Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation (COACT) Draft Notes

February 9, 2023 | 3-5pm

In-Person at Redmond Public Works & Online via Zoom

Members: Dave Thomson, BPAC; Cathi Van Damme, City of La Pine; Barb Campbell, Bend City Council; Brian Potwin, Commute Options; Gary Ross, Andrea Blum, Sisters City Council; Mike Whitfield, City of Madras; Joe Smietana, City of Metolius; Bob Townsend, ODOT; Commissioner Patti Adair, Deschutes County; Andrea Breault, CET; Scott Smith, City of Prineville; Jon Skidmore, City of Redmond Public Works

Attendees: Sharon Smith, OTC; Tom Headley, Century West; Brett Howell, Zechariah Heck, Rye Baerg, ODOT Climate Office; Chris Doty, Deschutes County Public Works; Emerald Shirley, Valerie Egon, ODOT

Staff: Scott Aycock, Sommers Taylor, COIC

Outcomes:
Bob Townsend moved to approve the November Meeting Minutes. Andrea Blum seconded. Approval of the notes passed with unanimously.

Andrea Blum moved to elect Commissioner Brummer as the next COACT Chair. Scott Smith seconded. Commissioner Brummer was elected the COACT Chair unanimously.

Andrea Blum moved to elect Commissioner Fording for COACT Vice Chair. Scott Smith seconded. Commissioner Fording was elected the COACT Vice Chair unanimously.

Commissioner Adair nominated Councilor Andrea Blum for the City Chair on the Executive Committee. Councilor Blum nominated Barb Campbell for the second City Chair on the Executive Committee. These elections were both passed unanimously.

OTC is starting to look at dates for their next meeting to hear feedback from ACT's and they will make sure they get out the date well in advance of the meeting.

Bob Townsend presented on upcoming and current ODOT projects.

Action Items:
The 2024-2027 STIP Public Comment meeting will take place March 15th. COIC staff will send COACT members information on the meeting when it becomes available.

Scott will provide COACT's comments that came out of todays meeting to the STIF projects.

Commissioner Adair will send Scott information on the Pay Equity Act when it becomes available.

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Commissioner Adair will send Scott information on the House Bill pertaining to retaining and recruiting employees.

DRAFT NOTES

3:00 1. Call to Order & Introductions *Comm. Jerry Brummer, Chair*

Members and attendees each introduced themselves and expressed if they were new members of COACT or attending as a participant.

3:15 2. Public Comments *Comm. Jerry Brummer, Chair*

There were no public comments.

3:20 3. COACT Business

- Review November Meeting Minutes **Attachment A Draft Meeting Minutes**

Bob Townsend moved to approve the November Meeting Minutes. Andrea Blum seconded. Approval of the notes passed with unanimously.

- 2023-2024 COACT Leadership **Attachment B Operating Guidelines**
  - Action: COACT Chair Vote

Andrea Blum moved to elect Commissioner Brummer as the next COACT Chair. Scott Smith seconded. Commissioner Brummer was elected the COACT Chair unanimously.

Andrea Blum moved to elect Commissioner Fording for COACT Vice Chair. Scott Smith seconded. Commissioner Fording was elected the COACT Vice Chair unanimously.

  - Action: COACT Executive Committee members Vote

Commissioner Adair nominated Councilor Andrea Blum for the City Chair on the Executive Committee. Councilor Blum nominated Barb Campbell for the second City Chair on the Executive Committee. These elections were both passed unanimously.

- Action: 2023-2024 COACT Meeting Schedule

The proposed 2023-2024 COACT Meeting Schedule was approved unanimously.

