

**Deschutes County Transportation Coordination Project  
Core Team Meeting #3 – June 22, 2006  
Oregon Department of Human Services, Lewis and Clark Room**

**In Attendance:**

Project Core Team Members:

Mike Daly, Deschutes County (Convener)  
Dan Vizzini, Oregon Solutions (Facilitator)  
Lin Gardner, Department of Human Services  
Allan Flood, Bend Community Action Team  
Carol Maszk, Central Oregon Council on Aging  
Mark DeVoney, Oregon Department of Transportation Region 4  
Steve Jorgensen, Deschutes County Community Development  
Jeff Monson, Commute Options for Central Oregon  
Tyler Deke, Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Sherrin Coleman, Oregon Department of Transportation Transit Division  
Andrew Spreadborough, Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council  
Mike Schmidt, Bend Chamber of Commerce  
Judith Ure, Deschutes County  
Osmar Blanco, T-Mobile  
John Rexford, Bend-La Pine School District  
Gene Zinkgraf, Central Oregon Community College  
Darrell Wilson, Opportunity Foundation of Central Oregon  
Laurie Thom, Redmond Community Action Team  
Don Horton, Bend Metro Park and Recreation District  
Kristi Otteni, La Pine Community Action Team

Interested Parties:

Richard Etzel, Interfaith Action for Justice  
Chuck Arnold, Bend Downtowners Association  
Jeff White, Central Oregon Coalition for Access  
Nancy Ruel, La Pine Community Action Team  
Gary Daniele, Worksource Central Oregon  
Yesenia Sharp, Bend Community Action Team/Latina Leadership Ed. Center  
Mark Schindel, Old Farm District Neighborhood Association  
Lupita Lewis, Central Cascade Lines, Inc.

**Introductions**

Commissioner Daly opened the meeting by asking for introductions from participants. He then asked for any updates or news items from participants, stating that he specifically was interested in hearing from those who are working on transportation projects.

Lupita Lewis spoke about the Central Cascades Bus Line, a new non-profit service that she is starting. The service will be based in La Pine, with regular routes to Bend three

times daily. She said that a community input meeting was scheduled for June 27 at the La Pine library. The meeting purpose is to gather ideas and feedback from the community regarding the service.

Jeff Monson asked about their relation to the La Pine senior Center. Lupita said that she had met with the senior center staff and discussed the service, and that seniors had been surveyed to determine needs. She went on to describe the surveys process, and indicated that there were 102 COCC students residing in La Pine. Mike Schmidt asked what types of riders will be targeted by the service. Lupita said that low income populations, seniors, job commuters, students and medical rides will use the service. Commissioner Daly asked how the service will be funded, and if there is a business plan. Lupita replied that they do have a business plan, though noted funding is a challenge. They are applying for local and state grants, fundraising, and expect a portion of their costs to be covered by rider fares. She said their proposed rate structure is \$4 for round trips for seniors/disabled, \$6 for student round trips, and \$8 for the general public. \$30 monthly passes will also be available.

Jeff Monson said that the City of Bend will has announced their fixed route service which will start in the fall. He suggested that Heather Ornelas from the City provide an update to this group at the next meeting. He said that the planning document is available on the City of Bend web site.

Andrew provided an update on transit discussions that have been taking place at the Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation (COACT). He explained that COACT is a tri-county board made up of representatives of each local government, ODOT, and other stakeholder organizations. COACT's function is to provide input and recommendations to the Oregon Transportation Commission on regional priorities, and to serve as a coordinating forum for regional transportation issues. He said that the COACT leadership has been noting the building interest within the region related to regional transit issues. Several regional initiatives, including this coordination project, are gaining momentum. In response, COACT will devote a majority of their November meeting to discussing regional transit issues. The goals of the meeting will be for COACT to better understand each initiative and how they relate/coordinate, and to gain a better understanding of the need for a transit system, who will ride the system, where will it go, and how will it be funded.

Andrew said that this meeting presents an opportunity to advance this project and garner support for the implementation plan that results from this project. He said that given the increased interest among the region's leadership, we should perhaps review our plans for the project needs analysis by considering a more in-depth process.

### **May Meeting Minutes**

Dan Vizzini referred the group to meeting packet attachment A – May 25, 2006 meeting minutes. He asked for any changes or corrections to the minutes. No changes were requested.

## **Project Vision Statement**

Dan referred the group to meeting packet attachment B – “Brainstorming a Project Vision.” He noted that the document includes a draft of a project vision statement, as well as the May meeting flipchart notes that served as the source for the draft. He asked the group to review and respond to the draft vision statement. Mike Schmidt noted that he liked that the statement is brief and succinct. Chuck Arnold suggested that it include a statement about the project intent of coordinating transportation services. Mark DeVoney suggested that the Bend 2030 Vision process language around transit could be used for the vision. Darrell Wilson suggested that the statement should be built around “we value” statements.

Dan asked for a volunteer committee to further ‘wordsmith’ the statement. Chuck Arnold, Nancy Ruel, Richard Etzel, Jeff Monson, and Mike Schmidt volunteered. A revised draft will be presented at the next core team meeting in July.

## **Provider Surveys**

Andrew provided an update to the group on the transportation provider survey process. He reminded the group that the intent of the survey is to develop an inventory of transportation resources in the region. This information is needed to further understand opportunities to develop coordination projects.

