

Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan *Hood River County, Oregon*

2009 – 2012



Prepared by Mid-Columbia Economic Development District

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Executive Summary

The Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan was prepared by Mid-Columbia Economic Development District to meet state and federal requirements for Special Transportation Fund (STF) agencies to develop a coordinated transportation plan. It focuses on addressing the transportation needs of three target populations residing in Hood River County: low income individuals, individuals with disabilities, and individuals who are senior. The transportation plan looks at gaps in services and prioritizes needs to assist in:

- improving transportation services for the three target populations by identifying opportunities to coordinate existing resources;
- providing a strategy to guide investment of financial resources; and
- guiding the acquisition of future funds and grants.

This plan was developed as a tool to help local transportation providers and communities improve transportation services, increase efficiency of service delivery, and expand outreach to meet growing needs. It provides a framework to guide the investment of transportation resources. As such a resource, this plan:

- evaluates community resources
- assesses and documents transportation needs of the three target populations
- identifies strategies to address gaps in transportation services and efficiencies of service delivery
- establishes relative priorities of the strategies

This document is an update to the 2007-2010 Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan. Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, under contract with the Association of Oregon Counties prepared this plan update. It was updated using information collected from the previous coordinated transportation plan, data from new surveys and outreach efforts, and new demographic and service resource analysis.

The coordinated transportation plan is intended to define and prioritize general strategies that the transit service providers can use to develop specific projects. High priority strategies to address gaps and barriers fell under six categories:

Sustain existing transportation services:

- Maintain dial-a-ride operations
- Maintain daily fixed route services between Hood River and The Dalles
- Provide for replacement of vehicles that have exceeded their useful life
- Seek funding for vehicle repair and maintenance
- Continue policies for allowing companions to ride free

Stable funding:

- Continue to seek to leverage all match against state and federal grant funds
- Utilize local groups to help advocate for public transportation funds

Hours of service:

- Analyze use of fixed route service to determine best service hours

Service routes:

- Market services to determine if there is a critical mass of riders from Cascade Locks for new services

Information about transportation services:

- Provide information to agencies that most closely work with the Spanish speaking population
- Host student intern to write newspaper articles
- Develop brochure to place at locations frequented by the target populations, including human service agencies, laundromats, Gorge Center, and medical facilities
- Continue participation in Gorge TransLink, maintain website as a central information resource, and support TransLink in seeking a mobility manager
- Continue communication with human service providers about transportation services

Planning and coordination:

- Continue shared administration with Wasco County Transportation Network

Performance measures linked to the above strategies were created to help transportation providers assess how they are meeting these strategies over time. This plan is intended to be updated in three years, or as conditions change. When updating, it will be important to gauge progress on the highest priorities and satisfaction of the performance measures. An updated community assessment will also be vital in three years to ensure transportation providers are addressing current community needs.

Introduction

Federal and State Requirements

The State of Oregon requires Special Transportation Fund (STF) agencies to prepare a coordinated transportation plan to guide the investment of STF moneys. The State directs that this plan be utilized to maximize the benefit to the elderly and people with disabilities within that area. Correspondingly, with the passage of the Federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) transportation authorization, Congress required a “locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” intended to improve transportation services for persons with disabilities, individuals who are elderly, and individuals with lower incomes. This Coordinated Transportation Plan serves to meet both federal and state requirements for preparation and adoption of a coordinated plan.

Plan Purpose and Intent

The purpose of the plan is to meet federal and state requirements and to provide a framework for transportation providers and the STF agency to maximize transportation investments to assist three target populations: individuals with low incomes, individuals who are senior, and individuals with disabilities. It covers a three year timeframe (2009-2012) and is intended to be updated at least every three years, or as conditions change.

Planning Area

The planning area covered under this coordinated transportation plan is Hood River County, Oregon. Hood River County is located on the northern border of Oregon along the Columbia River. The county covers 534 square miles with an average of approximately 39 people per square mile.¹ Incorporated cities include Hood River and Cascade Locks. Unincorporated communities include Parkdale, Odell and Pine Grove. Hood River is the most populated community in the County with a total population in 2000 of 5,831. Population in 2000 was 1,115 for Cascade Locks. The nearest metropolitan area is Portland, Oregon, 60 miles to the west.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau

Planning Process

Stakeholder Identification and Consultation Process

Stakeholders include the target populations, agencies with significant contact with the three special needs populations, and entities providing transportation services. Stakeholders include public and private transportation providers, human service agencies, community organizations, medical facilities, residential facilities, and group homes. Stakeholders were involved in identifying needs of the target populations and the County, the transportation resources available, and strategies to address transportation needs. Information was gathered through individual interviews, public meetings, surveys, and involvement with the Special Transportation Fund (STF) committees.

Phone interviews and meetings were conducted with the majority of stakeholders in Hood River County with additional stakeholders participating in public meetings. These stakeholders were invited to the public meetings to discuss the availability of transportation resources and the potential for coordinating and improving transportation services.

Finally, stakeholders participated as members of the STF committee and Hood River County Transportation District Board in developing priorities for discretionary fund applications.

Stakeholders Contacted

Personal interviews were conducted with the following stakeholders from 2006 through 2007 to gather information on transportation needs, services, gaps, and solutions:

- **Columbia Area Transit:** Offers dial-a-ride and deviated route public transportation services in Hood River County. Serves transportation users including *seniors, disabled, and low-income clients*.
- **Mid Columbia Community Action Partnership:** Promotes self-sufficiency in families and individuals within the low-income economic range residing in Hood River, Wasco and Sherman Counties. Serves *low-income clients, including seniors*.
- **Mid Columbia Housing Authority:** Provides safe and affordable housing for low income families in Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Skamania and Klickitat Counties. Serves *senior populations, persons with disabilities on fixed incomes, and low-income individuals*.
- **Area Agency on Aging:** A division of Mid-Columbia Council of Governments, assisting *elderly individuals*.
- **Providence Hood River Hospital:** Local hospital. Serving *all low-income, senior, and disabled populations*.
- **Faith in Action:** Organizes volunteers to help transport people to medical appointments. Serves Hood River and Klickitat Counties. Primarily serves *seniors*, but there are no pre-qualifications for service.
- **Mid-Columbia Center for Living:** Focuses on behavioral and mental health and substance abuse services. Serves *low-income, senior and disabled populations*.
- **Eastern Oregon Support Services:** Represents and supports people with disabilities in Eastern Oregon, including providing some transportation services for clients. Serves *people with disabilities*.

- **Next Door (Nuestra Comunidad Sana):** Focused on serving children, families and communities, particularly Latino families. Serves *low-income* clients.
- **The Arc of the Mid-Columbia:** Advocates for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Serving *clients with disabilities*.
- **Department of Human Services:** Providing senior, mental health, addiction, children's and disability services. Serves *low-income, senior and disabled* clients.
- **Hood River Valley Adult Center:** Senior Center. Serving *seniors*.
- **MCCOG Workforce Investment Act:** A division of MCCOG assisting job seekers and employers in Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam and Wheeler counties. Serving *low income* populations, especially dislocated workers.

Public meetings were also conducted to allow stakeholders additional participation in development of the coordinated transportation plan. Stakeholders participating in public meetings in 2006 include:

- **La Clinica del Carino:** Family health clinic with locations in The Dalles and Hood River, serving *low-income* clients.
- **Veteran's Administration:** Provides assistance to veterans, including transportation services for *veterans*.
- **Gorge Yellow Cab:** Private taxi service in Hood River County. Serving *all populations*.
- **Columbia Area Transit:** Offers dial-a-ride and deviated route public transportation services in Hood River County. Serves transportation users including *seniors, disabled, and low-income clients*.

Public Meetings

Samples of the Public Meeting Notices can be found in Appendix A. Public meetings were held on the following dates to gather information for the 2007-2010 plan:

- November 20, 2006, 12:00 p.m., Cascade Locks City Hall, Cascade Locks**
- November 20, 2006, 7:00 p.m., Hood River Library, Hood River**
- November 21, 2006, 5:30 p.m., Parkdale Grange, Parkdale**
- January 8, 2007, STF Advisory Committee Meeting, Hood River**
- January 10, 2007, 9am, Hood River Transportation District Meeting, Hood River**

These public meetings were held across Hood River County to encourage additional input from those not accessing DHS services, participating in the senior mealsite program, or utilizing Columbia Area Transit. The first public meeting was held at Cascade Locks City Hall. It was scheduled during CAT's normal operating hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) to allow those with transportation needs to attend. The second public meeting was held at the Hood River library. An evening meeting was scheduled to allow those working during the day to attend. A third meeting was held at the Parkdale Grange. Locations for these meetings were carefully chosen to allow residents from across the county to participate without having to travel far. Stakeholders, transportation providers, and the public were all encouraged to participate in these public meetings. Translators were available for Spanish speaking residents at the Parkdale and Hood River meetings. Messages announcing the public meetings were developed in Spanish and English. These messages were broadcast on local radio stations and included in flyers posted in businesses, community centers, and common areas throughout Hood River County.

Public meetings were held on the following dates for the 2009-2012 plan update:

January 29, 2009, 8am, STF Advisory Committee Meeting, Hood River

February 11, 2009, 9am, Hood River Transportation District Meeting, Hood River

March 5, 2009, 8am, STF Advisory Committee Meeting, Hood River

March 11, 2009, 9am, Hood River Transportation District Meeting, Hood River

Targeted Surveys

The planning process for the initial plan and the plan update focused on encouraging public involvement through public meetings and targeted surveying of the three special needs populations. Examples of the surveys can be found in Appendices B and C and a detailed discussion of survey results in Appendix D.

In December 2006, existing users of CAT's Dial-a-Ride service, the local public transportation authority, were interviewed through an on-board transportation survey. Through individual interviews, 37 riders provided feedback about transportation services. Of these riders, 16 were seniors and 18 were disabled. No information was collected regarding income status.

Also in 2006, surveys were conducted at the Hood River Valley Adult Center, the senior mealsite location in the City of Hood River. Surveying included both individual conversations and paper surveys. Paper surveys were printed with large type for those with visual impairments. Individual conversations allowed seniors who could not write or read an opportunity to respond. A total of 14 seniors responded to the surveys.

Surveys were also conducted in January 2007 at the Department of Human Services (DHS) offices in Hood River. Surveys were available in both Spanish and English at the DHS offices. A total of 22 responses were collected from this survey. A copy of the survey is available in Appendix B.

While updating the plan, surveys were distributed in December 2008 and January 2009 via the Hood River County Chamber of Commerce monthly newsletter and the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District monthly newsletter to target and reach employers. A survey designed through SurveyMonkey allowed employers and employees the opportunity to respond electronically and anonymously regarding their transportation needs. This outreach effort to employers in Hood River County was initiated to further reach the low-income population and better understand access to work requirements. Five employees/ general public responded to this survey; no employers responded.

To gather additional public feedback on the plan and transportation needs, surveys were available at the alternative transportation show in Hood River in November 2008, sponsored by the Gorge Technology Alliance. Information was gathered verbally throughout the show as well.

Finally, in updating the plan, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District utilized surveys distributed by the Klickitat County Horizons group to gather additional information about transportation needs. Klickitat County Horizons is an all-volunteer group of citizens, concerned about transportation access. They distributed the majority of their surveys through school systems, including Hood River County School District, and through personal contacts. Information from the surveys distributed through the Hood River County School District constituted the primary focus for identifying transportation needs. Approximately 1600 surveys from around the region were collected with approximately 840 reporting a location in Hood River County as their place of residence. The main information collected from these surveys can be found in Appendix D.

Data Analysis

Demographic Data Overview

The most recent Census data available is from the 2000 U.S. Census. In relation to the special needs populations, the data for Hood River County indicates:

Total Population	20,411
Percentage of Population 65 years and over.	12.9%
Percentage of individuals with disabilities (5 years and over)	16.8%
Percentage of individuals living below the poverty level.	14.2%
Percentage of individuals that speak a language other than English at home.	24.7%
Mean travel time to work in minutes for workers 16 years and over.	19.1 min

Population Estimates

Population data is available on a more recent basis from the Portland State University Population Research Center. Trends for population projections for 2000-2040 are available in the detailed tables in Appendix E. Both the State and the County are anticipated to experience annual population growth, but Hood River County is anticipated to outpace the State, on average, for annual population growth. The trend is anticipated to continue and an increasing population will add additional strain to the transportation system and require new services to meet increasing demand. Increased transportation services demand will require additional vehicles and increase wear and tear on existing vehicles, necessitating more frequent vehicle replacement.

Across the State of Oregon and within Hood River County, the population is also gaining elderly individuals. Trends for senior population projections for 2000-2040 from the Office of Economic Adjustment are available in the detailed tables in Appendix E. Maps of the dispersion of the current senior populations (based on 2000 Census data) can be found in Appendix F. Larger senior populations result in increased transit demands since many elderly rely on public transportation. Senior populations also have unique demands with more frequent medical appointments and the need for wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

Across the state of Oregon, in addition to growing older, the population is becoming more racially diverse with the minority population growing faster than the white population. Human service providers in Hood River County have noted distinctly changing conditions as these two phenomena converge. Next Door, an agency serving Latino families noted that older Latino adults would often leave the United States in the past. However, many older Latinos are now staying in the area, due to health conditions and family concerns, creating the development of a new aging community. A larger Latino population affects public transit providers by requiring bi-lingual advertising, information and drivers.

Income and Employment Data

In 2006 Hood River had a per capita personal income of \$29,333, which ranked 13th in the state and was 88 percent of the state average of \$33,299 and 80 percent of the national average of \$36,714.² Hood River County's unemployment rate in February 2009 was 9.0%, which is an increase of 3.8%

² Bureau of Economic Analysis

from one year ago. The increase represents both a statewide and national trend of increasing unemployment during an economic downturn, but is still lower than the State average of 10.8% (seasonally adjusted).³ Fluctuations in employment are common and increases result in more low-income individuals requiring access to public transportation. In the past year, the price of fuel dramatically fluctuated and high prices resulted both in an increase in service providers' costs and an increase in demand, especially for low-income populations.

In Hood River County, the highest market for home buyers is found in the City of Hood River where the average home price climbed to \$369,300 in 2008.⁴ Because this is also where most of the County's services, medical facilities and shopping opportunities are located, lower income residents are often forced to live in more affordable markets in Hood River County (Odell, Cascade Locks, Parkdale) and drive longer distances to reach the amenities in the City of Hood River. This necessitates a coordinated transportation system be in place to connect outlying lower income populations with Hood River.

Transportation Routes- Common Origins/ Destinations

Origins

As the major population center, a majority of transportation needs originate in the City of Hood River. Maps of common origins and destinations can be found in Appendix F. Columbia Area Transit drivers report that the majority of transportation takes place and originates within the City of Hood River proper. Specific origins include:

- Apartment complexes and RV/Mobile home parks. In Hood River, a number of the more affordable complexes are concentrated in the Heights on the south end of town. There are also a number in Upper Valley (Parkdale and Odell). A list can be found in Appendix G.
- Senior and assisted living facilities and retirement communities. A list can be found in Appendix H.
- Group homes.

Origins for Latino seniors, stakeholders noted, is not concentrated in many areas. However, Odell, Parkdale and Pine Grove were mentioned as locations with dispersed populations. For transit providers, this means a dispersed need for transit services and dispersal of bi-lingual transit information.

Destinations

Hood River County's major population center, where much of the public transportation takes place, is the City of Hood River. The County's proximity to Portland and The Dalles, however, make those areas popular destinations as well. Major destinations concentrated in Hood River include the following:

- La Clinica
- Mid-Columbia Center for Living
- Columbia Gorge Center
- Mobile Health Unit locations:
 - Parkdale Fire Department

³ OLMIS

⁴ OLMIS

- Odell Fire Department
- Cascade Locks City Hall
- Pine Grove Fire Department
- Cascade Locks City Hall
- Wal-Mart
- Safeway
- Rosauers/ Walgreens complex
- Senior mealsites (Upper Valley, Cascade Locks, Hood River Adult Center)
- Providence Hospital

Changing Conditions

Changing conditions in the County will affect the ways in which the three target populations travel in the next few years. Public transportation providers must anticipate these changes when planning for current and new services. These changing conditions include:

- Columbia Gorge Community College has constructed a new campus in Hood River and expanded their campus in The Dalles. Travel to and between campuses in Hood River and The Dalles will increase, particularly for low-income individuals, with more class offerings at these two locations. Alternative transportation, such as walking and bicycling, is difficult due to the geography of the campuses; both are located on the top of hills. CGCC has promoted walking and biking, however, with a recent focus on students who travel to the campuses using these methods. CGCC has also partnered with the Hood River and Wasco County transportation providers to promote a fixed route service to both campuses.
- Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital completed a significant expansion in March 2009. This expansion could result in increased need for transportation to the facility and could decrease the need for medical transportation to the Portland area.
- As of February 2009, a SuperCenter Wal-Mart is under consideration for the west end of The Dalles. The Wal-Mart in Hood River is not a SuperCenter, so it is likely that if this new store is approved, it would increase regional travel to this location, particularly by low-income families. It would also increase the amount of inter-County and inter-City travel to and within The Dalles for shopping, and increase the need for job access transportation to and from this location.

