

## Special transit rides: Average number of annual transit rides per elderly and disabled Oregonian

### Our strategy

Transportation mobility is important to Oregonians. We invest in and promote the use of accessible transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities. State and federal programs have been developed to provide access for those with mobility needs.

### About the target

The original target was set in 1999 as a goal based on a 1998 study of the needs of older adults. In 2008, a Portland State University needs study was conducted using updated

research methods and determined that individuals need an average of 26 percent more transit trips than are available today. This assisted ODOT to set a new target and supported a change in methodology to include fixed route transit trips as well as demand response trips for older adults and people with disabilities. The original target and methodology did not consider the importance of fixed route transit as a way to provide independent mobility. A new target and methodology includes both demand response and fixed route trips for seniors and people with disabilities. A new goal of 29 annual trips (a 26 percent increase) per

Oregon's population of older adults and individuals with disability by 2022 was set.

### How we are doing and how we compare

Since 1998, average annual rides per older adult and person with disability steadily increased until 2007. In 2007, the average number of rides declined due to population and fuel cost increases with no commensurate resource increase. Legislative and federal American Recovery and Response Act investment provided a boost in 2009. Population growth and stagnant

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## Fact

Oregon's population of older adults and individuals with disabilities need an average of 26 percent more transit trips than are available today.

# Special Transit Rides, cont.

revenue continued to affect progress. With our current emphasis on improvements in modal connectivity and access, a goal of 2.5 per annual improvement toward the target is reasonable. 2015 shows a small loss.

Continued legislative support in 2013-2015 and 2015-2017 should help performance to improve with state and local revenues stabilizing. Data is not available to compare Oregon with other states.

## Factors affecting results and what needs to be done

Oregon population increases are outpacing fund availability; rapidly increasing costs of providing service are also constraining service availability. Funding for transit service is primarily supported by local, state and federal public funds. Fares contribute up to 25 percent of costs but smaller systems generally recover much less fare to offset their costs. Legislative support has begun to help smaller providers recover lost ground in meeting the goal although the larger systems have just started to add back fixed route services to

pre-recession levels. We will continue to emphasize improved access to transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities.

## About the data

The data is compiled by the Public Transit Division using reports from the U.S. Census, Portland State University and transit providers. The new methodology provides a better measure of mobility for this population as it includes both the public transportation rides taken on fixed route transit and demand response transit. Fixed route transit is a preferred and more cost effective mobility solution for older adults and people with disabilities because it provides the greatest access and independence for individuals when it is available. A majority of older adults and people with disabilities live in communities where fixed route services are available.



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## Data source

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