

Oregon Department of Transportation

Vision Around the Mountain

August 2021

N NELSON
NYGAARD



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Oregon Department of Transportation collaborated with dozens of stakeholders from Summer 2020 to Summer 2021 to develop a regional vision for public transportation to, from, and around Mt. Hood.



This project was made possible through the generous local support from Clackamas County, the City of Sandy, and the Hood River County Transportation District, as well as our partners at the Federal Highway Administration.



PROJECT TEAM

Oregon Department of Transportation

Jason Kelly, Project Manager

Kristen Stallman

Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates

Stephanie Wright, Project Manager

Kyle Taniguchi

Paul Lutey

EnviroIssues / Ross Strategic

Susan Hayman

Max Farbman

Leah Litwak

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Teresa Christopherson and Kristina Babcock, Clackamas County / Mt. Hood Express

Andi Howell, City of Sandy

Patty Fink, John Andoh, Hood River County Transportation District / Columbia Area Transit

Andrea Breault, Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council

Bill Westbrook, US Forest Service

Jamie Lemon, Federal Highway Administration

DEFINITIONS

Transit Service Types: Local, Express, Circulator/Shuttle

- **Local** – Closely spaced stops providing high levels of access all day
- **Express** – Connects major destinations and prioritizes short travel times by minimizing the number of stops. Passengers access service at major hubs. Service may be concentrated around peak times.
- **Circulator/Shuttle** – Service linking destinations that often runs on a “headway” schedule (such as every 30 minutes) rather than by a set time.

HB 2017 – House Bill 2017, Keep Oregon Moving, makes significant investments in transportation. This legislation created a new dedicated source of funding for improving or expanding public transportation - the **Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund** (STIF).

ACRONYMS

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

AVL – Automatic Vehicle Location

CAT – Columbia Area Transit

CET – Cascades East Transit

CGE – Columbia Gorge Express

COIC – Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council

GTM – Gorge to Mountain

HRCTD – Hood River County Transportation District

MHMM – Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

MHTA – Mount Hood Transportation Alliance

MHX – Mount Hood Express

PAOT – Persons At One Time (term used by the Forest Service)

SAM – Sandy Area Metro

TDP – Transit Development Plan

TMP – Transit Master Plan

VAM – Vision Around the Mountain

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1 Introduction	1-4
Project Goals.....	1-4
Study Area.....	1-4
Project Process.....	1-5
What We Heard	1-6
Project Outcomes.....	1-8
2 Our Public Transportation Story.....	2-10
Existing Services.....	2-11
Key Takeaways.....	2-17
3 Our Vision.....	3-18
Vision statement.....	3-18
Planning Landscape.....	3-19
Vision Principles.....	3-20
Goals.....	3-21
Strategies	3-23
4 Looking Forward	4-25
Funding the Vision.....	4-25
Building Leadership.....	4-26
A Call For Action.....	4-29
FRAMEWORK 4 ACTION.....	4-30
How to Navigate F4A.....	4-32
Governance.....	4-33
Transit Routes.....	4-34
Service Operations.....	4-38
Transit Hubs & Amenities.....	4-40
Passenger Convenience.....	4-44
Recreation Lands Access & Congestion Management.....	4-49
Marketing, Branding, & Customer Engagement.....	4-52
Planning and Policy.....	4-55

TABLE OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1	Workshop Participants..... 1-7
Figure 2	Transit Timeline 2-10
Figure 3	Today’s transit routes directly connecting around the mountain (note that additional services connect to the US 26/OR-35 corridors are not shown)..... 2-11
Figure 4	Summary of Operating Characteristics..... 2-12
Figure 5	Travel Times by Corridor, Typical Weekday 2-13
Figure 6	Driving vs. Transit Cost Comparison..... 2-13
Figure 7	Transit Ridership by Route Using Most Recent Data..... 2-14
Figure 8	Productivity (Passengers per Revenue Hour)..... 2-15
Figure 9	2019 Operating Revenues by Agency 2-16
Figure 10	Annual O&M Cost by Route..... 2-16
Figure 11	Transit Network Vision..... 4-25
Figure 12	How Building Leadership Might Achieve Vision 4-28
Figure 13	Key to F4A Contents..... 4-32
Figure 14	Transit Network Vision..... 4-35
Figure 15	CGE has been directed to stop several blocks east of TriMet buses..... 4-41

1 INTRODUCTION

Stakeholders have long envisioned continuous, convenient public transportation connecting to and from the mountain.

Mt. Hood draws local, national, and international visitors, and in turn supports a bustling year-round economy. But traffic and parking headaches threaten the mountain economy, the natural environment, and equitable access to jobs and recreation.

A vision, created jointly by stakeholders, defined a future where transit is a reliable and convenient option for mountain residents, employees, and visitors. This vision can also be integrated into a larger bi-state transit strategy including the Columbia River Gorge.

Vision Around the Mountain, or **VAM** is the result of months of collaboration between stakeholders looking toward our future.

PROJECT GOALS

1. Establish a long-term, regional transit vision for public transportation serving Mt. Hood from I-84, OR 35, and US 26
2. Create strategies and actions supporting the regional vision housed within a Framework for Action
3. Secure partnerships to continue implementing the vision
4. Provide a list of projects for the transit element of the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan update

STUDY AREA

VAM focused on two primary transit corridors:

- OR 35 between Hood River and Mt. Hood
- US 26 between Portland and Mt. Hood

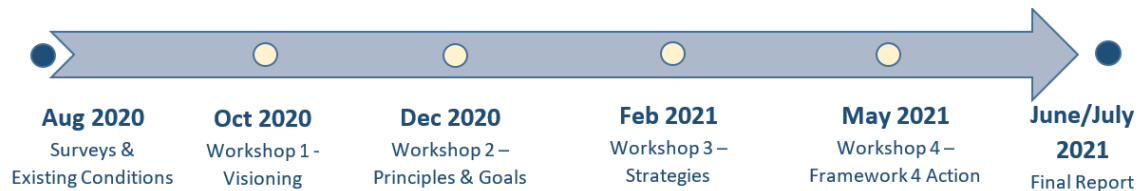
While these two corridors were the focus, we know peoples' travel patterns use an entire network of corridors connecting across and to OR 35 and US 26. Stakeholders imagined a transit network where people can travel a complete loop around Mt. Hood without driving – therefore the Columbia River Gorge was considered in VAM conversations. We acknowledge the critical role I-84 transit plays in realizing the Vision.

Vision Around the Mountain
ODOT

With respect to VAM, the references to the Columbia River Gorge region focus on the I-84 corridor. This correlates with the existing transit corridor currently served by Columbia Gorge Express linking Portland and Hood River.

There is exciting work happening to create a vision for transit in the greater Gorge area that encompasses both Oregon and Washington. Our intent is that the energy and vision developed in VAM can highlight potential for coordination between Mt. Hood and Gorge transportation providers. Together we can move toward a bi-state, coordinated approach to public transportation.

PROJECT PROCESS



Project highlights included:

- Input gathered through four workshops engaging 61 participants
- A survey around transportation priorities completed by stakeholders
- Discussions with a Technical Advisory Committee, which included representatives from existing transit providers, the Federal Highway Administration, and the US Forest Service
- A list of actions or projects identified in previously adopted plans that will support immediate-term progress toward the vision
- This project focused on a vision and supporting framework of actions to achieve the vision. The intent was for project stakeholders to bring forth opinions of constituents they represent. Technical analysis and public engagement was not a focus of this project's scope; however more robust public engagement will be needed as partners move toward implementation.

Project stakeholders participated in a total of four workshops.

Figure 1 Workshop Participants

NAME	AFFILIATION	NAME	AFFILIATION
ANDREA BREAUULT	Cascades East Transit	TERRA LINGLEY	Oregon Department of Transportation
JAY HIGGINS	City of Gresham	THERESA CONLEY	Oregon Department of Transportation
MICHAEL OATES	City of Hood River	VALERIE EGON	Oregon Department of Transportation
ANDI HOWELL	City of Sandy	REP. ANNA WILLIAMS	Oregon House of Representatives (District 52)
JORDAN WHEELER	City of Sandy	BRITTANY BERGE	Port of Cascade Locks
JOHN NIYAMA	City of Wood Village	OLGA KAGANOVA	Port of Cascade Locks
BRETT SETTERFIELD	Clackamas County	MEGAN RAMEY	Region 1 Area Commission on Transportation
KAREN BUEHRIG	Clackamas County	JOHN WHITMAN	Ride Connection
KEN HUMBERSTON	Clackamas County	KHRYS JONES	Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce
PAUL SAVAS	Clackamas County	GREG LEO	The Leo Company
LIZZIE KEENAN	Clackamas County Tourism and Cultural Affairs	JON TULLIS	Timberline Lodge
AMY SCHLAPPI	Columbia Area Transit	SCOTT BRICKER	Travel Oregon
PATRICIA FINK	Columbia Area Transit	EVE NILENDERS	TriMet
JOHN ANDOH	Columbia Area Transit	JAMIE LEMON	United States Department of Transportation
EMILY REED	Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance	SETH ENGLISH-YOUNG	United States Department of Transportation
KRISTIN DAHL	Crosscurrent Collective	BENN WATTS	United States Forest Service
KARA SCHROEDER	Gray Line of Portland	BILL WESTBROOK	United States Forest Service
DAVID DUNCAN	Grey Line of Portland, Big Pink Sightseeing	CHRISTY CHEYNE	United States Forest Service
BRAD HOUGHTON	Mid-Columbia Economic Development District	CLAIRE FERNANDES	United States Forest Service
KATE DRENNAN	Mid-Columbia Economic Development District	JEREMY EVANS	United States Forest Service
KATHY FITZPATRICK	Mid-Columbia Economic Development District	KRISTIN AUSTIN	United States Forest Service
KRISTINA BABCOCK	Mount Hood Express	LYNN BURDITT	United States Forest Service
TERESA CHRISTOPHERSON	Mount Hood Express	SCOTT KADEN	United States Forest Service
GREG PACK	Mount Hood Meadows	STAN HINATSU	United States Forest Service
MATTHEW DRAKE	Mount Hood Meadows Ski Resort	TERRIE JARRELL	United States Forest Service
SAMARA PHELPS	Mount Hood Territory	ASHLEY HUCKABY MAY	Visit Hood River
ALLISON BOYD	Multnomah County	KEVIN ENGLISH	We Are Camp
MARYJO ANDERSEN	Multnomah County		
NATHAN CLARK	Multnomah County		
NATE STICE	Office of Governor Kate Brown		
LIV BROOKFIELD	Office of Representative Blumenauer		
KRISTEN STALLMAN	Oregon Department of Transportation		
MARIA SIPIN	Oregon Department of Transportation		
RIAN WINDSHEIMER	Oregon Department of Transportation		

PROJECT OUTCOMES

Our Vision Statement

Create and sustain a world-class public transit service providing equitable, convenient, and enjoyable access to and throughout the Mt. Hood/Columbia Gorge region for a growing number of visitors, recreationists, employees, and residents. This vision mitigates vehicular impacts, supports regional economies, improves safety, and promotes environmental stewardship.



