

## NW Oregon Area Commission on Transportation

November 2, 2006

Cannon Beach Community Center  
Cannon Beach, OR

The meeting was called to order by Lylla Gaebel, Chair. The following members and guests attended or participated by teleconference:

Rita Bernhard – Columbia County Commission	Larry McKinley – ODOT Region 2
Clark Berry – Washington County	Gerald Meyer – Port of St Helens
Lisa Bianco – Congressman David Wu	Matt Mumford – Tillamook County Transit
Bruce Carswell – Portland and Western Rail	Don Otterman – City of North Plains
Mark Ellsworth – Governor’s Office	Preston Polasek – City of Clatskanie
Valerie Grigg Devis – ODOT Region 2	Paul Pulliam – Port of St Helens
Randy Hamlin – City of Rockaway Beach	Ron Puzey – City of Clatskanie
Eric Jacobson – ODOT/DLCD	Shawn Reiersgaard – Tillamook Citizen-at-Large
Senator Betsy Johnson – State Legislature	Ann Richardson – Congressman David Wu
Rod Jones – Seaside Signal	Carmen Swigart – City of Cannon Beach
Randy Hamlin – City of Rainier	Harry Utti – IBIS Group (P&W Rail)
Jim Heikkila – Clatsop Co Citizen-at-Large	Russ Warr – City of Astoria
Floyd Holcomb – IBIS Group (P& W Rail)	Ed Wegner – Clatsop Co Public Works
Dennie Houle – OECDD	Liane Welch – Tillamook Co Public Works
Tony Hyde – Columbia County Commission	Lonny Welter – Columbia County
Shirley Kalkhoven – City of Nehalem	Kathryn Williams – Portland & Western Rail
David Kim – ODOT Region 1	Pete Williamson – Port of St Helens
Rosemary Lohrke – Columbia Citizen-at-Large	Representative Witt – State Legislature
Don McDaniel – Port of Astoria	Janet Wright – Columbia County
Ray McFarlane – City of Rockaway Beach	

Excused: Ron Blin, Don Otterman, Ed Wegner, Tim Wilson

1. Welcome and Introductions: Members and guests introduced themselves. Welcome to new members:
2. NWACT Minutes/Updates:
  - Approval of September 7, 2006 Minutes – Approved unanimously. (RB, RW).
  - Public Comment – Representative Brad Witt offered comments regarding restoring the Portland and Western rail particularly around the Knappa area. A critically important link to economic development from Portland to Astoria, rail freight on the portion of the line still in existence has nearly doubled. About \$2 billion of development is already either under construction or planned on Port of St Helens property and largely dependent on rail access.
  - Legislative Comment – Representative Witt, Senator Johnson and Mark Ellsworth noted that we will be coming up very soon on Oregon’s legislative session.
  - Region 2 Update – Nehalem – Wheeler paving is complete for this paving season, Fall Creek bridge project is still continuing with the single lane detour over by March. Work on Hwy 26 has involved some travel delays, but the work is getting done.
  - Region 1 – Working on the Clatskanie preservation project on Hwy 30. Construction at Van St should start in 2009. The Havlik Rd crossing in Scappoose planning has started. The STIP open house for western Washington County was held last week. The Glencoe Interchange is working on access management – access to businesses on Glencoe Rd north of Hwy 30. The expected cost is now up to \$25 million. Looking at roundabouts on surface streets and back roads to move some traffic. Rainier has a TE project that is ready to go to bid, although need to work out some compromises on freight mobility.

- Oregon Transportation Commission – Larry reported that the NE and SE ACTs gave their biennial reports to the OTC. Chair Foster complimented the ACTs are their input and role they play with the local constituencies. Also discussed was the overlap of decisions on the STIP cycle, eg, scoping of projects that often never get funded. The Commission also funded a couple of Immediate Opportunity program.

### 3. Portland & Western Rail Corridor Study

Bruce Carswell, P & W President gave a presentation on the rail line, development along the line and planning for future use of the land. Needed from a corridor study: Community impacts, crossing safety, bridges, industrial land development. What is breakeven to justify upgrading the track? Response: Probably a 50 to 80% increase over the current tonnage occurring after St Helens. Who would conduct study and who would pay for it? Response: Probably would have to be a partnership on funding, the Port of St Helens may be the lead coordinator. Portland & Western would put funds into it, but will need other funds. Have any indication of number of crossings that would be closed? For safety, the fewer crossings the better. Also, fewer crossings allows more funds per crossing for enhanced safety. Will need to increase involvement from private sector, because ultimately businesses will be needed to support sustainable rail. Need to expand business development, as not enough existing business to support the rail. Pursuing federal and local (Connect Oregon) financing. Expect an ongoing subsidy? Response: No, looking for resources to put infrastructure in place.

