



ANNUAL REPORT

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Table of Contents

Section 1 Vision, Mission, and Values.....1

Section 2 The District

2.1 Leadership letter.....3

2.1 About the District.....4

Section 3 Moving transit forward in the Mid-Willamette Valley

3.1 New buses ribbon cutting.....5

3.2 Transit Day at the Capitol.....6

3.3 Get On Board Day.....6

3.4 Team Cherriots Campaign.....7

3.5 New Reduced Youth Fare.....7

3.6 Cherriots Career Fair.....8

3.7 Bus Rodeo Roundup.....8

Section 4 Cherriots cultivates community connections

4.1 Parade buses.....9

4.2 Welcoming our new neighbors.....10

4.3 Open Streets Salem.....10

4.3 Annual poster contest.....11

4.4 Drive Less Challenge.....11

4.5 Cycleshare comes to Salem.....12

Section 5 Financial story

5.1 Revenue sources.....13

5.2 General Fund expenses.....13

5.3 Performance data summary.....15

Section 6 Awards, acknowledgments, honors, and accolades

6.1 GM elected to national and state offices....17

6.2 Safety and Loss Specialist certification....17

6.3 MV operators receive award.....17

6.4 So. Salem Connect recognizes Cherriots....18

6.5 Cherriots earns healthy employer award..18

6.6 Excellence in financial reporting.....18

6.7 Sustainable practices recognition.....18

6.8 Garten recognizes Cherriots.....18

Section 7 People on the move

7.1 Communication hires.....19

7.2 Finance hires.....19

7.3 Operations promotions.....19

7.4 Operations hires.....19

Section 7 Governance.....20

Vision, Mission, and Values

A strong public transit system is the backbone of environmentally friendly and economically thriving communities. The Cherriotics vision, mission, and values represent the guiding principles for long-range transit planning.

Vision

Making a positive difference by enhancing community livability through innovative, sustainable regional transportation options.

Mission

Connecting people with places through safe, friendly, and reliable public transportation services.

Values

Safety – We emphasize safety by providing safe, secure, and clean public areas and work sites.

Service Excellence – We serve the public, each other, and our community partners with friendliness, courtesy, empathy, respect, and dignity. We recognize that our customers, internal and external, are why we exist, and we take pride in the positive impact we make in their daily lives.

Communication – We promote an open and respectful culture that values candor. Cherriotics listens to its customers, community partners, and employees, actively engaging them in conversations.

Innovation – We encourage and respect new ideas from employees, partners, and the public. The District embraces innovation, environmentally responsible technology, and best practices.

Accountability – We hold ourselves accountable as stewards of public funds, community trust, and the environment. Cherriotics will honor this commitment with transparency, honesty, and integrity.





Leadership letter from the General Manager and Board President

Dear Friends of Cherriots:

For the first time in more than 12 years, our adopted budget provides for significant service enhancements. Thanks to the new statewide employee payroll tax, Cherriots is able to add new service. This includes Saturday, later evening, and for the first time ever, Sunday service.

The partnership among all levels of governments — local, state and federal — has been vital so that transportation continues to be the economic engine that contributes to a better quality of life for communities in Marion and Polk counties.

Oregon was one of 25 states and the District of Columbia that increased funding for public transit in Fiscal Year 2017 by a total of \$1.1 billion over Fiscal Year 2016 levels. This is a key indicator of how state departments of transportation are bolstering support for public transit operations and capital projects, as well as enhancing public transportation options in both urban and rural communities.

Public transportation is increasingly being viewed as a “regional mobility manager” by many consumers. A recent survey by the American Public Transportation Association found that 77 percent of commuters view public transit as the backbone of a lifestyle that connects them to ride-hailing and car-sharing services, scooters, and bicycles.

While the new and enhanced service creates an opportunity to gain new supporters and customers, it is also our chance to restore mobility to existing customers. For too long, those who rely on us have had to endure hardships on the weekend and later evenings. People can now do their Saturday errands, take an evening course, see a movie, or visit family and friends on the weekend.

Increasing mobility for all creates great value for our community for generations to come. Thank you for supporting us on this journey.




