

# Annual Operations Plan

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Fiscal Year 2022 & 2023

DRAFT



MORROW COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT

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## **PURPOSE AND GOALS**

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This Annual Operations Plan describes the scope of work undertaken by The Loop – Morrow County Public Transit, referred to in this document as The Loop, for the fiscal years of 2022-2023. The Loop is an intra-county and inter-county service for all residents and visitors of Morrow County. The Loop's geographic service area is primarily 2,047 square miles in Morrow County and makes frequent trips outside of the official service area to other requested locations. Our buses and vans are ADA compliant, and our drivers are trained in handling and securing mobile devices and assisting passengers with special needs.

This document captures the anticipated breadth of services and forecasts opportunities and challenges (that reasonably can be anticipated). This document aims to provide a road map for the next year and guide the ongoing discussion about how public transportation is planned, deployed, and managed in Morrow County.

This plan will be broken out into three sections, as follows:

- Existing Services to be delivered (and any potential changes taking place).
- Known project opportunities within the community (historically delivered, and new opportunities available).
- Known opportunities or challenges that may occur in our method, means, or model of delivery.

Appendixes of published support materials will follow these for all standard operating programs in Morrow County.

## **LIVING DOCUMENT**

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This document is our best forecast for the coming fiscal year. It should not be construed as limiting our response to opportunities or our options to resolve challenges. Moreover, it is intended to inform subsequent Annual Operations Plans while creating a historical record for future development.

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## **DEFINITIONS**

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While every effort has been made to keep this plan user-friendly, it is sometimes necessary to use an industry term to demonstrate compliance with regulations. This subsection is intended to help guide the reader when the following terms appear:

**ADA:**

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (and the amended 2008 AADA) prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas.

**Curb-to-Curb:**

This term often applies to the Demand Response and Route Deviation modes of services. It means the passenger is responsible for getting themselves to and from the vehicle.

**Demand Response:**

Sometimes called Dial-a-Ride, Demand Response service is when a passenger makes a reservation in advance. A vehicle comes to their location to pick them up and deliver them to their requested location. This service often operates as Curb-to-Curb.

**Deviated Route:**

Sometimes referred to as Route Deviations, this refers to a Fixed Route delivery strategy that allows the bus to temporarily leave the route to perform a Curb-to-Curb pick-up within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the regular line traveled. This service must also be scheduled a day in advance.

**Dial-a-Ride:**

A passenger calls the transit center to schedule a ride at least a day in advance of their planned outing. See Demand Response for more information.

**Door-to-Door:**

Door-to-Door indicates that passenger assistance is available from the door of origin to the first door of the planned destination. This service may be requested verbally or in writing, and tailored to the passenger's need.

**Flag Stop:**

Sometimes called a Flex Stop, this term refers to a passenger's ability to access a Fixed Route bus at points between formal stops by waving to the driver to indicate he or she wishes to board.

**Fixed Route:**

A Fixed Route system is a bus that follows a prescribed path on a published schedule. Passengers can access the formal bus stops, and the bus does not deviate from the indicated path unless traffic issues force it to divert from the normal route.

**Origin-to-Destination:**

This term, used in the ADA, is meant to remove barriers for passengers using the Dial-a-Ride service. It purposefully does not define the beginning and end of the trip to allow the terms of service to be designed by the passenger. The only limitations to this model imposed by The Loop are that our drivers will not enter the home of a passenger, and will not proceed beyond the main entryway of any destination.

**Paratransit:**

Sometimes called ADA Paratransit or Complementary Paratransit, this term refers to the obligatory service running alongside a Fixed Route bus line that provides equivalent service to those who are prevented from using the Fixed Route due to a disability. This service operates on a Dial-a-Ride model.

**Title VI:**

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any program or activity that receives Federal funds or other Federal financial assistance.

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## HOLIDAYS AND CLOSURES

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The Loop will observe the following Holidays during Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023. The Loop will have two dedicated all-staff training days one in the fall and spring. In most cases, services will be closed entirely.

New Year's Day .....	December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2021
Martin Luther King Jr. Day .....	January 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
Presidents' Day.....	February 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2022
Memorial Day .....	May 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
Juneteenth.....	June 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
Independence Day .....	July 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
Labor Day .....	September 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
Veterans Day .....	November 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
Thanksgiving.....	November 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
Christmas .....	December 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
New Year's Day .....	January 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2023
Martin Luther King Jr. Day .....	January 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Presidents' Day.....	February 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Memorial Day .....	May 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Juneteenth.....	June 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Independence Day .....	July 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Labor Day .....	September 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Veterans Day .....	November 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Thanksgiving.....	November 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 2023
Christmas .....	December 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Staff Training Day.....	Spring 2022
Staff Training Day.....	Fall 2022

## THE LOOP ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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The Loop has two advisory committees, The Special Transportation Fund (STF) and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF).

