

**Deschutes County Transportation Coordination Project
Core Team Meeting #10 – April 26, 2007
Deschutes County Services Center, Bend
DeArmond Meeting Room**

In Attendance:

Mike Daly, Deschutes County Commissioner
Jeff Monson, Commute Options
Tyler Deke, Bend MPO
Judith Ure, Deschutes County
Mike Schmidt, Bend Chamber of Commerce
Andrew Spreadborough, COIC
Lupita Lewis, Central Cascade Lines
Richard Etzel, Interfaith Action for Justice
Chuck Arnold, Bend Downtowners
Lin Gardner, Department of Human Services
Yesenia Sharp, Bend Community Action Team/Latina Leadership Ed. Center
Janet Mallea, Central Oregon Resources for Independent Living
Carol Maszk, Central Oregon Council on Aging
Bob Weeber, Opportunity Foundation of Central Oregon
Osmar Blanco, T-Mobile
Kathy Drew, Deschutes County Mental Health
Wendy Harrison, COIC/Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Roy Morris, Oregon Employment Department
Peter Russell, Deschutes County Planning
Dan Vizzini, Oregon Solutions

Introductions

Dan Vizzini welcomed attendees, and asked for a round of introductions. Dan reviewed the agenda.

Announcements

Mike Schmidt announced that he met with congressional representatives during a recent visit to Washington DC. He discussed with them needs related to transportation in Central Oregon. He said that their response was that if the region wants to access federal gas tax funds there must be a local match. The chamber of commerce board of directors supports addressing a broad range of transportation needs, including transit.

Jeff Monson reported that the Bend Area Transit (BAT) ridership remains high, and that there are plenty of bike riders accessing BAT services. He said that the increase in bike riders has opened a broader service area for the BAT system – people are biking to connect with BAT routes. He said that 900 bike riders rode BAT in March, roughly 3% of the total ridership, and the number of bikers accessing the service will increase as the weather warms. He said that the buses hold two or three bikes, depending on bus size.

Andrew Spreadborough said that the Mobility Consortium Committee has become formally a subcommittee of the COIC board. This will provide an organizational structure, staff support, and fiscal and administrative support for projects that emerge from the Mobility Consortium planning effort. He said that the Mobility Consortium committee is working currently on conducting a regional mobility market analysis – a statistically valid phone sampling survey that will provide data on public interest in a regional mobility system. The survey should be completed in May. Mike

Schmidt noted that the survey findings will be able to be sorted by community, and will provide information on where people want or need to go.

Andrew also announced that the Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation in planning a “regional transit forum” in June. The purpose of the forum will be to announce the Mobility Consortium committee’s regional market analysis outcomes, to discuss next steps in the development of a regional system, and to hear from attendees regarding their views and opinions on regional transit. The target audience includes private business, elected leaders, local government administrators, transportation providers, and the public. Jeff noted that the dates fall within Commute Options week, providing opportunity for coordination of events.

Yesenia Sharp said that Jeff had recently appeared on the Spanish language TV station to promote Commute Options.

Review of Draft Deschutes County Public Transportation Plan

Andrew began the review of the most recent draft plan by providing an overview of the planning process and requirements. He said that the Core Team began meeting about a year ago to work on a transportation coordination plan for the county. After the project was under way, the Core Team learned of the newly-enacted federal requirement for counties to complete “Coordinated Human Services Plans.” The required elements for the federal plan were similar to and aligned with the Core Team planning process already under way. The Core Team agreed to take on the coordinated planning requirement, and that the Core Team’s plan would serve as the county’s coordinated plan. The Core Team worked to meet an early planning deadline – an “interim plan” was approved to meet ODOT Public Transit Division’s deadline for the statewide discretionary grant program. The interim plan was approved by the Core Team in early January, and submitted by the county to ODOT in late January. The discretionary grant review committee used the interim plan when reviewing and recommending grant applications – all applicants to the discretionary grant program needed to demonstrate that their projects aligned with or were derived from the interim coordinated plan.

After submission of the interim plan, ODOT Public Transit Division staff provided feedback on the plan. They recommended adding certain elements, and enhancing the needs analysis specific to special transportation populations. The revised draft that has been distributed for today’s meeting adds elements in response to ODOT’s review – primarily adding information, data and analyses that the Core Team had assembled earlier in the planning process, but that had not been included in the interim plan document. Today’s meeting will attempt to get a better idea of the needs of the special populations related to the public transportation system. Andrew noted that the revised/final plan needs to be approved by Deschutes County and submitted to ODOT Public Transit Division no later than June 30, 2007.