Robert Krebs
Board President




Allan Pollock
General Manager



About the District

Founded in 1979, Cherrriots is the operating name for the Salem Area Mass Transit District. Cherrriots is a special district funded predominantly by local property taxes, state funds, and federal funds. The District's workforce includes non-represented employees and members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757, which represents transit operators and maintenance workers. The population of the Salem and Keizer urbanized area is about 236,000 and the population of the overall Cherrriots service area is about 500,000. Cherrriots provides local, regional, and paratransit services in Marion and Polk counties. Local Cherrriots service is provided by 64 buses, powered by compressed natural gas or biodiesel fuel. Regional service is provided by 12 buses; paratransit service with 43 vehicles; and shopper shuttle service with five vehicles. In Fiscal Year 2018, annual Cherrriots ridership among all services was just over 3.2 million, averaging 14,000 rides per day. Cherrriots expects its ridership will steadily increase with expanded bus service and growth in the region.

Moving transit forward in the Mid-Willamette Valley

Salem Area Mass Transit District ribbon cutting unveils new buses

Oregon's federal delegation secured grant funding for Cherriots to replace a number of its buses with ones that run on clean-burning compressed natural gas. Cherriots hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony in September to unveil the new local, regional, and paratransit vehicles. The event, held at Keizer Transit Center, drew dozens of Cherriots riders and supporters, including U.S. Congressman Kurt Schrader. Board President Robert Krebs called the congressman a Cherriots champion for assuring a significant federal investment in the Mid-Willamette Valley.



Cherriots celebrates Transit Day at the Capitol

For more than a decade, Oregon public transportation providers have been participating in this event to bring attention to the need for, and benefits of, public transit. Cherriots, along with several other public transportation providers, participated in Transit Day at the Capitol in April. This was a unique opportunity for public transportation providers, including TriMet, Rogue Valley Transportation District, Cascades East Transit, and South Metro Area Regional Transit to inform, engage, and thank Oregon's leadership who have been champions of transit.

Get On Board Day

Cherriots joined thousands of other public transportation providers nationwide on April 25 to celebrate Get On Board Day. Sponsored by the American Public Transportation Association, National Get On Board Day encourages people to support public transportation and showcases the benefits it brings to communities. For example, each weekday in the U.S., 34 million people board public transportation. Cherriots hosted an "open bus" with one of the brand new buses at its Downtown Transit Center. Community members also hung out with local celebrity Caesar the No Drama Llama, who helped raise awareness about public transportation and the important role it plays in the health and the livability of this community.



Team Cherriots: Customer Education Campaign

The Customer Education Campaign is an initiative that focuses on efficiency, safety, and courtesy. The goal of the campaign is to remind riders that they have an impact on the service provided and that by working together, Cherriots can improve the experience for everyone. For example, a cast of colorful, fun, and friendly characters reminded riders to have their fare or pass ready; to use crosswalks at the transit centers and on the streets; and that there is no eating on the bus.



New reduced youth fare introduced in Marion and Polk counties

Cherriots made it more affordable than ever for families to ride together. In June 2019, the District introduced a reduced fare for youth ages 6 to 18. (Children 5-years-old and younger still ride free.) For example, an annual pass was \$270. The new fare is \$120. The day pass went from \$1.50 to \$1.



Cherriots Career Fair

With more service, you need more people. Cherriots kicked off its recruitment for enhanced service with its first ever Career Fair in January. Through social media and advertising, the event drew about 175 job seekers. Cherriots recruited for bus operators, maintenance workers, and customer service representatives. Word-of-mouth and Facebook proved to be the best methods to inform people about Cherriots and the Career Fair. Candidates were able to fill out an online job application. Thirty-six applications were completed at the fair and nearly 60 applications were received through the website during the first 24 hours of posting.



Bus Rodeo roundup

Throughout the country, public transportation providers set up courses to test the driving and safety skills of transit operators. Cherriots hosts its annual bus "rodeo" in the fall. This year's champion was three-time repeat winner Dan Miller, who went on to compete in the International Rodeo held in Louisville, Kentucky. Miller placed 17th among a field of 78 competitors.



Cherriots cultivates community connections

Cherriots buses are always a crowd favorite in both the Keizer Fest Parade as well as the Keizer Holiday Lights Parade.



