

RVACT *Rogue Valley Area Commission on Transportation*

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To: Members, Rogue Valley Area Commission on Transportation

From: Pat Foley, RVCOG

Re: Summary of September 9, 2008, RVACT Meeting, Grants Pass City Council Chambers, Grants Pass, OR

Members and Alternates in Attendance: Al Densmore, Medford; Ernest Garb and Page Townsend, RVTD; John Morrison, Ashland; William Cecil, Talent; Tom Humphrey, Central Point; Bob Lewis, Phoenix; John Vial, Jackson County; Tim Cummings, Grants Pass; Jim Raffenburg and Rob Brandes, Josephine County; Vicki Guarino, MPO; Arthur Anderson and Jerry Marmon, ODOT; Mike Montero, Craig Stone, Alan DeBoer, Jeff Hunter, Stacey Kellenbeck and James Lowe private sector representatives from Jackson and Josephine Counties

Members Absent: Butte Falls, Cave Junction, Eagle Point, Gold Hill, Jacksonville, Rogue River, Shady Cove, and private sector representatives Reeve Hennion and Richard Smith

Staff: Paul Mather, Mike Baker, Patricia Fisher and Gary Leaming, ODOT; Pat Foley, RVCOG

Other: Jane Randleman and Allie Cyr ODOT; Alex Georgevich, Medford; Chris Clayton, Central Point and Representative Ron Maurer

1. Roll Call
Jeff Hunter

Roll was taken. A quorum was present.

2. Approval of Minutes
Jeff Hunter

Jeff asked if there were any changes to the July 9, 2008 RVACT minutes. The minutes were approved as submitted with two abstentions.

3. Public Input
Jeff Hunter

Jeff invited members of the public to make comments. There were no public comments.

4. Transportation Enhancement Project Comments

Pat Fisher

Handouts: Transportation Enhancement project applications

- 1. Phoenix – Bike & pedestrian improvements*
- 2. Jacksonville – Bike, pedestrian, landscape and historic preservation*
- 3. Central Point – Highway 99 Gateway improvements*
- 4. Grants Pass – Highway 99 Improvements Phase III*
- 5. Rogue Valley Council of Governments/Oregon Parks & Recreation – Rogue River Greenway trail*
- 6. Ashland – Pedestrian & bicyclist facilities*
- 7. US Forest Service – Oregon Birding Trail Enhancement*

Art Anderson started out by saying discussions on prioritizing Transportation Enhancement (TE) Projects has occurred at two previous RVACT meetings. The RVACT has expressed its desire to support local TE projects rather than prioritize them. In the past the general discussion has been that the Modernization Program is the RVACT's primary focus and the Transportation Enhancement Program is a jurisdiction submittal process.

Alan DeBoer feels that it is better to prioritize the TE projects.

Mike Montero added, in prior discussions it was determined that our role is to look for fatal flaws in the applications that are from our region and to say this acceptable or not because there is an independent process where the applications are prioritized without any authority from this group.

Pat Fisher, ODOT Transportation Enhancement Program Manager, said they are currently in the selection cycle. We have received ninety-one applications statewide. At this point we have gone through the initial screening and the in-house technical review and have come to the public comment phase. Sixty-seven out of ninety-one original projects have advanced into the public comment phase. Seven of those projects are from the Rogue Valley area.

Pat went on to report that recently we had Transportation Enhancement funds approved for the Rogue River Greenway Trail tunnel at Blackwell/Kirtland Road intersection. The tunnel will be built in conjunction with Kirtland Road/Highway 140 extension project. She commended the applicants for their hard work in putting the application together. It is nice when there is a chance to act quickly and do something at the right time and at the right place rather than doing a project later when it will cost a lot more.

Pat said one of the reasons she came today is to try and convince you not to approve all of the projects equally. But if you have already had this discussion and came to the consensus not to prioritize TE projects, I don't know how much arm twisting I can do. Pat pointed out that you may want to consider projects that are in contention and see if any of them are not consistent with previously agreed priorities or themes in this region or if there are one or two that you think really are ahead of the others to give those projects an advantage.

The vote online is being conducted through an internet online survey tool. We have had over 2,000 responses statewide. We haven't polled any intermediate reports at this time. She cannot tell whether there is more interest in one project or another in this part of the state. This will be done after September 15th when the comment period ends. Another purpose of the comment

period is to solicit input from the area commissions, economic revitalization teams and the metropolitan planning organizations around the state. As far as the technical results, all of these projects scored good or better. There is not a big distinction technically in any of these projects. We are content that any of these projects could proceed and be effective.

