

Our Mission

ToGo has been formed to promote transportation options and balanced transportation systems.

Our Goal

The goal of ToGo is to create greater awareness of transportation options and to provide a format for transportation options professionals, other interested entities, and individuals to exchange and distribute information at the local/regional level.



2011 ToGo Board

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*"A champion is someone who gets up,
even when he can't"*
~ Jack Dempsy

www.togo-oregon.org

Transportation Options Budding Out

Phil Warnock, ToGo President

This time of year is filled with the promise of growth. As the daylight hours lengthen and the spring bulbs begin to push up through the soil, so too there is promise of tremendous growth in the field of Transportation Options. The Oregon Transportation Commission has approved the list of Flex Funds projects which includes a healthy mix of Transit/TDM and Bike/Ped. The first elements of these projects will begin in a few short weeks. The activity around the Flex Funds projects will increase the profile of Transportation Options across the state and begin to fill travel equity gaps.

The Flex Funds project of key interest and concern to ToGo is the Statewide TDM package submitted by ODOT. Several members of ToGo served in an advisory capacity during the development of the ODOT application and the success of the application is a credit to their hard work and professional insight. Just as the planting of a garden is only the initial effort to have a plentiful harvest, we have only begun the work to make the statewide program a success. ToGo will play a significant role in shaping and ultimately in implementing the various components of the statewide program.

The much anticipated online rideshare suite of tools is now moving toward implementation in earnest. The steering committee is meeting monthly and the project management team is in the midst of conducting interviews with agencies to develop their transition plans and timelines. Agencies involved with ToGo comprise the early adopters of the system and are the innovators for how it will enhance services to commuters and travelers. These tools will also rectify short-comings of the existing fragmented ride matching systems and reach all Oregonians. It will serve as a foundation element for other TDM efforts throughout the state for years to come.

All of these opportunities will require energy that ToGo members are to be prepared to provide. So I encourage each of you to be involved, be heard and be ready for the year ahead. We have the unique opportunity to be part of a better Oregon that is of our own creation.

Lane Transit District Gateway EmX Extension

EmX service to the Gateway area began on Sunday, January 9, 2011. EmX vehicles regularly travel along the EmX routes between downtown Eugene, downtown Springfield, and the Gateway area in north Springfield. Visit LTD.org or contact LTD at 541-682-6100 for a schedule of EmX service and information.

The popular EmX service carries passengers to the Gateway Mall, the University of Oregon, downtown Eugene and Springfield, area motels and neighborhoods, and the many businesses and employers along the way including Sacred Heart Medical Center, Royal Caribbean, Symantec, and many more.



Two Major Oregon Transportation Projects Make Obama Budget - Kristian Foden -Vencil February 15, 2011—OPB News

Two of Oregon's largest transportation projects were included in President Obama's budget proposal for 2012.

\$200 million is slated for the new Portland-Milwaukie light rail line. That's good news for Tri-Met because the money comes relatively early in the fund-raising process and indicates strong federal support.



The other large project is the Columbia River Crossing. \$850 million was recommended for the light-rail portion of the proposed new I-5 bridge over the Columbia.

Federal Transportation Administrator Peter Rogoff said the existing bridge is inadequate and the replacement ought to include light-rail.

Peter Rogoff: "So we're not going to build a highway bridge and then realize down the road, gee wouldn't it be nice if we had transit on it."

The FTA scores all its projects on cost effectiveness, environmental need and mobility improvement.

Both the Columbia River Crossing and the Portland-Milwaukie light-rail received a medium-high ranking, which is the higher end of the scale. The president's budget now goes to Congress for further work.

Get Paid to Carpool—The Daily Score posted by Lisa Stiffler

A pilot program launched January 27, to help match up drivers and riders who are crossing the Highway 520 bridge that connects Seattle and Bellevue. The project, called go520, is being funded by Washington state in an effort to reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicles crossing the bridge. The program is recruiting 250 drivers and 750 riders.



An Irish company called AveGo, which works on transportation software and technology, developed the pilot. To get commuters on board, they'll give drivers who use the program 20 or more times each month a \$30 gas card, and riders will receive up to \$30 per month in "AveGo credits to use towards travel beyond the program covered by the go520 initiative," according to a post on TechCrunch (I'm afraid I don't really know what that entails). Drivers participating in the program need have an iPhone, while riders just need a phone that can text.

The timing is right. Come April, 520 bridge drivers will have to pay a toll of up to \$3.50 per trip to help cover the cost of a new six-lane span across Lake Washington.