The STF Advisory Committee is established in the interest of transit system users (seniors and people with disabilities of any age) in Morrow County. Its purpose is to advise the Morrow County Commissioners/The Loop on matters that pertain to the Special Transportation Fund and all issues regarding the transportation needs of those utilizing the transit system. The Advisory Committee will make recommendations that encourage and promote the accomplishments of those needs that directly affect the welfare of those who desire and/or require such services.

**The Loop Morrow County Co Transportation  
STF Advisory Committee  
2022**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Maximum Members: 11</b>	<b>Term allowance: 4 years</b>
<b>NAMES</b>	<b>REPRESENTING</b>	<b>TERM EXPIRATION</b>
Sheryll Bates	Heppner/Community	12/31/2024
<b>Vacant</b>	Boardman/Hispanic	12/31/2020
<b>Vacant</b>	Boardman/Hispanic	12/31/2020
Debra Khaljani	Heppner/Transit User	1/26/2026
<b>Vacant</b>	Lexington/Community	12/31/2021
Aaron Palmquist	Irrigon/Community	12/31/2021
"George" Virginia Nairns	Heppner/Sr. & Disabled	12/31/2022
Karen Pettigrew	Boardman/Sr.	12/31/2022
Kerry Hawley	Heppner/Low-Income/Disabled Transit User	12/31/2022
Katie Imes	Trans. Coordinator	12/31/2022
Stephanie Case	Planner	12/31/2022

Committee meetings are held quarterly- July, October, January, and April alternating between Boardman, Irrigon, and Heppner

The STIF Committee shall assist the Commissioners in tasks and duties supporting local and regional transportation services funded through the State Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) and allocated to Morrow County for distribution to Public Transportation Service Providers within and adjacent to Morrow County.

**The Loop - Morrow County Public Transportation  
Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Advisory Committee  
2022**

Members	Minimum Members: 5	Maximum Members: 9	Term allowance: 3 years
NAMES	REPRESENTING		TERM EXPIRATION
<b>Vacancy</b>	Ione Seniors/Low Income		6/30/2021
<b>Aaron Palmquist</b> <i>Chair</i>	Irrigon/Low Income		6/30/2024
<b>Debbie Radie</b> <i>Vice Chair</i>	Boardman Employers/Employees		12/31/2024
<b>Kerry Hawley</b>	Heppner/Seniors		12/31/2022
<b>Katie Imes</b>	County Staff Transportation		12/31/2022
<b>Stephanie Case</b>	County Staff/Community		12/31/2022
<b>Karen Pettigrew</b>	Boardman/Low Income		12/31/2023
<b>Sheryll Bates</b>	Heppner/Seniors		10/30/2024
<b>Vacancy</b>	Boardman/Transit Destinations		4/7/2024

Committee meetings are held quarterly- July, October, January, and April alternating between Boardman, Irrigon, and Heppner.

Note: STF and STIF plan to consolidate in the fiscal year 2023. For more information, go to <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/RPTD/Pages/STF-STIF-Consolidation.aspx>



## **Section One: Existing Services – The Loop is a no fare service**

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### **Rides to Wellness/ Veteran Rides to Wellness:**

Serving Morrow County Veterans, Seniors, Person with Disabilities, Limited, or no Transportation. Ridership is available to any of Morrow County residents.

Transportation for Veterans to medical facilities can be arranged by calling The Loop Office. Please tell the Dispatcher that you are a Veteran when booking the transportation.

### **Demand Response:**

The Loop is a curb-to-curb service for residents of Morrow County. We operate on a first-call-first-serve basis. Trips for service need to be scheduled in advance. Service is offered Monday through Friday, **8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** except for holidays or cancellations due to inclement weather. Trip times can be adjusted to meet earlier or later appointments or activities. Weekend trips may also be requested through The Loop Office when the trip meets the program purposes.

### **Medicaid Contract:**

The Loop is contracted with Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc. (GOBHI) to provide curb-to-curb, Non-Emergent Medical Transportation at no cost to riders eligible for transportation services through Oregon Medicaid. (Participants must have prior approval through the Oregon Medicaid Transportation Brokerage).

### **Contracted Services:**

The Loop is contracted with CareVan Transportation providing service to residents in Boardman and Irrigon who have appointments at Good Shepherd Medical Group Facilities. This service is available during normal business hours at no charge.

