Draft Meeting Minutes

Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation
COACT
September 9, 2021
Zoom Meeting

Members: Commissioner Patti Adair (Deschutes County); Councilor Steve Uffelman (City of Prineville), Councilor Andrea Blum (City of Sisters), Andrea Breault (Cascades East Transit, COIC), Councilor Barb Campbell (City of Bend), Councilor Krisanna Endicott (City of Redmond), Jeff Hurd (City of Madras alternate), Robert Townsend (ODOT), Brian Potwin (Commute Options). Commissioner Wayne Fording (Crook County), Paul May (Metolius Planning Commission).

Guests: Tracy Williams (Bend Airport), Matt Powlison (Deschutes County), Chris Cheng (ODOT), Chris Doty (Deschutes County), Councilor Megan Perkins (City of Bend alternate), Tyler Deke (Bend MPO), Tom Headley (Century West Engineering), Kayla Fleskes (DKS Associates), Fred Lelacheur (Redmond Airport), Susan Peithman (ODOT), Annette Liebe (Governor's Office), David Amiton (ODOT).

Staff: Scott Aycock and Sienna Fitzpatrick, COIC.

NOTES

1. Call to Order and Introductions

COACT was called to order by Commissioner Patti Adair, Chair, at 3:00pm. Scott introduced all members in attendance. He reminded the group to announce themselves for the record when making a motion.

2. Public Comments

A) *General Comments*
No comments from the public at this time.

3. COACT Business

Approve May 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes ***(Action)***
Councilor Blum moved to approve the May 13 meeting minutes. Councilor Uffelman seconded; the motion passed.

5. ConnectOregon Program Update

A) Updates
B) Discussion
Robert Townsend, ODOT
Bob's items were moved up in the meeting to accommodate his availability. He provided a presentation on ConnectOregon funding as it has become available again (see *ConnectOregon COACT Update* to see the summary sheet). The funding for this cycle is $46 million which is less than previous rounds; the reasoning is because some of the biannual funds are being spent on earmark projects. The next cycle will be higher. The program website has information about this; applications go live Sept 15. The biggest difference this time is that it's only aviation, marine, and rail transportation projects. If you need ODOT support on an application just reach out, the actual awards won't be available until April/May of next year. He added that there will be a formal COACT review/ recommendation component as in times past. There are high level procedural notes on the website but it will be similar to what's been done before where applications come

through and recommendations are made and/or scoring. Jeff Hurd asked if they still do a specific allocation per region; Bob said they're not doing that this time. Scott recalled that we usually get around 10% from prior processes, but that's not the case this time around. Fred asked about the future Connect; is there any information on it at this time? Bob said not right now, it was silent for a few years to pay for earmarks from HB2017. There will be a ConnectOregon application process every few years again. Jeff asked if it's the same process as before where we have to rank and review applications and then send to the state and advocate for them. Bob said no, it will be somewhat the same and there's information on the website about those questions and what the selection process looks like.

8. ODOT Major Projects Update

A) Major highway projects update for Central Oregon
Robert Townsend, ODOT

Bob gave an overview of major project updates from ODOT (see *ODOT Project Update COACT* for slides on each project),

US20 Ward/Hamby Rd (Bend): This project goes to bid soon and construction should begin 60-90 days from when the contractor is on board. This is a much-needed safety improvement project, and it should be open by Memorial Day weekend of next year. Commissioner Adair asked how the bids will come in with the project budget at $5.4 million. Bob said they expect it to be pretty high with supply issues and worker and sub-contractor shortages. This is a necessary project so they'll be funding it at whatever it comes in at to get the safety improvements done.

