Oregon Department of Transportation



STIF Discretionary and Statewide Transit Network Application: FY 2023-25

Applicant Information

Agency Legal Name

Lane Council of Governments

Project Title

South Lane County Metro Shuttle

Agency Legal Address

859 Willamette Street, Suite 500, Eugene, Oregon 97401

Application Contact Name

Kelly Clarke

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Name of Person Signing Agreement

Brendalee Wilson

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Application Contact Title

Principal Transportation Planner

Application Contact Phone Number

(541) 682-4026

Title of Person Signing Agreement

Executive Director

Phone Number of Person Signing Agreement

(541) 682-4283

Agency Information

1. Transit Agency Type Intergovernmental Entity

1.A Does the agency have any existing grant agreements with ODOT?

Yes

- 2. What is the main type of service that will be supported by this award? Demand Response
- 3. Would this award support ongoing operations of an existing service?
- 3.A Brief history of current project/service. What, if any, elements of the proposed project differ from existing efforts and services?

The southern Lane County Metro Shuttle project is a rural based demand response transit service. Rides are scheduled by making a reservation via the operator's dispatch and are typically from the rider's home in rural southern Lane County to their destination in the Eugene-Springfield area. South Lane Wheels is the current operator under contract with the City of Cottage Grove. The City is transferring contract management to the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG). LCOG will be evaluating the service as a pilot for its efficacy and expansion to other areas of rural Lane County. Differences that may arise as LCOG assumes management include rebranding, change of fare structure, and change of service hours.

Risk Assessment Information

- 4. Did your agency have any turnover of management or financial staff in the last two years?
- 5. Does your agency have an accounting system that allows you to completely and accurately track the receipt and disbursement of funds related to the award?

 Yes
- 6. What type of accounting system does your agency use? Combined
- 7. Does your agency have a system in place that will account for 100 percent of each employee's time?

Yes

- 8. Did your staff members attend required training and meetings during the previous biennium? Yes
- 9. Was your agency audited by the federal government in the past two years?
- 10. Did your agency stay on budget in the past two years? Yes

Agency Qualifications

11. Describe how your agency has the legal, managerial and operational capacity to perform and report on project progress within the scope, schedule and budget of the anticipated grant agreement. (Description of operational capacity should apply specifically for the workload of projects in this application.)

LCOG is an independent public agency; established and supported by its member agencies to coordinate and provide public services within Lane County and beyond. LCOG's governing body is its Board of

Directors. Over the past biennium, LCOG managed and reported on the transit routes connecting Eugene-Florence and Florence-Yachats. LCOG's Transportation staff have many years combined experience in project management. A dedicated planner is assigned to the transit project administration role to track scope and schedule. A fiscal analyst tracks budget and reporting. Each route has a separate budget and contract. Costs are tracked according to grant agreement terms. Our team has experience with the ODOT OPTIS reporting system and submits reports and documents on time. Existing and previous IGAs are always reviewed by legal and managerial staff for compliance and correctness. LCOG's most recent Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is attached.

12. Certification of Compliance

By checking this box, the applicant certifies that if they are awarded funding, they will meet and ensure compliance for the term of the agreement with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations including, and not limited to, those pertaining to passenger transportation, civil rights, labor, insurance, safety and health.

Yes

- 13. Do you plan to use a Sub-Recipient or contractor to implement the grant supported activity? Yes
- 13.A If Yes, please list the Sub-Recipient(s) and describe how the applicant will provide sufficient Sub-Recipient/contractor oversight to ensure eligibility is maintained while receiving STIF Discretionary or Statewide Transit Network moneys.

LCOG will contract with a service provider to operate this service. LCOG employs several oversight strategies including regular check-in meetings to discuss service status and provide direction and oversight as needed. LCOG requires monthly summary of services and invoices informing expenditures and contract deliverables. Staff establishes protocols to meet unfulfilled contract terms. LCOG maintains copies of the contractor's annual audits and insurance for liability purposes.

14. If you seek the 10 percent match reduction, does the project meet one or more of the four factors identified in OAR 732-044-0005(4)(a)? Select each factor that you believe is exemplified by the proposed project.