Vision Framework

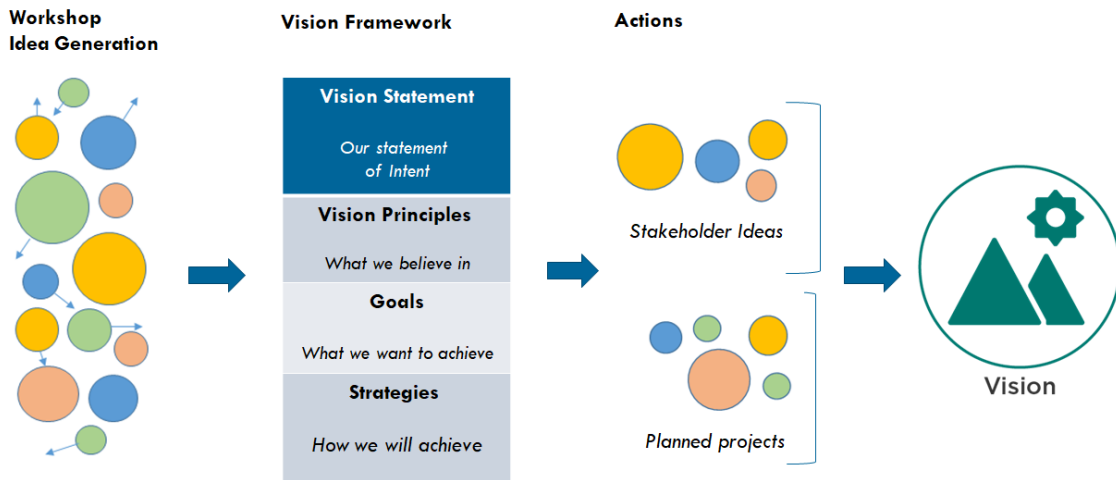
Project stakeholders created a vision framework representing shared values and goals for transit. The framework was progressively developed and refined throughout the project to ensure it aligned with participant feedback and supported the project outcomes.

The vision framework includes a Vision Statement, Vision Principles, Goals, Strategies, and Actions. This document reflects this construct.

Definitions

- **Vision Framework**: Structure aligning Vision Principles, Goals, and Strategies to support the Vision Statement
- **Vision Statement**: Our overarching **aspirational** statement of intent
- **Vision Principle**: Components of our vision statement **we believe** in
- **Goals**: What we want to achieve – our **desired outcomes**
- **Strategy**: How we will achieve – **actionable activities**
- **Actions**: Specific **steps toward strategies**, including ideas generated by stakeholders and projects that are already planned and/or funded

Our Vision journey



How it fits together

Vision or VAM will be used to:

- Build support with decision makers and additional stakeholders
- Leverage funding through grants, private entities, and public agencies
- Act as a foundation for future public transit expansion and integration

VAM's vision principles and goals are financially unconstrained and long-term (20 year or longer in the future). Getting there from today means taking on concrete, near-term actions and building support for longer-term concepts.

Strategies bridge the gap between today and the vision – demonstrating both how to achieve our goals and also providing high-level guidance for partners to build upon today's foundation.

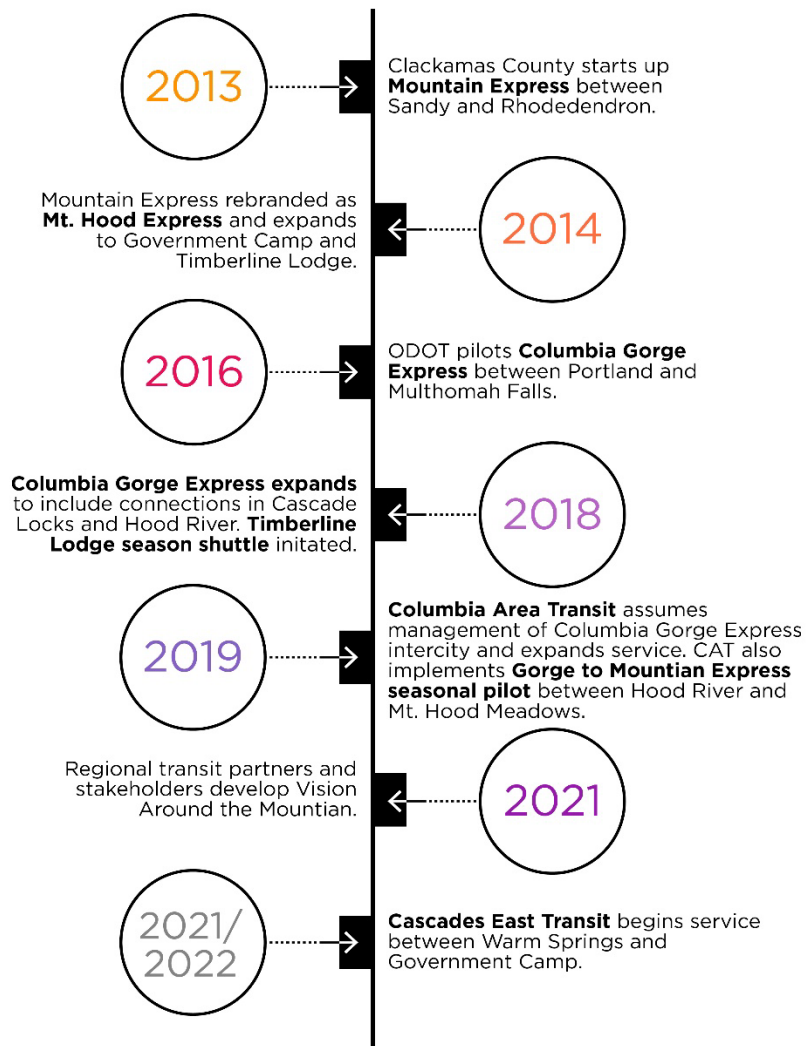
The agencies responsible for implementing VAM actions will need further collaboration between stakeholders. The ideas in this document could be carried out by public transportation providers, non-profits, or private operators. VAM's focus is on finding shared values and goals. The methods of service delivery are a critical next step.



2 OUR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION STORY

Public transportation options for getting around the mountain have grown exponentially during the past decade.

Figure 2 Transit Timeline



EXISTING SERVICES

Today, several public and private transit services connect to Mt. Hood. Note that TriMet connects the Portland metro area residents to SAM and MHX, and while TriMet is part of the greater regional transit network, TriMet services are not the primary focus of VAM.

The public providers serving the US 26, OR 35, and I-84 corridors, as well as Timberline Highway, are shown in Figure 3 and summarized in Figure 4..

Figure 3 Today's transit routes directly connecting around the mountain (note that additional services connect to the US 26/OR-35 corridors are not shown)

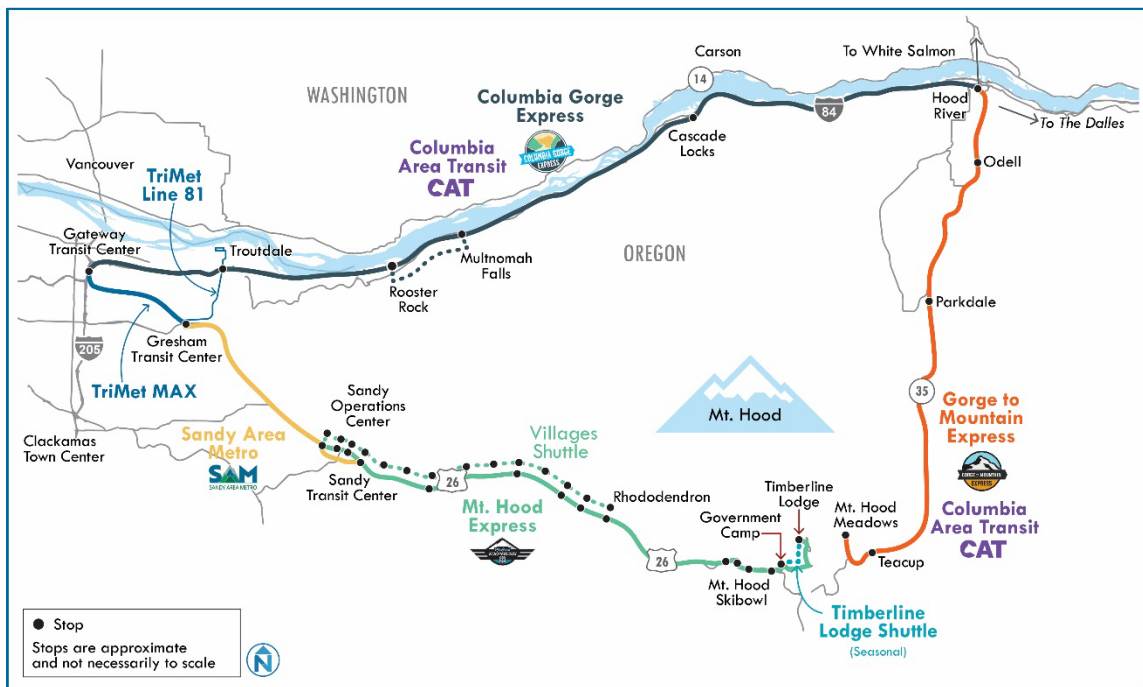









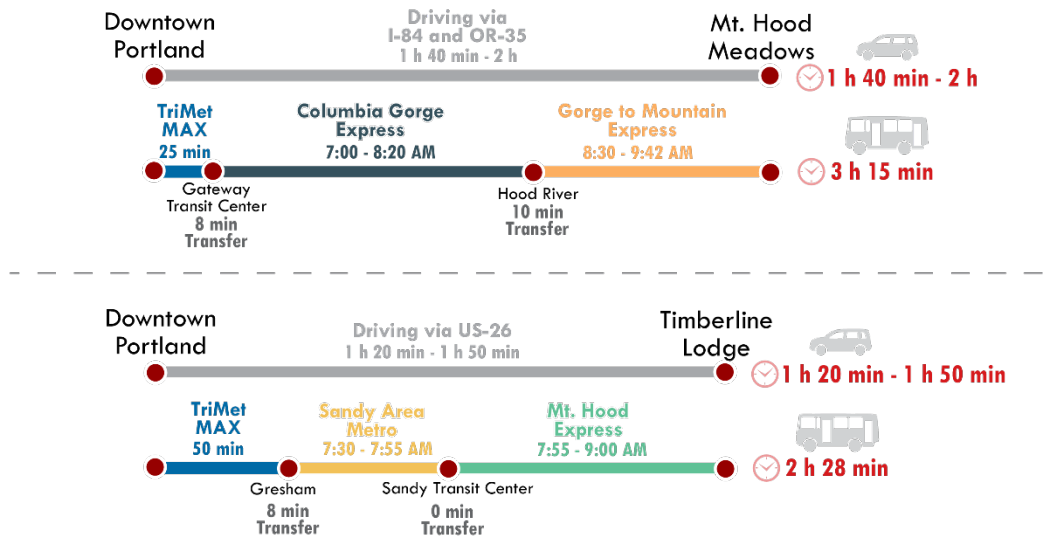
Figure 4 Summary of Operating Characteristics