Andrew distributed the first draft of a resource inventory. He explained that survey forms were sent to about 30 private, public and non-profit providers. As of the meeting date, about 35% had been returned. The resource inventory document, therefore, is a partial summary of the county transportation resources. Andrew reviewed the document in detail, and noted that efforts will continue to collect the remaining surveys.

In reviewing the resource inventory, meeting participants offered suggested changes or additions. Commissioner Daly said that there needs to be a succinct summary at the beginning of the document providing more information and background. The group felt that we were missing a number of providers, including private businesses that offer van service (Eagle Crest, Inn of the 7<sup>th</sup> Mountain), Department of Human Services Volunteer Program, Independent living facilities, churches, and private schools. Andrew will work with a few of the meeting participants to distribute surveys to these groups.

## **Needs Assessment**

Jeff Monson presented information on Commute Options survey and assessment work. He distributed two summary forms that captured responses to surveys that were completed by individuals that had signed up for ride matching services through Commute Options. He said that this information can provide a basis for needs assessment work through this project.

Andrew explained that the second component of the resource analysis and needs assessment process is the gathering information from and about the users of the transportation system. As mentioned earlier, with the November COACT meeting focused on transit issues there is greater need to provide detailed information about

regional transit needs. Andrew explained that at the May core team meeting the group discussed options for conducting the needs assessment. Based on the discussions, the group had decided to survey businesses and organizations that represent or work with populations that have a need for transportation services (such as state agencies, businesses, and non-profits). However, Andrew suggested that we may want to take another look at a general public survey to collect information directly from the riders. He distributed a discussion draft document that provided a suggested method to collect information from businesses and agencies. The group reviewed the discussion draft, and suggested that additional businesses and organization should be added to the recipient list:

- Senior centers
- Faith based organizations
- Fuqua Homes
- Pozzi Windows/Jeld Wen
- Central Oregon Community College
- School Districts as employers
- Local, state and federal governments as employers
- Redmond airport
- Businesses geographically clustered, such as the Old Mill

Mike Schmidt said that the Bend Chamber of Commerce has researched the transit issue. He said that rather than surveying individual businesses, we may want to look at the needs by sectors and by geographic clusters of businesses. He suggested we may want to work with the real estate sector or homeowner associations. Darrell said that we need to first focus on what sort of information we need, then design a process to collect that information. Dan said that the goal of this process is to coordinate services, therefore we need data on the specific needs of riders.

Osmar Blanco said that he would like to work on refining the business survey. He said that we need to understand the numbers of riders who need to get to their employers, and where they will be going.

Lupita discussed the survey work related to the planning for the Central Cascade Lines, explaining that they asked individuals where they want to go, when they want to go, and how much they are willing to pay. Mike Schmidt said we need to design something that is brief and easy to fill out. After discussions about online survey options, Gary Daniele said that not all potential riders have access to a computer, so we should have a variety of alternate formats so that the entire population has the ability to complete the survey.

Chuck said that we should not assume that the public understands the full cost of driving a car, and suggested that the survey should provide information on the costs (e.g. that cars cost on average 50 cents per mile to drive). Mike Schmidt said that he would discourage this sort of information because it would lead to the perception among some respondents that the process is anti-car. He said that people know how much they are paying.

Dan returned the group to Darrell's earlier comment about the need to understand what information we need, and then developing a process to collect that information. In essence we could look at this process as market research for a transit system. There is a data collection component – where are people going and how are they getting there. He said that we are working toward developing a project that coordinates existing providers to better serve the needs. We should be open to looking are broader transit needs, but need to focus on existing providers and needs.

Dan suggested that to move this process forward a committee should form with the goal of designing a survey process. Committee volunteers: Jeff, Mike Schmidt, Yesenia Sharp, Gary, Osmar, and Andrew. Dan asked that Jeff and Mike serve as co-chairs of this committee.

Lupita said that she has concerns about interconnecting transportation providers – and the difficulty in switching systems and dealing with multiple fares. Mike Schmidt talked about other communities where integrated pass systems have been developed, and suggested that this should be a goal.

### **Federal and State Transportation Funding Sources**

Sherrin Coleman provided a presentation on the ODOT Transit Division and the variety of state and federal funding sources managed by ODOT Transit. She said that they are managing over 200 grant agreements for 42 general public systems in non-urban areas of Oregon. She explained that ODOT prefers to grant to public agencies rather than non-profits.

Within Sherrin's powerpoint presentation, she highlighted new federal funds and planning requirements that have emerged from the SAFETEA-LU legislation, and commended the group on their progress toward meeting the new planning requirements. She said Deschutes County is ahead of most of the state in this regard.

Sherrin was asked if state or federal dollars are available for the sorts of projects discussed and considered through this process. She replied that there are funds available, including the state Special Transportation Fund (STF), and Federal Transit Administration 5311 "New Start" grant dollars. She encouraged that we attend the Oregon Transit Conference on October 10 through 12. Tyler Deke mentioned that other federal funds may be available, including FTA 5307 and 5309 – both of which are accessed by the City of Bend.

### **Meeting Wrap-Up**

The July meeting will be held at the same location. Agenda topics will include a presentation by Heather Ornelas of the City of Bend regarding the new Bend fixed route system, update on needs assessment survey work, and a review of the ODOT household location/employer location maps that Sherrin Coleman provided.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:50.**

**Next Meeting:**      **Thursday, July 27, 2006**  
                             **9:00 AM to Noon**  
                             **Location to be determined**