

# Meeting Minutes

**Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation  
COACT  
March 9, 2017**

**Redmond Public Works Training Room  
243 E. Antler Ave., Redmond, OR**

---

**Members:**

Wayne Fording (Jefferson County), Charles Rushing (City of Culver), Jack Seley (City of Prineville), Karen Friend (Transit Rep), Jerry Brummer (Crook County), Bill Braly (Bicycle and Ped. Rep), Gary Judd (Aviation), Andrea Blum (City of Sisters), Jeff Monson (Transportation Options), Patrick Hanenkrat (City of Metolius), Jeff Hurd (City of Madras), Mike Folkestad (Jefferson County stakeholder), Charlie Every (Trucking Rep), Barb Campbell (City of Bend), George Endicott (City of Redmond), Melvin Ewing (Federal Agency Rep, BLM), Bill Moseley (City of Bend alternate), Tony Debone (Deschutes County), Dennis Scott (City of La Pine), Gary Farnsworth (ODOT).

**Guests:**

Suzanne Linford (Bend, Animal Migration Protection), Della Mosier (ODOT), David Amiton (ODOT), Joni Bramlett (ODOT), Nick Arnis (City of Bend), Richard Ross (CET RPTAC), Craig Honeyman (League of Oregon Cities (via phone)), Travis Brouwer (ODOT (via phone)), Chris Doty (Deschutes County), Andy Perry (Anderson Perry & Assoc.), Brandon Mahon, (Anderson Perry & Assoc.), Phil Stenbeck (City of Prineville).

**Staff:**

Scott Aycock (COIC), Julie Jameson, COIC

**1. Call to Order and Introductions**

Meeting called to order at 3:05pm. Introductions were made.

**2. Public Comments**

Suzanne Linford, Protect Animal Migration (PAM) and resident of Bend, requested to speak.

Suzanne spoke about the Protect Animal Migration citizens' group in Deschutes County that does community outreach and education regarding the need to provide habitat connectivity for mule deer and other wildlife through the construction of wildlife crossings. The group provides information to the community on the increasing number of wildlife/vehicle collisions, risks to motorists, and impacts on mule deer, other wildlife and ecosystems.

Highway 97 is vital to the movement of mule deer between summer and winter ranges. Currently, over 22,000 vehicles per day drive over Lave Butte through a large hot spot area for deer, elk and some other species. In July 2016, traffic volume increased to 24,000 vehicles per day.

There are over 1,000 collisions with wildlife per year between Bend and Sunriver – on state, county and City of Bend highways and roads. This does not include non-reported collisions or incidences when mortally wounded animals leave the roads to die off site. Each collision costs the public over \$6,500 per collision or \$6,500,000 per year. This does not include the costs associated with human injuries or fatalities. It is a conservative figure.

The group's priority for 2017 is to continue to build a diverse, large coalition focused on education on the need for wildlife crossings. Following the successful example of Washington State, they will be circulating a petition to have

wildlife connectivity and ecology be a priority in all transportation construction projects. Suzanne circulated various handouts to COACT.

### 3. COACT Business

#### A. January 12, 2017 Meeting Minutes (**ACTION**)

*Barb Campbell motioned to approve the January 12, 2017 meeting minutes. Jerry Brummer seconded. Minutes were approved by consensus.*

### 4. 2017 OR Legislative Session – Transportation Topics

#### A. Joint Committee on Transportation Preservation & Modernization

#### B. Transportation Legislation Update

Gary Farnsworth introduced Craig Honeyman, League of Oregon Cities (joined via phone).

Craig spoke to the current legislative effort to pass a transportation funding package, and noted that his presentation would be given from the city point of view. As noted, transportation funding is a priority and all efforts should culminate in a plan that is long-term, accountable, credible, and sustainable. It would be designed to preserve and modernize our transportation infrastructure to the economic benefit of the state of Oregon.