US20 3rd St & Greenwood Ave Improvements: This goes from Mervin Sampels (at the DMV) down 3rd Street to Greenwood; there are some pedestrian improvements on Greenwood that they're doing as part of this project even though a project next year actually has the majority of Greenwood sidewalk improvements included in that. The first phase of this project is a new signal at Mervin Sampels, upgraded signals throughout, sidewalk infill, ADA ramps everywhere, repaving, new drainage system, two or three improved crosswalks, a few flashing crosswalks, and a few protected medians. This already went to bid last month, and this morning the Oregon Transportation Commission was approving an award. This is one of the projects that came in at more than they thought due to contracting factors, but they're proceeding with it. K&E Excavating got the bid and they'll be starting in 30-45 days. They'll work starting this winter through next year (Oct 2022) as it's a pretty significant, invasive project. The new signal at Mervin Sampels is part of the Empire long-term improvements to help people in the industrial area to the east of 3rd Street be able to access out towards 3rd instead of using the dirt road behind Dairy Queen. Councilor Campbell asked if the $17 million is the estimate or the final bid? Bob said that it is the updated cost estimate. She followed up by asking if that increased cost will affect the completion of Greenwood and Bob said not at this time, though the next phase could increase based on changes for costs. When things come in overbid they adjust the cost estimates based on new data.

US97 Redmond-Bend Safety Corridor (Phase 1): This project goes to bid soon; it's the first of three or four phases making safety improvements along Hwy97 between Redmond and Bend. This first phase includes a median barrier on Deschutes Market Rd South with a J-turn construction south of the barrier which creates an opportunity to turn around safely and only have to cross one direction at a time. The reason for it is the concrete barrier going in to prevent crossover accidents. Acceleration/decel lanes (Quarry and 61st) are also in the budget for this project, which will be significant safety improvements. The median barrier is the most significant improvement.

US20 Deschutes River Bridge-Robal Rd (Bend): This is the big improvement from Tumalo to Cooley-Robal area. This will go to bid next spring with construction starting next year. The most notable improvements are the roundabouts in Tumalo and Old Bend-Redmond Hwy which were approved through the Mobility Advisory Group for the trucking industry. (***Slight correction to this slide***) They're repaving

sections and putting in a multi-use trail on the north side of US20 between Cooley and Old Bend-Redmond; between Cooley and Robal a developer is putting in the multi-use trail which will eventually connect Robal to Old Bend-Redmond. Deschutes County and ODOT have each added another $1 million through COVID relief funds to construct a pedestrian undercrossing in Tumalo for a total of $19-20 million. This will go to bid early spring 2022 and finish by spring 2023. Councilor Campbell asked if pedestrians and bikers would be able to cross the Old Bend-Redmond roundabout; he said that both roundabouts in Tumalo and Old Bend-Redmond will be safe for bike/pedestrian crossings. Andrea Breault asked about putting a transit stop in Tumalo; ODOT asked them to look elsewhere. She's been working with private property owners and it hasn't gone anywhere, so she was hoping to rejoin the conversation with ODOT about this to put in a concrete pad during the design construction process. Bob invited her to connect with him. Chris Doty asked Andrea to connect with him as well about that since it's a County road.

Bend North Corridor: These slides are exhibits of this project. There are a few versions where a multi-use path exists but nothing major. They're easier to view on the project website. They're still proceeding with this project despite increases in cost while pursuing additional funding for it with the City and ODOT. They're short-listing consultant contractors (the start of the process to select a consultant, reducing the list) and will put out an RFP in November to work with consultants on price, design, requirements, etc. until they settle on a contract. They plan to sign the contract in June 2022 and start construction soon after. The roundabouts approved on US20 also cover this project so there will be roundabouts on US20 and Cooley and US20 and Robal, plus the major realignment on Hwy97. They've acquired a few properties already along this area, this part of the project is ongoing. Construction will begin next year to be completed in fall 2024. The goal is to complete US20 first – from Tumalo to Empire will be complete before starting Hwy 97 work so there are alternate routes available. The cost is $150 million range most likely due to costs of construction and more recent appraisal of right-of-way acquisition. He mentioned regarding the 2024-27 STIF update, one of the components is enhanced funding in a competitive pool that they're applying for to cover the shortage here. They're also working with the City of Bend and some other funding sources to cover this.

