

Meeting Minutes

Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation COACT March 11, 2010

Members:

Dennis Luke (Deschutes County), John Hatfield (Jefferson County), Lynn Lundquist (Crook County), Lonny Macy (Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs) George Endicott (City of Redmond), Gary Farnsworth (ODOT), Lon Kellstrom (City of Sisters), Eileen Stein (City of Sisters), Dana Cork (BLM), Donald Greiner (City of La Pine), Peggy Fisher (USFS), Alan Unger (Deschutes County), and Jeff Monson (Commute Options).

Guests:

Travis Wells (City of Madras), Janet Brown (Governor's Office), Eli Ashley and Cheryl Howard (Deschutes County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee), Scott Smith (City of Prineville), David Brandt and Chris Doty (City of Redmond), Tom Blust (Deschutes County), Casey Bergh (Kittelson and Associates), Nick Arnis (City of Bend), Jim Bryant (ODOT), and Karen Friend (Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council/Cascades East Transit). Michael Bufalino (ODOT Freight Mobility) attended by phone.

Staff:

Andrew Spreadborough and Sharon Nance (Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council).

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Dennis Luke called the meeting to order and introductions were made. Dennis Luke stated that Congressman Walden announced today that he will be joining other House Republicans in not submitting any earmarks this session.

General Public Comment

None noted.

Requests for COACT Membership

Andrew Spreadborough informed members that two COACT membership requests have been received. They are:

- 1) Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and
- 2) Cascades East Transit

He stated that the COACT Operating Guidelines provide COACT the ability to appoint ex-officio representatives (non-voting). To accommodate these requests, Andrew distributed a revised "Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation (COACT) Operating Guidelines, Adopted March 17, 1999 and revised March 11, 2010." The revision expands the ex-officio representation to include 1 Transit Representative and 1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Representative.

Cheryl Howard and Eli Ashley gave an overview of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Dennis Luke asked if they would consider including three additional slots on their board one for Crook and Jefferson County and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Cheryl Howard responded affirming that the request could be accommodated. She stated that Eli Ashley will be the

representative with herself being the alternate. **Lynn Lundquist moved to approve the ex-officio membership of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. George Endicott seconded. Motion was approved by consensus.**

At the request of the Board Chair, Karen Friend gave a brief overview of the Cascades East Transit (CET), a regional coordinated transportation system for the three Central Oregon counties. George Endicott voiced his support of CET's membership. Due to the increased need and emphasis on mass transit, they are a valuable entity to have at the table. **George Endicott moved to approve the ex-officio membership of Cascades East Transit. John Hatfield seconded. Motion was approved by consensus.**

Andrew Spreadborough explained the proposed changes to the COACT Operating Guidelines. They include:

- 1) Under Structure and Membership, Ex-Officio Representation – Expanding Ex-Officio Representation to include 1 Transit Representative and 1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Representative. During discussion, it was also recommended to update the Local State Legislators from 3 members to “Local State Legislators that are in the COACT District”.
- 2) Meeting Schedule – Change the current sentence to read “COACT meets every two months at a regular, established meeting time”.

Lynn Lundquist moved to approve the above changes to the COACT Operating Guidelines. George Endicott seconded. Motion was approved by consensus.

Old Business

January 14, 2010 Minutes

No corrections were noted. **Minutes were approved by consensus.**

COACT November, 2010 Meeting Rescheduled

Andrew Spreadborough presented a revised meeting schedule for COACT. The revised schedule reflects a COACT meeting in October instead of November due to the conflict with the Veterans Day Holiday which falls on the second Thursday in November. There would not be a full COACT Board meeting in the months of November or December. Eileen Stein asked if this schedule would conflict with the STIP process. Gary Farnsworth responded stating that he will check the schedule and get back with the Board. Dennis Luke requested that this be brought back to the next meeting to allow members to check their schedules for possible conflicts.

Oregon Special Session Legislative Update

Art Schlack from the Association of Oregon Counties joined the meeting via phone call, and reported on the following bills.

Senate Bill 1019 – This was the fix for registration of heavy vehicles to allow the distribution of 50-30-20. This was an omission from the bill that passed in 2009. Added to the bill was to require signage where there is photo radar next to school zones.

Senate Bill 1024 – This bill deals with access management. There was concern primarily from the development community about ODOT and access management. The bill had some major impacts; it was amended during the session in order to get ODOT's support. The section of the statute that was amended now applies to state and county highways. Example – where a new road approach

permit was needed because of a change in use, it was only under ODOT rule now it is in statute and has increased the number of “change of use” without requiring a road approach permit. In addition, they will have a continued discussion with industry, ODOT and local governments and are assured a place at the table as they continue to discuss access management looking forward to the 2011 session.

