



# commute options

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



# 2021 Annual Report

Commute Options is dedicated to innovative transportation options that connect people of all ages to the places they go – employees to their workplaces, students to their schools, and neighbors within their communities. We champion active transportation and infrastructure improvements, fostering essential partnerships, and educating the community on transportation options.

## Mission Statement

Commute Options increases access to transportation options across Oregon.

## Vision Statement

We envision communities using safe, convenient, and reliable transportation options that result in healthier individuals, a cleaner environment, and a stronger economy.

## 2021 Staff

Brian Potwin - *Executive Director*

Kim Curley - *Community Engagement Coordinator*

Emily Dougan - *Project & Administrative Coordinator*

Whitney Bennett - *Safe Routes to School Coordinator*

## 2021 Board of Directors

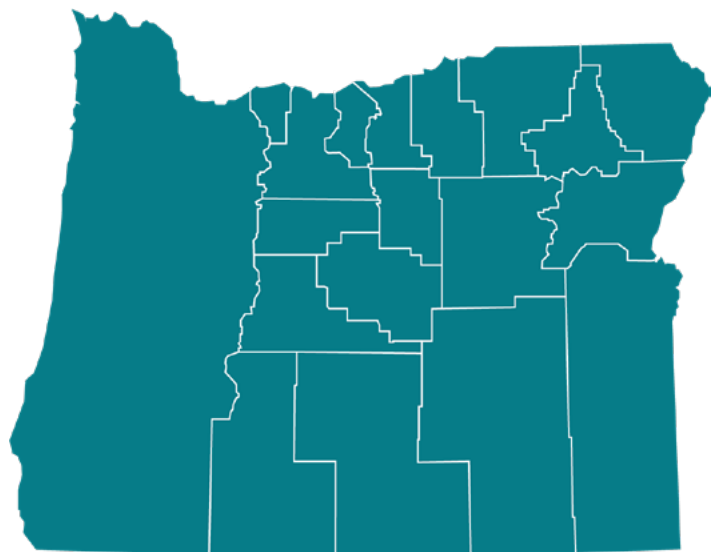
Marshall Greene - *Board Chair*

Janet Gregor - *Treasurer*

Ashley Mohni - *Secretary*

Neil Baunsgard - *At Large*

Zechariah Heck - *At Large*



In 2021 we worked in 18 counties, including Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, and Wheeler Counties.

## Top Accomplishments

1. **Statewide Technical Assistance.** Commute Options as a Statewide Technical Assistance Provider successfully launched the Central, Eastern and Southern Oregon Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Hub, providing support to SRTS coordinators throughout Oregon.
2. **Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day.** On November 17th, Commute Options participated in Oregon's inaugural celebration of Ruby Bridges, a civil rights icon, for this Walk to School Day.
3. **Statewide SRTS Webinars.** Commute Options hosted multiple statewide webinars for SRTS practitioners to improve their programming.
4. **New Project & Administrative Coordinator.** New teammate Emily Dougan has expanded the accessibility and reach of the Oregon Safe Routes to school program for everyone across the state. We are fortunate to work with her for her enthusiasm and passion for healthy active kids everywhere.
5. **Strategic Plan.** This year marked the completion of the Commute Options strategic plan for the next three years, focusing on increased communication, diversifying resources and connecting with more community members.
6. **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility.** Furthering internal Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) work to utilize these values in hiring practices and general workplace policies, and create opportunities for education among employees.
7. **Walking School Bus.** After a dormant year due to Covid-19, the Walking School Bus program was re-activated and there was one ongoing Volunteer Led Walking School Bus route for Bear Creek Elementary.
8. **Drivers Education.** Oregon Friendly Driver is now being taught three times a year by Drivers Education teachers in Bend-La Pine School District High Schools.
9. **Safe Routes to School Education.** Central Oregon students were back on bikes for the Fall Safe Routes to School Bicycle Education after a long intermission due to the Covid-19 school closures.
10. **Vanpools.** Subsidized two vanpools with Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund dollars through a partnership with Cascades East Transit. Deschutes National Forest employees ride from Northeast Bend to Crescent five days a week, and we helped employees at Black Butte Ranch travel from Redmond to work seven days a week in the summer of 2021.
11. **Transportation Options Group of Oregon.** Kim Curley was voted Vice President of the Transportation Options Group of Oregon's Board of Directors in September 2021.
12. **Outreach.** Commute Options got back out on "the road" visiting the Eastern and Central Oregon communities of Joseph, Enterprise, La Grande, Pendleton, Hermiston, Klamath Falls, Lakeview, The Dalles, and Hood River. Even during the global pandemic and all the restrictions, we were able to connect with our neighbors.

