

MORROW COUNTY COORDINATED HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN



August 2022



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ACRONYMS

- ACS - American Community Survey
CTP – Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Plan/Coordinated Transportation Plan
CTUIR - Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation
DLCD - Department of Land Conservation and Development
FTA – Federal Transit Administration
IAMP - Interchange Area Master Plan
HRTG – Highly Rural Transportation Grant
ICU - Intensive Care Unit
LEP - Low English Proficiency
MCPT - Morrow County Public Transit
PMT - Project Management Team
PTAC - Public Transit Advisory Committee
ODOT – Oregon Department of Transportation
RVHT - Rural Veteran Healthcare Transportation Grant
STF – Special Transportation Fund
STIF - Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund
TSP - Transportation System Plan
WORC - Workforce On-Demand Ride Cooperative



INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

Morrow County is undertaking an update to its Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Plan (the Coordinated Transportation Plan, or CTP) to address a combination of regulatory and community goals.

The Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) Section 5310 program and Oregon's Special Transportation Fund (STF) both fund projects and services that enhance the mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities. To be eligible for funding, projects and services are required to be "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit human services transportation plan." While §5310 funds are directed solely toward services open to the general public, STF funds can also be used for client-only services and programs enhancing the mobility of low-income individuals. As the recipient of Morrow County's STF funds, Morrow County Public Transit (MCPT) implements projects and services funded by §5310.

The STF is being merged into Oregon's Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) effective July 2023. Administrative rulemaking related to this merger will not be finalized until late 2022. However, if ODOT's initial recommendations are implemented, client-only projects and services will need to be included in the CTP to be eligible to receive STIF funding. As the designated STIF Qualified Entity, Morrow County has the ability to distribute federal and state funds to itself and to eligible subrecipients to support the mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities. An update to Morrow County's CTP should capture existing STIF plan projects and inform future STIF planning.

The intent of the CTP is to be a "living" document identifying needs and investment priorities. Transit providers and partners in Morrow County will use the plan to allocate funding and develop and enhance transit services. Since the plan must be updated every five years, it has been written in a way that can incorporate ongoing updates and revisions.

Coordinated Transportation Plan Requirements

ODOT provides the following requirements for Coordinated Transportation Plans:

- » (1) An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and non-profit);
- » (2) An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service (Note: If a community does not intend to seek funding for a particular program (Section 5310, 5311), then the community is not required to include an assessment of the targeted population in its coordinated plan);
- » (3) Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and
- » (4) Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.



Assessing Need and Identifying Proposed Service and Capital Improvements

Reflecting legislative priorities identified in the Keep Oregon Moving act, the CTP addresses the transportation needs of people residing and traveling within the region, especially those residents in low-income communities. Key project and program provisions of the CTP include the following STIF Criteria:

- » Increased frequency of bus service to areas with a high percentage of Low-Income Households.
- » Expansion of bus routes and bus services to serve areas with a high percentage of Low-Income Households.
- » Fund the implementation of programs to reduce fares for public transportation in communities with a high percentage of Low-Income Households.
- » Procurement of low or no emission buses.
- » The improvement in the frequency and reliability of service between communities inside and outside of the Qualified Entity's service area.
- » Coordination between Public Transportation Service Providers to reduce fragmentation in the provision of transportation services.
- » Implementation of programs to provide student transit service for students in grades 9-12.



DEMOGRAPHICS



DEMOGRAPHICS

Understanding specific demographic distributions and needs is vital to evaluating the quality of a transit system. This section discusses the composition of Morrow County and its communities, and the considerations for needs for different transit dependent populations. It should be noted that census block groups in Morrow County are large, and dilute the density of populations. As such, maps provide the total population within each transit dependent population group in addition to density.

Transit riders are typically generalized into two categories:

- » **Choice riders** have adequate resources and abilities to own, operate, and maintain a vehicle but choose to use transit. Choice riders are more likely to use public transportation for commuting or when transit offers an advantage over driving (i.e., roads are congested, convenience, high parking fees, passenger amenities, etc.)
- » **Captive riders**, also referred to as transit dependent riders, use public transportation because they lack access or resources to own or operate a vehicle. These riders use public transportation for most of their trips, including to get to work, medical appointments, shops, and social activities.

Choice riders can be located anywhere in a community, with the strongest market areas typically being areas with high population or employment density. Market areas for captive riders, however, is more complex, as an understanding of population distributions and considerations for special concerns is needed. For example, older adults tend to travel during the daytime and require shorter walks to/from a bus stop. The following outlines seven demographic groups typically associated with higher use of transit:

- » **People Experiencing Poverty** – individuals who live within a set of income thresholds established by the US Census Bureau, which vary by family size and composition. Low-income households tend to rely on public transportation as it is less expensive than owning and operating a vehicle.
- » **People with Disabilities** – people with a disability often have difficulty operating a vehicle and require access to public transportation.
- » **Youth** – individuals under 18 years old have limited access or ability to drive a vehicle.
- » **Elderly Adults** – individuals aged 65 and older may become less comfortable driving as they age or are no longer physically able to drive.
- » **People of a Racial Minority** – often live in neighborhoods that have suffered systemic disinvestment and other barriers to transportation.
- » **Zero Vehicle Households** – persons residing in households without access to a vehicle typically rely on walking, biking, public transportation, or carpooling to meet their mobility needs.
- » **Low English Proficiency Households** – low English proficiency (LEP) can be a barrier for interacting with the transportation system, particularly in terms of owning and operating a vehicle. Typically, households with low English proficiency rely on other modes to meet their mobility needs.



- » **Veterans** - have devoted years of their lives into their respective field of expertise, with many impacted by limited mobility and high medical needs.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in the provision of federally supported benefits and services, including public transportation service. In addition to Title VI populations, this analysis presents information about the study area population’s transit reliant populations, including poverty status, age, racial/ethnic composition, and English proficiency, and proportion of people with disabilities.

Table 1 breaks down these metrics for Morrow County and its communities. This analysis provides information regarding populations who are typically more reliant on transit or have been historically underrepresented in planning processes. Values higher than the state average are in **bold**. As shown, cities throughout Morrow County have high percentages of people below the poverty line, people with a disability, youth, older adults, zero vehicle households, households with low English proficiency, and veterans.

Table 1. Title VI and Underrepresented Populations

	2020 Census Population	Total Population (ACS)	Total Households (ACS)	Below 100% Poverty	Below 200% Poverty	People with Disability	Youth (Under 18)	Older Adults (65 and older)	Racial/Ethnic Minority	Zero Vehicle Households	Households with LEP	Veteran
Oregon	4,246,155	4,096,744	1,642,579	12.4%	29.3%	14.3%	20.7%	17.7%	25.0%	7.2%	2.4%	8.3%
Morrow County	12,303	11,384	4,093	15.1%	42.5%	17.3%	27.5%	22.4%	41.3%	2.0%	6.7%	10.6%
Boardman	NA	3,527	1,086	20.6%	51.3%	11.1%	33.7%	12.5%	74.7%	2.5%	20.3%	4.2%
Heppner	NA	1,264	556	10.9%	39.9%	27.9%	25.9%	29.5%	12.3%	2.0%	0.0%	12.1%
Ione	NA	410	178	16.6%	29.3%	32.7%	19.5%	32.9%	24.6%	0.0%	10.1%	12.1%
Irrigon	NA	1,896	668	16.2%	44.6%	16.4%	25.9%	16.6%	51.3%	0.7%	4.5%	11.2%
Lexington	NA	160	85	8.8%	51.3%	44.4%	21.9%	40.0%	12.5%	15.3%	0.0%	20.0%

Source: 2020 Census and American Community Survey 2016-2020 5-Year Estimates; Tables S1602, S1701, S1810, B25044. NA = Not Available.

People Experiencing Poverty

Low-income populations are individuals that live within a set of income thresholds established by the US Census Bureau, which vary by family size and composition. Historically, people experiencing poverty may rely on active and public transportation more than the general population; therefore, recognition of this group’s concentration centers is needed to determine transportation needs. Figure 1 and Figure 2 illustrate areas with high percentages of people living below the poverty level. Densities of individuals residing below 100% poverty exist in the following areas:



- » Northern part of Irrigon and the surrounding areas
- » Most parts of Boardman with a higher concentration south of I-84 and north of Wilson Lane

Densities of individuals residing below 200% poverty exist in the following areas:

- » Throughout Irrigon
- » Parts of Boardman south of I-84 and north of Wilson Lane

People with Disabilities

People with a disability often have difficulty operating a vehicle and require access to public transportation. Figure 3 illustrates areas with high percentages of households with disabilities. Densities of people with disabilities exist in the following areas:

- » All of Irrigon, but mostly concentrated in the northern part and surrounding areas
- » Most parts of Boardman, with a higher concentration south of I-84
- » Western half of Lone
- » Western portion of Heppner

Youth & Seniors

Analyzing an area's age composition helps decision-makers understand the potential need for increased transit options. As people age, they typically begin to drive less and require alternative modes of transportation for medical appointments, shopping, and visiting family and friends. Children are unable to operate a vehicle and must rely on family, friends, walking, biking, or public transportation to travel. Figure 4 and Figure 5 illustrate areas with concentrations of youth and older adults, respectively. As illustrated in both the figures, densities of youth and older adults existing in the following areas:

- » All of Irrigon, but mostly concentrated in the northern part and surrounding areas
- » Most parts of Boardman, with a higher concentration south of I-84 and north of Wilson Lane

People of a Racial Minority

People of a racial minority, defined by the US Census Bureau as non-white and/or Hispanic populations, typically live in neighborhoods that have suffered systemic disinvestment and other barriers to transportation. Understanding where people of color live is a step towards equitably implementing transit service that serves their needs. Figure 6 illustrates areas with high percentages of people of a racial minority. Densities of racial minorities existing in the following areas:

- » All of Irrigon, but mostly concentrated in the northern part and surrounding areas
- » All of Boardman, with a higher concentration south of I-84 and north of Wilson Lane
- » Most of Lone
- » Western portion of Heppner

The federal poverty level is defined by household size. The 2022 federal poverty level for a family of 4 is \$27,750 of income. 200% of federal poverty level for a family of 4 would be \$55,500. The state of Oregon uses 200% poverty level for Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund criteria.



Zero Vehicle Households

Vehicle availability may limit a person's ability to commute to work or get to an activity center. Depending on the number of people living in each household, a certain number of vehicles may not be able to provide everyone with a means of transportation. Figure 7 illustrates areas with concentrations of households with no vehicles available. Densities of zero car households existing in the following areas:

- » Northern part of Irrigon and the surrounding areas
- » Most parts of Boardman with a higher concentration north of I-84
- » Eastern part of Lone
- » Southeastern portion of Heppner

Low English Proficiency Households

Low English proficiency can be a barrier for interacting with the transportation system, particularly in terms of owning and operating a vehicle. Typically, households with low English proficiency rely on other modes to meet their mobility needs. Figure 8 illustrates areas with high percentages of households with low English proficiency. Densities of households with low English proficiency exist in the following areas:

- » Northern part Irrigon and the surrounding areas
- » All of Boardman, with a higher concentration south of I-84 and north of Wilson Lane
- » Most of Lone
- » Portion of the northern Heppner

Veterans

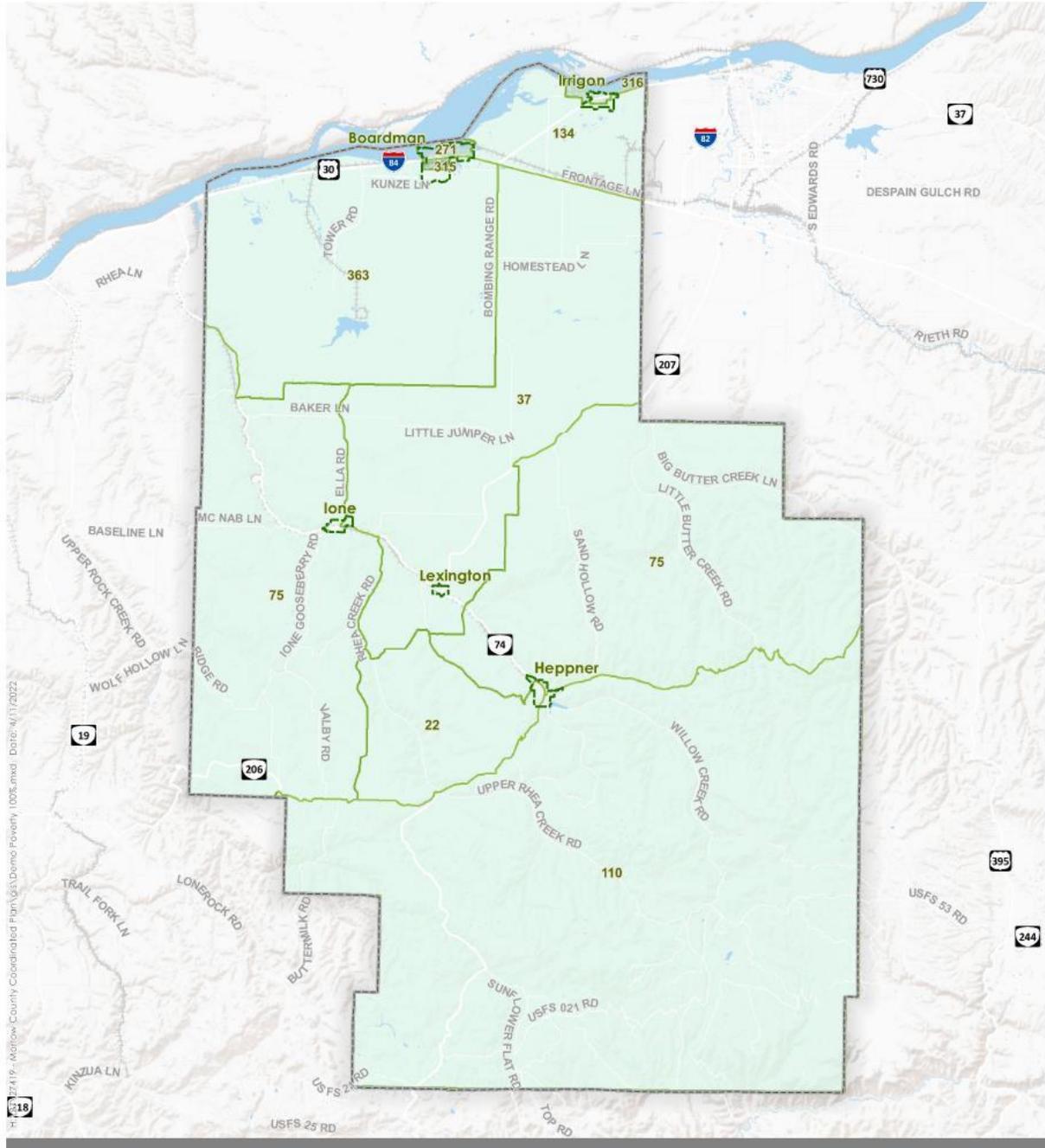
Veterans typically have an increased need for transit options given mobility impairments and higher medical travel needs. Figure 9 illustrates areas with high percentages of veterans. Densities of households with veterans exist in the following areas:

- » All of Irrigon, but mostly concentrated in the northern part and surrounding areas
- » All of Boardman, with a higher concentration south of I-84 and north of Wilson Lane
- » Western portion of Heppner



Morrow County Coordinated Transportation Plan

Figure 1. People Below 100% Poverty



People below 100% Poverty per Acre by Block Group

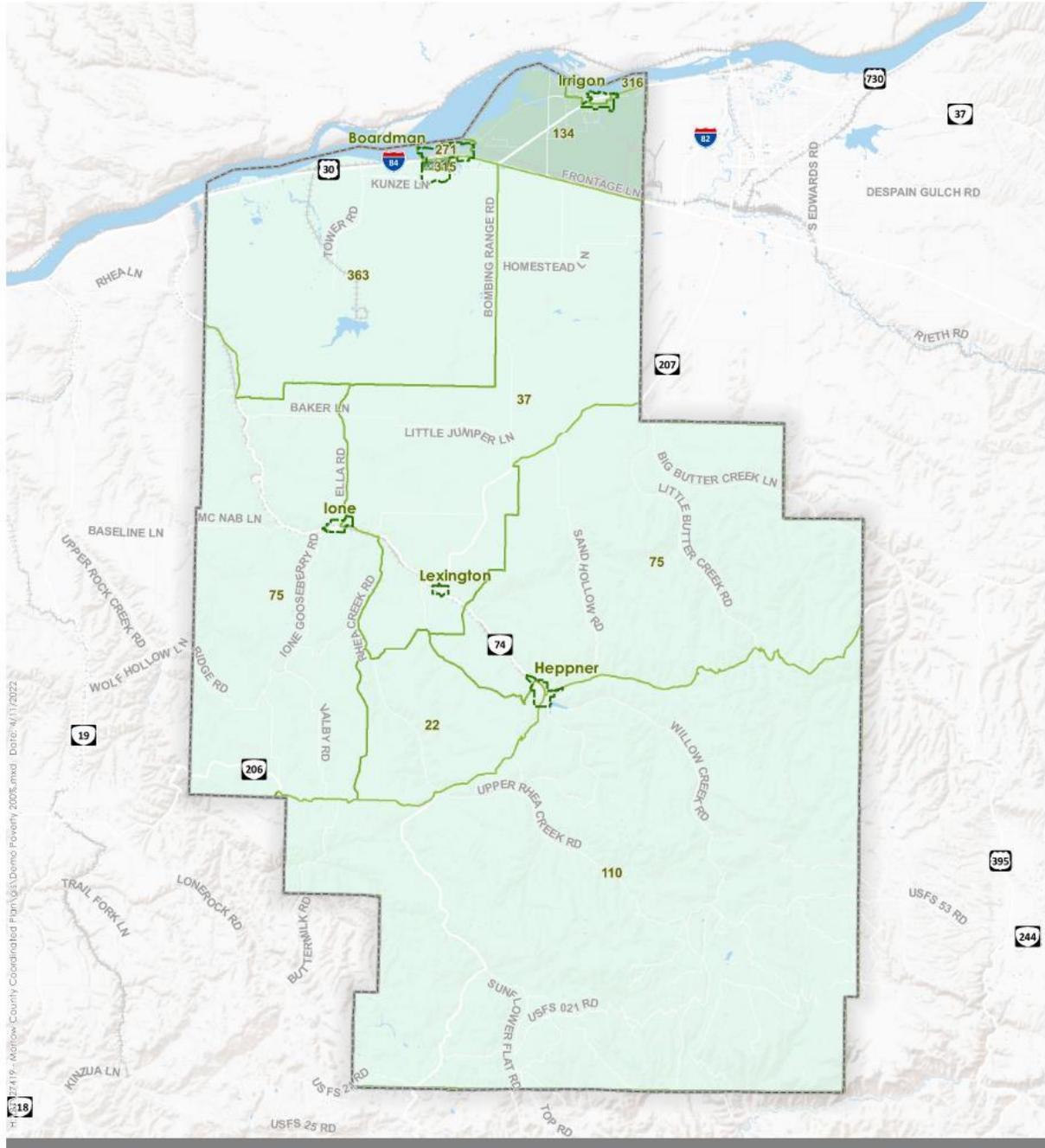
- 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.25
- 0.25 - 0.50
- UGB
- County Boundary



Source: American Community Survey 5yr 2020 Table C21007



Figure 2. People Below 200% Poverty



People below 200% Poverty per Acre by Block Group

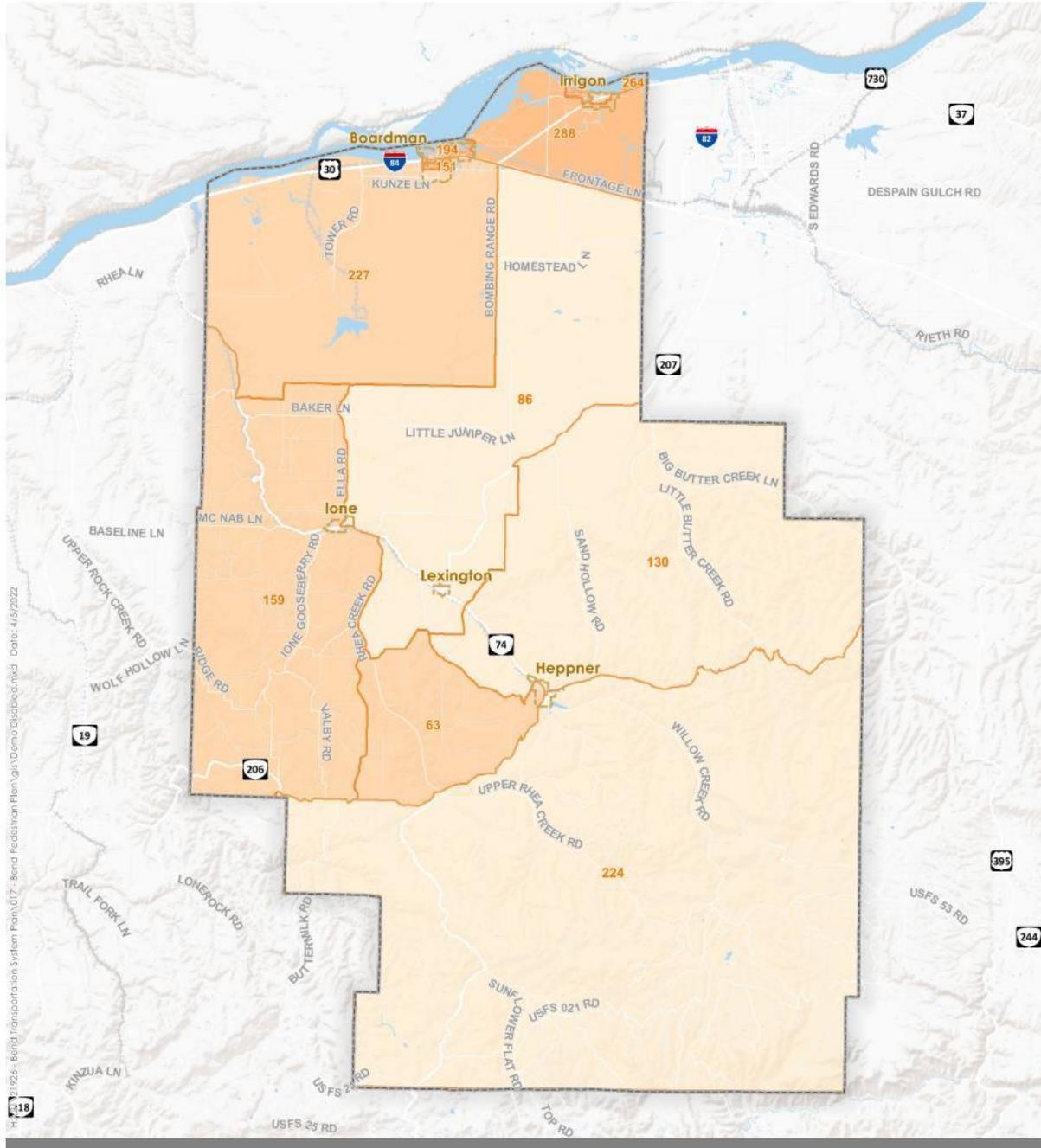
- 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.25
- 1 - 1.5
- UGB
- County Boundary



Source: American Community Survey 5yr 2020 Table C21007



Figure 3. People with Disabilities



People with Disabilities per Acre by Block Group

- 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.00
- 0.01
- 0.02 - 0.08
- 0.09 - 0.20

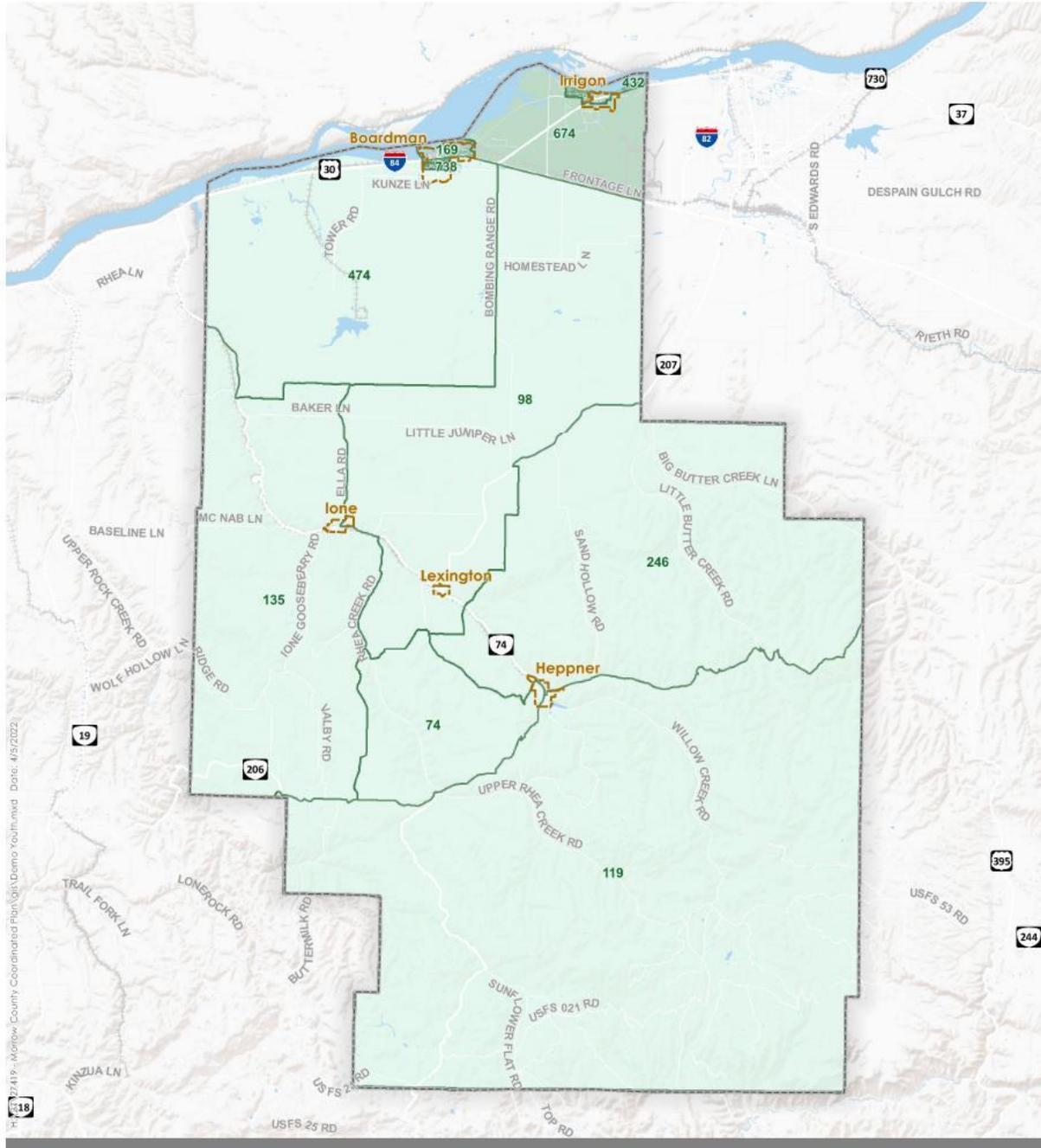
- UGB
- County Boundary



Source: American Community Survey 5yr 2020 Table C21007



Figure 4. Youth Population



People Under Age 18
per Acre by Block Group

- 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.02
- 0.03 - 0.07
- 0.08 - 0.14
- 0.15 - 1.00