Welcoming our new neighbors: reaching out to refugees

Using public transportation can be intimidating for anyone. But imagine those individuals whose country of origin is not the U.S., English is not their first language, and they have never heard of Salem, Oregon. Since 2015, Salem has welcomed refugees from nine different countries. Salem for Refugees is a local nonprofit that exists to bring people and resources together to empower refugees to thrive. As part of their resettlement, the Cherriots Travel Training Program works with Salem for Refugees to provide assistance and education to new refugees. Travel Training is a free instructional service that promotes safe and independent travel for all riders. The travel trainers help Salem's new neighbors to safely travel to English language classes, the grocery store, and to their jobs. This initial introduction to transit develops skills where new neighbors can utilize the bus to fully acclimate as individuals and families in the Salem-Keizer area.

Open Streets Salem

Open Streets Salem is a free, community event that began as Salem Sunday Streets in 2013. By temporarily closing streets to vehicle traffic and opening them to the public, OSS provides an atmosphere where neighbors can safely run, walk, roll, and play while interacting with local businesses and activities along the route. Some of the activities included a bounce house, puppet parade, and a helmet safety demonstration. From a six-foot ladder, the Cherriots Trip Choice team dropped melons – some in helmets, some not. While the melons in the helmets survived the drop, the unprotected melons did not. With the Salem Fire Department, Cherriots Trip Choice arranged a helmet fitting for children and gave away 45 helmets.



Annual poster contest

For the first time in the history of the contest, all three winners from the high school category came from the same high school: Sprague. Their artwork was featured on one of the new buses, which was driven to the high school for an assembly to recognize the winners. This year's theme was "World Car Free Day." Cherriots received more than 350 entries from 15 area middle and high schools. The artwork is featured in the 2020 Cherriots desk calendar and displayed at the Young Artists' Showcase at the Bush Barn Art Center through a partnership with the Salem Art Association.



Drive Less Challenge

The Oregon Department of Transportation sponsors the annual statewide Drive Less Challenge to encourage people to try transportation options other than driving alone. The two-week September challenge drew significant participation regionally. Participants logged their trips – bicycle, carpool, vanpool, transit, and walking – into Drive Less Connect, and then were eligible to receive prizes.



Cycleshare comes to Salem

Since the June launch of Salem's shared bicycle program, 406 members have joined Ride Salem. They have taken 743 rides totaling 582 hours, burning 2.9 million calories, and avoiding 200-plus pounds of CO2 emissions. There are 22 bikes at five Salem area locations, including one near the Downtown Transit Center. Cherriots Trip Choice is one of 15 sponsors of Ride Salem.

Financial story

With the passage of House Bill 2017, Cherriots received a new funding source through a statewide employee payroll tax that took effect July 1, 2018. This new funding source provides the resources needed for Cherriots to significantly expand its service, beginning September 2019. As a steward of public funds, Cherriots honors this commitment with transparency, honesty, and integrity.

Cherriots is a special district funded predominantly by local property taxes, state funds, and federal funds. Forty-five percent of general fund revenue comes from local property taxes. Twenty-one percent of the budget comes from funds received from the state. These are funds the state pays in-lieu of paying property taxes on tax exempt, state-owned property in the Salem area.

In Fiscal Year 2019, annual Cherriots ridership among all services was just over 3 million, Cherriots expects its ridership will steadily increase with expanded bus service and growth in the region.

Revenue sources | Fiscal Year 2018-2019

SOURCE	AMOUNT	%
<i>Passenger Fares</i>	\$2,196,271	8%
<i>Federal Revenue</i>	\$3,745,984	13%
<i>Property Taxes</i>	\$12,868,092	45%
<i>State Revenue</i>	\$8,820,080	31%
<i>Other Revenue</i>	\$731,628	3%
Total Revenue	\$28,362,055	100%

General Fund expenses | Fiscal Year 2018-2019

DIVISION	AMOUNT	%
<i>General Manager / Board</i>	\$587,320	2%
<i>Administration</i>	\$834,894	3%
<i>Finance</i>	\$1,161,178	4%
<i>Communication</i>	\$1,514,056	6%
<i>Transportation Development</i>	\$2,179,474	8%
<i>Transportation</i>	\$19,171,334	72%
<i>Non-Allocated</i>	\$1,003,128	4%
Total Expenses	\$26,451,383	100%



