



TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM #13

Date: October 3, 2019 Project #: 21289
To: Project Management Team
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Subject: Transportation Options

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INTRODUCTION

Through its Planning and Strategic Programs Department, RVT provides the region’s Transportation Options (TO) program, known as the Way To Go Program. This memorandum outlines the programs and events RVT currently provides to the community and highlights recommendations for updates and additions to the program.

IN THIS MEMO

- ▶ Current RVT TO programs and events
- ▶ Potential new programs to consider
- ▶ Action items

CURRENT PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

The Way To Go Program helps connect Rogue Valley residents to a variety of available transportation options. The program website¹ provides a wide range of information about the programs and events offered by RVT to promote modes other than the single-occupancy vehicle. A main goal of a TO program is to be the one-stop shop for residents trying to understand their transportation options and resources. RVT’s program strives to improve mobility for people in the Rogue Valley and reduce automobile trips, congestion, and pollution. RVT’s current programs and events are discussed below, organized by similar categories as those used on their website.

¹ <https://www.rvtd.org/SectionIndex.asp?SectionID=6>

OPTIONS

Rogue Valley residents have many options for traveling to work, school, home, and other destinations. RVTD provides descriptions of these options on their website, along with additional mode-specific services that are provided in the region if applicable.

Walk

Other than pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, shared-use paths, and trails, there are no specific services provided to promote walking in the Rogue Valley. Walking and other modes are promoted through the Gus Ride the Bus interactive bus program and several annual events and challenges such as Rogue Commute Challenge, "Be Seen. Be Safe.", Medford Open Streets, Walk and Bike to School Day, and the Get There Challenge.

Bike

In addition to bicycle facilities provided by the local jurisdictions of Rogue Valley, such as the Bear Creek Greenway multi-use trail, the following programs support those traveling via bike:

Rogue Bikeshare: A community bikeshare program that is operated through Zagster and sponsored by RVTD, Rogue Valley Council of Governments (RVCOG), Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), City of Ashland, and Southern Oregon University. Users can pay an hourly or annual cost to use the shared bikes. Bikes must be picked up and returned to static bike share stations, largely located in Ashland and downtown Medford.

Safe Cycling Class: RVTD provides a free class that helps attendees learn to ride confidently and safely on the different streetscapes of the Rogue Valley, teaching basics of bicycle safety and riding. A League of American Bicyclists Certified Instructor teaches this class. Attendees are of all ages and can include individuals or groups, such as families or organizations.

Adult Bicycle Safety Classes: These classes provide participants with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to safely bicycle for transportation. Participants attend a 3-hour long course with classroom, parking lot, and community bike ride sections. A course goal is for participants to have the confidence and skill level needed to navigate local bicycle facilities to make bike trips for commute, shopping, and recreational activities.

Bike Rodeo Skills Course (Youth Bike Safety): RVTD's Bike Rodeo is a bicycle skills event which provides an opportunity for bicyclists to practice and develop skills that will help them to become better bicyclists and avoid typical crashes. An evaluator provides immediate feedback to the participant in a positive manner (satisfactory; needs improvement). If the child has difficulty with a particular lesson, he or she has the chance to keep practicing. The goal of the bicycle rodeo is to provide an opportunity for the participants to learn, practice, and

demonstrate their bicycle handling skills in a fun, noncompetitive atmosphere. During RVTD's 2018-2019 fiscal year, there were approximately 40 participants.

Bikes on the Bus: RVTD provides a bike rack on the front of every fixed route bus, allowing travelers to utilize both modes in a single trip. The bike racks can carry up to three bikes with spaces being first come, first served. During RVTD's 2018-2019 fiscal year, there were approximately 45,069 counts of riders using the bikes on the bus service.

Transit

RVTD provides fixed-route and paratransit (demand-response) transit service to the Rogue Valley. To support users of the transit system, RVTD provides the programs described below.

Google Trip Planner: RVTD provides an embedded Google Trip Planner on their website homepage and on the Way To Go Program webpage. The tool is set up to suggest a transit trip, although the user can toggle between other modes as well.

Bus Commuter Skills Class: Travel Training in a group or individual setting. RVTD's Travel Trainer provides classroom instruction to participants offering:

- System orientation — a presentation of RVTD's services and how to use them;
- Familiarization — an individual or group trip on RVTD accompanied by RVTD's Travel Trainer;
- One-to-one training in the field — RVTD's travel trainer walks the participant through the steps of taking a particular trip.

