GOAL 12: TRANSPORTATION

Goal: To provide and encourage a safe, convenient, and economic transportation system.

FINDINGS

1. The Transportation System Plan adopted April 1999 is an element of the Gilliam County Comprehensive Plan. It identifies the general location of transportation improvements. Changes in the specific alignment of proposed public road and highway projects shall be permitted without plan amendment if the new alignment falls within a transportation corridor identified in the Transportation System Plan.

2. Four principal highways, three of them state routes, are situated in Gilliam County. Interstate 84- borders the northern boundary of Gilliam County east to west. State Highway Route 19, intersection 1-84 at Arlington, proceeds south through Condon and Fossil and terminates in a junction with U.S. Route 26 west of Dayville, is the principal north-south highway in Gilliam County. State Route 206 crosses the county in a northwest-southeasterly direction, intersecting with Oregon Route 19 in Condon then proceeding easterly to Heppner. A short section of State Route 74 is located in the extreme northeast corner of the county.

3. While the principal highways in the county serve to provide for the movement of people and goods through the county, the county road system primarily functions to facilitate transportation between various areas in the county or between an area of the county and a principal highway. Maintaining these important traffic ways is a major county responsibility and prudent public management dictates that the relatively limited resources available for this purpose be directed toward those areas in which they do the most good.

4. Rail lines follow Interstate 84 and the Columbia River; service is available from Arlington to Columbia Ridge Landfill and Recycling Center 10 miles south of Arlington. Rail service from Arlington to Condon and I-84 at Willow Creek to Heppner was abandoned in 1993. Any and all measures to retain the 10-mile section to Columbia Ridge Landfill will be considered and supported.

5. Three separate sites for river port terminal facilities were identified in the Mid-Columbia River Front Plan.

6. There are two public use airports in the county, one at Arlington, and the other at Condon. The Arlington Airport may be a special significance because of potential demands placed upon it in connection with economic development activities in the northern area of the county. Both airports are important to the County and must be protected from conflicting uses.

7. A natural gas pipeline traverses the county.
8. If the need arises for the Condon Radar Base to be developed to accommodate housing demands, improvements to existing transportation routes or alternate transportation methods may be considered.

9. Oregon Waste Systems, Inc. is currently operating a Solid Waste Disposal Facility adjacent to Chemical Waste Management, NW, a hazardous waste facility. Said firm is independently investigating the transportation requirements for such a facility. These include a new rail spur and possible improvements to the Cedar Springs Road. Transportation of materials to the subject facility very possibly could benefit the County by reducing the likelihood that the rail line will be completely abandoned.

10. To support the County’s primary economic base of agriculture and to assist in economic diversification, the County recognizes the importance of new and additional commercial, industrial and other uses which will utilize and support water and rail transportation facilities.

7. On May 17, 1980, the Gilliam County Court approved a resolution that prohibits the placement of any structure that may cause the obstruction of vehicular traffic on or near County roads.

POLICIES:

In consideration of the above Findings, the Gilliam County Court adopts the following policies:

1. Major attention by the Oregon State Highway Division should be directed toward improvement of:

   A) Oregon Route 19 between Arlington and Condon;

   B) Oregon Route 206 in its entirety

In that order, both of these major routes are in need of improvement, including straightening of the basic alignment and widening of the roadway. In several areas, re-engineering and improvement of super elevations should be undertaken. Relative to the State Highway facilities within the County, it shall be the policy of the County to continue to work with, support, and coordinate with the State Highway Six-Year Planning programs. Further, it is not the intent of any county implementing ordinance provisions to preclude or limit any highway improvement project, which merely requires an expansion of an existing right-of-way for completion. Highway projects shall only be regulated when an existing right-of-way realignment is involved where the new alignment crosses productive agricultural lands. Further, should EFU statutes be amended regarding such projects, the County will proceed to consider the inclusion of such amendments into local ordinance provisions.
2. The County’s transportation system is at present adequate to handle the needs of the area. Because Union Pacific Railroad has abandoned the line from Arlington to Condon, it will be the policy of Gilliam County to seek the help of appropriate State and Federal agencies for the immediate improvement of the road network so that farm products can continue to move to major market areas in an efficient manner.