Transportation Resource Analysis

Existing Transportation Service Options

Hood River County's transportation options for people with disabilities, seniors, and individuals with low income include:

Transportation Provider	Public/Private	Service Type	Hours	Days	Service Area
Columbia Area Transit	Public	Dial-a-Ride	8 a.m. to 5 p.m.	Monday-Friday	Hood River County
Columbia Area Transit	Public	Fixed Route- The Dalles	6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.	Monday-Friday	Hood River & The Dalles
Columbia Area Transit	Public	Fixed Route - Portland	7:30 a.m. to 5:10 p.m.	Thursday	Hood River and Portland
Columbia Gorge Express	Private	Non-emergency medical transportation	By appointment	Monday-Sunday	Columbia River Gorge
Greyhound	Private	Bus- Fixed Route	By schedule	Monday-Sunday	I-84 corridor
Amtrak	Private	Train- Fixed Route	By schedule	Monday-Sunday	Bingen, WA to Portland
Taxis	Private	Taxi- door-to-door	24 hours	Monday-Sunday	Hood River County
Faith in Action	Public	Volunteer	By appointment	By appt.	Hood River and Klickitat counties
Providence Village	Private	Client transportation	As needed	As needed	Hood River
Down Manor	Private	Client transportation	As needed	As needed	Hood River
Hawks Ridge	Private	Client transportation	As needed	As needed	Hood River
Next Door	Public	Client transportation	after school, evening	As needed	Hood River & Wasco Counties
La Clinica	Public	Client transportation	As needed	As needed	Hood River/ The Dalles
Columbia Gorge Center	Public	Client transportation	As needed	As needed	Hood River County/ The Dalles
Eastern Oregon Support Services	Public	Client transportation	As needed	As needed	Hood River & Wasco counties
Center for Continuous Improvement	Private	Client Transportation	As needed	As needed	Wasco & Hood River counties
Carpool/Rideshare	Private	carpool	By appointment	By appt	State of Oregon

Veterans Administration	Public	Medical transportation	As needed	As needed	Hood River County
VPSI	Private	vanpool	As arranged	As arranged	Hood River-metro
Enterprise	Private	vanpool	As arranged	As arranged	Hood River-metro

Columbia Area Transit (CAT)

The main public transportation provider for Hood River County is CAT. Although the main office is located in Hood River, administration is shared with the Transportation Network in Wasco County to reduce costs and increase coordination of services.

Service Area/Hours

CAT offers Dial-a-Ride, door-to-door service from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday throughout Hood River County. In addition, it connects to Greyhound for trips to The Dalles, Portland, and points east. CAT also offers two fixed route services: one connecting Hood River and The Dalles three times per day, Monday through Friday, and one connecting Hood River and Portland on Thursdays. Both fixed route services involve coordination with the Transportation Network in Wasco County (the route to Portland originates in The Dalles). The fixed route schedules to Portland and The Dalles can be found in Appendix I.

Fares

Door to door service is offered at a 10% discount to seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Regular fares are as follows:

- Hood River- \$1.25 each way
- Odell- \$1.50 each way
- Parkdale- \$2.00 each way
- Cascade Locks- \$2.25 each way
- Mosier- \$1.50 each way
- Bingen/White Salmon- \$1.25 plus toll (\$3.00)
- The Dalles- \$3 each way
- Portland -\$8 each way

Funding

The Hood River County Transportation District, which was formed in 1993 by a vote of Hood River County residents, provides a tax base for the operation of CAT. In addition to the tax base, operational costs for CAT services are covered through:

- Federal Transit Administration Funds
- Business Energy Tax Credit program
- Mass transit payroll taxes
- Greyhound commissions
- Medicaid, medical and non-medical
- Fares
- Contract with Mid-Columbia Council of Governments for shared administration.
- Oregon State Special Transportation Fund

Financial support keeps fares at a reasonable level, allowing special needs populations to access transportation services at a minimal cost.

Columbia Gorge Express

Columbia Gorge Express provides non-emergency medical transportation. When updating this plan, there was a major change to the services offered by Columbia Gorge Express. They no longer offer shuttle buses or chartered trips into Portland.

Service Area/Hours

Columbia Gorge Express operates seven days per week and provides medical transportation.

Funding

Supported through fares and fee-for-transportation services.

Greyhound

Greyhound is an inter-city transportation provider offering service along the I-84 corridor. Services were significantly cut back in 2004 following a major reduction in Greyhound's route system, but a hub has been maintained in Hood River.

Service Area/Hours

Greyhound offers service along the I-84 corridor. From Hood River, passengers can travel to (among others) The Dalles, Portland, and points east. Currently, Greyhound makes three stops in Hood River per day in each direction. It leaves Hood River heading west at 4:35 a.m., 3:15 p.m., and 5:00 p.m. and arrives at 11:00 a.m., 12:50 a.m., and 12:40 p.m.

Although Hood River is fortunate to have maintained Greyhound service in the area, passengers planning a day trip to Portland/Vancouver, the nearest major metropolitan area, may experience scheduling difficulties. Day trips to Portland are often necessary for Hood River County residents requiring access to specialized medical services. A person trying to reach Portland and return to Hood River via Greyhound during the course of a single day would need to leave Hood River around 4:30 a.m. and return on a bus departing Portland around 11:30 a.m.

Funding

Operations are supported primarily through fares, which can be prohibitively expensive for low-income passengers. Low-income passengers are forced to find lower cost options for regional travel and may turn to the CAT fixed route services to Portland and The Dalles.

Amtrak

Amtrak is a passenger rail service.

Service Area/Hours

Amtrak provides passenger rail service on the Washington side of the Columbia River. A train station is located in Bingen, Washington. Amtrak has a more favorable schedule than Greyhound for people taking a day trip to Portland. Using Amtrak, an individual would leave around 8:00 a.m. from Bingen and return on a train departing Portland at 4:45 p.m. the same day. The difficulty with this situation for travelers is getting to and from the Bingen station.

Funding

Operations are supported primarily through fares. Although less expensive than Greyhound, they can still be prohibitively expensive for low-income passengers.

Taxi

There are three taxi companies located in Hood River County: Gorge Yellow Cab, Hood River Taxi and Transportation, and Apple City Taxi

Service Area/Hours

Taxis are available on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They primarily serve residents in the City of Hood River.

Funding

Operations are supported through fares.

Faith in Action

One of the services provided by Faith in Action is transportation for individuals in Hood River and Klickitat counties to medical appointments. The program coordinates a network of volunteer drivers who utilize their own vehicles. Currently, Faith in Action has about 35 active volunteers, about 20 of which assist with transportation needs.

Service Area/Hours

Services are provided on a volunteer basis and are therefore dependent upon the availability of volunteers. Services are provided throughout the cities and rural areas of Hood River and Klickitat counties.

Funding

The program was launched in 2004 with a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and continues its operations through funding from United Way, Lions Club, Providence Hood River Hospital, individuals, local congregations, and others.

Carpool/Rideshare

Carpoolmatchnw.org is a common carpool/rideshare service that has the ability to connect commuters in Hood River County and is promoted by Oregon Department of Transportation. Numerous other carpool matching sites exist. Informal carpool networks also occur throughout the Gorge and are facilitated by the improvement of a common parking location near Grace Su's China Gorge Restaurant.

Human Service Providers

Some assisted living facilities, community organizations, and human service agencies provide their own transportation, which is supplemented by CAT's services. Agencies, facilities, and organizations providing their own transportation include:

- Veteran's Administration, which provides medical transportation services for veterans.
- Residential facilities, including Down Manor, Brookside, Hawks Ridge, and Providence Village, which all provide some transportation for their residents.
- Next Door, which provides some of their own transportation using staff vehicles to serve after-school and evening needs of their clients.

- School vans, which are available to outside groups for scheduled events if the request comes from school district personnel and the driver has been approved by the district. Next Door noted that they use them frequently.
- La Clinica for on-demand transportation needs.
- Columbia Gorge Center which provides daily transportation for people with disabilities to their Pine Grove Facility for employment and enrichment activities and transportation several times per week for community outings for clients from both The Dalles and Hood River. Their group homes in Hood River also have vans that provide daily transportation to the Pine Grove Facility, medical appointments and community outings. They also provide transportation services to clients on an individual basis.
- Eastern Oregon Support Services, which utilizes “personal providers” to transport some individuals for appointments and special events.

Van Pools

A limited number of local employers provide transportation for their workers through Enterprise or VPSI. Transportation is generally provided by employers with distant work sites, such as Mount Hood Meadows and Google. Vanpools have also been established by individual employees from multiple companies, such as a vanpool that runs from Hood River into Portland using a vehicle from Enterprise. An informational meeting was held in January 2009 by Enterprise to discuss options for creating a second vanpool based upon the current high level of demand. Since the vehicle is leased, it is not economically feasible to operate this same service from Hood River to The Dalles as it becomes more expensive for the riders than operating a private vehicle.

Administration

Administration is shared between Hood River County Transportation District and Wasco County Transportation Network. There is strong administrative capacity with the Hood River Transportation District with administrator Dan Schwanz.

Coordination of Services

Hood River County is unique in the degree of coordination already undertaken between transportation providers. Coordination activities between transportation providers and human service agencies occur in the following manners:

- The Hood River County Transportation District participates with four other counties in Gorge TransLink, an alliance of transportation providers in the Mid-Columbia region. Gorge TransLink provides regional coordination and marketing for the participating providers in Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Klickitat and Skamania Counties. The main public transportation providers in each of these counties have passed resolutions and Memorandums of Understanding to coordinate efforts in applying for funding for a mobility manager.
- Administration services for the Hood River County Transportation District are shared with Wasco County’s Transportation Network. This both reduces the cost of administration and encourages coordination between the two systems. They also share the Medicaid Broker services which greatly increases coordination between the two transportation districts and Medicaid transportation needs.
- The Hood River County Transportation District also serves as Greyhound Agent.

- Hood River County Transportation District’s administrator participates in regular meetings with select human service agencies to share information about transportation and human service resources.

Transportation Funding Resources

Local Funding for Transportation Services

Through stakeholder interviews a number of local funding sources were identified for transporting the three target populations:

- Individuals with disabilities may be eligible for a certain amount of money to purchase transportation services from a variety of providers. While in the past these funds went directly to the transportation providers, individuals now have the opportunity to choose.
- Department of Human Services utilizes System of Care (SOC) funds for necessary transportation.
- In 2007, ARC, a nonprofit agency serving clients with disabilities, indicated that they have limited funds and would like to use them to coordinate transportation for their clients.

State and Federal Funding

- Section 5310: Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance. Federal funding source designed specifically to meet elderly and disabled individuals’ transportation requirements. Administered by states and available through the State of Oregon through the discretionary grant process.
- Section 5311: Rural Transit Assistance. Federal funding source designed to support rural transportation operations. Administered by states and available through the State of Oregon through a formula process.
- Medicaid Non-emergency Transportation. Provides funding, managed by DMAP, for transportation for clients to and from medical services that are both medically necessary and covered by Medicaid.
- Non-medical Medicaid resources for the developmentally disabled.
- Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC). Federal funding source designed to provide funding for transportation programs which address the unique transportation challenges faced by low-income persons seeking to get and keep jobs.
- New Freedoms Program. Federal funding source designed to help overcome transportation barriers facing Americans with disabilities.
- Special Transportation Fund. State funding source distributed both by formula and through the discretionary application process.
- Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC): State program providing tax credits for eligible energy conservation programs, including reduced driving affects offset by public transportation projects. Tax credits are available to businesses that support transportation solutions.

Transportation Fleet Inventory for Hood River County

(*Note: n/a indicates organization did not release or did not have any additional information)

Operator	Model/ Year	Mileage Estimate	ADA Accessible	Remaining Useful Life (Years)	Seating Capacity
Providence Senior Village	1995 Bus	*n/a	Yes	1	20

Providence Senior Village	1996 Minivan	n/a	No	n/a	7
Columbia Gorge Center	1999 Nissan Quest	72,000	No	5	6
Columbia Gorge Center	2000 Ford E350	103,000	No	5	11
Columbia Gorge Center	2001 Ford E350	92,000	No	5	11
Columbia Gorge Center	2003 Ford Econoline	163,000	No	3	11
Columbia Gorge Center	1996 Ford E350	65,000	No	5	11
Columbia Gorge Center	2002 Ford E450 (leased from MCCOG)	105,000	Yes	3	18
Mid-Columbia Center for Living (MCCFL)	1994 Ford Taurus	176,855	No	0 – will be surplusd in event of mechanical failure	5
MCCFL	1995 Ford Escort	100,441	No	0 – will be surplusd in event of mechanical failure	4
MCCFL	1997 Subaru Legacy	138,230	No	0 – will be surplusd in event of mechanical failure	4
MCCFL	1999 Subaru Legacy	131,434	No	0 – will be surplusd in event of mechanical failure	4
MCCFL	1999 Honda Odyssey	105,974	No	0 – will be surplusd in event of mechanical failure	7
MCCFL	2001 Subaru Impreza	88,749	No	0 – will be surplusd in event of mechanical failure	4
MCCFL	2001 Ford Taurus	85,985	No	0 – will be surplusd in event of mechanical failure	4
MCCFL– System of Care Grant	2004 Ford Econoline	71,000	No	2	12
MCCFL	2004 Ford Goshen Bus	67,000	No	2	15
MCCFL– System of Care Grant	2005 Honda Odyssey	53,002	No	3	7

MCCFL	2005 Subaru Legacy	69,053	No	3	5
MCCFL– System of Care Grant	2005 Subaru Legacy	76,160	No	3	5
MCCFL	2005 Subaru Outback	69,502	No	3	5
MCCFL– System of Care Grant	2005 Subaru Impreza	52,437	No	3	5
MCCFL	2007 Ford Taurus	37,254	No	5	5
MCCFL	2007 Chevrolet Impala	38,237	No	5	5
MCCFL- State of Oregon– Supported Employment Grant	2008 Chevrolet Malibu	16,584	No	6	5
MCCFL	2008 Ford Escape Hybrid	16,177	No	16	5

Needs Assessment

Barriers

Common barriers to fully meeting transportation needs were noted throughout the planning process during public meetings and stakeholder interviews. Barriers include:

- Lack of a concentrated population outside of the City of Hood River. The rural nature of Hood River County is mirrored in the data gathered through the 2000 US Census and shown on the maps of population concentration in Appendix F. There are few private transportation offerings outside of the City of Hood River and I-84 corridor due to the expense of this service. The dispersed population also affects the ability to provide vanpool and carpool matching services.
- Distance between major population centers. Interstate 84 provides a thoroughfare for traffic and hosts many of the major population centers, but it is still approximately 60 miles to the nearest metropolitan area, Portland, Oregon from the City of Hood River.
- Limited capacity of existing transportation providers. There is a high demand for transportation services, but the transportation providers are limited in the number of vehicles and staff available to provide transportation services. Additionally, existing vehicles are aging and many need replacement.
- Although Hood River County has a taxing district, there is still a limited amount of local funding that can be used to leverage state and federal funding sources.
- Limited funding. In general, local funding is only part of a larger picture related to the amount of funding provided for public transportation services.
- Lack of bike and pedestrian access across the Hood River Bridge. The current bridge connecting Hood River and Bingen, Washington does not allow pedestrian and bicycle travel, which severely restricts connections across the Columbia River. The Port of Hood River, which operates the bridge, has no current plans to replace the bridge.

Improving Coordination

Overlap/Duplication of Services

Hood River County has one primary public transportation service provider: Columbia Area Transit (CAT). CAT has been active in identifying and working with partners including Gorge TransLink and Columbia Gorge Center to avoid duplication of services.

Opportunities for Coordination

There are human service agencies currently augmenting the transportation services offered by CAT with their own services. With additional funding and capacity for CAT, these may eventually have an opportunity to coordinate under a single transportation source. Such services include Eastern Oregon Support Services who utilizes “personal providers” to transport individuals.

Capital Equipment

The vehicle fleet inventory indicates an aging fleet of vehicles with a number that have significantly extended beyond their useful life. Vehicle replacement is therefore critical to maintaining operations. Preventative maintenance and repair is also necessary to ensure that current vehicles can continue to be used.

Transportation Needs for Seniors

Transportation issues for elderly individuals include:

- Columbia Area Transit dial-a-ride operations and vehicles provide basic transportation services for elderly individuals.
- Columbia Area Transit fixed route system provides basic transportation options daily to medical and shopping services between Hood River and The Dalles.
- Columbia Area Transit fixed route system provides basic transportation weekly to medical and shopping services in Portland.
- Lack of companions to ride with elderly users.
- Affordable public transportation services in the evening.
- Affordable weekend public transportation services.
- Expanded options for affordable travel to Portland, primarily for medical appointments.
- Expanded options for inter-county travel, particularly between Cascade Locks and the City of Hood River.
- Coordinated transportation for seniors to attend social events.
- Scheduling difficulties presented by the need for 24 hour advance notice for dial-a-ride services.
- Information dissemination and public awareness about transportation services. Elderly individuals are sometimes unaware of the services available to them.
- Confusion regarding utilization of transportation services.

