Date: October 14, 2019

From: Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation

To: Eugene City Council
Lane Transit District Board of Directors

Re: MovingAhead Analysis and Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BEST finds there is broad community support for *complete streets* that enable people to walk, bicycle, or use a mobility device in *safety*; to access frequent and *useful transit*; or to drive. Such complete streets support Eugene's vision for *compact urban development*. To varying degrees, members of the community see that such better transportation is good for the triple bottom line of *people, prosperity and the planet*. Moreover, taxpayers want to see a *return on investment* to benefit the community more with limited public dollars.

To advance this community vision for better transportation, BEST recommends:

1. **Prioritize the Franklin Boulevard Transformation project** and seek funding to make needed improvements as soon as possible to enable more frequent transit service, create a complete street, and support new development around the UO.

2. **Select Enhanced Corridor as the locally preferred alternative for each of the five MovingAhead corridors**—with the understanding that the first priority is to make needed safety improvements for people bicycling, walking or using mobility devices; second to make targeted improvements to reduce traffic congestion or improve transit service; third to spur transit-oriented development where detailed land use planning determines it is both desired and economically feasible; and lastly to pursue an "open" form of BRT only if funding for both capital and operating costs is feasible.

3. **Develop a joint citywide transportation and land use strategic business plan**, before pursuing capital investments in any of the MovingAhead corridors. The plan should articulate the outcomes the community desires, select strategies for achieving those outcomes, provide a timeline of actions to implement those strategies, and provide a funding plan to ensure there are sufficient resources. BEST offers possible elements of such a plan, which in the future could include pursuing EmX demonstrated to be cost-effective.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with our MovingAhead analysis and recommendations.

Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation (BEST) appreciates the extensive and careful work the project management team has done to identify investment opportunities, cull these down to just the five most promising corridors, and prepare an *Alternatives Analysis Report* to objectively identify the costs and benefits of different options.[1]

BEST is a privately funded local 501(c)(3) nonprofit. In 2012, BEST came together as a broad group of community leaders to support the Eugene City Council in approving the West Eugene EmX project. Today, BEST is building a successful community by bringing people together to promote transportation options, safe streets and walkable neighborhoods.

To develop these recommendations, over the last five years BEST attended public meetings, met with MovingAhead staff,[2] and conducted our own analysis. Specifically, these recommendations represent the consensus of the BEST Board of Directors (see masthead), with advice from our partner organizations, informed by public input via our recent series of focus groups and our prior community conversations. BEST offers you these recommendations as our best sense of sound public policy in the community interest.

The remainder of this memo begins with our overall analysis, reviews each of the corridors in detail, and then offers our recommendations. In Appendix A, we trace the evolution over the past two decades of a shared community vision for better transportation:

[1] *Alternatives Analysis Report*, MovingAhead, September 2018, http://www.movingahead.org/alternatives-analysis-report/.

[2] BEST met with staff to learn about MovingAhead. See "Feedback on MovingAhead," BEST, May 13, 2019, http://www.best-oregon.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/BEST-LTD-MovingAhead-2019-05-13.pdf.

ANALYSIS

As detailed in Appendix A below, there is broad community support for *complete streets* that enable people to walk, bicycle, or use a mobility device in *safety*; to access frequent and *useful transit*; or to drive. Such complete streets support Eugene's vision for *compact urban development*. To varying degrees, members of the community see that such better transportation is good for the triple bottom line of *people, prosperity and the planet*.

Moreover, taxpayers want to see a *return on investment* to benefit the community more with limited public dollars.[3, 4]

But if it is clear what the community wants, which MovingAhead investments best advance these public interests?

To arrive at an answer, BEST looks at three key aspects of this shared vision: 1) frequent and useful transit, 2) transportation safety, and 3) compact urban development.

1. Frequent and Useful Transit

Below we examine reasons to invest in infrastructure to provide frequent and useful transit:

- Building out the BRT system
- Increasing transit ridership
- Reducing transit travel times
- Reducing transit operating cost
- Tapping into federal funding
- Flexible implementation

Building out the BRT system

As detailed in Appendix A, in 2001 with *TransPlan* the community embraced a vision for 61 miles of bus rapid transit (BRT) linking nodal development areas and served by feeder buses.

A primary aim of MovingAhead is to "develop a capital investment program" in order to build out "the region's vision for BRT."

But over the past two decades, the region's vision for transit has evolved from one focused on BRT infrastructure to one focused on useful service. LTD's *Long-Range Transit Plan* adopted in 2014 and Eugene's *2035 Transportation System Plan* adopted in 2017 do not necessarily call for a BRT system but rather for a Frequent Transit Network (FTN).

Today the community is on the verge of substantially realizing the vision for a FTN—using existing infrastructure. Set to be implemented as early as Fall 2020, the *Transit Tomorrow*

[3] Before his untimely passing, Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce president Dave Hauser at an EmX Steering Committee meeting asked about the *return on investment* of MovingAhead alternatives.

[4] See also "If You're Planning to Invest in Infrastructure, You Need to Understand These 3 Concepts," Strong Towns, March 25, 2013, https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2013/3/25/three-core-understandings.html.

Draft Network Plan calls for transit service every 15 minutes on most of the FTN corridors, including along the five MovingAhead corridors.

It is unclear why major investments in additional BRT would be needed to advance the FTN, at least in the short term.

Increasing transit ridership

Since *TransPlan*, the community has begun implementing a form of BRT, branded as EmX.

Launched in 2007, the first segment from downtown Eugene to downtown Springfield has been an unqualified success. It exceeded ridership projections within its first year of operation.[5] Today, demand is so high that Transit Tomorrow recommends even more frequent service.

Launched in 2011, the second segment from downtown Springfield to Gateway and RiverBend has been a mixed success. In 2015, a consultant study prepared for the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce suggested that ridership was well below projections—at least along International Way and by RiverBend.[6] In 2018, LTD confirmed this assessment when it reduced service from every 10 minutes to every 15 minutes, citing lower ridership and a need to cut operating cost.[7]

Launched in 2017, the third segment from downtown to west Eugene has also been a mixed success. In 2019, LTD reported that average weekday ridership had been projected to be 7,399 but the recent actual figure was 4,245.[8]

The *Alternatives Analysis Report* estimates the systemwide annual ridership increase, as well as the number of jobs and people served. But it does not estimate the increase in useful transit, for example, the number of jobs accessible within 45 minutes.[9]

Insofar as past projections of future ridership have proved unreliable, it is unclear how much weight to give to projections contained in the *Alternatives Analysis Report*.

