

REGION 1 AREA COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION

Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2016 Portland, Oregon

Attendees: Bill Avison, Steve Bickford, Bernie Bottomly (alternate), Sam Breyer, Mayor Krisanna Clark, Mayor John Cook, Councilor Peter Cornelison, Mayor Doug Daoust, Mayor Lori DeRemer, Councilor Craig Dirksen, Mayor Denny Doyle, Jess Groves, Councilor Jeff Gudman, Mayor Brian Hodson, Commissioner Diane McKeel, Bill Merchant, Brian Newman, Commissioner Steve Novick, Chris Oxley, Chair Ron Rivers, Commissioner Roy Rogers (Chair), Steph Routh, Joseph Santos-Lyons, Commissioner Paul Savas (Vice-Chair), Pam Treece, Julie Wehling, Pia Welch, Rian Windsheimer

Absent: Tom Chamberlain, Mayor Jef Dalin, Bill Wyatt

Commissioner Roy Rogers called the meeting to order and opened a round of introductions.

Region 1 Manager Updates

Rian Windsheimer provided the following ODOT Region1 updates:

- The federal FAST Act provides additional funding for the 2016-2018 STIP cycle and for the 2019-2021 cycle. During the last STIP update the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) decided that if additional federal money came in it would go to Fix-It. They created a shelf list of Fix-It projects, identified last fall:
 - US-26 Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) project to close the gap on the TIGER grant project
 - ITS project for OR-224/212
 - US-26 Beavercreek culvert repair
 - I-84 Farley Slide project
 - Interstate Maintenance funding for I-205 from Pacific Highway to the Abernethy Bridge

Beyond the standard funding there is specific funding dedicated to freight projects, especially on the interstate system. There is \$39 million statewide for allocation in the 2016-2017 STIP for freight projects. There will be \$49 million for future years for freight funding. The next OTC meeting will discuss scenarios for funding allocations. The ACT will discuss at the March meeting and provide feedback. They are not likely to increase discretionary pots of money above an additional 50%.

- \$4 million in remaining Jobs and Transportation Act money will be allocated to the Troutdale bridges. There are two bridges on the east side of the interchange that are old;

one just had a new hole discovered in it. ODOT Bridge will be matching with \$10 million to replace those bridges.

- Mayor Brian Hodson discussed the Canby project for which Region 1 is recommending Immediate Opportunity Funds (IOF) be allocated. Project Blue Ice is a distribution company looking to relocate from Portland area to Canby. They would be expanding to a 400,000-square-foot development in the Canby Pioneer Industrial Park that requires a new road to be built. The company is deciding between that site and a site in Vancouver, WA.

Commissioner Steve Novick asked about whether the FAST Act funding would allow ODOT to revert to the original 75/25% Fix-It/Enhance split.

Rian Windsheimer answered that the OTC made the decision to widen the split with the understanding that any additional funding would go to Fix-It.

Commissioner Steve Novick asked about the reason having been that any additional money would go to Enhance.

Rian Windsheimer responded that they are still developing scenarios around 2019-2021. The Fix-It allocation has been decided for 2016-2018. Hopes ODOT staff will be able to bring some scenarios to the ACT for feedback.

- There has been a request to address the ACT about issues in the Columbia River Gorge. The June meeting will be held in the Gorge, which will allow the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD) time to work through a project prioritization process.

Public Comment

Commissioner Roy Rogers provided an opportunity for public comment.

Commission Administration

Motion: Mayor Brian Hodson moved, and Bernie Bottomly seconded, to approve the minutes from the December 7 meeting.

- ✓ The meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Enhance Non-Highway 150% List Discussion

Kelly Brooks and Christina Hopes led a discussion of Enhance Non-Highway projects for the 150% list and provided a draft 150% list based on the rankings submitted by ACT members.

The three main criteria ACT members used to guide rankings were benefit to state system, incorporation in existing local and regional plans, and modal criteria and cross-modal attributes. She reminded the ACT that the bylaws express a desire to strive for consensus, and that if consensus cannot be reached there are 18 votes needed to pass a motion. A minority report can be issued if desired.

Commissioner Paul Savas asked about the “Remaining Funds” box on the spreadsheet.