Transportation Needs for Individuals with Disabilities

Transportation issues for individuals with disabilities include:

- Columbia Area Transit dial-a-ride operation provides basic transportation services for individuals with disabilities.
- Columbia Gorge Center offers transportation services between The Dalles and Hood River to clients with disabilities accessing Columbia Gorge Center for work.
- Lack of companions, when needed, to ride with people with disabilities.
- Affordable public transportation services in the evening.
- Affordable weekend public transportation services.
- Expanded options for affordable travel to Portland, primarily for medical appointments.
- Scheduling difficulties presented by the need for 24 hour advance notice for dial-a-ride services.
- Scheduling difficulties presented by the lack of ability to plan.
- Information dissemination and public awareness about transportation services. Individuals with disabilities are sometimes unaware of the services available to them and learn about services primarily through word-of-mouth or through human service agencies.
- Confusion regarding utilization of transportation services.

Transportation Needs for Individuals with Low-Incomes

Transportation issues for low-income individuals include:

- Columbia Area Transit dial-a-ride and fixed route operations provide basic transportation services for low-income individuals.
- Affordable public transportation in the early morning for employment opportunities.

- Affordable public transportation services in the evening for employment and other services.
- Affordable weekend public transportation services.
- Expanded options for affordable and regular travel to Portland, primarily for medical appointments and shopping.
- Some employers provide vanpool opportunities for access to work. Employers without vanpools may need assistance establishing them.
- Scheduling difficulties presented by the need for 24 hour advance notice for dial-a-ride services.
- Information dissemination and public awareness about transportation services. Low-income individuals are sometimes unaware of the services available to them and learn about services primarily through word-of-mouth or through human service agencies.
- Confusion regarding utilization of transportation services.
- Language barriers may increase difficulties in accessing transportation services.
- Very-low income individuals cannot afford fares charged for transportation services.
- Lack of services for regular access to work.

Strategies to Address Barriers and Gaps

Based upon information gathered from public meetings, surveys, and stakeholder interviews the following are strategies to address Hood River County’s transportation needs. Strategies affecting seniors are marked by an S, those affecting individuals with disabilities are marked by a D, and those affecting low-income individuals are marked by an L.

Issue: Sustain Existing Transportation Services

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
There is high demand for current dial-a-ride operations through CAT. This was the highest noted and primary concern indicated in public meetings, stakeholder interviews and surveys	Maintain dial-a-ride transportation options	High- CAT is the primary source for public transportation in the County and is fully utilized by the target populations.	S,D,L	Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available through STF funding for operations
New fixed route service is offered daily by CAT to connect between Hood River and The Dalles.	Maintain daily fixed route services between Hood River and The Dalles	High- CAT is the primary public transportation source.	S,D,L	Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available through 5311 funding for operations
New fixed route service is offered weekly by CAT to connect riders to Portland	Maintain weekly fixed route service between Hood River and Portland.	High- CAT is the primary public transportation source.	S,D,L	Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available through 5311 funding for operations
Aging fleet of vehicles	Provide for replacement of vehicles that have exceeded their useful life	High- CAT has an aging fleet and vehicles must periodically be replaced in order to maintain current service levels	S,D,L	Administration capacity exists. Financial resources likely available through STF funding for operations

Aging fleet of vehicles	Seek funding for vehicle repair and maintenance	High- maintaining and repairing existing fleet reduces cost of acquiring new vehicles on a more frequent basis. All vehicles are currently used to support existing transportation options	S,D,L	Administration capacity existing. Financial resources likely available through STF funding
CAT building is too small and difficult for Greyhound access	Construct new facility for CAT	High: Facility has been planned for many years and is necessary to operations	S, D, L	A significant capital investment, but CAT has been preparing for many years
Companion policies at CAT allow companions to ride free- increases ease of use for elderly and disabled	Continue policies for allowing companions to ride free	High- current policy commended and allows low-cost travel training	S,D	Administration capacity exists; financial cost minimal and currently absorbed into system operations

Issue: Stable Funding

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
Federal and State funding is essential to public transportation system operations	Continue to seek to leverage all match against state and federal grant funds.	High: Public transportation administrator already applies for state and federal funding, which are essential to operations	S, D, L	Administrative capacity exists. Financial impact is positive
Federal and State funding is essential to public transportation system operations	Utilize local groups to help advocate for public transportation funds	High: Local advocacy groups are already concerned about public transportation and could be used to assist	S, D, L	Requires administrative coordination and information distribution.
Lack of local match limits the state and federal funding that can be achieved	Identify and utilize nontraditional sources of local funding, such as support from the business community, human service providers, etc	High: Lack of local match is a significant barrier to expanding transportation services. It is difficult to coordinate multiple sources of small amounts of funding, however	S, D, L	Effort would take a great deal of time. Financial impact would be positive
Bridge tolls inhibit travel across the River	Further conversations with the Port of Hood River and Port of Cascade Locks regarding reducing/eliminating tolls	Medium/High: Low cost strategy that could have potentially very beneficial effects in encouraging public transportation use and connections around the region	S, D, L	Administrative capacity exists. Financial impact is positive. Could be combined with a mobility management strategy
System lacks an active volunteer corps to provide low-cost driver services	Establish a volunteer recruitment strategy for CAT	Low/Medium: Although volunteers can help reduce costs for driving, it is a system that takes a good deal of administration to initiate and oversee.	S, D, L	Effort would take a great deal of time. Financial impact would be minimal once instituted. This strategy would be a higher priority if a lead partner were identified.

Issue: Hours of Service

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
Early morning services. Expanded morning hours would facilitate work-related needs for the target populations. Frequently cited need in contacts with stakeholders	Expand CAT services to include early morning hours	Medium: Early morning hours were cited more frequently as a need for expanded service than evening hours. It is costly to expand the service, however	L	Administrative capacity and staffing would need to increase, financial burden high.
Evening services are needed to access addiction and support groups, classes, and to facilitate some work-related needs	Expand CAT services to include evening hours	Low: Costly to implement and cited less frequently as a need	S, D, L	Administrative capacity and staffing would need to increase, financial burden high.
Hours of fixed route service between Hood River and The Dalles do not match with some users needs. Noted particularly by community college students who do not begin classes at the early service hours	Analyze use of fixed route service to determine best service hours	Medium: This is a new service in its first few years of operation and would benefit from this analysis to increase ridership and ensure it adequately meets transit needs.	S, D, L	Would likely require contracting with a firm to analyze or placing significant staff time to the project. Cost: moderate.

Issue: Availability of Service

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
Scheduling difficulties- riders must schedule dial-a-ride at least 24 hours in advance.	Create additional fixed or deviated route services	Low: Costly to implement for the convenience of less scheduling difficulty	S,D,L	Financial burden would be high
Scheduling difficulties- riders must schedule dial-a-ride at least 24 hours in advance.	Add drivers and vehicles to existing routes to reduce scheduling difficulties	Low: increases waste in the system. Financial resources could be better used in other ways.	S, D, L	Financial burden would be high
Scheduling- very low income individuals may not have a phone or funds to use a pay phone to call 24 hours in advance	Coordinate with human service agencies to allow use of phones to call CAT	High: Can be undertaken in a larger communication and coordination effort with these groups	L	Administration would be minimal if combined with larger outreach. Financial cost negligible.

Current rideshare systems (e.g. carpoolmatchnw) are computer-based and less accessible to those without computers or email accounts	Direct individuals to computers at their local library and computer training classes through the community college or Council of Governments	Medium: Requires little investment to provide connections	S, D, L	Requires small investment of staff to understand available resources. Cost negligible
Spanish speaking riders may have difficulty communicating with drivers and dispatchers	Offer educational stipends for drivers and dispatchers to learn Spanish	Medium: Could have large payoffs for a small investment	L	Requires small to moderate cost and time investment for a stipend
Coordinated travel for seniors to special events	Provide information on private charter services in central transportation information resource	Medium: Public providers could provide information through existing services such as websites at a minimal cost. There is a question of what liability may be introduced by a public agency promoting a private provider that they have no control over or ability to check reference	S	Capacity exists and financial burden negligible.

Issue: Days of Public Transit Operations

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
Weekend service is not available through CAT and can be prohibitively costly to obtain through private providers	Offer weekend service operations through CAT	Low: expensive to implement. Needs for weekend service were related primarily to shopping and convenience	S, D, L	Administrative capacity and staffing would need to increase, financial burden high.
Weekend transportation service available through private providers, but information regarding the services may not be readily accessible to users	Promote private providers offering weekend service	Medium: Cost of private transit service may be too high for some of the target populations. Public providers could provide information through existing services such as websites at a minimal cost. There is a question of what liability may be introduced by a public agency promoting a private provider that they have no control over or ability to check reference	S,D,L	Capacity exists and financial burden negligible.
Fixed route service to Portland is currently offered one day per week.	Analyze use to determine best day to offer transportation to Portland	Medium: This is a new service in its first few years of operation and would benefit from this analysis early on to increase ridership and ensure it adequately meets transit needs.	S, D, L	Would likely require contracting with a firm to analyze or placing significant staff time to the project. Cost: moderate.

Issue: Service Routes

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
Additional options needed for Cascade Locks residents transportation to Hood River	Market services to determine if there is a critical mass of riders from Cascade Locks for new services	High: Marketing and analyzing responses would help determine interest level and need for new offering	S, D, L	Staffing would be required to conduct the survey, Could be combined with TransLink mobility management strategy
Options for regional travel in the Mid-Columbia area	Enhance and develop connections to Skamania County Transportation Services	Medium: Benefit accrues primarily to Skamania Co. residents coming into Hood River Co., but connection is part of a larger Gorge TransLink strategy which benefits Hood River County	S, D, L	Activities already underway to support creating connections

Issue: Information about Transportation Services

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
Elderly individuals are sometimes unaware of the services available to them	Produce brochures and distribute at senior centers	Medium/High: Printed materials easily go out-of-date so should be kept simple. Would easily reach the target population	S	Administrative capacity exists. Costs can be kept at a minimal level with black and white brochure
Elderly individuals are sometimes unaware of the services available to them	Create and distribute reference magnets	Low: Not widely used and expensive to produce and distribute	S	Would require staff time. Costs moderate given the anticipated benefit
Spanish-speaking population has a particular challenge in accessing information about transportation services due to language barriers. Hood River County has a significant population of Spanish-speakers.	Provide information to agencies that most closely work with the Spanish speaking population	High: Word of mouth is the most powerful outreach tool to the Spanish speaking population	S, D, L	Administrative capacity exists. Costs moderate given the anticipated benefit.

Spanish-speaking population has a particular challenge in accessing information about transportation services due to language barriers. Hood River County has a significant population of Spanish-speakers.	Place articles in newsletters with a focus on Spanish speaking populations: El Paplote, Providence Hood River Hospital, Hood River Downtown Business Association, and Hood River School District	Medium: A powerful outreach tool to the Spanish speaking population; will require additional staffing effort to produce.	S, D, L	Capacity would need to increase. Financial costs anticipated to be minimal to moderate
Spanish-speaking population has a particular challenge in accessing information about transportation services due to language barriers. Hood River County has a significant population of Spanish-speakers.	Produce radio spots about transportation services, including ones to be aired on Radio Tierra	Medium: A powerful outreach tool to the Spanish speaking population; will require additional staffing effort to produce.	S, D, L	Capacity would need to increase. Financial costs anticipated to be minimal to moderate
News media not fully utilized to inform the public about transportation service offerings	Host student intern to write newspaper articles	Medium: Staff would require oversight for the intern, but is a good medium to reach Hood River County residents	S, D, L	Staffing required for oversight and arranging internship; costs negligible
Target populations are not fully aware of the public transportation services available to them	Develop full marketing plan and start a public education and awareness campaign	Medium: Long term strategy	S, D, L	Staffing required to participate in plan development. Costs moderate to hire marketing firm
Target populations are not fully aware of the public transportation services available to them	Develop brochure to place at locations frequented by the target populations (human service agencies, laundromats, Gorge Center, medical facilities)	Medium/High: Printed materials easily go out-of-date so should be kept simple. Would easily reach the target population. Can combine with strategy #27	S, D, L	Administrative capacity exists. Costs can be kept at a minimal level with black and white brochure
Target populations are not fully aware of the public transportation services available to them	Continue participation in Gorge TransLink, maintain website as a central information resource, and support TransLink in seeking a mobility manager	High: CAT currently participates in Gorge TransLink and provides information to maintain the website as a central source. This strategy would maintain existing activities	S, D, L	Activities currently underway. Costs minimal

Human service providers are often the key access points and information resource for the target populations	Continue communication with human service providers about transportation services.	High: Efforts already engaged in and should continue. Effective means to reach target populations	S, D, L	Activities currently underway. Costs minimal
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Issue: Cost of Service to Users

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
Economic stagnation creates more users in the low-income bracket. Very low-income passengers unable to afford transportation service	Implement a donation based fare.	Medium/Low: Would increase system accessibility for target population, but reduce some of overall system viability	L	Would require funding system in other ways to account for eliminated fares. Would need to define implementation, who qualifies for a discount.
Economic stagnation creates more users in the low-income bracket. Very low-income passengers unable to afford transportation service	Develop a system of discounted fares for special needs populations	Medium: Increases system accessibility, less affect on system viability	L	Lesser effect on demonstration of local commitment.
Economic stagnation creates more users in the low-income bracket. Very low-income passengers unable to afford transportation service	Establish transportation fare fund to support passengers who cannot afford to pay	Medium: Difficult to initiate, but achieves goal and offsets negative effects	L	Requires staffing to coordinate. Costs offset each other

Issue: Understanding How to Use Public Transportation

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
Special needs populations may experience confusion regarding utilization of available transportation services	Offer travel training to key people at human service agencies for them to share with their clients	Low/Medium: Could be implemented through a Gorge TransLink Mobility Manager strategy.	S, D, L	Staffing required unless under mobility management strategy. Costs moderate.
Lack of companions to ride with individuals under companion-free policy	Utilize Faith in Action to maintain a list of companion riders. Provide connection for individuals without companions to Faith in Action	Low: Benefit is small in relation to the staffing costs that must be incurred to maintain and background check the list. Question of liability.	S, D	Administration overwhelming; financial cost minimal.

Issue: Access to Work

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
Lack of services for regular access to work	Encourage employer vanpools	High: Reduces demand on the transportation system while still achieving an adequate level of service for users. Meets an unmet demand	L	Administration capacity could be available, costs minimal
Employer transport increasing strain on an already overloaded public transit system	Encourage Carpool, rideshare and vanpool options	High: Reduces demand on the transportation system while still achieving an adequate level of service for users. Meets an unmet demand	L	Administration capacity could be available, costs minimal

Issue: Planning and Coordination

Service Gaps/Barriers	Strategies to Address	Demand	Population Affected(S/D/L)	Resource Capacity
Administration is currently shared between Hood River Transportation District and Wasco County's Transportation Network, which reduces costs for the entire system and increases coordination	Continue shared administration with Wasco County Transportation Network	High: continues existing coordination effort	S, D, L	Administrative capacity positively influenced, financially positive
Contact with Human Service Providers is essential for reaching target populations and continually updating the inventory of available resources		High: continues existing coordination effort	S, D, L	Administrative capacity exists, costs negligible.

Priorities

Criteria and Methodology

The list of strategies was provided to the Special Transportation Fund Committee for prioritization. The complete prioritized list is provided in Appendix J. Projects were given a priority ranking of A through D. Highest priority strategies were ranked “A” and lowest priority strategies were ranked “D.” Consideration for ranking was based upon whether the strategy:

- Addressed an identified need
- Could be completed within a three year timeframe
- Increased or built upon coordination efforts
- Affected one or more of the special needs populations (elderly, disabled, low-income)
- Noted available and identified funding sources (including local match)
- Provided for adequate administrative capacity
- Had adequate vehicles to support the strategy, if applicable
- Anticipated cost/benefit ratio

Relative Priorities of Strategies

Priorities were established through individual submission of rankings by STF Committee members and decided collectively at the STF Committee meeting on March 5, 2009. Each category of priorities is outlined below.