Senate Bill 1059 – Green House Gas Reduction Bill has also gone through changes. The most significant piece of change to the bill is in Section 2 requiring ODOT to adopt a statewide strategy for the reduction of green house gas as it relates to transportation. This change could have implications on a statewide basis and beyond the MPOs. In addition, this bill requires ODOT and LCDC to take a look at establishing strategies for the reduction of green house gas and also some targets for the MPOs beyond the Metro area. Section 7 requires local governments within the MPOs to examine what changes they could do in the short term either in terms of the transportation plan or other kinds of strategies that might be implemented in the short term to reduce green house gas. Initially, both LOC and AOC identified some fiscal impacts to the cities and counties within the MPOs. By changing the language in Section 7 to say that the local governments shall consider reductions and amendments to the plan would remove the fiscal impacts that were identified. Senate Bill 1059 passed but it does require ODOT and LCDC to come back in 2011 to report on the fiscal impact and move forward with other requirements.

Senate Bill 1077 – This bill consisted of informing the gas dealers that they are only required to post the lowest grade gas that you can see from the street with other grades being posted within the service station.

Dennis Luke asked if the 1992 date is still included in Senate Bill 1059. Art responded affirming that the date remains in the bill. Dennis Luke stated that with Deschutes County being a part of Bend’s MPO, he asked if Deschutes County and the City of Bend will need to start looking at the 1992 air standards. Art will research the question and provide a response in the future. Gary Farnsworth inquired about the status of signing Senate Bill 1059. Art responded that the Governor’s Office has worked diligently on Senate Bill 1059 and it is expected to be signed by the Governor.

Gary Farnsworth added additional comments on the current Senate Bills:

Senate Bill 1019 – Included in Senate Bill 1019 is an amendment permitting oversize loads to address bike lane issues. This amendment allows oversized loads to encroach on bike lanes. The bill also requires the commission to do grants or loans to rural airports under ConnectOregon III. He reported that there was an announcement that removes the requirement in ConnectOregon III where a recipient was required to pay the department 2% of the project cost. This action only affects ConnectOregon III.

Senate Bill 1024 – This bill puts the department back to work with stakeholders to prepare for the 2011 legislative session. ODOT will also develop standards that will allow for closer access space in highways that are traveled less than 5,000 vehicles per day. This will allow the department more flexibility.

Senate Bill 1031 – The bill provided clarification on destination resorts. In addition, it requires traffic impact analysis as part of a destination resort proposal.

Senate Bill 1059 – DLCD will be involved in the rule making along with ODOT, DEQ, and Department of Energy.

Senate Bill 3379 – The invites have been sent out to the working committee; still waiting on responses but expect the first meeting to be held in early April. A consultant is on board and is currently making calls, conducting interviews and developing a website.

Art Schlack informed members that the “Buy America” Bill died in the Legislature. Dennis Luke added that this bill would have required the use of America made products in any building as long as it didn’t increase the cost by more the 25%. Proponents of the bill will continue to work on improving the bill for further consideration. Art reported on the status of the initiative that was filed to require a vote on transportation taxes and vehicle fees was appealed to the Oregon Supreme Court. The Oregon Supreme Court is currently reviewing the issue. Until the court approves the initiative, the sponsors are not allowed to start collecting signatures. In order for the initiative to be placed on the ballot, 110,000 signatures are required. Art stated that ODOT presented the commission with some legislative concepts including a placeholder for a ConnectOregon IV.

Dennis Luke announced that both he and George Endicott have been appointed to Local Officials Advisory Committee for the Director of DLCD.

ConnectOregon III Process Update, Regional Review Committee Appointments

Gary Farnsworth distributed a handout entitled “ConnectOregon III Timeline and COACT Process”. Dennis Luke stated that the Executive Committee has request that Scott Cooper, former Crook County Judge who has experience with ConnectOregon I and II process, be one of the three Region 4 representatives at the State level. Deschutes County has volunteered to cover the cost of his travel, room and food expenses.

Gary Farnsworth explained that a regional priority list will be compiled by weighing projects from the southern region, the northern region and projects in the central region since these projects are in ODOT Region 4. There are 10 applicants within Region 4. Gary Farnsworth gave a brief description of each of the projects. Gary Farnsworth reviewed the timeline for the ConnectOregon III process:

3/11/2010 – COACT Review Process Check-in, Project Submittal Updates, Regional Review Meeting Delegates/Preparation

3/24/2010 – Modal Committee Reports delivered to Regional Review Committees (when we can begin review/discussion/recommendation, ODOT Region 4 staff begins review recommendations)

4/8/2010 – COACT Executive Board (1:30) and COACT TAC (3:00) scheduled to meet

4/16/2010 – Regional Review Committee in Bend (10:00-Noon, Deschutes County Services Building).