- OTC Letter **Attachment C Draft Calendar**

Sharon Smith from OTC joined the meeting to discuss the OTC letter that COACT submitted. OTC heard the feedback and concerns from COACT as well as the other ACT's across the state. Currently they are brainstorming with regional folks and ODOT on how to evaluate the ACT's feedback. The goal is to have another meeting with the ACT's this summer to hear more concerns. Regarding the Connect Oregon funding, there are always more projects than there is funding. That project focuses on strategic projects across Oregon and the scoring process is complicated. The program gets a lot of applications across the state. Even if a project is ranked high at a local level, it doesn't mean it gets awarded because it's a *statewide* program. **OTC is**

starting to look at dates for the next meeting and will make sure they get out the date well in advance of the meeting.

3:40 **4. 2023-2024 ODOT Project Summary**

- Discussion

  Bob Townsend, ODOT Region 4

Bob Townsend presented on upcoming ODOT projects.

Project 1: US97/20 Bend North Corridor Project – Construction is happening now. Consists of improvements to Highway 97 and 20. This is not one large project but is two separate projects with two separate contractors. Most of the traffic impacts will happen in 2024. Hopefully by 2024 we are driving the new highway with some cleanup left.

Q: Commissioner Adair – Will the two roundabouts will be done by the end of the year?

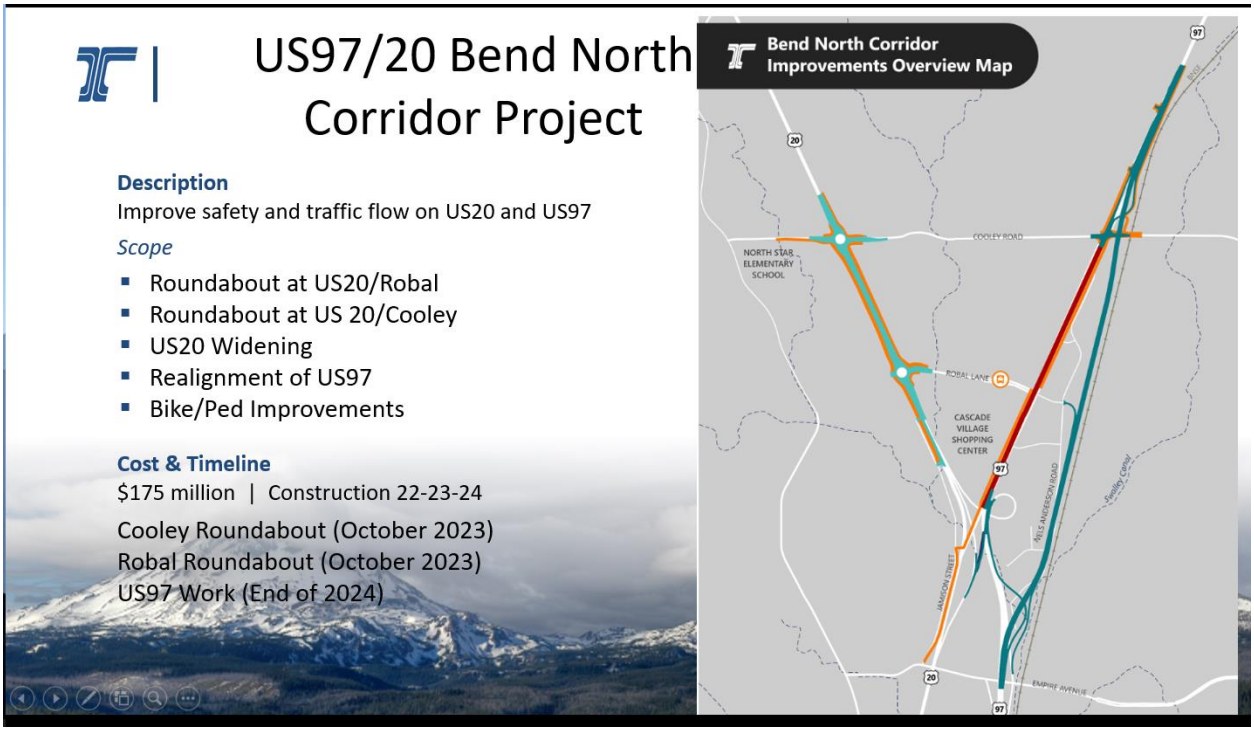
A: Yes. A contractor is signing on to finish by the end of the year and if they are not finished by that timeframe, the contractor has to pay ODOT money by the day.

