

Legislative Update: SB 1601 will help alleviate impacts of COVID-19

July 1, 2020

ODOT's Public Transportation Division is pleased to announce that the Oregon legislature last week passed Senate Bill 1601, providing immediate flexibility to use Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Formula funds to maintain existing services. This decision is in an effort to reduce the negative fiscal impacts of the pandemic on transit providers.

NOTE: It remains STIF policy that recipients may *not* use STIF funds to supplant local and regional funds directed to public transportation service providers.

The Public Transportation Division team is currently working to identify the mechanisms and processes necessary to accommodate this flexible fund use. We will be in touch as soon as we have more information about next steps.

What else is new?

SB 1601 also consolidates the Special Transportation Fund, or STF, with STIF, which will become effective on July 1, 2023. The bill language is consistent with the recommendations of the Consolidation Advisory Committee. A portion of the 90 percent formula allocation to Qualified Entities will be dedicated to transit services for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Each Qualified Entity shall receive a share of these funds as the population of the county or counties represented by that Qualified Entity bears to the total population of the state. After distribution of this portion of the funds, the remainder of the 90 percent distribution will be allocated to Qualified Entities under the previously established procedure for allocating STIF Formula funds. The Public Transportation Division team will be developing the processes and program schedule needed to carry out the consolidation by July 1, 2023, including completing necessary administrative rulemaking, program guidance, and other process updates.

Providers can expect a robust engagement process around this effort, similar to the recent work we did to initiate the STIF program and conceptualize the STF/STIF consolidation. We will continue to provide updates on the process and schedule as they become available.

Please direct any questions on these topics to [your regional transit coordinator](#).

Thank you for your support of public transportation in Oregon.

The Public Transportation Division Team