“A” Category: High Priority

These are strategies targeted for immediate pursuit or those that are currently being done and that should be continued. They include:

Continuation of existing actions:

- Maintain dial-a-ride operations
- Maintain daily fixed route services between Hood River and The Dalles
- Provide for replacement of vehicles that have exceeded their useful life
- Seek funding for vehicle repair and maintenance
- Continue policies for allowing companions to ride free
- Continue to seek to leverage all match against state and federal grant funds.
- Utilize local groups to help advocate for public transportation funds
- Provide information to agencies that most closely work with the Spanish speaking population
- Develop brochure to place at locations frequented by the target populations, including human service agencies, laundromats, Gorge Center, and medical facilities.
- Continue participation in Gorge TransLink, maintain website as a central information resource, and support TransLink in seeking a mobility manager
- Continue communication with human service providers about transportation services.
- Continue shared administration with Wasco County Transportation Network

New actions for pursuit:

- Analyze use of fixed route service to determine best service hours
- Market services to determine if there is a critical mass of riders from Cascade Locks for new services
- Host student intern to write newspaper articles

“B” Category: Mid-Priority

These strategies are targeted for pursuit based upon funding availability:

- Maintain weekly fixed route services between Hood River and Portland
- Construct new facility for CAT
- Further conversations with the Port of Hood River and Port of Cascade Locks regarding reducing/eliminating tolls
- Expand CAT services to include early morning hours
- Expand CAT services to include evening hours
- Create additional fixed or deviated route services
- Add drivers and vehicles to existing CAT routes to reduce scheduling difficulties
- Offer educational stipends for drivers and dispatchers to learn Spanish
- Provide information on private charter services in central transportation information resource
- Offer weekend service operations through CAT
- Promote private providers offering weekend service
- Analyze use to determine best day to offer transportation to Portland
- Enhance and develop connections to Skamania County Transportation Services
- Produce brochures and distribute at senior centers
- Place articles in newsletters with a focus on Spanish speaking populations: El Paplote, Providence Hood River Hospital, Hood River Downtown Business Association, and Hood River School District
- Produce radio spots about transportation services, including ones to be aired on Radio Tierra
- Develop a system of discounted fares for special needs populations
- Offer travel training to key people at human service agencies for them to share with their clients
- Encourage employer vanpools
- Encourage carpool, rideshare and vanpool options

“C” Category: Low Priority

These are long-term strategies that are not for immediate consideration:

- Identify and utilize nontraditional sources of local funding, such as support from the business community, Arc, Hospital, etc
- Establish a volunteer recruitment strategy for CAT
- Develop full marketing plan and start a public education and awareness campaign
- Establish transportation fare fund to support passengers who cannot afford to pay

“D” Category: Not Prioritized

These strategies are not targeted for completion at this time:

- Coordinate with human service agencies to allow use of phones to call CAT
- Direct individuals to computers at their local library and computer training classes through the community college or Council of Governments
- Create and distribute reference magnets
- Implement a donation based fare
- Utilize Faith in Action to maintain a list of companion riders. Provide connection for individuals without companions to Faith in Action

Performance Measures

High priority strategies that are targeted for pursuit must be tied to performance measures in the coordinated transportation plan. These performance measures focus on assisting in determining if unmet needs are better served through the strategies implemented. Performance measures were identified in conjunction with the transportation providers after the high priority strategies were identified. It is essential that these performance measures are easy to track or already a component of the tracking already undertaken by the service providers so it is not an increased burden. The performance measures identified are listed below.

Transportation Need	Strategies	Performance Measure
Sustain Existing Transportation Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain dial-a-ride operations • Maintain daily fixed route services between Hood River and The Dalles • Provide for replacement of vehicles that have exceeded useful life • Seek funding for vehicle repair and maintenance • Continue policies for companions to ride free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Track ridership for dial-a-ride services - Track ridership for Hood River/ The Dalles fixed route - Track vehicle replacement - Track vehicle mileage - Free companion policy maintained
Stable Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to seek to leverage all match against state and federal grant funds. • Utilize local groups to help advocate for public transportation funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All match for state and federal funds met - Local funding contributions increase
Hours of Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze use of fixed route service to determine best hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compare ridership of fixed use service before and after hours are adjusted
Service Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market services to determine if there is a critical mass of riders from Cascade Locks for new services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information obtained about ridership from Cascade Locks
Information about Transportation Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information to agencies that most closely work with the Spanish speakers • Host student intern to write newspaper articles • Develop brochure to place at locations frequented by the target populations. • Continue participation in Gorge TransLink, maintain website as a central information resource, and support TransLink in seeking a mobility manager • Continue communication with human service providers about transportation services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased number of Spanish speaking riders (as measured using a sample of rider surnames) - Increased ridership in general - Increased use of website - Improved connections with human service providers
Planning and Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue shared administration with Wasco County Transportation Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared administration in place

Plan Review and Adoption

2007-2010 Coordinated Transportation Plan Adoption

The first draft of this coordinated transportation plan was presented to the Hood River County STF committee on January 8, 2007 and to the Hood River Transportation District Board of Directors on January 10, 2007. It was discussed at both of these meetings. The draft plan was approved for submission to the Oregon Department of Transportation with the applications to the Public Transit Division Discretionary Grant Program. The final plan was completed in April 2007.

2009-2012 Coordinated Transportation Plan Update

Under contract with Association of Oregon Counties, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District began updating the plan for 2009-2012. A draft was presented to the Hood River County STF committee in January and March 2009 and to the Hood River Transportation District Board in February 2009. The draft plan was also posted on MCEDD's website (<http://www.mcedd.org>) for public review between February 2009 and March 2009. Stakeholders were encouraged to provide feedback. The final plan was approved by the Hood River County STF committee in March 2009 and by the Hood River Transportation District Board on April 8, 2009.

Future Plan Reviews

This plan is designed to be reviewed and updated at least once every three years. It should be reviewed and updated in 2012 at the latest.

Appendix A: Public Meeting Notices

Transportation

How well is it serving your community?



Public meeting to discuss transportation needs of:

- Seniors
- Low-income individuals
- Individuals with disabilities

Public comments will be used to inform the development of a coordinated public transportation plan for Hood River County.

Monday, November 20th

8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Cascade Locks City Hall

7 to 8 p.m. Hood River Library

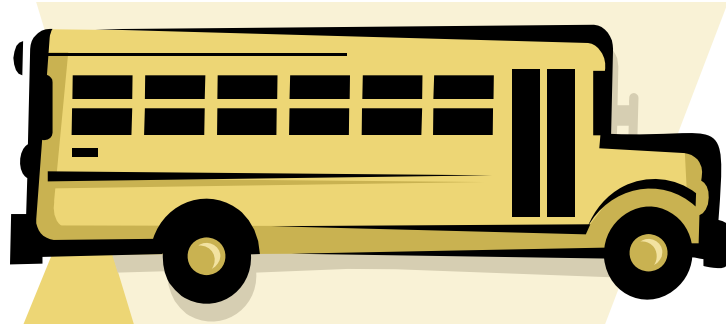
Tuesday, November 21st

8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Parkdale Grange

For more information contact MCEDD:

Amanda Remington at 541-296-2266 or amanda@mcedd.org

El Transporte



La reunión del público para discutir las necesidades de transporte de:

- Los mayores
- Los individuos con ingresos pequeños
- Los individuos con incapacidades

Los comentarios del público serán utilizados para crear un plan para el transporte público.

El lunes, 20 de Noviembre

**7 a 8 de la tarde, Biblioteca de Hood River
502 State Street, Hood River, OR**

El martes, 21 de Noviembre

**8:30 a 9:30 de la mañana, Parkdale Grange
7375 Clear Creek Road, Parkdale, OR**



For Immediate Release

Contact: Amanda Remington
Phone: (541) 296-2266
Email: amanda@mcedd.org

November 4, 2006

Public Transportation Meetings

Hood River- On November 20th and 21st, public meetings will be held in Hood River, Parkdale, and Cascade Locks to discuss public transportation needs. The first meeting will be held Monday, November 20th at Cascade Locks City Hall gym from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. It will be followed by a meeting later in the day at Hood River County Library community meeting room in Hood River from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Mid-Columbia Economic Development District is conducting these public meetings to solicit comments regarding transportation needs of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with low income. The final meeting will be held at the Parkdale Grange on Tuesday, November 21st from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Public comments will be used to develop coordinated transportation plans for Hood River and Wasco counties. The plans will be designed to improve public transportation services and will be specifically targeted to the needs of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and individuals with low income.

For questions, contact Amanda Remington at Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, (541) 296-2266, or via email at amanda@mcedd.org. MCEDD serves Klickitat, Skamania, Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman counties by promoting the creation of family-wage jobs, the diversification of the economic base, and the growth, development and retention of business and industry.

###

Appendix B: Stakeholder Survey

Name: _____ *Title* _____

Organization: _____

I. Transportation Description

How familiar are you with the current transit services in your county? (What services are you aware of?)	
How would you rate those services: excellent, good, fair, or poor?	
How do you think your constituents view public transportation these services?	
Does your organization provide any of its own transportation services for your clients? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are they integrated into the public transit system? - Would you be open to leveraging resources, sharing vehicles, or expanding or changing services? 	

II. The Need

How many people do you represent?	
What are their characteristics (age, income, abilities)?	
What are their transportation needs? Unmet needs?	
Are you aware of any changing conditions that may alter these needs?	
How extensively do they use/need to use public transportation?	
What are the primary destinations they need to travel from and to?	
What are the primary obstacles to using public transportation?	

III. Marketing and Communication

Do you think that information about public transportation services is easy or difficult to obtain and is it in a format that can be accessed by your constituents?	
How could information about transit services be more effectively communicated with your constituency?	

IV. Prioritizing

What would it take to make transit more useful for your constituents?	
Currently, what would you list as your top 3-5 priorities for public transportation?	

V. Further Communication

Do you have any additional contacts you would recommend I get in touch with?	
What would be the best means of getting in touch with (your clients) regarding transportation needs?	
Do you have any additional comments you would like to make?	

Appendix C: Transportation Survey

Help us improve transportation services!

Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) is developing a coordinated transportation plan focused on the needs of seniors, individuals with low income, and individuals with disabilities. With limited resources and funds available for public transportation, we appreciate your responses as they will help prioritize transportation needs. Completed surveys may be returned to DHS and will be picked up by MCEDD.

Where do you usually need to travel?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Dalles | <input type="checkbox"/> Hood River |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Around Wasco County | <input type="checkbox"/> Around Hood River County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Portland/Vancouver | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Where do you need transportation to get to?

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping trips | <input type="checkbox"/> Medical appointments | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special events | <input type="checkbox"/> Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What days and times would you like to have access to transportation? (Please list and be as specific as possible)

Do you use public transportation?

- Yes No

How would you rate the public transportation system?

- Excellent Good Fair Poor

Do you have any comments on how we can improve public transportation services?

Appendix D: Stakeholder Interview Matrix and Public Feedback

Organization	Service Area	Service Pop'n (Low Income, Senior, or Disabled)	Needs and Barriers Identified	Common Destinations	Common Origins	Coordination Opportunities	Solutions
Faith in Action	Serves Hood River and Klickitat Counties	Primarily serves seniors, but there are no pre-qualifications for service.	Some of these individuals are fearful as they are uncertain how the system works.	Most people need to get to medical appts, the store, the bank. Some need to get to medical appts in The Dalles and Portland.		A link could be made between Faith in Action and the public transit providers.	Many of the individuals, especially seniors, might be open to using public transportation if they had someone to guide them through the process or a companion to accompany them to medical appts
DHS	Serves Hood River County	children and families, including foster children, child abuse, and parents with drug/alcohol issues	Public transportation is not available after hours and on the weekends. Local taxis can provide evening and weekend service, but are a costly alternative There is some need to transport school age children that are too young to go by themselves. Escorts are required in this case, which is difficult to arrange	Alcoholics Anonymous meetings Apartment complexes Disability office in Hood River was closed, so all individuals must now come to The Dalles.			Have an on-call service Have a fixed route through the City
Eastern Oregon Support Services	Serves Wasco and Hood River Counties	All clients are 18 years of age and older. All are low-income	For evenings and weekends they are forced to utilize taxis or hire personal transportation, which is expensive. Need for transport to special events such as Special Olympics Scheduling in advance is an obstacle.	Travel from Hood River to The Dalles to go to BiMart for discount shopping.	Going to work or shopping in City of Hood River		Eastern OR Support Services generally sends out resource lists to their clients. Ensure that brochures are available at their offices. Ads in the paper might also be useful.
Providence	Hood River	Serves those	The mobile health unit is too large				Establish partnership

Hood River Mobile Health Unit	County	without insurance and those that have difficulty accessing health services	to take to people's homes, so must park in central locations. Individuals may have difficulty getting from their homes to the set locations.				with public transportation to provide rides to mobile health unit locations
Area Agency on Aging	Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler and Hood River	elderly individuals	Would prefer a regular schedule. Offer more connections to Portland. Seniors have issues when they need to get to Portland for appointments, but they do not have enough insurance to take an ambulance and would be fine to go in a car. Seniors require affordable transportation to special events and social events				Establish a transportation summit for organizations dealing with the elderly and people with disabilities to discuss coordinating and improving services to their constituents. Provide a bus for special events and social events for seniors
Mid Columbia Housing Authority	Wasco, Sherman and Hood River Counties in Oregon and Klickitat and Skamania counties in Washington	Low-income families	Clients often have difficulty scheduling in advance Large need for work-related transportation	State Offices, Mid Columbia Housing, clinics, Grocery stores			complete a full marketing plan. local radio spots. Add a link to the GorgeTransLink on the MCHA website and also flyers in their office.
ARC	Mid Columbia.	Serving clients with disabilities.	Would like to have an after hours bus that ran one night a week for the ARC to get their clients with developmental disabilities to social events Would like extended hours for getting people to and from their jobs				ARC has limited funding available and would like to use some of it to coordinate transportation for their clients to special events.
Mid Columbia Center for Living		Serves low-income, senior and disabled populations.	Youth need transportation for after school activities and meetings. Many clients in low-wage		There is not much concentration of seniors, but there are a number in the Odell		For marketing to the Latino/a community, try advertising in: Radio Tierra

			<p>occupations need a reliable bus to transport them to work the early morning shift</p> <p>Transportation for seniors is needed as many stay at home</p> <p>Fares can be a hindrance to some.</p> <p>Evening services are needed, especially to get individuals to evening appointments and group sessions at Center for Living</p> <p>Some clients are not capable of planning ahead to schedule rides</p>		trailer park. Parkdale has a dispersed population also.		<p>El Papalote</p> <p>School Newsletters</p> <p>Hospital Newsletter</p> <p>Hood River Downtown Business Association materials</p>
MCCOG Workforce Investment Act	Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam and Wheeler counties.	Serving low income populations, especially dislocated workers.		To and from: Employment Child care College classes			The marketing and service is great given what the community has to work with. If more transportation services were available, then more marketing could be undertaken
Inpatient Services, Providence Hood River Hospital	Hood River County	Serving all low-income, senior, and disabled populations.	<p>Getting to The Dalles from Hood River</p> <p>Services for outpatient transportation (those coming in and leaving the hospital the same day). Some individuals can arrange for it through senior services, but others cannot.</p>				<p>They have funds available to purchase vouchers from CAT for those inpatients (individuals staying at the hospital overnight) that do not have funding available in terms of personal finances or medical cards. For after</p> <p>hours/weekends and transportation away from places served by CAT, the hospital has a non-urgent van.</p>

La Clinica	The Dalles and Hood River,	Serving low-income clients.	On demand transportation must be covered by La Clinica. CAT does not have a means to serve as an on-demand transportation provider (they require advance notice to schedule rides)				
Mid-Columbia Community Action Council	Hood River, Wasco and Sherman Counties	low and middle income individuals	Very low income individuals may not have a phone or money to use a pay phone to dial a ride. The transient and low income populations often have limited skills and planning ahead- even 24 hours- for a ride is unfeasible	To: La Clinica, Hospital, MCCOG for the work program, Center for Living, DHS offices	From: Major apartment complexes		Have a donation based fare. Establish more fixed route systems
Next Door	Hood River County	The Latino/a community. Many are low income. Some are seniors.					

Public Feedback: Survey Responses

CAT On-Board Surveys

Individuals currently using CAT were extremely satisfied with the service citing adequate operation hours and travel locations, responsive drivers, reasonable fares, and great companion policies. A few riders commended CAT for providing a high level of service with limited resources and commented that without CAT they would have no other means of transportation. Word-of-mouth (from family or a human service provider) was the most common means by which the riders had first learned of the system. The on-board surveys revealed an overall rating of “Excellent” from 100% of riders participating in the survey.

Senior Mealsite Surveys

By contrast, the senior mealsite surveys at the Hood River Valley Adult Center showed a large range of responses regarding the quality of public transportation service, with “good” ultimately reaching a majority (60%). Followed by “fair” (20%), “excellent” (10%) and “poor” (10%).

In the process of conducting surveys, many seniors sought advice on how to access transportation. Notably, a few seniors that had been living in the area for less than six months did not know that public transportation resources existed in the county. These types of responses, in which seniors acknowledge a need for transportation, but no information on accessing it, provide an indication that marketing and outreach should be increased.

An emphasis should be placed on marketing at the locations frequented by populations with special transportation needs, such as residential facilities and senior centers. Marketing devices should be easily repeated and not one-time shots. Frequently, mobile seniors expressed concerns that information about how to access public transportation may not be available if they suddenly lose the ability to drive. In addition to changing needs of mobile seniors, those new to the community need to have the benefit of having information about public transportation options readily available and easy to access.

Seniors who had correct information about the system generally cited as pressing issues:

- Increasing operating hours to include evening and weekend service.
- Creating daily fixed or deviated route service to eliminate the difficulty of scheduling a ride at least 24 hours in advance.
- Offering affordable travel to Portland. In our surveys at the senior center, however, there was a stronger preference for services within Hood River County (84.6%) than for services connecting to Portland (61.5%).
- Assisting with the coordination of transportation to special events for seniors.
- Increasing marketing of existing services by placing information at senior centers and creating reference magnets about services.

Department of Human Services Surveys

Surveys conducted at the Department of Human Services office in Hood River were collected in late December 2006 and analyzed in January 2007. A total of 22 responses were received.

Travel Locations

When asked where travel was required, individuals overwhelmingly cited in (72.7%) and around (45.15%) Hood River as the main place they required transportation. Portland/Vancouver was marked by 31.8% of respondents, followed by The Dalles (18.2%). Medical appointments (50%) and work (50%) constituted the main reasons for needing transportation, followed by shopping trips (38.9%) and special events (11.1%). Multiple responses were allowed.

Perceived Quality of Public Transportation Services

Half of all respondents from the DHS survey location rated public transportation services in Hood River County as “good.” This was followed by a rating of fair by 31.2%, excellent by 12.5%, and poor by 6.2% of respondents.

