



# Emerald Express Green Line

Eugene and Springfield, Oregon

Lane Transit District

Counterclockwise from top: EmX at station (© 2013, Lane Transit District); EmX riders (@2011 Wolfram Burner); Double-sided boarding (© 2015 Bryan Costale).

A new transit line helps improve active transportation options and access to economic centers.

## CONTEXT

- Constructed in 2007.
- Western.
- Urban.
- \$25 million.
- 4-mile corridor from Eugene to Springfield.
- 10,000 daily riders.



## INTEGRATED BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT)

- First leg in a regional bus rapid transit (BRT) network vision.
- Exclusive right-of-way (ROW) and limited stops.
- Holistic transit and active transportation connections.

## WHAT WAS THE PROJECT DRIVER?

As part of the update process of the regional long-range transportation plan, the Lane Council of Governments identified bus rapid transit with upgraded bus infrastructure and service as a key strategy to address anticipated congestion between Eugene and Springfield.

## HOW DID THIS CONNECT THE COMMUNITY?

The purpose of the Emerald Express (EmX) was to **improve transit services** and active transportation connections. At the time, it was one of the first BRT systems in the United States. The EmX characteristics include exclusive bus lanes, transit signal priority, high-capacity vehicles with near-level boarding, transit signal priority, widely spaced stations, off-board fare collection, and short headways.

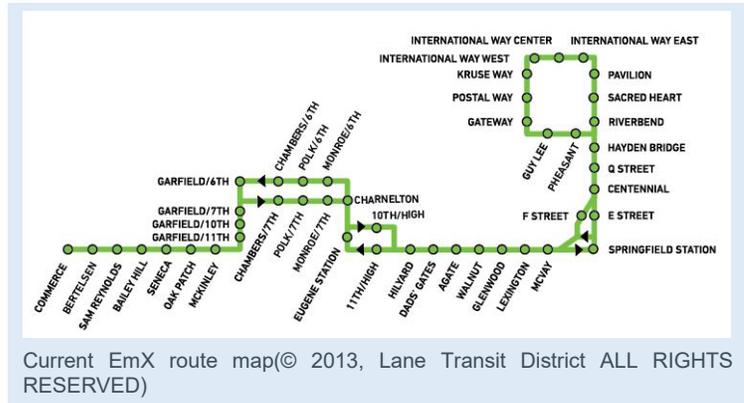
The first corridor project, the Green Line, was designed as a **pilot project** to increase transit ridership through reduced travel time and increased reliability through exclusive ROW, fewer bus stops, and improved boarding and exiting processes and rider amenities. The 4-mile route connects downtown Eugene and downtown Springfield, the two main hubs along the Franklin Corridor. The Franklin Corridor also serves the key economic centers such as the University of Oregon and Sacred Heart Medical Center.

The EmX project also incorporated bicycle improvements, landscaping, new sidewalks, and traffic enhancements – all meant to support improved local active transportation access. The service also features double doors, which was a critical **transit user accommodation** that provided **expanded access to transit** by facilitating bicycle-on-bus accommodations and faster boarding.

The community was involved in the corridor design process. There was an effort to communicate and engage with every business owner and resident located along the corridor to discuss the system concept and get feedback. Multiple **design charrettes** and open houses were held to get input on the design and implementation of the system and were supplemented by **stakeholder engagement** working groups that included elected officials. **Visualization techniques** have been identified as a key to the project’s success, particularly in demonstrating to how the project would look and function. It was essential in gaining community support as well as keeping Lane Transit District (LTD) employees engaged throughout the process.

The Green Line replaced one of LTD's most popular bus routes, which originally served about 2,700 daily riders. In 2012, several key ridership milestones were surpassed as EmX carried 11,258 boardings on April 10 of that year and averaged more than 10,000 weekday boardings the same month.

During the original BRT network planning, LTD envisioned a system of BRT corridors that could be built in stages, to match funding availability and ridership demand, at much lower cost than light



Current EmX route map(© 2013, Lane Transit District ALL RIGHTS RESERVED)

rail. The success of the Green Line helped demonstrate the value of the rest of the network. This progression has occurred as LTD has opened two additional corridors: The Gateway EmX and the West Eugene EmX. In addition to the features of the Franklin corridor, these corridors also included advances in green infrastructure like rain gardens, public art, and improved intersections.

### WHAT WERE THE BENEFITS?



INVEST

Transit service headways have been reduced to 10 minutes, compared to the previous 15-30-minute headways on the old route. The EmX has increased travel speed from 11 mph to 15 mph, and improved service reliability.

Awards:

- 2008 Sustainable Transport Honorable Mention from the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, the only one in the United States.
- BRT Standard Bronze award in 2013.
- Highlighted in the Federal Highway Administration’s Livability in Transportation guidebook.

#### For more information:

- [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/case\\_studies/guidebook/appendix/app07.cfm#foot27](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/case_studies/guidebook/appendix/app07.cfm#foot27)
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