



EmX: Bus Rapid Transit from Lane Transit District



Lane County has gone a long way from its first transit system, a mule cart that went from the railroad station to the University of Oregon in 1891. Lane Transit District's (LTD) new bus rapid transit system, the EmX, has arrived.

The EmX began operation on January 14, 2007. This free service connects Springfield Station and Eugene Station. The 60 foot articulated hybrid-electric buses travel the four mile route between downtown Eugene and Springfield. EmX also serves a regional hospital and the University of Oregon.

Level boarding and dedicated spaces make it easy

for wheelchair users and bike riders to use the service. Building on the art and design of the transit stations, the EmX stations use artfully fabricated and cast railings to ensure platform safety.

Public Transit Division staff had the opportunity to ride the EmX while the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) was being configured. Using exclusive lanes, signal priority and queue jumpers, the EmX is designed to replicate the look and functionality of light rail systems. On weekdays, a vehicle will arrive every 10 minutes.

The LTD board approved a second EmX line on November 15, 2006. In addition to other funding, this project was awarded funding under ConnectOregon, a \$100 million package to enhance modal connections passed by the 2005 Oregon Legislature. Slated for operation in 2010, the new service will serve Pioneer Parkway, connecting Springfield Station with PeaceHeath Hospital, River-Bend development area and the Gateway Mall.

For more information, visit LTD's Web site at www.ltd.org.

ConnectOregon II

The Oregon Legislature held a hearing on the second lottery bonded multi-modal transportation appropriation bill, House Bill 2278, on Jan. 29, 2007.

Stefano Viggiano, Assistant General Manager for Lane Transit District (LTD), testified how important the original funding was to one of LTD's projects. "A small amount of local investment can yield very big returns." He also discussed an amendment changing to the proposed legislation to better "recognize transit's contribution to economic development."

While it remains to be seen whether such changes will be incorporated into the bill, testimony was very positive about the projects and process used for ConnectOregon.

Newsletter Timing

This newsletter is a month later than originally planned, largely because of other division activities. It will resume regular, quarterly mailing in April.

Willamette Transit Manager Certificate Program

The Transit and Community Transportation Management Certificate Program provides a major training option and resource to transit and paratransit professionals.

The overall aim of the program is to provide courses that are generally on a management level.

It is designed to meet the management development requirements of those involved in the field of transit

and community transportation management and operations. The program is also structured to meet the constraints of working professionals in terms of class scheduling, duration, content and the learning characteristics of adults.

This year, the ten day-long sessions will run over two weeks, April 2-6 and May 7-11. It will be held in Portland, at Willamette University Portland Center, Brew House

& Tower Offices. The cost of the two-part program will be \$2,700.

Rural Transit Assistance Program scholarships may be available. More information is available on Public Transit Division's Web site, Events Page: http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/PT/TECH_ASSIST/events.shtml. Alternatively, you can contact Sherrin Coleman, at (503) 986-4305.

Bay & Beach Shuttle

Especially in smaller communities, a transportation agency's success can be determined by the personal effort of a few key people. In Lincoln County, one of those people is Cynda Bruce. She runs Lincoln County's Transportation program.

When funding dedicated to small urban and rural general public transportation was increased with the passage of the federal transportation reauthorization (SAFETEA-LU), Lincoln County Transportation District used the funding to help create a new service tailored to Newport's unique transportation needs.

Working in close partnership with local merchants and

business associations, Lincoln County Transportation created a new service - the Bay & Beach Shuttle. Designed to mitigate congestion on Newport's heavily traveled bayfront, the service had over 3,300 riders in its first seven weeks. To put that in perspective, that is about a third of the city's population - or lots of people not driving through or parking in the congested bayfront area.

While the free shuttle is open to all, it specifically allows people driving large recreational vehicles to park their vehicles in larger parking lots and take the shuttle to the bayfront. Riders can visit shops along the route and return to their hotel without having to navigate the nar-

row, busy bayfront streets. The service runs regularly during spring break and summer.

Marketing materials are contributed by local businesses and Cynda reports that community support has been tremendous. Staff is encouraged to develop knowledge of the local community; being able to direct riders to local businesses of interest both enhances ridership and supports local businesses.

Such programs highlight what Oregon transit providers can do with additional funding. Please share such stories with us so that we can help spark the imagination of other Oregon providers as well as share at the Capitol.

■ *Your feedback on this newsletter and the Public Transit Division web site would be appreciated. Please send your comments, suggestions, questions, or information that you would like to share with the transit community to Adam Torgerson, at adam.m.torgerson@odot.state.or.us.*

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