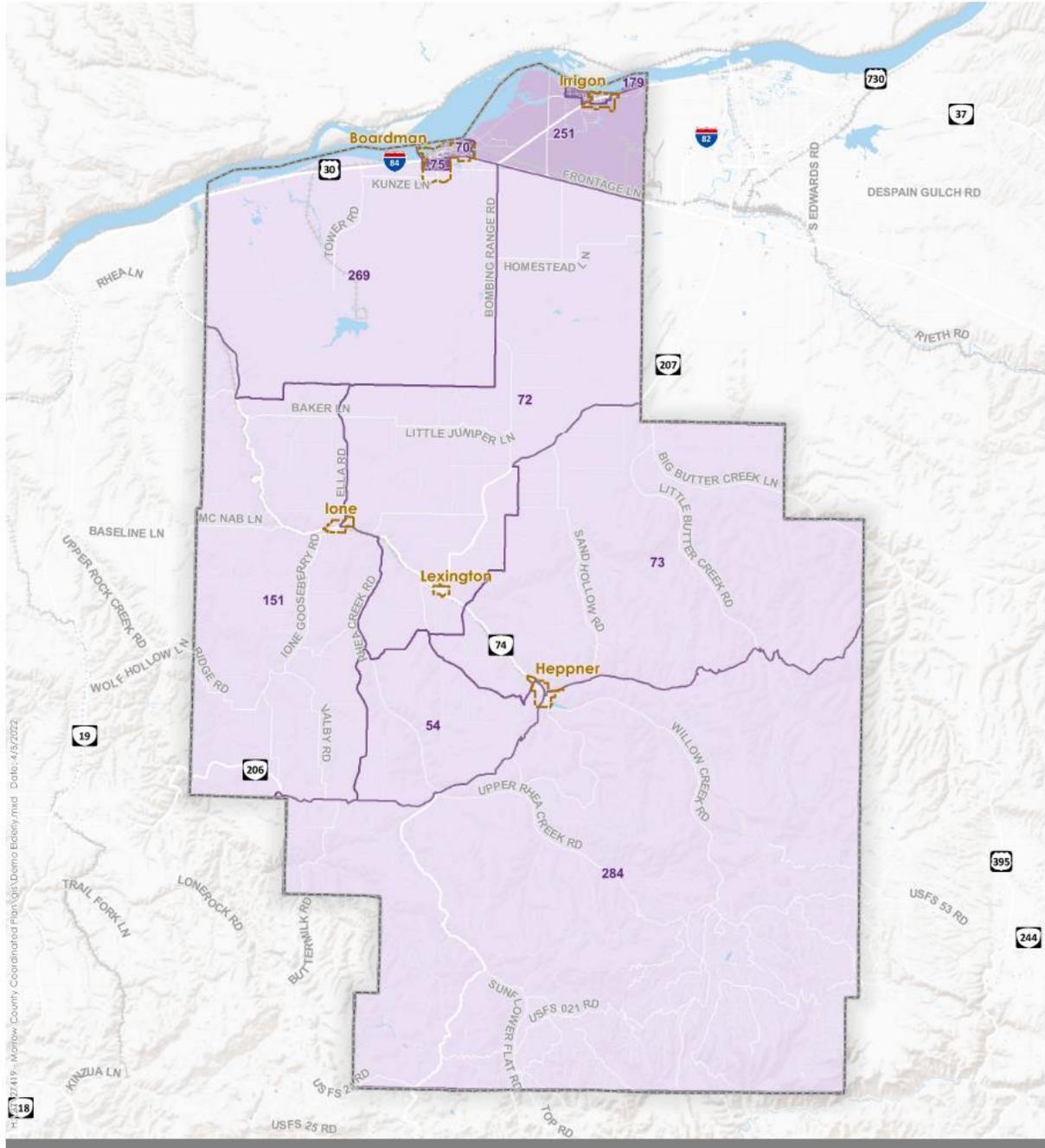
- UGB
- County Boundary



Source: American Community Survey 5yr 2020 Table B01001



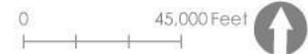
Figure 5. Senior (Age 65 and Over) Population



People Age 65 and Over per Acre by Block Group

- 0.00
- 0.01
- 0.02 - 0.03
- 0.04 - 0.06
- 0.07 - 0.10

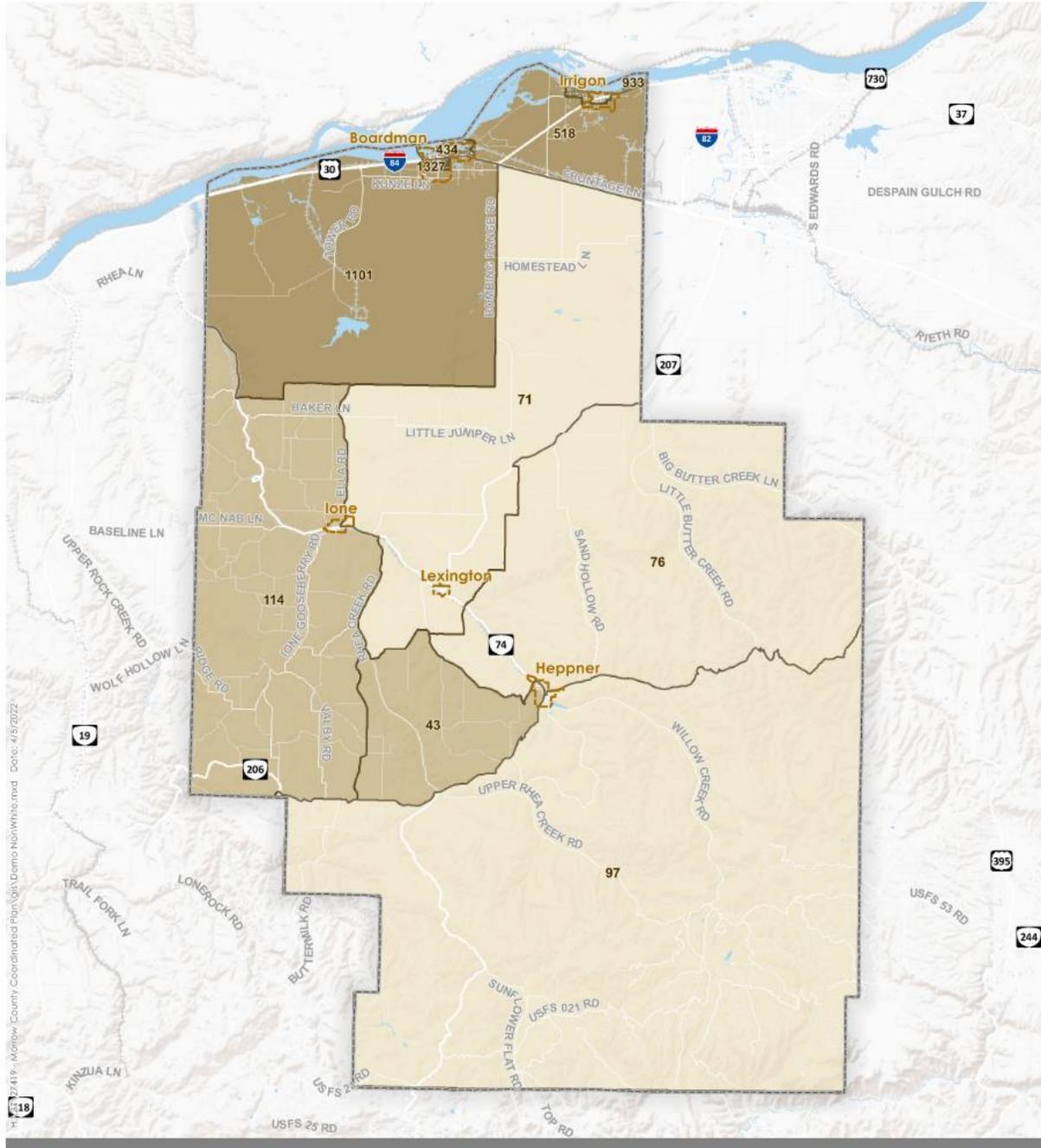
- UGB
- County Boundary



Source: American Community Survey 5yr 2020 Table B01001



Figure 6. People of a Racial Minority



Non-White Population per Acre by Block Group

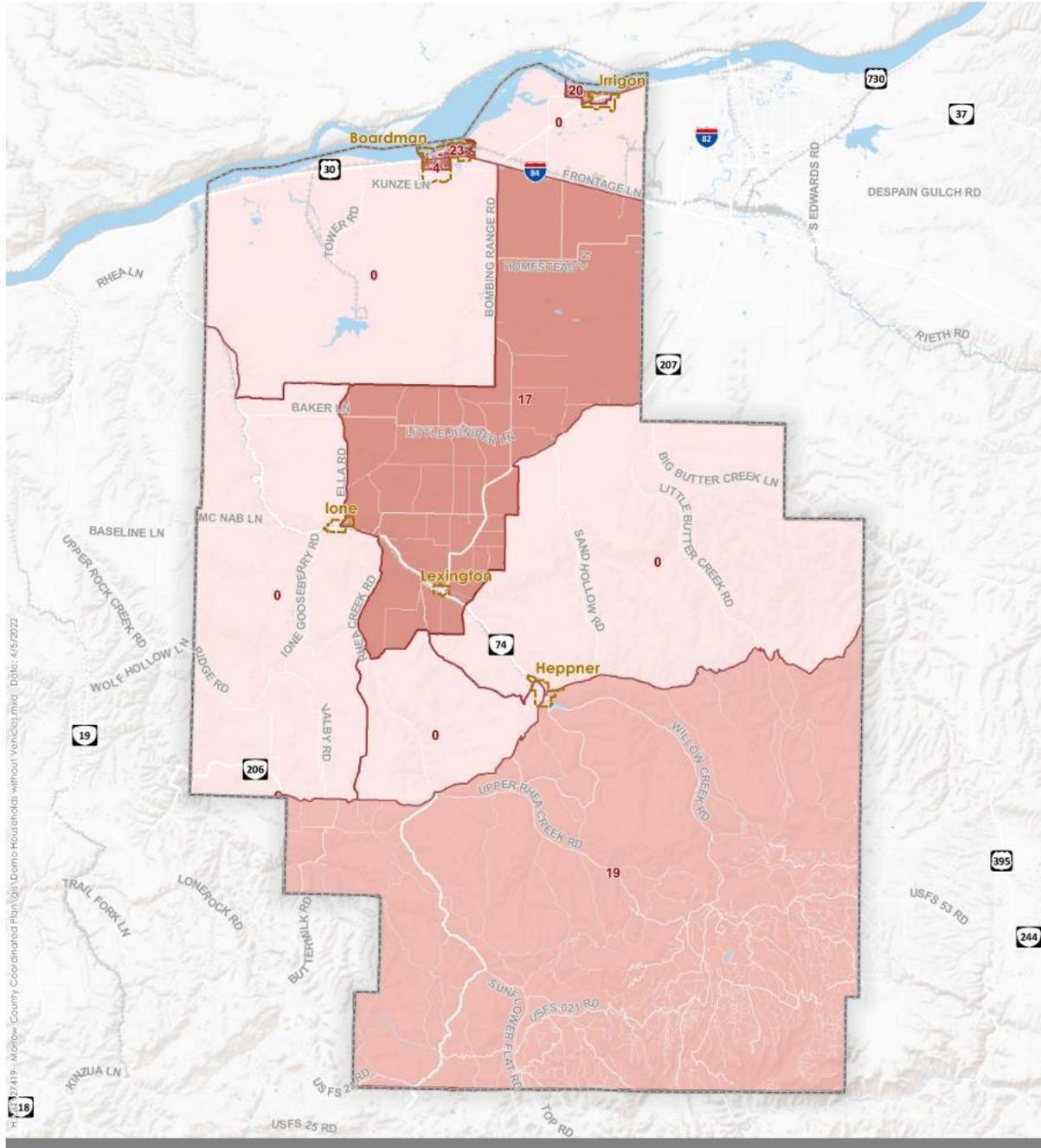
- 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.00
- 0.01
- 0.02 - 0.30
- 0.31 - 1.79
- UGB
- County Boundary