7. Oregon 2024-2027 STIP Update

A) Discussion

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drxakQYA1c4

Robert Townsend, ODOT

Bob noted that the 24-27 STIP presentation is available via the link above; there's no new information at this time, and the application takes 18 months. ODOT applied for funding for the Bend North Corridor and the US20 to Locust Roundabout in Sisters. We'll know if we're on the short list for those in a month; they're shortlist 125-150% and then they'll have to go through a modified application and won't know until April 2022. He mentioned the infrastructure bill – ODOT contributions from it could be $1.5 billion over the next 5 years of added funding to the ODOT budget. Still not at the finish line yet but they're preparing behind the scenes so they'll be ready. He will share more information at the next COACT meeting and will reach out to jurisdictions as he gets more information.

4. ODOT Public and Active Transportation Program

A) 24-27 STIP Public and Active Transportation Program Overview and Selection Process

Susan Peithman, ODOT

Susan introduced herself; she works at ODOT in the Public Transportation Division. She is the Strategic Investments Manager, including oversight of the Public and Active Transportation fund for the 24-27 STIP. She's been conducting overviews of this funding area to ACTs: one is a general overview of the 24-27 program area and the second is specific to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategic program. She started

with a presentation on the *24-27 Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategic Program Update for Region 4 (see presentation for slide details)*.

ODOT adopted a strategic action plan in fall 2020 with 10 key actions to redirect agency priorities. One of those implementing actions is improving access to active and public transportation with a very specific agency metric of increasing agency funding dedicated to walking, biking and transit specifically towards equitable outcomes. The STIP funding allocation was approved in December 2020. The OTC has significant discretion over their federal funding so they decided to increase their funding 66% for walking, biking, and transit projects and programs ($255 million). They met with stakeholders and got feedback through the STIP development process. A good amount of this funding will also go towards public transportation; she'll return to this topic later. Pedestrian and bicycle funding for 24-27 has six different funding areas. ODOT is required to spend 1% of its highway funds on pedestrian and bicycle facilities; they pulled it out as a line item which is $25.5 million a year. There is a regional allocation for these funds. The community paths grant was increased to $36 million for multi-use paths and expanded eligibility to new projects in right-of-way with extremely high levels of protection (e.g. cycle track); updating this program now. There are $45 million for Ped/Bike Strategic which come from federal funds for the state system; this is a new set of funds for ODOT along with the Safe Routes to School Infrastructure fund – another $10 million of federal funds with the caveat that projects must be within a mile of a school. HB 2017 Safe Routes to School Infrastructure grant – this includes projects for sidewalks, crossings, bicycles etc. for communities; there is $45 million available for 3 years. It's important to note that we have allocated $10 million of federal dollars to schools in the state system, ODOT has decided to pull out of the SRTS Infrastructure competition – they are an eligible recipient. This is an effort to ensure that more money goes towards local agencies and it's easier for local agencies to spend state dollars over federal dollars. They increased their Safe Routes to School grant program by another $1 million.

Why an increase in funding? There's been a 35% increase in pedestrian fatalities over the last 10 years and a decrease of 6% car fatalities. 50% of trips are under 3 miles which is a doable biking distance. The ODOT bicycle and pedestrian network is only 63% completed in urban areas – clearly need a complete walking/biking network. Sustainability – 40% of Oregon's GHG emissions come from transportation. She elaborated on the pedestrian fatality statistic – ODOT dug into the numbers on this regarding equity and pedestrian safety to understand who is part of the 35%. Black, Indigenous, and people of color as well as those in a higher poverty Census tract have a higher rate of pedestrian injury. Higher concentration of arterial roadways in high poverty census tracts. This data helps guide where that ped/bike strategic (PBS) funding is going. PBS program needs to get developed first to get in the queue for construction. After OTC supported the breakdown of funds they're now getting moving. *See presentation for goals*.

