

# 0 Introduction & Summary

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# The Trade-offs

## Transit Tomorrow

Lane Transit District (LTD) has launched Transit Tomorrow, an effort to understand how LTD’s services should be distributed in its service area.

LTD operates a variety of public transportation services throughout central Lane County. But people are most likely to experience LTD as the bus system in Eugene and Springfield. Over 90% of LTD’s ridership comes from the regularly scheduled bus routes (including EmX and Routes 1 through 85) that operate in the Eugene-Springfield metro area.

**Transit Tomorrow is focusing first on how these metro area bus routes might change in the next three years.** Upcoming work will address how changes in bus service may impact LTD’s other services, such as the demand response services provided by Ridesource.

## Key Trade-offs

This report describes and evaluates four possible ways that LTD service could change, based on two major trade-offs:

- **Ridership vs. Coverage:** Is it more important to provide frequent service in places that will attract the most riders, or to provide a little bit of service to as many places as possible?
- **Service vs. Affordability:** Is it more important to use LTD’s resources to provide as much service as possible, or to reduce the cost of getting on the bus?

Neither of these questions have technically “correct” answers. LTD will always need to balance the competing priorities they reflect. In both cases, the correct answer depends on what the community values most.

## What We’ve Heard

Public input received to date suggests the community does not fall entirely on one side of either trade-off.

### Ridership vs. Coverage

Transit Tomorrow engaged the public in summer 2018 on preferences and priorities for future LTD service, through in-person events and a public online survey. In total, LTD engaged nearly 1,000 people through this effort, with the following primary results:

- Most of the people we heard from were more interested in high frequency service than maximizing coverage. But not everyone: over one-third were more interested in coverage.
- When we asked people about their priorities for service, respondents consistently prioritized frequency improvements – especially weekend and evening frequency – above other possibilities, including service to more places.
- Then again, most respondents preferred that LTD make minor adjustments rather than a network redesign. This argues against designing a network only for higher ridership and higher frequencies, as that would require significant change.

### Service vs. Affordability

Separately, LTD convened an ad hoc Fare Policy Committee with representatives from community stakeholders. This committee was convened in response to repeated requests from the public to expand fare discount programs targeted at youth and low-income populations.

At this time, the Board of Directors has directed LTD to pursue the Fare Policy Committee’s recommendations, including a new student fare subsidy program for schoolchildren and an expansion of LTD’s low-income subsidy program.

This is significant because investing resources in fare discounts or subsidies means those same resources will not be available for service. Yet many people have expressed a desire for higher frequencies and longer hours, suggesting parts of the community desire more service.

LTD will soon start receiving new funds from the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF). Some of these will likely be used to implement the Fare Policy Committee’s recommendations. With the rest, LTD can pursue both service increases and further fare reductions, but the more it does of one, the less it can do the other.

