



Transportation System Plan



Chapter 7 Transit System and TDM Plan

7 Transit System and Transportation Demand Management Plans

As the costs of fuel and street projects increase, there will be greater demand and emphasis on public transportation services to address the mobility needs of McMinnville's residents. Furthermore, as a member of the Western Climate Initiative, Oregon is considering statewide policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Local planning efforts will likely be encouraged and perhaps required to further emphasize transportation and land use plans, programs and policies that help reduce (single-occupant) vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and lower vehicle emissions per capita.

Through the Transit System and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plans, the City can simultaneously help relieve future traffic congestion and improve its environment by reducing drive-alone travel and their emissions.

As discussed in Chapter 3, future traffic congestion between the Highway 18 corridor and downtown and west McMinnville is generally attributed to peak hour commuting from new jobsites in and around the Airport area. Greater use of transit service and deployment of TDM measures offer viable alternatives to drive-alone travel in these corridors.

Pedestrian, bicycle and transit travel are key modal elements of McMinnville's TSP, and will become increasingly more important mobility options for McMinnville residents as the costs of transportation increase. Transportation demand management (TDM) measures, combined with the growing role for transit in McMinnville will also help to reduce VMT and carbon emissions. Both the public transit and TDM elements of the TSP are described below.

Transit System Plan

Transit service in McMinnville and the surrounding Yamhill County area comes in several forms: fixed-route bus services, dial-a-ride and commuter link bus service to other Willamette Valley cities. Yamhill Community Transit Area (YCTA) operates the local fixed-route, dial-a-ride and inter-city bus services in McMinnville. While the City does not directly own and operate public transit, there are many ways in which it supports transit through multi-modal system operations and project and program development. McMinnville's goal to support transit is:

Transit System Goal

To support YCTA in their goal to provide a city-wide street and sidewalk system that result in efficient transit operations (current and future) as well as safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to public transportation services and facilities.



Transit Policies

Additional policies are identified to help guide the Transit System Plan, supplementing policies already included in the McMinnville Comprehensive Plan and summarized in Chapter 2 of the TSP.

- **Transit-supportive Street System Design** - the City will include the consideration of transit operations in the design and operation of street infrastructure.
- **Transit-supportive Urban Design** - through its zoning and development regulations, the City will facilitate accessibility to transit services through transit-supportive streetscape, subdivision, and site design requirements that promote pedestrian connectivity, convenience, and safety.
- **Transit Facilities** - the City will continue to work with YCTA to identify and help develop supportive capital facilities for utilization by transit services, including pedestrian and bicycle access to bus stop and bus shelter facilities where need is determined and right-of-way is available.
- **Pedestrian Facilities** - the City will ensure that arterial and collector streets' sidewalk standards are able to accommodate transit amenities as necessary along arterial and collector street bus routes. The City will coordinate with YCTA on appropriate locations.
- **Intermodal Connectivity** - the City of McMinnville will encourage connectivity between different travel modes. Transit transfer facilities should be pedestrian and cyclist accessible.

1997 McMinnville Transit Feasibility Study

In 1997 McMinnville completed its Transit Feasibility Study¹. The Study assessed local travel and land use patterns, from which it identified and recommended a phased-plan to increase fixed-route

transit service hours and expand geographic coverage. In 1997 YAMCO (predecessor to YCTA) operated only two local routes within McMinnville, with limited service hours, and only two inter-city link routes (one each to Newberg and Sheridan/Willamina). The Plan recommended adding a third route in McMinnville, linking west McMinnville and the Willamette Valley Medical Center near Highway 18.

Existing Transit and Public Transportation

YCTA has essentially implemented the 1997 Transit Feasibility Study recommendations, and has increased county-wide services as well. This section describes the current transit services and facilities affecting the City of McMinnville. Included in the description is a summary of current fixed routes and service levels, effective March 2009.