Pat Fisher reviewed and showed photos of area projects:

1. Ashland – Laurel Street Sidewalks
2. Central Point – Highway 99 Gateway Project
3. Grants Pass – Bicycle and pedestrian system improvements, Rogue River Highway
4. Jacksonville – First and Main Streets Enhancement Project
5. Phoenix – West 1st Street bicycle and pedestrian improvements
6. Rogue Valley Council of Governments – Rogue River Greenway Trail
7. US Forest Service – Oregon Birding Trail Enhancement

Questions, Comments, Discussion:

Alan DeBoer asked how many dollars are available. Pat responded there is \$13M available statewide for this funding cycle. That translates to thirteen to eighteen projects.

Mike Montero said that it might be good for this committee to understand that the funding for these projects are federal funds. Pat added these projects are not in direct competition with any other road, bridge, maintenance, interstate type of funding.

Jim Raffenburg wanted clarification on the intent of the dollars. Pat responded the intent is to enhance the cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the transportation system. There are twelve specific types of projects that are under this program. In Oregon the projects have overwhelmingly been for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Landscape and beautification is another category and some of the local projects are incorporating this into their scope.

John Morrison pointed out the importance of Ashland's project. There are two factors. Ashland closed two grade schools. When Brisco School was closed it caused all of the youngsters living in this neighborhood to have to cross North Main at Laurel Street (signalized intersection) and then walk to Helman School. Laurel Street does not have sidewalks. From a pedestrian (school children) and enhancement standpoint it is extremely important that to provide sidewalks. We have had a big change in pedestrian (school children) and bicycle traffic that didn't exist before. The other factor, ODOT has been encouraging cities to close some of their rail crossings. ODOT would like Ashland to close the crossing that comes from north Main and connects with Orange Street. If this occurs it will throw all of the traffic over to Laurel. At that point it is a big broad intersection which feeds Quiet Village homes onto North Main which is one of the major sectors of the city. This will become a very busy and awkward intersection. A clearly delineated and upgraded modernized pedestrian facility is something that is high priority for the city of Ashland.

Alan DeBoer said that we will be lucky if we get one of these projects. Pat Fisher stated that ODOT Region 3 will get at least one project. There will be at least one project from each ODOT Region. Douglas County has submitted a couple projects. Alan added no more than two projects will be selected. Pat agreed that that is probably right. Alan stated that if we recommend our first and second choice of projects we may get a second project. If we give this whole list we will probably only get one.

Art Anderson said he hears what Alan is saying. But looking at the list of projects submitted hammers home more reasons why we should not prioritize. We would have to get down to discussions of whose sidewalks are better than the others. I don't feel compelled to argue that point for most of the jurisdictions.

Bob Lewis said that Phoenix's project ties the downtown to three schools, the new library, the bike path and Colver Road. This project it is real important to us too. It is hard to prioritize these projects.

Tim Cummings said he doesn't want to discredit the worthiness of those projects but from his perspective when he looks at private streets as compared to ODOT facilities it is hard to make a compelling point just because it dumps onto a state highway. He would say that Laurel Street probably isn't a state highway. If he looked at it from our city's perspective, the city of Grants Pass has an infill system where we come forward with projects that are a series of LIDs. We do our own streets that dump into state facilities. He has a hard time looking at infrastructure improvements on side streets that don't feed into ODOT facilities. Pat Fisher responded by saying that in this program, the project, the benefit of state highway we will directly or indirectly will have an advantage because of what the focus area point. But other than that the other projects, the trail projects and projects that have been mentioned here, Phoenix and bikes that are on collectors, critical neighborhood connecting streets are certainly eligible in fact they are eligible for both this program and the bicycle pedestrian grant program. Both cases mentioned are providing access to schools which is a national issue.

Rob Brandes asked how the online survey comments are scored. Pat Fisher, we first looked at the technical scores. We want technically sound projects. We then looked at local priorities. We will look for things like whether certain areas have ballot stuffers' verses whether there seems to be a real distinctive support for one project compared to another, especially if their technical scores are similar. From the online survey we wanted to hear the reasons for project support. Did the people key in on certain projects for a variety of reasons or are they really all strongly concerned about a particular issue.

Motion:

John Vial commented that he finds it very difficult to compare projects that are not similar at all. How do you compare an interpretative bird watching website with sidewalks and how do you compare sidewalks within cities with bike trails. I think to do this exercise we would need criteria that helps to sort this out. We don't have those criteria. John made a motion to support all seven projects and to forward all seven projects with equal weight. Stacey Kellenbeck seconded the motion.