Predominantly serves or provides access to and from rural communities Fills a significant gap in the Statewide Transit Network

15. Will federal funds be used to complete this project?

Project Information

16.A Project Title

South Lane County Metro Shuttle

16.B Describe the project to be funded. Clearly describe what the requested fund award would be used to accomplish, detailing the specific tasks and deliverables. Where relevant, identify the origin and destination of the proposed service as well as each municipality visited along the route. Please see page 7 of the application instructions for additional guidance on writing a project description.

This project will serve as a pilot rural demand response service model for the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG). The City of Cottage Grove is currently providing a service called Metro Shuttle. Metro Shuttle is a door-to-door service designed for South Lane County residents living outside of the Cottage Grove city limits who seek transportation to go to points north, most particularly Creswell, Eugene, and Springfield. The service is expressly for rides of 10-miles or more, and rides must originate and/or

terminate in the southern region of Lane County. Rides are scheduled by making a reservation with the operator dispatch. Common trip purposes include medical appointments, shopping, and entertainment. The Metro Shuttle does not serve the Eugene Airport. Fares are based on the pickup location. For example, a ride to Eugene that originates and terminates near Dorena Lake is \$30 round-trip. A ride to Eugene that originates and terminates closer to Creswell is \$20 round-trip. The Metro Shuttle is a vital transportation option for many in south Lane County who do not have another travel option.

The City of Cottage Grove provides this service, along with a parallel service within its city limits, via a contract operator. While the City remains committed to ensuring these reliable transit services, it is transferring contract administration responsibilities to LCOG and the Lane Transit District (LTD). This transfer of responsibilities is intended to find best fits for service management and ongoing sustainable operations. The City does not have the internal capacity and expertise to continue with managing transit contract. As an outcome of evaluating best fit for current and future services, LTD will focus on providing the services within their service boundary and LCOG will focus on proving services outside of that service boundary. Please see the attached map showing the LTD service boundary. This outcome highlights the emerging role of LCOG, with its Link Lane transit service, as a public transportation service provider within Lane County and the ongoing collaborative relationship between LCOG and LTD in providing rural transit service.

This outcome also creates an opportunity for LCOG to take on this demand response service as a pilot and upon taking on contract administration will evaluate its efficacy, build on what is working, and identify operational room for improvement. Operational room for improvement may include rebranding of the service and a reconsideration of the fare structure.

As the emerging provider of rural transit in Lane County, LCOG is exploring ways to serve rural residents experiencing transportation barriers, most particularly in accessing health care, basic shopping needs, social, and entertainment destinations in the urban Eugene-Springfield area. Given the dispersed nature of where rural residents live, and Lane County's very large geographic span, the fixed-route model is not the most efficient or cost-effective option. LCOG intends to evaluate the pilot Metro Shuttle as model that could serve more than southern Lane County. We will evaluate the pilot with the question of "Is this a service model that we can expand to serve a wider area or areas of Lane County and beyond?"

If awarded funding, LCOG will undergo a procurement process to bring-on a contract provider to operate the service, including the dispatch.

17. What is the minimum project cost that will still allow your project to proceed? \$350,000.00

18. Select the fund source(s) for which you would like to compete and that you believe your project is eligible to receive. Check all that apply.

STIF Discretionary
STIF Intercommunity Discretionary

19. Why is this an important project? What are the consequences of this project not receiving funding?

On-demand rural transit is critical to meeting transportation needs of our rural transportation-disadvantaged community members. LTD's Coordinated Plan identifies the unmet transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults and people with low incomes across all of Lane County, and particularly in areas where there is currently a lack of available public transportation. LTD's service boundary is primarily the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area, significantly less area than Lane County. LCOG's role in filling gaps in rural transit service is vital to meeting these unmet needs. If this project is not funded, the Metro Shuttle will not operate at current levels.

20. Will this project involve breaking ground or any other activity that might require environmental review per federal requirements?

