

## **6. OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES**

This chapter includes the plan for other transportation modes, including: public transit, air, rail and intercity connections, and utilities. These transportation services are not provided by the City, County, or State and thus are not under the direct control of these agencies. The City and County should study transit needs and service before the end of the planning period (2015). The public agencies responsible for transportation in the Grants Pass urban area will coordinate with the providers of these kinds of transportation to assure the best possible services for the urban area.

### **Public Transportation**

Public transportation within the Grants Pass Urban Area is currently provided by the Rogue Transit System. This is operated by Rogue Transportation, Inc. (a private, for profit organization.) In addition to the regularly scheduled bus service, Rogue Transportation provides taxi service and shuttle service to the airport in Medford. Figure 2-3 in Chapter 2 illustrates the existing transit routes and transit supportive markets in the urban area. Additional transportation services are provided by Josephine County Community Services for eligible individuals over the age of 60 who cannot drive, or who do not have access to a private automobile. Service is very limited in terms of the quantity provided for the community, and the trip purposes served.

It is likely that community needs for public transit will increase in the future. This is due to: (1) overall growth in the population of the area; (2) changes in the composition of the population with more people becoming dependent on public transit (especially the elderly); (3) increased emphasis on travel by means other than private automobiles to reduce congestion and the need for costly expansions to the local transportation system; and (4) requirements to improve air quality and address other environmental problems related to automobile use.

The current situation in Grants Pass related to the provision of public transit service is rather unique. Very few private operators provide public transit services. Typical market conditions and operating costs do not result in profitable operations, and public transit normally requires some degree of public subsidy. Since the local transit service is provided by a private operator, this limits the types of public funds that could be used to finance transit service. Financial constraints also limit the amount of service that the operator can provide.

The Grants Pass community has shown a strong interest in providing public transportation for those members of the community who do not or cannot provide their own transportation, such as the young, the elderly, the disabled, and people without access to private transportation. The need for public transit was cited repeatedly in the interviews and public meetings conducted as part of this planning process.

It may be possible to find some funds to provide for capital equipment and facilities, and or some types of service in the short run. However the question of long term transit service provision depends on the willingness of the local community to provide a long term, stable funding source. The basic funding for public transit in Oregon is limited and the local

atmosphere regarding taxation and public expenditures make this a challenging issue to address.

Maintaining reasonable expectations about public transit service for the Grants Pass Urban Area is key, along with assessing long term implications of short term actions. There may be ways to make existing resources go further through better coordination of the services that do exist and pooling of resources from multiple sources. There may be some potential for outside funds for "demonstration" of creative public/private partnerships to provide transportation services. However, these are short term or one-time-only sources that cannot be counted on for long term service provision. There may be ways to provide public support directly to individuals that would allow them to "purchase" service from private providers. These options need to be explored further to determine which, if any, of them are appropriate for this community.

In the meantime, it appears that local public transportation will continue to be provided by the private sector, through a variety of general purpose transportation services (the bus or taxi), special purpose transportation (such as the Josephine County Community Services), and special services associated with tourist operations.

A related issue is that the provision of transit service (even if provided at a relatively high level) will not eliminate the need for the roadway improvements included in Chapter 4. Even with very good transit service, it is unlikely that a large percentage of travelers in Grants Pass would use public transit rather than private automobiles. Many of the improvements included in Chapter 4 are needed to complete the local arterial and collector network, which is critical regardless of the transportation mode used by travelers. Other improvements are needed to deal with significant existing or projected congestion problems that would not be eliminated through transit service provision.

### **Intercity Bus and Rail Connections**

Regularly scheduled intercity passenger transportation is provided by Greyhound/Trailways and Western Transportation Lines. Greyhound/Trailways provides four trips per day in each direction between Grants Pass and Medford, with connections to points beyond. Western Transportation Lines operates morning and afternoon shuttle services between Medford, Gold Hill, Rogue River, Grants Pass and Cave Junction. There are no changes expected in the current operation of either of these services. However, since these are provided by private sector operators, they may choose to change services in the future to meet market conditions.

Rail service in the urban area is operated by the RailTex, which bought out Southern Pacific in 1994. Service is limited to the movement of freight; passenger service has not been provided to this area since 1953. The current level of service appears adequate to meet local needs, and does not create any adverse impacts on local traffic operations. Additional intercity goods movement is provided by trucking companies. Figure 6-1 shows the location of proposed truck routes through the Grants Pass Urban Area. The map designates through routes for trucks, through routes for vehicles with 3 axles or less, local delivery routes, and signed truck routes.