Q: Andrea Blum – Does this include work being done on 3rd St?

A: Paving being completed is from the DMV office to Greenwood. This will happen in April at nighttime when the temperature is cooler.

Q: Barb Campbell – Will there be a new traffic light on Highway 20 by the DMV?

A: Yes. PED crossing stuff up now and in a week, there will be new poles. A new, full traffic signal should be operational by April. Right now ODOT is looking for someone to do electrical testing.



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Project 2: US20: Tumalo – Cooley - This is two projects. Both of these have active construction right now. Hopefully in full operation by May and the Tumalo roundabout in full operation by September. There will be multi-use paths when projects are done on the northside of Highway 20 to Old Bend/Redmond highway.

Q: Commissioner Adair – When will the undercrossing be done on Tumalo?

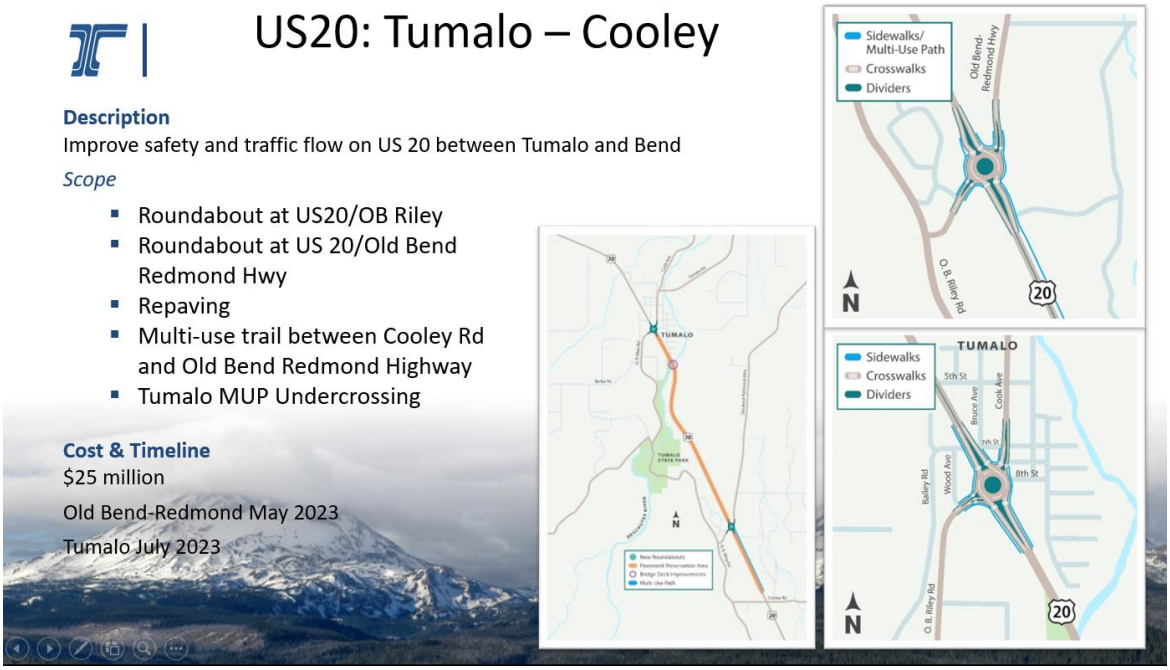
A: Undercrossing should be done by September. Hopefully Highway 20 is done by the end of the year with cleanup work earlier into the new year. These are the biggest roundabouts in Oregon.

Q: Barb – In the City of Bend roundabouts, the traffic engineers make every roundabout lane separate. For two lane roundabouts, are all lanes going to go the same?

A: In this situation where it's two lanes, you will be able to go straight and in any direction. Public awareness campaign will need to be had to educate on how these roundabouts work to inform the public.