Reducing transit travel times

Instead, we focus on projections for in-vehicle transit travel times.

---

[5] "London, Paris Edge Out Guatemala City; Eugene, Oregon; & Pereira, Colombia for 2008 ST Award," *Earth Times*, January 14, 2008, https://www.itdp.org/2008/01/14/london-paris-edge-out-guatemala-city-eugene-oregon-pereira-colombia-for-2008-st-award/.

[6] "Performance Review of Lane Transit District's Gateway EmX," CSA Planning, November 2015, http://csaplanning.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/GatewayEMXperformancereview_webversion_2.pdf.

[7] "Based on productivity differences among the different segments, the EmX line would be split into two routes. The Springfield Station–Eugene Station–Commerce segment would maintain current 10-minute service. The Gateway-Springfield Station segment would move to 15-minute service to align with current demand." Board meeting, LTD, June 20, 2018, https://www.ltd.org/file_viewer.php?id=3117.

[8] Board meeting, LTD, July 17, 2019, https://www.ltd.org/file_viewer.php?id=3776.

[9] A key measure Transit Tomorrow uses to evaluate different service scenarios is the number of jobs accessible within 45 minutes from a given location.

As summarized in the table below, investments in Enhanced Corridor provide time savings of 10 minutes for Highway 99, 5 minutes for River Road and Coburg Road, 2 minutes for Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., and 1 minute for 30th Avenue.

Such reduced travel times do make transit more useful and can result in increased ridership.

But compared to Enhanced Corridor, investments in EmX provide additional times savings of just 3 minutes for River Road, 2 minutes for Highway 99, 1 minute for 30th Avenue, and no savings at all for Coburg Road.

It is not clear that there is a significant enough decrease in transit travel times to justify the higher capital cost for EmX as compared to Enhanced Corridor.

Reducing transit operating cost

An adopted goal of MovingAhead is to "meet current and future transit demand in a cost-effective and sustainable manner" with objectives to "control the increase in transit operating cost to serve the corridor" and to "implement corridor improvements that provide an acceptable return on investment."[10]

The Enhanced Corridor Package is estimated to *reduce* system-wide operating cost by $100,000 per year, which might not be significant but is at least headed in the right direction.

In contrast, the EmX Package is estimated *increase* system-wide operating cost by $8.2 million per year.[11] It is unclear where funding for the increased operating cost would come from, nor whether LTD's general fund nor State Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) monies would be tapped.

The increased operating costs for EmX alternatives could result in cuts to other transit service, especially in light of the recent cuts to service for Gateway EmX.

Tapping into federal funding

The total estimated capital cost for the offered packages range from $145 million for the Enhanced Corridor Package to $332 million for the EmX Package.

EmX and Enhanced Corridor could qualify for federal funding. For example, Small Starts is a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) discretionary and competitive grant program that can fund fixed guideway and corridor-based BRT projects.[12]

Before applying for a Small Starts grant, FTA requires completing an environmental review process including developing and reviewing alternatives, selecting a locally preferred

[10] "Preliminary Purpose and Need, Goals and Objectives," MovingAhead, October 16, 2015, http://www.movingahead.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/MovingAhead-PNGO-20151016.pdf.

[11] The increased operating cost for EmX are likely due to the assumption that it would provide service every 10 minutes whereas Enhanced Corridor would provide service just every 15 minutes. In light of the more recent Transit Tomorrow analysis, it is unclear that service every 10 minutes is justified anywhere except along Franklin Boulevard. Nonetheless, BEST feels obligated to assess the alternatives based on provided figures.

[12] "Capital Investment Grants Program," FTA, https://www.transit.dot.gov/CIG.

alternative (LPA), and adopting it into fiscally-constrained long-range transportation plan; gaining commitments of all non-5309 (match) funding; and completing sufficient engineering and design. Then FTA evaluates and ranks grant proposals based on six factors: mobility, environmental benefits, congestion relief, economic development, land use and cost effectiveness (cost per trip).[13] It is unclear how well the various MovingAhead alternatives might compete for Small Starts or other federal funding.

Moreover, it is unclear how large a local match would be required to access federal funds. For example, if there were a requirement for a 50% match, it would range from $72.5 million for the Enhanced Corridor Package to $166 million for the EmX Package. It is also unclear where local match funds would come from, nor whether LTD's general fund nor State Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) monies would be tapped.

The need to secure local match funding for either Enhanced Corridor or EmX alternatives could result in cuts to transit service.

Flexible implementation

Compared to light-rail, a strength of BRT is that it can be flexibly implemented, using dedicated lanes, business access and transit (BAT) lanes, or running in mixed traffic.

To date, BRT has been implemented using a combination of specialized vehicles and stations branded as EmX, a "closed" form of BRT: EmX vehicles can operate with EmX stations, and regular buses can operate with regular stops and stations, but the two systems cannot interoperate.[14, 15] As such, an expansion of the current EmX system could result in operational limitations.

For example, today LTD could not switch to using regular buses to serve EmX stations along International Way and by RiverBend.

For example, if EmX were built along River Road but not along 30th Avenue, it would not be possible to go from River Road to Lane Community College without switching vehicles.

As a "closed" form of BRT, EmX suffers some operational limitations and should be limited to corridors where challenges and opportunities exist substantially along the length of the corridor and that offer the highest level of potential for transit-oriented development and ridership growth.

[13] "About Capital Investment Grant Programs," FTA, https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grant-programs/capital-investments/about-program.

[14] "Review of West Eugene EmX Project," Jarrett Walker, April 19, 2012, http://www.best-oregon.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Review-of-West-Eugene-EmX-Project-2012-04-19.pdf.

[15] See also "Bus Rapid Transit Followup," Human Transit, November 19, 2009, https://humantransit.org/2009/11/bus-rapid-transit-followup.html.

"Enhanced Corridor is a new concept for the Eugene-Springfield region, and is intended to improve safety, access and transit service without requiring major capital investments."[16] But many are still not quite sure what this new concept is.

At least some are concerned that Enhanced Corridor is being offered as "not EmX" but if approved could turn out to be "EmX Lite."