3. Current county policy involves periodic maintenance of county roads on a regular schedule. County roads have been prioritized according to use based on the movement of agricultural products, commercial use, and traffic volume with a maintenance schedule adopted. County policy requires that a five-year plan for construction and maintenance of these roads be updated annually. The County hereby reaffirms these policies as being in the general public interest.

4. Although the County, within limitations of available time and manpower, has provided some limited maintenance assistance on private roads on a cost-reimbursable basis, the County is not in a position to guarantee maintenance of private roads or of any road not designed and constructed to predetermined County standards.

5. It has been and will continue to be the policy of Gilliam County not to build or totally fund major improvements of existing roads to serve isolated non-agricultural areas or developments. The requirements for new roads or major improvements for such areas and/or developments shall, therefore, be the responsibility of those areas or developments needing and requesting such facilities and/or improvements. The County will continue to concentrate its maintenance and construction efforts on County Roads of major significance to the overall economy of the County and to those roads, which have been constructed to and “accepted” as County Roads for full maintenance responsibility.

6. If the Condon Radar Base is converted to housing for such a needed purpose, the County will encourage commuter transportation service from said Base to the point(s) of destination, and/or may fully implement those provisions set forth by Policy No. 5 set forth herein before.

7. In order to reduce weed infestation and to conserve agricultural land, it will be the policy of Gilliam County to acquire new rights-of-way no wider than necessary to satisfy construction and maintenance requirements.

8. It is the policy of Gilliam County to look to the Port of Arlington Commission to provide leadership in the development of identified river port sites and facilities, and to encourage the Port Commission to develop its plans in a manner consistent with the County’s Comprehensive Plan. Further, it is the policy of the county governing body to encourage all county offices and agencies to cooperate with the Port District in this development, consistent with available County resources and provided that sufficient benefits to the overall economy of the County will accrue there.
9. Gilliam County recognizes the importance, existing and potential, of the two public use airports in the county. The county's policy will be to protect these airports from hazards to navigation and to otherwise encourage the development of adjacent lands and facilities in a manner that will be conducive to increased utilization of these fields. The county’s policy on the Condon Airport is to support its retention as a state-owned facility.

10. Operation, maintenance, repair and preservation of existing transportation facilities shall be allowed without land use review, except where specifically regulated.

11. Dedication of right-of-way, authorization of construction and the construction of facilities and improvements that follow roadway classification and approved road standards shall be allowed without land use review for improvements designated in the Transportation System Plan.

12. For State projects that require an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) or Environmental Assessment (EA), the draft EIS or EA shall serve as the documentation for local land use review, if local review is required.

13. Gilliam County shall coordinate with the Department of Transportation to implement the highway improvements listed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) that is consistent with the Transportation System Plan and Gilliam County Comprehensive Plan.

14. Gilliam County shall provide notice to ODOT of land use applications and development permits for properties that have frontage or access onto a state highway.

15. Gilliam County shall consider the findings of ODOT’s draft Environmental Impact Statements and Environmental Assessments as integral parts of the land use decision-making procedures. Other actions required, such as a goal exception or plan amendment, will be combined with review of the draft EA or EIS and land use approval process.

16. Gilliam County shall protect the function of existing and planned roadways as identified in the Transportation System Plan.

17. Gilliam County shall include a consideration of a proposal’s impact on existing or planned transportation facilities in all land use decisions.

18. Gilliam County shall protect the function of existing or planned roadways or roadway corridors through the application of appropriate land use regulations.

19. Gilliam County shall consider the potential to establish or maintain access ways, paths, or trails prior to the vacation of any public easement of right-of-way.
20. Gilliam County shall preserve right-of-way for planned transportation facilities through acquisitions, dedications, or setbacks.

21. The function of airports shall be protected through the application of appropriate land use designations to assure future land uses are compatible with continued operation of the airport.

22. Airport Inventory Updates: There are no new airports in Gilliam County and the updated plan for the Condon Airport is hereby adopted by reference, but is not found to conflict with any existing Plan policies or implementing Ordinance provisions. The airport at Arlington is classified as a municipal airport.

23. Highway Inventory Updates (Four-Year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program dated 2008-2011): There are no improvement projects identified as applicable to Gilliam County.