

BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE
NORTH EAST AREA COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION
(NEACT)
August 2006

The North East Area Commission on Transportation (NEACT) was granted a charter by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) in August of 2004. During the last two years, NEACT has held meetings bimonthly and during peak work periods, monthly to meet project selection deadlines. (see project selection timeline)

NEACT's mission, as described in the provisional charter, is as follows:

- *To provide a forum for local government agencies and the private sector to discuss, understand, and coordinate long range transportation issues affecting the northeast Oregon region*
- *To collaborate on the development process and application of criteria for determining transportation infrastructure, capital investments and project prioritization in the northeast Oregon region*
- *To reach agreement for recommendation to OTC on priorities for state transportation infrastructure and capital investments through the development of an implementation strategy. This will be based on staff recommendations through the technical committee and appropriate state and local transportation plans*
- *To advocate northeast Oregon regional transportation issues to the public, neighboring regions, area legislators and other interested organizations*
- *To advise the Oregon Transportation Commission on state and regional policies affecting the northeast Oregon region's transportation system*

NEACT adopted its Operating Bylaws in October of 2002 using the guidelines listed in the draft "*Policy on Formation and Operation of Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs)*" dated June 13, 2002. The bylaws were updated in September of 2003 and are in compliance with the OTC's "*Policy on Formation and Operation of Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs)*" adopted June 16, 2003.

The following describes the structure and operation of NEACT and answers the questions listed in the "*Policy on Formation and Operation of Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs)*"

Geographic Boundaries

The NEACT boundaries encompass a geographical community of interest made up of Union, Baker, Umatilla, Morrow and Wallowa Counties, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservations (CTUIR). These five counties, the cities and stakeholders within them and the CTUIR face many similar transportation issues. Recognizing these similarities, the NEACT

produced a “Common Policies” document that is included in the Operational Bylaws.

NEACT Membership

Voting member positions	Number of members	Elected or private sector
Baker County Commission	1	Elected
Umatilla County Commission	1	Elected
Union County Commission	1	Elected
Wallowa County Commission	1	Elected
Morrow County Commission	1	Elected
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation	2	*2 Elected
Representing Cities of Baker County	1	Elected (Mayor)
Representing Cities of Wallowa County	1	Elected (City Council)
Representing Cities of Morrow County	1	City Government
Representing Cities of Umatilla County	1	City Government
Representing Cities of Union County	1	City Government
At Large Member - Baker County	1	Private Sector
At Large Member - Wallowa County	1	County Government
At Large Member - Morrow County	1	*Elected - Port official - appointed
At Large Member - Umatilla County	1	City Government
At Large Member - Union County	1	Private Sector
ODOT Voting Member	1	State Government

As stated in part IV, section B. Membership in the “Policy on Formation and Operation of Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs)” ‘Tribal Governments, Port officials and Transit officials...will count toward the requirement of at least 50% elected officials.’”

NEACT’s membership also includes ex-officio (non-voting) members. The ex-officio membership includes representatives of adjacent area commissions (Southeast ACT and the Lower John Day ACT), state legislators representing districts within the geographic NEACT area, local congressional aides, representatives of county road departments and planning departments, representatives of regional groups that have an interest in transportation issues, representatives of the Region Community Solutions Team, member of the OTC in Eastern Oregon.

Membership Representation

NEACT membership includes 50% (9) elected officials from the area and 50% (9) non-elected members.

Coordination with adjacent ACTs and the Legislative Delegation

Lower John Day ACT, Central Oregon ACT and Southeast ACT are on the NEACT’s mailing list and receive agendas and minutes from each meeting. The ODOT representative and the Chair of Lower John Day ACT and Southeast ACT are Ex-Officio members. The Chair for SEACT is an Ex-Officio member of NEACT. The appropriate state legislators are Ex-Officio members of NEACT. Congressional aides for Senator Wyden and Senator Smith are Ex-Officio members.

Work Program

NEACT adopts a work plan every two years. The plan is used to guide in agenda building. NEACT's work plan for 2006-2008 is enclosed with this report.

Public Involvement

Meeting Notification – ODOT's Region 5 Public Affairs staff sends a press release to all media in the area approximately ten days prior to the regular meeting. At this time the agenda and draft minutes from the last meeting are mailed to stakeholders, city representatives and interested citizens that have requested to be included on NEACT's mailing list. The agenda is posted on the ODOT-NEACT website.