Comments

In addition to requests for service, cost was one of the most significant issues for those returning surveys and a common reason for not using public transportation. Other comments received noted the need for public education about how to access and use public transportation.

Fellowship for Peace Petition for Improved Hood River Transportation

The Fellowship for Peace submitted a petition for improved Hood River Transportation in December 2006. The petition read in part, “We the undersigned ask that our public transit system, the Hood River County Special District, work to more adequately serve the people residing throughout our county, and to help stop the degrading of our environment and traffic pollution of Hood River and the Gorge. [...] The District would thus do well to now address needed service improvements, especially full (and fully publicized) daily public transit to Portland and The Dalles, and evening transit.”

This petition was independently conducted and circulated in Hood River County by the Fellowship for Peace and signed by 109 individuals from Hood River, Wasco, Klickitat and Skamania counties. It was also endorsed by Brian Stauff of the Department of Human Services, District 9, and Mayor Berry of the City of Mosier. The petition allowed residents to pledge that they would use expanded CAT services, but did not address funding concerns. One of those signing the petition noted that her concern was help paying for existing services. Most, however, marked that they would use one, or a combination of, expanded services to Portland, The Dalles, and evening transportation.

The petition indicates the level of concern residents have, and their motivation for expanding the services of their public transportation provider, CAT. This plan incorporates the concerns raised through the petition and seeks to provide an outline to define them and identify potential ways these concerns and others can be addressed.

Chamber of Commerce Surveys

Information was collected in December 2008 and January 2009. An article requesting employer feedback appeared in the January newsletter of the Hood River County Chamber of Commerce and in the December newsletter of the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District. The article directed readers to a SurveyMonkey survey providing employers and employees the opportunity to respond electronically and anonymously regarding their transportation needs. This outreach effort to employers in Hood River County was initiated to further reach the low-income population and better understand access to work requirements. Five employees/ general public responded to this survey; no employers responded.

The main need for transportation cited by respondents was for shopping trips (3 respondents) with work cited as the second highest need (2 respondents). Respondents currently used mostly cars for transportation, with walking and biking as their main alternative method. They traveled 5 to 10 miles per day on average. Most lived within The Dalles and traveled mostly within that town. Reasons

cited for not using public transportation included convenience, ease of access, and scheduling difficulties. Other comments encouraged pedestrian and bike access over the Hood River Bridge and finding ways to encourage biking/walking to work.

Klickitat Horizons Surveys

Surveys were distributed by the Klickitat County Horizons group, focusing on contact through the school systems, including Hood River County School District. Approximately 1600 survey responses were collected from around the region; approximately 840 respondents reported a location in Hood River County as their place of residence. Answers reported below are from all respondents, not those only residing in Hood River County.

When asked if they currently use vanpools, carpools or public transportation, two thirds of respondents answered no while one third answered yes. Respondents mostly traveled to Hood River, with The Dalles coming in second. About 45% of respondents use a car to make several trips per day from their homes, 40% made one to two trips per day and 15% made less than five trips per week.

To the question of how the rising cost of transportation has affected their families, 54% responded that costs have not really affected them, 40% have cut non-essential expenditures to cover rising costs and 6% are no longer able to meet basic needs. When asked if they would use public transportation for work or shopping if it was available, respondents were almost neatly divided: 34% would be willing to adjust their schedule and walk some if it saved money, 30% would only be able to use it once or twice per week, and 35% wouldn't use it.

Public Feedback: Public Meetings

Public meetings held in Cascade Locks, Hood River, and Parkdale brought forth comments from residents, transportation providers, and human service organizations. Needs and issues identified in these three meetings included:

- Continuing CAT services. Existing public transportation services are vital to the communities they serve.
- Travel to Portland is inadequate and significant barriers exist to finding an affordable solution.
- Designing a public awareness campaign to educate the public about the importance of transportation services to those using them.
- Creating a better connection to Wasco and Skamania counties.
- Increasing use of the rideshare system and making it accessible to those without computers.
- Addressing cultural divide issues and language barriers.
- Reorganizing the Cascade Locks Tuesday shopping trips to Hood River.
- Early morning service to pick-up residents in Cascade Locks.
- Advocacy for additional funding for public transportation services.
- Outreach to isolated populations.

Potential solutions for some of the gaps in transportation services for seniors, individuals with disabilities and individuals with low income were identified during the course of the meetings. Solutions included:

- Conduct a public outreach campaign to better inform special needs populations of their transportation options. This campaign should include attending Next Door and La Clinica meetings and advertising on Cascade Lock's local access channel.
- Market the monthly trips to Clackamas.
- Market Cascade Locks trips to Hood River to determine if there is a critical mass of riders. Locations to conduct surveys include at the Senior Potlatch, in the newspaper, and on the local access channel.
- Encouraging CAT to hire Spanish-speaking bus drivers.

Utilize local groups to help advocate for increased funding of public transportation services and maximize the potential of these services.

Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholders commended CAT for providing a maximum level of service given a limited level of funding. Sustaining existing services was noted as a priority, however unmet transportation needs still exist. The interview form used in consulting with stakeholders is available in Appendix E. For a detailed matrix of interview responses, see Appendix F. In general, according to stakeholder interviews, the unmet transportation needs include:

Marketing and Outreach

As noted by the public meetings and surveys, special needs populations do not always realize that public transportation services are available for them to use. Those that are aware usually hear word-of-mouth from family, friends, or employees of human service agencies or community organizations. This sentiment was reinforced through the stakeholder interviews. Stakeholders noted that these populations often access a number of human service resources, so continually providing a flow of information to stakeholders is extremely important.

Connections can be made with the human service agencies through regular transportation forums or mailings. It is also important to educate new employees and ensure that information is flowing throughout an organization to reach front desk employees as well as administration. Additional ideas included:

- Developing a full marketing plan.
- Providing links to Gorge Translink on human service agency websites.
- Hosting a student intern to write articles for the local papers.
- Placing transportation brochures at places frequented by the target populations.
- Producing radio spots, including ones to be aired on Radio Tierra in Spanish.

- Placing ads or articles in newsletters with a focus on Spanish speaking populations: El Papalote, Providence Hood River Hospital (Spanish and English), Hood River Downtown Business Association materials, and Hood River School District.

Extended Hours

Early morning and evening service to facilitate work related needs for individuals with disabilities seniors, and individuals with low income was the most frequently cited need. Evening hours were also a priority for getting individuals to addiction and support groups. Individuals attending these groups have often lost their license and have few resources for transportation. Cascade Locks foster home requested an extension of service hours to allow CAT to pick up their passengers in Cascade Locks and transport them to Columbia Gorge Center. *(Note: this has been done since collecting this feedback.)* Next Door noted that the youth they work with need transportation for after-school activities and meetings. Weekend hours were requested, but the needs were mainly for shopping and convenience.

Connection to other transportation systems

Stakeholders noted a need for increased connection between other public transportation systems in the region, including Skamania County Transportation and the Transportation Network in Wasco County. DHS in particular noted that their disability office in Hood River was closed, forcing individuals to now travel to The Dalles. *(Note: connections between Hood River and The Dalles have been improved since collecting this feedback.)*

Fixed and Deviated Route Service

A number of human resource providers noted the difficulty scheduling dial-a-ride service can place on low income individuals. Conversely, some noted that they used this as a way to help their clients learn how to budget, plan, and live independently. For those without someone to assist in the process, however, it was noted that very low income individuals may not have a phone (or money to use a pay phone). Ideas were not presented on alternatives to allow those without a phone to have increased contact with the system for scheduling other than stopping by the office if they could access it. Also, some individuals have difficulties that prevent them from having the capacity to plan in advance.

The Hospital noted that while they provide vouchers for inpatients (those staying overnight at the hospital), they have some concern for individuals that must come to and leave the hospital the same day. The concern is that this is an immediate transportation need which does not allow planning in advance and may occur on evenings or weekends.

Fare

The fare was generally mentioned as being quite reasonable, especially since it is mostly supported by other sources. However, a few human resource providers noted that they have clients that simply cannot come up with the fare. Ideas presented included having a discounted fare available for special needs clients.

Travel to Portland/Vancouver

In a survey conducted by Providence Hospital, 53% of respondents rated “Access to transportation to Portland” as a top problem. This issue was brought up in a few of the stakeholder interviews, but noted with understanding that resources are strained and limited options exist. It was a primary concern in the petition circulated by Fellowship for Peace, which was seeking expanded CAT service to Portland. *(Note: Thursday fixed route service to Portland has been implemented since collecting this feedback. Ridership has been low to nonexistent.)*

Companions

CAT’s policy of allowing companions to ride free was commended. Improvements can be made by coordinating with Faith in Action. Faith in Action has the necessary volunteers and administration in place to organize a companion system for seniors and individuals with disabilities traveling to medical appointments.

Mobile Health Unit

The Mobile Health Unit is a new service, started in October 2006 by Providence Hood River Hospital. The mobile health unit is too large to take to people’s homes, so must park in central locations. Individuals may have difficulty getting from their homes to the set locations, so a partnership between the health unit and CAT was cited as a potential issue for coordination. A listing of the times and locations can be found on page 5 under “Destinations.”

Building for CAT

CAT noted the need to move out of the small office next to DMV to a proposed location near Walmart. This would require the construction of a new building, but would create a more efficient system for the transportation providers. Not only would it represent an improvement for CAT, but it would also increase the efficiency of Greyhound in getting busses into and out of Hood River.

Appendix E: Detailed Demographic Tables

Senior Population Projections

An aging population is projected for the State and the County. This will increase the demands on any public transportation system. A graph of the following information is on the next page. *Source: Oregon Office of Economic Analysis (April 2004).*

Year 2000

<u>Area</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>55-59</u>	<u>60-64</u>	<u>65-69</u>	<u>70-74</u>	<u>75-79</u>	<u>80-84</u>	<u>85+</u>
Oregon Total	3,436,750	174,245	132,447	112,759	106,421	95,329	66,828	58,423
Hood River County	20,500	919	689	669	598	531	409	408

Year 2010

<u>Area</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>55-59</u>	<u>60-64</u>	<u>65-69</u>	<u>70-74</u>	<u>75-79</u>	<u>80-84</u>	<u>85+</u>
Oregon Total	3,843,900	268,023	228,279	159,820	112,772	85,347	67,733	76,272
Hood River County	21,998	1,538	1,133	810	555	476	382	514

Year 2020

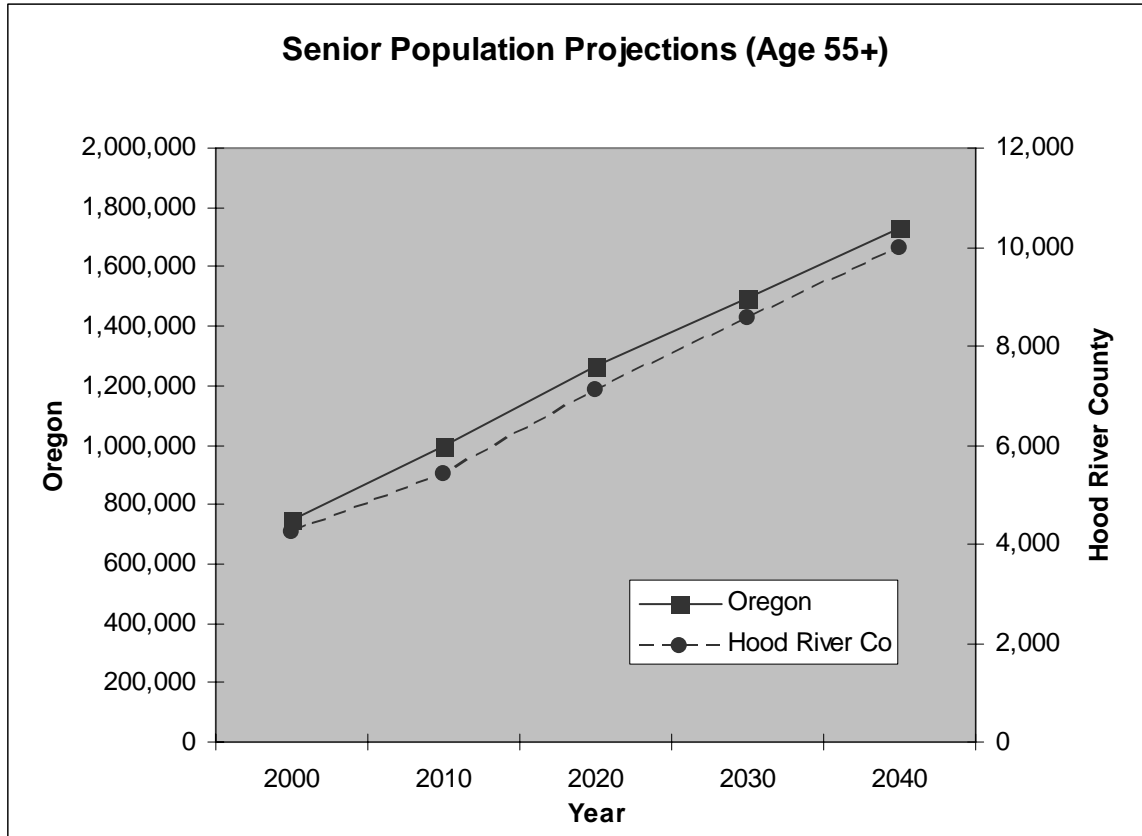
<u>Area</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>55-59</u>	<u>60-64</u>	<u>65-69</u>	<u>70-74</u>	<u>75-79</u>	<u>80-84</u>	<u>85+</u>
Oregon Total	4,359,258	267,168	267,583	251,301	198,776	124,275	74,495	84,909
Hood River County	25,027	1,598	1,613	1,419	952	598	370	580

Year 2030

<u>Area</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>55-59</u>	<u>60-64</u>	<u>65-69</u>	<u>70-74</u>	<u>75-79</u>	<u>80-84</u>	<u>85+</u>
Oregon Total	4,891,225	280,047	261,311	253,683	237,821	201,648	137,799	119,971
Hood River County	28,404	1,645	1,523	1,504	1,392	1,085	668	758

Year 2040

<u>Area</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>55-59</u>	<u>60-64</u>	<u>65-69</u>	<u>70-74</u>	<u>75-79</u>	<u>80-84</u>	<u>85+</u>
Oregon Total	5,425,408	337,313	297,787	268,516	235,769	208,589	171,551	213,094
Hood River County	32,498	1,839	1,603	1,587	1,349	1,187	1,030	1,400



This graph presents the data from the previous page.
Source: Oregon Office of Economic Analysis (April 2004).

Population Projections

An increasing population is projected for the State and the County, which will further put demands on public transportation systems.

Source: Oregon Office of Economic Analysis (April 2004).