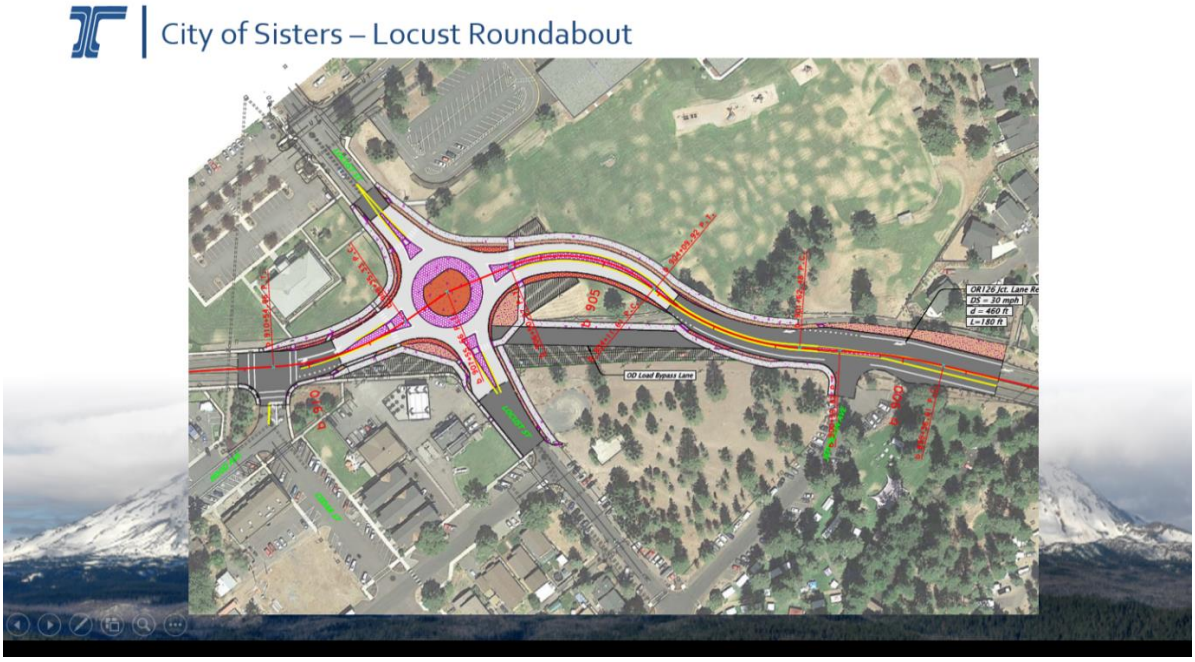
Q: Andrea Blum – On the multi-use pathways, can you use an e-bike?

A: There will be certain guidelines on e-bikes but the new dirt bikes will not be allowed. There will still be bike lines on the highway. A bicyclist can choose the roundabout or use the multi-use pathway and the crossings.



Project 3: City of Sisters – Locust Roundabout – COACT used to have input on where roundabouts went but now it's delegated. Some wish we still had local control, but we got $20M out of the $45M out of the new allocation so this new way is really helping us. This roundabout allows car to avoid downtown. It's shifted to the north for ease of construction. The project is design now and we are acquiring the right of way now. Bidding is supposed to

start in the Fall and hoping to be complete by Memorial Day.



Project 4: US97 Terrebonne – This includes improvements throughout Terrebonne. Will include roundabout upgrades. The main ticket is an interchange at lower bridge way. The project is slated to go to bid later this year and have a 2-year construction project. This project has a lot of funding from Deschutes County

Q: Scott Aycock – There aren't any signals on the local part of this?

A: No, it operates as a roundabout.

Andrea – CET is working with ODOT on all of these roundabouts and will make sure that buses are able to get in and out safely. CET is contributing capital to these projects.