BEST also has questions about what Enhanced Corridor actually is but is encouraged by Portland's example.[17]

In particular, BEST is unclear on whether Enhanced Corridor is a kind of BRT, if it is intended to be an "open" or "closed" kind of bus service, and whether it would be eligible for FTA Small Starts or other federal funding.

If it is an "open" kind of bus service, Enhanced Corridor offers the opportunity of making smaller and more targeted investments in infrastructure, especially to address particular bottlenecks or to enhance stops and stations with large and growing ridership—without necessarily needing to rebuild an entire corridor.[18, 19, 20]

2. Transportation Safety

As detailed in Appendix A, the City of Eugene finds that the health and safety of residents are the utmost priority.

---

[16] *Alternatives Analysis Report*, MovingAhead, September 2018, http://www.movingahead.org/alternatives-analysis-report/.

[17] "TriMet designates a small set of major bus lines as the Frequent Service network. Frequent Service transit lines run every 15 minutes or better most of the day, every day. At this level of service, a bus is coming soon whenever you need it, and it is easy to transfer from one line to another to travel in many directions. For this reason, high frequency is associated with high ridership. Frequent bus lines are always among TriMet's busiest. They carry 58% of all bus ridership in the region. …

"The City's *2035 Comprehensive Plan* and planning and zoning process is encouraging more density along much of the Frequent Service network, so over time an even larger share of the population will live on it. Therefore, it makes sense to focus our attention on those lines.

"Enhanced Transit is the next step in improving the Frequent Service network so that even more people find it useful. Enhanced Transit Corridors (ETC) are portions of the Frequent Service network that are high priorities for speed and reliability improvement, as identified by this Plan."

See *Enhanced Transit Corridors Plan*, PBOT, June 20, 2018, https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/73684.

[18] "Cities need to make many small investments … all aimed at improving the quality of life. The goal is to nudge private capital off the sidelines by responding to the struggles of people already living there. Make their lives better and things will get better. This involves a simple, four-step approach: 1. Identify where people … struggle going about their daily routine. 2. Identify the next smallest thing that can be done today to address that struggle. 3. Do that thing. Do it right away. 4. Repeat the process." See "Iterating the Neighborhood: The Big Returns of Small Investments," Strong Towns, October 3, 2019, https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2019/9/19/the-strong-towns-approach-to-public-investment-satbook.

[19] See also *Strong Towns: A Bottom-Up Revolution to Rebuild American Prosperity*, Charles Marohn, https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2019/9/30/strong-towns-book-release-day-satbook.

[20] See also "The Spectacular Benefits of Tactical Urbanism," Streetsblog USA, September 11, 2019, https://usa.streetsblog.org/2019/09/11/the-spectacular-benefits-of-tactical-urbanism/.

There is a critical need to invest as soon as possible in safety improvements for especially the most vulnerable people bicycling, walking and using mobility devices.

Staff have suggested the possibility of making such improvement incrementally as (local) funding becomes available.

Staff have also suggested that part of the attraction of MovingAhead is to bundle transit projects with safety ones. For example, federal transit funding could be used for sidewalk improvements, as was the case with West Eugene EmX. Moreover, by bundling together transit, bicycle and pedestrian investments using different sources of funding, it could be more feasible to meet the match requirements for some federal funding.

But especially if there is already local funding, a downside of bundling could be to trade some needed safety improvements today for the possibility of larger investments in a corridor years in the future.

The interaction between local funding for safety improvements and federal funding for transit improvements is not clear.

3. Compact Urban Development

As detailed in Appendix A, the City of Eugene envisions compact urban development along six Key Corridors: West 11th Avenue, Highway 99, River Road, Coburg Road, Franklin Boulevard and South Willamette Street.

But today this vision is a work in progress, still awaiting more detailed planning and the adoption of needed land use changes.

Currently, of the six Key Corridors, the segment of Franklin Boulevard running east-west by the University of Oregon is the closest to having changes adopted (although our understanding is that the Franklin Boulevard Transformation project is focused on transportation infrastructure changes and not looking at adopting land use changes.)

The River Road Corridor Study shows promise but has not yet resulted in a clear vision for the corridor. (An earlier study for South Willamette Street was put on hold after years of effort and controversy.) And to date, West 11th Avenue, Highway 99 and Coburg Road have not yet experienced detailed planning.

Meanwhile, economic studies commissioned by the City of Eugene provide no compelling evidence that "if we build it, they will come," i.e., that investments in either Enhanced Corridor or EmX—at least on their own—would spur much transit-oriented development.[21]

Transportation investments can be expected to increase rents that property owners can charge—but perhaps not enough to close the gap between higher construction costs and lower rents to spur much transit-oriented development, at least at present.

[21] For example, BEST reviewed a draft *Eugene River Road Economic Study* that ECONorthwest prepared in April 2019 for the City of Eugene.

REVIEW OF CORRIDORS

The highest priority corridor in Eugene for major transportation investments is actually not one of the five MovingAhead corridors:

- **Franklin Boulevard** was designed as a state highway business route but now functions as a main street: the University of Oregon's "front porch." It already experiences the highest ridership of any LTD corridor. But in order to better serve a demand for more frequent service, Transit Tomorrow has identified a critical need to double track the existing EmX line. Moreover, Franklin Boulevard is part of the High Crash Network (but no portion is identified in LTD's *Pedestrian Network Analysis*). It is an Envision Eugene Key Corridor, arguably the one with the greatest potential for transit-oriented development. The project is estimated to cost roughly $28 million.

Of the MovingAhead corridors, BEST recommends prioritizing them in the following order:

1. **River Road** is the corridor that shows the most immediate promise for EmX. It is part of the High Crash Network and portions are identified in LTD's *Pedestrian Network Analysis*. It is an Envision Eugene Key Corridor. There is sufficient right-of-way to make significant changes without unduly affecting motor vehicle traffic or surrounding businesses. The EmX alternative provides for business access and transit (BAT) lanes for most of the way from Northwest Expressway to Beltline. And BEST understands there is some neighborhood support for the EmX alternative.

   But the River Road Corridor Study is not yet complete and the City of Eugene has not yet adopted land use changes to encourage transit-oriented development along the corridor. For the EmX alternative, the estimated increase in system-wide operating cost of $2 million per year would amount to $40 million over 20 years—with no funding yet identified.

