

Meeting Minutes

Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation COACT September 9, 2010

Members:

Dennis Luke (Deschutes County), John Hatfield (Jefferson County), Lynn Lundquist (Crook County), Gary Farnsworth (ODOT), Eileen Stein (City of Sisters), Alan Unger (Deschutes County), Don Greiner (City of La Pine), George Endicott (City of Redmond), Jack Seley (City of Prineville), Jeff Eager (City of Bend), EV Smith (City of Culver), Jeff Monson (Commute Options for Central Oregon), Karen Friend (Cascades East Transit/COIC), Mike Morgan (City of Madras), Peg Fisher (Deschutes/Ochoco National Forest), and Dana Cork (Prineville BLM).

Guests:

Scott Edelman (City of Prineville), Scott Smith (City of Prineville), Matt Kittelson (Kittelson and Associates), Scott Beard (Kittelson & Associates), James Lewis (COIC), Karen Swirsky (COIC), Tom Blust (Deschutes County), David Ditz (DMA, Inc./Juniper Ridge), Chris Doty (City of Redmond), Nick Snead (City of Madras), Mike Lovely (BMPO CAC and SBNA), and Nick Arnis (City of Bend).

Staff:

Andrew Spreadborough (Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council).

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Dennis Luke called the meeting to order and introductions were made.

General Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Dennis Luke noted that the next COACT meeting will be held on October 14, rather than in November. This schedule change was made due to the November standing meeting date falling on a holiday. There will not be a November COACT meeting.

Old Business

Lynn Lundquist moved to approve the COACT Minutes of July 8, 2010. John Hatfield seconded. The minutes were approved by consensus.

Needs List Update Review and Approval

Gary Farnsworth reviewed the updated COACT Project Needs List. He said that comments have been received from COACT members over the past few weeks, and the current version reflects changes resulting from these comments. Action on the needs list was delayed until later in the meeting to allow time for additional review.

Draft 2012-2015 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

Gary Farnsworth said that the 2010-2015 STIP has not yet been adopted. He distributed a handout that summarized the STIP update timeline. He noted that the November 11 TAC meeting date will need to change due to the Veteran's Day holiday, so this schedule will be updated.

Gary Farnsworth distributed a handout that listed regional STIP allocations within various project categories (i.e. modernization, preservation, safety, etc.). The Region 4 allotments within the categories were reviewed and discussed. Gary said that the STIP update will be reviewed in detail at next month's COACT meeting. He said that the process is to develop an initial draft, then work through the review and public comment period (which takes about a year to complete). Alan Unger asked if the "flex funds" will be reflected within the STIP regional allocation categories. Gary replied that the flex fund program information will be included within the information presented at the October COACT meeting. George Endicott asked if the projected allocations reflect the proposed across-the-board cuts to the state budget. Gary Farnsworth replied that since the STIP is specific to gas-tax funded projects, it would not be subject to across-the-board cuts to general fund programs.

Dennis Luke noted that Gilliam County and the City of Malin were approved for funding through the ConnectOregon III program; they had been among the at-risk projects due to their ranking position. He said that COACT submitted a letter in support of these projects. He said that three Central Oregon projects were approved: City of Prineville railroad freight depot, City of Madras airport improvements, and COIC/City of Redmond transit maintenance and operations facility. Mike Morgan said that thanks should go to Dennis Luke and Scott Cooper for the great job they did in working through the process and representing our region on the statewide review committee.

Dennis Luke asked if there were any more comments on the needs list. Eileen Stein asked if the US 20 @ OR 126 project in the Operations section had the correct amount. Gary Farnsworth said that he will check the amount, and noted that the needs list dollar amount should be consistent with the City's TSP. Dennis Luke asked about the status of the City of Sisters gas tax. Eileen Stein said that the tax is in effect; the Judge Brady decision was appealed, so it is now going to the Court of Appeals. She said that there was a petition to get the tax back onto the ballot for vote, but the petitioner did not get enough signatures.

Lynn Lundquist moved to accept the COACT Needs List as modified. John Hatfield seconded. The Needs List was approved by consensus.

City of Bend-ODOT Draft Agreement Concerning Juniper Ridge Zone Change

Dennis Luke said that the City of Bend provided a presentation to the COACT Executive Committee in August in which they summarized the draft intergovernmental agreement between the City and ODOT on the proposed Juniper Ridge zone change. The Executive Committee submitted a letter to the Oregon Transportation Commission in support of the IGA development process. The Executive Committee agreed that this issue should be presented to the full ACT membership, and that COACT should consider submitting a letter as well.

David Ditz provided an overview of the draft agreement. He said that he was hired by the City in January of 2009 to lead the development process for the first section of Juniper Ridge. He said that the City is in the process of gearing up to a zoning hearing on this project, and is working with ODOT on the proposed intergovernmental agreement. Dennis Luke said that the proposed agreement has significant Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) impacts, which could have significance or applications within other communities.