Source: Census 2020 Table P1





Figure 7. Zero Vehicle Households



Households without Vehicles per Acre by Block Group

- 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.00
- 0.01
- 0.02 - 0.01

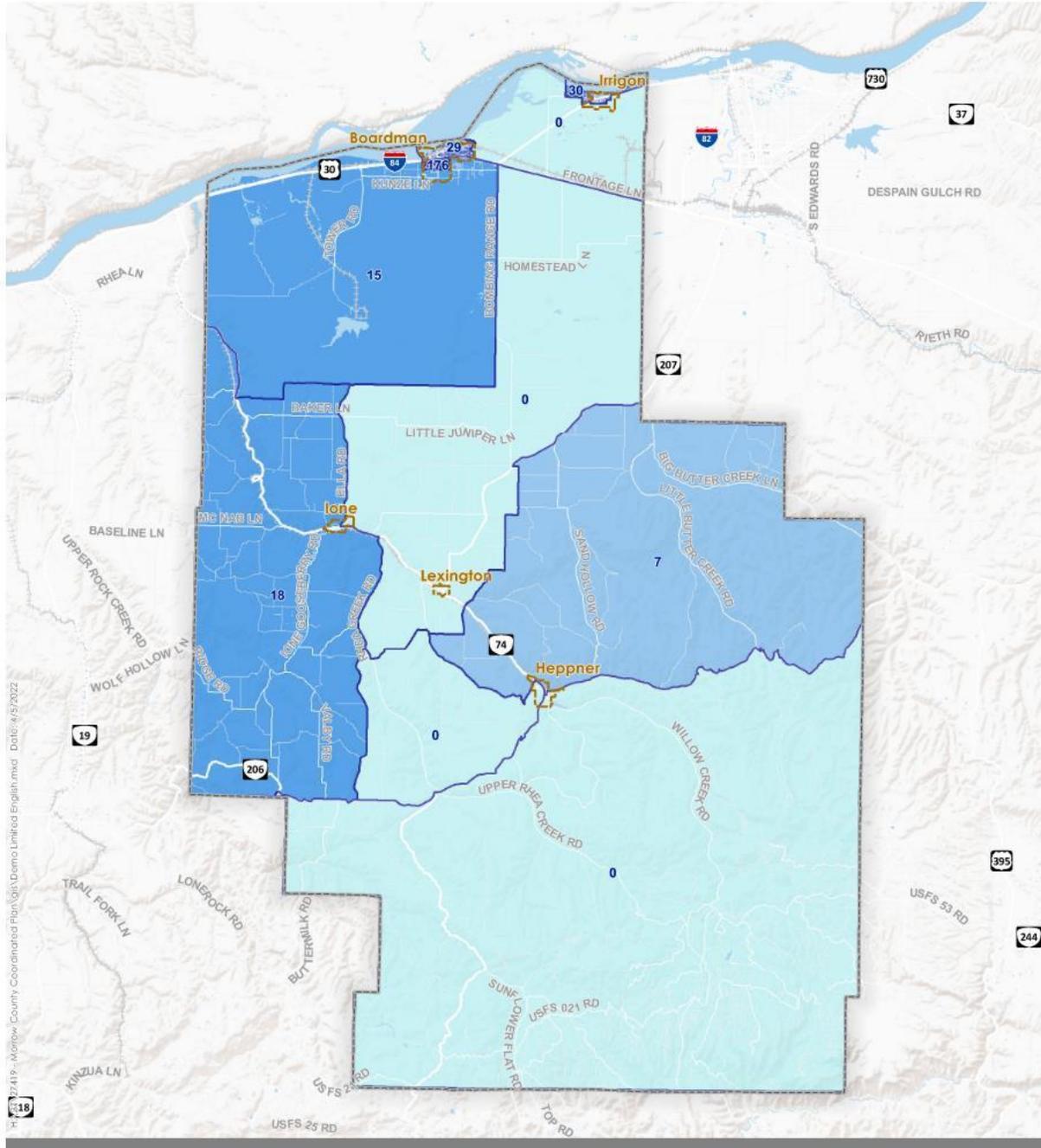
- UGB
- County Boundary



Source: American Community Survey 5yr 2020 Table B25044



Figure 8. Low English Proficiency (LEP) Households



Households with Limited English Spoken per Acre by Block Group

- 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.00
- 0.01
- 0.02 - 0.24

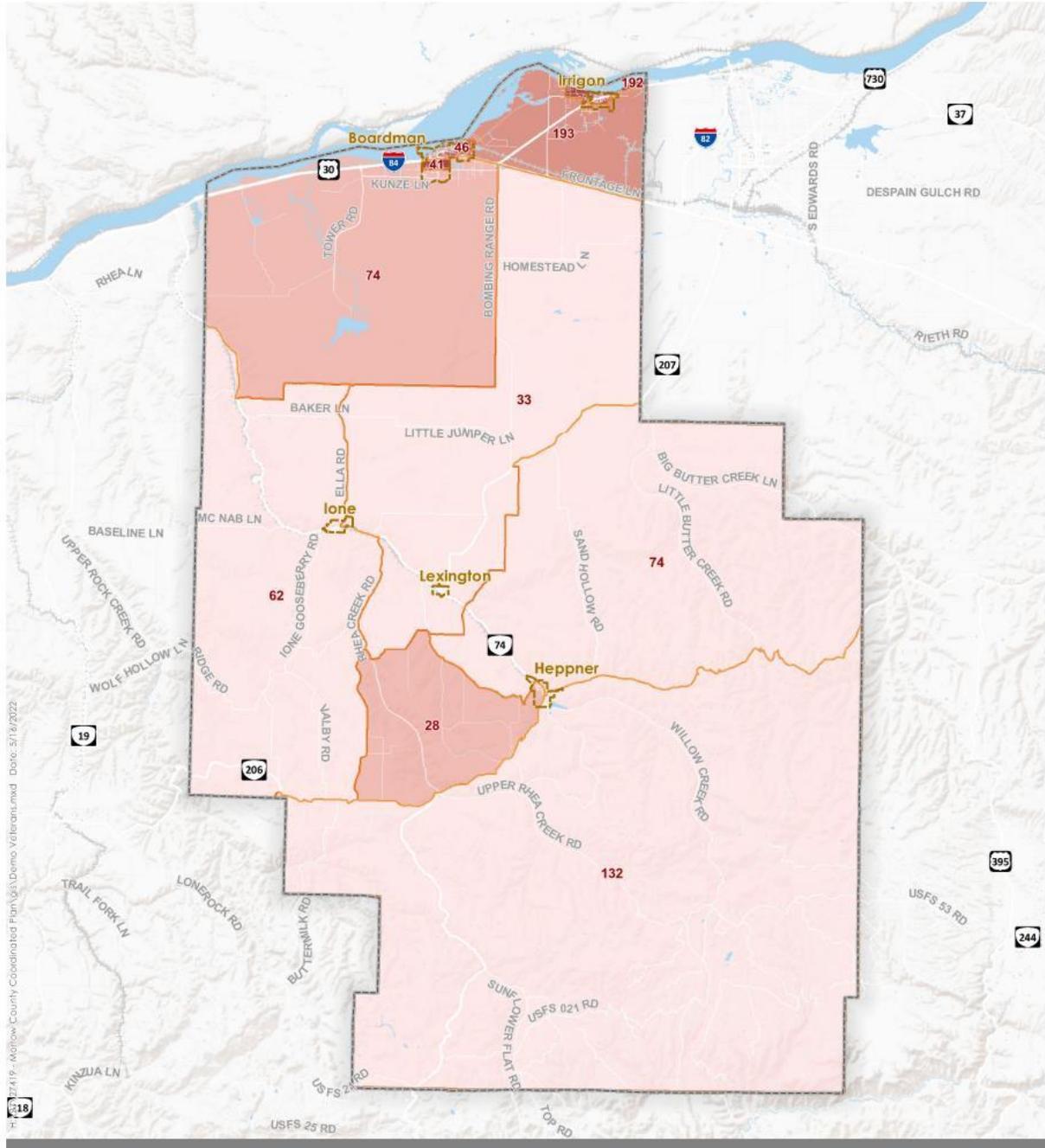
- UGB
- County Boundary



Source: American Community Survey 5yr 2020 Table C16002



Figure 9. Veterans



Veterans per Acre by Block Group

- 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.00
- 0.01 - 0.02
- 0.03 - 0.06

- UGB
- County Boundary



Source: American Community Survey 5yr 2020 Table C21001



EXISTING SERVICES AND RESOURCES



EXISTING SERVICES AND RESOURCES

Taking inventory of the existing transportation services and resources within the county helps identify any unmet transit needs and gaps in transportation service. Available services include one fixed-route (buses running on a set schedule with set pick-up and drop-off points) operated by Kayak Public Transit serving Irrigon. The second main public transportation operator is Morrow County, which operates a dial-a-ride service (called The Loop) in which passengers can get picked up at their home and taken to their destination. Other privately provided transportation services in the region are also described.

Public Transportation Service within Morrow County

Transportation services provided in Morrow County by public entities are summarized below.

THE LOOP

Morrow County Public Transit operates The Loop, a demand-response service (also known as dial-a-ride service) for residents of Morrow County. Service is provided on weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Trip times can be adjusted to meet earlier or later appointments or activities. Weekend trips can also be requested. Request for service is made through the dispatch office, those hours are weekdays 8-12 am and 1-5 pm.

KAYAK PUBLIC TRANSIT

Kayak Public Transit provides public transportation serving southeastern Washington and northeastern Oregon via fixed-route, ADA Paratransit⁶, and a voucher-based taxi system. The service is operated by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), which is headquartered in Mission in Umatilla County. The goal of service lies in connecting towns and transporting people to employment and school. Kayak Public Transit's Hermiston Hopper route services Irrigon Monday-Saturday, providing two stop times daily. Morrow County funds the service to Irrigon.

TRANSIT FACILITIES

Morrow County Public Transit has three bus storage locations in the cities of Heppner, Boardman and Irrigon. These facilities are at capacity. Morrow County is planning to expand its transit facility infrastructure to meet its current and future operating demands. This could include but is not limited to, storage and maintenance facilities, transit centers, and park and ride areas.

Neighboring Public Transportation Services

Neighboring transportation services are provided by local city, county, and private providers.

GREYHOUND

Regional transportation services available near Morrow County are provided by Greyhound. Greyhound operates private transit bus lines throughout the United States. Greyhound has a daily route that travels through Morrow County but does not have a scheduled stop within the County. The nearest scheduled Greyhound stop is in Stanfield, 25 miles east of Boardman on I-84,



in Umatilla County at the Pilot Travel Center. The stop is served by a Greyhound route connecting Portland and Denver via Boise and Salt Lake City. The stop is also the end point of a connecting route to Pasco, Yakima, and Seattle. Morrow County residents feel strongly that Greyhound should schedule stops in the northern portion of Morrow County.

GRANT COUNTY

Grant County People Mover also provides service near Morrow County, with a Prairie City to Walla Walla route providing stops in John Day, Mt. Vernon, Long Creek, Dale, Ukiah, Pilot Rock, Pendleton, and Milton-Freewater on Tuesdays.

CITY OF HERMISTON

The City of Hermiston provides workforce and senior transportation services seven days a week, typically between 6 AM and 6 PM. The workforce program (WORC) serves approximately 30 riders per month and senior transportation serves 100 riders per month.

GILLIAM COUNTY

Gilliam County provides dial-a-ride services Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Fridays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., providing roughly 75 to 100 trips per month. Riders are typically accessing services such as grocery stores, medical, social services, elder/senior services, banking, and community events.

WHEELER COUNTY

Wheeler County provides dial-a-ride services, primarily for seniors and people with disabilities but open to the general public when space allows. The service is operated by both volunteer and paid drivers. Trips are typically for non-emergency medical, and passengers access facilities as far as The Dalles and Portland.

Client-Based Transportation Service

Several transportation services in Morrow County are privately provided to specific clients.

CAREVAN (GOOD SHEPARD HEALTH CARE SYSTEM)

In addition to The Loop's demand-response service for all populations, CareVan Medical Transportation provides services for residents living in Boardman and Irrigon that have appointments at Good Shepherd Medical facilities in Hermiston. Service operates from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on weekdays. Rides are dispatched by a volunteer at Good Shepherd and are only available for clients of Good Shepherd. Transportation is currently provided for approximately 400 to 700 clients per month.

COLUMBIA RIVER COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

Columbia River Community Health Services is a clinic located in Boardman providing medical services to the greater Boardman area population, migrant/seasonal farm workers, refugees, and low-income populations. Clients without access to other transportation are provided nonemergent rides to/from appointments. Rides must be scheduled with the clinic on a case-by-case basis. Transportation is currently provided for approximately 50 clients per month.



CAPECO

CAPECO is a non-profit who provides service to a mix of clients including Medicaid recipients, older adults, and the general public. The agency provides Dial-a-Ride transportation in Umatilla County and community services in Morrow County. CAPECO services include eight drivers, four of whom are paid.

TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

Transportation Solutions provides non-emergency medical transport in Walla Walla, The Dalles, La Grande, Pendleton, Hermiston, Baker City, Clarkston/Lewiston, Boise, and the Coeur d'Alene areas for Medicaid patients. They typically serve into Irrigon about once per day and occasionally other communities in Morrow County. Vehicles include ambulatory and wheelchair-accessible vans.

EMPLOYMENT TRANSPORTATION

Workforce transportation is provided by some employers, such as Independent Transport, Atkinson Staffing, MJ's Labor, and others.

Other Transportation Service

TAXIS

Limited taxi service exists in the northern region of Morrow County provided by taxi companies based in Umatilla County (e.g., Umatilla Cab Company, Elite Taxi). There is no consistent taxi service in eastern or southern Morrow County.

UMATILLA-MORROW COUNTY HEADSTART

Umatilla-Morrow County Headstart provides bus services for children enrolled at the Boardman Center and Irrigon Headstart. The Oregon Child Development Coalition provides bus services for children enrolled in the Migrant Education Program.

MID COLUMBIA BUS COMPANY

Mid Columbia Bus Company provides school transportation services, though buses can be contracted as charter bus transportation if fleet and drivers are available. Should Mid Columbia Bus Company not provide charter services, public entities in the region can contract to serve these trips.

Rail Facilities

Rail services within Morrow County includes only freight service. Rail transportation has historically been, and continues to be, an important avenue for moving goods within the region. Passenger service had previously been provided via a stop at the Hinkle Railyard in Hermiston and is desired by Morrow County residents to return. Future transit services should connect to passenger rail service.



RAIL FREIGHT FACILITIES

Rail freight services are provided to businesses in Morrow County by the Union Pacific Railroad: from their main line, which parallels I-84. Multiple spurs extend from this line: one serving the coal-fired gas plant and another serving the Umatilla Ordinance Depot.

In fact, The Union Pacific main line running east-west through the Columbia River Gorge runs through the Boardman Industrial Park, owned by the Port of Morrow. Through this connection, the Port is able to transport its goods either to the Port of Portland or east into the continental United States.

The Hinkle Classification Yard, located 20 miles east of the Port of Morrow (near Hermiston, Oregon), is the largest hump yard west of St. Louis. Through use of this facility, the Port is able to access rail lines leading north into Canada and south into California. The Port is effectively able to use rail service because of the Hinkle hump yard to send its products in many different directions.

Historically, there were freight rail lines in place at the former Umatilla Chemical Depot (previously known as the Umatilla Army Depot). There are no spurs currently active on the depot land. The Union Pacific Mainline runs east and west adjacent to the southern border of the depot property. Future development plans are to reconnect a spur off the UP mainline to the depot property with connectivity to serve future industrial sites that will be located at the depot.

PASSENGER RAIL FACILITIES

There has been no passenger rail service in Morrow County since the mid-1990s, when the Amtrak Pioneer line between Salt Lake City, Utah and Portland, Oregon stopped operating. Loss of this line not only removed service from Morrow County, but also from a regional perspective, deleted service east to Salt Lake City. Amtrak does provide service between Portland and Spokane on its Empire Builder line. Morrow County residents must go to the Tri-Cities, the closest stop, to use this service.

Airport Facilities

Two public airports exist in Morrow County currently limited to private aircraft. They include the Lexington-Morrow County airport and the Port of Morrow airport west of Boardman. The closest public air service is located in Pendleton, Oregon. Depending on the growth of Morrow County, opportunities exist to expand the Port of Morrow's airport facility to provide public air transportation service. In addition to airport facilities, medical flight service is available in the County.

LEXINGTON-MORROW COUNTY AIRPORT

Morrow County Airport in Lexington is owned and operated by Morrow County. There is an Automated Weather Observation System and a 4,300-foot main runway that will accommodate most intermediate size aircraft.