The current goals for new transportation investment include:

- Protecting Oregon’s investment in its existing bridges, streets, roads and highways
- Improving accountability in delivery of investments
- Preparing the transportation system for a Cascadia Zone earthquake
- Replacing old bridges to improve safety and resilience
- Improving public transportation
- Streamlining processes of transportation project development and implementation
- Making the system safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers
- Maximizing opportunities for federal participation
- Assuring equitable sharing among transportation system users of system costs
- Ensuring cost effective use of resources to meet transportation needs

The long-term investment program could include:

- Maintenance and preservation
- Seismic preparedness
- Traffic congestion
- Public transportation, safe routes to schools, bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Multimodal freight
- Accountability
- Revenue, fees, taxes, tolls and bonding

The Joint Committee will set priorities and balance the desire for new investments against the willingness to pay for the transportation investment program. They anticipate that transportation-related taxes and fees will be increased and that tolls may be used when feasible.

Craig then discussed potential additional investments in more detail. ODOT estimates additional investments are needed for Maintenance and Preservation:

- \$100 million more per year to maintain pavement conditions
- \$100 million more per year to replace bridges
- \$35 million more per year to replace and upgrade culverts
- \$50 million more per year to increase winter maintenance and expand incident response program

AOC estimates that counties collectively need an additional \$284 million for maintenance and \$97 million for county bridges. LOC estimates that cities collectively need an additional \$217 million to maintain streets and bridges.

Additional issues for consideration regarding additional investments:

- Priority corridors for ODOT's bridge and culvert strategies
- Should the package include specific highway preservation, bridge and culvert projects or should OTC select projects?
- Should city bridge replacement needs be estimated separately from street pavement needs? Should there be a separate local government bridge bond program?
- How should small cities and small counties be addressed?
- What provisions are made for transfer of road jurisdiction between counties and cities?
- Do orphan highways affect state pavement and maintenance needs?

Seismic Preparedness and potential additional investment:

- ODOT estimates that an additional investment of \$20 million per year is needed to deal with landslides on priority routes, and for advanced maintenance supplies, and bridges on local lifeline routes
- Neither cities nor counties have been assessed to date.

Craig continued to discuss Traffic Congestion. Potential additional investment:

- State Highways – \$100 million per year over next 20 years.
- Counties - \$100 million per year over next five years.
- Cities - \$3.7 billion in capital needs of all types, including projects on state highways within cities and city streets.

Additional issues for consideration regarding traffic congestion:

- Should this package include specific congestion-relief and/or highway-modernization projects or should the OTC select the projects?
- Should cost-benefit or return-on-investment be made a criterion for congestion relief projects?
- Should we have development of mega-projects?
- Should targeted surtaxes be implemented?
- Should cost-benefit be made a criterion when considering additional bike/pedestrian investments?

Regarding Public Transportation and Safety, potential added investment:

- ODOT estimates an additional investment of \$108 million per year to improve public transportation on all levels.
- ODOT estimates an additional investment to improve safety in the following areas:
  - \$35 million per year to enhance the ARTS program
  - \$20 million to fill bikeway and walkway gaps around schools and transit stops
  - \$6 million per year to enhance the Safe Routes to School program
- AOC estimates an additional \$25 million per year for safety
- The cities' 2016 Infrastructure Survey estimates \$3.7 billion in capital needs of all types, including safety projects.

A few additional issues for consideration:

- What role does state and federal policy play in reducing fare box recovery rates?
- Are there "education" and "enforcement" measures to improve safety to all system users?
- Should a safety program be pooled and targeted to address high priority safety hazards or should money for safety be distributed by formula?
- Should this package include specific public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian and safety projects or should the OTC select the projects?

Regarding Multimodal & Freight (aviation, port/marine, and rail), there were a few additional issues for consideration:

- Should *ConnectOregon* be made permanent?
- Do we have a way of measuring the return?
- Should provisions separate from *ConnectOregon* be made for multimodal “transload” facilities in Eastern Oregon?

Revenue:

The State Highway Fund is the primary funding mechanism (\$1 billion per year) for highways, roads and streets, and this is augmented by federal highway funds (\$0.5 billion per year). The funding sources for safety projects and bikeways and sidewalks are the same as those for highway, road and street projects. At least 1% of State Highway Fund money must be spent for safety, bike, and sidewalk projects.