Participants receive a Travel Kit with transportation options information and a pass for 6 free rides on RVTD's fixed-route system. During RVTD's 2018-2019 fiscal year, there were approximately 44 participants.

Travel Training: For users with questions about how to ride the RVTD transit system, a Travel Trainer is available² to assist them. Riders can call or email with specific questions, ranging from "how do I read the schedule" to "how do I know where this bus is going".

Intensive Travel Training: Travel training is offered one-to-one and is most often provided for older adults or for people who have cognitive or physical disabilities. RVTD's travel trainer works with local social service agencies, schools, or private referrals to assist clients who need additional assistance to use RVTD's fixed-route system independently. The Travel Trainer will meet a participant at a defined location and travel RVTD's bus routes, often focusing on a specific trip unique to the participant, to provide onboard instruction on how to navigate using RVTD's

² <http://rvtd.dev.projecta.com/Page.asp?NavID=4>

service. The goal is for the participant to feel comfortable and be able to safely utilize RVTD's fixed route service.

RVTD Mobile Apps: While RVTD does not develop apps, they support several by publishing their schedule data and sharing user feedback received. Several apps that currently use RVTD's data to help riders plan their trips include OneBusAway, Moovit, and Google Maps.

Rideshare

ODOT maintains a single, easy-to-use carpool matching tool and trip planner for the state, called **Get There**³. The tool helps users match with carpool, start or join a vanpool, find transit options in their county, and locate bikeshare stations. As stated on the Get There website, "Plug in where you want to go and we'll show you how to Get There—with carpool, vanpool, walk, bike, and transit options." Part of the program includes the ability to easily log trips using the CommuteTracker app by RideAmigos. As discussed in the Employer Commute Solutions section, RVTD offers a Customized Rideshare Program to help employers set up their worksite through the Get There tool.

EMPLOYER COMMUTE SOLUTIONS

RVTD supports worksites to help improve transportation options for employees and others accessing the site. RVTD's Commute Solutions Program offers employers in Southern Oregon information and solutions for employee commute options. RVTD meets with interested employers to discuss specific concerns, issues, or employee transportation barriers for that organization. If possible, an Employee Transportation Survey is administered to better understand issues and opportunities. RVTD provides customized transportation options programs to best match the needs of the employer, including developing a carpool network on Get There, Emergency Ride Home Program, Group Bus Pass Program, transportation options kits for new employees, and employee outreach and education about available services. The following are the employer programs offered by RVTD, the majority of which are free of charge.

Bus Pass Programs

RVTD offers two bus pass programs for employers, making it easy to provide transit access to an entire population at a substantial discount. Between the two programs described below, the 2018-2019 fiscal year bus pass program ridership was approximately 242,990.

U-Pass program: With the Universal Pass (U-Pass), the monthly price of bus fare is \$3.85 per employee for companies that buy the pass for all of their employees, which is 93% less than the cost of a regular monthly bus pass (normally \$56). Schools can participate for \$1.95 per student per month. A minimum of 10 employees or students is required for participation in the U-Pass program.

³ <https://getthereoregon.org/>

Fare Share program: The Fare Share option lets employers and schools share the cost of transit access with their employees or students, with a major discount for both. A company or school can provide access to transit service at a greatly reduced price of \$0.45 per person per month. Similar to U-Pass, the monthly fee paid by the organization must cover all of their employees or students, whether or not they use transit. Employees of participating organizations can buy a monthly transit pass for \$10, compared to the normal rate of \$56. For students, a monthly pass costs \$5 per month. A minimum of 100 employees or students is required to participate in the Fare Share program.

Employee Surveying

RVTD will help an employer conduct a survey to find out how their employees are currently getting to work and which commute options are of interest to them. This includes processing and analyzing the results and providing a written report. This service is free upon request.

Transportation Fairs and Employee Outreach

RVTD will put on an event at a workplace to help promote commute options and provide personalized trip-planning assistance for employees. RVTD will educate employees on carpooling, bicycling, walking, and riding transit. Marketing materials and incentives can be provided. In addition, RVTD can bring an RVTD bus to the workplace to get employees comfortable with the ride. This service is free upon request.

New Employee Commuter Kit

One of the best times to educate employees about their commuting options is when they first start to work for a company. RVTD can provide an employer with free transit kits for new hires, filled with service information, maps, and trip-planning tips. The employee receives customized information about how to get to and from work and the available transportation options in Southern Oregon. They also receive an Explorer Pass for free rides on RVTD buses.