Designation of truck routes is important for the design, operation and maintenance of the street network. Because of the weight and size of trucks special attention must be paid to

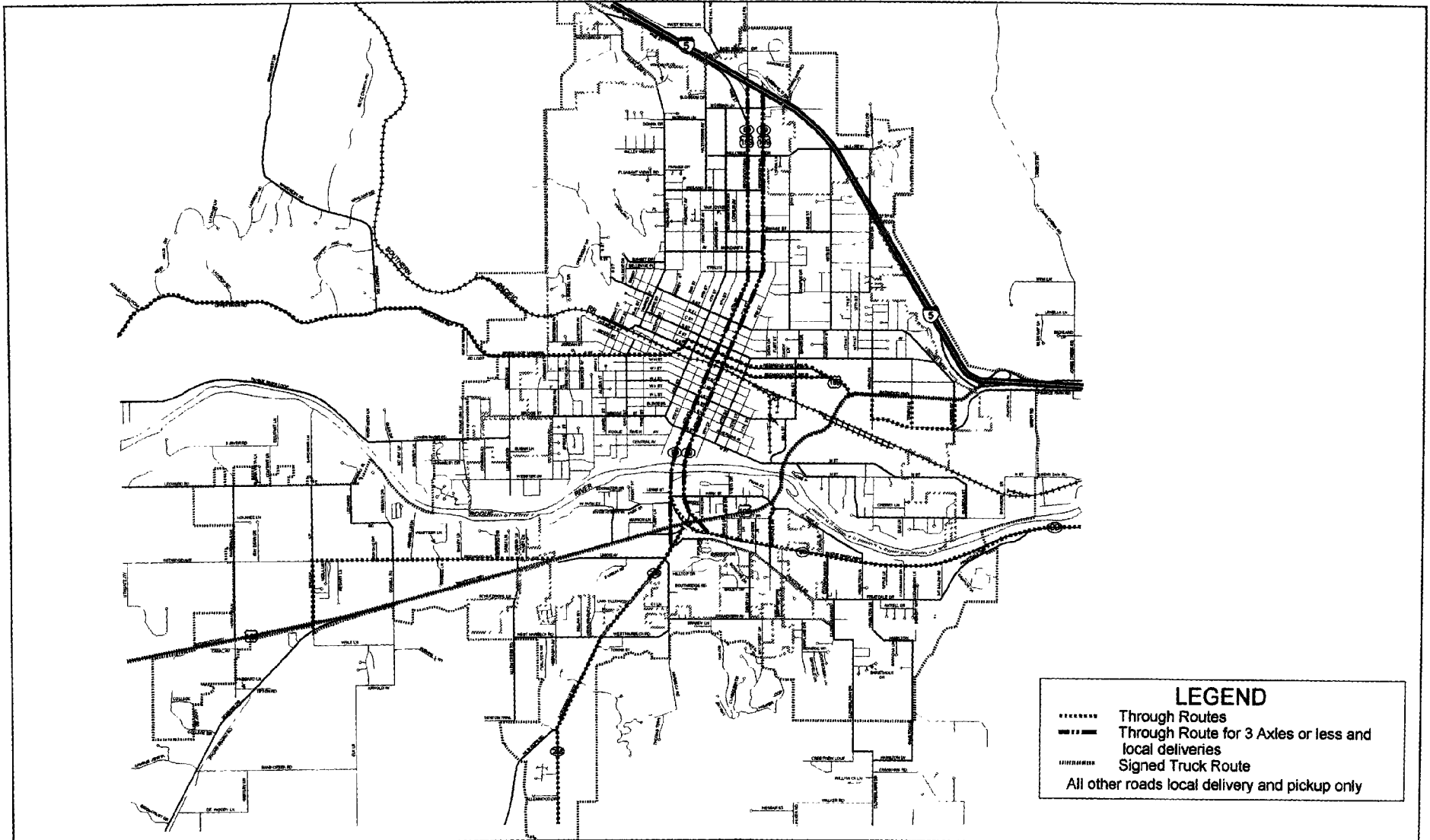
pavement strength, turning radii at intersections, roadway width, and the height of overhead obstructions. In addition, minimizing the impacts of truck traffic on residential neighborhoods is important.

## **Aviation**

Grants Pass Airport is located six miles northwest of Grants Pass. This is classified by the FAA as a "General Utility," general aviation airport serving private aircraft. Commercial passenger service is provided at the Rogue Valley International Airport in Medford (30 miles south of Grants Pass). The Merlin Airport Master Plan, completed in 1992, identifies some constraints on the current operations due to the length of the runway and the absence of an instrument approach. However, the airport, in combination with the full service airport at Medford, appears to meet the needs and demand for aviation for the Grants Pass urban area.

## **Pipelines and Utilities**

Within the Grants Pass Urban Area there are two natural gas pipelines. The Northwest Pipeline Corporation operates one of the lines, which is used to transport natural gas over long distances to local utilities and distributors. The second pipeline, operated by W.P. Natural, provides for the distribution of natural gas to Grants Pass and Ashland. These appear to be adequate for the area and there are no plans for additional pipelines.



**LEGEND**

- ..... Through Routes
- . - . - . Through Route for 3 Axles or less and local deliveries
- Signed Truck Route
- \_\_\_\_\_ All other roads local delivery and pickup only

**Proposed Truck Routes**

**Figure  
6-1**

**Grants Pass  
Urban Area  
Transportation Plan**