Kelly Brooks answered that it is the result of a tie in voting that left two projects on the cut line.

Christina Hopes demonstrated the calculator as projected on the screen and showed similarities to how rankings were completed.

Kelly Brooks explained that each member has a draft ranking, a ranking by county and sets of graphs showing the distribution of the projects.

Commissioner Roy Rogers asked for any questions for the staff before beginning the discussion. He explained that for those who participated in the last round of this before there was an ACT, members could just propose that something move up the list to replace something else, and then the group can discuss.

Pia Welch expressed support for the Metro North Slough Bridge project as serving an underserved area.

Commissioner Paul Savas said that he struggled with some of the criteria as shared by others. The Clackamas County Coordinating Committee (C4) ranked some of the criteria and he heard concern about some of the projects being eligible for the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) while rural projects outside the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) boundary have this as their only opportunity. C4 discussed whether projects should be on or off the state system and also heard applicants ask for the criteria to remain as written because they based their proposals on ODOT’s criteria.

Councilor Jeff Gudman asked that if the group took the first five projects and then decided between numbers six and seven, there would be some leftover funding, so if there was a gap left, could the Hood River County projects use it for something?

Kelly Brooks responded that these projects have not been scoped, so we don’t know how well these numbers match reality. As staff scope projects, we find the initial numbers are usually low and those costs usually go up. The rule we have used previously is that if the applicant has identified a phase and applied an amount to that phase, that can be discussed.

Rian Windsheimer added that the group should remember this is about getting to the 100% list. As you go beyond that, you end up getting more if possible. For example, the Historic Columbia River Highway proposal is a project development application.

Kelly Brooks continued that there are four proposals from Hood River County. The Oregon Parks and Recreation proposal is scalable because it's a design project.

Bernie Bottomly said he was struck by the Hood River County results. He asked if they were ranked low because they didn't compete well within the criteria or because they were just off ACT members' radar? For future rounds, is there a way to correct for knowledge bias? He agreed that unless an applicant has identified a phase then it shouldn't be imposed through this process. For the ramps on Powell and Division proposal, it is a scalable project that could simply include fewer corners based on scale.

Rian Windsheimer explained that the rankings are an indicator. There are things that come through that drive the group to make a proposal rise to the top of the list. Staff tried to give members the tools to prioritize their own criteria within the guidelines. This list is intended to be a starting point for the discussion.

Mayor Lori DeRemer recognized that the counties all pitched projects. She hates to see 70% match for a project on the state system left on the table for Clackamas County's overcrossing. It's very unfortunate that Hood River County is in this position. She also recognized that the overcrossing could be in the MTIP round, but that as those projects sit there they lose buying power.

Councilor Peter Cornelison said that the group from Hood River County agreed that their priority project is the elevated sidewalk on May Street that connects to the elementary school.

Mayor Denny Doyle expressed disappointment that at least one project from each county did not make this draft list and would like to move forward with that idea.

Brian Newman said that he personally had a Hood River County project in his top five, but with four projects the support may have been dispersed rather than focused on one consensus project.

Councilor Jeff Gudman remarked that if we think the conversation is difficult now, the 100% list will mean that only the top four projects will make the cut. If we define equity as one project going to each county, the only way to get there is to take a Multnomah County project off the table.

Steph Routh brought up income and racial equity, and praised Multnomah County for highlighting a project that serves that equity. Commented on the question of being on or off the state system: the 70s greenway is technically off the state system but serves as a bicycle route parallel to 82nd Avenue. Near the state system should be good enough.

Commissioner Roy Rogers said that Washington County looked at growing population and took a regional approach. He asked that assuming no one would cut the top five, would there be time to go back with a different lens and re-rank projects 6-21?

Rian Windsheimer clarified that the group would be allocating the remaining 30% of the 150%.

Commissioner Roy Rogers responded that they could accept the top five, but then go back and re-rank the rest with the new knowledge from this discussion. The last time the STIP was determined they went back and asked if that is still where we are. Asked about the timeframe.

Kelly Brooks answered that staff had hoped to have a 150% list tonight so that scoping can begin. We can't get any closer to 100% without going out and looking at these projects. If we don't get there tonight it will really press ODOT staff to get back by June to decide upon a 100% list.