Transit and public transportation facilities in the McMinnville area are operated by YCTA, a private non-profit organization serving Yamhill County. YCTA transit began as a service for the elderly and residents with physical or mental challenges. Transit operations have expanded to offer service to all residents. YCTA provides transit service in McMinnville through (1) bus transit, (2) dial-a-ride and (3) intercity commuter linking service.

McMinnville Bus Routes

YCTA currently operates three bus transit routes within McMinnville. **Exhibit 7-1** shows the YCTA bus routes. All routes are “loop” routes, where buses travel in a one-way direction around each loop. Each route operates on half hour headways on weekdays, and 90-minute headways on Saturdays. All transit routes operate between the hours of 6:00am and 7:00pm Monday through Friday and 8:00am to 7:00pm on Saturdays. There is no Sunday service.

Fares are \$1 each way, \$2 for a day-pass, or \$30 for a monthly pass. Some riders qualify based on income for a free bus pass.

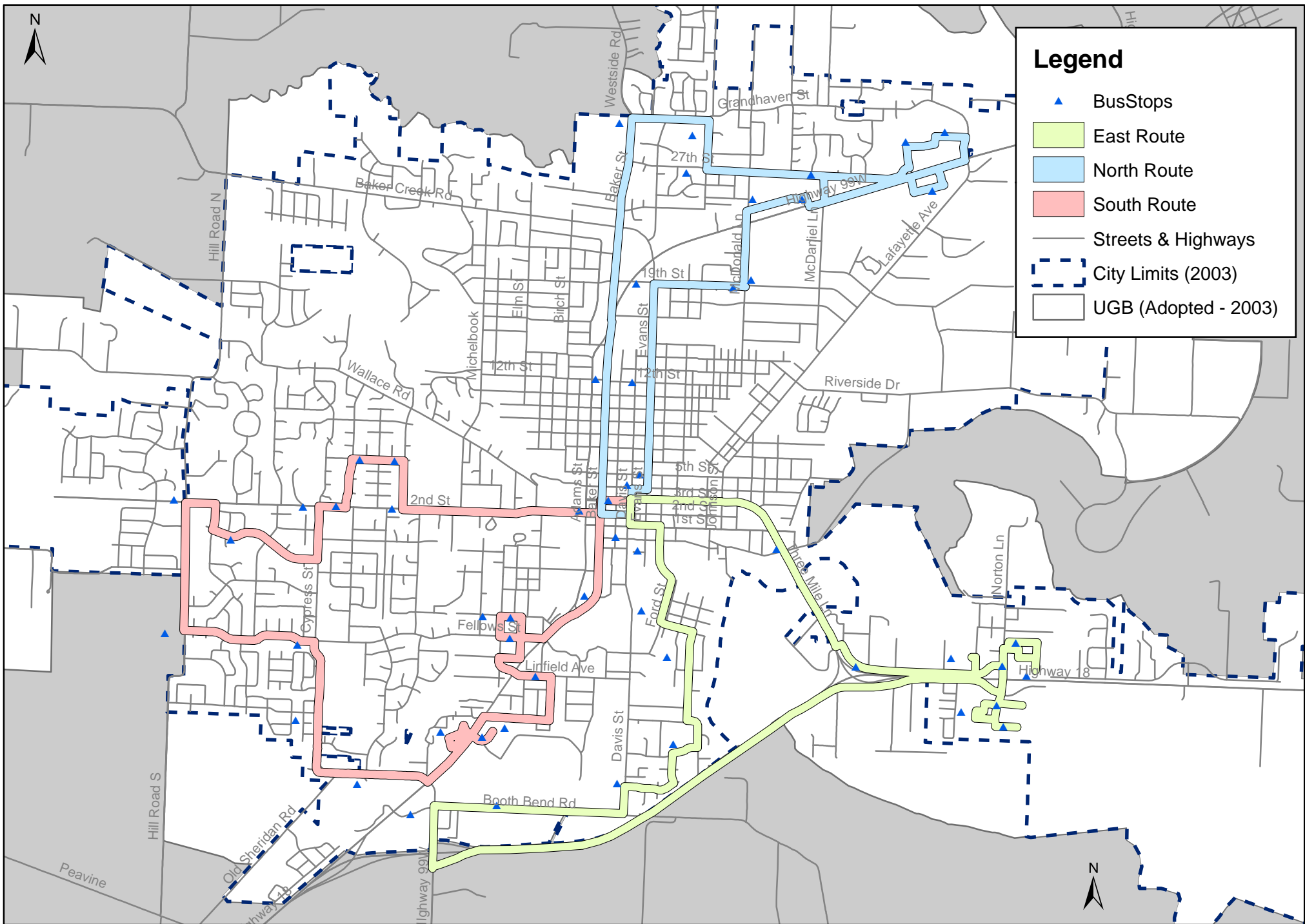
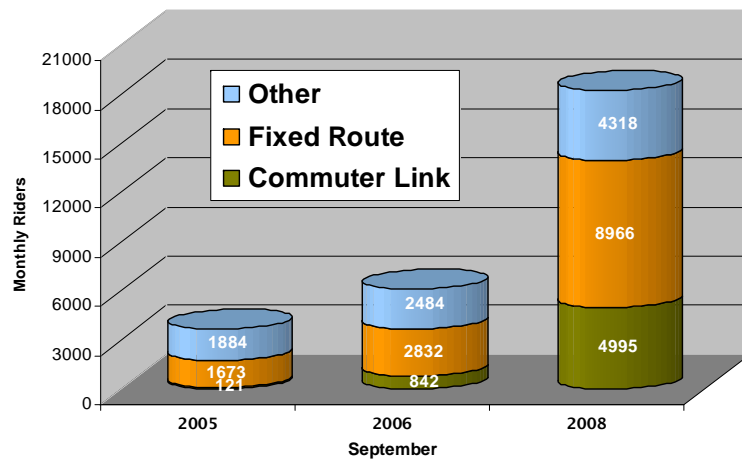