Lexington is located one-half mile north of the Town of Lexington city center, just west of Highway 207. The airport access road is located approximately one-half mile north of the



intersection of Highway 207 and Highway 74. The paved airport access road travels approximately ¼ mile from Highway 207 to the vehicle parking area.

The airport has been a base for agricultural spraying operators for many years, in addition to accommodating general aviation, business, medical and charter activities. The airport currently accommodates locally based single engine aircraft, including two turbine powered agricultural aircraft. In addition to local aircraft, the airport accommodates intermediate general aviation, business aviation, including turboprop, business jet and helicopter operations. Morrow County has been the owner of the airport since 1960.

Location Identifier 9S9, FAA site Number 19500.5*A, Latitude 45-27-14.9000N, Longitude 119-41-25.0000, Elevation 1634

The Airport Layout Plan for the Lexington-Morrow County Airport, acknowledged by DLCD in 2002, defines how the airport is planned to be used over the next two decades. The Air Industrial Zone identified in the Airport Layout Plan has been applied as an overlay zone in the Morrow County Zoning Ordinance. Copies of the Airport Layout Plan are available at the County Public Works Department.

PORT OF MORROW AIRPORT FACILITY

The Port of Morrow purchased what was previously known as the Boardman airport. This facility offers a 4,200-foot-long paved runway. This runway was designed to offer takeoff and landing capability for heavy bombers and commercial passenger/cargo jets, but current use is corporate jets and light general aviation aircraft.

After acquiring the airport, the Port of Morrow developed an Airport Industrial Park centering on the 100-foot wide, 4,200-foot-long landing strip. Industrial sites are available for facilities that would benefit from the capabilities of the airport as well as the general services provided by the Port of Morrow. Sufficient land exists at the Port's Airport Industrial Park to extend the runway and to offer a full range of aviation services depending on the need of future industrial, commercial, or public clientele.

Future Port of Morrow improvements to the Airport Industrial Park focus on improved access for ground transportation services. Also to be considered are the actions approving a major motor speedway and related uses at the Boardman Airport.

LIFE FLIGHT SERVICES

Air Ambulance World provides life flight services to Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner. These services provide Intensive Care Unit (ICU)-equipped aircraft to transport patients between medical facilities.



SUMMARY OF RELEVANT PLANS



SUMMARY OF RELEVANT PLANS

The Morrow County Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan (Morrow County CTP) Update will identify public transportation needs for people with disabilities, seniors, individuals with lower incomes, individuals with limited English proficiency, and others who depend on public transportation services. The Morrow County CTP will seek to minimize duplication of services, identify gaps in services, identify unmet needs, and prioritize strategies for better public transportation services. This section lists the relevant plans conducted since the 2016 Morrow County CTP and identifies elements critical to this Morrow County CTP update. Reviewed documents include:

- » Morrow County Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Plan (2016)
- » Port of Morrow Interchange Area Master Plan (IAMP, 2012 with ongoing update)
- » City of Heppner Transportation System Plan (2018)
- » Morrow County/Umatilla County Transit Development Strategies (2018)
- » Hermiston – Boardman Connector / Boardman – Port of Morrow Circular Report (2021)

In addition to these plans, the project team notes that the following documents were completed prior to and incorporated in the 2016 Morrow County CTP:

- » Morrow County Heritage Trail Concept Plan (2000)
- » Boardman Main Street IAMP (2009)
- » City of Lone Transportation System Plan (1999)
- » City of Lexington Transportation System Plan (2003)
- » Irrigon Downtown Development Plan and Highway 730 Streetscape Plan (2009)
- » Irrigon to Umatilla Highway 730 Corridor Plan (2008)

Morrow County Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Plan (2016)

The 2016 Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Plan developed and documented transportation needs, opportunities, and challenges for Morrow County for key target populations, including older adults, people with disabilities, and people with low incomes. In addition to intra-city, commuters, the plan aims for better coordination with health and human services providers. This document will be further evaluated in *Task 3: Evaluation of Former Plan Recommendations* for relevancy and updates. Table 2 summarizes the documented transit-related needs and opportunities from the 2016 Morrow County CTP.



Morrow County Coordinated Transportation Plan

Table 2: 2016 Morrow County CTP Needs/Opportunities

Need	Opportunity	Keep and Update?
Information and Marketing		
Market The Loop to the general public	Focus marketing so that all individuals know they can use The Loop, and it is not only for “special transportation.”	Yes
Bilingual information and marketing	Morrow County's large Spanish-speaking population may not be aware of transit service availability.	Yes
Geographic		
Service to medical facilities	Central/southern Morrow County residents need access to Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner while those in northern Morrow County generally need to get to Tri-Cities or Umatilla County hospitals.	Yes
Connections to Port of Morrow	Dense employment clusters at Port of Morrow could support transit, carpools, or vanpools.	Yes
Inter-county service	Morrow County residents must often travel to Tri-Cities, Umatilla County, or farther destinations for services.	Yes
Kayak service to Boardman	Kayak currently links Pendleton through Hermiston to Irrigon. The agency has thought about extending service to Boardman. The county and Boardman can work with Kayak to assess service viability and support expansion, if warranted.	Modify – Implement service to Boardman
Long-distance trips	Current volunteer and veteran's programs transport passengers 100 miles or more to services on a regular basis, including destinations such as Portland or Walla Walla.	Yes
Regional transportation network	Many providers serve the greater region, but service lacks coordination. A system with a mix of regional intercity routes supported with demand-response services and vanpools/carpools would provide all-day mobility options serving multiple markets.	Yes
Temporal		
Late night/very early morning service	Employees working 2nd and 3rd shifts (late night and early morning) do not have transit options available.	Yes
Organization		
Employer coordination	So far one employer has shown interest in providing transportation options to employees at the Port of Morrow. The Loop can reach out to this employer and others to educate employers about existing service and find out transportation needs.	Yes
Funding silos dictate service eligibility requirements	Special Transportation Funds, Highly Rural Transportation Grants, Title IIIB, and Medicaid are some of the funding sources being used to provide transportation in Morrow County and its neighbors. Comingling clients funded by separate sources on one vehicle is often either disallowed outright or is not encouraged, resulting in low passenger productivity per vehicle or hour.	Yes



Need	Opportunity	Keep and Update?
Technology		
Scheduling software	The county plans to purchase scheduling software, which will enable The Loop to potentially increase service productivity and also coordinate with other providers.	Modify – Monitor purchased software
Operations		
Lack of volunteers	The Loop relies upon volunteers, which are often in short supply.	No
Lack of regular service	Residents do not have access to regularly scheduled service offerings that do not require a reservation, making transit inconvenient.	Yes
Door-through-door assistance	Some passengers are not able to board vehicles at the curb without assistance, meaning the volunteer must be able to provide assistance.	Yes
Underserved Markets		
Medicaid recipients	There is no public transportation Medicaid authorized provider in the county.	Yes
Hispanic community	Hispanic populations in Morrow County (Boardman, Irrigon) do not have access to or know of how to use available public transit	Yes
Veterans	The VA clinic in Boardman can provide some services and has capacity to serve more people, but funding is limited and its continued operation is in question. Continued outreach needed to alert veterans about Veteran's Choice program providers in Morrow County.	Yes

Port of Morrow Interchange Area Master Plan (IAMP, 2012 with ongoing update)

The Port of Morrow IAMP was prepared for the I-84/Laurel Lane interchange to preserve the capacity of the interchange while providing safe and efficient operations between connecting roadways. The IAMP establishes near-term and long-term recommendations for the interchange and surrounding roadway network. The ongoing update currently proposes refined interchange area designs with walking and biking facilities, but does not include mention of transit needs.

Morrow County/Umatilla County Transit Development Strategies (2018)

The 2018 *Morrow County/Umatilla County Transit Development Strategy* evaluates needs and identifies strategies and solutions that address these needs. The transit-related needs identified in this plan are summarized below.

TRANSIT SERVICE

- » Add transit service not just to major population centers, but to the various rural employment clusters that exist throughout Morrow and Umatilla County. Major employment clusters that should be a focus of this study include:
 - Port of Morrow



- I-84/I-82/Westland Road interchange area
 - US 395 (south of Hermiston) industrial area
 - McNary/Port of Umatilla area
- » Increase the geographic scope of fixed route transit service. Areas for consideration include:
- City of Boardman/Port of Morrow
 - City of Arlington
 - City of Heppner/City of Lexington
 - Tri-Cities in Washington State
 - OR 11 corridor between Pendleton and Milton-Freewater/Walla Walla, WA.
- » Consider the special needs of providing transit service to industrial areas and rural employment clusters.
- Take into account employee shift patterns when considering transit service to industrial areas and employment clusters.
 - Broad service spans that accommodate the variety of work shifts that exist at many large-scale employment centers.
- » Some employment clusters such as the Port of Morrow and Port of Umatilla/McNary area have a large geographic footprint. Transit service to these areas may necessitate smaller shuttle service to more efficiently serve the various businesses that are located too far from transit stops or lack adequate pedestrian facilities.

INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

- » Construct and integrate Park-and-Ride facilities along the I-84 corridor. Planning for Park-and-Ride facilities has already been included in the recent City of Pendleton Transportation System Plan and Mission Area Community Plan.
- » Construct new pedestrian improvements to accommodate transit service in employment clusters.

COORDINATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS

- » Coordinate services that cross jurisdictional and transit provider service area boundaries.
- » Coordinate services among social service agencies, senior centers, medical facilities, employers, and other organizations to share information about local transportation options, training opportunities, and other information.
- » Apply technological solutions to facilitate coordination efforts.

CAPITAL AND FUNDING NEEDS

- » Sustainable funding to maintain and provide for service additions and route enhancements.
- » Fare subsidies for several population groups (fixed incomes, those with medical plans that don't cover transportation, for medical trips, for accompanying caregivers).



City of Heppner Transportation System Plan (2018)

The City of Heppner TSP highlighted issues and opportunities related to transit, including those related to information and marketing, technology, operations, and the market for transit service. With regards to physical improvements, the City of Heppner TSP highlights the need for a larger long-term facility for fleet storage, maintenance and operations, vehicle upgrades, shuttles/vanpools, fixed-route feasibility in Heppner, and continued demand-response service. Table 3 summarizes the identified transit-related issues and opportunities in the City of Heppner TSP.



Table 3: City of Heppner TSP Transit Plan - Issues and Opportunities

Topic Area	Issue	Opportunity
Information and Marketing	General public may not be aware of The Loop Service	Continue marketing service to all Morrow County residents
	Potential to appeal to younger generation who is interest in transit	Increase marketing and social media presence
Technology	Dispatching and schedule done manually	Staff currently receiving training on new scheduling software. Pursue a contract with software provider to automatically handle scheduling and dispatch.
	Limited vehicle amenities; long trip distances	Study the possibility of offering wi-fi on vehicles to increase appeal to broader range of riders.
Operations	Fleet has outgrown existing Heppner bus barn	Explore options for building or renting larger long-term facility in Heppner, Lexington, or the surrounding area.
	Not all The Loop vehicles are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps.	Upgrade vehicles when funding becomes available.
	Long-term staffing for The Loop uncertain	Form a succession plan to account for current staff retirement, and hire new staff with specific transit planning experience.
	Lack of volunteers/unmet demand – 17 denials in the month of September	Identify additional volunteer drivers to expand the volunteer pool beyond the existing nine. Explore ways to incentivize additional volunteers, such as by increasing the daily reimbursement rate.
	Limited funding for system expansion	Oregon HB 2017 will allocate additional funding for Morrow County transportation – possibly \$100,000 - \$200,000 annually beginning in FY 2020.
Market for Transit Service	Difficult to serve agricultural sector workers and Port of Morrow; destinations not on main roads and demand for employees ebbs and flows.	Shuttles or vanpools may best serve employment market
	Trip distances on The Loop are very long. People must travel far from Heppner to major destinations, which is difficult to address with regular transit service.	Consider connecting people via Morrow County transit to locations served by other providers, like Kayak. Transit to Hermiston, for example, would allow a person to travel via Kayak to Pendleton, Tri-Cities, or La Grande, for example.
	Desire to expand public transportation both within Heppner as well as connecting to regional destinations.	Study feasibility of establishing fixed route service in the near future. Look to Grant County People Mover as a potential example.
	Although Heppner is compact, topography and consideration of those with limited mobility may indicate demand for intra-Heppner transit	Continue providing demand-response service within Heppner



Hermiston – Boardman Connector / Boardman – Port of Morrow Circular Report (2021)

The Hermiston – Boardman Connector / Boardman – Port of Morrow Circular Report identified the preferred operations of two new services:

- » The Hermiston- Boardman Connector, a clockwise and counterclockwise fixed-route loop between Hermiston, Umatilla, Irrigon, and Boardman utilizing the I-84, Westland Road, US 395, and US 730 corridors. Service would be provided by Kayak Public Transit.
- » Boardman – Port of Morrow Circular, a deviated fixed-route service covering the Port of Morrow with a flexible deviation zone and the City of Boardman along Columbia Avenue, Main Street, Wilson Lane, Boardman Avenue, and other local roadways. Morrow County's the Loop would operate the Circular.

In addition to the services, key outcomes for Morrow County include bus stop improvements in the County, bicycle and pedestrian connections to those stops, and the need for a Morrow County transit center, storage and maintenance, and/or park-and-ride facilities, likely in Boardman and/or Irrigon.

Near-term implementation needs (verbatim from the Final Report) include:

- » **Pursue** funding through the identified funding sources or others that arise to support operating and capital costs.
- » **Coordinate** with local jurisdictions, businesses, and property owners to establish stops and seek bus stop and access improvements.
- » **Develop** marketing and advertising materials in conjunction with partners.
- » **Improve** local coordination, potentially through dedicated staff at transit agencies and/or designated liaisons at the local agencies.
- » **Plan** for property acquisitions and/or capital improvement of existing properties for regional facilities such as transit centers, park-and-rides, and vehicle maintenance and storage facilities as described in this Report.
- » **Refine** the transit schedules through ground-truthing prior to implementation.
- » **Monitor** system performance and demand over time and consider adjustments to service.

Morrow County Transportation System Plan

The Morrow County Transportation System Plan (TSP) was recently updated to incorporate recent transit planning efforts. The TSP reiterates many of the needs discussed above, and also describes the desire for improved long-distance rail and bus transportation in the County. The TSP identifies other roadway, biking, and walking facility improvements that can support and promote transit use.



STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT



STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Stakeholder involvement is essential for a successful Coordinated Transportation Plan. Engaging the appropriate organizations and individuals in this planning efforts is critical to identifying the needs of the target populations, the public transportation resources available, local context, and prioritization of strategies.

This section summarizes responses to a provider survey to inventory transportation services in Morrow County, provider interview summary, stakeholder workshop feedback, and Morrow County Public Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) feedback.

Inventory Survey

The inventory survey asked questions regarding existing services provided, rider use of the system, COVID-19 pandemic impacts, funding, and needs identified by each agency and/or its clients. Responses from the inventory survey were received from the following providers:

- » City of Hermiston's Hermiston WORC program
- » Columbia River Health
- » Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)'s Kayak Public Transit
- » Gilliam County Transportation
- » Good Shepherd Health Care System's CareVan
- » Greyhound (via Isaacs & Associates)
- » Morrow County

Responses from these providers helped to revise and supplement the pre-populated inventory of existing services. In addition, responses were used to understand needs and potential strategies. Key findings related to goals and needs from the responses are as follows:

- » All respondents serve the general public, and most noted that they serve tribal members, low-income households, people with disabilities, older adults, homeless populations, veterans, people with limited English proficiency, people with chronic medical needs, and people in recovery from substance abuse.
- » The most common trip purpose includes medical/dental appointments, social service appointments, grocery shopping, and recreation.
- » Key transportation challenges faced by clients include:
 - Local routine trips such as appointments, work, and grocery shopping aren't accessible by transit
 - Lack of understanding on how to use the transit system
 - Transit trips take longer than a client's capacity for travel
 - Lack of resources to pay for transportation services
 - Public transit service does not operate late enough in the evening
 - An accessible vehicle isn't always available
 - Bus stops are not close enough to residences and/or destinations like work
 - Eligible trip purposes are limited (e.g., for medical, senior nutrition, day program, or work trips only)
 - Difficulty making reservations for demand response services



- » Several providers don't have ADA accessible vehicles
- » Most respondents require reservations to be made in-advance (typically 24 hours), rather than within an hour or two
- » Average ridership is at about 40-50% of pre-COVID levels for Greyhound, Columbia River Health, senior services, and Kayak Public Transit. Gilliam County and the WORC program are near their pre-COVID levels.
- » Providers responded to COVID by reducing service when-needed (either frequency, service type, or stopping service altogether), using vehicles for food transportation, limiting trip purposes, reducing the number of passengers per vehicle, and implementing disinfecting procedures
- » Key funding includes federal, state, county, and city-level funding, as well as grants, private donations, and fares.
 - Morrow County has secured the DLCDC Rural Transportation Equity Fund grant and is looking to incorporate it into the CTP.
- » Columbia River Health added that a stop near their clinic on future services would be helpful for clients.

Other feedback, that doesn't necessarily impact goals and needs, include:

- » Most respondents directly provide transportation services and own their own fleet (rather than lease), except for the City of Hermiston

Full details are included in Appendix A.

Interview Summary

Interviews were conducted to further expand on survey responses and explore other topics stemming from initial questions. Interviews were conducted with the following providers:

- » Gilliam County
- » Grant County
- » Greyhound
- » Kayak Public Transit
- » Morrow County
- » Wheeler County

Detailed notes are provided in Appendix B. Key themes from these discussions include:

- » Obtaining drivers is challenging for all agencies.
- » Dial-a-ride services are generally back to their pre-COVID demand, with several agencies not seeing changes to demand during COVID.
- » Greyhound services are down in ridership, and the provider will need to see ridership return more before returning to 2 roundtrips per day for service, which is currently at 1 roundtrip per day.
- » Most public providers primarily serve elderly, people with disabilities, and low-income populations, and typically for medical and grocery shopping trips.



- » Marketing and education is challenging, many members of the public don't know that the services exist. Leveraging local organizations and agencies to market services could be helpful.

Stakeholder Workshop

The summary of relevant plans, demographics, inventory of existing services and resources, and draft goals and objectives were presented to stakeholders during a workshop. Key comments and needs from the discussion are as follows:

- » In addition to the STF/highly rural funds, note that STIF and other funding sources should be used efficiently and allow for passengers sharing vehicles and rides, regardless of funding source.
- » It's important to have parking availability for the workforce, and also consider how working parents get to and from childcare. Can buses provide car seats? Bike parking?
- » Look at wheelchair charging stations at more stop locations.
- » ODOT has a micromobility pilot program, looking at this for electric scooters, golf carts, etc. for first/last-mile connections in the Port would be helpful.
- » Explicitly state that providers with both paid and unpaid drivers were surveyed and are present in the area.
- » Improve services goal should discuss workforce, connecting people with disabilities, low-income populations, and access like parking, scooters and other micromobility
- » Think more regionally, provide linkages between other areas and plans. How do these plans work together?
- » For funding, include partnerships with employers
- » For staff, seek other training opportunities, increases to driver pay to be competitive, bilingual staff
- » Focus the plan on "Human" – what are all the needs? Making sure to integrate into other plans.

Morrow County Public Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) Presentation

This draft CTP was presented to the Morrow County Public Transportation Advisory Committee on July 19th, 2022, for review and feedback. The PTAC was in agreement with the CTP's identified needs, strategies, and priorities. The PTAC noted that obtaining resources, such as funding and vehicles, can be challenging in Morrow County. A statement was added to the *Implementation and Monitoring Program* section to highlight that the identified timeframes are outlined by need, and that resources must be obtained to be able to implement the strategies.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives were developed based on statewide and regional plans, local needs, and survey and stakeholder feedback. These were refined based on input from the Project Management Team (PMT), Morrow County PTAC, and further stakeholder input.

- » Goal 1. Provide improved service to meet the needs of all community members, with a focus on those reliant on public transportation.
 - Objective 1A. Prioritize improvements, with the help of the DLCD transit equity grant and similar efforts, for transit-dependent people, including low-income populations, people with disabilities, zero-vehicle households, racial and ethnic minorities, older adults, youth, people with limited English proficiency, and veterans.
 - Objective 1B. Improve access to education and work opportunities, in particular at the Port of Morrow, via new and improved transportation services and coordination with private transportation providers.
 - Objective 1C. Determine customer needs through direct outreach, consultation with service providers, and findings from other planning efforts.
 - Objective 1D. Improve convenience through mobile tools and apps that integrate regional and neighboring transportation services.
 - Objective 1E. As services are implemented and improved, promote safe and comfortable transit facilities and low-stress walking and biking connections, especially at transit centers and major transit stops.
 - Objective 1F. Collaborate with local governments and connecting transit providers to ensure transit service meets the needs of riders.

- » Goal 2. Provide reliable transportation options for health-supporting destinations.
 - Objective 2A. Enhance service to connect to grocery stores, pharmacies, recreational centers, social service agencies, and other community resources.
 - Objective 2B. Collaborate with all transportation service providers, pairing traditional fixed-route and demand-response services with first-/last-mile connection options such as shuttles, transportation network companies (TNCs), sharing of bikes and other mobility devices, and cooperative programs such as those within assisted living communities.
 - Objective 2C. Support enhancements to long-distance services, such as passenger rail, Greyhound service within Morrow County, and transportation by private providers, for access to medical, employment training, and other opportunities not available in Morrow County.

- » Goal 3. Provide reliable transportation options for economic opportunities.
 - Objective 3A. Enhance service to connect to educational centers, government centers, job centers, and other community resources.
 - Objective 3B. Collaborate with large employers to help meet the transportation needs of employees, especially for those who are working non-traditional business hours (early morning/late night shifts).
 - Objective 3C. Coordinate with other public agencies and divisions, such as those responsible for land use planning, housing, and development review, to strengthen transit effectiveness and include transit considerations in growth and development.



- » Goal 4. Improve marketing of services and education across transportation service areas.
 - Objective 4A. Improve transit education and marketing, particularly through outreach to transportation-disadvantaged and underserved groups that focuses on bilingual marketing and outreach and travel training.
 - Objective 4B. Collaborate with transit agencies to share public transit information in a variety of formats and media to inform and attract new transit users, such as improving availability of route and schedule information as well as access to real-time arrivals and other data.
 - Objective 4C. Promote transit-supportive measures that make bus stop availability clear, including trip planning services, wayfinding signage, stop amenities (e.g., bike racks), and more.

- » Goal 5. Pursue stable funding sources to maintain and lower transportation costs to the public.
 - Objective 5A. Foster new and innovative partnerships to share and leverage resources, improve services, and further create awareness of transportation services in and nearby Morrow County.
 - Objective 5B. Pursue clean fuel for transit vehicles, such as electrification of the future vehicle fleet and infrastructure, to reduce gas and maintenance costs.
 - Objective 5C. Identify a range of needs, opportunities, and strategies that can be ready to take advantage of grant funding opportunities, such as those focused on employment, capital improvements, service reliability, and/or geographic coverage.
 - Objective 5D. Identify vehicle storage and maintenance and public-friendly transit center sites to reduce “deadhead” mileage and costs.

- » Goal 6. Recruit and retain staff to be able to provide reliable services.
 - Objective 6A. Partner with Oregon Employment Department and neighboring transit providers to promote and access Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) training centers and reduce costs to agencies and/or potential drivers.
 - Objective 6B. Consider ways to provide transportation for driver or staff training opportunities or market existing services for job access opportunities.
 - Objective 6C. Conduct regular feedback with staff to ensure workplace satisfaction and identify opportunities to improve working conditions.
 - Objective 6D. Monitor salaries, incentives, and benefits of peer agencies to promote fair living wages to transportation provider staff.



NEED AND STRATEGIES



NEEDS AND STRATEGIES

Based on the above analysis, the needs and corresponding strategies are summarized below. Many strategies meet multiple needs. While displayed as tied to each individual need here, the strategies are expanded and prioritized individually in the next section.

- » **Need:** Provide local and regional connectivity for transit-dependent groups, especially in Heppner, Boardman, and Lexington, which have high percentages of people with disabilities, people experiencing poverty, racially diverse populations, and zero vehicle households
 - Implement and continue to monitor the Boardman – Port of Morrow Circular and Hermiston – Boardman Connector
 - Begin on-demand shuttles to communities such as Heppner, Lexington, Lone, and other communities not connected to the fixed-route system.
 - Enhance service hours and/or number of vehicles operating at a time dial-a-ride services
 - Promote and/or subsidize vanpools
 - Expand bilingual information and marketing program
- » **Need:** Enhance services for populations in unincorporated areas and communities not connected to the existing system, in particular for elderly populations
 - Begin on-demand shuttles to communities such as Heppner, Lexington, Lone, and other communities not connected to the fixed-route system.
 - Enhance service hours and/or number of vehicles operating at a time dial-a-ride services
 - Coordinate with public and private providers to ensure access and eligibility
 - Promote rideshares
- » **Need:** Ensure reliable transportation for employment-based trips, especially for low-income populations
 - Implement and continue to monitor the Boardman – Port of Morrow Circular and Hermiston – Boardman Connector
 - Refine, implement, and continue to monitor the Heppner – Boardman Connector
 - Refine, implement, and continue to monitor the Arlington – Boardman Connector
 - Promote and/or subsidize vanpools
 - Expand marketing and partnerships via employers
- » **Need:** Maintain and enhance connections with other transportation providers
 - Establish regular coordination meetings with connecting providers
 - Enhance bus amenities throughout Boardman, Hermiston, and other locations that currently exist or are planned to connect with The Loop and Kayak Public Transit.
- » **Need:** Better serve ridership on existing services
 - Enhance weekend dial-a-ride and/or future fixed-route service and later night/earlier morning service
 - Improve fare payment options for transportation services that aren't free, including affordable options for low-income populations and students
 - Provide real-time vehicle arrival information



- » **Need:** Enhance transit facilities
 - Enhance bus amenities throughout Boardman, Hermiston, and other locations that currently exist or are planned to connect with The Loop and Kayak Public Transit.
 - Implement transit centers and major bus stops with higher levels of amenities
 - Build bus storage and maintenance facilities to accommodate existing and future buses
 - Provide bilingual marketing materials at stops
 - Consider the installation of wheelchair charging stations at transit stops
 - Provide parking near stops

- » **Need:** Maintain and grow vehicle fleet to meet service needs
 - Obtain new vehicles
 - Establish capital replacement plan
 - Investigate and pursue transition to alternative fuels
 - Ensure adequate storage and maintenance capabilities, such as the planning effort in Boardman

- » **Need:** Stabilize costs and grow funding streams
 - Continue to leverage local funds to obtain state and federal funds, such as the Rural Transportation Equity Program
 - Seek ways to share trips across funding pools (5310, 5311, RVHT, HRTG, etc.) while maintaining separate ride records
 - Investigate and pursue transition to alternative fuels

- » **Need:** Attract and retain staff, including drivers, maintenance, supervisors, and administration
 - Partner with local colleges to communicate availability of job openings
 - Seek peer review to ensure competitive wages and benefits
 - Conduct regular feedback sessions with staff
 - Provide professional development/continuing education opportunities
 - Provide an employee recruitment/retainment incentive program

The following section brings forward the strategies discussed above, establishes evaluation criteria, and presents the prioritized strategies.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria for the strategies focus on the costs and benefits, ease of implementation, and group(s) served or needs met. These criteria are established at the following scales:

- » Costs – Roughly estimated costs considering the scale of implementation.
 - \$: Less than \$25,000 Annually
 - \$\$: \$25,000 to \$75,000 Annually
 - \$\$\$: Greater than \$75,000 Annually

- » Benefits – Qualitative measure identifying expected outcome of the recommendation.
 - +: Allows for services to continue operating as-is, such as retaining a fleet and staff
 - ++: Enhances services slightly to moderately, such as adding slight geographic area or service hours



- +++: Enhances services substantially, such as adding new connections regionally
- » Difficulty of Implementation – Considers whether the strategy can be implemented quickly and with little complication, beyond costs to implement.
 - Low: Infrastructure, staff, and other resources are already in-place
 - Medium: Some infrastructure, staff, and other resources are in-place, but more will need to be obtained
 - High: No infrastructure, staff, or other resources are in-place
- » Group(s) Served/Needs Met – Considers how many of the following groups benefit from this strategy: Low-income populations, people with disabilities, youth, older adults, racial/ethnic minority, zero vehicle households, households with Limited English Proficiency, veterans, and employees.
 - ○: Fewer groups served/needs met
 - ●: Many groups served/needs met

Results and Prioritization

Using the above evaluation criteria, the strategies were evaluated and prioritized in Table 4. High priority strategies are generally lower cost, provide greater benefits, have lower difficulty to implement, and serve the needs of more groups.



