



# Council Study Session

May 1, 2023

<b>Agenda Item</b>	Rogue Valley Transportation District – Service Updates		
<b>From</b>	Scott Fleury PE	Public Works Director	
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<b>Item Type</b>	Requested by Council <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Update <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

## **SUMMARY**

Paige West, Planning and Strategic Program Manager for the Rogue Valley Transportation District (RVTD) will present transit service improvements planned for the City of Ashland. RVTD has developed a new City of Ashland internal circulator route #17 and will present the details and background information associated with this service enhancement.

## **POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED**

Climate Action Energy Plan: Strategy ULT-1. Support Better Public Transit and Ridesharing

- ULT-1-1. Coordinate with neighboring local governments to promote use of transit, carpooling, and car-sharing.
- ULT-1-2. Work with RVTD to implement climate-friendly transit.
- ULT-1-3. Establish policies to support development near transit hubs without displacing disadvantaged populations.
- ULT-1-4. Evaluate Feasibility of expanded local transit options.

Department Goals:

- Maintain existing infrastructure to meet regulatory requirements and minimize life-cycle costs.
- Maintain and improve infrastructure that enhances the economic vitality of the community.
- Evaluate all city infrastructure regarding planning management and financial resources.

## **BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The City has long shown support for public transit and RVTD. The City previously subsidized transit fares for trips originating in Ashland, and currently subsidizes transit fares for elementary through high school students and seniors (age 65 and over). Voters within the City voted for RVTDs operation levy on the 2017 ballot that increased service hours and headways on certain routes.

The City adopted the Climate Energy Action Plan (CEAP) that details goals and strategies to reduce the localized carbon impact on the environment. The Plan identified a goal of working with RVTD to implement expanded local transit options, and to incorporate climate friendly transit options. In order to support the plan, a focus point for Ashland’s citizens, the Transportation Commission (TC) and Public Works Department recommended the City pursue a Transit Feasibility Study to lay the groundwork for future transit enhancements.

The Council awarded a Transit Expansion Study contract to Nelson \ Nygaard at the [February 20, 2018 Business meeting](#). The goal of the Transit Expansion Feasibility Study was to evaluate the mobility needs





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of residents, employees and visitors in the City of Ashland, and how public transportation might best meet those needs today and in the future. Outcomes of the project developed a flexible set of strategies the City may consider to enhance public transportation, including actions, partners and other resources needed to implement those strategies.

The study developed a list of flexible strategies for improving transit that include fixed route services (intra-city and inter-city), demand response services within the City, propulsion technologies, infrastructure capital improvements, and transportation programs to support accessibility to transit, and help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Strategies for transit expansion are detailed with implementation details and action plans that align with near term and long-term requirements for successfully implementing the strategy.

### Strategies formally developed include:

- Local Fixed Circulator Route **(Proposed New Route)**
  - A local route with 60-minute headways that provide access to transit on Ashland Street, Clay Street, East Main Street, Hersey Street and Maple Street (hospital)
  - This route also provide paratransit coverage to Mountain Meadows **(In-Service)**
- Central Corridor Shuttle
  - Primary corridor transit improvements with 30-minute headways on Main Street and Ashland Street
  - Route provides capacity and frequency to several key destinations
- Medford-Ashland Express **(In-Service)**
  - Additional route from Medford to Ashland on the I5
  - Reduces travel time from Medford to Ashland by approximately 20 minutes
  - Would operate during route 10 peak congestions times (approximately 10 AM to 4 PM)
- General Public Demand Response **(Ashland Connector Not In-Service Currently)**
  - Flexible program using Ford Hybrid ADA accessible passenger vans
  - Provides curb to curb and regional connections
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Investments and Bus Stop Infrastructure
  - Improve first mile pedestrian connections
  - Improve transit stops (seating and lighting)
  - Rogue Bike Share support
  - Additional bicycle parking/storage
- Electrification of fleet
  - Support future electrification of RVTD fleet
  - Develop charging infrastructure for potential future fleet changes
- Marketing and Transportation Demand Management
  - Develop and market information to the public regarding transit and transportation options

The City Council accepted the plan at the March 5, 2019 Business Meeting and supported a grant application for RVTD, ([Minutes](#), [Staff Report](#)). Information developed within the City's Transit Feasibility Study was incorporated into RVTD's 2040 Master Plan completed in 2019 ([RVTD 2040 Master Plan](#)).