Oregon Transportation Commission Investment Priorities

Equity and Public Transportation Service to Low-Income Households

21. Describe how this project would support and improve access for vulnerable populations and/or historically marginalized communities.

The 2021 Cottage Grove Area Transit Development Plan (TDP) conducted a thorough community profile of the south Lane County area. The TDP included southern Lane County and northern Douglas County in the community profile as this geography reflects residents with similar travel patterns taken on a regular basis to meet daily needs related to work, education, medical and social services, recreation and shopping. Vulnerable populations include people over the age of 65 or under 18, people of color, people with limited English proficiency, people with a disability, people with low to moderate incomes, households with no vehicles available, and veterans. Collectively, these vulnerable populations experience greater travel barriers in rural areas without transit access. The TDP provides insights into the project area's population:

- The share of the population over 65 is greater in the travel shed (22%) than Oregon (17%).
- The share of the population under 18 is similar in the travel shed (20%) to Oregon (21%).
- The travel shed's resident population is 92% white and 8% non-white.
- More residents report having a disability in the travel shed (21%) than Oregon (15%).
- The travel shed has a higher share of low-income individuals at all three measures of poverty than compared with the State.
- The travel shed at 6% does report a lower percentage of vehicle availability than Oregon (8%).
- The share of veterans in the travel shed (12%) is larger than Oregon (9%).

This project will directly support vulnerable populations by maintaining and expanding upon a car-free travel option that is otherwise not available in southern Lane County.

The Metro Shuttle will be a pilot project for LCOG in terms of both a new area of Lane County in which Link Lane will operate and a new on-demand service model. While it will continue to serve rural, southern Lane County, it will also serve as a model for LCOG to evaluate and potentially apply to other areas of rural Lane County. This evaluation will be undertaken through an equity lens and LCOG staff will coordinate with local transportation, community partners, and health representatives to determine areas in which vulnerable populations and/or historically marginalized populations are located and in need of transit services that may benefit from a similar type of service.

Coordination of Public Transportation Services

22. Describe how this project would improve the passenger experience, benefit multiple transit providers, or involve consolidation, coordination, or resource sharing between agencies, including use of transportation data and technology.

This project is a direct result of local agencies coordinating to provide transit while leveraging each agency's expertise, resources, and missions. The City of Cottage Grove is currently managing two door-to-door type services: one within its City limits and one outside of its City limits. Given internal shortage of capacity and expertise, the City approached LCOG and LTD to discuss how and if these services could be

transferred or consolidated. After evaluation of service needs along with the expertise, resources, and mission each agency brings to the table, the decision was made to consolidate these services by transferring the Metro Shuttle into LCOG's Link Lane portfolio and the door-to-door service within the City limits to LTD. This decision best reflects LTD's mission to provide service within its district boundary and LCOG's mission to fill the gap in rural transit service within and beyond Lane County. This arrangement will also leverage the City of Cottage Grove's standing in the community as a partner and advocate for transit services. This project's success is dependent upon all partner's ongoing coordination, and each partner is committed to this endeavor.

The Metro Shuttle will rely on resource sharing between LCOG and LTD as a common dispatch. Currently, vehicles are utilized to serve operations both within and without the Cottage Grove city limits. LCOG and LTD will coordinate so that the vehicles will continue to do so, even though these two operations will have different contract managers.

The project has the opportunity to leverage technology resource sharing, as LTD's integrated fare project should be complete by the biennium, allowing seamless travel between LTD and Link Lane services.

Passengers will benefit from a well-coordinated operation. While service within and outside of Cottage Grove may be operated by two different agencies, the intent is that a rider will not need to be aware of this deviation. Through shared resources, most particularly dispatch, riders' interface with these services will be seamless.

Environmental and Public Health

23. Describe how this project would go beyond providing an alternative to personal car use to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce pollution, and/or support positive health outcomes. How does this project support applicant's climate planning efforts?

The 2021 Cottage Grove Area TDP establishes the following two objective related to these criteria:

- Environmental Sustainability Provide environmentally sustainable transportation options that are a convenient alternative to driving, increase the use of public transportation in the Cottage Grove area, and explore opportunities to utilize cleaner energy.
- Reduce Vulnerability Reduce the public transportation system's vulnerability to economic fluctuations, natural disasters, climate change, and hazardous incidents, and provide resources to community members during such events.