On Site Audit

RVTD will help an employer review viable transportation options at the worksite and audit bicycle and pedestrian accessibility. The audit includes suggestions on how to make the workplace attractive and accessible for a variety of transportation modes.

Employee Transportation Coordinator and Staff Training

RVTD will train a staff member to serve as the worksite's Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC), helping employees get to and from work. RVTD will show them how to effectively manage and promote the company's commute options program.

Emergency Ride Home Program: The Emergency Ride Home Program (ERH) is available to employers who have an established ETC. ERH is like commuter insurance. Qualified employers in the Rogue Valley can provide employees with up to four free taxi rides home (up to 30 metered miles) each year, should they experience a personal or family emergency on a day when they have commuted to work without a car (bike, bus, walk, carpool, vanpool). RVTD

covers the cost of the taxi ride, as long as the employer is enrolled in the program, has an ETC as a liaison between RVTD and its employees, and the employee has experienced a qualified emergency. RVTD's website⁴ covers the program in more detail. During RVTD's 2018-2019 fiscal year, there were five participating employers.

Customized Rideshare Program

RVTD will set up a network for a worksite within Get There for free. The network allows employees to find carpool matches with other company employees. At an employer's request, RVTD will provide a demonstration and quick training to get a carpool network up and running at the worksite. Free promotions, marketing materials, and incentives can be provided.

Employee Outreach

RVTD will produce customized marketing materials to help employees learn about their transportation options. Biking, walking, carpooling, and transit information can all be provided at no cost to the employer or employees.

Vanpool Options

In addition to the statewide ridesharing program Get There, RVTD can provide all the information necessary for an employer to determine if vanpooling is right for their business. RVTD will get interested employers in contact with vanpool service providers in the areas and help their employees transportation needs.

EDUCATION AND SCHOOL SOLUTIONS

In addition to the mode-specific classes and trainings described above, the following programs are provided to support education around Rogue Valley transportation options.

Gus Rides the Bus

Gus Rides the Bus is an interactive bus program open to pre-school, elementary and middle school classes. The class includes pedestrian and bike safety information, a ride on the bus, and a travel kit with information needed to use the local transit system and a pass good for six free rides. During RVTD's 2018-2019 fiscal year, approximately 1,143 students participated in the program.

Walk and Bike to School Days

Schools in Rogue Valley participate in national Walk and Bike to School Days⁵, normally occurring every year in May and October.

⁴ <http://rvtd.dev.projecta.com/Page.asp?NavID=43>

⁵ <http://www.walkbiketoschool.org>

EVENTS AND CAMPAIGNS

RVTD advertises and markets transportation options in the Rogue Valley through events and campaigns. Most of the events and campaigns occur once a year and educate community members on the options that are available.

Get There Challenge

In addition to the everyday functionality of the Get There statewide tool, an annual competition is hosted to further publicize and promote the program. The Get There Challenge allows individuals or teams to log all trips not made by a single-occupancy vehicle to become eligible for prizes.

Go By Bike Week

Go By Bike Week is Southern Oregon's campaign to promote and encourage biking for transportation in the Rogue Valley and replacing car trips with bicycle trips. The campaign utilizes community marketing and advertising for awareness, campaign events for engagement, and online trip logging for participation. One event that occurs simultaneously is Bike Month Bingo, where participants track their points on a personal bingo sheet and can win prizes after they reach a "Bingo". During RVTD's 2018-2019 fiscal year, there were approximately 146 pledges made by community members, 103 filled bingo cards received by RVTD, and 6,658 logged miles.

Medford Open Streets Event

The Medford Open Streets Event temporarily closes streets to personal vehicle traffic, opening that space up to other modes of transportation, socializing, and fun. The goal is to create a standalone event to promote active transportation options and help visualize others uses of public spaces in the City of Medford.

Rogue Commute Challenge

The Rogue Commute Challenge is RVTD's workplace team commute challenge. Employers sign-up to participate in a two-week campaign to commute by walking, biking, carpooling, or using transit. Workplaces with the most trips and miles are recognized. The goal of the Rogue Commute Challenge is to educate and promote commute alternatives to drive alone. Through the Rogue Commute Challenge, RVTD fosters connections with local workplaces to promote transportation options to employees year-round. During the 2019 Rogue Commute Challenge, there were nine workplace teams and approximately 413 logged trips.