Potential Revenue Sources:

The Governor’s Transportation Vision Panel and the Joint Committee worked on possible revenue and financing tools to be a part of a 2017 Transportation Plan. Options include:

- Fuel taxes – increase state gas taxes, state and/or local gas tax
- Motor vehicle related fees – increase driver and vehicle fees, local registration fees, studded tire tax
- Road use fees – roadway tolling, per-mile road user charges
- General revenues – lottery, property tax, employer/employee payroll tax, bicycle excise taxes
- Finance tools – bonding, public private partnerships

The package is unclear at this point, but the Legislature is diligently working on it.

George Endicott discussed an idea regarding separating out bike/pedestrian funding from, for instance, *ConnectOregon* because it doesn’t demonstrate economic benefits as easily as other modes and create its own funding source. Craig confirmed, but also noted that bike/pedestrian lanes that are a part of the roadway system can receive funds from the trust fund.

George Endicott asked a follow-up question regarding an 11 cent gas tax increase. He heard that one subcommittee passed this, but that the other three have not? Could this number go up? Craig confirmed that it could. Craig also noted that many different elements of the transportation package won’t be utilizing the gas tax because gas taxes can’t be spent on the projects they are responsible for – e.g. public transportation, multimodal, and off-roadway bike and ped projects. More creative financing will play a big part in the decision-making.

Gary introduced Travis Brouwer, Assistant Director of ODOT (joined us via phone)

Travis added some additional comments that Craig had not covered.

The Public Transportation and Safety Workgroup: this workgroup is trying to find better funding for the non-highway passenger modes. Currently these needs are funded by federal and local money, and there is very little state money allocated to them for transportation. New funding and distribution tools are in the works for both urban and rural areas across the state. In rural areas and between rural areas, we want to increase services to better serve the seniors and the disabled to better meet their transportation needs.

Bike lanes near schools and transit stops are priorities for safety. Funding for off-roadway trails is also needed. They are looking at moving funding between different highway modes and taking bicycle improvements and transit out of these funding buckets, e.g. *ConnectOregon*. For instance, bike versus rail projects are really different, so bike projects should probably come from a dedicated source.

Regarding maintaining roads and bridges; the Oregon Transportation Commission has stated that roads and bridges that are nearing the end of their life span are high priority. Most of our roads and bridges were built in the 1970's. The funding distribution to repair roads and bridges might be calculated by the population of cities versus smaller jurisdictions, vehicle use within the cities, etc. There might be automatic increases for some time (e.g., year one will be substantially different and the funding level will increase dramatically after a few years).

Question: Bill Moseley asked about COIC's proposed legislation allowing individual communities to stay in the regional transit system and self-determine if they want to tax themselves to have more service here in Central Oregon? Travis said this may get wrapped up in the larger funding package, or it could be a stand-alone bill.

Question: Michael Folkestad asked about the marine board water craft user fees, and noted that there seem to be fees for just about everything now - are there any thoughts about bicycles and utility trailers, etc. also having user fees? Travis said yes, there are conversations about creating a 5% excise tax for bikes to help pay for bike infrastructure.

Question: Jeff Monson asked to verify the 5% bike excise tax – did Travis say that it would generate \$2 Million? Travis confirmed and added that there has been \$3.5 million invested in the last few years into bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure.

There were no more questions. Gary thanked Craig and Travis for joining us on the phone.

There was an open discussion among the committee members regarding the tax revenues:

- Tony Debone discussed the proposed 11 cents per gallon which equates to \$300 million. It's hard to think of taxing ourselves, but then we need the funding to keep our transportation infrastructure in shape. It's a political process. Is that enough? Too much?
- George Endicott stated that the actual funding that would go to maintenance is around \$150 million; the other half goes to everything else. We are falling behind.
  - Dennis Scott agreed.
- Chris Doty continued the discussion on the gas tax and added that the only tax that makes sense is the transportation package.