Exhibit 7-2 summarizes and compares YCTA's ridership for September in 2005, 2006 and 2008. In 2006, YCTA increased its operating hours significantly, the results were a near doubling of fixed-route ridership in McMinnville. As a result of additional service improvements, and to some degree the impact of higher gasoline prices, ridership across YCTA's system increased dramatically (again) in 2008.

Exhibit 7-2 YCTA Transit Ridership



Commuter Linking Transit

YCTA's commuter linking service is provided on four major routes, three linking to other transit systems in Hillsboro, Salem and Newberg. The commuter linking services also provide transit access to other Yamhill county communities: Amity, Carlton, Dayton, Sheridan, Willamina and Yamhill.

Fares for commuter linking service are also \$1 each way, \$2 for a day-pass, or \$30 for a monthly pass.

Transit Center

YCTA currently converges its three-route and commuter linking route service on 5th Street at the Yamhill County Courthouse. Yamhill County, in support of YCTA, is currently conducting a feasibility study to locate and develop a long-term site for local and regional transit center operations. In addition, Yamhill County received a large allocation of federal funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to include the purchase of larger buses and develop the transit mall.

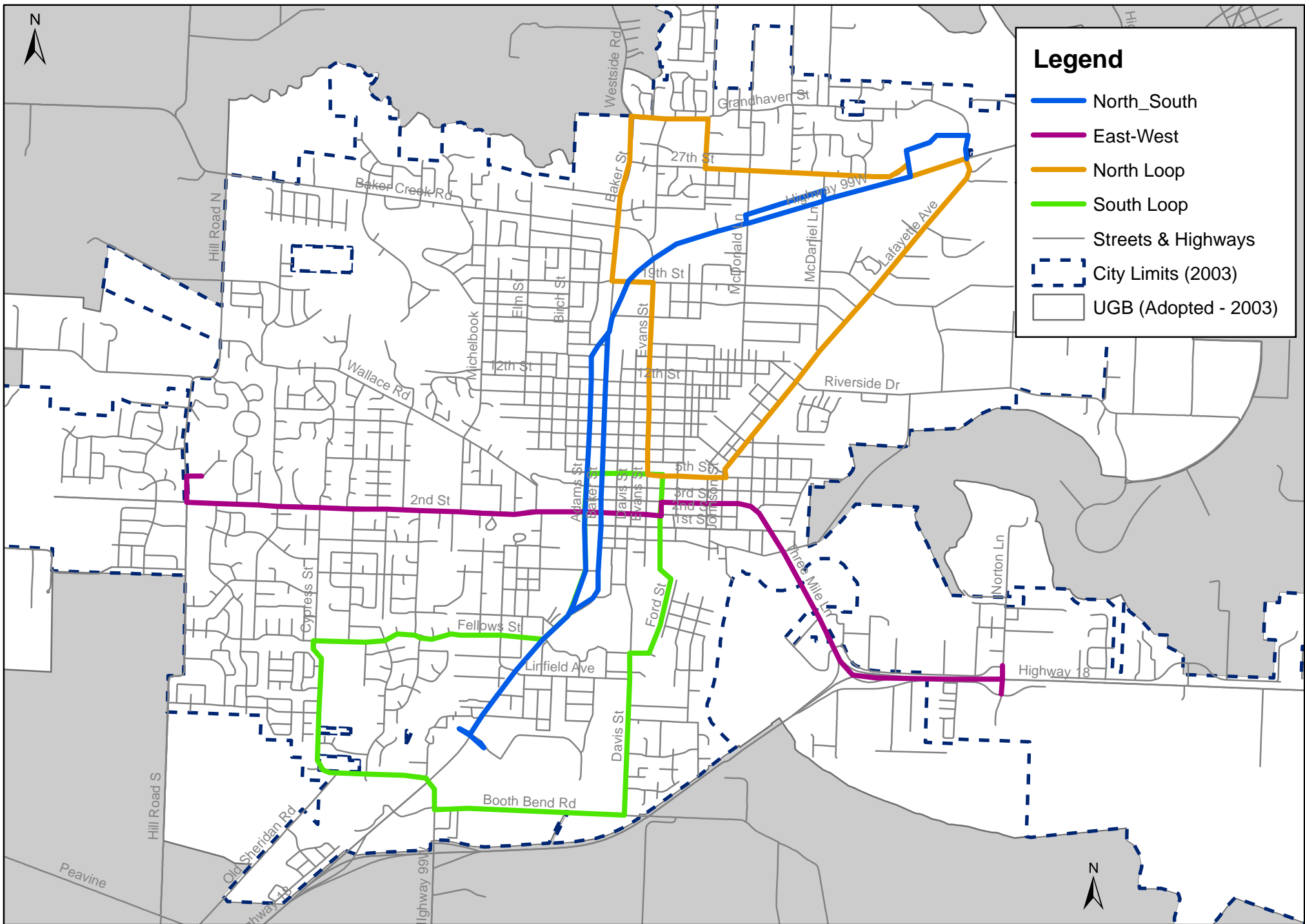
Dial-A-Ride

YCTA also operates dial-a-ride service for curb-to-curb, pick-up and drop-off service throughout Yamhill County. Dial-a-ride fares are \$1.50 general public and \$1.00 senior/disabled. Dial-a-Ride operates from 8am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. Dial-a-ride scheduling requires a 24-hour notice and request.

Future Transit Service

In April/May 2009 YCTA revised its fixed-route bus service in McMinnville, modifying two of its three looping routes to bi-directional, direct service. **Exhibit 7-3** maps the proposed YCTA fixed-route service plan. Compared to the current "loop" routes, the bi-directional routing along 2nd Street and Highway 99W will significantly reduce transit trip travel times, and should help to attract additional commuter travel in the future.