Forecasts of Oregon's County Populations and Components of Change, 2000 - 2040

Total Population

<u>Area Name</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>FORECAST</u>							
		<u>2005</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>2035</u>	<u>2040</u>
Oregon	3,436,750	3,618,200	3,843,900	4,095,708	4,359,258	4,626,015	4,891,225	5,154,793	5,425,408
Hood River	20,500	20,698	21,998	23,485	25,027	26,667	28,404	30,310	32,498

Population Change

<u>Area Name</u>	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>FORECAST</u>							
	<u>2000-2003</u>	<u>2000-2005</u>	<u>2005-2010</u>	<u>2010-2015</u>	<u>2015-2020</u>	<u>2020-2025</u>	<u>2025-2030</u>	<u>2030-2035</u>	<u>2035-2040</u>
Oregon	104,750	181,450	225,700	251,808	263,550	266,757	265,210	263,568	270,615
Hood River	0	198	1,300	1,487	1,542	1,639	1,737	1,905	2,188

Annual Growth Rate

<u>Area Name</u>	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>FORECAST</u>							
	<u>2000-2003</u>	<u>2000-2005</u>	<u>2005-2010</u>	<u>2010-2015</u>	<u>2015-2020</u>	<u>2020-2025</u>	<u>2025-2030</u>	<u>2030-2035</u>	<u>2035-2040</u>
Oregon	1.00%	1.03%	1.21%	1.27%	1.25%	1.19%	1.11%	1.05%	1.02%
Hood River	0.00%	0.19%	1.22%	1.31%	1.27%	1.27%	1.26%	1.30%	1.39%

Hood River County Disability Characteristics

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Subject	Total
Population 5 years and over	19,482
Without any disability	86.8%
With one type of disability	7.1%
With two or more types of disabilities	6.1%
Population 5 to 15 years	3,567
With any disability	4.4%
With a sensory disability	0.4%
With a physical disability	0.1%
With a mental disability	4.4%
With a self-care disability	0.1%
Population 16 to 64 years	13,430
With any disability	10.1%
With a sensory disability	2.3%
With a physical disability	6.4%
With a mental disability	5.7%
With a self-care disability	1.1%
With a go-outside-home disability	1.6%
With an employment disability	3.8%
Population 65 years and over	2,485
With any disability	42.6%
With a sensory disability	15.1%
With a physical disability	28.7%
With a mental disability	9.1%
With a self-care disability	8.7%
With a go-outside-home disability	12.9%

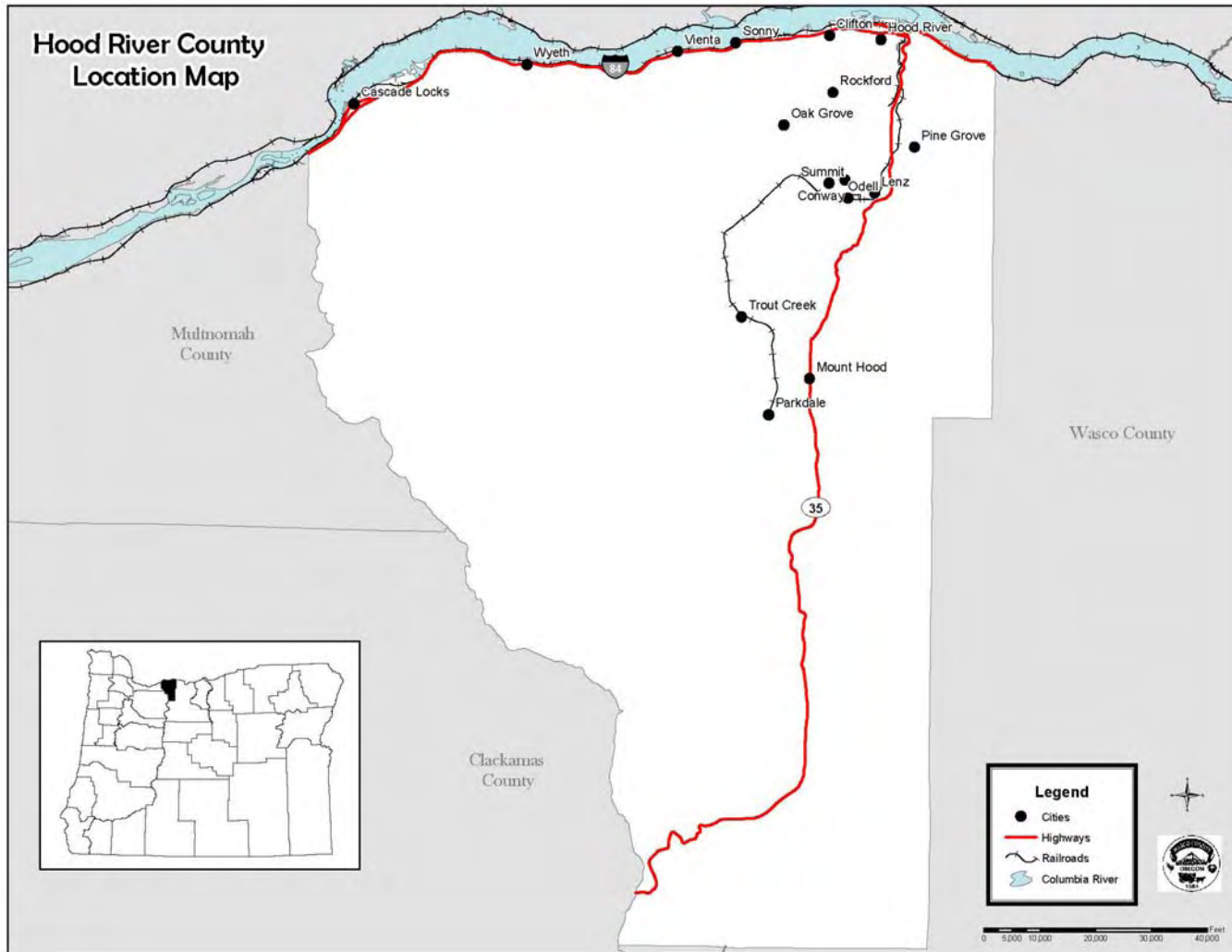
Hood River County Poverty Status By Disability

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey

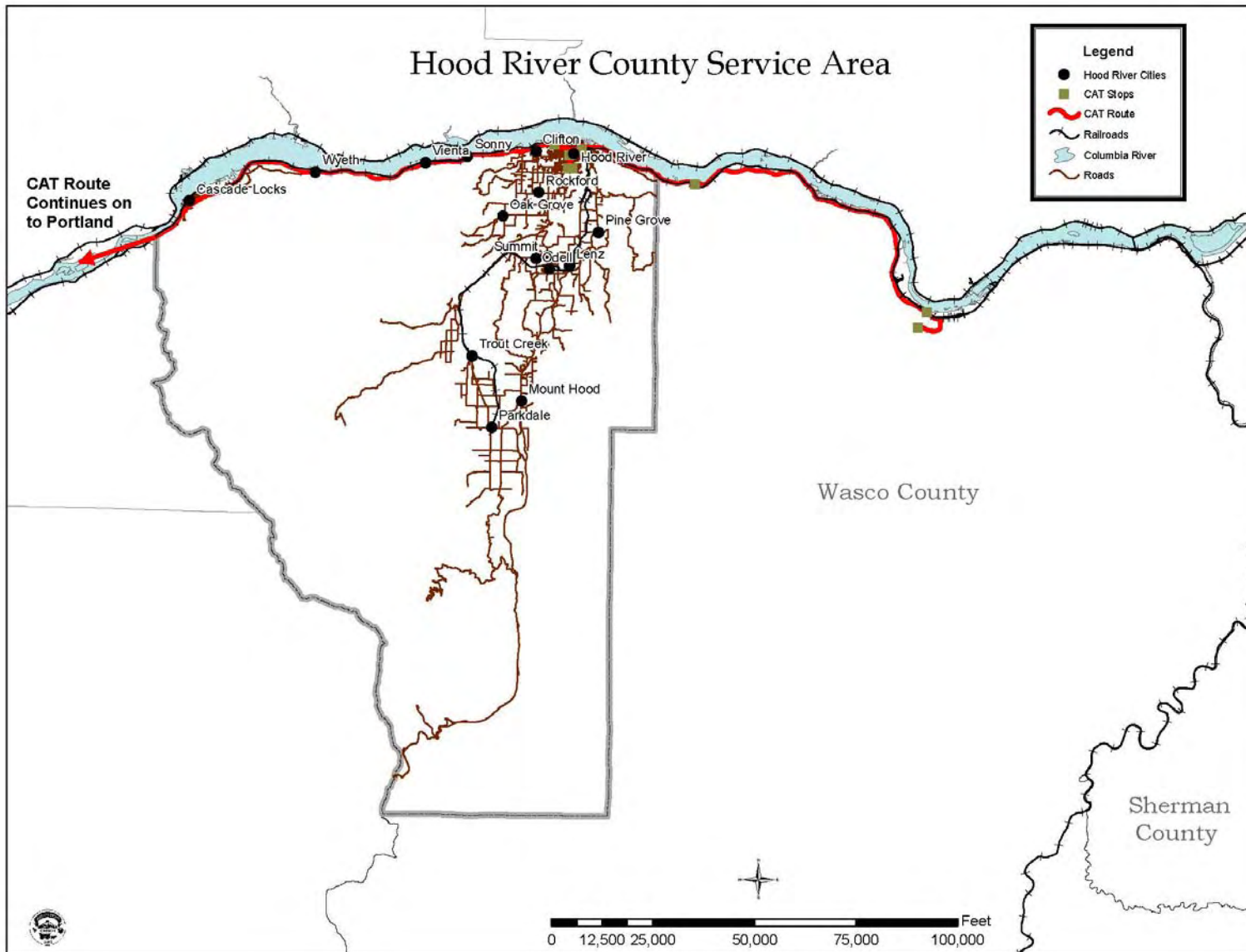
Population 5 years and over for whom a poverty status is determined	19,482
With any disability	2,572
Below poverty level	22.9%
With a sensory disability	696
Below poverty level	25.9%
With a physical disability	1,572
Below poverty level	26.5%
With a mental disability	1,149
Below poverty level	19.6%
With a self-care disability	374
Below poverty level	29.4%
No disability	16,910
Below poverty level	13.0%
Population 16 years and over for whom a poverty status is determined	15,915
With a go-outside-home disability	534
Below poverty level	21.2%
Population 16 to 64 years for whom a poverty status is determined	13,430
With an employment disability	515
Below poverty level	13.4%

Appendix F: Maps

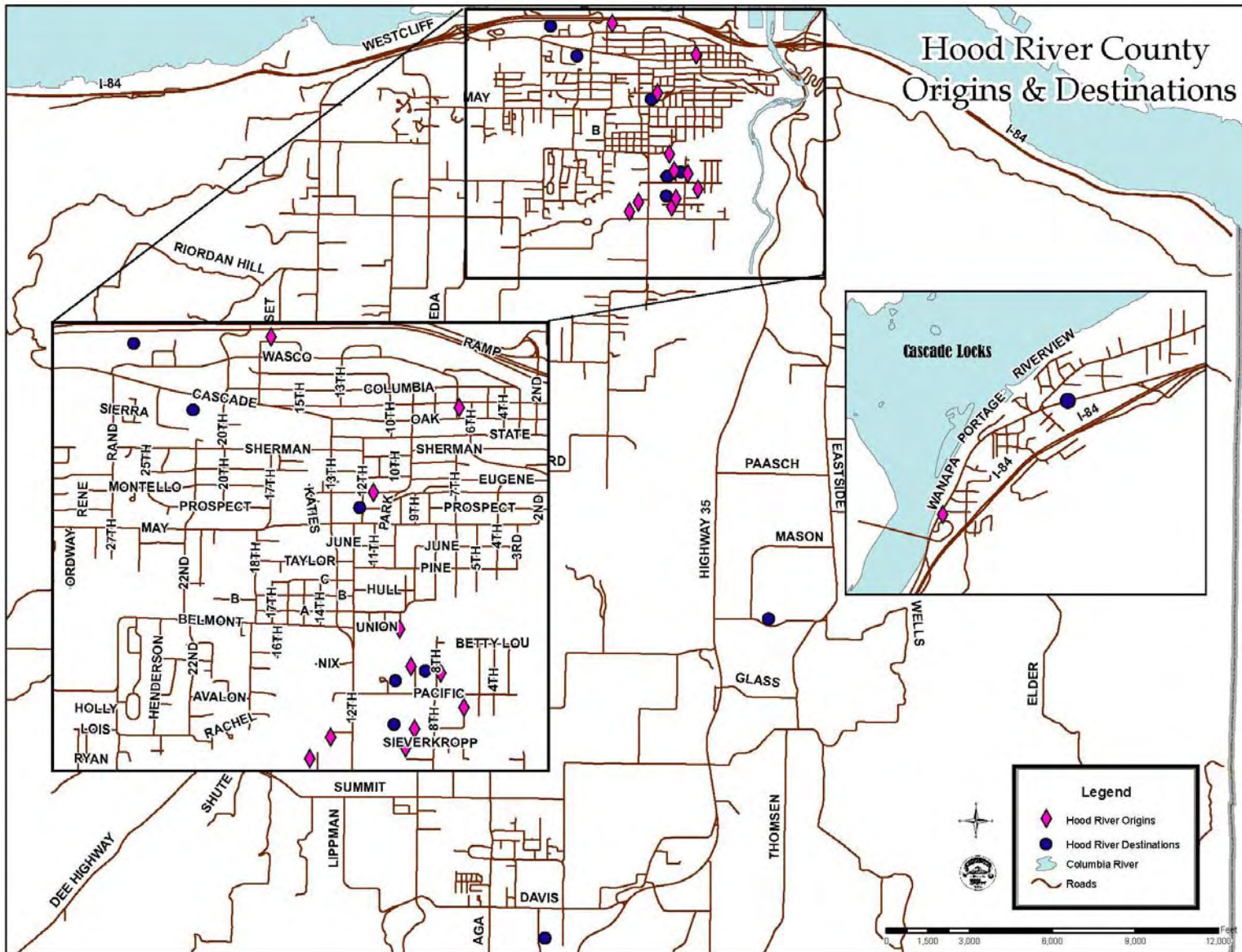
Locator Map



Current Service Areas and Transportation Routes Map



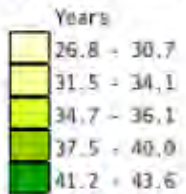
Common Origins and Destinations Map





Population Distribution Map

TM-P017. Median Age: 2000
 Universe: Total population
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data
 Hood River County, Oregon by Block Group

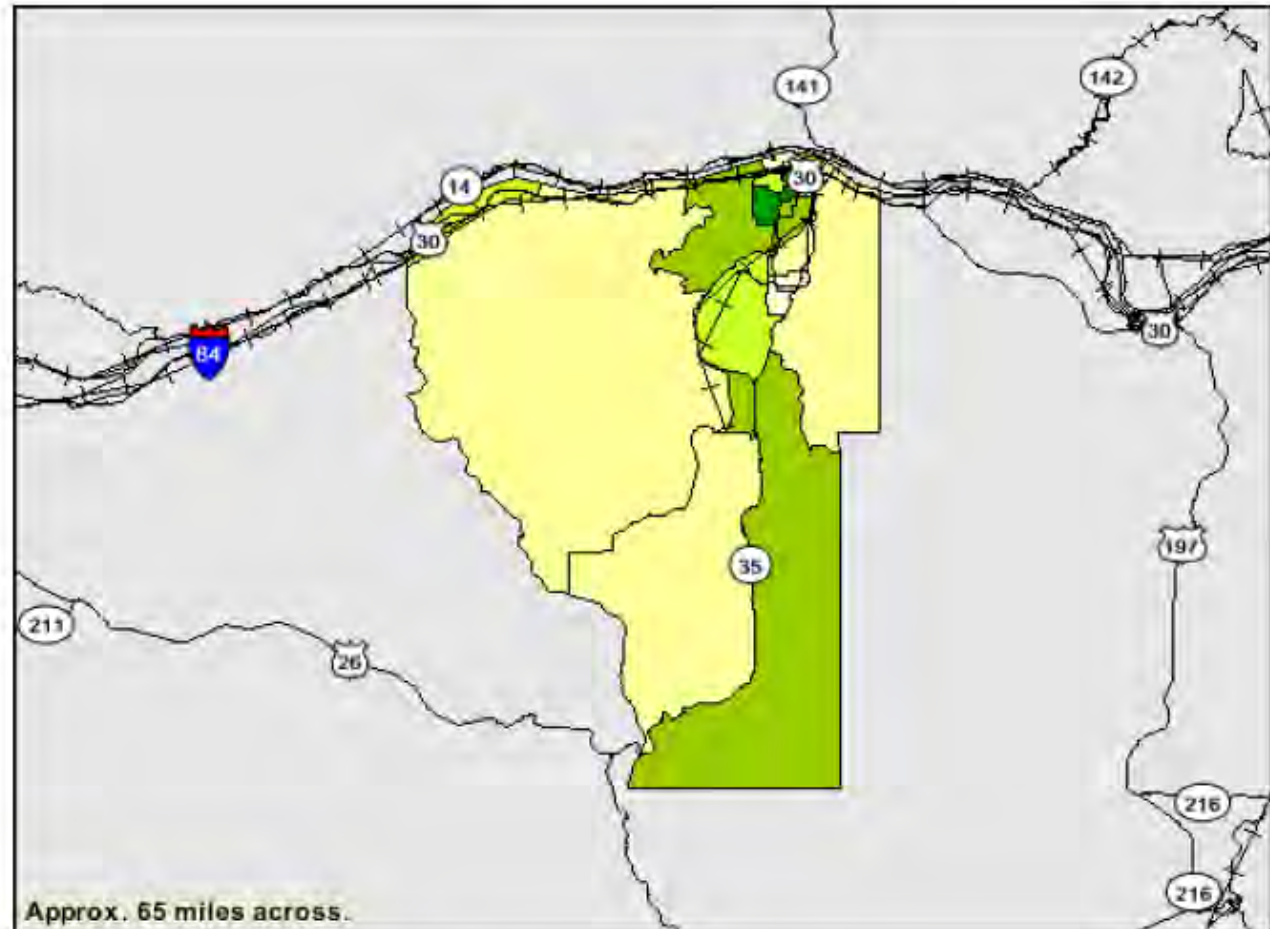
Data Classes



Features

-  Major Road
-  Railroad

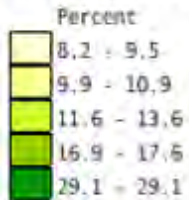
Items in context
 are not visible
 at this zoom level!