## Programs

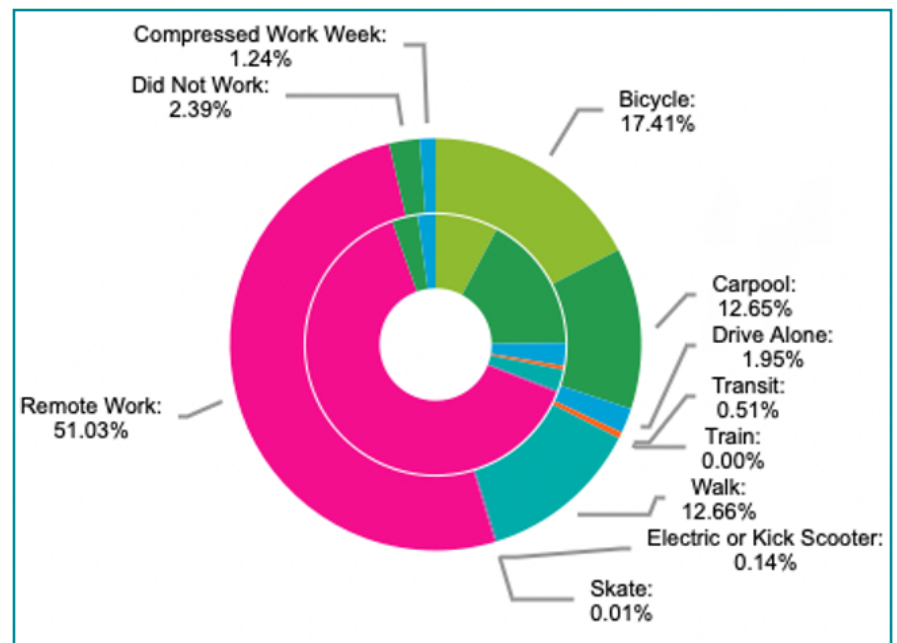


# get there rewards

The Get There Oregon initiative sponsored by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and its partners across the state, helps commuters and employers shift business practices and work habits one trip at a time. Commute Options' [Get There Rewards](#) program changes personal travel behavior, improving health, saving money, and reducing parking needs. Incentives come to employees through the Get There Rewards program, which encourages use of walking, biking, carpooling, vanpooling, remote work and compressed work week instead of driving alone. During 2021, the Get There Rewards continued to thrive during COVID-19 restrictions with many partner companies continuing remote work policies and practices. Commute Options network of nearly 2,500 logged nearly 55,000 remote work trips on Get There Oregon in 2021. Other achievements include over 100,000 alternative mode trips, totaling 772,440 miles not driven. Participants burned 5,441,937 calories during the year walking and rolling!

900 Tango cards were earned by participants in 2021. There are hundreds of options with the Get There Rewards choices expanded with the Tango Card, offering a global catalog of the most popular gift cards, prepaid cards, and donations that are sent directly to the recipient's email. In October we hosted the Get There Challenge where participants won prizes, reduced carbon emissions, and improved their own personal health! The 2021 challenge had **1,405** participants throughout Oregon, over **7,080** achievements unlocked, and hundreds of new users logging trips for a total of **148,000** miles!

Challenge participants learned biking and walking safety skills, expanded their understanding of transportation options, and spiffed up their home office with tips from Comcast Business.



Get There Rewards 2021 Mode Data

This challenge highlighted people's ability to log trips while remote working. The 2021 Get There Challenge celebrated those employees and assisted essential workers accessing their jobs by rewarding people for their remote work and other transportation options trips.



In 2021 Oregon Friendly Driver virtually reached people who drive through the [Oregon Friendly Driver online course](#) and through Live Webinars hosted by the Commute Options team. Drivers education teachers adopted the materials as well and began presenting Oregon Friendly Driver in their regular drivers education classes.