Performance data | Five year summary

RIDERSHIP	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
<i>Local</i>	3,304,058	2,953,459	2,900,817	2,976,485	2,955,477
<i>Regional</i>	188,398	162,636	144,465	131,636	93,910
<i>LIFT</i>	160,327	150,906	140,875	139,175	137,815
<i>Shop and Ride</i>	7,998	7,851	9,107	9,979	9,572
<i>Total Ridership</i>	3,660,781	3,274,852	3,195,261	3,257,275	3,196,774

REVENUE HOURS	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
<i>Local</i>	149,455	157,054	164,298	163,490	167,949
<i>Regional</i>	23,472	23,978	23,888	21,224	17,724
<i>LIFT</i>	62,849	62,444	61,380	63,766	64,184
<i>Shop and Ride</i>	4,091	4,103	4,684	5,357	4,966
<i>Total Revenue Hours</i>	239,867	247,579	254,277	253,837	254,823

REVENUE MILES	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019
<i>Local</i>	1,861,951	2,004,511	2,044,465	2,016,972	2,124,151
<i>Regional</i>	506,411	527,127	263,271	476,014	335,339
<i>LIFT</i>	787,126	775,475	752,523	805,257	791,198
<i>Shop and Ride</i>	40,492	40,779	51,085	54,723	55,140
<i>Total Revenue Miles</i>	3,195,980	3,347,892	3,368,311	3,352,966	3,305,828



Awards, acknowledgments, honors, and accolades

General Manager elected to national and state offices

General Manager Allan Pollock was elected to the American Public Transportation Association's 2018-2019 Executive Committee. Pollock also serves on APTA's Board of Directors. APTA is a nonprofit group of about 1,500 public and private sector member organizations that promotes and advocates for the interests of the public transportation industry in the United States. At the state level, Pollock was elected president of the Oregon Transit Association, whose purpose is to assist members in the development and improvement of efficient, safe, and convenient transportation services, techniques and methods, facilities, and equipment.



Safety and loss control specialist receives national certification

Michiel Majors, safety and loss control specialist, earned the Transportation Safety and Security Program certificate. The TSSP is managed and administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Safety Institute and the Federal Transit Administration. This is achieved through successful completion of four TSI courses: Transit Bus System Safety, Transit System Security, Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies, and Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation. TSSP certificate holders have proven to have a broad-based knowledge of the principles of safety and security in transit system operations and management, and have the ability to develop and implement safety, security, and emergency management programs in the transit industry.



MV transportation operators receive Katherine McCleary Award

Two drivers from MV Transportation, Cherriots contractor for Cherriots LIFT, Cherriots Regional, and Cherriots Shop and Ride services, were recognized with the Katherine McCleary Award. This award is the organization's top award for safety. Awardees were James Bancroft for safe driving, no accidents, no absences, and providing a World Class Customer Experience for the fourth quarter; and Jack Kaltenbach, MV Transportation Driver of the Year for the Division and MV Transportation Regional Driver of the Year.

South Salem Connect recognizes Cherriots

The South Salem Connect recognized Cherriots as its Business Partner of the Year for 2018. South Salem Connect is a Community Partnership Team that is a combined supportive effort by Salem Leadership Foundation and the City of Salem. The value of Cherriots being represented at the table is twofold: promoting Cherriots as a positive, contributing community partner in the Salem-Keizer area and rural communities; and educating and informing on the District's available transportation services and programs.

Cherriots earns healthy employer honor

Members of the Cherriots Wellness Committee were honored to accept the award on behalf of the District at the Portland Business Journal's 2018 HR Summit, with Cherriots placing eighth overall in the category of 100-499 employees.

From fresh fruit deliveries to Fitbit walking challenges, Cherriots is creating a healthier and safer workplace in the public transportation industry. The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, which is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, invited a Wellness Committee member to present a case study on the Cherriots Wellness Program. Michiel Majors, the District's safety and loss control specialist, gave the presentation at the American Heart Association's conference in Houston, Texas. Majors said it was an opportunity to put Cherriots on the same national stage as Kaiser Permanente, IBM/Watson, and Johns Hopkins University.