 Mount Hood Express (MHX)	
Service Overview	Express Route: Connects Sandy to Government Camp and Timberline Lodge (with stops in Alder Creek, Rhododendron, Welches and Government Camp) Villages Shuttle: Connects Sandy to Welches and Rhododendron
Trips per Day	Express Route: 7 roundtrips (8 roundtrips during peak of winter season) seven days/week * Villages Shuttle: 4 roundtrips seven days/week*
Span of Service	Express Route: 5:15 AM to 8:45 PM Weekdays, 5:15 AM to 11:10 PM Weekends during peak of winter season Villages Shuttle: 5:45 AM to 8:14 PM seven days/week
Frequency	Varies from 1.5 to 3 hours
 Sandy Area Metro (SAM)	
Service Overview	SAM's Gresham route connects the Portland metro region at Gresham Transit Center (with MAX service) to the Sandy Transit Center, where passengers can transfer to Mt. Hood Express.
Trips per Day	31 roundtrips Weekdays, 17 roundtrips on Saturdays, 8 roundtrips on Sundays
Span of Service	5:30 AM - 9:55 PM Weekday, Saturdays: 5:30 AM - 10:25 PM, Sundays: 7:00 AM - 9:55 PM
Frequency	Weekdays: 30 minutes from 5:30 AM to 8 PM, 60 minutes at all other times Saturdays: 60 minutes all day Sundays: 8 round trips spread throughout the day
 Gorge to Mountain Express (GTM)  CAT Columbia Area Transit	
Service Overview	Connects Hood River to Mt. Hood Meadows and is operated by Columbia Area Transit.
Trips per Day	4 roundtrips Weekdays, 8 southbound and 7 northbound trips Weekends
Span of Service	6:00 AM to 5:20 PM Weekdays, 6:00 AM to 11:20 PM Weekends
Frequency	Varies from 2.5 to 3.75 hours Weekdays, Varies from 1 to 3.25 hours Weekends
 Columbia Gorge Express (CGE)  CAT Columbia Area Transit	
Service Overview	CGE provides year-round intercity service connecting Portland, Multnomah Falls, Cascade Locks, and Hood River.
Trips per Day	8 trips between Portland and Hood River (5 trips to The Dalles) Weekdays, 6 trips between Portland and Hood River (2 trips to The Dalles) Weekends
Span of Service	5:40 AM to 7:40 PM Weekdays, 7:10 AM to 6:40 PM Weekends
Frequency	Varies from 1 to 2.5 hours Weekdays, Varies from 1.5 to 2.5 hours Weekends
 Timberline Shuttle	
Service to	Connects Government Camp and Timberline Lodge (no Weekday service).
Trips per Day	Approximately 16 round trips Weekends only [excludes some major holidays]
Span of Service	8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Weekends only
Frequency	20-30 minutes depending on traffic and weather (Weekends only)

Travel Times and Costs

Buses will always take longer than driving, but minimizing the difference in travel times makes the bus more attractive. Figure 5 shows that transit takes significantly longer than driving, and an opportunity exists to capture riders at major hubs such as Gateway Transit Center, Gresham Transit Center, or Sandy Transit Center through the provision of park and ride. People who want to avoid parking hassles or chaining up in winter may be willing to park in Hood River or Sandy and take the bus the rest of the way.

Figure 5 Travel Times by Corridor, Typical Weekday



In addition to travel time, cost is also an important consideration in choosing whether to take transit or drive. As shown in Figure 6, transit is cheaper than driving between downtown Portland and Mt. Hood when all car expenses, including parking, gas, and wear & tear are included. The average consumer does not think about wear & tear when choosing to drive, but the reality of how driving incurs additional costs could be used in messaging.

Figure 6 Driving vs. Transit Cost Comparison

	Driving (Round trip)	Transit (Round trip)
Downtown Portland (Pioneer Square) to Mt. Hood Meadows	\$5 daily parking + \$77 gas and wear & tear = \$82	\$5 TriMet day pass + \$20 on CGE + Free on GTM = \$25
Downtown Portland (Pioneer Square) to Timberline Lodge	\$5 daily parking + \$72 wear & tear = \$77	\$5 TriMet day pass + \$5 day pass valid on SAM and MHX = \$10

Note: Assumes IRS reimbursable rate of 57.5 cents per mile driven, which includes gas and vehicle depreciation (wear & tear)

Performance Overview

Ridership by route for the most recent year available is shown Figure 7. Ridership is steady on the more established services (CGE, MHX, and SAM). GTM service just completed its first year, and the Timberline Shuttle just completed its second year of service.

The most common transit effectiveness measure used is **productivity**. This is the ratio of the amount of service provided (hours) to the amount of service consumed (ridership). As shown in Figure 8, passengers per revenue hour for the routes in question generally range from 10 to 20.

Figure 7: Transit Ridership by Route Using Most Recent Data

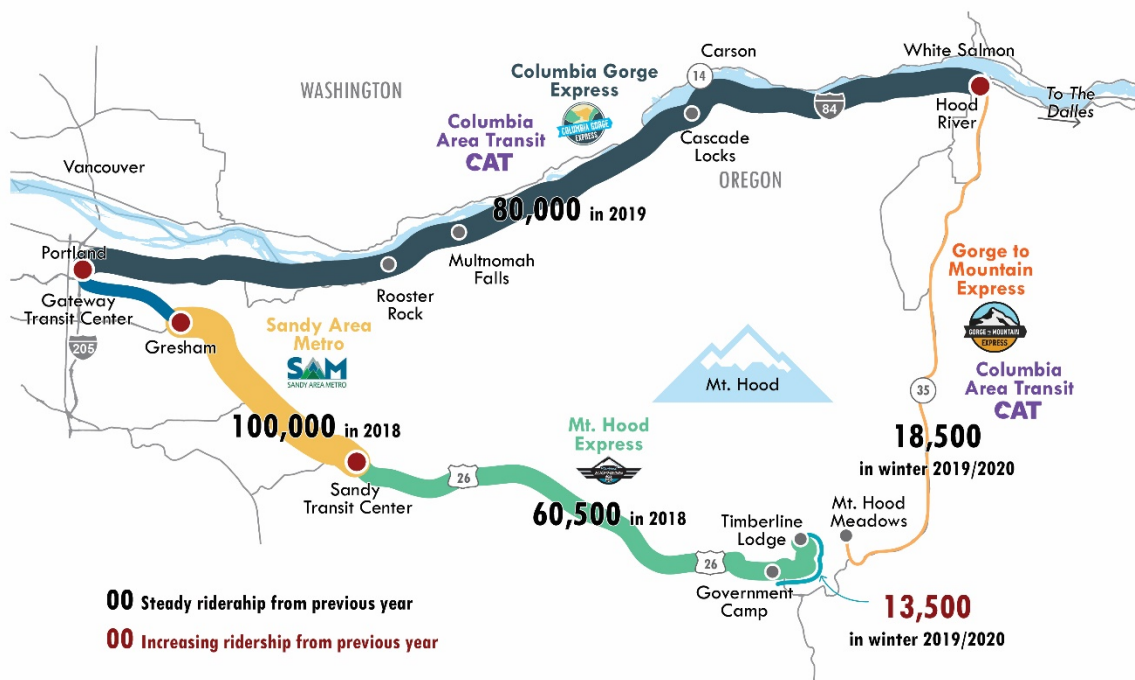
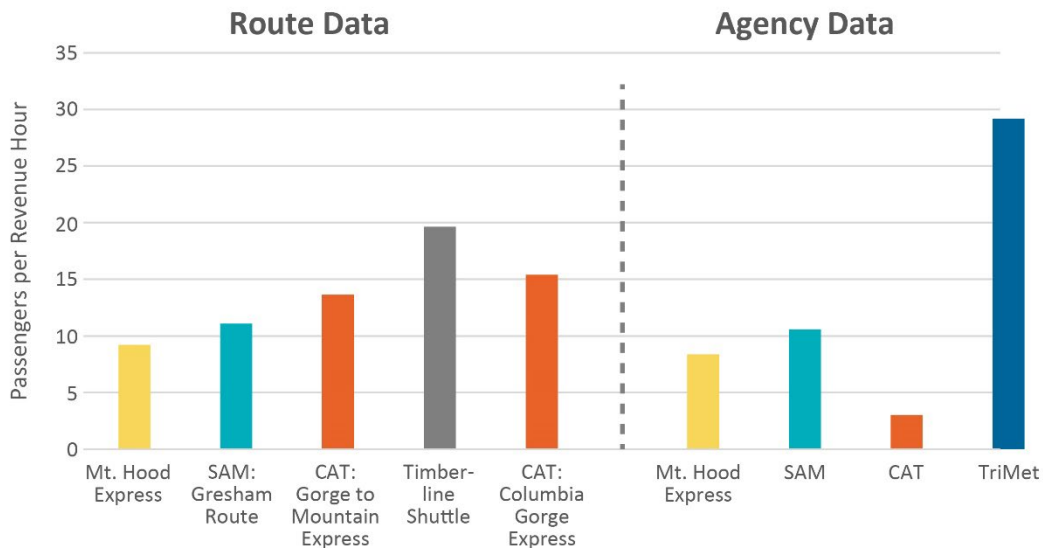


Figure 8 Productivity (Passengers per Revenue Hour)



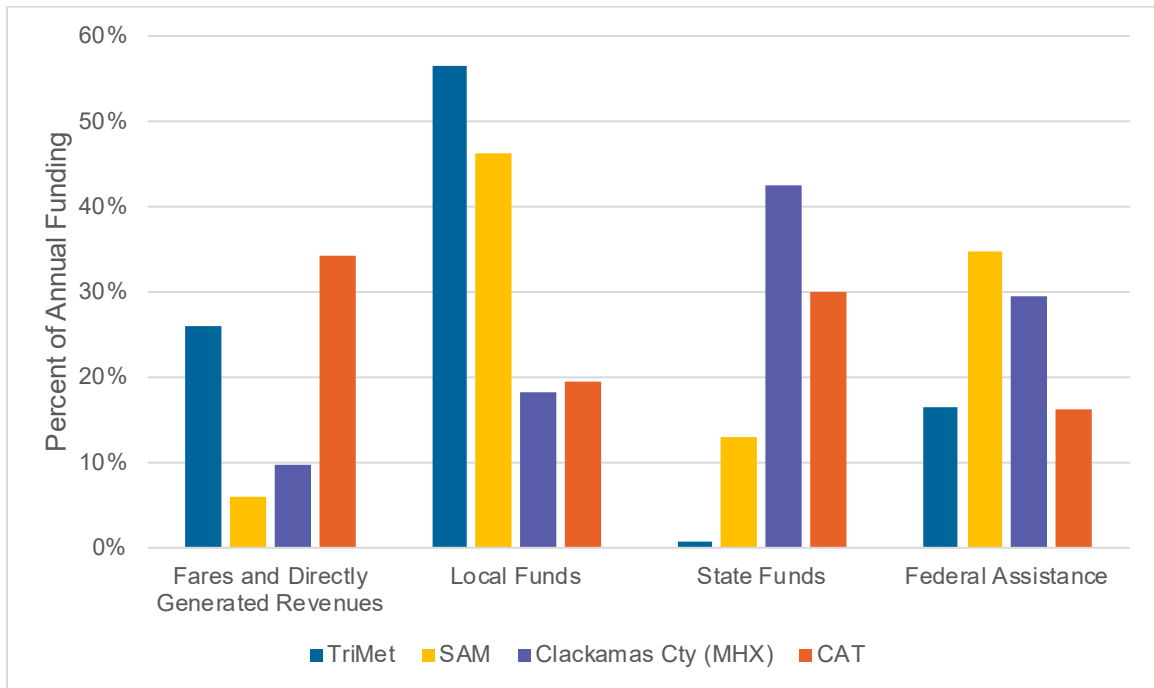
Route Data Source: 2018 Clackamas County Social Services NTD report, 2019 Sandy Transit Master Plan Existing Conditions Report, Winter 2019/2020 CAT operations data for GTM, Winter 2019/2020 Timberline Lodge shuttle operations data, 2016-2019 CGE Performance Report Card.