Elderly Population Distribution Map


TM-P020. Percent of Persons 65 Years and Over: 2000
 Universe: Total population
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data
 Hood River County, Oregon by Block Group

Data Classes

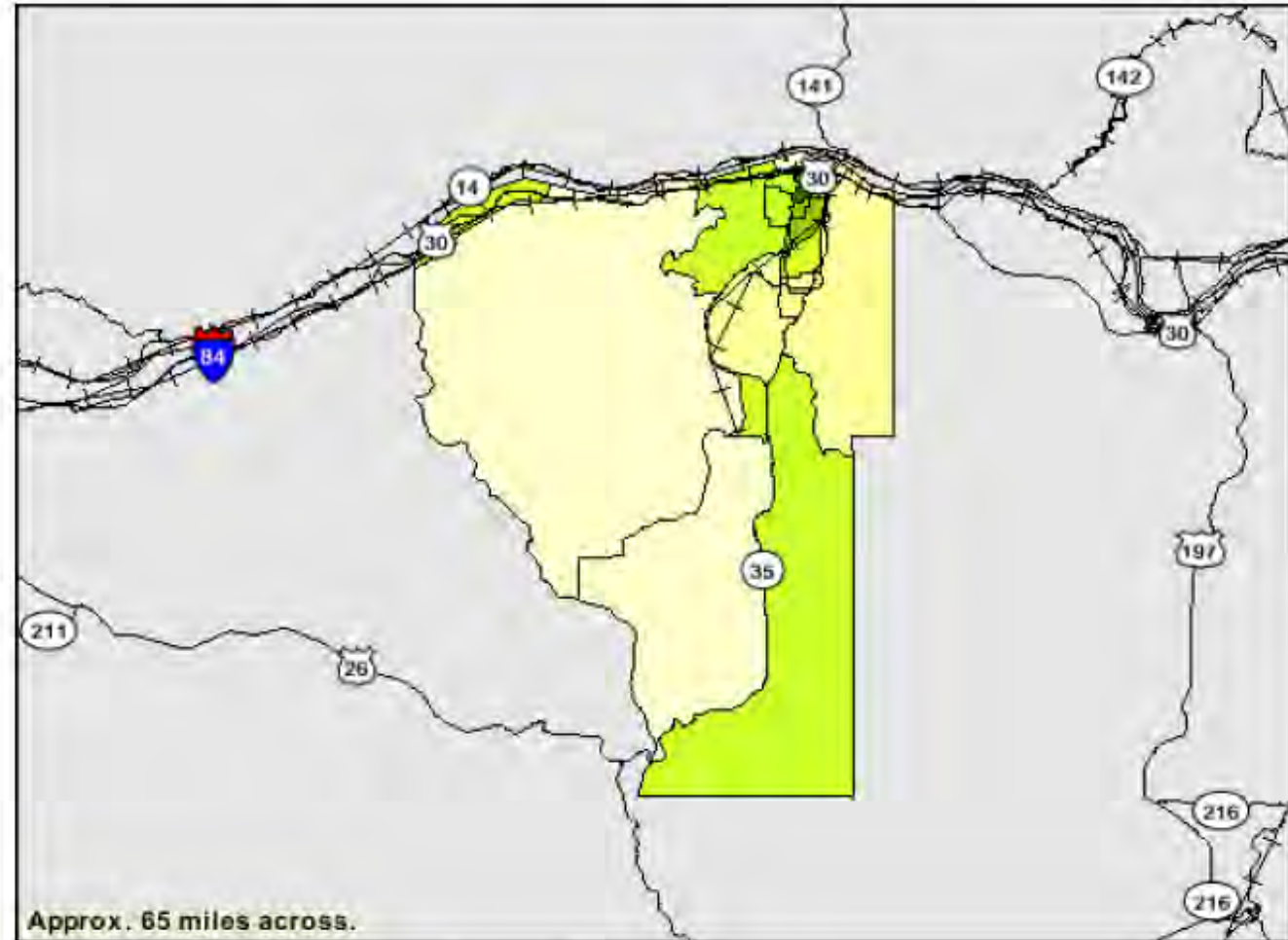


Features

 Major Road

 Railroad

Items in text
 are not visible
 at this zoom level



Individuals with Disabilities Population Distribution Map

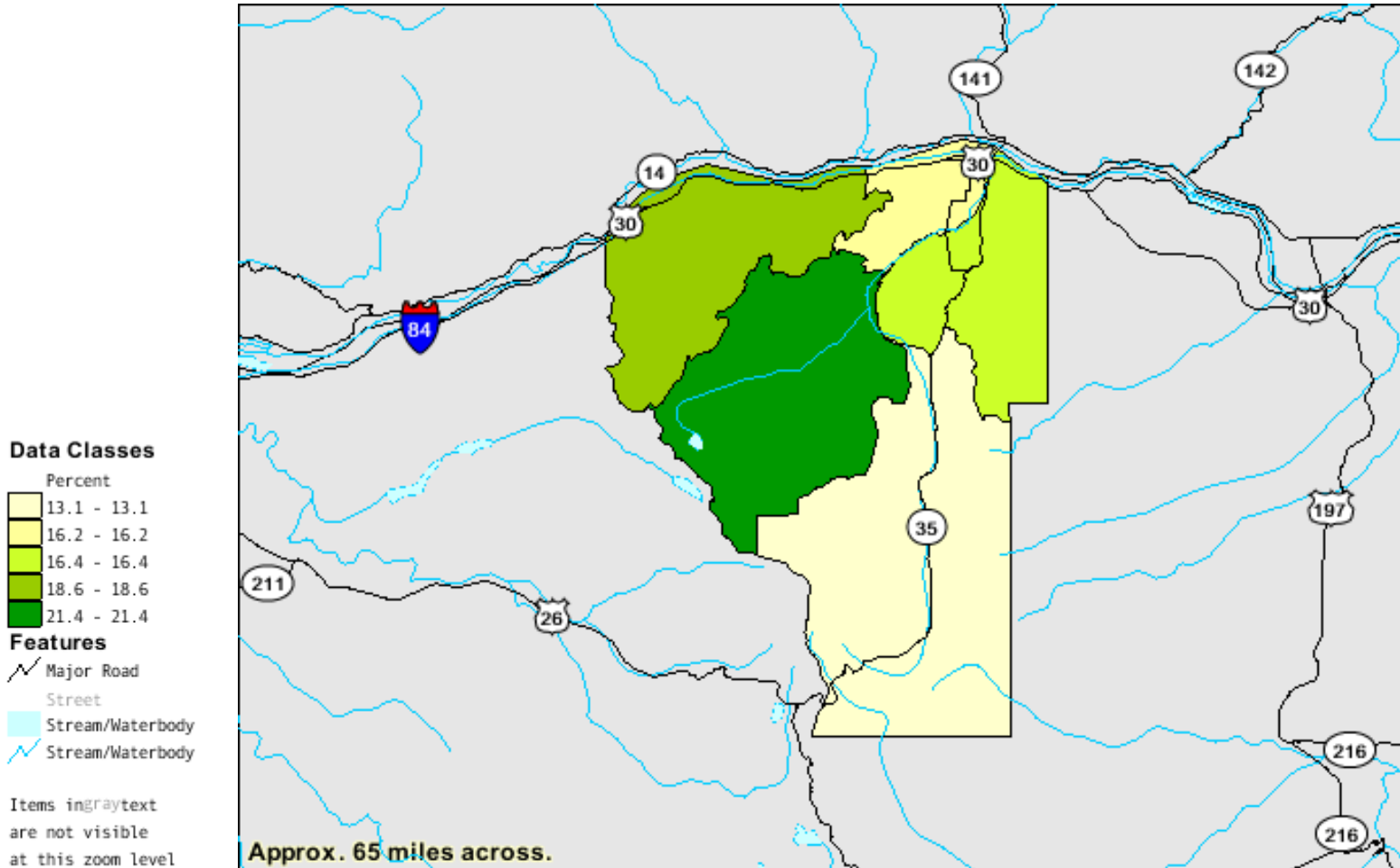
TM-P046. Percent of Persons 21 to 64 Years With a Disability: 2000

Universe: Civilian noninstitutionalized population 21 to 64 years

Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data

Hood River County, Oregon by County Subdivision

NOTE: Data based on a sample except in P3, P4, H3, and H4. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf3.htm>.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Matrix P42.

Low Income Population Distribution Map


TM-P069. Percent of Families Below the Poverty Level in 1999; 2000
 Universe: Families
 Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data
 Hood River County, Oregon by Block Group

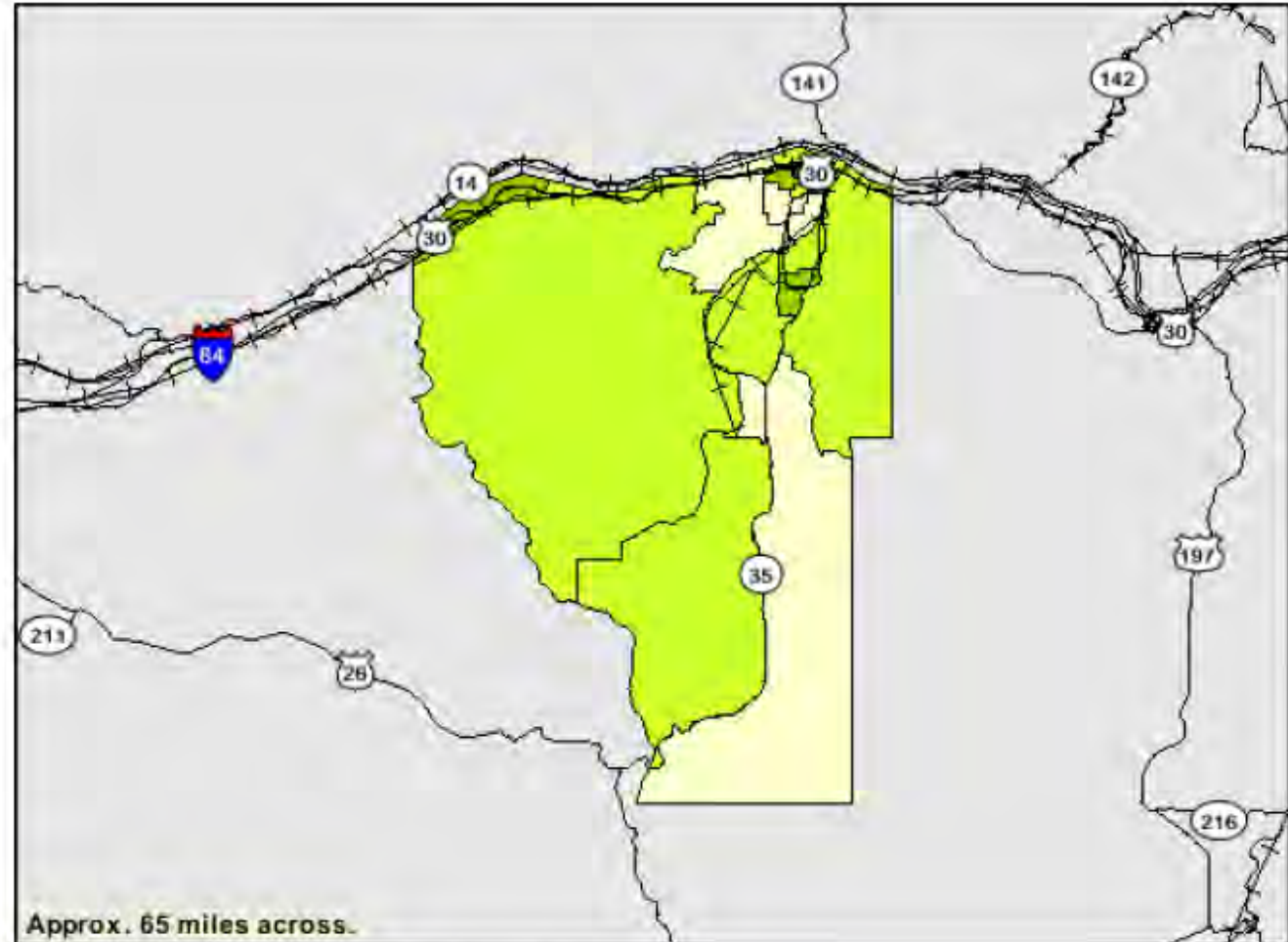
Data Classes

Percent	
0.0 - 2.8	
4.4 - 5.0	
7.5 - 10.4	
14.6 - 16.9	
19.4 - 21.7	

Features

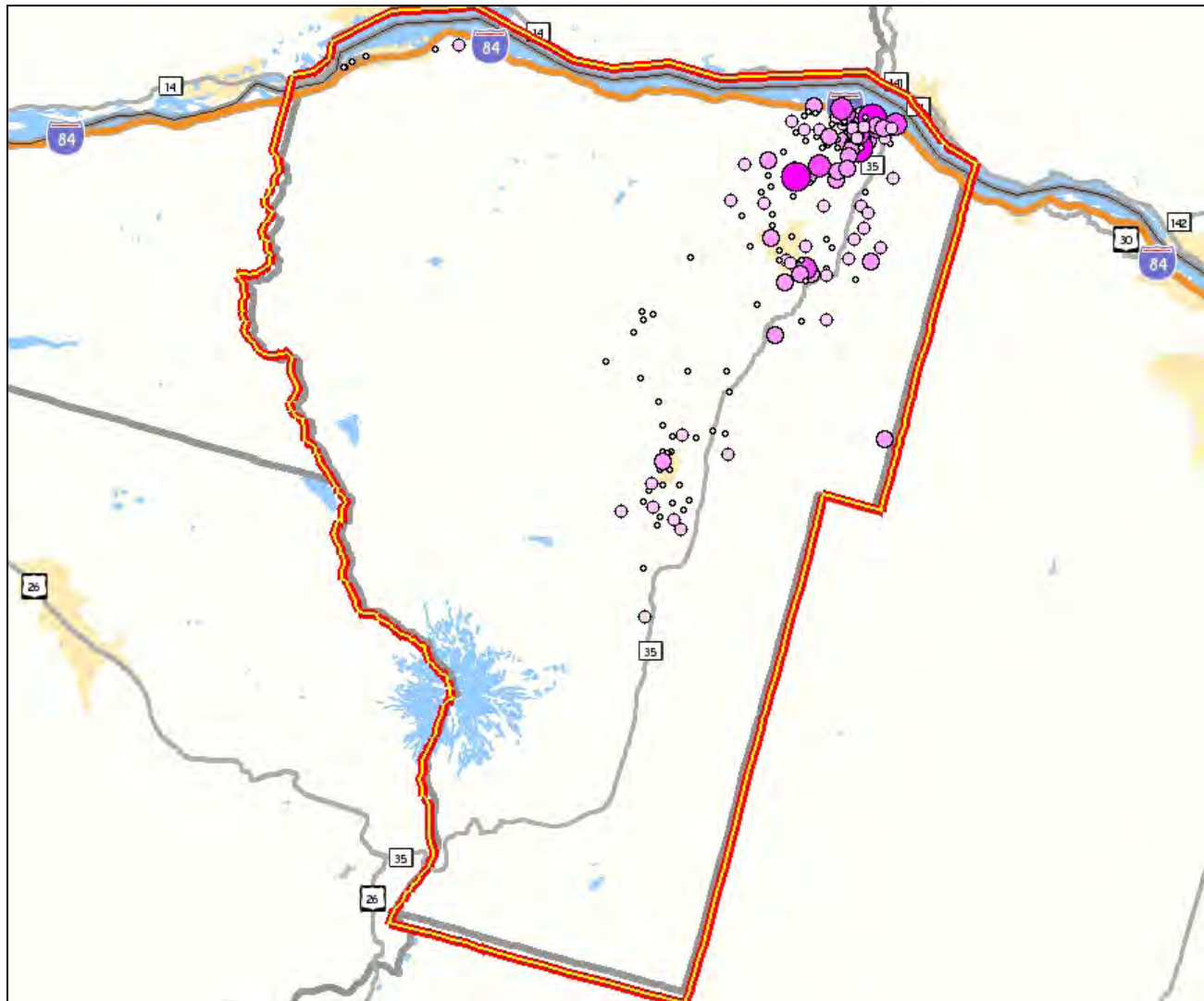
-  Major Road
-  Railroad

Items in  text are not visible at this zoom level



Work Place Distribution Map

Source: US Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies

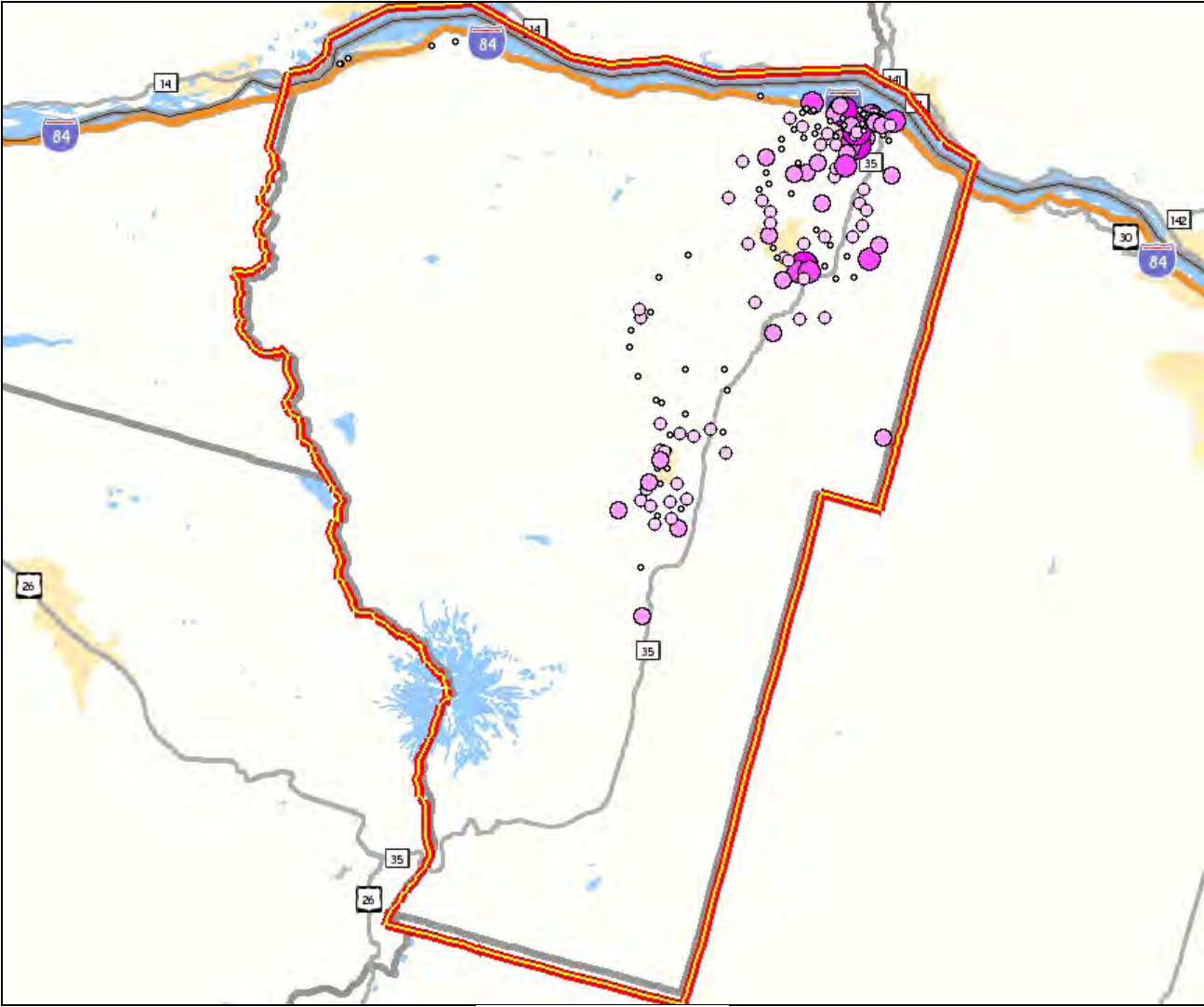


2006

- 3 - 19 Workers
- 20 - 65 Workers
- 66 - 154 Workers
- 155 - 300 Workers
- 301 - 520 Workers