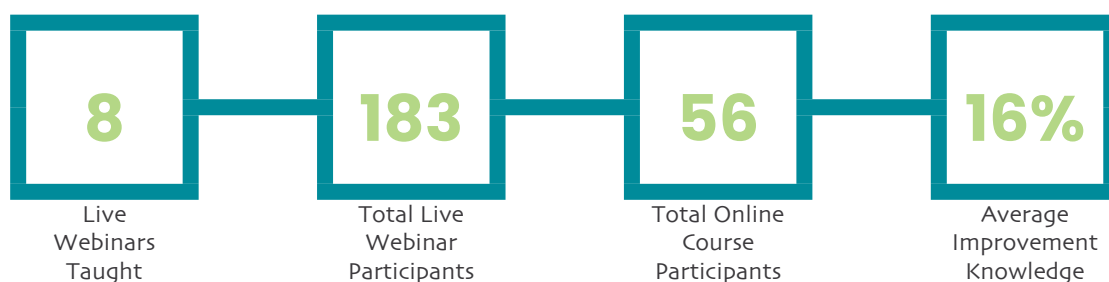
[Oregon Friendly Driver](#) is a course for people who drive that helps to educate on how to safely use the roadway with people who are walking and biking. Since the global COVID-19 pandemic necessitated restrictions for gathering in person, Commute Options migrated to Live Webinars and developed an Online Course. The Live Webinars, the Online Course, and the in-person class include pre- and post-tests. Participants learn about:



*Oregon Friendly Driver Live Webinar*

- The safest ways to utilize the roadway network
- The rules of the road for people driving, people riding bicycles and people walking
- How to avoid common crashes
- How people riding bikes use the road and how people driving can respond
- How to use roadway features: sharrows, bike lanes, and rapid flashing beacons

Last year 183 participants successfully completed the class, received an Oregon Friendly Driver certificate, and became a more friendly driver on our roadways.





# SafeRoutes

## Oregon Safe Routes To School



One of Commute Options' foundational programs, our [Safe Routes to School](#) program is part of a national network of providers bringing walking and biking education and encouragement to students. We do this through a combination of virtual and in-person walking and bike safety instruction across Central Oregon, as well as virtual and in-person encouragement events throughout the year. Commute Options is also a member of the Oregon Safe Routes to School Technical Assistance Provider team, which provides Safe Routes practitioners throughout the state with tools to build and expand their programming.

### Safe Routes to School Education Program

The 2021-2022 school year brought lots of opportunities to implement Safe Routes to School programming with schools back to in-person learning. With limitations on in-class access, the Safe Routes to School Coordinator offered virtual walking and biking education along with outdoor walking and biking education at several of the program schools. The virtual materials continue to be an excellent resource that allows the education curriculum to be shared to all students and families across Central Oregon.

### Spring Walk and Roll Challenge

We organized a Spring Walk and Roll Challenge that ran the entire month of May. Students recorded the number of trips they walked and rolled throughout the month to qualify for prizes. We awarded a Madras Elementary School student the grand prize - a new bike. The challenge was promoted at program schools and on our website to reach all students in Central Oregon.

### Fall Walk and Roll to School Day

On October 6, 2021, we promoted Walk and Roll to School Day to all of our program school communities and encouraged students and their families to get out and walk and roll.

### Winter Walk to School Day

On February 23, 2022, we celebrated Winter Walk to School Day to remind our students to keep walking through the seasons. We created a Winter Walking Bingo challenge and awarded participants Walk + Roll Prizes for participation.