2. **Coburg Road** appears to offer the best potential for transit-oriented development. Moreover, with no other solutions to growing traffic congestion, there is a need to do something creative. Coburg Road is part of the High Crash Network and portions are identified in LTD's *Pedestrian Network Analysis*. It is an Envision Eugene Key Corridor.

   But high motor vehicle traffic volumes and limited right-of-way along Coburg Road could make it difficult to acquire dedicated or BAT lanes. The City of Eugene has not yet conducted a detailed land use study engaging local residents and business owners, calling into question whether there is yet strong support for EmX or Enhanced Corridor. For the EmX alternative, the estimated increase in system-wide operating cost of $1.8 million per year would amount to $36 million over 20 years—with no funding yet identified.

3. **Highway 99** runs through some of the most transportation disadvantaged parts of Eugene.[22] It is part of the High Crash Network and portions are identified in LTD's *Pedestrian Network Analysis*. Highway 99 is an Envision Eugene Key Corridor.

[22] For example, see "Figure 10.6. Households without a Vehicle Map, 2007–2011," Lane Livability Consortium, https://www.livabilitylane.org/projects/equity_and_opportunity.htm.

But the surrounding pedestrian network could reduce how many people could access transit stations. The City of Eugene has not yet conducted a detailed land use study to identify transit-oriented development opportunities. For the EmX alternative, the estimated increase in system-wide operating cost of $2.8 million per year would amount to $56 million over 20 years—with no funding yet identified.

4. **30th Avenue** does not appear to be a good candidate for an EmX alternative. Transit service today with existing infrastructure is already frequent and reliable. 30th Avenue is not part of the High Crash Network and no portion is identified in LTD's *Pedestrian Network Analysis*. It is not an Envision Eugene Key Corridor. For the EmX alternative, the estimated increase in system-wide operating cost of $0.5 million per year would amount to $10 million over 20 years—with no funding yet identified.

5. **Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.** does not have an EmX alternative nor is it an Envision Eugene Key Corridor. It is part of the High Crash Network (but no portion is identified in LTD's *Pedestrian Network Analysis*).

The following tables summarize key costs and benefits from the *Alternatives Analysis Report*:

Capital Costs.

Corridor	No-Build	Enhanced Corridor	EmX
River Road	$0.0M	$24.0M	$78.0M
Coburg Road	$0.0M	$41.0M	$113.0M
Highway 99	$0.0M	$38.0M	$67.0M
30th Avenue	$0.0M	$12.0M	$53.0M
Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.	$0.0M	$21.0M	—

Change in Systemwide Annual Operating Costs.

Corridor	No-Build	Enhanced Corridor	EmX
River Road	$0.0M	–$0.6M	$2.0M
Coburg Road	$0.0M	$0.0M	$1.8M
Highway 99	$0.0M	–$0.1M	$2.8M
30th Avenue	$0.0M	–$0.5M	$0.5M
Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.	$0.0M	$1.1M	—

In-Vehicle Transit Travel Time Savings.

Corridor	No-Build	Enhanced Corridor	EmX
River Road	0	5 min	8 min
Coburg Road	0	5 min	5 min
Highway 99	0	10 min	12 min
30th Avenue	0	1 min	2 min
Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.	0	2 min	—

RECOMMENDATIONS

To advance the shared community vision for better transportation, based on the analysis above BEST recommends the following infrastructure investments and other actions:

1. **Prioritize the Franklin Boulevard Transformation project** and seek funding to make needed improvements as soon as possible to enable more frequent transit service, create a complete street, and support new development around the UO.

2. **Select Enhanced Corridor as the locally preferred alternative** for each of the five MovingAhead corridors—with the understanding that the first priority is to make needed safety improvements for people bicycling, walking or using mobility devices; second to make targeted improvements to reduce traffic congestion or improve transit service; third to spur transit-oriented development where detailed land use planning determines it is both desired and economically feasible; and lastly to pursue an "open" form of BRT only if funding for both capital and operating costs is feasible.

3. **Develop a joint citywide transportation and land use strategic business plan**, before pursuing capital investments in any of the MovingAhead corridors. The plan should articulate the outcomes the community desires, select strategies for achieving those outcomes, provide a timeline of actions to implement those strategies, and provide a funding plan to ensure there are sufficient resources.[23]

   Such a strategic business plan could include elements such as the following:

   a. By Fall 2020 or as soon as feasible, implement Transit Tomorrow to substantially realize the FTN.

   b. A year after Transit Tomorrow has been in operation, assess changes in ridership and community demand for more service—both longer hours and more places. Determine how much more operating funding, if any, would be needed to provide the community with the transit service it needs.

   c. Develop a long-term transit financial stability plan that identifies a needed level of financial reserves to ensure LTD can guarantee the community some minimum core service during up and down business cycles.

   d. Develop a climate change policy to guide efforts to increase transit service and ridership in line with local plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.[24, 25, 26]

---

[23] For over three years, LTD has recognized the need to develop a 10-year strategic business plan.

[24] For example, see the *Central Lane Scenario Plan*, LCOG, June 2015, https://www.lcog.org/367/Central-Lane-Scenario-Planning.

[25] For example, see "Climate Recovery Ordinance and Climate Action Plan 2.0," City of Eugene, https://www.eugene-or.gov/3210/Climate-Recovery-Ordinance.

[26] For example, see "Greenhouse Gas Inventory Results FY12–18," LTD, available in the board packet, September 16, 2019, https://www.ltd.org/file_viewer.php?id=3909.

e. Develop a right-of-way protection policy to protect existing right-of-way for desired future improvements and to limit adjacent development that could make the cost of acquiring additional right-of-way prohibitive.[27]

f. Develop a major improvements policy to guide when major capital infrastructure investments are warranted.[28]

g. Develop a policy to guide when, if ever, it would make sense to divert funding from transit service to capital infrastructure investments.

h. After the completion of the River Road Corridor Study,[29] if there is neighborhood support and if funding for both capital and operating costs is feasible, pursue the EmX alternative in conjunction with adopting land use changes to support transit-oriented development.

i. Convene a select task force of stakeholders, especially key business owners, along Coburg Road to assess whether the business-as-usual scenario of no major improvements and growing traffic congestion is acceptable, or whether some targeted investments such as Enhanced Corridor might make sense.

j. Convene transportation disadvantaged people especially living in the Bethel area to learn what transportation service or infrastructure improvements—or other changes—would do the most as soon as possible to improve their options for getting where they need to go.

k. Prior to committing to a major transportation investment along a corridor, first design the *place* the community wants the corridor to become.[30] For example, develop and adopt an integrated transportation and land use refinement plan that focuses on the experiences of people using the corridor and that identifies land use changes along the corridor and connectivity improvements in the surrounding neighborhood.[31, 32, 33]

---

[27] As part of its work, the West Eugene Collaborative called on the Eugene City Council and the Eugene Planning Commission to change setback requirements in order to preserve potential right-of-way for future improvements. See "Building setback standards along West 11th Avenue," Larry Reed & Rob Zako, October 15, 2008, http://www.best-oregon.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/WEC-ECC-Setbacks-20081015.pdf.

