

Meeting Minutes
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**Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation  
COACT  
September 8, 2011**

**Members:**

John Hatfield (Jefferson County), Alan Unger (Deschutes County), Mike McCabe (Crook County), Gary Farnsworth (ODOT), Wendy Holzman (City of Sisters), Karen Friend (Cascades East Transit/COIC), Mike Morgan (City of Madras), Gus Burrell (City of Madras), Ken Mullen (City of La Pine), Dana Cork (BLM-Prineville), Travis Wells (Warm Springs), Peggy Fisher (Ochoco/Deschutes NF), Lonny Macy (Warm Springs), Kathie Eckman (City of Bend), Eileen Stein (City of Sisters) and Cheryl Howard (Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee).

**Guests:**

Scott Edelman (City of Prineville), Jerry Brummer (City of Prineville), Tammy Baney (Deschutes County), Jon Heacock (ODOT), Peter Russell (Deschutes County), George Kolb (Deschutes County), David Brandt (City of Redmond), Patrick Hanenkrat (City of Metolius), Paul Bertagna (City of Sisters), Pauline Hardie (City of Sisters), Butch Hansen (ODOT), Scott Beaird (Kittelson & Associates), Ana Jovanovic (ODOT- Region 4), Joel McCarroll (ODOT-Region 4), Nick Snead (City of Madras) and Mike Lovely (BMPO CAC, SBNA, RTAC)

**Staff:**

Andrew Spreadborough and Misty Winner (Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council)

**Call to Order**

COACT Chair John Hatfield called the meeting to order @ 3:06. Introductions were made.

**General Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**COACT Business**

**Mike McCabe moved approval on the July 14 meeting minutes. Alan Unger seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by consensus.**

Andrew Spreadborough announced that the COIC Administration, Community and Economic Development and Loans Departments have moved to COIC's new Hawthorne Station location in Bend. COIC's Transportation Department, including the Cascade East Transit and Cascades East Ride Center, will remain in this building until January 2012. The November and January COACT meetings will be held at the current location (2363 SW Glacier Place, Redmond). After the COIC transportation programs move to the new Transit Maintenance and Operations Facility at the Redmond Public Works Site in February, we will need to find a new Redmond meeting location for COACT. We have a couple options, including Redmond City Hall. More details to follow.

**New Business****Summary of COACT Meeting with Lynn Peterson**

Gary Farnsworth stated that he appreciated the Lynn Peterson meeting participation from COACT members, and said that he hoped to continue the dialogue regarding the future of ODOT and the Area Commissions. Alan Unger stated that Lynn Peterson is a trained engineer and former county commissioner, so she is aware of transportation-related issues. COACT needs to continue to educate the Governor's office on issues of importance to this region.

Scott Edelman asked about the reference to design standards revisions within the meeting minutes. Gary replied that these issues are under review, and that there are no easy answers. He said that there were a few folks at the meeting that commented on issues related to mobility standards. ODOT is aware of the concerns/issues, but noted the need to continue to balance mobility with safety. Mike Morgan stated that community development starts first with jobs and safety. Gary stated that this has been a long time concern for ODOT and it is about balance for both the community and ODOT.

Gary said that given the discussion at the Lynn Peterson regarding a greater focus on other modes, he has been considering discussing with the group the possible elevation of ex officio COACT members to full voting members. That would include transit, bike & pedestrian, aviation, BLM and USFS. He suggested that COACT discuss this in greater detail at a future meeting. Alan Unger asked Karen Friend her opinion. Karen answered that she feels it would make a big difference and it would help strengthen the CET presence in the community and at other meetings.

#### **Discussion with Oregon Transportation Commissioner Tammy Baney**

Chair John Hatfield introduced Deschutes County Commissioner and recent Oregon Transportation Commission appointee Tammy Baney. Tammy commented on the success of COACT as a regional collaboration group, and that the state will continue to look to the ACTs for guidance. She thanked the COACT members for their hard work and continued commitment.

Tammy Baney said that the Oregon Transportation Commission will be going over their work plan in October. She noted that OTC Chair Gail Achterman had to step down, and she is unsure what this will mean in terms of OTC leadership. Chair Achterman has asked Tammy to take an active lead on work plan items related to governance (how the OTC works with local government), and the road user fee study, with a focus on legislation.

She said that Governor Kitzhaber met with the OTC in August. The Governor presented six principles/questions to the OTC:

1. Do we have the right group of individual at the table at the beginning of the process to define the problem and solution together?
2. Should ODOT manage or own the facility or would it be better managed for a diverse set of outcomes by another agency of jurisdiction?
3. Are we creating programs that don't simply invest in the future of the transportation system, but meet a multitude of community objectives?
4. Does each decision move us closer to a sustainable, safe, lower carbon, multimodal system?
5. Does the decision maximize benefit for the least cost under the limited resources?
6. Does the decision or policy move us closer to finding a more rational transportation funding mechanism for the future?