David Ditz said that the zone change is needed because Juniper Ridge constitutes the City's future supply of large lot industrial development. He projected a map of the project area, and showed the location of the 500 acres included within the first phase. He said the property is currently zone 'urban reserve', though the City's general plan shows the land as industrial. He said that the proposed IGA is necessary because risk capital cannot be attracted to the project until approval of the zone change. The proposed development will have significant impact on roads, which triggers the TPR. George Endicott asked why local road improvements are included within the IGA. David replied that they are included because the TPR applies to local roads as well as state facilities.

David Ditz discussed the initial projects included within the IGA that will mitigate the impacts of the project, including a roundabout and ramp improvements at Empire Avenue. Collectively, these improvements will have significant benefits to the system. He said that the TPR analysis was completed in July; concurrency standards would require mitigation measures be in place before occupancy. The total package of roadway improvement mitigation measures will cost approximately \$53 million. Dennis Luke asked what the City's share of those improvements would be. David replied that the City would contribute \$32 million, and the ODOT request would be \$21 million.

David Ditz said that rather than implementing the full range of mitigations up front, the proposal is to break mitigation measures into four phases with fixed peak hour trip numbers per phase. Each phase would have pre-defined mitigations; the mitigation must be complete by the end of one phase before moving on to the next. He discussed the Transportation Management Area designation, and the use of Transportation Demand Management measures as means to reduce trips.

David Ditz said that this proposal to 'back-load' mitigation improvements is precedent setting. He said that a challenge facing this project is ODOT's funding constraints, particularly within the modernization project category. However, there are opportunities presented by this approach as well. This agreement constitutes unprecedented cooperation between state and local government, and there is documented stakeholder support of this effort. He said that this could be seen as a template for other jurisdictions.

Dennis Luke said that recent discussions by the Land Conservation and Development Commission on the TPR suggest that there is a difference of opinion between LCDC and the OTC. Nick Arnis summarized concerns expressed by Oregon cities on the TPR, and mentioned an upcoming report on this subject. George Endicott said that the League of Oregon Cities and Association of Oregon Counties have expressed concern regarding the TPR, and have asked DLCD to become involved in monitoring the TPR as it relates to economic development. Gary Farnsworth said that the OTC will be meeting in Bend this fall, and that they will be discussing TPR issues.

Lynn Lundquist noted that the recession has contributed to the conditions that have led to this discussion. He said that what he likes about the City of Bend-ODOT IGA is that it provides a template for other communities facing similar TPR challenges. Mike Morgan noted that at \$53 million for the improvements, the per-acre cost would be \$160,000. He asked how much of this cost will be passed through to the developers. David Ditz replied that approximately \$5 million would be. Lynn Lundquist stressed that his support is for the framework of this agreement, as opposed to the specific dollar amounts. Mike Morgan acknowledged the work in reaching an accord on proportionality.

Eileen Stein asked to what degree the TMA and TDM measures have been embraced by the development community. Nick Arnis and Jeff Monson discussed outreach to businesses, and the success of van pools in generating trip reductions. David Ditz noted the work by Commute Options to develop the TMA requirements, including the requirement for 100% participation in the TMA.

Gary Farnsworth noted that the ‘template’ for this process is related to the discussions and thought process, as opposed to the specific measures. He said that each community is different, so cautioned the use of the specific agreement as a template. Eileen Stein asked if the IGA will be available. David Ditz replied that it will be available to other communities.

Dennis Luke asked if COACT would be interested in providing a letter in support of this agreement. The COACT members agreed by consensus to provide the letter, with the Chair to sign on behalf of COACT.

Dennis Luke briefed the group on Lane County’s formation of an Area Commission on Transportation. He noted that there is no venue for the Oregon ACTs to meet, and said that proposing a statewide ACT gathering would be a good suggestion to the OTC.

Central Oregon Transportation Options Plan Overview

James Lewis provided an update on the Central Oregon Transportation Options Plan. He said the purpose of this project is to look at inter-community trips to determine how to accommodate those trips in a cost-effective fashion over time. He said that analysis of existing data on trips has been the focus over the past several months. Once the data gathering is complete, focus will turn to analyzing scenarios for accommodating the trips. Scenarios could include implementing TDM measures, commuter rail investments, transit investments, and land use patterns. He said that five scenarios will be selected and studied.

He discussed the project structure, which includes a technical advisory committee and a policy group. A stakeholder committee has also been formed, and public meetings will be held to collect input. He said the project is broad, so will have a “30,000 foot” view of data and scenarios. The outcome of this process will be a policy document for jurisdictions. The policy document will be adopted by the COIC board, and then taken to the jurisdictions for implementation.

James Lewis discussed the emphasis on vehicle miles traveled reduction, and that this project will help understand how to best accomplish VMT reductions. He discussed the greenhouse gas emissions reduction component. Karen Swirsky reviewed the data analysis outcomes, and distributed data tables on VMT and GHG emissions over time. James Lewis said that this data will be applied to the various scenarios to determine the benefits and cost reductions in reducing VMT, along with reductions in GHG emissions.

The group discussed the project focus on VMT reduction/GHG reduction, as well as the project’s analysis of transit and alternative land uses as means to accommodate trips over time. Gary Farnsworth said that there is value in looking at transit studies and the Central Oregon transit market survey to determine what the demand for transit services would be, and to analyze the benefits to the system.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.