Cherriots recognized for excellence in financial reporting

For the sixth consecutive year, Cherriots received an award from the Government Finance Officers Association. Cherriots qualified for the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its 2018 annual financial report. Established in 1945, the certificate program encourages public agencies to prepare comprehensive financial reports that embrace the spirit of transparency and full disclosure.

Marion County recognizes Cherriots for sustainability practices

Because of Cherriots commitment to sustainable business practices, Marion County recognized the District as an EarthWISE Certified Business and honored it with a Mid-Valley Green Award. EarthWISE stands for "Workplace Initiative for Sustainable Enterprise." It is a free environmental assistance program offered to businesses in Marion County. Recycling programs, the utilization of alternative fuels, and clean diesel technology are some of the ways Cherriots has made intentional changes to its operations to achieve its mission of sustainability. The certification is valid for three years.

Garten Services recognizes Cherriots

Garten Services presented Cherriots with the Community Partnership award in recognition of its Transit Host program. This program, which is grant funded, is part of the Cherriots Customer Service Office within the Communication Division. Transit hosts are stationed at the Downtown Transit Center from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Rain or shine, transit hosts assist riders by providing schedules, giving directions, and helping riders with transfers and connections.

People on the move during Fiscal Year 2019

Communication hires

Elva Gaona, Customer Service Representative
Daniel Gonzalez, Customer Service Representative
Tristan Reedy, Customer Service Representative

Finance hires

Wendy Feth, Accounting Supervisor
Brittany Palacios, Accounting Technician
Kathleen Smidt, Accountant

Operations promotions

Jason Bathke, Transit Operator
Jolynn Franke, Transit Planner I
Jeremy Jorstad, Transit Planner II
Dean Kidd, Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor
Zach Leeth, Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor
Ryan Miller, Operations Supervisor
Jacob Patterson, Service Technician
Julie Ryan, Operations Supervisor
Suzanne Ybarra, Administrative Assistant

Operations hires

Grace Anderson, Administrative Assistant
Kenneth Ball, Service Technician
Belinda Benson, Transit Operator
Derek Beutell, Transit Operator
Kylee Bryant, Transit Operator
Bernardo Carrasco, Transit Operator
Hector Chavez Ruiz, Transit Operator
Gloria Derowitsch, Transit Operator
Rosemarie Filley, Transit Operator
Anthony Gamma, Service Worker
Adam Gass, Transit Operator
Scott Grubbs, Journey Mechanic
Derek Hendersen, Service Worker
Jason Kam, Journey Mechanic
Jose Lara Gomez, Transit Operator
Debra Leffler, Transit Operator
Mark Poulson, Transportation Manager
Brock Prieto-Asmar, Service Worker
Joseph Reul, Journey Mechanic
Robert Ritchie, Transit Operator
Naomi Schafer, Transit Operator
Charles Seals, Transit Operator
Joshua Shewfelt, Transit Operator
Michael Spears, Transit Operator
Levi Tarbell, Transit Operator
Juanita Trevino, Transit Operator
Rachael Wakefield, Transit Operator
Michael Wilson, Service Worker

Governance

Board of Directors

The Cherriots Board of Directors establishes priorities, evaluates the performance of the transit system, and adopts budgets. The seven-member board also works with community members to improve bus service and address transit-related issues. Three external committees provide advice to the Board: the Special Transportation Fund Advisory Committee, the Citizens Advisory Committee, and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund Advisory Committee. With recent changes in Oregon law, seats on the Board will be governor appointed rather than directly elected, beginning July 2019.



Steve Evans
Vice President
Subdistrict 1 – West Salem



Colleen Busch
Secretary
Subdistrict 2 – Keizer



Kathy Lincoln
Director
Subdistrict 3 – Central Salem



Doug Rodgers
Director
Subdistrict 4 – Northeast Salem



Jerry Thompson
Director
Subdistrict 5 – Southeast Salem



Robert Krebs
President
Subdistrict 6 – South Salem



Marcia Kelley
Treasurer
Subdistrict 7 – South Salem

