

COIC – Central Oregon Strategic Transportation Options Plan (COSTOP)

I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Purpose

The purpose of the COSTOP project is the development of a long range strategic plan to guide local and inter-community public transportation options in Central Oregon to the year 2030 and beyond. Following adoption by COIC as the guiding long-range strategic plan for public transportation investments in the region, a plan for adoption and implementation by local jurisdictions will follow.

Goals and Objectives

The goal is for local governments and the State to meet the year 2030 demand for inter-community trips through cost effective solutions that include investments in public transit and supportive long term land use policies that support transit, as well as other viable transportation alternatives to single occupant vehicles. It is expected that through an analysis of a variety of Scenarios additional outcomes, such as transit supportive development patterns, reduced infrastructure costs and a reduction in greenhouse gases, will be the product of the goals and policies developed through this project. Also, it is the hope that this document will aid local jurisdictions in prioritizing capital expenditures and efficiently using resources to meet the future intercommunity travel demand over the next 20 years.

Process

The project will be locally driven, is supposed to rely on existing data and travel demand projections, and will examine a number of possible scenarios to meet the goals and objectives. It will include public input by utilizing a Policy Group (the COIC Board), a Technical Advisory Committee (staff with technical expertise from member jurisdictions) and a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (service providers, interested groups, etc.) to provide information, guidance and feedback throughout the project. The committees will be comprised on local elected officials, technical staff, representatives from local interest groups and citizens.

Implementation

A plan is only as good as its ability to be implemented. Once a preferred scenario (or a range of prioritized options) is decided upon, a 20-year implementation plan will be completed – with measures for sustaining the process and updating the plan. A very important part of the implementation plan will be working with the Policy Group and Technical Advisory committee to ensure the continued practical and political feasibility of the plan. The hope is that the goals and policies of the plan will be adopted by each jurisdiction and that intergovernmental coordination to physically implement the plan will occur.

II. CURRENT STATUS

The IGA for the project was executed on July 15th, 2010 by ODOT – that is the date to proceed from which grant compliance is calculated. The tasks that have been or are currently being completed include:

Task 1

- Establishment of the three working groups and committees (PG, TC and SG), and to determine their roles. Regularly scheduled meetings for updates and input from the groups are a requirement of the project.
- Creation of project web page (as part of the COIC web page) with up to date project information and documents

Task 2

- Methodology Review and Summary: Identification of the data sources and creation of the methodology, estimates, and assumptions to be used for preparation of the Technical Reports and Alternative Scenario Analysis. This also includes a general assumption of the types of conclusions that can be drawn from the data given the broad nature of the project and the expected “30,000 foot view” of the issues. The methodology and data sources were reviewed by the TC and the Transportation Planning Analysis Unit of ODOT and were found to be suitable for the purposes of the overall project.
- Technical Report One – Baseline Regional Transportation Related Emissions: This report will establish baseline year (1990 and 2010) data for GHG emissions to be used for comparative purposes in the forthcoming Alternative Scenario Analysis.

III. NEXT STEPS

Over the next 5 months, the baseline data, assumptions and estimates will be used to create Technical Reports Two (2030 Regional Intercommunity Trip Forecast and Infrastructure Estimate) and Three (Alternative Scenario Development and Cost Analysis). Technical Report Two will be conducted on the presumption that there is no change in land use patterns or mix of trip modes. Technical Report Three will explore cost related issues for various scenarios as decided upon by the Policy Group and Technical Committee. However, the costs scenario analysis must include a Commuter Rail Analysis/component, and a GHG emissions analysis for each scenario.

The last 6 months of the project will be spent developing public policy with the PG and TC (and citizen input), as well as input from COACT and the Bend MPO, based on the following (by utilizing the data accumulated through the previously completed tasks):

- Economic feasibility
- GHG emissions reduction
- Subjective political implications
- The capacity of the local jurisdictions to institute the policies individually and collaboratively
- Any other criteria as determined appropriate by the PG

Ultimately, at the conclusion of the report, an Implementation Plan will be developed to actualize the Preferred Scenario over the next 20 years according to the COIC Board adopted polices.