Meeting Materials – An agenda package is mailed to Commission members and others requesting the full package ten days prior to the regular meeting.

Meeting Location – Regular meetings are held at the ODOT Region HQ in the large conference room at 3012 Island Avenue in La Grande. The building is ADA accessible. Regular meetings are held bi-monthly or monthly when needed. The meetings begin at 10:00 A.M. and usually last until noon. Continued afternoon sessions are held when agenda items warrant.

Meeting Minutes – Meeting minutes are prepared for each meeting. After the minutes are approved at the next meeting, they are posted on the ODOT-NEACT website.

Work program guidance and Operational Structure

The work of NEACT is guided by the Chair and Co-chair, the ODOT NE Area Managers and the ODOT technical staff. The Area Manager assures that the Commission receives the educational presentations that enable them to carry on the business of the ACT. ODOT staff, working on behalf of NEACT, supply handouts and informational packets when needed.

A two year work plan is created and is used to assure items are on the agenda in time to reach goals or to submit Commission comments to the OTC or other transportation related committees.

An agenda build is on each agenda is based on the needs of the commission. The ODOT Area Manager and the ODOT staff can add to the agenda to include items needed for the next meeting. The NEACT Chair approves the final agenda before it is mailed out ten days before the regular meeting.

Technical Assistance

NEACT receives technical assistance from a variety of sources. The primary source of technical information comes from ODOT, as directed by the NE Area

Manager. Other sources include Byway committees, Port officials, Tribal presentations, city and county transportation presentations.

Efforts and Accomplishments

2004-06 Work Plan and Accomplishments

- NEACT will provide a forum for local government agencies and the private sector to discuss, understand and coordinate long-range transportation issues affecting the northeast Oregon region.
- NEACT will collaborate on the development process and application of criteria for determining transportation infrastructure, capital investments and project prioritization in the northeast Oregon region.
- NEACT will make recommendations to the OTC on priorities for state transportation infrastructure and capital investments through the development of an implementation strategy. This will be based on staff recommendations through technical committees and appropriate state and transportation plans.
- NEACT will advocate northeast Oregon regional transportation issues to the public, neighboring regions, area legislators and other interested organizations.
- NEACT will advise the OTC on state and regional policies affecting the northeast Oregon region's transportation system.
- NEACT will provide a forum for communicating, learning and understanding transportation issues as they affect the Area's economic opportunities and livability. Topics will include:
 - Transportation System Plan Reviews.
 - ODOT modernization project reviews.
 - Status and content of current and future STIP projects in Baker, Union, Umatilla, Morrow, and Wallowa counties and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)
 - Continue education on Transportation funding, programs and processes as they relate to the NEACT area.
- NEACT will prioritize area modernization project recommendations for the Development STIP and Construction STIP based on state and local transportation plans related to the NEACT area. *For the 08' – 11' STIP update, project recommendations and prioritization for the Modernization program in the NE area took place in February and March of 2006.*

- NEACT will make recommendation to ODOT regarding special funding opportunities and programs. *NEACT prioritized projects within their geographic area for Senate Bill 71 “Connect Oregon” projects during this biennium. NEACT also partnered with the SEACT to form the region 5 “Super Act” which prioritized the Connect Oregon projects for all of region 5.*
- NEACT will communicate and coordinate Regional priorities with other organizations, including the following:
 - Other ODOT Regions and ACTs
 - Community Solution Team
 - Regional Partnerships and Region Investment Boards
 - ODOT advisory committees
- NEACT will continue to consider all modes and aspects of the Transportation System in formulating recommendations, taking into account the provision of elements and connections between air, marine, rail, highway, trucking, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- NEACT will continue to provide documentation to the OTC of the public process and resulting recommendations forwarded by the NEACT, including alternatives for solutions and outcomes of decisions.
- NEACT will provide a report to the Oregon Transportation Commission at least once every two years.

Staff Support

ODOT Region 5 will provide administrative staff to supply support to NEACT. The budget is generated by the Planning Department.

Decision Making Process

NEACT uses a consensus decision-making process, when a quorum of voting members is present, and fosters a collaborative approach to problem solving. Consensus is based on the belief that each person has some part of the truth and that no one has all of it. Members are encouraged to voice and have recorded all views. Once a consensus decision has been reached, all members agree to support that decision.