Bill 2017 to provide a dedicated source of funding for improving, maintaining, and expanding public transportation for all users. Every two years, public transportation funding is made available to support access to jobs, improve mobility, relieve congestion, and reduce greenhouse gas emission in Oregon.
- Manage and staff ODOT's Get There transportation options program in Lane County.
- Deliver ODOT's Oregon Friendly Driver program in Lane County.
- Fund, manage, and staff the regional transportation options program. LCOG works with partner agencies to implement programs that influence travel behavior for the purpose of reducing or redistributing the demand on roads. The TO program implements strategies that improve the efficiency of the existing transportation system and works to provide a wide variety of mobility options including biking walking, scooting, taking transit, and telecommuting.
- Fund, manage, and staff Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs throughout Lane County. SRTS programs aim to create safe, healthy, convenient, and fun opportunities for children to use active transportation for the school commute. These initiatives promote livable, vibrant communities, increase physical activity, and improve unsafe walking, biking, and skating conditions throughout the community. This includes a commitment to providing safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and reducing crash rates in all communities, including those with low-income families and non-English speakers. Lane County Safe Routes to School is a collaboration between Lane Council of Governments; Lane County; Lane Education Service District; and the Oregon Department of Transportation.
- Provide funding and support for bicycle education programs.
- Provide additional planning assistance for the City of Eugene, Lane Transit District, and other member agencies.
- Under a contract with ODOT, LCOG is managing and staffing the Climate Friendly & Equitable Communities (CFEC) Implementation in the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area. This work will complete the area's Scenario Planning work originally conducted in 2015.