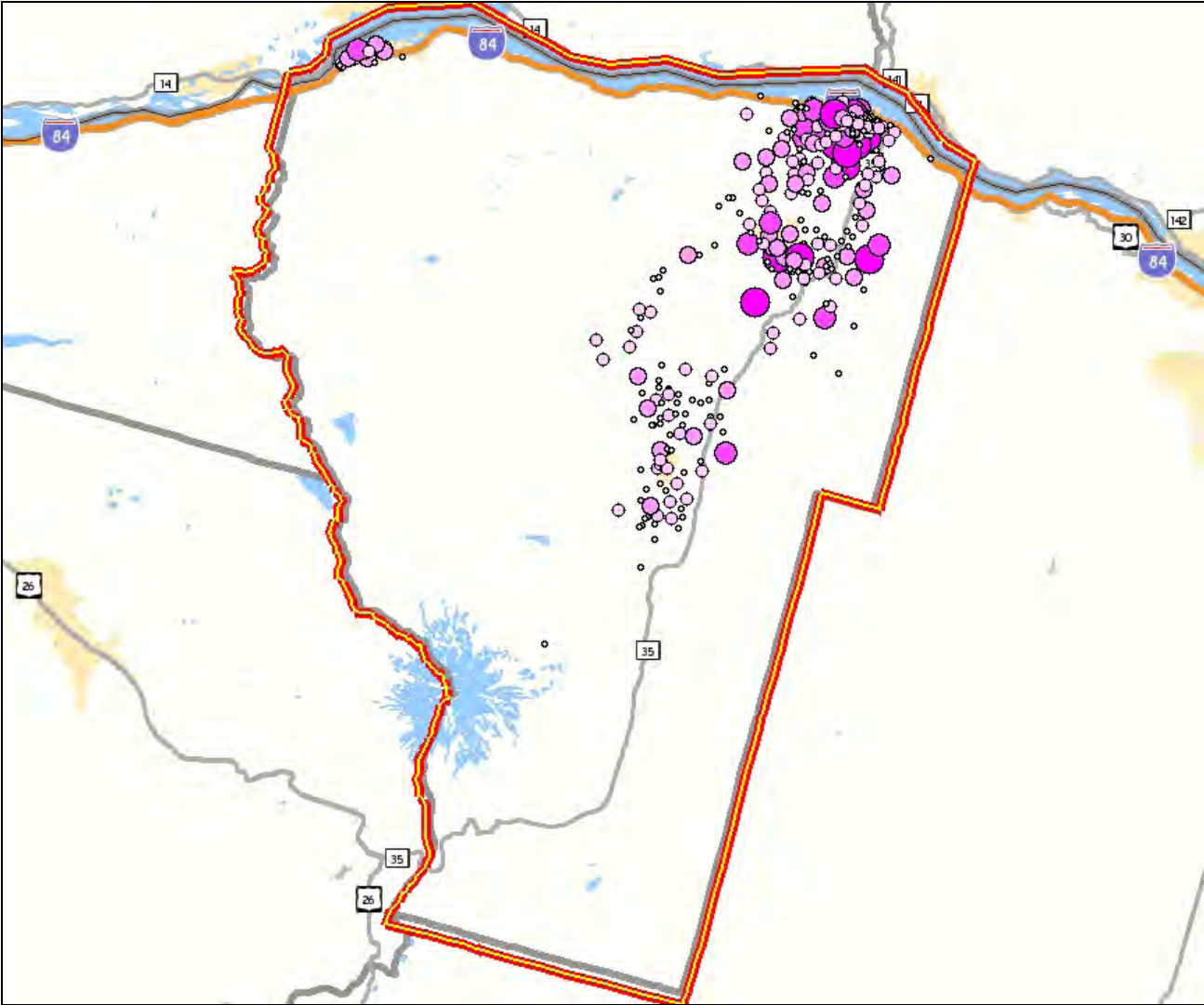
Low-Income Work Place Distribution Map

Source: US Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



Home/ Residential Area Distribution Map

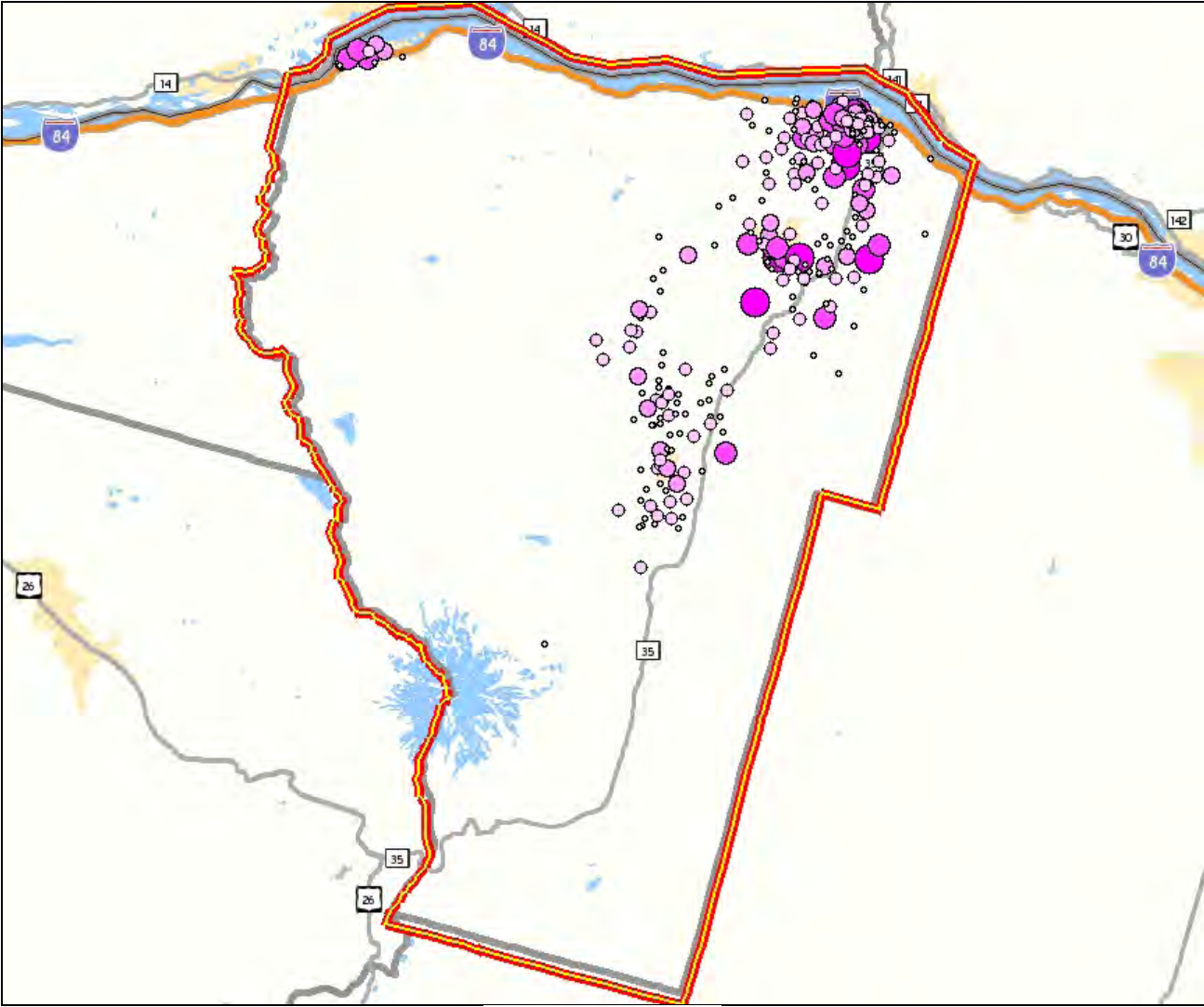
Source: US Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



- 2006**
- 2 - 8 Workers
 - 9 - 27 Workers
 - 28 - 64 Workers
 - 65 - 125 Workers
 - 126 - 217 Workers

Low-Income Home/ Residential Area Distribution Map

Source: US Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies



2006

- 1 - 2 Workers
- 3 - 10 Workers
- 11 - 23 Workers
- 24 - 46 Workers
- 47 - 81 Workers

Appendix G: Apartments in Hood River County

Located in Hood River unless otherwise noted

**American Village
Apartments**

Avalon Way

Arends Place I and II

Sieverkropp Drive

Bella Vista

Hope Ave

Down Manor

(senior housing)

Sterling Place

Columbia View

Oak Ave

**Columbia View
Apartments**

Cascade Locks

**Providence/Dethman
Manor**

(senior housing)

Montello Ave

Indian Creek Court

9th Court

Indian Creek Village

9th Court

Orchard View Manor

Pacific Ave

Riverside

9th Court

Riverview Terrace

Cascade Locks

Wind River

Sieverkropp

Wy'east Vista

Apartments

8th Street

Appendix H: Assisted Living, Nursing Homes and Retirement Communities

Located in Hood River unless otherwise noted

Ashley Manor
8th Street

Hood River Care Center
Henderson Road

Dethman Manor
Montello Ave

Parkhurst House
West May Street

Down Manor
Sterling Place

Providence/Brookside Manor
Brookside Drive

Hawk's Ridge
8th Street

Appendix I: Fixed Route Schedules

Fixed Route to Portland

Location	Time
Departs from Transportation Center- 201 Federal St, The Dalles	7:30 AM
Transfer to CAT Bus at Columbia Area Transit Office - 600 E Marina Way, Hood River - leave for Portland	8:00 AM
Departs from Gateway MAX station PDX	9:15 AM
Depart from Portland Art Museum 10th & Jefferson - Tri-Met Bus Stop #3049	9:35 AM
Leave Oregon Health Sciences (Sam Jackson Park Road - Tri-Met Bus Stop #5028 under the pedestrian breezeway)	9:50 AM
Arrive Clackamas Town Center (Lower level, South side, Main entrance west of Barnes and Noble)	10:30 AM
Leave Clackamas Town Center (Main entrance west of Barnes and Noble)	2:00 PM
Depart from Portland Art Museum 10th & Jefferson - Tri-Met Bus Stop #3049	2:30 PM
Leave Oregon Health Sciences (Sam Jackson Park Road - Tri-Met Bus Stop #5028 under the pedestrian breezeway)	2:50 PM
Leave Gateway MAX station PDX	3:30 PM
Columbia Area Transit Office- 600 E Marina Way, Hood River	4:35 PM
The Dalles- Transportation Center 201 Federal, The Dalles	5:10 PM

Fixed Route The Dalles-Hood River

MORNING

STOPS	EASTBOUND	WESTBOUND
Rosauer's	6:00 AM	
Columbia Gorge Community College Building 4 Parking Lot- The Dalles	6:35 AM	6:35 AM
The Dalles - Transportation Center 201 Federal St		6:46 AM
Mosier Pocket Park by the bridge over the RR		7:05 AM
Hood River Hotel		7:13 AM
Hood River Wal-Mart		7:18 AM
Providence Hood River Hospital		7:25 AM
Columbia Gorge Community College - Indian Creek Campus		7:28 AM
Rosauers		7:30 AM

MID-DAY

LOCATION	EASTBOUND	WESTBOUND
Rosauers	12:00 noon	
Columbia Gorge Community College - Indian Creek Campus	12:03 PM	
Hood River Providence Memorial Hospital	12:08 PM	
Wal-Mart	12:13 P M	
Hood River Hotel	12:19 PM	
Transportation Center- The Dalles	12:44 PM	
Columbia Gorge Community College Building 4 parking lot- The Dalles	12:56 PM	12:56 PM
Hood River Hotel		1:27 PM
Wal-Mart		1:33 PM
Hood River Providence Hospital		1:38 PM
Columbia Gorge Community College - Indian Creek Campus		1:43 PM
Hood River - Rosauers		1:46 PM

EVENING

STOPS	EASTBOUND	WESTBOUND
Hood River - Rosauers	5:00 PM	
Columbia Gorge Community College - Indian Creek Campus	5:03 PM	
Hood River Providence Memorial Hospital	5:08 PM	
Hood River - Walmart	5:15 PM	
Hood River Hotel	5:21 PM	
Mosier Pocket Park	5:29 PM	
The Dalles - Transportation Center 201 Federal, The Dalles	5:48 PM	
Columbia Gorge Community College Building 4 Parking Lot- The Dalles	5:58 PM	5:58 PM
Columbia Area Tansit office on 600 E Marina Way		6:28 PM

Appendix J: Complete List of Prioritized Strategies

Hood River County Coordinated Transportation Plan Strategies Prioritization Sheet		
Ref. #	Strategy Description	Ranking A-D
1	Maintain dial-a-ride operations	A
2	Maintain daily fixed route services between Hood River and The Dalles	A
3	Maintain weekly fixed route services between Hood River and Portland	B
4	Provide for replacement of vehicles that have exceeded their useful life	A
5	Seek funding for vehicle repair and maintenance	A
6	Construct new facility for CAT	B
7	Continue policies for allowing companions to ride free	A
8	Continue to seek to leverage all match against state and federal grant funds.	A
9	Utilize local groups to help advocate for public transportation funds	A
10	Identify and utilize nontraditional sources of local funding, such as support from the business community, Arc, Hospital, etc	C
11	Further conversations with the Port of Hood River and Port of Cascade Locks regarding reducing/eliminating tolls	B
12	Establish a volunteer recruitment strategy for CAT	C
13	Expand CAT services to include early morning hours	B
14	Expand CAT services to include evening hours	B
15	Analyze use of fixed route service to determine best service hours	A
16	Create additional fixed or deviated route services	B
17	Add drivers and vehicles to existing CAT routes to reduce scheduling difficulties	B
18	Coordinate with human service agencies to allow use of phones to call CAT	D
19	Direct individuals to computers at their local library and computer training classes through the community college or Council of Governments	D
20	Offer educational stipends for drivers and dispatchers to learn Spanish	B
21	Provide information on private charter services in central transportation information resource	B
22	Offer weekend service operations through CAT	B
23	Promote private providers offering weekend service	B
24	Analyze use to determine best day to offer transportation to Portland	B
25	Market services to determine if there is a critical mass of riders from Cascade Locks for new services	A
26	Enhance and develop connections to Skamania County Transportation Services	B

27	Produce brochures and distribute at senior centers	B
28	Create and distribute reference magnets	D
29	Provide information to agencies that most closely work with the Spanish speaking population	A
30	Place articles in newsletters with a focus on Spanish speaking populations: El Paplote, Providence Hood River Hospital, Hood River Downtown Business Association, and Hood River School District	B
31	Produce radio spots about transportation services, including ones to be aired on Radio Tierra	B
32	Host student intern to write newspaper articles	A
33	Develop full marketing plan and start a public education and awareness campaign	C
34	Develop brochure to place at locations frequented by the target populations, including human service agencies, laundromats, Gorge Center, and medical facilities.	A
35	Continue participation in Gorge TransLink, maintain website as a central information resource, and support TransLink in seeking a mobility manager	A
36	Continue communication with human service providers about transportation services.	A
37	Implement a donation based fare.	D
38	Develop a system of discounted fares for special needs populations	B
39	Establish transportation fare fund to support passengers who cannot afford to pay	C
40	Offer travel training and coordinate with human service agencies	B
41	Utilize Faith in Action to maintain a list of companion riders. Provide connection for individuals without companions to Faith in Action	D
42	Encourage employer vanpools	B
43	Encourage carpool, rideshare and vanpool options	B
44	Continue shared administration with Wasco County Transportation Network	A