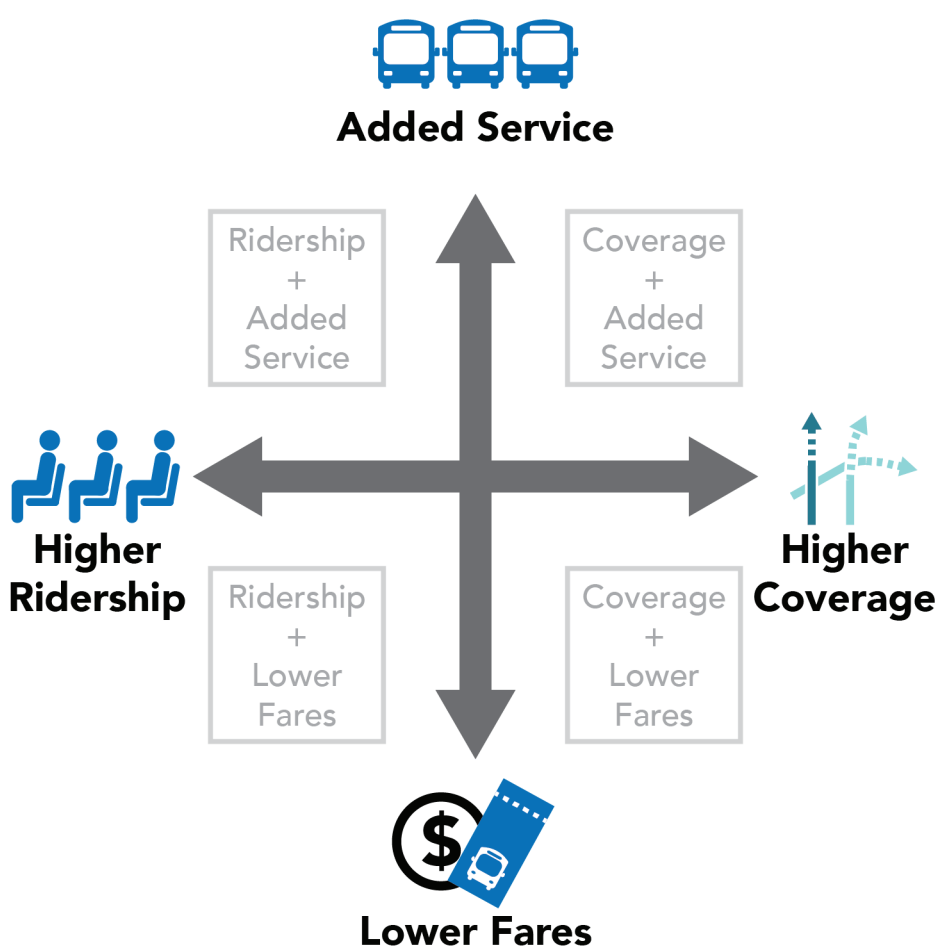


Figure 1: Trade-offs. Where should LTD focus its resources in the next three years? Is it more important to provide frequent service in a few places, or a little bit of service everywhere? Is it more important to increase service, or to make service more affordable?

# Four Scenarios for Metro Area Bus Service

This report describes four scenarios for metro area bus service. Each scenario illustrates the full set of service changes that LTD could make in the next three years, if it moved strongly in one direction<sup>1</sup>.

Scenarios were developed in two steps. First, to illustrate the trade-off between ridership and coverage, we designed two different networks:

- **High Ridership Network.** Frequent service on the metro area’s main streets. Some outlying neighborhoods would be farther from service than they are right now.

OR

- **High Coverage Network.** Based on spreading service to as many places as possible, taking the existing network as a starting point. Some areas would experience lower frequencies than they do now.

We then focused on how the balance between service and affordability impacts both networks. LTD will soon start receiving STIF funds from the State of Oregon. If most of these funds were spent either on more service or lower fares, LTD could achieve one of the following<sup>2</sup>:

- **Added Service.** *Similar level of service, 7 days a week.* Buses would come just as frequently on Saturday and Sunday as on weekdays. Evening service would improve slightly. Fares would not change.

OR

- **Lower Fares.** *Fares reduced by up to 50%.* This would be achieved by reducing the base fare, and offering more targeted discounts (e.g. for students, low-income, seniors). Weekend and evening service would not increase.

Figure 2 provides a summary of the service that would be provided in each scenario. Figure 3 (see following page) compares the outcomes of each scenarios in terms of coverage and job access.

**None of these scenarios is a proposal.** But you can compare these scenarios and their outcomes to help you clarify your preferences and priorities for service changes over the next three years.

**The shape of the final network will depend on what we hear from the community.** It may be similar to one of these scenarios, or somewhere in between, or something closer to existing service.

<sup>1</sup> These scenarios were developed collaboratively by staff representing LTD, the cities of Eugene and Springfield, Lane Council of Governments (LCOG), the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), with help and facilitation from consultants.

<sup>2</sup> Current estimates suggest STIF revenue will be about 10-12% of LTD’s existing operating expenses. The scenarios in this report assume about 8% would be spent on service and fares, with the remainder for other priorities such as purchasing buses to help renew the vehicle fleet..