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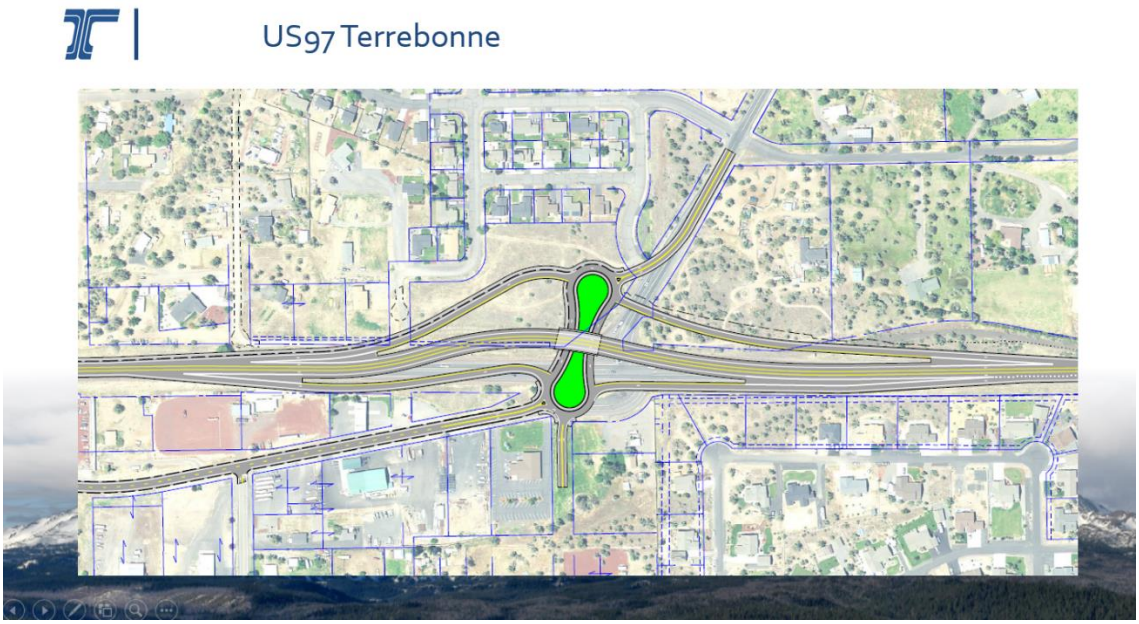


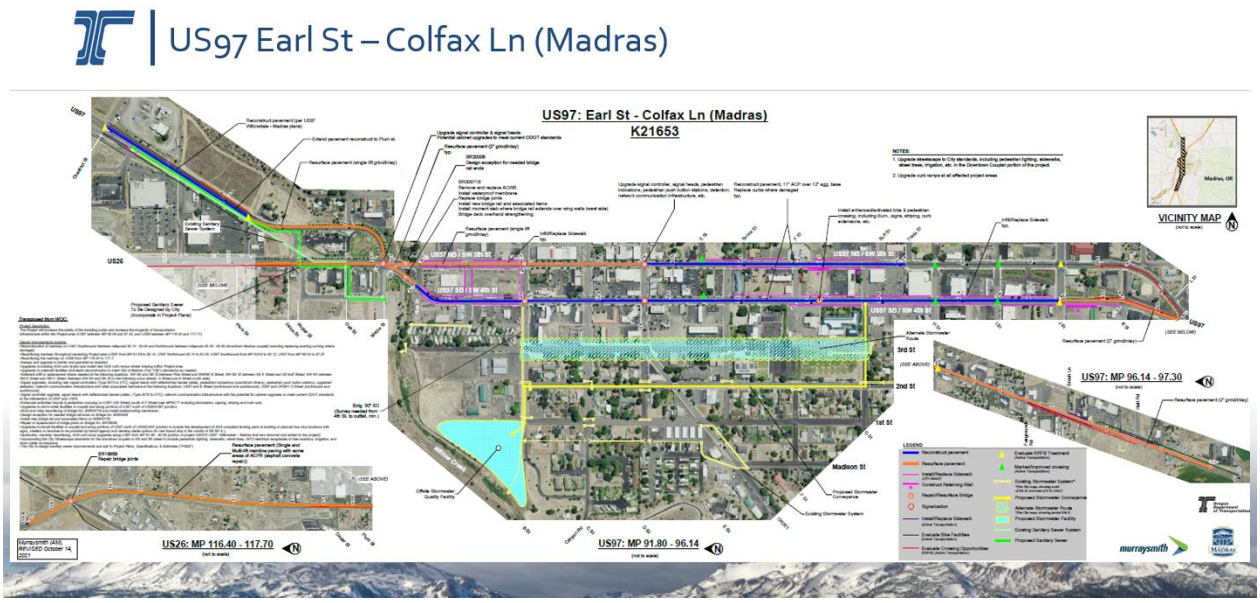
Project 5: US97 Earl St – Colfax Lane (Madras) – This project will take four years in development. ODOT is working on outreach now. Estimated to be a $25-$35M project. Working on building the roadway up to standards with lots of new improvements on the corridor. ODOT is scheduled to get a bid at the end of 2024. Working on identifying different funds now. Madras has already been successful in gaining some funds for the project