This project is helping to provide an environmentally sustainable option by freeing people from needing to drive. Many people within this project geography are relatively isolated geographically and access-wise. With this door-to-door service as a travel option, they are able to make a reservation for a ride and schedule that ride to coincide with such personal needs as their appointment time and/or transfer to another transit mode, including Amtrak or metro-area LTD services. This service goes beyond providing an alternative to personal car use as it is a piece of the transportation fabric that is severely lacking in the majority of rural areas.

Two of the service strategies to implement the "Reduce Vulnerability" objective are:

- Establish a shopper shuttle that serves the Cottage Grove area, including communities in north Douglas County
- Coordinate with human services agencies serving adults, seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans to provide transit services meeting the needs of these members of our community

This project is achieving those two strategies as it may serve for shopping needs as a shopper shuttle, and LCOG is a human services agency with deep community ties via its Senior & Disability Services with which Link Lane coordinates and supports.

The Metro Shuttle supports positive health outcomes. The Lane County Transportation Safety Action Plan (2017) reports that improving public health is linked directly to encouraging active transportation. Lower levels of physical activity and active transportation in rural areas create a poorer public health outcome, with higher levels of obesity than their urban counterparts. Transit access plays an important role in a complete active transportation network.

Safety, Security, and Community Livability

24. Describe how the project would increase use and participation in active transportation, and support connections between transit and other travel modes like biking and walking.

This project is uniquely positioned to increase use and participation in active transportation for a community that is otherwise reliant on personal vehicle use. The service is designed to meet the transportation needs of rural residents by providing a reservation based on-time shuttle service from the resident's home to destination. The scheduled pick-up feature and rural based geographic scope of the service are intended to make this a value-added car-free option that appeals to a wide variety of riders, some of which may otherwise drive, others of which do not have a car available.

Inherent to its design, the Metro Shuttle supports connections between transit and other modes because people getting rides likely do not have a car available at their destination. If their trip includes destinations beyond their Metro Shuttle drop-off, they will likely be walking, biking, or taking transit. It will be a part of the transit network in supporting connections between transit providers, including Link Lane, LTD, and Amtrak, to travel car-free within and beyond southern Lane County.

25. Describe how the project would support and improve safety of passengers in transit vehicles and safety of other roadway users.

LCOG will manage this service and operate it under contract. The contract operator must demonstrate the highest standards for safety protocols and have a safe history. LCOG ensures safety compliance with industry standards of the American Public Transportation Association and Federal Transit Administration.

The Lane County Transportation Safety Action Plan (TSAP 2017) reports that traffic crashes are the leading cause of death in Lane County for ages 1-24. In 2014, Lane County had more traffic fatalities than any other county in Oregon and has continued to have high rates. While most traffic is in the cities, most fatalities were in rural areas. Elements of rural roads, such as high speed limits, narrow shoulders with ditches, and the absence of median barriers can increase the risk of fatal crash types. Low population density and geographic isolation of rural communities can increase detection, response, and travel time for emergency medical services, thereby increasing mortality rates. The majority of highway fatalities take place on rural roads (54% of all fatalities and 2.4 times higher than the fatality rate in urban areas), creating a disproportionate impact to rural areas with regard to fatal and severe-injury collisions and associated economic costs. Multimodal safety is a challenge in the rural area. People who live in rural communities generally travel more in their automobiles and over further distances, increasing the likelihood of a crash. Transportation options in rural areas are limited, with insufficient bicycle and pedestrian networks and access to public transportation.

One TSAP strategy is improving travel options, including transit, for rural residents, which provide significant co-benefits of improving the quality of life for vulnerable populations. Per the Lane County Transportation System Plan, many rural residents feel like they cannot get anywhere in rural Lane County without a car. Youth, seniors, and people with disabilities are especially isolated in rural areas, and there is demand for expanded and more frequent transit service in rural areas. The Metro Shuttle will address this strategy and support and improve the safety of rural residents.