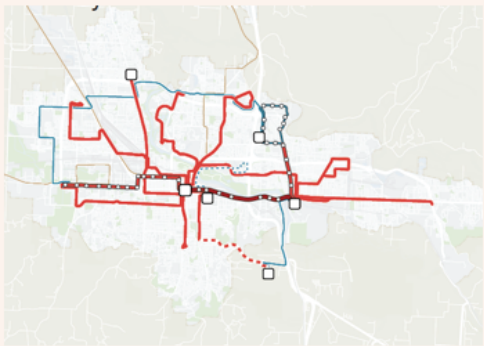
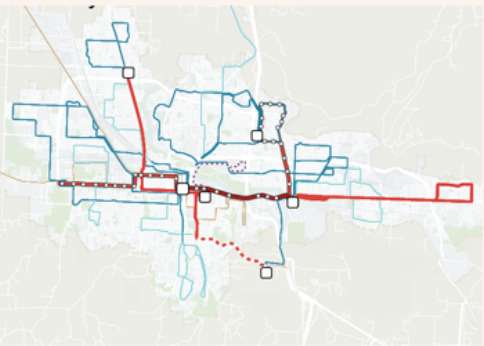
Network Concept	Ridership	Coverage
	 <p>High frequency service on main streets. Connections enable faster travel across the metro area. Some areas lose service.</p>	 <p>Service in as many places as possible. Based on existing network, but more areas covered and lower frequencies in some areas.</p>
Added Service	<b>Scenario 1 Ridership + Added Service</b> <p><i>Most routes operate:</i> Every 15 mins weekdays Every 15 mins weekends Every 30 mins after 8 PM</p> <p><i>No change in fares.</i></p>	<b>Scenario 3 Coverage + Added Service</b> <p><i>Most routes operate:</i> Every 30 mins weekdays Every 30 mins weekends Every 60 mins after 7 PM</p> <p><i>No change in fares.</i></p>
	<b>Scenario 2 Ridership + Lower Fares</b> <p><i>Most routes operate:</i> Every 15 mins on weekdays Every 30 mins on weekends Every 30 mins after 8 PM</p> <p><i>Fares up to 50% lower.</i></p>	<b>Scenario 4 Coverage + Lower Fares</b> <p><i>Most routes operate:</i> Every 30 mins on weekdays Every 60 mins on weekends Every 60 mins after 7 PM</p> <p><i>Fares up to 50% lower.</i></p>

Figure 2: Scenarios. These four scenarios illustrate the far ends of how much LTD’s metro area network could change in the next three years. This report compares and contrasts the outcomes of each scenario, to give you the tools to tell LTD where you think it should stand on each of the two trade-offs. Some people may feel that one of these scenarios is the way to go, while others will prefer something in between, or something closer to existing service.

# Summary of Outcomes by Scenario

Scenario	Weekdays				Weekends			
	Residents near any service (1/4-mile)	Residents near frequent service (1/2-mile)*	Avg. jobs w/in 45 minutes (door-to-door)	% change in jobs within 45 minutes	Residents near any service (1/4-mile)	Residents near frequent service (1/2-mile)*	Avg. jobs w/in 45 minutes (door-to-door)	% change in jobs within 45 minutes
Existing Service	67% 162,000	22% 54,000	25,300	N/A	57% 138,000	27% 65,000	18,800	N/A
Scenario 1: Ridership + Added Service	50% 120,000	60% 145,000	28,900	+ 14%	44% 107,000	59% 143,000	27,500	+ 46%
Scenario 2: Ridership + Lower Fares	50% 120,000	60% 145,000	28,900	+ 14%	44% 107,000	17% 42,000	20,600	+ 10%
Scenario 3: Coverage + Added Service	70% 170,000	38% 92,000	25,100	- 1%	67% 163,000	37% 89,000	24,700	+ 31%
Scenario 4: Coverage + Lower Fares	70% 170,000	38% 92,000	25,100	- 1%	57% 139,000	17% 42,000	17,700	- 6%

\* Frequent service means a route where a bus comes every 15 minutes or better, from at least 6 AM to 7 PM on weekdays, 8 AM to 7 PM on Saturdays, and 10 AM to 7 PM on Sundays. EmX lines would remain frequent until 10 PM.

Figure 3: Scenario Outcomes. This table illustrates the big picture of how transit service would change under each scenario. In the Ridership scenarios, many areas would be located farther from transit service, but almost all routes would be frequent, so travel times would improve, and job access would improve from almost everywhere. In the Coverage scenarios, some new areas would gain service, and a few routes would become more frequent, but travel times would not improve as much, and on average job access would not improve. On weekends, existing service is much more limited than on weekdays. The Added Service scenarios would increase weekend service, so weekend job access would improve significantly. The Lower Fares scenarios would maintain current levels of weekend service (on average), so they would have much less impact on weekend job access. Which outcomes are more valuable to you?