Q: Scott Aycock – These improvements leverage momentum for bigger improvements, correct?

A: Yes, improvements starts out small and then grows. The city is using the opportunity to upgrade sanitation as well.

Q: Scott Aycock – Did they get the EDA funds they applied for?

A: Yes.



Bob mentioned other significant projects and he is happy to speak with folks offline about any other projects as well. Scott Aycock mentioned that EDA funds are unusual for construction projects, but that this City of Madras project is a good example that you can get creative. Let COIC know if you need help getting creative on funds.

4:00 **<u>5. 2024-2027 STIP Update</u>**

- Discussion
  Bob Townsend, ODOT Region 4

Originally the draft STIP would have been adopted in January, but the dates for public comment didn't work. There won't be an official meeting, but ODOT plans to use the ACT meeting for the public to give testimony. **This meeting will take place March 15th. COIC staff will send COACT members information on the meeting when it becomes available.** At this meeting, ODOT plans to provide a summary of how STIP works as well as provide extra information. There will be a virtual link for public comment and will be open for anyone who wants to join. The STIP will be made public on March 9th. Bob will send out email information with draft meeting materials beforehand. ODOT cannot accept public comment until after the STIP goes public.

4:05 **<u>6. DASH Carbon Reduction Program</u>**

- Presentation
- *Rye Baerg, ODOT Climate Office*

Rye presented on the ODOT Carbon Reduction Program. All the information is on the PowerPoint he sent over and is available on the COACT website. COIC staff will send the PowerPoint out to all COACT members along with the notes.

Q: Scott Aycock – Does anyone have projects lined up for this to utilize these?

A: Andrea Brealut – CET struggled to find workforce. We are looking at going after these funds to alleviate licensing problems that discourage folks from working. It takes 3 months to train up an individual and the federal government makes it tough for an individual to get a CDL. CET has been doing some behind the scenes work. Currently and slowly procuring new vehicles.

Q: Barb Campbell – Is there any legislation we can look for?

A: Andrea Breault - Another extension on pay equity allows us to offer bonuses on hire. In private business, you can provide bonuses but in government this goes against equity law. During COVID this was extended so that we could provide bonuses and would be nice to be able to do this again. Andrea will ask Tammy if there's anything this group could sign on to for support. The ATU is the union for transit workers and our is based in Portland. We're asking them to see how to encourage younger folks to do this work. Opening this conversation with unions to see how to get creative on recruiting younger folks.

Barb Campbell – The City of Bend has lobbyists and will forward anything that comes up regarding this to this group.

4:15 <u>6. 2023 Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund</u> Attachment D STIF Projects

- Review Projects
- COACT Feedback

The projects being reviewed can be found on the COACT website under the February 9th, 2023 meeting materials.