Bicycle Education at Sisters Elementary School

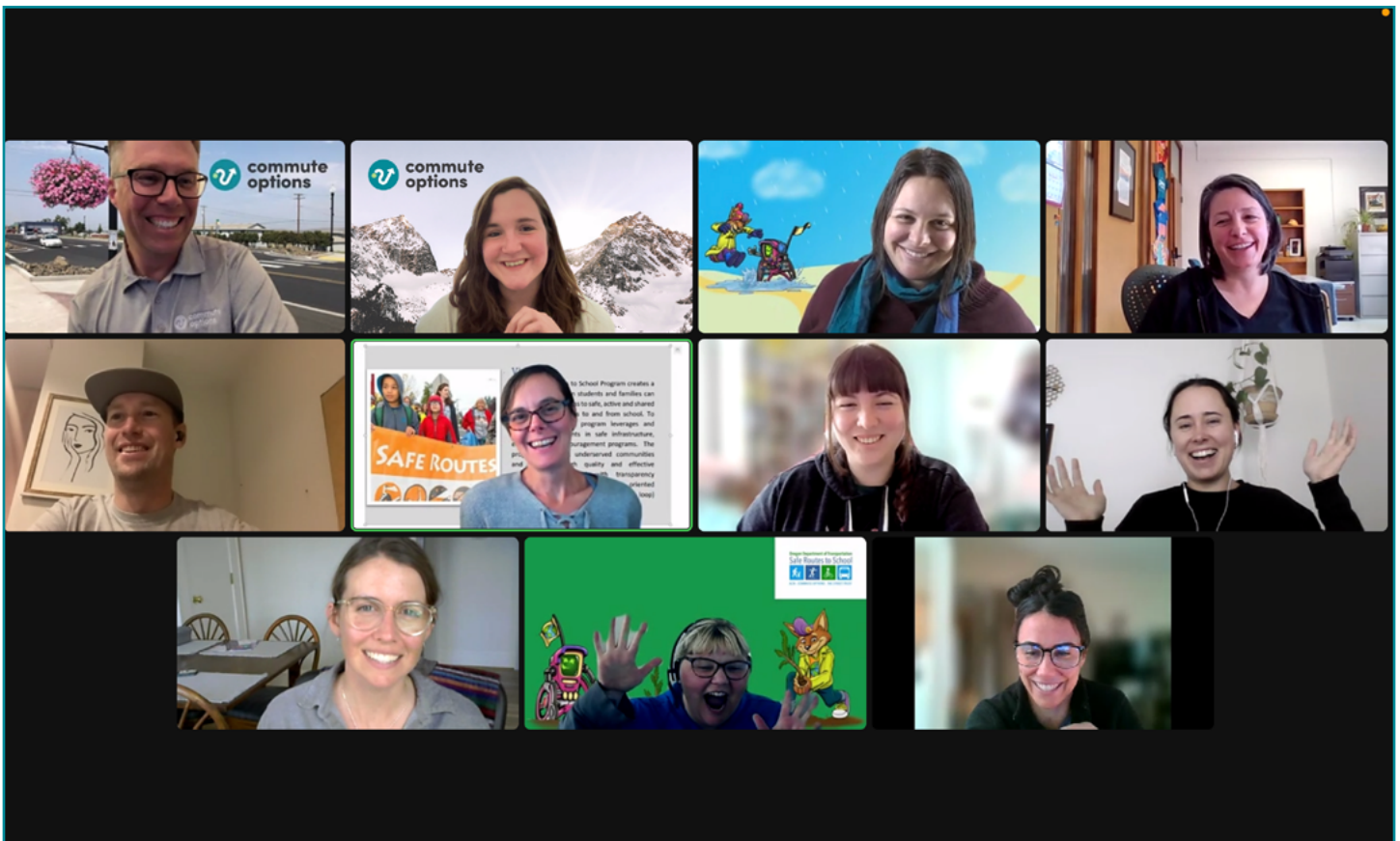


# Oregon Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School



ALTA • COMMUTE OPTIONS • THE STREET TRUST

In 2021, the Safe Routes to School Technical Assistance Provider Team introduced its statewide Hub model. Commute Options leads the Central, Eastern and Southern Oregon Hub, meeting with Safe Routes practitioners in group and one-on-one settings. Commute Options assisted practitioners throughout the Hub by providing customized programming tools, connecting practitioners to resources, developing statewide toolkits and hosting educational monthly webinars.



TAP Team (Left to Right): (top) Brian Potwin, Emily Dougan, Hannah Day-Kapell (Alta), AnnMarie Hingley (Cycle Oregon), (middle) Clint Culpepper (Cycle Oregon), LeeAnne Ferguson (ODOT), Lindsey Huber (the Street Trust), Nora Stoelting (Alta), (bottom) Katie Selin (Alta), Heidi Manlove (ODOT), Amanda Boyd (Alta)



# Walking School Bus

Let's Walk and Roll

The [Walking School Bus program](#) is a program funded through Oregon Safe Routes to School and volunteers. Many school districts around the country have organized special or one-off walking school bus events, but we are the only program that offers mapped walking routes and a legacy of successful program implementation that has shaped the way we plan the Walking School Bus program.

There was a high demand for the Walking School Bus Program this school year. COVID-19 caused significant staffing issues for schools and this resulted in the loss of many bus routes. Several informal Walking School Buses routes popped up that were led by parents and caregivers. This included several [Park and Walks](#) that assisted in alleviating traffic directly at school pick up and drop off areas. Commute Options coordinated one volunteer led Walking School Bus that operated 3 days a week for Bear Creek Elementary School. There continues to be a growing interest in and demand for the Walking School Bus Program. The value of the program has been elevated this year and significant expansion is envisioned in coming years.