Along the new bi-directional routes YCTA and the City can begin an assessment of the type and location of designated bus stops and other important pedestrian and bicycle access features.



Bus Stops & Related Amenities

Within a transit system, additional factors that users consider in their travel decisions are curb-side factors. These factors affect transit users' comfort, safety, and convenience. Bus shelter design and placement are important examples of curb-side factors.

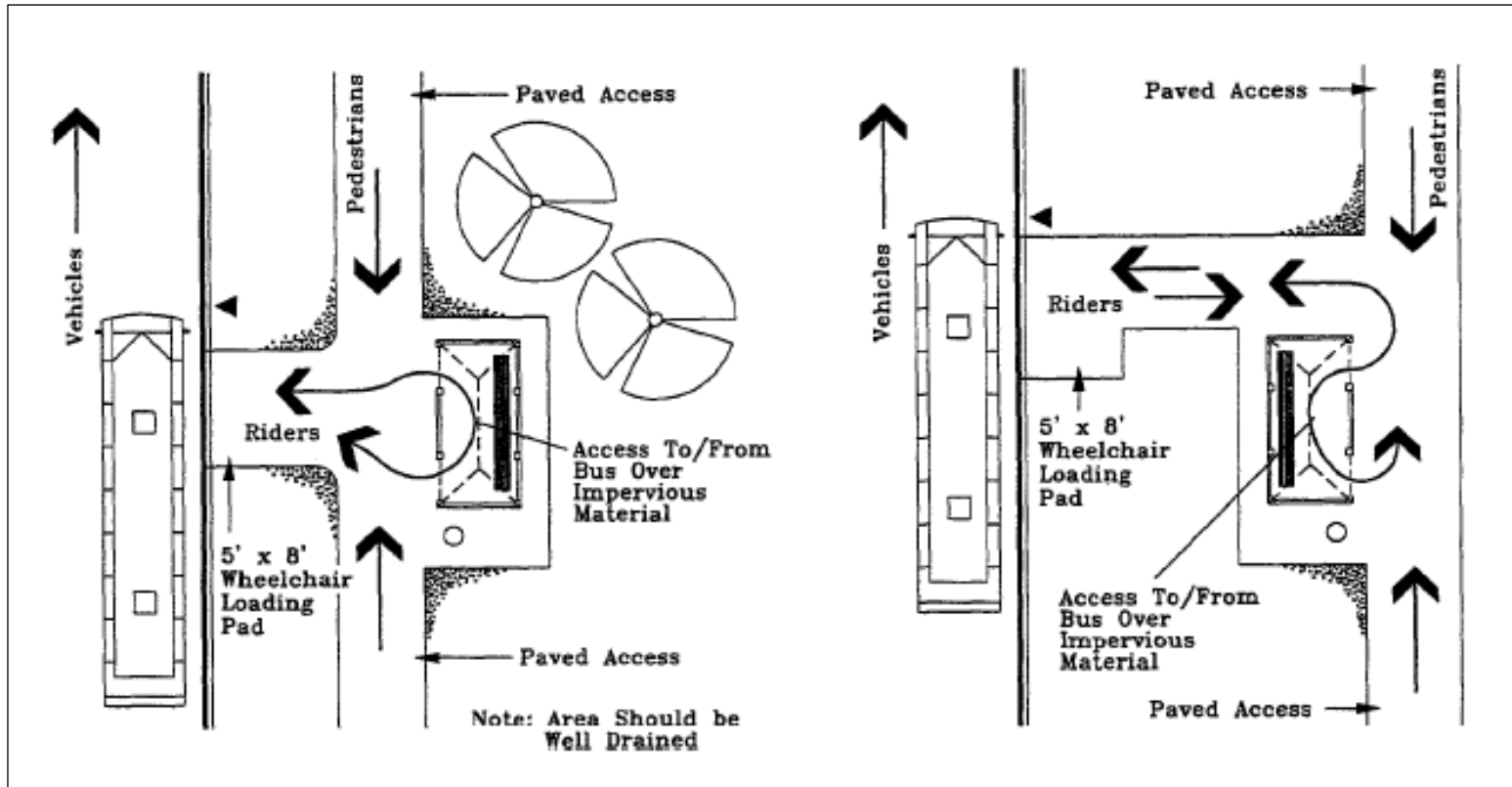
In order to implement the City's transportation policies from the Comprehensive Plan and TSP, McMinnville should consider increasing the City's curb-side factors in collaboration with YCTA. The locations at which the City may consider these factors are along the two new, bi-directional routes: Second Street and Highway 99W.