The Loop is contracted with Kayak Public Transit providing service to Irrigon. This service runs Monday-Saturday making an AM and PM stop. This is a fixed route giving access to Umatilla County at no charge; for more details, go to

<https://ctuir.org/media/4tdfb0ml/hopper.pdf>

## **Weekly Shopper Service:**

The Weekly Shopper routes started last fiscal year. There are two routes that operate once a week on Fridays to Hermiston for shopping and lunch. Riders must call in advance to reserve a seat on the bus. Brouchures have been distributed throughout the county in English and Spanish. Information is also posted on our websites.

### As an example:

Week 1 – Safeway & Grocery Outlet

Week 2 – Walmart & Dollar Tree

Week 3 – Safeway & Bi-Mart

Week 4 – Walmart & Dollar Tree

The Loop operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, and national origin following Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Any person who believes she or he has been aggrieved by any unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI may file a complaint with The Loop Office.

## **Section Two: Known Opportunities**

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### **Event-Driven Services:**

Including the following, but not limited to the following options:

#### **1) Event-Driven Opportunities**

- a. Morrow County Fair & Rodeo
- b. St. Patrick's Festival
- c. Morrow County Harvest Festival
- d. Watermelon Festival
- e. Pendleton Roundup
- f. Umatilla County Fair & Rodeo

### **Additional Service Opportunities:**

#### **2) Fixed Route Services**

- a) Port of Morrow/Boardman Circulator
- b) Heppner/Boardman Connector
- c) Arlington/Boardman/Port of Morrow Connector

The Loop is currently planning for expanding service to offer the Port of Morrow/Boardman Circulator. This route would connect with the

Hermiston/Boardman Connector (operated by Kayak Public Transit) giving Morrow and Umatilla County residents access to employment, health services, and other public services.

### **Emergency Services:**

In the event of a declared emergency, our services may be mobilized by County, State, or Federal emergency management officials. We will comply and prioritize such requests in the event we are called upon.

## **Section Three: Known Challenges and Opportunities**

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### **Challenges:**

- Infrastructure – Bus Barns, Fleet Expansion, and Staffing. Currently, The Loop utilizes three bus barns, one County-owned in Heppner, one at the Boardman Senior Center, and one at the Irrigon Senior Center; all these barns are at capacity. With the demand for expanded services, particularly employment opportunities, shopping, and public services, the Loop is perusing many funding streams to enable the program to grow.
- Recent Infrastructure Developments. Morrow County was awarded STIF Discretionary funding to plan a new transit facility. In November of 2021 Pivot Architecture was hired to consult the county on the development of the new facility. In Spring of 2022 the county was awarded 5339 Discretionary funding to hire a project administration consultant. In the fall of 2022 the county will apply for Section 5339 funding to construct the transit facility, the County Budget Committee recently approved discretionary funding to the transit facility for the local match. Morrow County Public Transit will pursue other opportunities for local match support in our expansion efforts.
- Staffing – Transit Drivers, Office Staff. The Loop has requested two FTE Transit Drivers I, two FTE Transit Drivers II, two FTE Transit Dispatchers, and one FTE Operations Supervisor. These positions will allow for expansion of our services to include a fixed route system and operational needs. These positions are pending a supplemental budget hearing to be conducted in July or August in 2022.

## **Opportunities: Funding Sources - State and Federal**

- STIF Discretionary – State of Oregon
  - Capital Purchases – 5 buses and 1 passenger van
  - Planning Project – Bus Barn construction
  - Operating Expenses- to launch new route services
  
- STIF Formula – State of Oregon
  - Outline projects to support existing services and expansion
  
- STF Formula – State of Oregon
  - Operations- Demand Response Service
  
- Section 5304 – Federal Transportation Administration
  - Planning Project – Update Morrow County Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan
  
- Section 5310 - Federal Transportation Administration
  - Administration, Purchased Services, Preventive Maintenance
  
- Section 5310 Discretionary – Federal Transportation Administration
  - Preventative Maintenance
  
- Section 5339 FY 22/23 – Federal Transportation Administration
  - Bus Barn/Transit Facility, Capital Purchases
  
- Section 5339 Discretionary Federal Transit Administration
  - Transit Facility Phase II – Project Administration
  
- Highly Rural Transportation Grant – Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs
  - Administration, Operating Expenses
  
- New Funding – Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation Grant – State of Oregon
  - Operations, Drivers Wages
  
- COVID Relief Funding – State of Oregon
  - Operations, Workforce Development, Capital Purchases