# What This Report Covers

## What’s Included

Chapters 1 through 4 describe each scenario with the following information:

- **Detailed weekday network map.** Use this to find the places you care about, and notice which routes would go there on the Ridership and Coverage networks. Note the colors of the routes, which represent their weekday frequencies. Note where else those routes go.
- **Weekday, evening and weekend mini-maps.** These smaller maps illustrate how frequencies would vary from one time period to another. In the existing network, LTD provides a lot more service during weekdays than on weekday evenings or on weekends.
- **Frequency and span table.** This shows the detailed frequencies and spans of every route in each scenario. This is where you can see if the specific route(s) you care about would run at the times you want them to, and at what frequencies.
  - » Remember, **do not simply look for your route number** – start by looking at the maps to find routes near you, and then reference these tables.

In Chapter 5, we compare the outcomes that would result if any of the four scenarios were implemented, in the following terms:

- **Coverage.** Under each scenario, how many people and jobs would be located near transit service?
- **Job Access.** Under each scenario, how many jobs could you typically access in 45 minutes from anywhere in the metro area?
- **Travel Time Maps.** From selected locations, where could you get to in 45 minutes?

## Future Considerations

**This report specifically focuses on EmX and regular bus routes in the Eugene-Springfield metro area.** Because these routes account for 90% of LTD’s ridership, they constitute LTD’s greatest overall impact on mobility.

Knowing the future shape of the metro area bus network will help LTD refine improvements to major corridors in Eugene and Springfield under the MovingAhead and Main/McVay projects.

However, LTD’s services and LTD’s interest in mobility does not end there. Achieving clarity on the orientation of the metro area bus network will make it possible to examine changes or improvements to:

- **Rural bus routes** that connect Coburg, Junction City, Veneta, Creswell, Cottage Grove, Lowell and the McKenzie River Highway to Eugene and Springfield.
- **Out-of-district services** managed and/or supported by LTD in other parts of Lane County. This includes the Diamond Express connecting Oakridge to Eugene, the Rhody Express in Florence, and South Lane Wheels in Cottage Grove.
- **Demand-responsive services**, including ADA Paratransit, non-emergency medical and human services transportation provided by LTD through the Ridesource program.

Having thoroughly reviewed the purpose and goals of its public transportation services, LTD will then be in a better place to evaluate how **other modes** (walking, cycling, driving) and **new mobility services** (like ridehailing, bike-sharing, dockless scooters, or others) can best interact with public transit.



# Next Steps

Transit Tomorrow combines technical analysis and broad-based community input to develop a public transit network for the future. The next steps in the process are the following:

- **January - February 2019: Public Input on Scenarios.** LTD is asking the public for feedback on the scenarios presented in this report, and the trade-offs they reflect. LTD will be presenting key information online and at community events, and seeking public feedback through a variety of channels, including:
  - » Meeting the public at community events.
  - » Online survey seeking public feedback: <http://openhouse.jla.us.com/transit-tomorrow-2>
  - » Project web page: [www.ltd.org/transit-tomorrow](http://www.ltd.org/transit-tomorrow)
  - » Project e-mail address: [transit-tomorrow@ltd.org](mailto:transit-tomorrow@ltd.org)
- **March 2019: Board Decision on Trade-offs.** Taking into account public feedback, the LTD Board of Directors will make a policy-level decision on the preferred orientation of the future transit network.
- **Late Spring 2019: Draft Plan.** The staff and consultant team will design a network proposal. Depending on the Board’s direction, the future network could be similar to what exists today, or it could be very different. This plan will be presented to the Board of Directors in late spring.
- **Late 2019: Final Plan.** The LTD Board of Directors and project staff will take the steps necessary to turn the Draft Plan into a Final Plan. This may include further public consultation as appropriate.
- **2020 - 2021: Service Changes.** LTD will make regular seasonal adjustments to service throughout this process. If the proposed future network looks very different from existing service, significant service changes may begin taking effect in Fall 2020.