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## **FISCAL IMPACTS**

The primary fiscal impact associated with transit services or changes developed by RVTD for operation within the City of Ashland are associated with staff time coordination and support for RVTD. This includes marketing and outreach support and preparing material for the Transportation Committee and City Council, including support of grant applications.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Does the Council have any questions regarding the proposed transit route #17 or other general questions of staff and RVTD?

## **SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS**

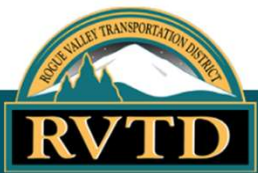
N/A

## **REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment #1: RVTD presentation



Presentation for  
Ashland City Council  
Paige West | Senior Planner & Edem Gómez | Associate Planner



# Today's Presentation

- ▶ 2023-2025 Planned Projects
- ▶ Route 17 - Ashland Loop
- ▶ Ridership 2022-2023
- ▶ Passenger Survey preliminary results
- ▶ Construction update



# 2023-2025 STIF Formula Projects

In District Projects
<b>NON-OPERATING PROJECTS</b>
New Transportation Building
New ADA Maint. Facility
Paratransit Vehicles (6)
Mobility Management
Low Income Bus Passes

Out of District Projects
<b>OPS/ Maintaining Fixed Route</b>
Route 63 Eagle Point
Route 100 JCT RV Commuter

OPS/ Maintaining Fixed Route
26 East Medford
24 Southeast Medford
1X Express Medford to Ashland
27 Medford Crosstown
Ashland Service

**RVTD also applied for 2023-2025 STIF Discretionary to fund an ADA sidewalk improvement at Front Street Station and to complete the Transportation Building**

OPS/ Enhancing Fixed Route
41- Central Point Circulator
Increase Frequency 40
Increase Frequency 60
29-Southwest Medford



# Driver Recruitment

- ▶ In recent months, RVTD has hired 18 new drivers (now at 71 drivers)
- ▶ Evening hours were added in December
- ▶ Several Transportation personnel have moved to positions such as Field Supervisors, a Maintenance Technician and a District Trainer or retired
- ▶ As personnel moves up within the organization, it has required us to hire more drivers to expand service