It's a cool idea. I've often thought as I've driven past folks waiting for buses on particularly soggy days that I wouldn't mind giving them a lift if I knew where they were going (of course since they're waiting for the bus, this would provide no environmental benefit, but you know what I mean).

And the Seattle-Bellevue area is not alone in this computerized carpooling experiment. Last week the New York Times reported on similar ventures in DC, Houston, San Antonio, and Austin. Let's hope it takes hold in the Northwest and expands beyond the 520. Any ideas on other commuter routes that would be good candidates?

Five Central Oregon transportation projects get 1.3M
February 21, 2011 Collaboration from AP and The Bend Bulletin

BEND, Ore. (AP) — Nearly \$1.3 million in state transportation funding awarded to five projects in Central Oregon will help extend a bus route in Bend, add to a trail system in Madras and help the city of Bend comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

The Bulletin newspaper in Bend reports the grants are from a new state program created by redirecting a portion of Federal Highway Administration funds to non-highway transportation projects.

The city of Bend was awarded more than \$300,000 for engineering and surveying work on sidewalks needed before installing curb ramps to help the city meet disabilities act requirements under a settlement with the U.S. Justice Department.

But the largest grant will go to Madras, with \$456,500 for a new segment of paved bicycle and pedestrian trails.

Become a ToGo Member

Memberships are always available and dues vary by organization size and type; please contact us for current pricing information.

ToGo is a sponsor of the Oregon Transportation Conference held annually in Seaside. The 2010 Conference featured five sessions on Transportation Options coordinated by ToGo. The 2011 Conference will be held in October. To join ToGo, email Tracy.Smith@ltd.org or call 541.682.6183.



Scott Turnoy joins MCEDD Team!

Scott Turnoy joined MCEDD in the fourth quarter of 2010 as the new Project/Mobility Manager. Scott has his Bachelor's in Environmental Studies & Politics from Whitman College and Master's in Community and Regional Planning from the University of Oregon.

Previously, Scott worked the UO Economic Development Center and conducted a statewide needs assessment of economic development in Oregon communities, specifically identifying assets and barriers, strategies in use, organizational coordination, and technical assistance needs. In addition, he worked on projects for the City of Junction City, US Forest Service, and provided project support and office management for Decisions Decisions LLC, in Portland, Oregon.

Scott will be helping to provide increased access to public transportation and enhance coordination services within MCEDD's region.

Transit Benefit Parity Extended for One-year

Association for Commuter Transportation Contact: Jason Pavluchuk

In 2009, as a part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the transit benefit was increased from \$120 per month to \$230 per month matching the amount allowed for parking expenses. That provision was set to expire at the end of 2010.

ACT has been working with its partners on and off the hill to make permanent or extend that provision. This week, Congress completed work on an extension of the Bush/Middle class tax cuts and included as a part of that package is a provision extending parity between the transit/vanpool and parking portion of the transportation fringe benefit at a level of \$230/month for one-year. The transit benefit was set to be reduced to \$120/month on January 1st; with this action, the transit benefit will stay at \$230/month until at least the end of 2011.



This represents a huge victory for ACT as failure to extend parity would have had the same impact as an 18% increase in fares. Jon Martz, ACT Public Policy Chair said, "This benefit has been a critical tool for our members. Extending parity was one of the top priorities for the Association. A great deal of gratitude needs to be extended to Senators Schumer, Carper, and Menendez, as well as Congressmen McGovern, VanHollen, Blumenauer, Congresswoman Schwartz among many others."

New Bill Would Increase Investment in Vanpooling

Jon Martz, Vice President Government Relations, VPSI

On February 9, 2011, The Private Investment in Commuter Vanpooling Act of 2011 was introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Mike Rogers (R-MI), Rep. Russ Carnahan (D-MO) and Rep. Don Young (R-AK). The bill, H.R. 596, will make it easier for communities to offer commuter services by removing a barrier which prevents local governments from fully utilizing federal transit dollars to leverage private capital investment in the provision of vanpool services.

This unique type of public-private partnership is a public transit financing option which has not gotten a lot of notice in these daunting economic times. H.R. 596 encourages the expansion of working public-private partnerships for the commuting general public. Privately-financed, public-service vanpool programs have been around for thirty years, but never has the need been stronger for expansion of this type of public service. This bill will give communities a new choice at a time when local tax dollars are limited or not available for continued, new or expanded transit services and lower the cost to the consumer. The burden can be carried by a willing and able private sector.