5/5/2010 – Due date for Regional Review Committee must complete their work and submit the required documents to the ConnectOregon staff

6/10-11/2010 – Final review Committee Develops Recommendations

7/2010 – OTC public hearing on recommendations

8/2010 – OTC approval of projects

8-12/2010 – Agreements executed, implementation

He explained that the modal committees will review and evaluate the ConnectOregon III applications. Upon completion of the review process, the modal committees will submit reports prioritizing regional projects. Their recommendations have as much weight as the regions, and modal representatives will have a seat at the negotiation table at the state level. Gary Farnsworth explained that deliberations on the applications should not take place until after March 24 when the modal committee reports are delivered to the Regional Review Committee. This presents an issue since COACT does not have a full Board meeting scheduled until mid-May which is after the due date of May 5 for the submission of the Regional Report. To address this issue, it is suggested to convene a COACT Executive Committee and COACT TAC meeting on 4/8/10. Gary suggested that staff would evaluate the Central Oregon projects using the review instructions, develop recommendations with the TAC, and then take those recommendations to the Regional Review Committee meeting.

In answer to a question, Gary explained that each project will be scored on its technical merit and those scores will be used to compare and rank the Central Oregon projects. Once projects are prioritized in each ACT (northern, southern and central), representatives from each ACT will meet to compile the Regional Review Committee's priority list for Region 4.

Gary referred members to a page of the handout explaining the committee evaluation process: each ACT will bring their ranked projects to the Regional Review Committee, each applicant will have an opportunity to present their projects, and the committee will formulate a Regional Project Priority List. Representatives will submit the Regional Review Committee's Priority List for review, evaluation and selection at the State level.

Dennis Luke asked the preference of the Board 1) to authorize the Executive Committee to approve the TAC's recommendations, or 2) convene the Board in a special meeting to approve the TAC Committees recommendations. In answer to a question from George Endicott, Gary Farnsworth stated that the a sample of the criteria used to evaluate the projects include such issues as job creation, match, overall value for dollars spent, economic impact, regional significance. After discussion regarding various process options, **George Endicott moved to give authority to the Executive Committee to review the TAC recommendations and present the recommendations to the Regional Committee. John Hatfield seconded. Motion was approved by consensus.** Dennis Luke noted that information will be provided to the TAC Committee and arrangements will be made to have a conference phone available for anyone who wants to attend the TAC meeting by phone.

By Board consensus Dennis Luke and John Hatfield will be COACT's representatives at the Regional Review Committee. Gary Farnsworth informed members that he will provide an avenue for all members to have access to the modal reports and to keep members in the loop. Gary stated project applicants are invited to the April 16 Regional Review Committee to give a briefing of their project.

2010-13, 1012-15 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Schedule

Gary Farnsworth reported that the 2010-13 STIP draft will not be formally adopted until September or October of 2010. The next process will begin sometime in May 2011. June through October, ODOT will begin scoping and evaluating a range of projects and start formulating recommendations for the draft. In October, ODOT will start working with all the jurisdictions and other stakeholders on what the list of projects will look like. He added that at the April 8 TAC meeting, he would like to have the opportunity to discuss the STIP process.

New Business

Central Oregon Strategic Transportation Options Plan Overview

Andrew Spreadborough stated that COIC applied for and was awarded a Transportation Growth Management (TGM) Grant in 2009 for approximately \$175,000 to develop a strategic plan to meet 2030 inter-community travel demand in Central Oregon. The planning project will begin in March 2010. The goal is for local governments and the state to identify expected regional trips in 2030 and to develop “best practice,” cost-effective solutions that will reduce the need for costly infrastructure investments to accommodate those trips. Solutions considered will include transit development, transportation options, commuter rail, and land use. Emphasis will be on identifying solutions that a) save local governments money, b) provide a solid platform for economic development, and c) are tailored to each community. Project need:

- Rapid population growth
- Increasing difficulty on the part of local governments to develop and maintain adequate infrastructure to accommodate growth and provide a solid platform for economic development.
- Anticipated rapid growth of older adults, who tend to have high rates of transit use.
- Growing region-wide traffic congestion, increasing geographic disparity between affordable housing centers and family-wage employment centers, and attendant increases in commuting distances.
- Rapid and dynamic public transit system development in Central Oregon and corresponding challenges in developing a long-term stable funding structure.

Project Scope of Work Key Components:

- Baseline 2030 Regional Intercommunity Trip Forecast and Infrastructure Estimate
- Baseline Regional Transportation-Related Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions
- Alternative Scenario Development – Selection of three to five “alternative scenarios”
- Commuter Rail Analysis
- Alternative Scenarios Cost and GHG Emissions Analysis
- Coordinated Multi-jurisdictional Public Policy Analysis
- Final Strategic Document, Implementation Plan

Andrew Spreadborough stated that the real key to the process is regional involvement and will require active engagement with the communities. COIC staff will perform a majority of the project management and local work, such as data collection, technical analysis and report development, staffing and coordinating meetings and forums, and updating Councils and Commissions. Regional involvement framework includes COIC Board, Steering Team, Technical Committee and Stakeholder Advisory Committee. He would like to keep COACT engaged at least on an informational basis at this point, but will ultimately ask for support from COACT at the end of the process.

