



### Gorge Transit: Existing and Proposed Routes



# Transit Moves People. People Move Oregon.

Public transportation does a lot of important things that you might not even notice. It enables workers to get to jobs, older adults to medical facilities, younger people to schools, bike riders to urban centers, disabled adults to appointments and family members to shopping areas.

As public transportation matures and expands in Oregon, it will do many more important things. Electric buses will cut carbon emissions. Dial-a-ride and weekend service will give people more mobility options. Inter-community routes will expand the concept of neighborhood. On-demand scheduling and integrated payment platforms will empower statewide car-free travel. And that’s just the beginning.

Oregon’s 41 transit agencies have benefitted from additional funding through the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) approved by the 2017 legislature.

In the attached backgrounders, the agencies tell their stories – what they did during the pandemic, how they invested their STIF funds and where they could invest additional STIF funding if it was available.



Check out the backgrounders at [TransitMovesOregon.com](http://TransitMovesOregon.com)

# Senate District 21



## Your Guide to The Ride Connection

### Why Rider Connection is so vital

*Neil and his wife live in Forest Grove. When he learned he needed dialysis, he turned to friends for rides six times a week.*

*Then he discovered Ride Connection and its door-to-door service that takes him to his appointments like clockwork.*

*The service became especially important when his wife was diagnosed with cancer and now has her own travel challenges.*

\*\*\*

*Meaghan works at Amazon and rides the North Hillsboro Link Shuttle to her job.*

*The ride saves her a long, often rainy walk to and from her work.*

*“After a 10 or 12-hour shift, I thank my Ride Connection driver for the convenience,” she says. “The shuttle will become even more important as jobs here continue to expand.”*

Ride Connection is a private, non-profit organization based in Portland that provides free transportation services to older adults and people with disabilities. It offers ways for people to access goods and services needed to survive and enjoy independence, health and inclusion.

The Ride Connection network is made up of a collection of agencies that serve older adults and people with disabilities as well as low-income individuals and the general public by offering a variety of transportation options in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties.

Many Ride Connection services throughout the tri-county area do not operate on a fixed route system. For example:

**Door-to-Door** services provide riders with transportation to access medical care, healthy foods, social services and avoid social isolation

The **Ride Together** program provides mileage reimbursement for community members who drive friends and family members on a regular basis.

The **Travel Training** program provides one-on-one coaching for riders, whether new to public transportation or facing challenges due to developmental disabilities, to help them chart a course to the places they need to go.

Ride Connection works with local transportation partners to schedule, dispatch and organize non-emergency medical transportation for patients.

**Community Connector Shuttles** run regular routes through key outlying areas to reach as many riders underserved by traditional public transportation.

### A Proud Moment for Ride Connection

Ride Connection’s proudest achievement in the last three years is its response to the pandemic. When the pandemic began in early 2020, Ride Connection restructured its services to follow guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), implementing social distancing protocols and providing personal protective equipment (PPE) to all drivers and riders.

Ride Connection established cleaning procedures that also followed CDC guidelines and utilized emergency funding to purchase a fogging machine to increase cleaning capabilities for vehicles.

When ride requests decreased because many destinations were closed, Ride Connection shifted its capacity to deliver food boxes to riders who could not leave their homes.





*Our direct, door-to-door and last-mile transportation services empower riders to move through their local communities with greater agency, making connections that allow them to survive and thrive.*

**How many buses, vans and other vehicles do you operate?**

Ride Connection operates 126 buses, vans and other vehicles. Pre-pandemic weekly ridership averaged 10,479. Current weekly ridership averages 4,993.

**Key priorities for making service route decisions?**

Routing decisions seek to reduce service fragmentation, enhanced regional and inter-regional coordination, expand access, meet commuter needs, improve diversity and inclusivity and meet the needs of historically under-represented and marginalized communities.

**How has Ride Connection applied its STIF funding?**



*Ride Connection has undertaken planning for rural worker shuttle*

Ride Connections applied its STIF funding to:

- Maintain existing Connector Shuttle service
- Expand the Westlink Shuttle and Grovelink Shuttle
- Continue Tualatin shuttle planning for expansion
- Expand Rural Demand Response service
- Update transportation technology
- Support bus stop improvements in collaboration with Washington County
- Undertake planning for regional coordination for shuttle service and specifically for a rural workforce shuttle
- Conduct inter-regional planning with Tillamook County
- Implement Trip Master, a new travel tracking program developed in collaboration with Washington County

**How would Ride Connection apply additional STIF funding?**



With additional STIF funding, Ride Connection would:

- Expand shuttle service
- Add regionally coordinated shuttles
- Purchase electric vehicles
- Make further infrastructure improvements such as bus stop modification and EV charging stations
- Launch innovative pilot programs such as micro-transit and on-demand transportation solutions
- Undertake new partnerships for older adults and disabled services
- Seek broader partnerships in the community
- Address priority service improvements