Statewide Transit Network Connections

26. Describe how this project would support and improve the utility and connectivity of the

Statewide Transit Network and/or create a foundation for future Statewide Transit Network improvements.

This project will provide critical connections for rural southern Lane County into Cottage Grove and the Eugene-Springfield urban area. LCOG will evaluate its efficacy and value and adjust as needed to meet the needs of residents it is intended to serve. LCOG is consolidating the Metro Shuttle into its Link Lane portfolio as a pilot for how a demand response modeled service may be applied beyond the southern Lane County geography. As a feeder service into a major urban area and/or major transit lines, it expands the geographic availability of transportation services to rural areas that are otherwise un-served.

This pilot has the potential to be transformational on how transit in rural Lane County is offered. The Lane Coordinated Public Transportation Plan, 2019 Update, establishes three priorities based on community transportation needs:

- First Priority: Maintain sustainable service levels of viable operations ensure transportation services and connections remain at a sustainable level for people who depend on public transportation services in Lane County.
- Second Priority: Respond to growth within existing services Allow for measured increases where demand points to an unmet need within the available resources.
- Third Priority: Respond to emerging community needs Take action on opportunities to optimize coordination, develop new partnerships and to accommodate newly identified transportation needs and gaps.

LCOG's Link Lane transit services began operations after this plan was adopted in 2019 and provide a community resource not before available within rural Lane County. The Metro Shuttle addresses these priorities by 1) maintaining a lifeline service, 2) responding to unmet needs in rural Lane County by operating this service as a pilot and allowing for measured increases to respond to unmet needs across Lane County, and 3) optimizing coordination, and developing a new type of partnership between LCOG and LTD to accommodate both rural and urban transportation needs and gap. This project in-full is creating a foundation for future Statewide Transit Network improvements by creating a model of partnership and rural on-demand service.

Funding and Strategic Investment

27. Describe why investment in this project makes sense from both the perspective of current need and long term Oregon transit needs.

This project will sustain a legacy door-to-door transit service and revive it as a pilot service model for the Link Lane transit services. This project works towards the goal of a complete Statewide Transit Network and recognizes the value of collaborating with other transit and city agencies to reduce fragmentation, ensure efficiencies and enhance access opportunities via public transportation. Two goals to sustain this service beyond the 23-25 biennium are to pursue federal, state and local funding sources and to evaluate this service's performance for both the area within which it is operating and as a model for other areas within Lane County.

Investment in this project at this time is vital as it will sustain a service and allow LCOG time to manage it as a Link Lane service and evaluate its performance. Without project funding, this service will terminate as FY21-23 STIF funding expires. LCOG is not a taxing district and does not have an alternate source of funding to operate this route. This project leverages strong collaboration between Cottage Grove, Lane Transit District and LCOG, and all partners are committed to its success.

28. If this project will last beyond the 2023-25 biennium, describe the plan for ongoing funding including match. If not applicable, type N/A.

This project will last beyond the 23-25 biennium. LCOG is committed to continuing to provide this service. There is keen interest to develop this service as a model that LCOG could expand to other parts of Lane

County. LCOG's transit services are branded Link Lane. LCOG intends to seek sustaining funding for its Link Lane services by broadening its funding base, and to continue applying for STIF Discretionary and Statewide Transit Network funds. Local STIF Formula Funds will be used as project cost match.

The Transportation Growth Management program awarded LCOG funding to develop its first Link Lane Transit Development Plan. One of its key outcomes or deliverables is a strategic funding plan to prepare for sustainable ongoing funding. This planning effort is underway and will be complete within the upcoming STIF biennium.

29. Does this project depend on other funding sources including other discretionary grants whose outcomes are uncertain? If yes, please list those fund sources. If not applicable, type N/A. N/A

30. Capital Asset Purchases

Describe proposed capital purchases. If no capital assets are included in your application, type N/A.

N/A

Project Details

Task CategoryProject Administration
Operating

Project Administration

Give a brief (1-3 sentences) description of this project cost.