Andrew noted that it is not an expected outcome of the first phase of the project to obtain approval or action from the jurisdictions. After the grant period is completed, staff plans to develop the implementation plan and work with jurisdictions on possible adoption of the plan. He stated that this project phase will be completed by June 30, 2011. An update of the project will be presented at the next meeting.

Project Updates

Highway 97 - Terrebonne

Gary Farnsworth informed members that the Terrebonne project has been completed. Original cost estimate of the project was \$8 million but the project was completed for under \$6 million. Elements of the project included improvements to safety and access issues, provided pedestrian walkways, and improvements to lower bridge. The county received a grant to help with curb and sidewalk improvements. Now that the project is complete, he stated that the department has received positive public feedback on the improvements.

Highway 20- Tumalo

This summer ODOT will be making improvements on Highway 20 by installing a raised medium at one of the intersections. Feedback signs for speed have also been installed.

Highway 97 – Lave Butte

Original estimate for the project was \$30 million, but the project is expected to be completed for approximately \$22 million. Funding included \$9 million from OTIA III and almost \$12 million in Recovery Act funds. The project is on schedule and they are anticipating shifting traffic to the new alignment in July. Project is expected to be completed in the spring of 2011.

Deschutes Junction

Jim Bryant has been working with Deschutes County on their TSP plan and discussions have occurred around the interchange. ODOT would ultimately like to install a median down Highway 97 between Bend and Redmond for safety. This is not feasible until direct access to the highway can be accomplished. The first part of the project between Deschutes Junction and Gift Road is to meet with property owners on the west side regarding a frontage road plan.

Regional Roundtable

Don Greiner said that the City of La Pine passed their ordinance and adopted a comprehensive plan. He said the City has also approved a scenic bikeway plan.

Lon Kellstrom said that the Sisters gas tax was passed by the voters. He said that the City worked hard on the issue, and that the public agreed with the rationale for the tax. He said that city residents will only pay 20% of the tax, which adds up to \$18-\$25 per year for residents if they purchase all of their gas in town. The tax will be implemented on April 1. He said the City is also working on a development code update.

Chris Doty said that the 5th Street improvement project is moving along, and should be completed in June. The project was funded by ARRA. The Odem Medo Road project, which will add east-west travel capacity, is under construction. The City is talking about alignment options for the next phase of the Highway 97 re-route.

Nick Arnis said that the Bend City Council signed the Murphy Road Crossing IGA. A highway alignment option has been selected by the Highway 97 North Corridor Steering Team – the “East” alignment, which parallels the railroad, was selected through the EIS process.

Travis Wells said that the City of Madras B Street Bike/Ped improvement project will be bidding in mid to late March.

Scott Smith said that the City of Prineville is working on their Transportation System Plan (TSP) update. He said that the Freight Depot “Building #4” will be completed this week, and a tenant is scheduled to move in.

Lonny Macy said that a Warm Springs culvert project is under way in a rural area of the Reservation. He discussed a pedestrian crossing project, and ARRA-funded road preservation and maintenance improvements.

John Hatfield said that Jefferson County is in the process of reviewing and updating their TSP. He discussed a railroad crossing closure project.

Lynn Lundquist said that the 2nd Street egress has opened in Prineville. He said that Crook County will be working on a Highway 126 corridor study in an effort to position the project for addition to the STIP.

Tom Blust said that Deschutes County is working on a TSP update. He discussed the 19th Street extension project, which will extend the road along the east side of the railroad tracks between the Redmond Airport and Deschutes Market Road. He said that a reconstruction of Skyliners Road is planned.

Dana Cork discussed the Grizzly Butte Road maintenance that is planned by the BLM, an ARRA-funded trailhead project, and improvements to trails in the Crooked River Ranch area.

Eli Ashley thanked COACT for the appointment of a bicycle and pedestrian representative. He acknowledged ODOT’s support of the Bike-Ped committee. He said that the committee has looked at Highway 20 safety issues in the Tumalo area, as well as within the US 97-Cooley Road area. He discussed the proposed Sisters to La Pine bike route.

Karen Friend said that the Cascades East Transit program is experiencing significant month-to-month increases in ridership, including a current 22% monthly ridership increase. She said that ARRA-funded buses have been received. She said the Bend Intermodal Center project will be moving forward in the Spring, and the remodel will be completed in December.

Adjourn.