Agency Data Source: 2018 NTD agency reports

Funding Sources and Costs

The source of operating revenues for each agency (plus TriMet, for comparison) is shown in Figure 9. A larger agency like TriMet receives a higher portion of funding from fares, which is common compared to smaller agencies. TriMet also receives a much higher percent of local funding compared to state funding (since TriMet is a regional transit district they receive a higher portion of funding through payroll tax). While TriMet receives a significant amount of both state and federal funding, the other agencies, rely more heavily on state and federal funds as a percent of total operating revenues..

Figure 9 2019 Operating Revenues by Agency



Source: 2019 National Transit Database

Figure 10 presents the annual operating cost for each of the routes in the study area. Approximately \$2 million was spent operating transit in the year when data was available.

Figure 10 Annual O&M Cost by Route

	Year of Data	Annual Operating Cost
Clackamas County Social Services: Mt. Hood Express	2018	\$476,924
SAM: Gresham Route	2018	\$750,222
CAT: Gorge to Mountain Express	Winter 2019/2020	\$181,000
Timberline Shuttle	Winter 2019/2020	\$24,000 (season estimate)
Columbia Gorge Express (Intercity and Rooster Rock Shuttle)	2019	\$577,752
TOTAL	--	\$2,009,898 (Not adjusted for inflation)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Some major takeaways from the evaluation of existing services are as follows:

- **Transit coverage around the mountain varies by time of the year** – Winter has the highest service levels, due to the operation of GTM service.
- **There is currently no transit connection between Timberline Lodge and Mt. Hood Meadows** – This is the last missing link to complete transit connectivity around the mountain in the winter.
- **Transit service on weekends is less frequent, which is when tourist demand is high** – CGE and SAM frequencies are lower on Sundays in particular. Transfers on weekends are also not as optimally timed as the weekday schedule, resulting in longer transfer times.
- **Agencies must balance resources with service levels** – MHX, SAM, GTM, and CGE are providing long-haul services. More frequent service may attract more riders, but this can only be gained through significant capital and operating investment.
- **Annual ridership by route is fairly consistent throughout most of the study area** – Aside from GTM, which is still a new service, most of the transit services that operate around Mt. Hood have annual ridership in the 60,000 to 100,000 range. This indicates relatively balanced demand around the mountain.
- **Travel times from Portland to Mt. Hood on transit are significantly longer than driving** – Travel times measured from downtown Portland to Mt. Hood are long and primarily driven by transfer times and the number of stops along the route.
- **Cost and productivity are generally good** – Costs and productivity metrics generally meet industry conditions, meaning services have a good level of efficiency and effectiveness.

3 OUR VISION

Our transit future will be guided by our Vision statement, Vision Principles, Goals, and Strategies.

Definitions

- **Vision Statement**: Our overarching **aspirational** statement of intent
- **Vision Principle**: Components of our vision statement **we believe** in
- **Goal Statement**: What we want to achieve – our **desired outcomes**
- **Strategy**: How we will achieve our goals – **actionable activities**

VISION STATEMENT

Our Vision Statement

Create and sustain a world-class public transit service providing equitable, convenient, and enjoyable access to and throughout the Mt. Hood/Columbia Gorge region for a growing number of visitors, recreationists, employees, and residents. This vision mitigates vehicular impacts, supports regional economies, improves safety, and promotes environmental stewardship.

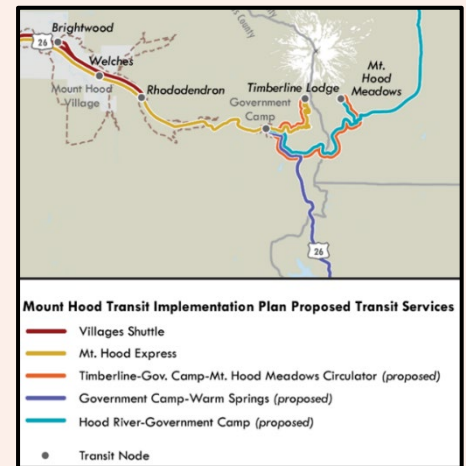


PLANNING LANDSCAPE

Many adopted plans already exist laying the groundwork for the vision.

Adopted Plans

- **Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Plans** for Tri County, Hood River County, and Deschutes County (2021-23) allocates state funding during FY2021-23 Biennium to qualified entities and distributes funding to public transportation service providers, including MHX, SAM, CAT and CET.
- **Clackamas County Transit Development Plan (2021)** lays out future transit corridors.
- **Historic Columbia River Highway Congestion and Transportation Safety Improvement Plan (2019)** includes congestion mitigations.
- **Highway 35 Transit Feasibility Study (2019)** identifies stop locations on OR 35.
- **Timberline and Summit Master Plans (2019)** show future investments that affect transit routing and stops.
- **Sandy Transit Master Plan (2020)** recommends changes to Sandy Area Metro.
- **The Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan (2016)** identifies safety needs along US 26.
- **Mt. Hood Area Visitor Survey (2018)** conducted by Travel Oregon provides insights into travel choices.
- **Mount Hood Transit Implementation Plan (2016)** developed the idea of regional service to the mountain and a circulator between mountain destinations.
- **Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan (2014)** included extension of Mountain Express to Timberline Lodge and rebranding at Mt. Hood Express.



Upcoming Efforts

- **Hood River County Transportation District Transit Master Plan Update** will update service plans for Columbia Area Transit (CAT) and address a future transit hub at the Port of Hood River and park and ride opportunities.
- **Clackamas County Transit Hubs Study** will identify locations for an intermodal hub on the mountain.
- **Clackamas County Integrated Fare Study** will include ideas on pass programs, fare structures, and collection infrastructure.
- **Gorge Transit strategy Phase II** sponsored by the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, will build on Phase I and lay out options for future transit delivery in the Gorge.
- **Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan Update** will include an updated list of pedestrian, bicycling, safety, and transit projects.
- **Government Camp Rest Area Relocation Feasibility Study** will assess feasibility and design considerations for relocating the Government Camp rest area on US 26.

VISION PRINCIPLES

Our Vision Principles represent our shared values.



World-class User Experience

We believe a customer-focused, convenient, and enjoyable transit service will change the travel behavior of existing users and attract new users



Managing Congestion

We believe public transit is a critical element in a regional congestion management effort that strives to mitigate congestion and improve safety when accessing key destinations.



Environmental Stewardship

We believe public transit contributes to responsible use and protection of public lands.



Economic Vitality

We believe a robust public transit service contributes to a vital regional economy by supporting tourism in the Mt. Hood/Columbia Gorge region and its related workforce.



Sustainable Funding

We believe generating stable, secure funding from multiple sources creates a sustainable transit service.



Equitable Access

We believe equitable transit service reduces barriers to access for all users, including traditionally underserved populations.



Effective Branding and Marketing

We believe clear, collaborative branding and marketing reaches a broad and diverse audience, achieves high levels of awareness and inspires use of public transit.



Regional Partnerships and Collaboration

We believe strong regional collaboration and public/private partnerships across the Mt. Hood/Columbia Gorge region contribute to an efficient, effective and equitable public transit service.

GOALS

Our goals encompass our desired outcomes.

World-class User Experience



- G1** Provide passengers throughout the Mt. Hood/Columbia Gorge region with access to **dependable and efficient transit** services.
- G2** Prioritize **transit over driving** through policy, design of streets and facilities, and pricing.
- G3** Make the **experience enjoyable** by using modern, comfortable equipment with gear storage, WiFi, great views, and entertainment options.
- G4** Provide customers with **real-time information** about travel conditions and transportation options.
- G5** Provide a **comfortable waiting experience** with amenities at transit hubs.

Managing Congestion



- G6** Integrate transit into a larger **congestion management** strategy that influences changes in travel behavior.
- G7** Promote **safer travel along transit corridors** through education, enforcement, and better transportation options.

Environmental Stewardship



- G8** **Reduce** the need for more **infrastructure** to support those driving to the Mt. Hood region.
- G9** Ensure that on-site resources (restrooms, trail capacity) can **support visitation levels**.
- G10** Use vehicles that operate with **sustainable energy** sources (to the extent possible).

Economic Vitality



- G11** Support **tourism and economic development** along transit corridors within the region.
- G12** Provide transit service that meets the needs of the **workforce** and facilitates regional employment opportunities and job retention.

Sustainable Funding



- G13** Achieve **financial security** by identifying and balancing diverse and innovative revenue sources.

Equitable Access



G14

Incorporate **equity** by addressing barriers that impact people's **ability to safely access** and use public transportation.

Effective Branding and Marketing



G15

Develop **service branding** that is clear and easy to understand for all.

G16

Develop **marketing that is welcoming and effective** at motivating target markets to use the service.

G17

Leverage **existing collaboratives** to execute the branding and marketing strategy and achieve high levels of awareness.

Regional Partnerships and Collaboration



G18

Develop a **regional partnership** that supports the service's governance, funding, user experience, economic connections, and communications with customers.

G19

Coordinate and build upon **regionally significant projects** and developments already underway.



STRATEGIES

Our strategies include actionable activities to achieve our goals. Actions and projects associated with each strategy are described in the Framework 4 Action (F4A) section.

Governance

- **Strategy #1:** Determine governance model(s) for operationalizing regional service and achieving VAM goals.

Transit Routes

- **Strategy #2:** Maximize use of the existing network of transit providers
- **Strategy #3:** Create a network of trunk and feeder routes including express, local, and circulator services connecting to and from the mountain.