How does ODOT identify high priority locations? ODOT recently completed their Active Transportation Needs Inventory (ATNI); Region 4 completed a region-wide one recently but ODOT wanted a comprehensive statewide look, which was completed in 2021. ATNI was designed to be a management system that informs investments – a data driven approach to identify and prioritize investments. ODOT has been working with DLCD on the update to the Transportation Planning rules and providing guidance on requirements for local agencies to complete an inventory of pedestrian and bicycle facilities. This guidance would help them work with DLCD and local agencies to complete an inventory of this information for the State. ATNI takes a ton of data in (see slide *ATNI Considerations*); they then went through a prioritization process and are using those priorities to distribute PBS funds. Types of projects that fall under PBS funding include sidewalks, bike facilities, pedestrian crossings, etc. The PBS program manager went around to all the program managers of other programs (Fix-It, ADA, ARTS) and asked what their priority projects were and lined them up with the ATNI to see what was in the top 10% and decided how to leverage those projects with existing projects. They found that sidewalks and road ramps go really well together so they coordinated a lot with the ADA program (their projects were taking place

in high need locations). They also identified stand-alone projects – took the top 1-5% of projects that were in the ATNI need locations; and ran everything through the lens of cost-effectiveness, project readiness, and the capacity of regions to deliver these projects. There are four projects for Region 4: SRTS OR66 sidewalks and crossings; SRTS OR50 Sidewalks and Crossings; US97 Earl St Ped/Bike Leverage; US97 Veterans Way/Yew Ave/Ped/Bike leverage. They have an open house about these projects coming up which she will send information out for. Chris Cheng added that Region 4 has fewer projects compared to other regions but they're bigger ticket items; the goal was to leverage existing larger projects rather than standalone projects. Susan reminded everyone that this is one pot of a number of different funding sources for pedestrian and bicycle projects.

Paul May, City of Metolius Planning Commission asked: Are Culver and Metolius still on the list for sidewalk improvements? David Amiton responded that he's not aware of any active or upcoming STIP projects in Culver or Metolius that they would leverage funds into; Paul asked how to get on the list. David said that most of their STIP projects are built on top of Fix-It projects (preservation type projects, performance management). Paul commented that Metolius doesn't have curbs or sidewalks in the school zone; they did ADA work on the corners but nowhere else. David explained that the ADA program has separate funds specific for ramps; for SRTS funding, he suggested following up with Chris Cheng to submit a SRTS application to get sidewalks. He offered to talk with him offline as well to discuss other opportunities. Scott will connect them via email.

Patti Adair asked about the Deschutes County safety statistics – why the numbers increased and national numbers. Susan said ODOT just did an in-depth analysis of pedestrian fatalities and OTC is reviewing the Transportation Safety Action Plan. Unfortunately, across the nation there is a state of emergency around pedestrian fatality data, as well as a lag on that data which hinders their real-time understanding. As mentioned, there's been a 36% increase in fatalities over the last ten years. Commissioner Adair noted that it doesn't take more than one event to impact a community.

Susan gave a quick overview of Public Transportation and Transportation Options Funding. There was a significant increase in public transportation funding: Mass Transit (for large urban agencies), Older Adults and People with Disabilities (additional $15 million), Transit Vehicle Replacement (discretionary, working to incentivize low/no emission vehicles), Transportation Options (marketing, education, direction action work to reduce single occupancy vehicle use – this has to do with the Portland eco-rule and employer transportation), Passenger Rail Facility Planning and Design. Commissioner Adair commented that US97 needs many improvements. Andrea Breault commented that as much as we love capital dollars, the bigger issue they're facing right now is the labor shortage. She suggested increasing the wage rate for CDL dollars to get drivers to drive the buses they have.

6. Central Oregon Safe Travels Team

A) Overview
B) Virtual Safe Travel Summit 9/30/21
C) Multidisciplinary Safety Committee

Tyler Deke, Bend MPO

Tyler shared his presentation on Transportation Safety Public Education in Bend and Deschutes County (*see presentation for slide details*). On the Transportation Safety Action Plans for Bend and Deschutes County, they completed a comprehensive analysis of five years' worth of crash data to look at the number of crashes, where and why, and to identify ways to reduce crashes. The plans dig into that data and lay out 'systemic solutions' (e.g. curve warning signage, speed management). Each document is somewhat location specific when certain areas popped up repeatedly. They considered infrastructure solutions to address them as well as non-infrastructure changes (a lot of the crashes can't be fixed with infrastructure due to behavioral factors like drunk/distracted driving; but some can). The TSAPs are being used today in Deschutes and Bend CIPs, and to identify projects for the General Obligation