Amenities that would make transit a more attractive travel option include: shelters, benches, shade trees, and adequate sidewalks (see Chapter 5). All of these amenities should comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The federal Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) outlines several of these design options in its report, *Guidelines for the Location and Design of Bus Stops*.² **Exhibit 7-4** displays options from this report that have accessibility for all users between the bus shelter and the curb.

While there is a possible new role for the City in support of these bus stop amenities, the installation and maintenance of these facilities should be administered by YCTA.

Exhibit 7-4 Bus Stop Design Examples



Transportation Demand Management Plan

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is a general term for various strategies that increase transportation system efficiency. TDM treats mobility as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. It emphasizes the movement of people and goods, rather than motor vehicles, and so gives priority to more energy and cost efficient modes (such as walking, cycling, ridesharing, public transit and telecommuting), particularly when the major street system will be heavily congested in the future.

As noted earlier in the TSP, the option to build more arterial streets and lanes are simply not available or desirable from a capital cost and environmental impact perspective. As McMinnville continues to grow, like other larger cities it will need to look more toward travel management programs and measures to help alleviate traffic congestion. In addition to the goals and policies identified in the Comprehensive Plan, McMinnville should adopt a specific goal in support of TDM:

Transportation Demand Management Goal

To help reduce single-occupant vehicle demand in McMinnville through a variety of transportation demand management strategies.

TDM Policies

As McMinnville's population has reached 30,000, the need to consider, develop and implement more specific TDM measures or programs arise. Consistent with the Street, Pedestrian and Bicycle System Plan elements, for the City to achieve its overall

transportation goals it will have to seek additional ways to abate future traffic congestion in ways it hasn't had to in the past. New policies are included here as the basis for McMinnville to consider and implement effective TDM measures.

The City of McMinnville can establish several strategies to reduce transportation demand, and thereby address the city's transportation congestion. The objectives of the TDM program are to reduce the number of vehicles on the area's roads, which reduces the demand on the existing transportation network.

Coordination with Yamhill County

- The City should coordinate with Yamhill County to promote and support Transportation Demand Management investments that may include, but are not limited to, the following strategies:
 - Ride-sharing coordination with regional partners,
 - Parking management, and
 - Transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly design.
- The City should support Yamhill County who provides assistance to employers in designing and implementing trip reduction plans at their work sites. Trip reduction plans will include strategies to encourage employees to use alternative transportation modes and discourage them from commuting in SOVs. Alternative work hours and tele-commuting will also be recommended as a way of reducing peak hour congestion.

Assisting Yamhill Community Transit Area (YCTA)

- The City should coordinate with YCTA to promote the use of transit and vanpools, in support of vehicle trip reduction strategies.

- The City of McMinnville should coordinate with and encourage YCTA to administer its county-wide TDM Program where it affects McMinnville. The Program may include, but is not limited to, the provision of:
 1. 24-hour rideshare matching hotline;
 2. carpool and vanpool match lists;
 3. information and referrals to the public on McMinnville and intercity transit service, vanpools, bicycle routes, tele-commuting, park-and-ride lots, other ridesharing agencies, and transportation services for special needs;
 4. assistance in the formation of vanpools;
 5. public outreach;
 6. school outreach;
 7. services to employers, including commuting surveys and individualized trip-reduction plans;
 8. coordination with other agencies and organizations with similar goals; and
 9. marketing of alternative transportation modes.