Service Operations

- **Strategy #4:** Ensure convenient regional connections between transit providers
- **Strategy #5:** Procure high-quality transit vehicles
- **Strategy #6:** Develop a fare structure that is easy to understand
- **Strategy #7:** Make the mountain accessible for low-income visitors

Transit Hubs & Amenities

- **Strategy #8:** Prioritize access to well-developed sites in the near-term, until policy has been formalized around access to less-developed sites
- **Strategy #9:** Provide safe and accessible bus stops
- **Strategy #10:** Develop a network for primary and secondary transit hubs
- **Strategy #11:** Create park and rides below the snow line

Passenger Convenience

- **Strategy #12:** Scale service levels to demand
- **Strategy #13:** Run service frequently enough so people do not need a schedule
- **Strategy #14:** Make transit travel times competitive with driving, door to door
- **Strategy #15:** Make service seamless with no more than one transfer between major destinations
- **Strategy #16:** Provide real-time travel conditions via web, mobile app, and at transit hubs
- **Strategy #17:** Support regional travel with integrated trip planner for all operators
- **Strategy #18:** Make passengers confident knowing they will have a seat on the bus
- **Strategy #19:** Make waiting areas comfortable with robust passenger amenities
- **Strategy #20:** Provide ample gear storage both on and off the bus

Recreation Lands Access & Congestion Management

- **Strategy #21:** Manage Sno-Park access to improve safety and reduce congestion
- **Strategy #22:** Undertake data collection to understand mountain usage
- **Strategy #23:** Use policies and programs to reduce unsafe driving and parking behaviors along US 26 and OR 35
- **Strategy #24:** Determine desired maximum capacity at recreation sites

Marketing, Branding, & Customer Engagement

- **Strategy #25:** Conduct outreach targeted at underserved populations to understand their transit needs
- **Strategy #26:** Develop a fun, attractive, light-hearted brand
- **Strategy #27:** Appeal to a broad audience
- **Strategy #28:** Promote service through tourism agencies, hotels, destinations, etc.
- **Strategy #29:** Find ways of integrating information about the area's history as part of the bus ride
- **Strategy #30:** Develop public awareness and education campaigns

Planning and Policy

- **Strategy #31:** Leverage transit investments in continued development and land use planning
- **Strategy #32:** Update local and regional policies to support transit
- **Strategy #33:** Implement user fees and use pricing to incentivize behavior change



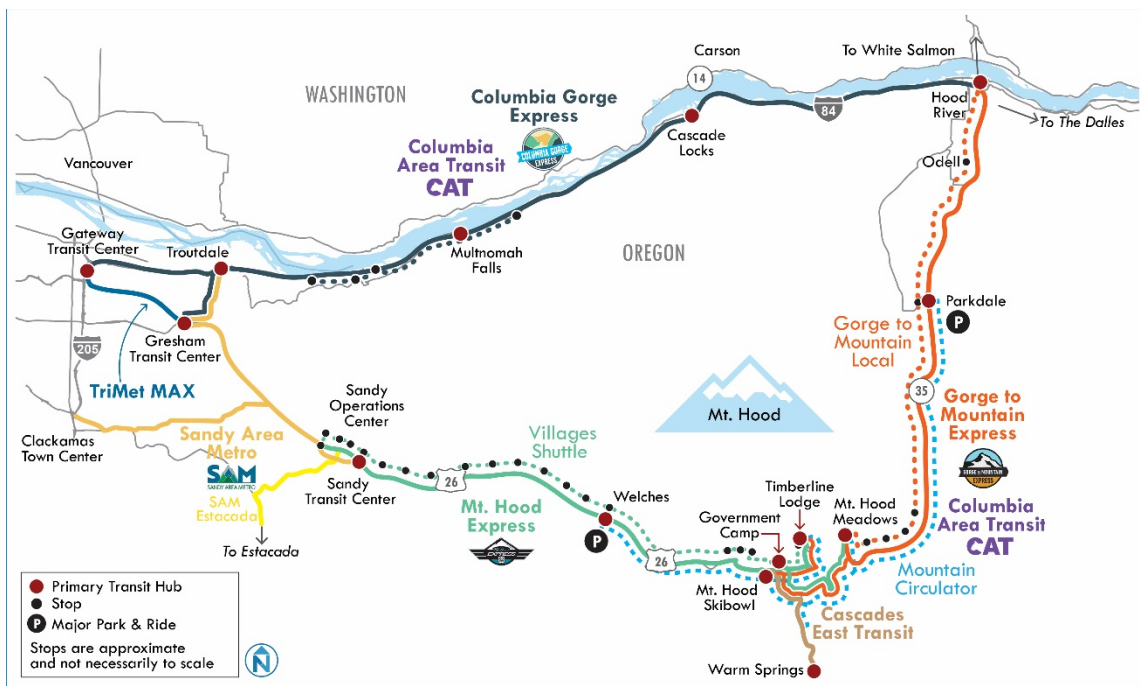
4 LOOKING FORWARD

Two critical elements are needed – additional funding to expand transit service, and leadership – to determine governance and next steps.

FUNDING THE VISION

One of the primary hurdles to realizing the Vision is the cost associated with providing additional transit services and associated amenities. It is estimated that the annual operating cost of all existing providers (MHX, SAM Gresham route, CGE, GTM, and Timberline Shuttle) is approximately **\$2 million/year in 2021**. To operate the core network Vision as shown below (Figure 11) for CGE, SAM, MHX, and GTM, the cost would be close to **\$5 million/year** for enhanced service frequencies operating every day and year-round.

Figure 11 Transit Network Vision



In addition to annual operating costs, the full Vision would also require additional capital costs for new vehicles, new transit hubs, park and ride facilities, etc. The cost to operationalize the US 26, OR 35, and I-84 service would therefore exceed \$5 million annually. Actual capital costs estimates are not available for this report.

Vision Around the Mountain ODOT

To fund transit, most providers typically utilize a mix of traditional (state and federal) as well as other funding sources (local subsidies, fares, advertising, etc.). And, while existing providers in the VAM network are also partially funded through private contributions from ski resorts, other innovative sources will need to be secured. Identifying the right mix of funding requires much more exploration. Some potential sources that could be used to fulfill the vision include:

Traditional Sources

- State
 - STIF
- Federal
 - 5307
 - 5311
 - FLAP
- Other
 - Local subsidies
 - Fares, advertising



New/Innovative Sources

- Pooled resources
- Leverage higher local match
- Congestion pricing
- Added Private contributions
- Parking fees
 - Increase Sno-Park fees
 - Charges for preferred parking

BUILDING LEADERSHIP

A critical next step is to develop an interagency leadership group that will continue pursuing the Vision.

A critical path topic for this Leadership group is governance models. Transit is currently provided through a blend of multiple models: transportation district (CAT, CGE), city agency (SAM), council of governments (CET through the Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council), and county agency (MHX). Each model has benefits and constraints that affect staffing levels, ability to access certain funds, and ability to leverage funds.

As discussed in the Framework 4 Action (see next section), VAM leadership should evaluate what a governance model needs to achieve, and assess how well existing governance structures meet those needs. The leadership team may decide the best course for Vision is to grow within existing models. Or, it may become apparent that a modified/hybrid model and/or new entity is needed to achieve the Vision.

The steps described below and summarized in Figure 12 are possible outcomes that will build leadership around VAM depending on the desired governance structure.

- **Communication/Coordination.** The first phase is for study participants, acting independently, to continue engaging with each other on a regular basis to better coordinate existing services. Initially these engagements could expand on their shared values and goals, but eventually could result in establishing a regular forum that would move the Vision forward. Developing a name for the alliance (e.g., the VAM Shared Vision Alliance) would be an important first step. This group could initially meet informally without much structure, but as needs arise would develop more formalized goals and start assigning defined roles to different members.

Vision Around the Mountain
ODOT

- **Enhanced Coordination/Collaboration.** Once this new group has been meeting regularly, the next phase is to identify other partners necessary for carrying the vision forward and to ensure full representation of partners and other stakeholders. Building off the mantra "form follows function," this phase could also involve clearly identifying why carrying the vision forward is important and then, acting jointly, develop an operational plan for making it happen. This could include working together on selected functions by non-binding actions such as exploring new funding options, identifying marketing/branding needs, and collectively responding to policy, administrative and operational issues.
- **Vision Stewardship.** The final phase is to formalize the group, identify a leadership team to implement the vision, and merge select (or all) functions by mutual consent. This may involve operational funding to provide technical expertise for the group and/or to help facilitate meetings and provide more structure and organization. This could include development of a website that coordinates existing services and schedules, spearheads development of shared facilities, creates a unified brand and fare mechanism, manages additional community outreach needs, etc. Should consolidation of existing services be considered feasible, this group or organization could legally transfer authority to a single agency responsible for providing service, securing funding, and planning for future service needs.



Vision Around the Mountain
ODOT

Figure 12 How Building Leadership Might Achieve Vision

Communication / Coordination

- Common Transfer Points
- Coordinated Schedules
- VAM Study

Enhanced Coordination / Collaboration

- Unified Website / Presence
- New Services / Connections
- Coordinated Schedules
- Defined Service Models (Local / Express)

Vision Stewardship

- Unified Identity / Website / Vehicles
- Shared Resources (Vehicles, Staff, Facilities, Etc.)
- New / Enhanced Facilities
- Expanded Funding Availability
- Fully Unified Fare Structure



A CALL FOR ACTION

Completing this Vision document is an important milestone in addressing future mobility needs to and around the mountain. The value of this visioning process is to organize priorities and goals and create a path forward. This milestone, along with the many years of dedication by numerous partners, will prepare the region for another decade of improving mobility to and around the mountain. And yet, there is much more work to be done to fully realize the vision. The next phase, and perhaps the most critical, is to maintain the momentum gained from this visioning process.

The **Framework 4 Action** presented in the next section establishes actionable strategies that are organized in a way that they do not all need to be completed at once or in any specific sequence. It is also important to note that the strategies developed in this vision document are intended to supplement, not supersede, other planning efforts, such as the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan update and the Gorge Transit Strategy. Progress toward the Vision will be acknowledged and updated in the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan.



FRAMEWORK 4 ACTION



FRAMEWORK 4 ACTION (F4A)

We can achieve the vision by building on what we have.

Vision Around the Mountain ODOT

The purpose of the Framework 4 Action (F4A) is to demonstrate implementable steps supporting Vision achievement. The Actions reflect the overall Vision and supporting Vision Principles, Goals, and Strategies.

F4A will serve as a resource and guiding document. Examples of uses include but are not limited to:

- Project implementation
- Informing policy development and decisions
- Leveraging strategic investments
- Reference for grant applications/proposals
- Integration of transit programs
- Capital improvements planning and purchasing
- Research, studies, plans
- Customer engagement, outreach, marketing
- Ongoing collaborative action



The F4A will also inform the project list for the *Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan (MHMM) 2.0 update*. MHMM is a 15-year rolling plan updated every five years.

Definitions

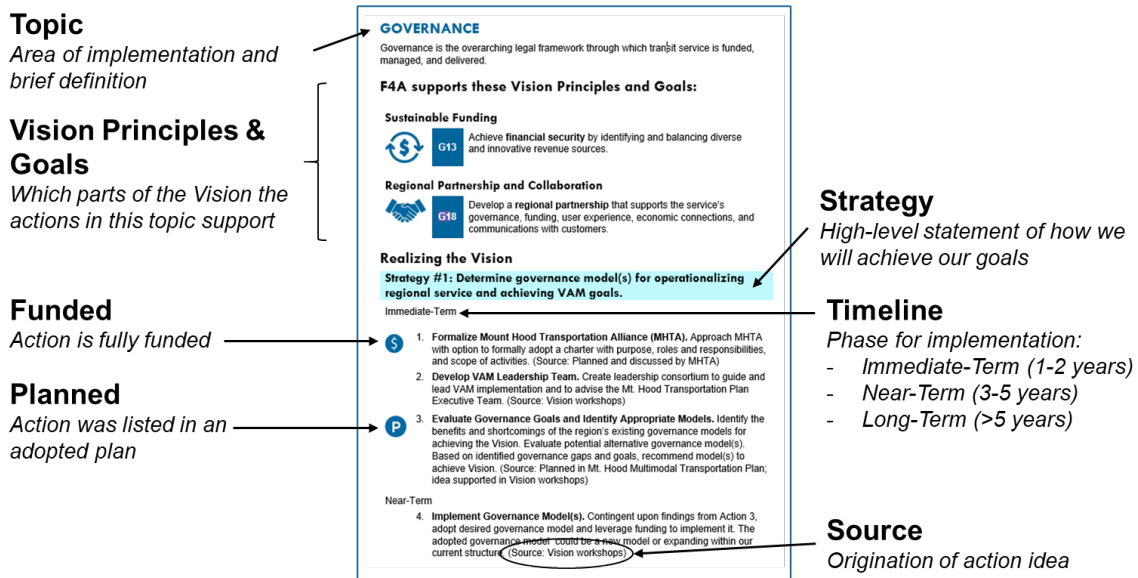
- **Strategy:** How we will achieve our goals – **actionable activities**
- **Actions:** Specific **steps toward strategies**, including ideas generated by stakeholders and projects that are already planned and/or funded

HOW TO NAVIGATE F4A

The vision principles and goals are oriented around values. F4A focuses on implementation, therefore, it is organized around eight key topic areas. Each topic area includes relevant Vision Principles and Goals, Strategies that move us toward the vision, and a list of phased actions.