Motion discussion and comments:

Vicki Guarino said the MPO Policy Committee reviewed the TE applications within the MPO planning area relative to the goals and policies of the 2020-2030 Regional Plan. They found that the four projects from the MPO area were consistent with the RTP goals and policies:

- Ashland's Laurel Street project - endorsing for supporting safety and pedestrian movement
- Central Point Gateway project – endorsing for safety and pedestrian improvements
- Phoenix project - it provides bike/pedestrian and transportation facilities
- Jacksonville/Britt Festival project - endorsing for providing pedestrian transportation facilities

Alan DeBoer said he is going to vote no on the motion. He thinks the ACT should prioritize. If the ACT prioritized projects he would support the Grants Pass or Central Point projects.

The motion passed: 15 yes votes and 2 no votes.

5. Select Earmark Projects for Priority List

Mike Baker

Jeff Hunter said that the earmark applications that are being considered for the priority list have been emailed to members of the RVACT. Mike Baker developed a spreadsheet which depicts the various criteria used to evaluate the projects. There are seventeen projects. Today we will be selecting five projects for the earmark priority list.

Mike Baker's spreadsheet listed nine criteria. The first six criteria are what the agency considers eligibility criteria. There are other considerations listed to think about. There are twelve projects that we need to narrow down to five for the priority list. Two of those projects are transit projects and they are considered separately. If you choose to support the transit projects you can provide a letter of support. That takes us down to ten projects. The other project that comes off of the list is the Garfield Avenue – Peach to Columbus. This project was removed by the city of Medford at the MPO policy committee meeting. We are looking at projects 3 and 5 thru 12 on the list. In terms of evaluating the different projects, we looked at a number of categories that were established in the Transportation Commission's policy.

Project	Eligibility Criteria						Other Considerations		
	1.STIP Eligibility	2.Strategic Investment	3.Strong Support	4.Readiness	5.OHP Policy2B	6.Funding	Project Type	Time-line	Earmark Request
FVI	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	MOD	2012	\$25M
Hwy 62	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	MOD	2010	\$20M
Hubbard Lane	Yes	No	Some	Yes	No	Yes	MOD	2011	\$2,380M
I-5 Truck Climbing Lanes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	MOD	2012	\$23M
Redwood Ave	Yes	No	Some	Yes	No	Yes	MOD	2010	\$2.8M
Scenic Ave Hwy99	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Oper.	2010	\$3,352M
Table Rock Rd	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	MOD	2010	\$3,374M
US 199 Grants Pass	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	MOD	2010	\$23M
South Stage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	MOD	2010	\$25M

1. STIP Eligibility Criteria: Project is identified in an acknowledged TSP (and RTP where applicable) and consistent with OHP Policy 1G, Action 1G.1 (Major Improvements).
2. Strategic Investment: The project is a strategic investment that addresses problems on Oregon's transportation system, is included in or consistent with an existing transportation plan document or needs list, and has been identified as a regional or state priority. Projects should provide significant benefits to Oregon and its transportation system in areas such as economic development, freight mobility, environmental quality, congestion relief and mobility improvements, safety, and other priority areas.
3. Support: The project has strong support, including support from local government agencies, area and/or statewide advisory bodies, the public, and the business community.

4. Readiness: The project has been developed enough to identify potential concerns and demonstrate that it has no know fatal flaws. The work will begin during the timeframe of the transportation authorization legislation (2010-2015).
5. OHP Policy 2B: Applicable to off-system projects. A) The off-system costs are less than or equal to on-system, and/or the benefit is to the state system are equal to or greater than those achieved by investing in on-system improvements, b) Local jurisdictions adopt land use, access management and other policies and ordinances to assure the continued benefit of the off-system improvement to the state highway system, c) Local jurisdictions agree to provide advance notice to ODOT of any land use decisions that may impact the off-system improvement, and d) Local jurisdictions agree to a minimum maintenance level for the off-system improvement.
6. Funding: Earmark funding, when combined with funding already committed to the project and additional available resources, will be used to complete the project or a project phase, which may include planning, environmental work and project development, preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, or construction. Construction of the project may be structured in phases so that the earmark funds received will complete construction of a segment of the project.