Table 4. Strategies and Priorities

Strategy	Cost	Benefit	Difficulty of Implementation	Group(s) Served/ Needs Met	Resulting Priority
Routes and Services					
Implement and continue to monitor the Boardman – Port of Morrow Circular and Hermiston – Boardman Connector	\$\$\$	+++	Low	●	High
Refine, implement, and continue to monitor the Heppner – Boardman Connector	\$\$\$	+++	High	●	High
Refine, implement, and continue to monitor the Arlington – Boardman Connector	\$\$\$	+++	High	●	Medium
Begin on-demand shuttles to communities such as Heppner, Lexington, lone, and other communities not connected to the fixed-route system.	\$\$	+++	Medium	●	Medium
Enhance service hours and/or number of vehicles operating at a time dial-a-ride services	\$\$	++	Medium	●	Medium
Promote and/or subsidize vanpools	\$	++	Medium	⦿	High
Enhance weekend dial-a-ride and/or future fixed-route service and later night/earlier morning service	\$\$	++	High	●	Low
Transit Stops and Rider Facilities					
Enhance bus amenities throughout Boardman, Hermiston, and other locations that currently exist or are planned to connect with The Loop and Kayak Public Transit.	\$	++	Low	⦿	High
Implement transit centers and major bus stops with higher levels of amenities	\$\$\$	++	Medium	●	Medium
Consider the installation of wheelchair charging stations at transit stops	\$	+	Medium	⦿	Medium
Provide parking near stops	\$\$\$	+	Medium	⦿	Low
Internal and Inter-Agency Coordination					
Establish regular coordination meetings with connecting providers	\$	+	Low	●	High
Conduct regular feedback sessions with staff	\$	+	Low	●	High



Morrow County Coordinated Transportation Plan

Strategy	Cost	Benefit	Difficulty of Implementation	Group(s) Served/ Needs Met	Resulting Priority
Coordinate with public and private providers to ensure access and eligibility	\$	+	Low	●	High
Continue to leverage local funds to obtain state and federal funds, such as the Rural Transportation Equity Program	\$	+	Low	●	High
Seek peer review to ensure competitive wages and benefits	\$\$	+	Low	●	Medium
Provide professional development/continuing education opportunities	\$	+	Low	●	High
Provide an employee recruitment/retainment incentive program	\$\$	+	Low	●	High
Marketing and External Information					
Expand marketing and partnerships via employers	\$	+	Low	⦿	High
Provide bilingual marketing materials at stops	\$\$	+	Low	⦿	High
Expand bilingual information and marketing program	\$\$	+	Low	⦿	High
Partner with local colleges to communicate availability of job openings	\$	+	Low	⦿	High
Promote rideshares	\$	++	Medium	●	Medium
Technology					
Provide real-time vehicle arrival information	\$\$	++	Low	●	High
Seek ways to share trips across funding pools (5310, 5311, RVHT, HRTG, etc.) while maintaining separate ride records	\$	+	Medium	⦿	High
Improve fare payment options for transportation services that aren't free, including affordable options for low-income populations and students	\$\$	++	Medium	⦿	Medium
Fleet and Facilities					
Obtain new vehicles	\$\$	++	Medium	●	High
Establish capital replacement plan	\$	+	Low	⦿	High
Investigate and pursue transition to alternative fuels	\$\$\$	++	High	⦿	Medium
Build bus storage and maintenance facilities to accommodate existing and future buses, such as the planning effort in Boardman	\$\$\$	+	Medium	⦿	High



IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING PLAN



IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING PLAN

This section identifies funding opportunities and timeline for the high-priority strategies and describes the considerations and partners to get recommendations on-the-ground.

Funding Sources and Timeline

Table 5 shows the funding sources that were assessed for each strategy and their primary area of eligibility for operating, capital, city/county facilities (primarily walking and biking connections), and marketing and outreach.

Table 5. Funding Sources

Funding Source	Description	Eligibility			
		Operating	Capital	City/County Facilities	Marketing/Outreach
Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Grants	Section 5304: Non-Metropolitan Transportation Planning Grant. Funds are allocated to states, which then distribute them to regional and local agencies for transit planning. Planning needs to be cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive, resulting in long-range plans and short-range programs reflecting transportation investment priorities.				X
	Section 5310: Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities . Formula funding to states and metropolitan regions for the purpose of meeting the transportation needs of seniors and people with disabilities. ODOT allocates state 5310 funds to rural areas via local STF agency and may reserve for discretionary programs.	X	X		X
	Section 5311: Rural Area. Formula funding to small cities and rural areas with populations of less than 50,000 for transit capital, planning, and operations, including job access and reverse commute projects. Funds are apportioned to states based on a formula that includes land area, population, revenue vehicle miles, and low-income individuals in rural areas and funds are distributed to providers through ODOT. Additionally, no less than 15 percent of funds must be spent on the development and support of intercity bus transportation, unless the intercity bus needs of the state are being adequately met.	X	X		X
	Section 5339: funding through an allocation process to states for small urban and rural areas, and transit agencies in large urban areas, to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities.		X		
	Other: The FTA periodically releases additional funding opportunities. In 2019, the FTA released the Integrated Mobility Innovation opportunity, providing \$15 million for demonstration projects focused on Mobility on Demand, Strategic Transit Automation Research, and Mobility Payment Integration. For FY20, the FTA also announced the Mobility for All Pilot Program to invest in mobility options for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and people with low incomes, aimed to enable connections to jobs, education, and health services. The FTA also provides Section 5314 – Technical Assistance and Workforce Development grants, which support technical assistance and educational activities that enable more effective and efficient delivery of transportation services, foster compliance with federal laws (including the ADA). These types of funding opportunities can help ODOT and providers invest in innovative and effective practices and partnerships.				



Morrow County Coordinated Transportation Plan

State Special Transportation Funds (STF)	Allocated by the Oregon Legislature every two years. Funds may be used for any purpose directly related to public transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities.	X			X
Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF)	Formula funds for expanding access to jobs, improving mobility, relieving congestion, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while providing a special focus on low-income populations. STIF funds may be used for public transportation purposes that support the operations, planning, and administration of public transportation programs and may also be used as the local match for state and federal grants for public transportation service. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 90% of STIF funds are distributed to Qualified Entities (Morrow County). ● 5% of STIF funds are available via discretionary grants for flexible funding. ● 4% of funds are available via discretionary grants for projects enhancing intercommunity service and the statewide transit network. ● 1% of the funds are allocated for program administration and a technical resource center. 	X	X		X
Highly Rural Transportation Grant (HRTG)	This grant-based federal program, under Veteran Affairs, provides demand-response services. It transports Veterans in highly rural areas to VA-authorized health care facilities. There is no cost fee, as long as the program is available in the area the Veteran lives in.	X			
Rural Veteran Healthcare Transportation Grant (RVHT)	This program, under ODOT, provides demand-response services, providing Veterans access to physical, mental, and/or behavioral healthcare. Access is not limited to VA-authorized health care facilities; access to services that contribute to a veteran's well-being may be accommodated as well. This program aims to focus its services to veterans but is open to shared rides with civilians.	X			
Private/Public Sponsorships	Private/public sponsorships involve a private entity, such as a local business owner, working with the public agency to fund a project (e.g., bus stop shelter and sidewalk connection maintenance). In return for their investment in the community, these business owners often have recognition for their role, providing a marketing venue for the business.	X	X	X	X
STIP Enhance	Funds allocated to projects through a competitive grant application process. Eligible projects include public transit capital improvements.		X	X	
Multimodal Impact Fees	Similar to transportation system development charges (SDC), but focused on improvements to multimodal transportation options. In the event a TIF is established, the fixed-route service could work to allocate a portion of funds towards transit-enhancing improvements.			X	
ODOT Safe Routes to School Grant Program	Eligible projects include safety improvements that positively affect the ability of children to walk and bicycle to school. Projects must be within a public road right-of-way, consistent with jurisdictional plans, supported by the school or school district, within a one-mile radius of a school, and able to be constructed within five years of the application. Project examples include sidewalks, median refuge islands, rapid flashing beacons, etc. The minimum funding request is \$60,000, and the maximum is \$2 million.		X	X	
Transportation Options Program	Discretionary grant program including initiatives such as Innovative Mobility Grants, which ODOT is currently determining a framework for, and Immediate Opportunity Grants of \$5,000 or less for qualified activities. Examples of eligible activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transportation focused community events such as Open Streets, Bike Rodeos, etc. ● Activities to engage historically underserved communities in active or multimodal transportation outreach or education ● Purchase of bike racks, helmets, locks, etc. associated with bike and pedestrian safety outreach 				X
Rural Transportation	This one-off ODOT funding opportunity seeks to support rural communities in:				



<p>Equity Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and engaging underserved communities in rural areas to provide transportation options like biking, walking, and public transportation in order to access to critical services and destinations; • Building capacity within local governments to maintain relationships and connections to underserved communities, with a focus on including underserved groups in future planning efforts; and/or • Matching communities' needs with outside funding opportunities (i.e. Federal, State programs and resources) through strategic investment planning. <p>Morrow County received this grant and will conduct outreach in the coming year. Should this grant become a regularly provided fund, Morrow County could continue to pursue this in the future.</p>				
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In addition to these, roadway facility owners (cities, Morrow County, ODOT) can pursue walking and biking facility improvements through the following funds:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| » Surface Transportation Block Grants | » All Roads Transportation Safety (ARTS) |
| » State Highway Fund | » General Fund |
| » Road Fund Serial Levy | » Transportation Development Tax |
| » Road Utility Fee | » System Development Charges (SDC) |
| » Vehicle Registration Fee | » Local Improvement District (LID) |
| » Local-Option Fuel Tax | » Tax Increment Financing |
| » Immediate Opportunity Funds | » Urban Renewal Districts |

Table 6 aligns the high-priority strategies to the relevant funding sources and identifies a timeline. The timeline is based on considerations such as securing staff, vehicles, or other resources to implement the recommendation, whether an activity is ongoing or a discrete task, and what other strategies need to be in-place before the strategy itself should be implemented. These timeframes represent the ideal implementation timeline and are subject to the availability of resources such as funding, staff availability, vehicles and facilities, and other factors.



Table 6. High Priority Strategies and Available Funding Pools

Strategy	Section 5304	Section 5310	Section 5311	Section 5339	STF	STIF	HRTG	RVHT	Private/Public Sponsorships	STIP Enhance	ODOT Safe Routes to School Grant	Transportation Options Program	Rural Transportation Equity Program	Timeline
Routes and Services														
Implement and continue to monitor the Boardman – Port of Morrow Circular and Hermiston – Boardman Connector		X	X		X	X	X	X	X					<2 yrs
Refine, implement, and continue to monitor the Heppner – Boardman Connector		X	X		X	X	X	X	X					3-5 yrs
Promote and/or subsidize vanpools		X	X		X	X			X			X		<2 yrs
Transit Stops and Rider Facilities														
Enhance bus amenities throughout Boardman, Hermiston, and other locations that currently exist or are planned to connect with The Loop and Kayak Public Transit.		X	X	X		X			X	X	X			0-5 yrs
Internal and Inter-Agency Coordination														
Establish regular coordination meetings with connecting providers		X	X		X	X			X					<2 yrs
Conduct regular feedback sessions with staff		X	X		X	X								0-5 yrs
Coordinate with public and private providers to ensure access and eligibility		X	X		X	X			X					0-5 yrs
Continue to leverage local funds to obtain state and federal funds, such as the Transit Equity Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0-5 yrs



Strategy	Section 5304	Section 5310	Section 5311	Section 5339	STF	STIF	HRTG	RVHT	Private/Public Sponsorships	STIP Enhance	ODOT Safe Routes to School Grant	Transportation Options Program	Rural Transportation Equity Program	Timeline
Provide professional development/continuing education opportunities		X	X		X	X								0-5 yrs
Provide an employee recruitment/retainment incentive program		X	X		X	X								0-5 yrs
Marketing and External Information														
Expand marketing and partnerships via employers		X	X		X	X			X			X	X	0-5 yrs
Provide bilingual marketing materials at stops			X			X			X		X			0-5 yrs
Expand bilingual information and marketing program	X		X			X			X			X	X	<2 yrs
Partner with local colleges to communicate availability of job openings		X	X		X	X			X			X	X	0-5 yrs
Technology														
Provide real-time vehicle arrival information		X	X		X	X	X	X	X					<2 yrs
Seek ways to share trips across funding pools (5310, 5311, RVHT, HRTG, etc.) while maintaining separate ride records		X	X		X	X	X	X	X					0-5 yrs
Fleet and Facilities														
Obtain new vehicles		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X				0-5 yrs
Establish capital replacement plan	X	X	X		X	X								<2 yrs
Build bus storage and maintenance facilities to accommodate existing and future buses, such as the planning effort in Boardman		X	X	X	X	X			X	X				3-5 yrs



Considerations and Partners

The following section describes additional considerations and partners to implement the high-priority strategies.

ROUTES AND SERVICES

- » **Implement and continue to monitor the Boardman – Port of Morrow Circular and Hermiston – Boardman Connector:** Morrow County has procured a vehicle and identified a preferred operating plan for the Circular alongside Umatilla County, Kayak Public Transit, cities, and stakeholder such as employers and healthcare representatives. As this strategy moves forward, continuing to refine its stop locations and amenities, route schedule, and marketing will be crucial to its success.
- » **Refine, implement, and continue to monitor the Heppner – Boardman Connector:** Morrow County will need to procure a vehicle, hire a driver, and refine a preferred operating plan for the Heppner – Boardman Connector. While entirely within Morrow County and intended to be operated by MCPT, this service would still need coordination with partners such as city staff, employers, health and social service agencies, and other organizations.
- » **Promote and/or subsidize vanpools:** Morrow County could implement this recommendation by promoting programs such as Commute with Enterprise¹ or further supporting vanpools by subsidizing this service, similar to Cascades East Transit's program which subsidizes \$500 per van per month².