VAM was created through a visioning process combined with a collation of previously identified projects. Therefore, not every strategy has an action; not every strategy includes immediate, near, and long-term step.

Figure 13 Key to F4A Contents



Equity

Equity must be woven into all our work, rather than being a stand-alone topic. There are three primary barriers VAM tries to overcome:

1. *Physical barriers* such as lack of sidewalks or bike facilities and inaccessible stops that do not meet ADA standards
2. *Cultural barriers* including language challenges or travel patterns that do not align with traditional times
3. *Resource barriers* such as low incomes that preclude people from accessing transit

Actions breaking down these barriers are integrated throughout F4A.

GOVERNANCE

Governance is the overarching legal framework through which transit service is funded, managed, and delivered.

F4A supports these Vision Principles and Goals:

Sustainable Funding



G13

Achieve **financial security** by identifying and balancing diverse and innovative revenue sources.

Regional Partnership and Collaboration



G18

Develop a **regional partnership** that supports the service's governance, funding, user experience, economic connections, and communications with customers.

Realizing the Vision

Strategy #1: Determine governance model(s) for operationalizing regional service and achieving VAM goals.

Immediate-Term

1. **Formalize Mount Hood Transportation Alliance (MHTA).** Approach MHTA with option to formally adopt a charter with purpose, roles and responsibilities, and scope of activities. (Source: Under discussion by MHTA)
2. **Develop VAM Leadership Team.** Create leadership consortium to guide and lead VAM implementation and to advise the Mt. Hood Transportation Plan Executive Team. (Source: Vision workshops)
3. **Evaluate Governance Goals and Identify Appropriate Models.** Identify the benefits and shortcomings of the region's existing governance models for achieving the Vision. Evaluate potential alternative governance model(s). Based on identified governance gaps and goals, recommend model(s) to achieve Vision. (Source: Planned in Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan; idea supported in Vision workshops)

Near-Term

4. **Implement Governance Model(s).** Contingent upon findings from Action 3, adopt desired governance model and leverage funding to implement it. The adopted governance model could be a new model or expanding within our current structure. (Source: Vision workshops)
- 5.

TRANSIT ROUTES

Routes refer to **where bus routes** are located.

F4A supports these Vision Principles and Goals:

World-class User Experience



G1

Provide passengers throughout the Mt. Hood/Columbia Gorge region with access to **dependable and efficient transit** services.

Managing Congestion



G6

Integrate transit into a larger **congestion management** strategy that influences changes in travel behavior.

Environmental Stewardship



G10

Use vehicles that operate with **sustainable energy** sources (to the extent possible).

Economic Vitality



G11

Support **tourism and economic development** along transit corridors within the region.

G12

Provide transit service that meets the needs of the **workforce** and facilitates regional employment opportunities and job retention.

Realizing the Vision

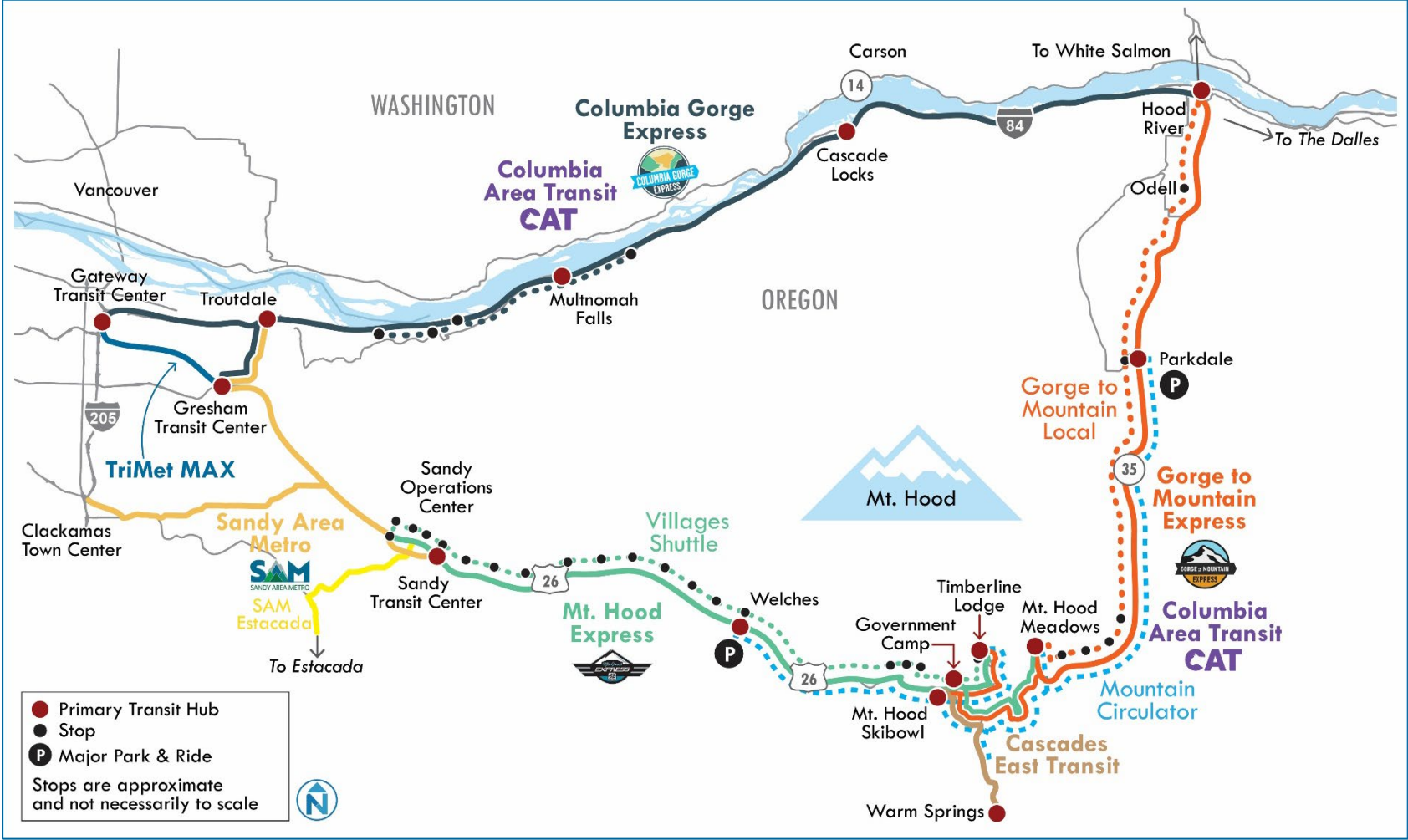
Figure 14 shows the future route network applicable to strategies 2, 3, and 4.

Strategy #2: Maximize use of the existing network of transit providers

Immediate-Term

6. **Upgrade Capital Equipment.** Continue purchasing capital equipment to maintain or expand existing transit service. (Source: Vision workshops. Clackamas County and CAT received funding to purchase capital equipment through 2021-2023 STIF allocation that may include vehicles for service maintenance and expansion)

Figure 14 Transit Network Vision



Near-Term



7. **Modify Limited-Stop Service on US 26.** Modify existing limited stop service along the corridor served by MHX, with some trips serving only major stops to streamline travel time and appeal to a wider market. (Source: Vision workshops)

Long-Term


8. **Expand US 26/OR 35 Local Service.** Expand on existing local service to provide frequent, all-day service in the corridors served by the Villages Shuttle and GTM, from Sandy to the mountain via US 26, and from Hood River to the mountain via OR 35. Connections to the Portland area could be made in Sandy and Hood River. (Source: Vision workshops)
9. **Expand US 26/OR 35 Express Service.** Expand on existing express service to provide frequent, all-day service in the corridors served by MHX and GTM, from Sandy to the mountain via US 26, and from Hood River to the mountain via OR 35. Serve primary transit hubs only to streamline travel times. Connections to the Portland area could be made in Sandy and Hood River. (Source: Vision workshops).

Strategy #3: Create a network of trunk and feeder routes including express, local, and circulator services connecting to and from the mountain

Immediate-Term

-  10. **Connect Warm Springs to Government Camp.** Implement CET's planned route from Warm Springs to Government Camp service in late 2021. (Source: Funded through STIF 2019-2021 allocation)
- 

Near-Term

-  11. **Fill Missing Mountain Transit Link.** Pilot expansion of transit service between Timberline Lodge and Mt. Hood Meadows, providing additional direct access to recreation lands. (Source: Identified in Mt. Hood Transit Implementation Plan; discussed in Vision workshops)
12. **Plan Mountain Transit Circulator.** Assess the cost and operating feasibility of a new mountain transit circulator between ski resorts, Government Camp, and Sno-Parks. (Source: Vision workshops)

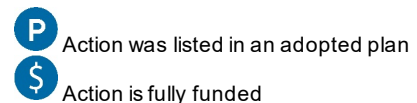
Long-Term

13. **Operate Mountain Transit Circulator.** Continue developing mountain transit circulator (Action 11) and adding desired stops as site facilities and access policies are formalized (such as designing for hop on/off service at trailheads and other recreational activities). Connect at each end to major park and rides. (Source: Vision Workshops)
14. **Explore Feeder Service.** Explore feeder service that can bring people from outside the primary transit service area to a stop location. (Source: Vision workshops)
15. **Research Resource Balancing.** As part of determining future service delivery, research other regional transit systems that successfully manage seasonal demand and develop list of solutions for resource optimization. Identify which solutions (e.g., resource sharing, contracting with private operators) may help the Gorge/Mountain region scale up and scale down operations to meet peak demand times. (Source: Vision workshops)
16. **Establish Return Trip Service.** Shuttle people back to their start location from the end of popular trailheads, so people do not have to hike the return trip. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #4: Ensure convenient regional connections between transit providers

Long-Term

17. **Optimize Regional Connections.** Create a continuous network of public transportation around the mountain and connecting mountain communities. Concepts identified through Vision workshops and previous plans include:
 - P** a. **Connection from Sandy to Clackamas Town Center** via Highway 212, identified in the Clackamas County Transit Development Plan.
 - b. **Seamless connection from Sandy to Portland** identified in Vision workshops
 - c. **Evaluation of East Multnomah County Travel Demand**, for travel between the Troutdale and Gresham markets. This is currently served by TriMet. High demand may indicate the need for more direct service between these communities, eliminating the need to transfer between CGE, TriMet, and SAM.



SERVICE OPERATIONS

Operations covers aspects of running transit service such as **vehicles** and **fares**.

F4A supports these Vision Principles and Goals:

World-class User Experience



G3

Make the **experience enjoyable** by using modern, comfortable equipment with gear storage, WiFi, great views, and entertainment options.

Environmental Stewardship



G10

Use vehicles that operate with **sustainable energy** sources (to the extent possible).

Equitable Access



G14

Incorporate **equity** by addressing barriers that impact people's **ability to safely access** and use public transportation.