*We are excited  
to announce...*





## RVTD's first since 2019

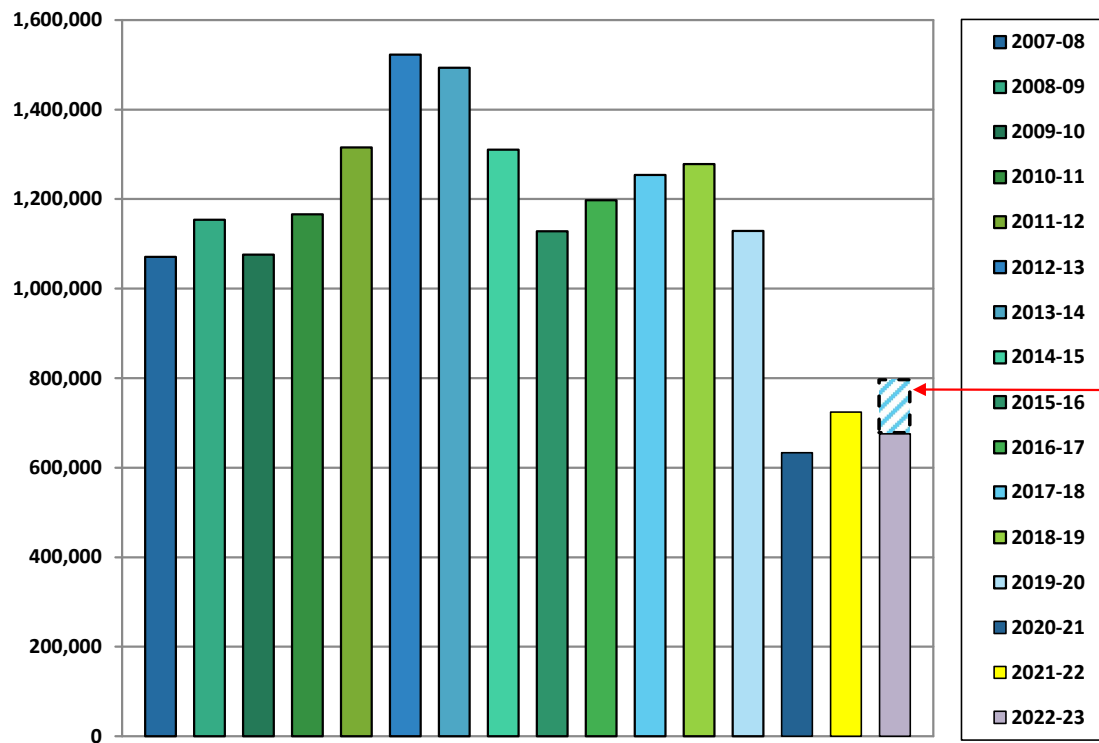
- ▶ The Ashland Connector proved successful and indicated areas with highest ridership potential
- ▶ Since December we have worked with the City of Ashland to finalize the route alignment and its major destinations
- ▶ Bus Stops are currently being identified approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile apart
- ▶ The route runtime is one hour and once stops are finalized, a full schedule will be available
- ▶ Service will begin June 26<sup>th</sup> and promotion has already begun







# Annual Ridership Comparison



Projected ridership

2018-2019  
PPRH:  
17.6

Current:  
9.3



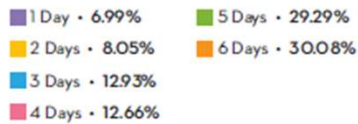
Annual Ridership Comparison

# 2023 RVRTD Onboard Passenger Survey: Preliminary Results

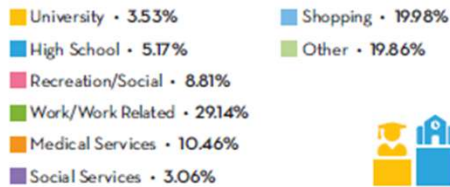


In March 2023, RVRTD conducted an onboard passenger survey to get insight into a rider's age, trip frequency, destination, and more. The results demonstrate Jackson County's continued need for a reliable transportation system.

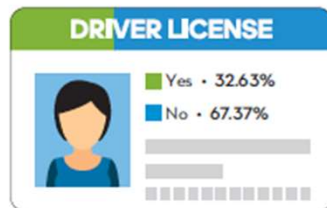
## How many days a week do you use transit?



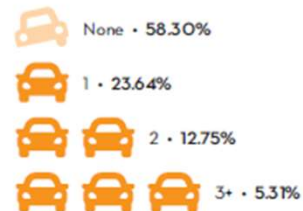
## What kind of places are you going to the most when you use RVRTD?



## Do you have a valid driver's license?



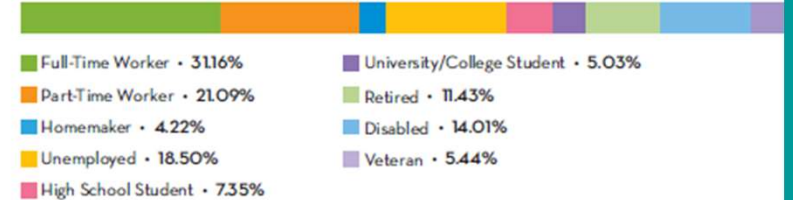
## How many working vehicles are available to your household?



## If bus service were not available, how would you make your trips?



## Are you? (Surveyed passengers checked all that applied.)



## What is your age?



## What is your personal income?





## Construction Update

### Transportation Building

- Bid schedule runs May through July
- Groundbreaking Fall 2023
- Expect completion by end of 2024

# Thank you

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Questions?