[28] "It is the policy of the State of Oregon to maintain highway performance and improve safety by improving system efficiency and management before adding capacity. …" See Policy 1G: Major Improvements, *1999 Oregon Highway Plan*, ODOT, https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Planning/Pages/Plans.aspx.

[29] Note that LTD is partnering with the UO on three student projects: "River Road Corridor Transportation Hubs," "Re-imagining River Road for Ecological Equity," and "River Road Station Site." See "Sustainable City Year Program: LTD," https://sci.uoregon.edu/sustainable-city-year-program-lane-transit-district.

[30] For example, is a given corridor intended to be a *street* for people to be or a *road* for people to travel through? See "What's a STROAD and why does it matter?" Strong Towns, March 2, 2018, https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2018/3/1/whats-a-stroad-and-why-does-it-matter.

[31] For example, see "Streets as Places Toolkit," Project for Public Spaces, September 15, 2015, https://www.pps.org/article/streets-as-places.

[32] "Designing Street for People," Transportation Alternatives, October 23, 2018, https://medium.com/vision-zero-cities-journal/designing-streets-for-people-13b8078abd07.

[33] In Spring 2019, UO Prof. Yizhao Yang's GIS class conducted a detailed block-by-block analysis of Gateway EmX, finding the transit service to be excellent. But their data suggests there have not been sufficient changes to the pedestrian environment to connect people in surrounding neighborhoods to that service.

APPENDIX A:
A SHARED VISION FOR BETTER TRANSPORTATION

Broadly speaking, BEST sees that the community shares BEST's vision for transportation options, safe streets and walkable neighborhoods.

Today, this vision is for *complete streets* that enable people to walk, bicycle, or use a mobility device in *safety*; to access frequent and *useful transit*; or to drive. Such complete streets support Eugene's vision for *compact urban development*.

To varying degrees, members of the community see that such better transportation is good for the triple bottom line of *people, prosperity and the planet*.

Moreover, taxpayers want to see a *return on investment* to benefit the community more with limited public dollars.

Community support for this vision is confirmed by public feedback on MovingAhead[34] and Transit Tomorrow.[35] It is also confirmed by BEST's own focus groups on transportation investment priorities,[36] as well as our community conversations a few years back.[37]

Moreover, this vision is articulated by various City of Eugene and LTD plans.

But because this vision has evolved over time and is articulated in different ways in different plans, here we want to trace the development of this shared vision by looking at plans 1) for frequent and useful transit, 2) for transportation safety, and 3) for compact urban development.

---

[34] "Key findings:

"Participants ranked safety and health as the most important investments for transportation improvements. Livable communities and environmental stewardship/sustainability were ranked the second and third most important values, respectively. …

"Participants considered access to all modes of travel for all people as the most important value for livable communities.

"Participants ranked eliminating transportation-related fatalities and injuries as the most important value for safety and health.

"Attracting a good workforce with quality public transit and planning for future residential and business growth were both top economic development values.

"Participants ranked efficient connections between travel methods as the most important value about transportation systems, followed closely by reliable bus service. …"

See *Community Values Survey*, LTD, April 23, 2018, http://www.movingahead.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/LTD-Report-FINAL-4-23-18.pdf.

[35] A key finding of the Transit Tomorrow public engagement is that there is overwhelming support for more service rather than lower fares. See *Transit Tomorrow Phase 2 Outreach Summary*, LTD, March 18, 2019, https://www.ltd.org/file_viewer.php?id=3537.

[36] See summary of focus groups, https://www.best-oregon.org/focus-groups-2019.

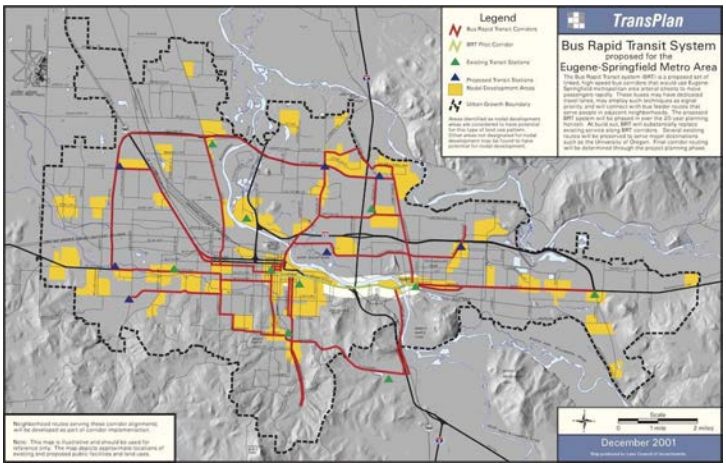
[37] *Community Conversations Report*, BEST, updated November 2016, https://www.best-oregon.org/ccreport/.

1. An Evolving Vision for Frequent and Useful Transit

A primary aim of MovingAhead is to "develop a capital investment program" in order to build out "the region's vision for bus rapid transit (BRT)."[38]

But over the past two decades, the region's vision for transit has evolved from one focused on more better infrastructure (i.e., BRT) to one focused on more useful service (i.e., Frequent Transit Network and Transit Tomorrow).

2001: *TransPlan* envisioned investing $100 million in a system of 61 miles of BRT, served by feeder buses and linking together nodal development areas, "1) if the system is shown to increase transit mode split along BRT corridors, 2) if local governments demonstrate support, and 3) if financing for the system is feasible":[39]



Bus Rapid Transit System, *TransPlan* (2001).

2007: The first EmX bus rapid transit line from downtown Eugene to downtown Springfield began operations.

2011: The second EmX line to Gateway and RiverBend began operations.