Gary Farnsworth stated that at times the processes between the OTC and COACT has not always been smooth. For example, there have been times when the OTC is requesting feedback from the ACT,

but the turnaround time is too short to accommodate the ACT meeting schedule. Gary asked how the ACT can support greater consistency in how we interact with the OTC. Tammy answered that this is very critical piece to the relationship, and stated that she is aware that there needs to be changes made. She indicated that she plans to play an active role in engaging with COACT on an ongoing basis.

Eileen Stein said that the OTC can play an important role in helping address local problems. As an example, there is a need in Sisters to balance community interests/livability with freight traffic. Alan Unger commented on the importance of the ACT in providing a unified regional voice on transportation issues. He mentioned challenges with the Transportation Planning Rule and ODOT funding issues. Gus Burril said that Madras has similar concerns regarding balancing freight mobility with community livability, and that the OTC needs to look at rebalancing safety. He also noted limitations on the ability of local governments to raise revenues. David Brandt said that the freight industry needs to help find solutions. Nick Snead said that he is a member of the committee looking at changes to the TPR. He said that the TPR is one of the greatest barriers to economic development. He said that other economic development issues include the availability of workforce and retail leakage (of which the TPR plays an important role). Alan Unger said that the recent Regional Solutions Advisory Committee, Mike Hollern had reminded attendees that there are a lot of good aspects to the Transportation Planning Rule, and that the goal is to balance the impacts of the TPR. Gary said that freight should not be viewed as a competing interest; the hard work is in achieving balance. He suggested consideration of a freight representative on COACT to foster better understanding and collaboration on this issue.

Tammy Baney said that COACT's hard work and focus to better serve the communities in Central Oregon has not gone unnoticed. She again thanked everyone for their continued commitment and she is looking forward to working together. She noted the recognition that we need to think differently about how to solve problems.

## **Presentations**

### **US 97 Bend North Corridor Project – Draft EIS**

Jon Heacock, ODOT Region 4 Tech Center Manager, provided a presentation on the status of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the US 97 Bend North Corridor Solutions project. He opened by displaying a map of the project area, and summarized key corridor components. He talked about the multitude of alternatives that were analyzed throughout the DEIS process. The OTC had provided direction to Region 4 that the project should look beyond the immediate needs for improving the highway corridor, and should focus on a long-term solution. He said that transportation studies indicated the need for a new transportation corridor within the project area. After review of the alternatives, two East Corridor alternatives were selected for further study. He said that the DEIS is currently in the public comment phase. The final EIS will include a “preferred alternative” for the corridor.

Jon reviewed the East Corridor alternatives in detail, describing connections to the local road network, interchange locations, and other aspects. He said that the draft DEIS comment period ends September 12<sup>th</sup> and ODOT welcomes any/all feedback – [www.us97solutions.org](http://www.us97solutions.org)

Gary Farnsworth reiterated that this process was taken in response to direction from the OTC. He added that the “no build” alternative could be the DEIS outcome. He said the focus of the process has

been on how we solve the congestion and safety problems in the corridor. Kathie Eckman noted the importance of the project for economic development efforts. She said the City would be submitting a letter in favor of the DS1 alternative. She said that it minimizes impacts, and supports the City's interest in developing Juniper Ridge. Tammy Baney asked how Juniper Ridge factored into the DEIS process. Jon Heacock replied that about 500 acres of Juniper Ridge was included within the transportation model, and included a reasonable projection of growth in the area. ODOT used the Bend MPO model for this project.

Gary said that the process was scaled back mid-way through in response to cost concerns, and the focus has been on developing a functional corridor. Alan Unger said that the County's challenge is paying for necessary county road improvements in the project area. Tammy Baney expressed concern about the impacts on neighborhoods within and around the project area, and the lack of funding for large projects. Jon Heacock discussed the ability to build the alternatives in segments over time as funding becomes available.

### **TripCheck Local Entry**

Joel McCarroll, ODOT Region 4 Traffic Manager, provided a powerpoint presentation on TripCheck Local Entry functions. He said that TripCheck Local Entry is a tool that allows local agencies to input planned and real-time information about their roadways into the TripCheck website, so that information can be disseminated to travelers. He said the site is located at: [www.tripcheck.com](http://www.tripcheck.com)

TripCheck was developed to provide more comprehensive traveler information for roadways. Joel reviewed the TripCheck features, and then reviewed how the local entry function works. He closed his presentation by summarizing why the local entry is of significance to local jurisdictions: support for operational objectives, safety benefit, and is a customer service tool that is a very low cost solution for collecting and sharing traveler data, and is available 24/7.

Dana Cork asked how detailed the maps are, and can they be used to identify forest fire locations. Joel stated that they are detailed/accurate and there are ways to import links, pictures, etc. Under the "type" section there is an "emergency response" link, but currently fire is not an option to list.

Joel ended the discussion by saying that if anyone had questions and/or feedback to please contact him. Elieen Stein suggested that Joel and Gary should think about setting up a regional training for staff. Gary agreed to look into developing an orientation session.

Meeting adjourned at 5:01 PM.