Realizing the Vision

Strategy #5: Procure high-quality transit vehicles.

Long-Term

18. **Research Alternative Fuel Transit Vehicles.** Conduct research into transit vehicles that use alternate fuels and operate well in an alpine environment. (Source: Vision workshops)

“[I envision] A less complicated system for using transit to access sites around the mountain.”

– Stakeholder survey

19. **Use Comfortable Vehicles.** Provide an enjoyable experience with over-the-road coaches with restrooms, WiFi, outlets, and open views. (Source: Vision workshops)





Action was listed in an adopted plan




Action is fully funded

Strategy #6: Develop a fare structure that is easy to use

Immediate-Term

-  20. **Complete Clackamas County Integrated Fare Study.** Study will include ideas on pass programs/fare mediums/collection infrastructure. (Source: Project is funded through Clackamas County and will begin in 2021)
- 

Near-Term



-  21. **Upgrade Fareboxes.** Upgrade fareboxes to allow for tap cards and phone payment (Source: Vision workshops. Upgrades to SAM fareboxes were recommended in the Sandy TMP.)



Long-Term

- 22. **Conduct Regional Fare Study.** Build on outcomes of Clackamas County Integrated Fare Study (Action 19). Study could include development of a regional pass program to encourage greater transit use, employer bulk buy option for employees, direct subsidies from large employers, etc. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #7: Make the mountain accessible for low-income visitors

Immediate-Term

-  23. **Expand Low-Income Fare Program.** Expand CAT's existing GOrge Pass program (accepted on CAT and CGE services) and continue low-income program for Hood River County residents. Evaluate expansion opportunities with other transit providers. (Source: GO Pass low-income program funded through 2021-2023 STIF allocation)
- 

 Action was listed in an adopted plan
 Action is fully funded

TRANSIT HUBS & AMENITIES

F4A supports these Vision Principles and Goals:

World-class User Experience



G3

Make the **experience enjoyable** by using modern, comfortable equipment with gear storage, WiFi, great views, and entertainment options

G5

Provide a **comfortable waiting experience** with amenities at transit hubs.

Environmental Stewardship



G9

Ensure that on-site resources (restrooms, trail capacity) can **support visitation levels**.

Economic Vitality



G11

Support **tourism and economic development** along transit corridors within the region.

Equitable Access



G14

Incorporate **equity** by addressing barriers that impact people's **ability to safely access** and use public transportation.

Realizing the Vision

Strategy #8: Prioritize access to well-developed sites in the near-term, until policy has been formalized around access to less-developed sites.

Near-Term

- P** 24. **Explore Gondola/Aerial Tram.** Continue exploring feasibility and cost of an aerial tram between Government Camp and Timberline Lodge, a major destination. (Source: Planned in Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan, Timberline Master Plan)
- 25. **Develop Transit and Recreation Lands Policy.** Develop agency policy around the role of transit for accessing USFS lands. This will be used to determine how transit much transit service is desired at USFS



Action was listed in an adopted plan



Action is fully funded

sites. Consider how transit might connect to regional trails. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #9: Provide safe and accessible bus stops.

Immediate-Term

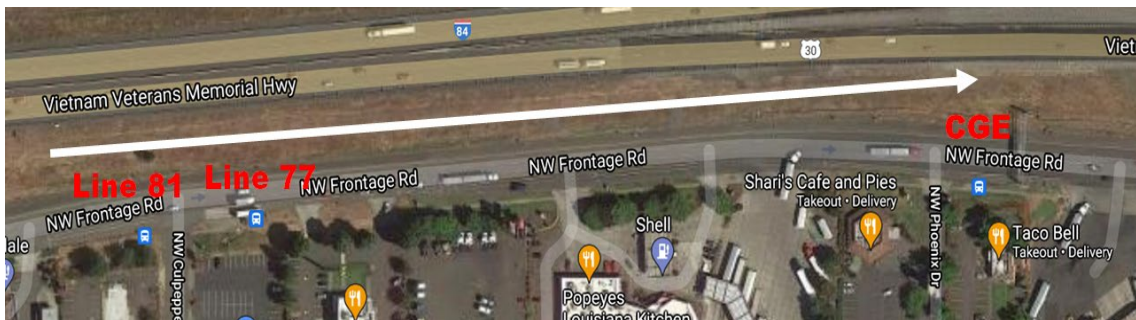
- P** 26. **Enhance Accessibility.** Upgrade existing stops as funding is available to meet ADA standards. (Source: Vision workshops. CAT obtained funding in the 2021-2023 STIF allocation to make ADA upgrades.)

\$
- \$** 27. **Provide Stop Amenities.** Provide quality amenities at all bus stops, including signage, shelter, bike parking, and lighting. Provide more robust amenities at transit hubs with high levels of activity. (Source: Vision workshops. Clackamas County obtained funding to improve bus stops in the 2021-2023 STIF allocation)
- 28. **Identify Roadway Upgrades Needed for Bus Service.** Identify desired bus stop locations along ODOT right-of-way on US 26 and OR 35. Work with ODOT to understand what upgrades are required to make these locations safe for buses to stop. (Source: Vision workshops)

Near-Term

- P** 29. **Continue Implementing Villages Plan.** Continue addressing pedestrian safety needs identified in the Villages Plan for access to transit service on US 26 (Source: Planned in Villages Plan)
- 30. **Improve CGE-TriMet Connection in Troutdale.** Consolidate Line 81/77 and CGE stops along Frontage Road in Troutdale to improve pedestrian safety and comfort. (Source: Vision workshops)

Figure 15 CGE has been directed to stop several block east of TriMet buses





- P** Action was listed in an adopted plan
- \$** Action is fully funded

Long-Term

31. **Achieve System-Wide Accessibility.** Build all new bus stops to ADA standards. Over time, improve all bus stops so they become ADA-compliant. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #10: Develop a network of primary and secondary transit hubs.

Immediate-Term

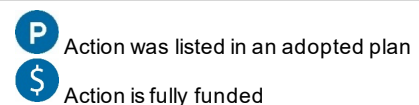
-  32. **Complete Clackamas County Transit Hubs Study.** Complete Clackamas County Transit Hubs Study to identify (1) 2-4 locations for an intermodal hub on the mountain (2) hub requirements (3) management plan (4) cost estimating (5) design concepts. Use this opportunity to identify primary and secondary hubs, which are places with high levels of existing or expected activity. Visioning process identified primary and secondary hubs as a way of framing the level of transit service and amenities desired. (Source: Study funded through Clackamas County and will begin in 2021)
-  33. **Finalize Government Camp Rest Area Relocation.** Complete relocation study based on findings from the Clackamas County Transit Hubs Study (Action 31). (Source: Relocation under discussion)
34. **Explore Sandy Transit Hub.** Research the funding and implementation of a Transit-Oriented Development Park & Ride in Sandy. (Source: Vision workshops)

Near-Term

35. **Develop Phased Bus Stops/Hubs List.** Map out a phased list of future bus stops, including primary hubs, secondary hubs, and local/recreation stops (see Action 31, 32, 33). Work with USFS on site management and access priorities (Action 24). Develop list of desired amenities at each type of stop/hub. (Source: Vision workshops)

Long-Term

36. **Make Transit Hubs into Places.** Create an environment where bus riders have access to retail activities and can easily hop off a bus, visit a place, and hop back on the bus. This supports existing retail and encourages additional development. (Source: Vision workshops)



Strategy #11: Create park and rides below the snow line.

Immediate-Term

- P** 37. **Explore Highway 35 Park and Ride Options.** Review land use and park and ride options in the OR 35 corridor as part of the HRCTD Transit Master Plan update (HRCTD includes CAT and CGE service). (Source: Study is funded through HRCTD and will begin in 2021/2022)
- \$**
- P** 38. **Develop Location for Hood River Transit Hub.** Evaluate feasibility of using Anchor Way at the Port of Hood River as a transit hub for local service, intercity service, and service connection to the mountain. (Source: Idea is under discussion between CAT and the Port of Hood River)

Near-Term

- P** 39. **Formalize Existing Highway 26 Park and Rides.** Add signage and amenities at park and rides along Highway 26. Evaluate existing usage and desired future functions in the express/local network. (Source: Planned in the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan)
- P** 40. **Investigate New Highway 26 Park and Rides.** Continue exploring locations identified in the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan for robust park and rides to reduce driving into the main destination area of US 26. (Source: Planned in the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan)



Action was listed in an adopted plan



Action is fully funded

PASSENGER CONVENIENCE

F4A supports these Vision Principles and Goals:

World-class User Experience



- G1** Provide passengers throughout the Mt. Hood/Columbia Gorge region with access to **dependable and efficient transit** services.
- G2** Prioritize **transit over driving** through policy, design of streets and facilities, and pricing.
- G3** Make the **experience enjoyable** by using modern, comfortable equipment with gear storage, WiFi, great views, and entertainment options.
- G4** Provide customers with **real-time information** about travel conditions and transportation options.
- G5** Provide a **comfortable waiting experience** with amenities at transit hubs.

Managing Congestion



- G6** Integrate transit into a larger **congestion management** strategy that influences changes in travel behavior.
- G7** Promote **safer travel along transit corridors** through education, enforcement, and better transportation options.

Realizing the Vision

**Strategy #12: Scale service levels to demand; and
Strategy #13: Run service frequently enough so people do not
need a schedule**

Immediate-Term

- P** 41. **Evaluate OR 35 Service Levels.** Determine market demand and feasibility of increasing service in the OR 35 corridor as part of the HRCTD Transit Master Plan Update. (Source: Study is planned and funded through HRCTD and will begin in 2021/2022)



Action was listed in an adopted plan



Action is fully funded

Near-Term

42. **Accommodate Peak Winter Transit Demand.** During peak times (Thursday/Friday/Saturday in December and January + winter holidays) demand for MHX service from Sandy to Timberline exceeds capacity, meaning not everyone waiting at a bus stop can board. Secure resources to provide additional trips during these high-demand times. (Source: Vision workshops)

Long-Term

43. **Understand Region's Travel Demand Patterns.** Travel patterns for recreation, employment, and local needs vary. Conduct robust outreach to employers, residents, and traditionally marginalized communities to understand the unique travel demand patterns of the region. (Source: Vision workshops)
44. **Establish Target Service Levels and Increase Service.** Establish target service levels (hours of operation and frequency) by season and weekday/weekend based on community input (Action 42). Over time, increase service levels to meet targets. Strive to run service frequently enough so that people do not have to consult a schedule. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #14: Make transit travel times competitive with driving, door to door

Immediate-Term

45. **Identify Delay Locations.** Use Automatic Vehicle Location data to identify areas of high delay to buses and when that delay typically occurs. Publish in annual transit agency reports to build the case for transit priority. (Source: Vision workshops)

Near-Term

46. **Place Transit at the Front Door.** Provide a prominent front door location for transit stops at ski resorts to reduce door to door travel times. Ensure adequate space for buses to circulate through parking areas. (Source: Vision workshops).

P 47. **Document Infrastructure Issues Causing Delay and Safety Hazards.**

Transit turns onto and off of US 26 numerous times. These turns can result in long delays and present safety concerns, as operators wait for a gap, then must accelerate rapidly when a gap appears. The Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

identified both ends of Government Camp Loop Road and accessing the Ski Bowl areas as places needing safety improvements. Continue building the case for signals or other safety improvements at these locations. (Source: Planned in Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan)

“[I envision] Frequency that builds confidence in riders that their time will be efficient and they will not be stranded.”