Unlike other more traditional public transportation options, commuter vanpool programs can be financed with at-risk, private capital. Today, our private investment in these types of programs is approximately \$100 million per year. I believe passage of this bill will stimulate private capital investment of more than \$1 billion in this type of public transportation over a six year period.



Upcoming Events

- 3/1 ToGo Board Strategic Planning Meeting, Eugene, OR
- 3/2 ToGo Board Meeting, Eugene, OR
- 3/2 ODOT Statewide TO Eugene, OR
- 3/2 Rideshare Online Steering Committee Meeting, Eugene, OR
- 3/15 Metro RTO (MOWG), Portland, OR
- 3/23 Westside Transportation Alliance Annual Meeting, Beaverton, OR
- 3/29-3/30 Oregon Active Transportation Summit, Salem, OR
- 4/6 Transit Day at the Capital, Salem, OR
- 4/11-4/12 WSRO Spring Workshop, Tacoma, WA
- 7/17-7/19 PIPTA, Vancouver, WA
- 6/13-6/19 Commute Options Week, Bend, OR
- 8/27-8/31 ACT International Conference, Chicago, IL

Member Organizations

- Cascades West Council of Governments
- City of Corvallis
- City of Eugene Transportation Planning
- Commute Options for Central Oregon
- Enterprise Rideshare
- FLT Consulting
- Lane Council of Governments
- Metro
- Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD)
- ODOT
- PF Consulting
- point2point Solutions
- Portland Bureau of Transportation
- Rogue Valley Transportation District
- Salem Area Mass Transit District
- SMART/City of Wilsonville
- Sunset Empire Transportation District
- Trans-Watch
- VPSI, Oregon Project Office
- Westside Transportation Alliance

This is YOUR newsletter, so please let us know what you'd like to see included! Send your topic suggestion or completed articles to kelsey.bayless@vpsiinc.com

The ToGo Newsletter is published quarterly.

Portland Ranks No. 1 in Public Transit—Joseph Rose, The Oregonian

Tri-Met may be running on red ink, slashing services and in the middle of a nasty contract fight with its driver's union, but Portland is still the nation's best city for public transportation, according to a new analysis.

The online U.S. News magazine analyzed data from the Federal Transit Administration and the nonpartisan American Public Transportation Association to come up with its findings.

Portland finished ahead of even the storied New York and Boston transit systems.

According to U.S. News:

"All of these cities' systems have unique features that set them apart. Portland's public transit provides riders with a variety of travel options, including buses, light rail, commuter rail, streetcars, and an aerial tram. New York is unique simply by virtue of high ridership: in 2008, 4.2 billion trips were taken on New York metro area subway lines, buses, and railroads, six times the number of trips taken in Los Angeles, the No. 2 city. Minneapolis and Portland both feature fare-free transit routes in their downtown areas. And the Salt Lake City area's Utah Transit Authority runs ski transit lines in the winter, in addition to its usual rail and bus services, and also features wireless Internet on its buses."

Obviously, things could be better in Portlandia. A show of hands: How many Tri-Met riders would like to see free wi-fi on buses and MAX a la the Utah Transit Authority?

Actually, there's more trouble in transit paradise.

OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon's Bus Riders Unite! riders union plans to kickoff its Campaign for a Fair Transfer on February 21.

Many transit riders, especially working class families, rely on single-trip fares to meet basic needs and can't afford to invest in transit passes, OPAL says.

With service cuts leading to longer wait times between buses, overcrowding, and missed transfers, OPAL wants Tri-Met to extend all Tri-Met transfers to three hours and support evening riders with unlimited transfer time after 7 p.m.

U.S. News notes that the number of public transportation systems in the U.S. has increased more than sevenfold in the last 30 years, from 1,044 in 1980 to 7,700 in 2009. The American Public Transportation Association estimates that for every one dollar invested in public transportation, four dollars are generated in economic returns.

The APTA also reported in January that in major urban areas, people on average save \$9,656 annually by using public transportation instead of driving.

According to a U.S. News analysis, the 10 U.S. cities with the best combination of public transportation investment, ridership, and safety are:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Portland | 6. San Francisco |
| 2. Salt Lake City | 7. Los Angeles |
| 3. New York | 8. Honolulu |
| 4. Boston | 9. (tie) Denver |
| 5. Minneapolis—St. Paul, MN | 9. (tie) Austin |