- Support YCTA in the application for adequate and consistent funding of the Regional TDM Program.

TDM Plan

Effective TDM programs are typically focused on reducing drive-alone commuter travel. Two available sources of data are useful in examining McMinnville work commuting travel behavior: (1) the U.S. Census³ and (2) local transit ridership data.

Exhibit 7-5 summarizes the year 2000 mode-share of McMinnville resident commuters, compared to other Oregon cities in the Willamette valley or outside of the Portland metropolitan area. These data reflect only the mode of travel to work. For McMinnville, this is a summary of all working McMinnville residents who work either in McMinnville, Salem, Portland or other cities and locations outside the McMinnville urban area.

By comparison, McMinnville is generally in the middle of the pack in terms of the percentage of workers who drive-alone on their trip to work. Bend and Canby have a larger proportion of tele-commuters (work from home). Newberg has a larger portion of workforce that walk to work. Bike, walk and transit mode-share in Corvallis makes up a significantly larger portion of travel than other cities.



McMinnville has a significant portion of commuters carpooling and an average portion who bike and tele-commute. However, the portion of McMinnville workers who ride transit and walk to work is very small.

Exhibit 7-5 Work Commute Comparative - Mode Share

2000 US Census - Journey to Work

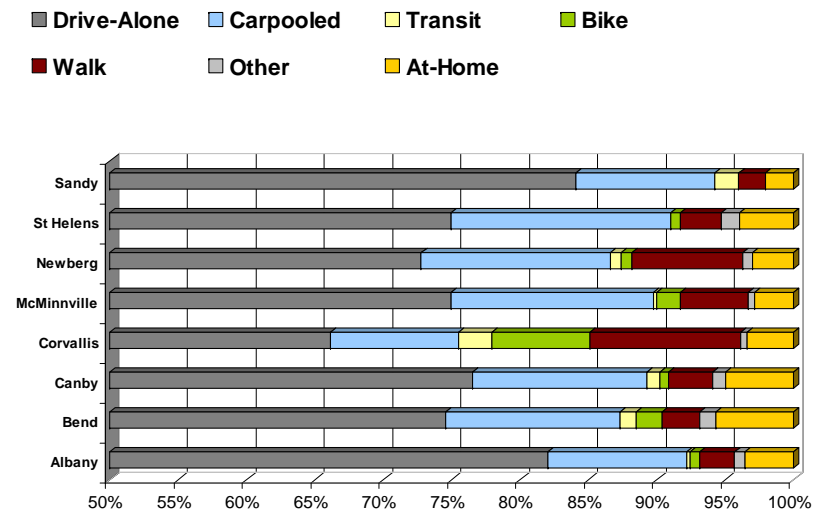


Exhibit 7-6 summarizes YCTA's historic ridership on their fixed-route and commuter link services, and a comparison to the historical price of gasoline. Two significant points are to be made in review of this historical data:

- (1) commuter transit ridership rises and falls dramatically, commensurate with the cost of gasoline (or more generalized, the cost of drive-alone travel) – indicating that many commuters will chose transit if and when the cost of drive-alone travel becomes too great; a common characteristic found in many other U.S. cities.
- (2) current, fixed-route ridership is much less affected by gasoline price, as the predominant share of local bus riders are non-commuters.