Rian Windsheimer asked about the possibility of scoping just the top five.

Kelly Brooks responded that she would like to get to full funding tonight and if we need to revisit the list we can discuss that.

Bill Merchant reiterated Commissioner Paul Savas' point that it should be considered if a project could be funded through another source. Rural communities rely only on this process.

Mayor Doug Daoust said that any time you have a number of people voting around a table, weight gets put into that vote. He suggested approving the top five projects and recommends seeing if the Oregon City project is scalable, taking the available remainder and splitting it between that and the Powell-Division project.

Joseph Santos-Lyons asked if the Hood River County members have a clear consensus.

Commissioner Roy Rogers responded that the May Street project is their preferred project.

Joseph Santos-Lyons answered that he isn't aware of how allocations have been made historically but that we might look at the bigger picture of funding over time if Hood River County is always going to be left behind.

Jess Groves thanked the group for sticking up for Hood River County and commented that everyone should get a slice of the pie, no matter how small the sliver.

Julie Wehling expressed disappointment that there's no rural project on the list. She was hopeful when the ACT was established that it would give a voice to rural communities, and this ranking doesn't reflect that. Perhaps the group can adjust the criteria in the future to help rural communities compete.

Commissioner Paul Savas echoed the comments that this was a process brought forth by the efforts of rural folks to get an opportunity at this. Last round there was an equitable share between rural and urban folks. Clackamas County is almost two counties, so he wished we had discussed in more detail how the rankings would look, known a little more. Wonders about how much the on or off-system criterion matters.

Bill Avison suggested looking at dollar amounts along with number of projects. Said he is kind of picking on Multnomah County with their \$9 million in projects. Several of the rural projects were really small dollars, so it's disappointing that the rural communities couldn't get any crumbs.

Councilor Craig Dirksen responded to the on or off-system point. For Metro, it wasn't so important whether it was on or off the system but whether there were other sources of funding available for the projects.

Mayor John Cook commented on splitting the dollar amount for number six, which is problematic before they are scoped and without knowing how scalable they actually might be.

Mayor Brian Hodson said that if you do the math, pull off number three and add the Hood River County project, that's \$1.5 million and add the tie for number six, there is more than \$3 million that could be allocated elsewhere. He liked the 70s greenway project. Every project has its merits, but if we're looking to put a sense of equity and positivity into the process, it's worth shuffling one of the top five projects out to show faith in the process.

Motion: Councilor Jeff Gudman moved, and Mayor Denny Doyle seconded, to advance a 150% list with ranked projects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 17 (May Street), which would leave \$400,000 as a cushion.

Commissioner Steve Novick said that if the project was ranked higher than 17 he might feel differently, but we do need to take population into account. If Hood River always has a project it means that 20,000 people will always have a project and 20,000 others somewhere else won't get a chance.

Commissioner Diane McKeel explained that the Stark Street Multimodal project is an East County project that benefits the Gresham-Vista Business Park and Mt. Hood Community College. It's an important project for East County. She added that Multnomah County included the May Street project in the list.

Mayor Brian Hodson asked whether Hood River County has access to other funding sources.

Jess Groves answered that they do not.

Commissioner Roy Rogers reiterated that the motion is to advance projects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 17.

Commissioner Paul Savas clarified that we won't be back to do this next year; STIP is a three-year funding cycle.

Mayor Doug Daoust remarked that he was a finance director for a large federal agency for years and has been through this type of process a number of times. Every time a process like this uses 10-12 criteria, that's what we would stick with. You don't come into the meeting and completely rewrite the criteria after everyone has gone through the ranking process. He has no problem with the Hood River project being brought up from the bottom of the list, but if that should fail by a vote he thinks the group should go back to the higher-ranked projects for discussion.

- ✓ The motion passed with 21 votes. Nays: Bottomly, Hodson, Newman, Novick, Oxley, Treece, Wehling.

Pam Treece commented that she wasn't as clear on the criteria for the process and didn't expect something like this to occur. In the future she would like more clarity about the criteria and what probabilities to expect.

Kelly Brooks responded that we still need to come back and approve a 100% list, so this feedback is helpful. Enhance is a different process because there are a number of criteria but no clear scoring. As the ACT begins the ConnectOregon process, there is a much more rigid scoring process.