"Be Seen. Be Safe." Light Giveaways

RVTD provides safety lights and "Be Seen. Be Safe." handouts to community members during the early fall to promote visibility as the darker commuting months approach.

Ashland Community Bike Swap

This fundraiser promotes bicycle transportation and benefits bike safety education in the Rogue Valley by providing a community venue for buying and selling working-condition bicycles and related equipment. This event is made possible by Ashland Parks & Recreation Commission (APRC); RVTD; and the City of Ashland Fire Department,

Police Department, and Transportation Commission. Community members can sell or donate bikes and bike gear.

GO VETS PROGRAM

Go Vets is an RVTD program made to help local veterans learn about transportation options and connect to the services needed to sustain a happy and healthy life. The program goal is to connect veterans to employment, education, medical, recreational, and social opportunities and services through an engaging and customized approach. The Go Vets program has been successful in improving the mobility and independence of veterans by providing transportation options that weren't there before.

Pedals for Patriots

The Pedals for Patriots program helps veterans that cannot afford a car or any form of transportation gain independence and mobility. The program refurbishes and donates bikes to these veterans that need a mode of transportation. The bikes that are given away are all donations; most of the bikes are given by local police departments.

VA Bike Loan Program

The Go Vets VA Bike Loan Program will provide VA inpatients with access to a bicycle to use while staying at the VA-SORCC. The program aims to increase their independence and mobility.

Go Vets Travel Training

The RVTD Travel Training program was developed by Veterans for Veterans. The program is open to veterans who want to learn to travel safely and independently using public transportation. Travel training is a free self-paced process where a veteran, regardless of ability or age, can learn to ride RVTD's fixed-route system and learn about transportation options like bicycling, walking, and carpooling.

POTENTIAL NEW PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The following are potential programs and services that could be created to add to the robust set of offerings RVTD provides through the Way To Go Program.

- ▶ Create a RVTD-provided vanpool system including areas outside RVTD's service area, such as Grants Pass and Tolo.
- ▶ Establish a Safe Routes to School program that can house all youth education programs and work with pedestrian and bicycle advocacy groups to expand the number of events, classes, and activities.
- ▶ Add another tool to the Employer Commute Solutions that would further enhance employer knowledge of traditional employer-based transportation demand management (TDM) techniques such as telecommuting, staggered work hours, and compressed work weeks through expanded education material. Additional support could be explored for helping employers develop their own TDM plans.

- ▶ Create a commute cost calculator to compare annual cost of the available mode options and further promote transportation options other than the single-occupancy vehicle.
- ▶ Create an individualized marketing program that provides personalized information about transportation options to individual residents. An example is the Portland Bureau of Transportation's (PBOT's) SmartTrips Program⁶, which allows community members to provide basic information about their essential destinations and receive hand-delivered packets and personalized emails describing their transportation options. These types of programs can also go door-to-door in neighborhoods with multiple transportation options available to discuss an individual's options. This approach considers that it is not "one size fits all" when it comes to transportation options. Different community and neighborhood characteristics, such as land use and geography, can greatly impact what modes are available in different portions of the Rogue Valley.
- ▶ Provide a transportation combination plan where a single monthly or annual pass grants the user access to a transit pass, bikeshare pass, carshare (up to a defined dollar amount), and/or taxi service (up to a defined dollar amount) at a discounted rate. PBOT provides an example program called the Transportation Wallet⁷, where residents who live in specified areas of the city can pay a single price for access to transit, streetcar, bikeshare, and carshare or trade in a parking pass to receive the benefits are free.
- ▶ Provide free fare for senior citizens, veterans, and other users of the system.

ACTION ITEMS

The following action items are recommended for the TDM Planner/Marketing Coordinator to focus on to continue to improve the Way To Go Program.