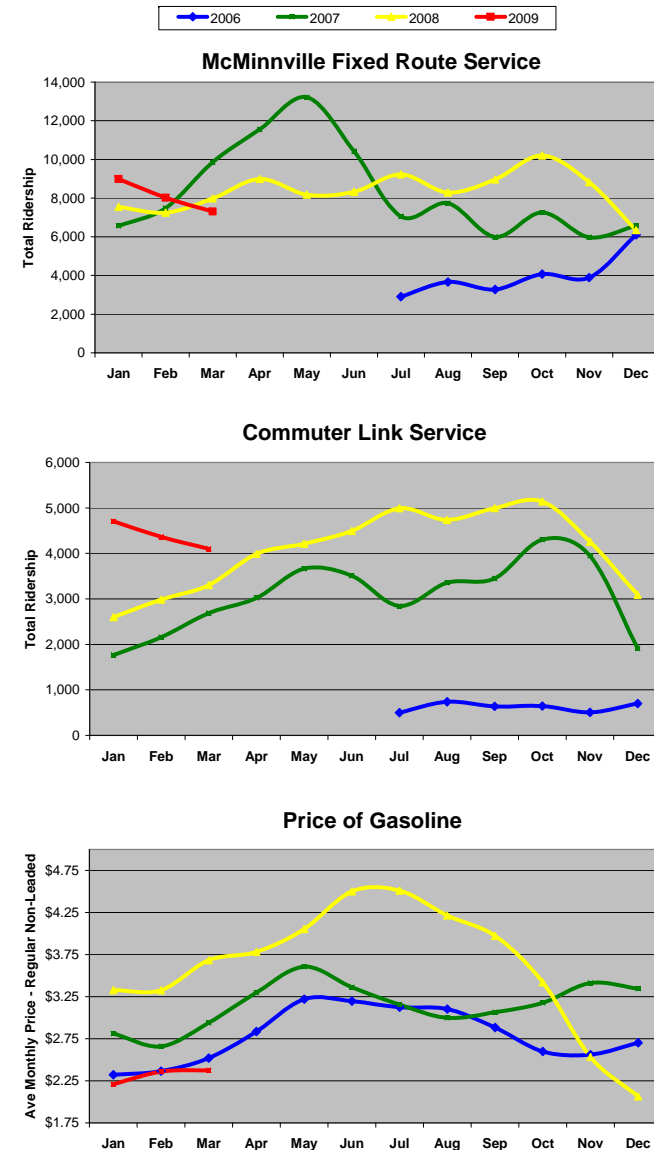
[Note: The dramatic increase in fixed-route service between February and May 2007 was the result of fare-free test program, which has since been terminated.]

Gasoline prices have declined dramatically since the summer of 2008, as has intercity transit ridership. Fixed route service in McMinnville has not been directly impacted by gasoline price; an indication that commuters are not yet a large portion of the fixed-route passenger profile.

Other elements of McMinnville's TSP supplement the City's support of public transportation, mainly:

- Complete Street improvements (see Chapter 4) with space to incorporate transit stops and amenities, and
- Enhance non-motorized modes travel systems with improved linkages to transit⁴ by walking (see Chapter 5) and bicycle (see Chapter 6).

Exhibit 7-6 Transit Ridership vs. Gas Prices



The City of McMinnville has a strong basis for transit growth in the coming years. The City's coordination with Yamhill County regarding future improvements will be instrumental in serving a growing community. With the appropriate TDM strategies in place, McMinnville could significantly reduce the number of single-occupant vehicles on the transportation network and in turn reduce VMT per capita and emissions.

Transit and TDM program and plan improvements can have a significant affect on McMinnville's congested corridors, especially the links to the planned employment center near the McMinnville Airport (see Chapter 3).

¹ McMinnville Transit Feasibility Study, 1997, David Evans & Associates.

² TCRP, *Report 19- Guidelines for the Location and Design of Bus Stops*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1996. See online copy at: http://www.trb.org/news/blurbs_detail.asp?id=2597

³ U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Journey-To-Work patterns for Willamette Valley Cities, U.S. Census website.

⁴ City of McMinnville Comprehensive Plan.