Bill Moseley commented on the lottery money. This money used to be earmarked only for schools and economic development, but now the lottery is being used for everything.

George stated that this is the difference between Constitution vs. law. The Lottery was created through an act of law and is not in the Constitution, so the legislature can change where the money goes

Jeff Monson stated that he does not agree with taxing bikes. They don't take up space, nor do they have wear and tear on roadways, and they in fact reduce wear and tear because people use them instead of cars. We are taxing behavior that we want people to do.

George acknowledged Jeff's point but also noted that the roads are widened by 5 feet to accommodate bicycles and there is a cost for that. Barb Campbell interjected that she is also concerned about registering bikes but that she also would like to see more riders placed into bike safety classes and to register their bikes.

Gary mentioned that regardless of opinions, if we want to fund capital improvements there needs to be a sense of skin in the game. Even though bicycles are cheaper to run, the widening of roads and bridges to accommodate cyclists is an issue. How do we gain a consensus about getting a whole package to go through?

Dennis reminded the COACT about the carbon emissions and how that issue could still hold up the whole package

Karen talked about COIC's ORS 190 Transportation package; that it is currently moving on its own, and stated that she is optimistic about it.

### C. Central Oregon Joint Resolution

Gary introduced Chris Doty, Deschutes County. The Central Oregon Joint Resolution was a product of the City/County Administrator's group that COIC has been convening. Most everyone has passed the resolution, although some communities have modified it a little bit. In the end it was all positive.

Scott Aycock added that Culver and Metolius have not participated in this yet, and that he will follow up with their reps at the end of the meeting.

Gary said it's probably going to be a rush for ACT input regarding funding package legislation towards the end of the session. The timeframe looks like early June for deliberation through end of the session. George commented that we need to be primed and ready to react in the funding game if they come asking for specific projects to fund. Gary noted that there is an interesting question posed in the Joint Committee framework - should the legislators determine the projects or allow the OTC, regions and/or communities determine the projects?

## 5. Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)

Gary introduced Della Mosier and David Amiton, ODOT – (handouts were distributed)  
Della debriefed us on the 2016 Federal Lands Access Program.

### A. Program Status Update

In the 2016 funding cycle, Oregon was allocated a funding package of about \$36 million annually for FY 2019, 2020, and 2021. The program funds projects located on Federal Lands Access Transportation Facilities, which include public highways, roads, bridges, trails and transit systems that are located on, adjacent to, or provide access to federal lands for which title or maintenance responsibility is vested in state, county, tribal, or local government.

### B. Look Ahead to Upcoming Solicitation

The funding comes around in two-year cycles, so we are thinking about how we can prepare. According to the 2016 Proposal Evaluation Criteria, FLAP applications should focus on these types of projects:

- Safety – Improvement of the transportation network for the safety of its users.
- Preservation – Improvement of the transportation network for economy of operation and maintenance.
- Recreation and Economic Development – utilization, protection, and administration of the federal lands and its resources.
- Mobility – Mobility of users and continuity of the transportation network servicing the federal lands and its dependent communities.
- Sustainability and Environmental Quality – Protection and enhancement of the environment associated with the federal lands and its resources.
- Readiness and Support – Project readiness, local support, financial support, capacity, and project delivery.

Region 4 projects were awarded funding for capital improvements, enhancement, planning and surface preservation. Relative to other regions, Region 4 was awarded funding for a diverse set of project types. Within COACT, projects awarded FLAP funding in the 2016 cycle included:

- Bend Haul Road Trail Improvements
- Cascade Lakes Highway Bicycle Facilities Evaluation and Master Plan
- Cascade Lakes Highway Chip Seal
- George Millican Road Chip Seal

- Hwy 372 Haul Trail Undercrossing Project
- Perry South Campground Connection
- US 20 & Barclay (Sisters) Roundabout
- US 97: Multi-use Trail Planning Study (Baker/Knott Road – Lava Lands Visitor Center)
- US 97: S Century Dr. to USFS Boundary

Chris Doty was asked to make any additional comments on the awarded chip seal funding. Chris stated that the chip seal funding is very useful and mentioned that the county has another project – a study to fund a needs analysis of bike needs along the Cascade Highway.