Table 1: Action Items for the Transportation Options Program

Description	Timeline	Support
RVTD-Identified		
Update the Way To Go Program branding to be separate but complementary to RVTD's transit services. All components of the TO program are housed under the Way To Go Program and will use the same branding. Create an official logo and use this logo on all marketing and outreach to provide consistent branding, including the RVTD website.	Within two years	NA
Create an annual Transportation Partnership Inventory. Catalog TO partnerships across the Rogue Valley and determine level of partnership.	On-going	Partners
Continue outreach to existing partners, including employers. Administer working sessions with partners and stakeholders.	On-going	Partners

⁶ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/625239>

⁷ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/78470>

Description	Timeline	Support
Continue to explore new partners, such as bicycle and pedestrian advocacy groups and major employers.	On-going	Potential partners
Outreach to new target audiences (such as minority populations, youth, and others), not just the commuting public.	On-going	NA
Review and gather local TDM ordinances in Southern Oregon to identify potential opportunities to collaborate on shared transportation option goals. Identify barriers or gaps in Transportation Options Policies.	On-going	Local and regional jurisdictions
Sit on local transportation committees to provide transportation options guidance and perspective.	On-going	City of Medford Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Ashland Transportation Commission, Jackson County Bicycle Committee, Grants Pass Walkways and Bikeways Committee, AARP Livability Group
Get There administration and training to learn the new rideshare and trip-logging platform, acquire donations for year-round use, and administer Get There and related campaigns.	On-going	ODOT
Get There promotion and outreach to educate existing and new partners, employers, and network about the tool functionality. This includes major promotional efforts to encourage registrations.	On-going	ODOT
Administer Annual Participant Survey and increase participation each year.	On-going	ODOT
Monitor need for additional staff.	On-going	NA
Explore new technology such as apps, social media, and other tools to support the TO program. When new tools are added to RVTD's services, update all materials and the website to reference the current services available and create a marketing or campaign strategy to share with the traveling public.	On-going	NA
Participate in Medford's Safe Routes to School Task Force.	On-going	Local jurisdictions
Continue to increase the network of Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETCs).	On-going	Partners
Work with local governments to combat congestion problems, such as the continued effort with the City of Medford and local employers on the 2018 Exit 27 Congestion Mitigation Program.	On-going	Local and regional jurisdictions
Enlist at least one new employers into the bus pass program each year.	On-going	Local employers
New Recommendations		
Monitor usage of existing programs and periodically evaluate need for changes. Underutilized and duplicative programs could be targets for improvement to make them more useful to the target audience, to focus on awareness and marketing, and/or to eliminate and use resources elsewhere.	On-going	NA
Consider new programs and services to add to the Way To Go Program, such an RVTD-provided vanpool	On-going	NA

Description	Timeline	Support
system, a Safe Routes to School program, an employer TDM support program, or others listed above.		
Update the "Your Options" section of all materials and the website to include educational information about for-hire transportation services and apps, such as ride-hailing or carshare companies.	Within two years	For-hire transportation companies operating in the Rogue Valley
Create a communications plan, with identified audiences/dates/individualized marketing.	Within two years	NA
Update all materials and the website to provide information about mobility options to points outside the Rogue Valley and where and how RVTD connects to them. Link the regional public transit services page and the Way To Go page on the district's website.	Within two years	Regional and external transportation services partners
Restructure the Way To Go program webpages of the RVTD website to make the information more manageable and easy to navigate. Remove duplicate pages or information.	Within two years	NA
Review and update all materials and the website to use the same terminology and make the target audience clear for each service. For example, always refer to the employer-based services as "Employer Commute Solutions" and not "Employer Commute Services" or "Commuter Trip Reduction Services" or to provide more clarity that these are services for employers and not directly for commuters call them "Employer Solutions".	Within two years	NA
Work with ODOT to create a full Transportation Options Strategic Plan.	Within five years	ODOT, regional, and local jurisdictions
Work with local jurisdictions to increase their capacity to provide TDM programming and support, either independent or in coordination with RVTD.	Within five years	Local jurisdictions
Market park-and-ride facilities and monitor the ability to add more throughout RVTD's service area.	On-going	Local jurisdictions
Provide long-term/secure bicycle parking at park-and-ride facilities and transit stations.	On-going	Local jurisdictions
Work with local agencies to improve bike access to transit stations and stops.	On-going	Local jurisdictions
Explore partnering with for-hire transportation services and apps, such as Lyft or Uber.	On-going	Potential partners
Consider other promotions similar to the Rogue Transit Trails Passport completed in 2016.	On-going	Local businesses
Conduct annual ETC surveys to understand what barriers ETCs are facing to encourage coworkers to use different modes, gain ideas about new services or enhancements, and better support the ETC role.	On-going	Partners
Work with other City governments to create Open Streets events throughout the Rogue Valley with support from RVTD.	On-going	Local Jurisdictions
Update the commute solutions toolkit as programs and services change.	On-going	NA