*Bear Creek Elementary School Walking School Bus Group*





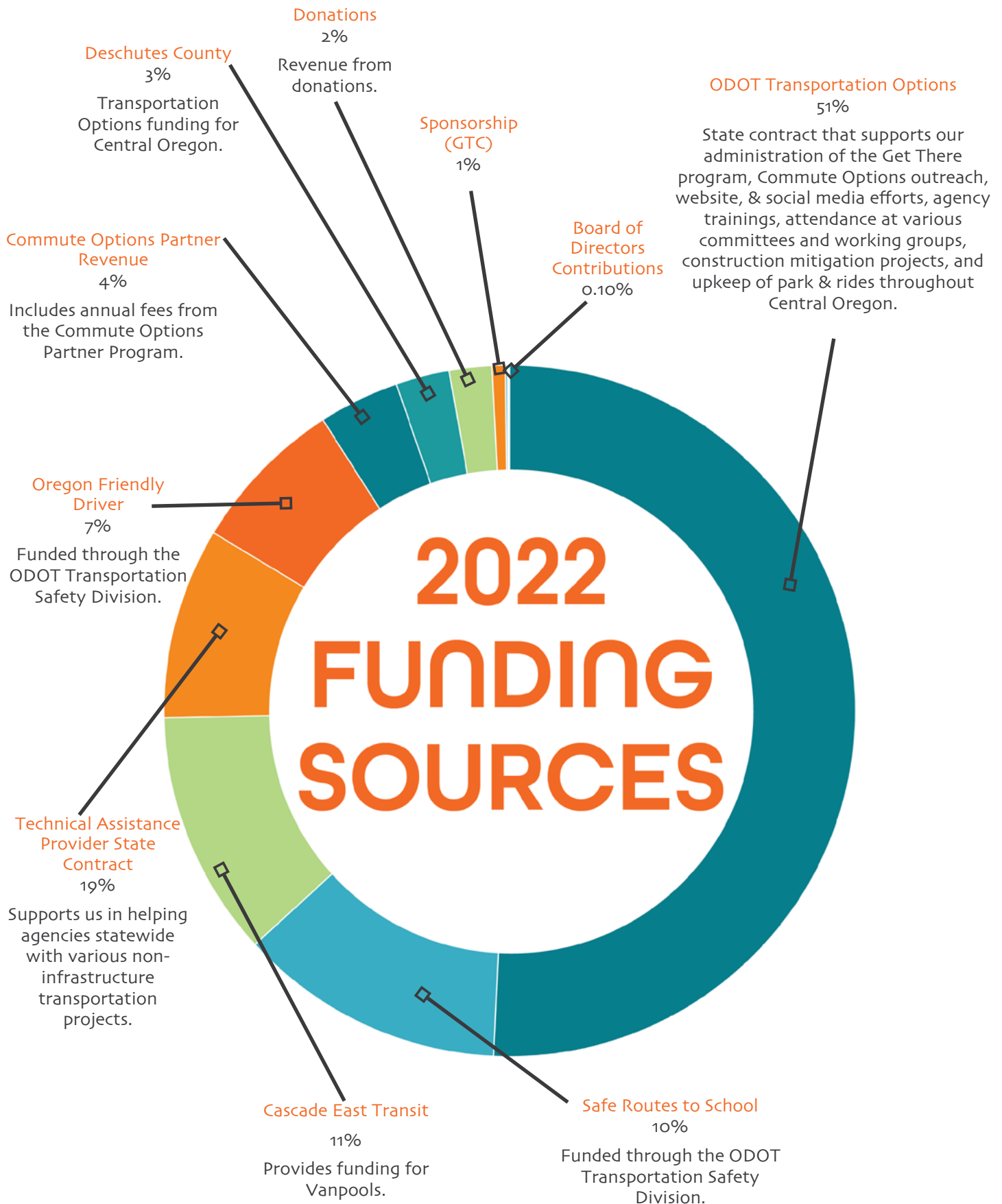


Commute Options and Commute with Enterprise introduced the [Vanpool](#) Subsidy program in mid-2020 through a partnership with Cascades East Transit. In 2021, we helped employees at the Deschutes National Forest, and Black Butte Ranch ride to and from work in a vanpool!

Vanpooling offers Central Oregon commuters a new option to get to and from work that saves workers time, money, and the stress of commuting. This program matches 5+ people with similar commutes and schedules to share a SUV or van. Our Vanpool subsidy program provides current model vehicles so riders can enjoy a comfortable and effortless way to and from work. The employer or the riders themselves pay a nominal fee monthly to cover the vehicle lease, gas, insurance, repairs and other vehicle costs. And to make it even more affordable, Commute Options kicks in \$500 per month/per van to reduce the monthly lease cost for vans in Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson counties. Employers benefit from vanpooling, too. It is an easy way to help the environment by controlling carbon emissions, reducing parking needs and the number of solo drivers on the road. Employees arrive to start their workday in a better state of mind. And the IRS provides tax incentives for employers and employees for vanpooling. It's a winning situation for employees, employers and traffic congestion too!

*Commute with Enterprise Van*







Commute Options Staff (Left to Right): Whitney Bennett, Brian Potwin, Kim Reynolds, and Emily Dougan

THANK YOU!