2012: A third EmX line to west Eugene was approved—but only after much vocal opposition and BEST came together to support the project.[40, 41]

---

[38] "The purpose of the MovingAhead project is to: Develop a Capital Improvements Program that forecasts and matches projected revenues and capital needs over a 10-year period. …

"The need for the MovingAhead project is based on the following factors: LTD's and the region's commitment to implementing the region's vision for bus rapid transit in the next 20 years consistent with the RTP that provide the best level of transit service in a cost effective and sustainable manner. …"

See "Preliminary Purpose and Need, Goals and Objectives," MovingAhead, October 16, 2015, http://www.movingahead.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/MovingAhead-PNGO-20151016.pdf.

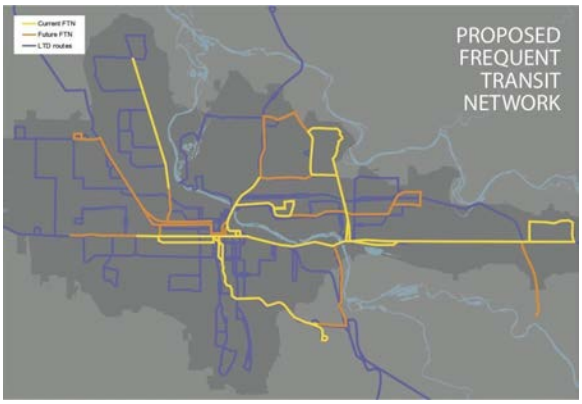
[39] TSI Transit Policy #2: Bus Rapid Transit, *TransPlan*, LCOG, July 2002, https://www.lcog.org/564/Regional-Transportation-Planning.

[40] "Rabid Transit: The drive toward West 11th EmX heats up," *Eugene Weekly*, September 13, 2012, http://www.eugeneweekly.com/2012/09/13/rabid-transit/.

[41] "LTD Board approves west Eugene EmX by 5-1," *Register-Guard*, October 9, 2019, http://projects.registerguard.com/rg/news/local/28869579-75/emx-eugene-board-west-ltd.html.csp.

The line has now been operating successfully for over two years.[42, 43]

2014: LTD recognized the region did not necessarily need some arbitrary level of infrastructure, e.g., Bronze, Silver or Gold Standard BRT,[44] but rather the most appropriate combination of infrastructure, vehicles and technologies to provide frequent transit service along major corridors: a Frequent Transit Network (FTN):[45]



Proposed Frequent Transit Network, *Long-Range Transit Plan*, LTD (2014).

---

[42] "LTD delivers hustle to streets of bustle," *Register-Guard*, September 17, 2017, https://www.registerguard.com/rg/news/local/35958935-75/ltd-delivers-hustle-to-streets-of-bustle.html.csp.

[43] "West Eugene EmX off to brisk start," *Register-Guard*, August 3, 2018, https://www.registerguard.com/news/20180803/west-eugene-emx-off-to-brisk-start.

[44] *The Bus Rapid Transit Standard*, Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, June 21, 2016, https://www.itdp.org/library/standards-and-guides/the-bus-rapid-transit-standard/.

[45] "**What is the Frequent Transit Network?**

"The community invests significant resources into the transit service provided by LTD. The purpose of the Frequent Transit Network (FTN) is to leverage that investment by tying it to the density and other elements of adjacent development.

"Characteristics of an FTN Corridor:

- Enables a well-connected network that provides regional circulation.
- Compatible with and supportive of adjacent urban design goals.
- Operates seven days a week in select corridors.
- Service hours are appropriate for the economic and social context of the area served.
- Coverage consists of at least 16-hours-a-day, and area riders trip origins or destinations are within ¼-mile-straight line distance.
- Average frequency of 15 minutes or better.
- Transit service is reliable and runs on schedule.
- Transit stations are high quality with amenities, including bicycle and pedestrian connections to stations and end-of-trip facilities, such as bike parking and bike share.

"**What is Bus Rapid Transit?**

"Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is the highest level of service available within the FTN.

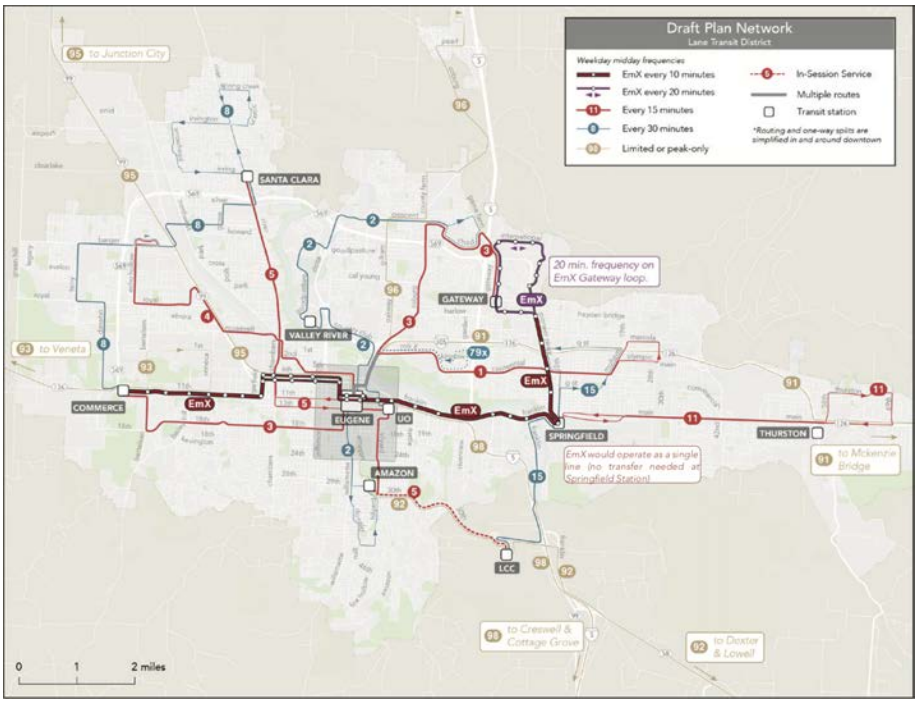
"BRT is a permanent, integrated system that uses buses or specialized vehicles on roadways or dedicated lanes to efficiently transport passengers. BRT system elements (running ways, stations, vehicles, fare collection, intelligent transportation systems, and branding elements) can easily be customized to community needs, and result in more passengers and less congestion."