Gary talked about the roundabout in Sisters. This is the first roundabout in Sisters and the first roundabout on the state highway system in Central Oregon.

Wayne Fording spoke for Jefferson County. He said that they received the letter of award, and that they are still working on the contract. They had a grant awarded for campgrounds along the corridor and expect they will be finished by 2018.

There were 14 projects throughout Region 4. Total funding amount came to \$14 million, which is an average of \$1 million per project. It ends up looking pretty smart that we got a lot of projects funded. The largest project funding awarded in the state was the \$30 million historic Mitchell Point Columbia River Trail. Going forward we may have projects that big, so thinking about distributing that across the state we need to estimate how much funding might be available to us in the future.

The call for projects during the 2016 FLAP funding cycle went out in 4/5/16 and final applications were due 7/1/16. Using this as a baseline, a 2018 call for projects of 4/3/18 and final application due date of 6/29/18 is a reasonable estimate. ODOT will have a draft list by August 2017 for potential projects.

Question: Where can we get more information on the criteria? Della handed out the 2016 Proposal Evaluation Criteria sheet.

Chris Doty commented that the Federal Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program isn't looking good, which will affect County roads programs. This will be a considerable loss of funding, and FLAP could help provide funding for these areas. Deschutes County will be OK, but counties like Crook County will be in a rough state due to loss of budget.

Melvin Ewing, BLM, discussed another process involving long range transportation funding on roads accessing BLM lands. He is pulling together a list of roads with issues, safety issues and concerns, or operations issues. He's looking for state and local roads - names, latitude/longitude, with known issues. The purpose is to identify the hotspots of where to use federal funds.

*Scott stated that he would email the list to the members in case they wanted to provide feedback to Melvin. Gary continues with saying this is good information for us to use going forward.*

## **6. Area Roundtable**

### **A) Discussion of Issues, Needs, Projects, etc.**

Gary Judd talked about the CORE airport grant program. Results came in (see handout of airport projects that were funded). As a reminder, this grant program is funded through a new aviation fuel tax and has generated \$1.7 million so far. Gary stated that the airports are really pleased with the outcome. All but two of the Central Oregon projects were funded, although Sunriver and Lake Billy Chinook were just below the cutline. Priority one was projects that would

receive FAA funding – which makes the grant leverage FAA \$ at a 10-to-one ratio. All of these projects were funded. Priority two is projects that address safety needs, and all of these projects were funded. Priority three is projects serving economic development needs, and Sunriver was the first on that list to not receive funding.

Michael Folkestad asked about the skydivers' issues at the Sisters Airport. Gary Judd replied there is an issue of the noise with low flying aircraft at every airport.

Jerry Brummer made a comment about the gas tax. The news stated there even with higher gas taxes in other states that Oregon has higher gas prices. Will fuel prices actually go up with the new tax? Barb commented on this. Gas prices are a mystery. It was noted that gas is cheaper in Washington, even though they have higher gas taxes, because the refineries are located there.

Gary asked Scott Aycock to show YouTube video, "Prineville Freight Depot – *ConnectOregon* Funding", which was a great synopsis of what can happen with the ConnectOR program - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqY5xh2nG0A>

Charlie commented on truck driver issues as stated in the new Trucking Magazine. Drivers are having a hard time meeting the new hours of service rules – particularly with the new Electronic Log Devices. Used to be when your 11 hours were up you pull off and try to find a parking area, sometimes that would require 15 minutes longer and that wouldn't be recorded. Now, the logs catch it, and if they are audited, they would be fined. Drivers are quitting due to the new rules. It is going to take more trucks to do what we are doing now with less. Other issues are with the emissions.

Karen Friend asked if there is data that supports the safety benefits of the new hours of service rules. Per Charlie – not yet. This rule does not go into effect until December 2017.

**Chair Wayne Fording adjourned the meeting at 4:54pm**