TRANSIT STOPS AND RIDER FACILITIES

- » **Enhance bus amenities throughout Boardman, Hermiston, and other locations that currently exist or are planned to connect with The Loop and Kayak Public Transit:** While establishing new bus stops in Morrow County, MCPT could start with basic amenities such as signage at stops as ridership patterns become apparent. Higher-level stops may warrant the need for benches, shelters, trash cans, bike racks, and more. Partners for this strategy include land owners, primarily private property owners, cities, ODOT, and Morrow County itself.

INTERNAL AND INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION

- » **Establish regular coordination meetings with connecting providers:** Partners for this strategy include staff from connecting agencies such as Kayak Public Transit and the Hermiston WORC program. These regular coordination meetings can help to identify further opportunities to enhance services and reduce duplication of efforts.
- » **Conduct regular feedback sessions with staff:** Gathering feedback from MCPT staff can help to not only improve staff morale and retention, but can also help to highlight rider concerns and institutional challenges that may otherwise not be passed along to MCPT administration staff.
- » **Coordinate with public and private providers to ensure access and eligibility:** Working with both the public agencies previously identified and private providers, such as employers

¹ www.commutewithenterprise.com

² <https://www.commuteoptions.org/vanpool/>



and non-emergency medical transportation brokerages, can improve public access to affordable transportation services. This coordination can also support updating the inventory of existing services and marketing services to the public.

- » **Continue to leverage local funds to obtain state and federal funds, such as the Transit Equity Fund:** MCPT can leverage local funds, such as those provided by city improvements and private property owner development, to access state and federal funds. In addition to property owners and infrastructure improvements as local match, services such as vanpool programs offered by employers may be able to be used as local match.
- » **Provide professional development/continuing education opportunities:** Professional development and education helps to keep staff up-to-date on industry trends in addition to basic training requirements, bringing fresh ideas to improve service back to Morrow County. Beyond MCPT staff, MCPT could look to provide training and education to other agency staff (ODOT, cities, etc.) through partnerships.
- » **Provide an employee recruitment/retention incentive program:** Attracting and retaining staff is a challenge in providing reliable services. Establishing an incentive program can help to expand the staffing pool and promote staff morale and retention.

MARKETING AND EXTERNAL INFORMATION

- » **Expand marketing and partnerships via employers:** MCPT has strong connections to many employers throughout the County, and continuing these partnerships can help to market services to existing and potential employees. In addition to employers, MCPT can work with neighboring transportation providers to educate the public on all available services.
- » **Provide bilingual marketing materials at stops:** As bus stops are implemented, providing information in both English and Spanish will be crucial to serving Limited English Proficiency populations. MCPT can work with local organizations and community members to refine the messaging and communication.
- » **Expand bilingual information and marketing program:** Similar to the previous strategy, expanding the bilingual information and marketing program can promote transportation use for populations who often lack reliable options. This strategy could be implemented imminently through the Rural Transportation Equity Program in partnership with community groups. This program should be reviewed and revised as-needed following implementation.
- » **Partner with local colleges to communicate availability of job openings:** Promoting job openings through local colleges not only attracts staff to MCPT, but also provides job opportunities to younger populations who tend to be lower-income. In addition to the colleges, Oregon Employment Department and workforce organizations such as New Horizons would be helpful partners in implementing this strategy.

TECHNOLOGY

- » **Provide real-time vehicle arrival information:** MCPT is participating in iTransitNW, a trip planning and bus tracking tool which several providers in the northeast Oregon and southeast Washington markets use to present transit information in one place. Real-time vehicle tracking is an aspect of iTransitNW, and allows for MCPT vehicles to be tracked both in this application and in other tools such as Google Maps. While typically implemented for fixed-route systems, real-time vehicle arrival information could also be



helpful for dial-a-ride services and giving better estimated arrival times to these passengers.

- » **Seek ways to share trips across funding pools (5310, 5311, RVHT, HRTG, etc.) while maintaining separate ride records:** Institutional barriers can prohibit or limit the sharing of trips when different funding pools are involved. Resolving these barriers can help to efficiently use transportation services and meet the needs of the community. MCPT can work with other public and private transportation providers to share trips and identify technologies for tracking these data. They can also work with ODOT to identify where barriers remain and work to resolve these at the state and federal levels.

FLEET AND FACILITIES

- » **Obtain new vehicles:** To continue providing services and ultimately expand their system, MCPT needs to regularly obtain new vehicles to replace aging fleets. An up-to-date fleet is also less likely to breakdown, increasing reliability of the system and reducing maintenance costs.
- » **Establish capital replacement plan:** In addition to the activity of obtaining new vehicles, a capital replacement plan can help MCPT to plan ahead for vehicle replacement and additions. A capital replacement plan should also consider alternative fuel technologies, specifically which service(s) could feasibly operate using alternative fuels based on existing mileage limitations. Partners for this strategy may include utility companies and other agencies and neighboring providers who may wish or need to charge their fleet within Morrow County.
- » **Build bus storage and maintenance facilities to accommodate existing and future buses, such as the planning effort in Boardman:** MCPT's bus storage facilities are currently at capacity. In addition to currently planning efforts for a storage and maintenance/public-facing transit center near Boardman, MCPT will continue to monitor the need for additional facilities. Partners include property owners, and where the facility is public-facing, the riders and any connecting transit providers.



MONITORING PROGRAM

The following section provides a program to track transit service performance and the success of the plan's recommendations. The program is data-driven and is founded on performance measures that can be tracked on a regular basis through set benchmarks. In most cases, these performance measures are already tracked as part of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) reporting requirements. This program enables a dynamic system where service adjustments can be implemented and justified following performance evaluations.

Performance measures are divided into monitoring on an annual and a less-frequent (e.g., biennial) basis. Most of the recommended performance measures should be reviewed each year; the performance measures identified for less-frequent review are less likely to fluctuate meaningfully on an annual basis. As these performance measures are applied in the future, Morrow County may adjust how often specific performance measures are examined. Benchmarks also consider existing and future data availability.

Annual Review of Performance Measures

The following performance measures are recommended to be evaluated at least annually to understand how the new services are being used. All but one of these measures are typically already monitored for National Transit Database (NTD) reporting purposes.

- » **Capital costs:** Examine annual capital costs directly to the service operator (Morrow County) and improvements by facility owners (Morrow County, local cities, employers, other property owners). This information is useful for budgeting for vehicle replacements and additional transit-supportive infrastructure such as shelters, based on actual agency cost experience.
- » **Operating costs:** Tracks annual operating costs for the services. This information is useful for evaluating cost trends for future budgeting purposes, and for calculating other performance measures, such as cost per hour, that can be compared with peer agencies.
- » **Annual rides:** Tracks total number of rides per year. This information is useful for evaluating ridership trends, and for calculating other performance measures, such as rides per hour or cost per ride, that can be compared with peer agencies. Transit providers typically also track ridership more frequently (e.g., by month, by day of week) to help identify ridership patterns and trends.
- » **Revenue service hours:** Tracks total number of hours of revenue service provided. This measure is used to calculate rides and cost per hour.
- » **Rides per hour:** Tracks average annual rides per hour (productivity). Staff resources permitting, tracking annual productivity by scheduled trip is useful for identifying and supporting the need for schedule changes (e.g., addressing consistently over- or under-utilized trips), for identifying the need to purchase higher-capacity vehicles, and for targeting marketing efforts to increase ridership, among other uses.
- » **Cost per hour:** Tracks average annual operating cost per revenue hour. Cost per hour is a useful measure to compare to peer agencies, to check whether one's costs and cost trends are in line with, greater than, or less than one's peers.



- » **Number of Deviation Request Denials (Circular service):** Tracks the total number of deviation requests denied on the Boardman – Port of Morrow Circular, to help identify the need for schedule and/or route changes to maintain service reliability and attractiveness. In addition, although more labor-intensive, tracking where and how frequently deviation requests are made can be useful for making route adjustments to serve high-demand trip origins and destinations.

Less-Frequent Review of Performance Measures

The following performance measures are either (1) less likely to change in a significant way on an annual basis and do not need to be tracked each year, or (2) are time-intensive to evaluate on an annual basis.

- » **System ease of use:** Tracks improvements made to travel between communities or transit providers, such as technology improvements (trip-planning, real-time tracking apps) and timed transfers between different transit providers.
- » **Walking and bicycling access:** Tracks the percentage of stops having a sidewalk/path, bicycle lane/path, and/or crossings connecting to the stop.

Peer Comparison

While every transit provider has unique service area and operating characteristics, comparing a provider's performance to that of similar providers can help managers and decision-makers gauge whether changes in performance match the experience of similar agencies, or may be due to actions on the provider's part (either something to correct or something to continue, depending on how performance changed). Transit agencies that receive federal funding are required to report information about service miles, service hours, and ridership, among others, to the NTD. Peer comparisons were conducted for Morrow County to understand existing and potential performance using the most-recent year of available data, 2018. Peers were primarily identified using the process described in *TCRP Report 141: A Guidebook on Performance Measurement and Peer Comparison in the Transit Industry*, which uses factors such as type of service provided, amount of service provided, geographic characteristics, and more.

Morrow County does not currently report data to NTD, given that it has not historically received federal funding that requires NTD reporting. Therefore, several providers who provide service similar to the proposed service were selected. These peers were matched based on an estimated 5,000 service hours and about 50,000 annual service miles for the Port of Morrow Circular and accompanying countywide dial-a-ride. This analysis only looked at local bus service (i.e., not commuter bus or demand-response as reported to NTD). Similar providers include CTUIR's local services, the City of Woodburn, South Clackamas Transportation District's (SCTD's) Molalla service, Lane Transit District's Florence service, and Malheur Council on Aging and Community Service's (MCOACS's) Ontario service. All of these services connect to regional transit service. Table 7 provides the peer comparison evaluation and

Figure 10 shows rides per hour for the peer providers. Table 7 also shows city populations and employments for each jurisdiction, with the Boardman numbers not including unincorporated

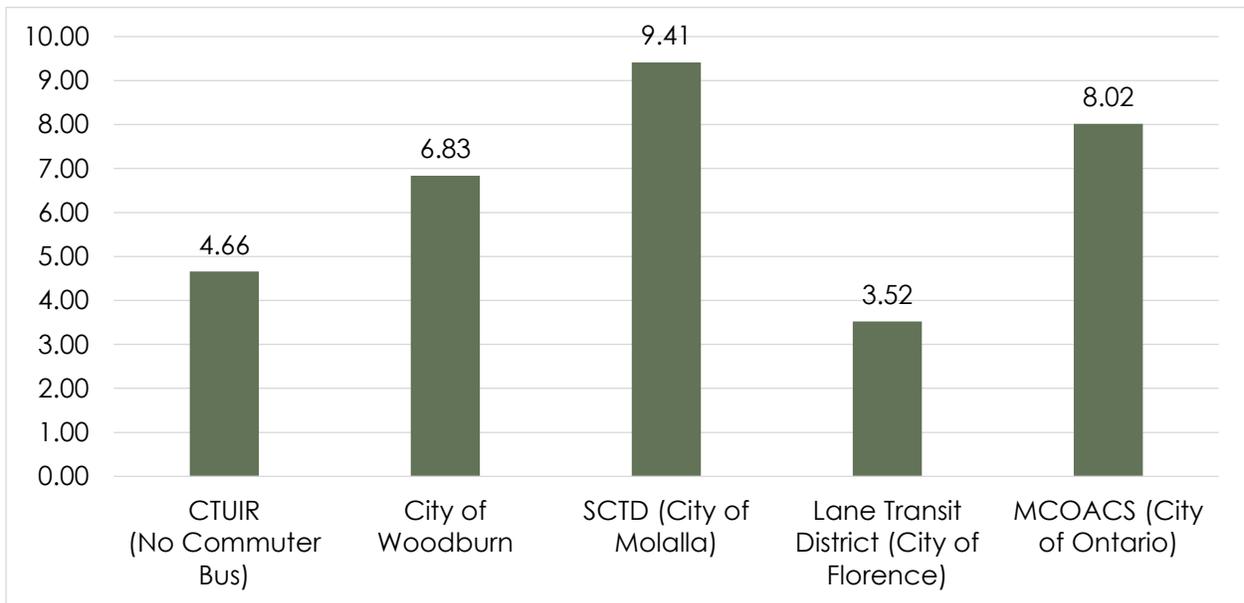


Port of Morrow employment. As shown, similar-sized providers typically generate 4-10 rides per hour. Ridership is generally higher in communities with high employment such as Boardman.

Table 7. Transit Provider Comparison (2018) for Boardman - Port of Morrow Circular

Data	Boardman/Port of Morrow	CTUIR (No Commuter Bus)	City of Woodburn	SCTD (City of Molalla)	Lane Transit District (City of Florence)	MCOACS (City of Ontario)
Population	3,439	Hermiston - 17,423 Mission - 850	25,738	9,155	8,921	10,966
Employment	6,283+	Hermiston - 7,305 Mission - 2,101	9,517	2,570	3,112	8,542
Annual Service Miles	50,000	92,832	45,023	17,104	27,177	65,023
Annual Service Hours	5,000	5,256	3,048	2,547	2,173	3,012
Annual Rides	—	24,485	20,831	23,968	7,651	24,150
Rides per Hour	—	4.66	6.83	9.41	3.52	8.02

Figure 10. Rides per Hour for Boardman - Port of Morrow Circular Comparable Services





CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

Transportation services play a key role in Morrow County, connecting its residents and visitors to the places they need to go locally and regionally. Most imminently, this document can serve as preparation for funding cycles, including STF and STIF plans, to begin implementing recommendations and enhancing transportation services. Beyond that, the recommendations are intended to provide conceptual guidance to be refined by MCPT and its partners as funding and partnership opportunities become available.

While this document provides prioritized strategies and examples of how these would specifically be implemented, the recommendations are a snapshot in time and may adjust to meet the changing needs of the region.