This rail project impacts almost every community along Hwy 30. All upgrades done to the rail line will not only benefit the railroad, but benefit the livability of the communities along the line. The rail corridor study was brought to NWACT to begin the discussion. Senator Johnson and Commissioner Hyde voiced strong support for the study. Senator Johnson and Representative Witt have been working with IBIS Group to identify issues along the Clatsop County segment of the line.

What looking at for costs of the study? Similar studies have been in the \$50,000 -- \$75,000 range. ODOT rail has already done a lot of work, and the study can be done incrementally. The City of Scappoose recently completed a rail study, which has been very successful identifying one crossing to close and opening up a new crossing. This information can be used with a longer corridor study, as well be used as a model for conducting the proposed study.

The Tillamook line also needs a corridor study. Why would like to look at this rail study as a three county study, a regional study. NWACT unanimously agreed to support the concept of a regional rail corridor study (RB, RW) Needed is to identify where to send a support letter, eg, ODOT rail, ERT.

Since there have been some other meetings, NWACT would like to know what has gone on up until now. One meeting involved looking at diking issues around Wauna, particularly in times of flooding, since some of the dikes have rail lines on them. When Port Westward really got going, Columbia County and the local cities got together to talk about the demands that were going to be made on that rail line. P & W provided information on what was needed from an infrastructure and operating perspective. The IBIS Group (Floyd Holcomb) was brought in because the line continues down to Astoria, and industrial development at Port Westward also affects Clatsop County. Floyd has a presentation he can also provide NWACT.

Process – Need to confirm a lead agency for the study. Then need to look at a scope of work: Community issues, long term what is going to happen with the dikes, safety issues, industrial development. One big unknown is the realignment of the rail if a Bradwood LNG plant goes in.

### 4. Transportation Enhancement Projects

Approximately \$11 million in funding is available. Based on the volume of applications it appears that it would be unlikely that more than 1 project will be funded per region. The ERT will also be looking at the two projects from the NWACT region. NWACT will provide a letter of support to Pat Fisher on both projects.

- Gaston – A pedestrian project to get school kids from the west side of Hwy 47 to a park on the south side of Main St, the request is for approximately \$1.1 million. In addition to the pedestrian crossing improvements, there some storm drainage work is included. Gaston has been designated a Special Transportation Area, and is also an economically distressed community. The safety component makes this a strong project.

- City of North Plains – A \$1.6 million project to revitalization downtown. Received a Small City Incentive Fund grant/loan for the engineering and have invested \$55,000 already. Expecting to have a project match of \$195,000 for the project. Primarily a beautification project, it will also have safety improvements through construction of sidewalks and traffic calming devices. Have had a public process since 2001 with widespread participation. Plus – the widespread support from multiple funding sources and the local public.

5. Transportation Growth Enhancement Program

Eric Jacobson provided the presentation. A funding resource to help local governments prepare plans to enhance transportation choices for their citizens: Transportation system plans, land use plans for improving transportation, bike-ped plan, downtown transportation improvement plan, neighborhood growth plans. Local match required is 10%. Direct services provided: Outreach to help small communities without full time planning staff identify solutions to a transportation and/or land use issue or problem; Quick Response – helps communities evaluate development proposals to meet the goals of local governments, developers and citizens, one of which was in Cannon Beach; and Code Assistance – Help identify and remove barriers to smart growth in their zoning and development codes.

Pre-applications are just being sent out to local governments for the 2007 – 2008 TGM Program. South Clatsop County and North Tillamook County will be facing some major population changes and could benefit from one of these consultations.

6. Draft NWACT 2005 – 2006 Biennial Report

Mary handed out a revised draft report. Lylla and Shirley will jointly present the report to the Oregon Transportation Commission in January. Any changes need to be given to Lylla or Mary.

7. Proposed Bylaws Amendment

NWACT members unanimously approved the following Bylaw amendment: Section IV. F. Election of Officers : Following the first sentence, NWACT’s Chair, Vice-Chair, and Second Vice-Chair shall be elected annually, add “a Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the Board Chair one meeting prior to the last scheduled meeting of the year to recommend the annual NWACT officer slate.” (RMcF, DMcD)

8. Nominating Committee – Mark Labhart presented the following Slate of Officers for approval at NWACT’s January meeting: Shirley Kalkhoven – Chair, Don McDaniel – Vice Chair, Rita Bernhard – Second Vice Chair.

9. New Business

- Connect Oregon 2 – While there is legislative support for funding Connect Oregon again, this support could be eroded if local constituents don’t support renewed funding.
- January Agenda – Presentation on rail transportation through Clatsop County, Election of 2007 Officers, Julie Rodwell – to receive feedback on the Connect Oregon process and freight corridor planning, final 2008 – 2011 STIP recommendations (following the Open Houses), draft of NWACT 2007 Workplan.

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Recorded: Mary McArthur, Staff

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Lylla Gaebel,-Chair