Scott Aycock – As part of states review process when looking at transit projects, there were only two projects that impact our region. The ACT has an opportunity to provide input on these projects.

Bob Townsend – Every ACT chooses how to do provide feedback in their own fashion. If you want to provide support, it's up to discretion of each ACT. In the past, COACT has provided positive reasonings as to why they support certain projects.

Scott Aycock – We didn't see any reasoning to support one project over the other project necessarily. We go to the online portal and then provide the justification as to why we think they should get funding.

Andrea Breault – Both projects hit multiple factors. We have staff that explains how the network works and explain how to get to medical facilities and shopping to get rural folks to medical care. We're working on making connections for rural folks and get them to denser areas of the state.

Commissioner Adair – Is this competitive? Are both going to get funded?

Valerie Egon – It is very competitive. $28.5M is available in funding, but the total projects in the state looking for funding is at about $50M. The review process will be very competitive.

Commissioner Adair – Is there anything we should add?

Scott Aycock – Add general support and add Andreas comments?

Bob Townsend – Yes. Scott can you do this tomorrow?

Scott Aycock – **Yes, will do this tomorrow.**

4:30 7. Discussion: Additional Transportation Funding Tools?

Commissioner Jerry Brummer, Chair

Commissioner Brummer expressed frustration to Scott about the intersection at Powell Butte School on Highway 126 between Prineville and Redmond. He wants to know if there are other sources of funding to support this project because the site has never gotten high enough on priority lists. What can COACT do as a region to work with the state to create another funding source? What else can COACT do to create enhancements instead of just repairs? Are there ways to get creative to make new funding sources for Central Oregon?

Chris Doty – The state statutes make it hard for local government to make funding available. Deschutes County had a tipping fee surcharge that was intended to pay for damage that garbage fleet does to roads, this could be a nexus. A system development charge for resort development is another example and could be a good funding source for projects like this. They're looking at doing something like this, but there's a long process to it. Counties have a difficult job generating funding sources. Crook County could look at creating the intergovernmental entity, allowing counties to create an entity to divert funds from the federal government. Gas tax is an option. ODOT will need to go to legislator for operational funding.

Barb Campbell – Received an email about OR's transportations earmarks and the annual federal appropriations bill. Of all of the projects, only two of them are east of the Cascades and account for only 5% of the awarded funding. Why didn't we get a better portion of the funding?

Commissioner Adair – We don't get the funding. There is a pay equity act and we're waiting on the number. **Patti will work on getting this information to Scott for staff to send out.**

Bob Townsend – It's up to Merkley and Wyden to push those. ODOT can't lobby but does provide supporting information.

Barb Campbell – So this was not a pot of money that was distributed, they were projects that were selected? Have our federal reps talked Bentz' office? Do we have projects that are shovel ready?

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Bob Townsend – Yes, Bentz wasn't submitting projects because the timing overlapped with his re-election. USDOT website Safe Streets for All won't come out until April. Step 1 for getting projects shovel ready is getting more planning level work done.

Commissioner Adair – There is a house bill for recruiting and retaining employees. **She will send this to Scott.**

Scott Aycock – We can continue to keep our eyes and ears open for creative solutions. COIC has additional resources to do some things like research. When directed, we can look into some things**.** We can prepare summaries for folks.

Jon Skidmore – What about a food and beverage tax?

Barb Campbell – That conversation is ongoing. Food and beverage tax include a fuel tax, and transportation utility fee. There is no specific timeline with this conversation. Will probably discuss more with budget discussions.

4:45 8. National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan

- Plan Review
  Zechariah Heck, ODOT

Zechariah Heck presented on the NEVI program. The presentation with all of this information can be found on the COACT website.

Q: Barb – Is anyone adding electric charging stations?

A: In Oregon, a large number of the charging stations go into supermarket parking lots.

4:50 9. Roundtable Updates

COACT members

The next COACT Boar meeting is on April 15th. Please send requests for agenda items to Scott at scotta@coic.org.

5:00 ADJOURN