transportation Bond and inform local applications for ARTS funding. The plans are also being used for project collaboration between the City of Bend and ODOT on how to address crash issues. They're currently focusing on Transportation Safety Education with a grant from ODOT; their objectives are to develop a Safety Communication Plan and Calendar, form a regional multi-disciplinary safety committee, and create a funding strategy with partners. Transport safety data 2007-20 indicated a sharp increase in crashes starting in 2018 (2021 data not available yet). Preliminary data from Jefferson and Crook mirrors the Deschutes chart. This data is driving MPO's work to push public safety messages. There were 31 traffic deaths in Deschutes County in 2020 when traffic volumes were low. Speed, intoxicated driving, and distracted driving can reduce risk by more than 2/3. Oregon has one of the highest seatbelt usage rates in the country, but the people involved in serious crashes aren't buckled. The smaller percentage of people not buckled are the ones injured or dying in crashes. They're starting up public education campaigns around these issues. They'll be adding safe summer and safe winter driving campaigns (there's always an increase in crashes during the first 2-3 snow and ice events, and an increase in people walking and biking in the summer months in addition to a tourist influx). Teen crashes are a big issue and there are ways they can target drivers ages 16-24 so they're planning to use those tools. They will be holding a safe travel summit on 9/30 from 11:30-1:30pm virtually; the link will be available on MPO's website. They also have a survey open at centraloregonsafetravel.org for public feedback on safety measures. They purchased two signs for this project this fall in Bend. Join the summit, promote the survey, travel safely!

Tyler also brought up some ideas for COACT's role in this safety campaign. The goal of their current work is to form a Regional Multidisciplinary Safety Committee and they see this as something that could be housed in COACT. Safety issues are similar throughout Central Oregon and Central Oregon operates in a single media market – COACT would serve as a good coordinator for education, identifying funding sources, championing safety, etc.

Councilor Campbell commented that the statistics on lives lost in crashes are heartbreaking. She asked if the District Attorney was invited to the safety summit and Tyler said yes and that the DA rep is on their advisory committee. Councilor Blum asked if there are stats from other safety programs about what kind of media has a better impact compared to others (Billboards vs Facebook etc). Tyler was not sure, it's hard to do this education work and measure results. Clackamas County has had this type of program in place for 10 years and tried lots of methods and they will be giving us feedback on the summit. Councilor Blum and Commissioner Adair commented on driving safety and increased police patrols near Sisters and past safety campaigns. Chris Doty commented that this is everyone's project and COACT is in a good position to lift up this work; he thanked MPO for taking leadership on this. Tyler commented that MPO doesn't have an ask for COACT yet but he will come back later this fall with a streamlined proposal. Commissioner Adair is in support of a safety committee. Their next meeting is Oct 28; Tyler will plan to bring a proposal then.

9. Roundtable and Next Meeting Agenda

A) *If time, share any items for the good of the order*
B) *Discuss agenda items for next meeting*

Scott opened the meeting up for a roundtable sharing opportunity.

Commissioner Adair – She was at the Central Oregon Health Council retreat and she shared that the "monoclonal" antibodies treatment is available for COVID-19 positive patients for out-patient treatment and it's available at St. Charles. They tested 50 people with that treatment and of those 50, only one went to the hospital. She wants everyone to know about it as it seems very effective. She also commented in the chat that she is glad to hear that the highway in front of the Riverhouse will be updated (from later in the discussion).

Chris Doty – Deschutes County is wrapping up projects (Negus and 17th, Cottonwood and Rickar Road getting paved). They're trying to finish up the construction season. Maintenance has been tough this year (heat, smoke, rain) but they've met most of their goals.