Project administration costs include, but are not limited to, vendor and contractor oversight, grant and financial management, training, internal and external program coordination, ensuring ongoing operating compliance, office supplies, overhead, and marketing support.

Total Task Cost (Grant Amount + Match Amount) \$31,500.00

Project Task and Match Amounts

20% Match Rate Calculations

Grant Amount - STIF Discretionary/STIF Intercommunity/5311f (80% State/Fed Share) \$25,200,00

Match Amount - STIF Discretionary/STIF Intercommunity/5311f (20% Local Share) \$6,300.00

10% Match Rate Calculations (For Qualified Applicants)

Grant Amount - STIF Discretionary/STIF Intercommunity (90% State Share) \$28,350.00

Match Amount - STIF Discretionary/STIF Intercommunity (10% Local Share) \$3,150.00

Operating

Give a brief (1-3 sentences) description of this project cost.

Operating costs include contract operator and dispatch costs, fuel, oil, licenses, and vehicle maintenance. The project cost listed in the Letter of Intent was \$175,000. Further budgeting in preparation for this application show that the true annual project cost is likely double. As such this application requests a minimum \$350,000 to cover both operations and administrative costs. While the costs are scalable based on the hours of operation, geography served, shared expenses with LTD, etc., the closer the grant award is to our true project costs, the more effective the pilot will be.

Total Task Cost (Grant Amount + Match Amount) \$318,500.00

Project Task and Match Amounts

20% Match Rate Calculations

Grant Amount - STIF Discretionary/STIF Intercommunity (80% State Share) \$254,800.00

Match Amount - STIF Discretionary/STIF Intercommunity (20% Local Share) \$63,700.00

10% Match Rate Calculations (For Qualified Applicants)

Grant Amount - STIF Discretionary/STIF Intercommunity (90% State Share) \$286,650.00

Match Amount - STIF Discretionary/STIF Intercommunity (10% Local Share) \$31,850.00

Application Totals Match Sources

Match Sources Amount

Local \$70,000.00

Are matching funds of at least 20% of project costs available if the project is awarded? Yes

What percent of funds will be used for demand response transportation? 100%

Percent of funds used for fixed route transportation

Note on Application Totals: If applying for 5311(f) Operating, a 50% match rate is applied to identified Operating costs. However, the application form automatically applies a 20% match rate to the full Project Cost, including Operating costs. Therefore, Section 5311(f) applicants should ensure the accuracy of the Total Task Cost for each Task Category, as the 20% match rate will only apply to non-Operating costs in a 5311(f) grant award. The form is unable to calculate an accurate application total using two different match

rates.

Application Totals Summary By Task - 20% Match Rate

Task Category	Task Project Cost	Task Grant Amount	Task Match Amount
Vehicle Expansion	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Vehicle Replacement	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Equipment Purchase	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Facility Purchase	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Signs/Shelters	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Planning	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Project Administration	\$31,500.00	\$25,200.00	\$6,300.00
Operating	\$318,500.00	\$254,800.00	\$63,700.00
Preventive Maintenance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mobility Management	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Total Project Cost: \$350,000.00	Total Grant Amount: \$280,000.00	Total Match Amount: \$70,000.00

Application Totals Summary By Task - 10% Match Rate (For Qualified Applicants)

Task Category	Task Project Cost	Task Grant Amount	Task Match Amount
Vehicle Expansion	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Vehicle Replacement	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Equipment Purchase	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Facility Purchase	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Signs/Shelters	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Planning	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Project Administration	\$31,500.00	\$28,350.00	\$3,150.00
Operating	\$318,500.00	\$286,650.00	\$31,850.00

Preventive Maintenance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mobility Management	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Total Project Cost: \$350,000.00	Total Grant Amount: \$315,000.00	Total Match Amount: \$35,000.00

Document Upload (Optional) LCOG 2021 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.pdf South Lane County Metro Shuttle Service Area.jpg Lane Transit District Service Area.jpg Lane County LOS Southern Lane County Metro Shuttle.pdf Cottage Grove LOS Metro Shuttle.pdf