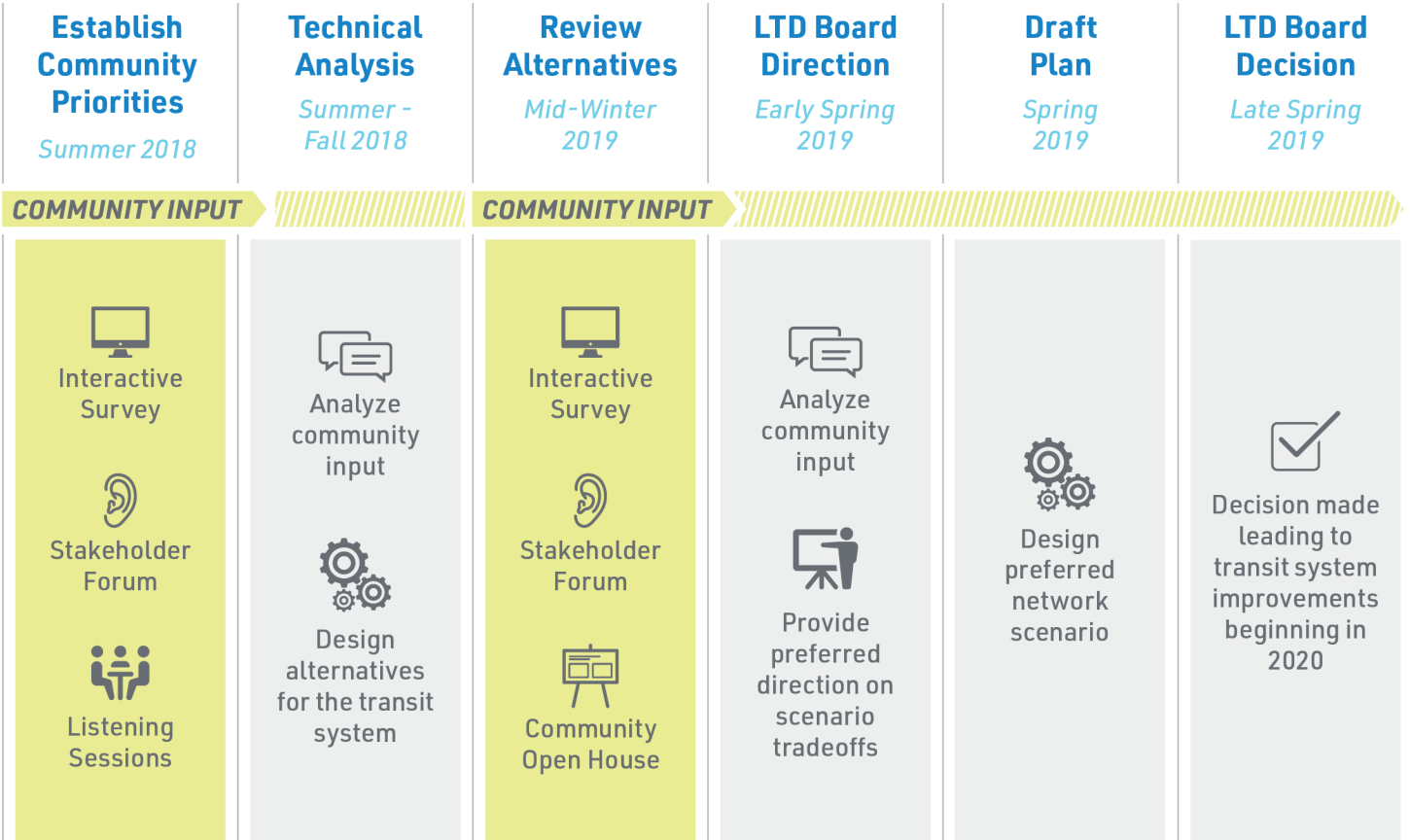


Figure 4: Scenarios. Project and community input timeline. LTD is seeking public feedback in two phases. The first phase occurred in the summer of 2018, and focused on the public’s values and priorities. In January and February 2019, LTD will be consulting the public on the real-world transit network trade-offs as reflected in this Scenarios Report. Public feedback on alternatives will be critical in shaping Board Direction for the Draft Plan. Ultimately, this process may lead to significant service changes in 2020.