Councilor Campbell – Bend passed a transportation bond a few years ago and they now have an oversight committee looking at projects and helping to decide how we complete all the projects, which come first, etc. The big project up next is Wilson Ave, which has a large number of people in that neighborhood near Vince Genna Stadium where they're walking and biking and there are no passable sidewalks or bike lanes. She's excited about addressing this project in particular. They heard a presentation at Council recently about a possible bike and pedestrian crossing which would go over the railroad tracks and the parkway in downtown Bend, connecting from there to the East Side of town. She hopes this will address the disparity between the East/West sides of the city and create healthy transit and unite the city. She brought up the issue that Paul May mentioned earlier about ODOT building sidewalk ramps but not the rest of the sidewalks; this is something Bend dealt with on Hwy 20 in town, and they had to find the money to build those.

Councilor Blum – They've been active over the last few months updating a lot of roads (on schedule), some projects were more expensive than anticipated. They're almost ready to put a new well online to help with water pressure issues around town. They're going to bury water and sewer lines under the Whychus Creek bridge to avoid the concern of ice in the winter taking out those lines.

Councilor Uffelman – There are a few Prineville projects – the 10th and Main intersection needed realignment and a traffic light update. They're waiting to get the light pieces to finish that intersection which is the final piece of construction. There's the 3rd Street project ongoing; they're trying to get funding for connecting Comestack and Peter roads to improve traffic and connect the hospital and schools. There's a rail access process ongoing for North Main Street, to help with industry opening on an industrial site that may create congestion on North Main near higher density residential areas.

Councilor Clark-Endicott – Redmond just approved a contract for NW 10th Street sidewalks; there was a missing section previously and the improvements will make that area safer for pedestrians, especially children. There are a lot of things happening at the airport – they awarded a contract to Knife River Corp for paving and electrical for $6.5 million-ish. They also accepted a USDOT air service development grant for $800k.

Jeff Hurd – Their construction season is starting to winding down. They're reconstructing a street on the south side of town. There are several sewer projects that they're trying to wrap up by the end of the year. The biggest one they're heading towards is on 97; traffic on 97 is huge and getting more congested every day. They're trying to build a connection to Culver Highway to alleviate that and are starting to develop a plan. This is a big process and investment that would really help commercial development downtown and traffic in general.

Paul May – A lot of development is coming to Metolius which is increasing the load on Culver Highway. He would like to see more happen in their County with the highway system to make it safer. Public works projects ongoing. Councilor Campbell emphasized this concern from Paul – separating curbs ramps from sidewalks makes people frustrated with their government, and that's a real issue for building trust with the community. Paul thanked her for her comments. David Amiton added that for the City of Bend project, they rehabilitated existing sidewalk; there are a lot of challenges with existing code enforcement, it's challenging to get property owners to maintain the facilities they're responsible for. He would be happy to work with cities to leverage funding to create accessible corridors. As it relates to Metolius, they're aware of the issue but still waiting on land use notification from the city, and a zone change will be required

which should trigger a traffic impact assessment. Paul said those steps are in progress; the land is in the UGB.

Brian Potwin – Commute Options is partnering with CET for a van pools program. Regarding today's conversation about traffic and fatalities, programs like this can help alleviate that. They had a slow start with it but they're looking to increase to another two vans in the next month. The *#DriveLikeIt* campaign for youth/students in Central Oregon is launching. The *Get There* challenge is coming up soon to alleviate roadway congestion in October.

Andrea Breault – Scott wrote a grant in 2015 for enhancements of rural bus stops; that grant got in the STIP and the new stops are being constructed now. Culver already has an ADA compliant bus stop, Madras has four, Prineville is getting one, Redmond and Sisters are getting one as well. They'll add shelters, buses, and signage once the structures are up.

Tyler Deke – ODOT is soon updating the Oregon Transportation Plan and he will be serving on their oversight/policy committee. He would like to be able to talk to COACT about what's happening and get our feedback on that process.

Scott asked for agenda items for the next meeting: Tyler Deke will bring his ask from COACT. Paul suggested a "support the small cities" item. David said we will potentially know more about Connect Oregon by the next meeting; information is coming through area managers and he will share at the next meeting if there is any. Commissioner Adair seconded Paul's comment on small cities, they deserve to be assisted with state dollars. Paul will work with Councilor Smietana to put together a presentation for Metolius – Commissioner Adair suggested including photos.

ADJOURNED at 4:51pm