See *Long-Range Transit Plan*, LTD, March 2014, http://www.movingahead.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Long-Range-Transit-Plan-2014-03-Final.pdf.

2017: The Central Lane MPO adopted the *2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)*, the most recent in a series of minor periodic updates to *TransPlan*. It calls for investing $400 million (in 2016 dollars)—still subject to the same three conditions as in *TransPlan*—to construct five additional EmX and five additional Enhanced Corridor lines in the FTN. "The actual location and type of future FTN investments will be determined once detailed corridor planning is undertaken."[46]

But an analysis conducted in 2015 concluded that four corridors—18th Avenue, Bob Straub Parkway, the Randy Papé Beltline Highway, and Valley River Center—would not be ready for any level of capital investment in BRT, at least over the next 10 years.[47]

Today: LTD is on the verge of substantially realizing the FTN, looking to adopt a Transit Tomorrow network and begin operating it as early as Fall 2020—using existing infrastructure. Consultant Jarrett Walker explains that Transit Tomorrow will provide more "useful" transit:[48, 49]



Transit Tomorrow Draft Network, LTD (August 2019).

---

[46] *2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)*, Central Lane MPO, May 2017, https://www.lcog.org/564/Regional-Transportation-Planning.

[47] *Level 1 Screening Evaluation*, MovingAhead, October 2015, http://www.movingahead.org/project-library/.

[48] The Transit Tomorrow Draft Network would simplify the transit network, provide service every 15 minutes or better on most routes, provide more evening and weekend service, and for many but not all people provide access to more places within a reasonable travel time. See *Transit Tomorrow Draft Network Plan*, LTD, available in the board packet, August 21, 2019, https://www.ltd.org/file_viewer.php?id=3825.

See also Transit Tomorrow, LTD, https://www.ltd.org/transit-tomorrow/.

[49] See also "Abundant access: Jarrett Walker on freedom through transit," TREC, September 9, 2014, https://trec.pdx.edu/news/abundant_access_jarrett_walker_on_freedom_through_transit.

2. A New Vision for Transportation Safety

The City of Eugene finds that the health and safety of residents are the utmost priority.

2015: The City of Eugene adopted the Vision Zero goal of no deaths or life-changing injuries on our streets, especially for the most vulnerable people walking, bicycling or using mobility devices.[50]

2019: The City Manager administratively adopted the *Vision Zero Action Plan*, which calls for "build[ing] capital safety infrastructure improvements along the Vision Zero High Crash Network each year":[51, 52]

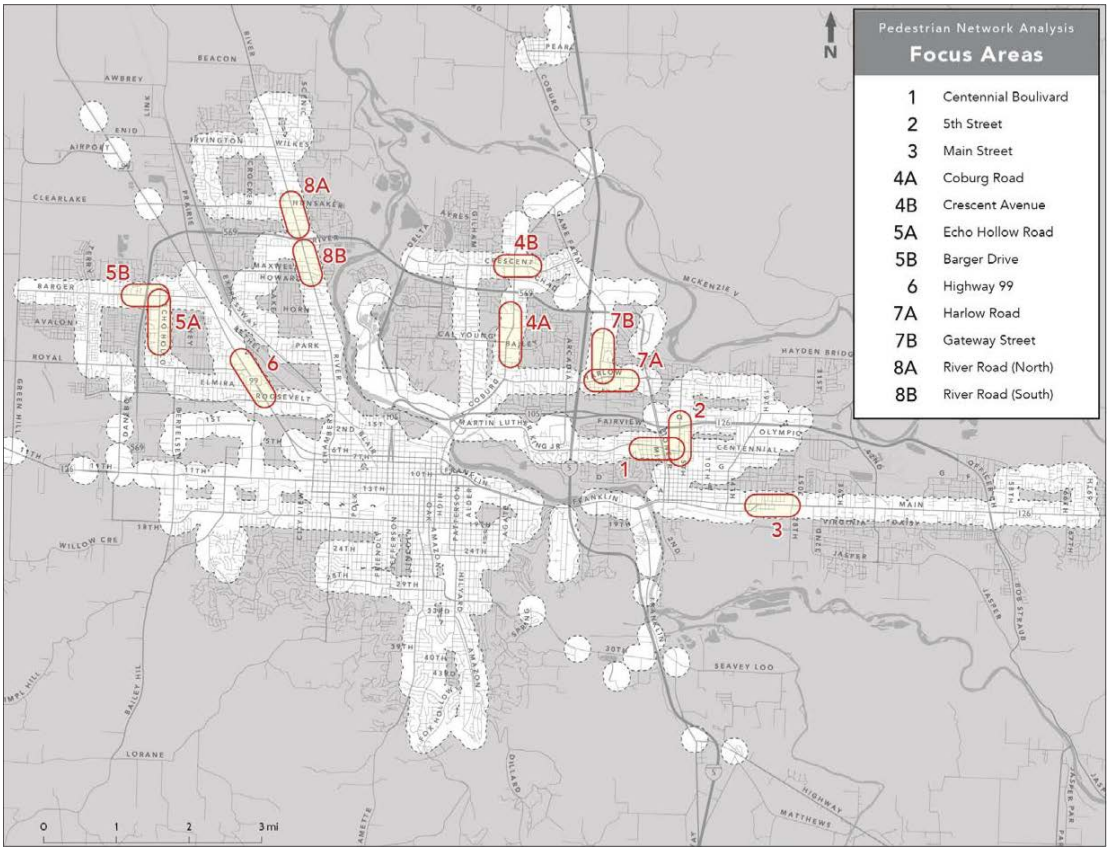
High Crash Network, *Vision Zero Action Plan*, City of Eugene (2019).

[50] Resolution No. 5143, City of Eugene, November 18, 2015, https://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/View/27858/VisionZeroRes5143.

[51] *Vision Zero Action Plan*, City of Eugene, March 29, 2019, https://www.eugene-or.gov/4270/Vision-Zero.

[52] See also the lists of projects in the *Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan*, City of Eugene, March 2012, https://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5566/Eugene-PedestrianBicycle-Master-Plan---2012.