Rian Windsheimer added that for those members doing this for the first time, it's a good reminder for ODOT to do a better job describing the process and which other processes, like MTIP, also exist.

Commissioner Roy Rogers added that the timing is different this cycle for MTIP.

Commissioner Paul Savas commented that he would have voted differently after hearing some of the dialogue. In the future it would be helpful to have an opportunity to refine the criteria for the next round.

Mayor Doug Daoust asked that since there is \$400,000 left over, is there any benefit going into the 100% list exercise in putting the Powell-Division project into that slot for scaled funds.

Rian Windsheimer answered that it's not real money because we haven't gotten to the 100% list, but we can have that conversation when we get there about reallocating any leftover funds.

Mayor Doug Daoust clarified that he means at the 100% list, those numbers will be more accurate?

Rian Windsheimer responded that as we scope we get more information about how the project will be done and funded. Does the project have scalability? How do we fit all of those projects into the 100% of available funding?

Commissioner Roy Rogers mentioned that at JPACT he asked about how we scaled back the amount of dollars assuming we wouldn't get a federal bill, and whether there is information about what the pot's going to be from the FAST Act.

Rian Windsheimer answered that there is \$39 million statewide for freight projects which the OTC will approve in June. A larger pot of money is available for allocation across the state in multiple STIP categories, but we don't yet know how that will be allocated.

Commissioner Roy Rogers asked whether these four counties that have a large proportion of the state's population should be proactively communicating with the OTC to discuss the economic impact of this area to the rest of the state.

Rian Windsheimer replied that the OTC will be discussing it in February, so if the ACT wants to say, "We have more people so give us more money," that's the ACT's prerogative to provide that feedback. There are folks around the rest of the state who believe they should have those funds for various other reasons.

Commissioner Roy Rogers added that we're talking about Hood River because they showed up and participated, so maybe at the statewide level we should show up and participate.

Bernie Bottomly asked that if the scoping comes back and there is significant change in the expected cost, what is the process for reevaluating?

Kelly Brooks answered that we did this in the last Enhance round. If it's your project, staff bring you into the scoping discussion. So if it's scalable or we need to find a way to make it fit, that's a discussion between ODOT staff and the applicant.

Rian Windsheimer added that he thinks the question is if a project blows up exponentially, how is it kept on the list?

Bernie Bottomly clarified that people might weigh a \$3 million project differently than a \$1 million project.

Rian Windsheimer responded that we ask the applicant how they want to deal with it: increase match, ask the ACT for more money. It's something for the ACT to think about: do you want to add an additional \$1 million or do you want to look for a different proposal to fund from the 150% list?

Commissioner Roy Rogers asked if it would be advantageous to write a letter to encourage the state to look at the distribution of those federal funds. He would be happy to sign it on the ACT's behalf. Asked for any objections to that.

Chair Ron Rivers encouraged him to do so.

Mayor John Cook recommended that it be bounced off of the ACT for any comments.

Commissioner Roy Rogers said he would draft a letter and send it out to everyone for input.

Rian Windsheimer said we could also leverage funding. If the region wants to see more money come this way, additional local or regional resources could be brought to the table to leverage projects. There has been discussion around some form of OTC strategic investment pot of money that would go to matching other areas or projects or federal funds. That could be an opportunity for this region to compete for some future grant program.

Commissioner Diane McKeel said she thinks the letter is a wise move, especially since this is the state's newest ACT.

Commissioner Roy Rogers said that the next meeting is at the same time on March 7, in this room.

Kelly Brooks added that a proposed meeting schedule is in front of you, and that if there is a traffic jam in the agenda in May, it may spill over into June or July. In March we hope to provide as much information on ConnectOregon projects as possible, although we won't yet have modal committee rankings. Then we should be able to rank those projects in April and come back in May to discuss Enhance and Fix-It Leverage. We are trying to keep June for informational items and for looking again at the bylaws and workplan. Some direction on this will come from Salem, but we have had interest in having Region 1's area managers come and provide project updates. If you have any thoughts on how we can better share information, let us know.

Commissioner Roy Rogers adjourned the meeting.