– Stakeholder survey

Long-Term

48. **Implement Transit Priority.** Implement transit priority treatments (signal priority, bus lanes, bus on shoulder) connecting to and around the mountain. (Source: Vision Workshops)

49. **Minimize Dwell Time.** Minimize dwell time (the amount of time spent loading and unloading passengers) through boarding islands, off-board fare payment, and staff employed to help people load and unload their gear. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #15: Make service seamless with no more than one transfer between major destinations

Immediate-Term

50. **Minimize Transfer Times.** Evaluate transfer times on existing services to see if there is opportunity to reduce transfer times. This increases convenience and reduces travel times. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #16: Provide real-time travel conditions via web, mobile app, and at transit hubs

Immediate-Term

P 51. **Show Next Bus Information at Transit Hubs.** Install sign boards with next bus information at transit hubs. (Source: Vision workshops. CAT received funding to install digital sign boards with next bus information in the City of Hood River.)

\$

52. **Publish Real-Time Parking Capacity.** Publish parking capacity on ski resort web sites. (Source: Vision workshops)

P

Action was listed in an adopted plan

\$

Action is fully funded

Long-Term

- P** 53. **Provide Integrated Web Site & Phone App with Transportation Information and Options.** Create a regional clearinghouse for traveler information including parking capacity, congestion levels and travel times, and next bus information. Use Intelligent Transportation System technology to provide information via web and mobile app. (Source: Planned in Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan)
- P** 54. **Expand Cell Phone Coverage.** Increase cell phone coverage so people can access online and mobile information. (Source: Planned in Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan)

Strategy #17: Support regional travel with integrated trip planner for all operators

Near Term

- 55. **Set Up Systems for Real-Time Integration.** Finish outfitting existing fleets with Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVL) with open Application Programming Interface (API) so all systems can be tracked real-time and can “talk” to each other. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #18: Make passengers confident knowing they will have a seat on the bus

Immediate-Term

- 56. **Research Seat Reservation Policies.** Riders want to be sure to get a seat on the bus, especially for long trips like those needed to get to and from the mountain. Research seat reservation policies and any legal implications to public transit resulting from these policies. (Source: Vision workshops)

Long-Term

- 57. **Integrate Dynamic Booking.** Allow passengers to dynamically book a seat on the bus if capacity is available. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #19: Make waiting areas comfortable with robust passenger amenities.

Near-Term

- P** 58. **Add Gresham Transit Center Amenities.** The Sandy Transit Master Plan identified a need for additional passenger amenities on NE 8th Street

where SAM buses make connections to TriMet services. (Source: Planned in the Sandy Transit Master Plan)

Long-Term

59. **Build Out Transit Hub Amenities.** Build out primary transit hubs serving major destinations and secondary hubs serving smaller destinations with robust amenities. These amenities might include restrooms, shelters, seating, gear storage, bike lockers, wayfinding and local information, and next bus information. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #20: Provide ample gear storage both on and off the bus

Long-Term

60. **On-Bus Gear Storage:** Provide ample secure storage for bikes, skis, and snowboards on buses or in trailers. Consider employing an assistant to help people load and unload gear. Ensure that passengers who spend time loading gear can still get a seat. (Source: Vision workshops)

“[I envision] A transit system that is an attractive alternative even for those with access to a private vehicle”

– Stakeholder survey

61. **Off-Bus Gear Storage:** Encourage passengers to shop or dine while waiting for the bus by building secure storage for gear at transit hubs. (Source: Vision workshops)

RECREATION LANDS ACCESS & CONGESTION MANAGEMENT

F4A supports these Vision Principles and Goals:

Managing Congestion



G6

Integrate transit into a larger **congestion management** strategy that influences changes in travel behavior.

G7

Promote **safer travel along transit corridors** through education, enforcement, and better transportation options.

Environmental Stewardship



G9

Ensure that on-site resources (restrooms, trail capacity) can **support visitation levels**.

G10

Use vehicles that operate with **sustainable energy** sources (to the extent possible).

Regional Partnerships and Collaboration



G18

Develop a **regional partnership** that supports the service's governance, funding, user experience, economic connections, and communications with customers.

Realizing the Vision

Strategy #21: Manage Sno Park access to improve safety and reduce congestion

Immediate-Term



62. **Complete Sno-Park Fee Analysis.** Complete USFS analysis of Sno-Park fee structure and share findings with the Mount Hood Transportation Alliance. (Source: In progress by USFS)



63. **Evaluate Sno-Park Access.** Undertake study of Sno-Park site management and access improvements. Topics potentially include:

a. ITS solutions to track and communicate parking capacity below the snow line and reduce unsafe access behaviors (Source: Under discussion by ODOT and USFS)



b. Work with the USFS Winter Recreation Advisory Committee to understand legislative changes that would be needed to increase

Sno-Park permit price and revenue sharing with USFS, ODOT maintenance, transit providers (Source: Planned in Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan)

Strategy #22: Undertake data collection to understand mountain usage

Immediate-Term

-  64. **Finish National Visitor Use Monitoring.** Complete NVUM monitoring, which counts visitation at recreation sites, and publish sample data to provide a benchmark for visitation levels. (Source: In progress by USFS)
- 

Strategy #23: Use policies and programs to reduce unsafe driving and parking behaviors along US 26 and OR 35

Immediate-Term

- 65. **Explore Parking Management & Mitigations.** Continue interagency Mt. Hood Multimodal Plan Executive Team to explore parking congestion mitigations along priority travel corridors. Update Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan with applicable projects. (Source: Vision workshops)

Long-Term

- 66. **Increase Enforcement.** Increase enforcement resources to reduce unsafe behaviors along US 26 and OR 35, including illegal parking, sledding close to the highway, and double parking in Sno-Park/trailhead lots, impeding transit and emergency vehicle access. (Source: Vision workshops)
- 67. **Continue Exploring Congestion Pricing.** Continue regional discussions around congestion pricing as a way of reducing driving. (Source: Vision workshops)
- 68. **Integrate Innovative Transportation Option.** Provide innovative ways of traveling to and between mountain sites using private options such as outfitter guides, carsharing, carpooling, or on-demand services like Uber and Lyft. This reduces driving personal vehicles between destinations. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #24: Determine desired maximum capacity at recreation sites

Near-Term

69. **Establish Persons At One Time (PAOT).** Establish maximum Persons at One Time at Sno-Parks and trailheads; develop management plan (using a mix of permits, reservations, parking charges, and transit) to meet PAOT. (Source: Vision workshops)

Long-Term

70. **Explore Dynamic Visitor Balancing.** Operators could have real-time capacity and crowding information at hand and knowledge of other trailheads and sites passengers can explore, allowing bus operators to dynamically route people to places that have capacity. (Source: Vision workshops)

MARKETING, BRANDING, & CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

F4A supports these Vision Principles and Goals:

Managing Congestion



G7

Promote **safer travel along transit corridors** through education, enforcement, and better transportation options

Equitable Access



G14

Incorporate **equity** by addressing barriers that impact peoples' ability to **safely access and use** public transportation.

Effective Branding and Marketing



G15

Develop **service branding** that is clear and easy to understand for all.

G16

Develop **marketing that is welcoming and effective** at motivating target markets to use the service.

G17

Leverage **existing collaboratives** to execute the branding and marketing strategy and achieve high levels of awareness.

Regional Partnerships and Collaboration



G18

Develop a **regional partnership** that supports the service's governance, funding, user experience, economic connections, and communications with customers.

Realizing the Vision

Strategy #25: Conduct outreach targeted at underserved populations to understand their transit needs.

- See Action 42

Strategy #26: Develop a fun, attractive, light-hearted brand.

Long-Term

71. **Develop a Regional Brand.** Develop a brand around service to the mountain. Potential models to look at include Northwest Connector. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #27: Appeal to a broad audience.

Near-Term

72. **Translate Materials.** Translate all materials into the languages used by areas served or desired to be served by transit. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #28: Promote service through tourism agencies, hotels, destinations, etc.

Immediate-Term

73. **Provide Ski Pass Discounts.** Provide discounts for those who arrive by transit. (Source: Vision workshops)

Near-Term

74. **Develop universal transit pass.** Develop a universal transit pass program targeted toward major employers and institutions. (Source: Vision workshops)

“Unifying under one name/system and pushing advertising from one entity could help with clarity around what the system offers and who might be a potential customer.”

– Stakeholder survey

75. **Consider Locals Discount.** Consider a reduced fare for locals, encouraging transit use. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #29: Find ways of integrating information about the area’s history as part of the bus ride.

Long-Term

76. **Integrate Education/Enjoyment.** Make the bus ride fun with history and culture programming. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #30: Develop public awareness and education campaigns.

Near-Term

77. **Promote Caring for the Mountain.** Create public awareness and education campaign centered around the region’s affection for Mt. Hood. Include messaging around 1) harms caused to the mountain by unsafe access 2) why you need snow tires/what are snow tires 3) benefits of transit. (Source: Vision workshops)

78. Create “How to get to the Mountain by Transit” Communications Campaign.

This could include a “how to get to the mountain by transit” brochure and utilization of existing provider websites to promote a unified communication message for how to travel via US 26 or OR 35 to Mount Hood. (Source: Vision workshops)

“Transit takes longer than vehicles, so how can the experience of being on a bus must be improved to make up for the time spent on the vehicle?”

– Stakeholder survey

PLANNING AND POLICY

F4A supports these Vision Principles and Goals:

World-class User Experience



G5

Provide a **comfortable waiting experience** with amenities at transit hubs.

Sustainable Funding



G13

Achieve **financial security** by identifying and balancing diverse and innovative revenue sources.

Regional Partnerships and Collaboration



G19

Coordinate and build upon **regionally significant projects** and developments already underway.

Realizing the Vision

Strategy #31: Leverage transit investments in continued development and land use planning

Long-Term

- P** 79. **Integrate Transit Planning with Summit Redevelopment.** As the Summit ski area redevelopment progresses, integrate transit operations into planning and design to ensure good passenger and customer access. (Source: Planned in Summit Ski Area Master Plan)

“If transit is cheaper, more fun, accessible for all, and helps sustain the mountain we love by reducing carbon in a personally measurable way, people will use the system and like it!”

– Stakeholder survey

- P** 80. **Integrate Transit Planning with Molly’s Portal.** A key feature of the Timberline 2019 Master Plan is Molly’s Portal, a new entry plaza and day lodge. As the plan progresses, include considerations for transit planning and access for passengers and customers. (Source: Planned in Timberline Master Plan)

Strategy #32: Update local and regional policies to support transit.

Long-Term

81. **Site Design.** Update state/county/local facilities design and site design manuals to include transit needs. (Source: Vision workshops)
82. **Parking Policy.** Adjust parking code to reduce parking requirements near transit. (Source: Vision workshops)
83. **Zoning Changes.** Upzone areas around transit to encourage development. Provide incentives for developers to build affordable housing and transit-oriented development. (Source: Vision workshops)

Strategy #33: Implement user fees and use pricing to incentivize behavior change.

Immediate

84. **Explore Parking Fee Increase.** Use results from Sno Park fee analysis (Action 62) to continue discussions on how parking fees can be increased in support of transit. (Source: Vision workshops)