Andrew provided a brief overview of the revised plan, noting sections that had been added to the interim plan, including:

- Enhanced Section II which documented the planning process
- Adding a “Resource Analysis” section
- Adding detail to the “Data Analysis and Needs Assessment” section
- Added a placeholder for “Barriers and Gap Analysis”
- Added appendices, including GIS-based maps of census blocks and tracts, providing a spatial overview of census data related to Deschutes County areas exceeding state average in percentages of seniors, disabled and low income residents
- Demographic and statistical information
- Resource analysis data and information

- Summary of project participants and invitees

The Core Team reviewed the draft document, and provided feedback on needed changes. Andrew said that a revised version will be distributed prior to the next meeting, and he encouraged participants to forward any edits, corrections or additions. Peter Russell asked if the plan title could be changed to avoid confusion, since the County will be updating their Transportation System Plan which includes a public transportation chapter. Dan said that we could title the Core Team's plan as the "Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan."

Dan noted that there is one section of the plan that won't be included in the plan version that goes to the County and ODOT for approval in June. He said that appendix F will be a declaration of cooperation among Core Team organizations. The declaration of cooperation is the typical point of completion for an Oregon Solutions project. A document will be developed and circulated in June that identifies specific implementation activities in a format that Core Team organizations can sign onto – organizations will be asked to identify one or more activities that they will take on to support plan implementation. This declaration will set the stage for future work. He noted that any successful implementation of the plan is contingent upon sufficient leadership support and administrative capacity.

Facilitated Discussion – Serving Disabled Persons

Dan led the Core Team through a facilitated discussion of transportation needs specific to special populations (seniors, people with low incomes, and people with disabilities). Andrew began by summarizing attachment C, stating that the type of information that we are looking for from participants includes:

- Origin and destination information – where populations are going or need to go.
- What are barriers to employment and/or access to services related to transportation?
- Geographic service areas – are there areas unserved or underserved by public transportation?
- Service times – are there times of the day where public transportation is not sufficiently available?
- Populations served – are there specific rider populations that are underserved?
- Fares – do some fare structures make a service inaccessible to certain rider groups?
- Accessibility and ease of use – are services inaccessible to certain rider groups, or are services limited?
- Information – is information on mobility options available to special populations?

The Core Team identified common destinations, needs, barriers and strategies, including:

Destinations

- Medical services
- Counseling services
- Education and training
- Jobs
- Shopping
- Family and social interaction
- Community, cultural and recreational opportunities

Barriers

- Information about available services (multi-lingual)
- Physical, emotional and cognitive impediments to mobility
- Need to anticipate needs for transportation services

- Inability to navigate a multiplicity of transportation "systems and "providers"
- Other personal demands on time such as child care

Transportation Providers

- Dial-a-Ride
- BAT
- Other local transit and van services
- Taxi cabs
- School, church and public fleets
- Volunteers

Information Sources

- Ride Center
- Commute Options

Service Considerations/Gaps

- Hours of operations... evenings and weekends
- Frequency of operations
- Ease of use... removing barriers to mobility
- Span of operations... rural and unincorporated areas
- Crisis intervention and management
- Fit... matching the transportation service to the user's needs

Strategies

- Information clearinghouse, and outreach to isolated special populations
- Training for service providers
 - ... reducing barriers, managing crises, providing emergency assistance
- Facilitated service application/registration process
- Facilitators, navigators or case workers to help match client to services
- Enhanced call center/resource and referral operations
- System of coordination and communication among providers
- Expanded use of volunteers
- Aggregating or coordinating rides in rural areas to build sufficient demand for service provider -
- Integrated land use and transportation planning – housing along with transit access (long term).
- Enhance availability of door-to-door services for riders with mobility limitations

Next Meeting

Dan said that the next Core Team meeting will be on May 24. At that meeting, the Core Team will again review the plan draft, and finalize it for submission to the County in June. He said that an updated plan will be sent by email to the Core Team a couple weeks prior to the May meeting, so that the Core Team will have a chance to review in greater detail prior to the 24th. The Core Team will then be convened again in June to begin the process of developing the declaration of cooperation.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00.

**Next Meeting: Thursday, May 24, 2007
 9:00 AM to Noon
 Oregon Department of Human Services
 Lewis and Clark meeting room**