Also in 2019, LTD's *Pedestrian Network Analysis* identified a dozen "areas where pedestrian infrastructure improvements are likely to most effectively address the needs of seniors, people with disabilities, the economically disadvantaged, and school children; make existing transit customers' walking trips safer, more direct, and comfortable; improve pedestrian safety and comfort through design and operations; attract new transit and walking trips; and leverage other public and private investments":[53]



Focus Areas, *Pedestrian Network Analysis*, LTD (2019).

3. A Fuzzy Vision for Compact Urban Development

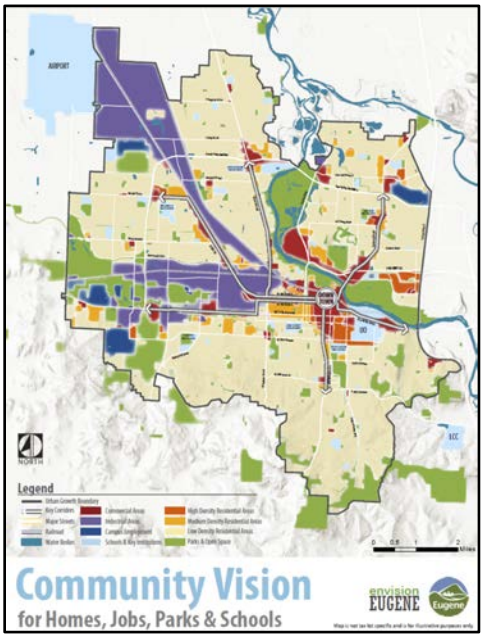
The City of Eugene envisions compact urban development along six Key Corridors: West 11th Avenue, Highway 99, River Road, Coburg Road, Franklin Boulevard and South Willamette Street. But today this vision is a work in progress, still awaiting more detailed planning and the adoption of needed land use changes to realize.

2012: The City Manager recommended basing Envision Eugene on seven pillars, including one to "promote compact urban development and efficient transportation options."[54]

[53] *Pedestrian Network Analysis*, LTD, January 2019, https://www.ltd.org/transit-tomorrow-document-library/.

[54] "The Envision Eugene Pillars," City of Eugene, March 2012, https://www.eugene-or.gov/2979/The-Pillars.

In particular, the City Manager identified six Key Transit Corridors and recommended integrating "new development and redevelopment in the downtown, … in core commercial areas, … and on Key Transit Corridors:"[55, 56]



Envision Eugene Community Vision, including Key (Transit) Corridors, City of Eugene (2019).

Key (Transit) Corridors are defined as "streets that have, or are planned to have, frequent transit service (approximately every 15 minutes or less). This frequent transit service is often accompanied by nearby amenities such as parks, commercial attractions or employment centers, and higher density housing that enable shorter trips and less reliance on the automobile."[57]

2017: The City of Eugene adopted the *2035 Transportation System Plan*. The plan includes four transit policies, including one most relevant to MovingAhead:[58]

> *Collaborate with Lane Transit District to provide a network of high capacity, frequent, and reliable transit services, including consideration of Bus Rapid Transit, to the Key Corridors as identified in* Envision Eugene, A Community Vision for 2032 *(2012) and to Frequent Transit Corridors as defined by Lane Transit District's* Long-Range Transit Plan*.*

---

[55] "Housing Tools & Strategies Deliberative Framing," City of Eugene, November 9, 2018, https://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/View/43573/Housing-Tools-and-Strategies-Working-Group---Options-for-Consideration---110918.

[56] See also "Key Transit Corridors" (map), City of Eugene, March 20, 2012, https://www.eugene-or.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5248/MAP-KeyTransitCorridors.

[57] *Envision Eugene, A Community Vision for 2032*, City of Eugene, March 14, 2012, https://www.eugene-or.gov/1863/March-2012-Recommendation.

[58] The other three transit policies are:

1. Promote the use of public transit and the continued development of an integrated, reliable, regional public transportation system.

To date, the City of Eugene has looked in greater detail at three of the six Key (Transit) Corridors: Franklin Boulevard is the subject of the current Franklin Boulevard Transformation project, which is slated to come before the Eugene City Council this fall to approve a preferred alternative.[59] South Willamette Street was the subject of the South Willamette Area Plan effort, but the Eugene City Council withdrew the land use application in 2017.[60, 61] River Road is currently the subject of the River Road Corridor Study.[62, 63]

But the other three Key (Transit) Corridors—West 11th Avenue, Highway 99 and Coburg Road—have not yet been the subjects of detailed land use planning efforts.

The *2035 Transportation System Plan* also includes a "Complete Streets Policy":[64]

> *Design, construct, maintain, and operate all streets to provide comprehensive and integrated transportation networks that serve people of all ages and abilities, promote commerce, and support the comprehensive land use plan's vision for growth and development in a responsible and efficient manner. …*

Finally, the *2035 Transportation System Plan* includes this potential action for system-wide policies:

> *Align the City's land use and parking regulations to encourage walking, biking, and use of public transit; more efficient use of land; and lower transportation and housing costs while accommodating the growth and economic prosperity espoused by the comprehensive land use plan.*

---

2. Prioritize improved transit service in Key Corridors and other areas with sufficient employment, activities, or residential density that best support transit service and transit services that connect residents to employment centers. If operational funding is sufficient, extend transit to support higher density housing and employment development planned for other areas.
3. Align transit services with community needs by engaging the broader community in determining the role transit service will play in Eugene's future; creating strategies that leverage capital investment to deliver the desired services and facilities; and identifying and pursuing the most effective, stable, and equitable sources of local funding for transit operations.

See *2035 Transportation System Plan*, City of Eugene, February 2017, https://www.eugene-or.gov/3941/Transportation-System-Plan.

[59] "Franklin Boulevard Transformation," City of Eugene, https://www.eugene-or.gov/3830/Franklin-Boulevard.

[60] "South Willamette Area Plan," City of Eugene, https://www.eugene-or.gov/2675/South-Willamette-Area-Plan.

[61] See also "South Willamette Street Improvement Plan," City of Eugene, https://www.eugene-or.gov/2055/South-Willamette-Street-Improvement-Plan.

[62] "River Road Corridor Study," City of Eugene, https://www.eugene-or.gov/4110/Corridor-Study.

[63] See also the larger "River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan," City of Eugene, https://www.eugene-or.gov/3558/River-Road---Santa-Clara-Neighborhood-Pl.

[64] *2035 Transportation System Plan*, City of Eugene, February 2017, https://www.eugene-or.gov/3941/Transportation-System-Plan.