It is important to note that the priority list of five projects doesn't preclude local jurisdictions from applying for earmarks on their own. The priority list is an attempt by the Oregon Transportation Commission to speed the earmark selection process locally before we all begin to talk to our congressional delegations. During SAFETEA-LU, which was the last authorization, we went through local agencies that didn't copy their local delegations. Some got their earmark and then couldn't deliver the project. Some were on state systems which were already prioritized they were on their systems and they were unable to make the match in a timely manner and we basically had to turn that money back. This is important because when projects are not delivered our money is turned back and it literally takes an act of congress to change the bill to reallocate funding.

Mike Baker said that we receive about forty one percent of earmarks of what is requested. If you ask for \$25M you are most likely not going to get that amount so you need to be prepared to fund the difference. In terms of project type, most of the projects that receive earmarks are typically Modernization projects that add capacity to the system or bridge projects.

Discussion, Comments, Questions:

James Lowe questioned scoring on strategic investments. Why are Redwood Avenue and Scenic Ave/Hwy 99 'No' and Table Rock Rd is 'Yes'? Mike Baker said this is because there is a lot of freight that moves on this section of Table Rock Rd and is a strategic investment to the state system. Some of that freight traffic is moving between the airport and the White City area so there is pretty good freight component to the state system by not moving that traffic onto Highway 62 or I-5. Hubbard Lane and Redwood Avenue received a 'no' because there is definitely a benefit to the city of Grants Pass but not necessarily to the state's transportation system. James asked, so it doesn't take traffic off of Highway 199? Mike said that it does somewhat but he didn't see that there was a significant benefit to the state system.

Tom Humphrey pointed out that there are three jurisdictions involved in the Table Rock Rd project (Jackson County, Medford and Central Point). Two cities own properties on both sides of the road. One of the areas in Central Point has been identified as a shovel ready site, one of eleven in the state.

Mike Montero thinks that before we get into the merits of each of the projects it would really be helpful for Mike Baker to review the framework for what we are doing here. This is the first time that we have done this. We know how STIP projects work. This is very different. I understand that our focus is to select projects that have merit and we also want to advocate for

projects that are going to have the greatest likelihood of securing congressional support when the Oregon Transportation Commission's lobbyist goes back to congress to say this is on our list. Mike Baker agreed with Mike Montero. He also clarified that just because the ACT puts these projects on a list of five does not mean that they will end up on the OTC's list. The OTC is going to be drawing from all of the ACTs also from the Oregon Freight Advisory Commission and other committees. Mike Montero said that he sits on the Oregon Freight Advisory Commission and he knows that of the projects that are on this list are getting ferreted out are Table Rock and the climbing lanes. They are looking at projects strictly from a freight perspective. It is going to be tough for the OTC to meld together a list of recommendations based on those different independent views.

Art Anderson added, Transportation Secretary Mary Peters mentioned earmarking problems specifically lighthouses and museums being funded under the transportation bill.

Mike Baker said there are two different types of earmarks that will come out of an authorization bill. One is what we generally see i.e., South Medford Interchange, Hwy 238, Hwy 62 - some of different earmarks that we have received that are a part of the obligation of those to the state. Then there are a few earmarks that are what we call above the line. There is a ten-percent match for projects. Mike cautioned that there is probably going to be a forty-percent match.

Vicki Guarino was asked by Mike Quilty to express his concern about RVACT artificially limiting the recommendations to five. He feels as though the region shouldn't be underselling the transportation needs here and if RVACT feels as though there are more than five projects that are worthy of attention and merit that RVACT ought to focus on identifying needs and supporting however many projects.

Mike Baker responded by quoting from the Guidance for Preparing Earmark Recommendation Lists: "While ACTs will not be provided funding targets, they should attempt to balance the number and size of requests. For example, ACTs that recommend large earmarks should advance fewer projects, while those that recommend smaller earmarks can advance more projects. ACTs are urged to present earmark request lists that are in line with their population; smaller ACTs should generally put forward a smaller total dollar amount, while larger ACTs may request a larger total dollar amount."

Art Anderson said this is pure economics. The policy guidance that he saw said between one to five projects, five for larger ACTs. This is where we came up with the number five.

Jim Raffenburg asked for clarification. Are we looking at recommending five equally or are they going to be prioritized? Art said we are not prioritizing.

Jim Lowe suggesting that we start by entering the projects that we are all in agreement on; US 199, Fern Valley Interchange and I-5 Climbing Lanes. Then we will discuss the final two.

Art Anderson agrees that these projects should be on the list. We made a commitment to Hwy 199 when we did the MOD cuts. With the climbing lanes we will probably get our money over a couple of years. We have about \$3M. If we can get another \$2M we can go out and develop the property. This gives us a major fix both northbound and southbound on the Sexton Summit. On Fern Valley we need to make the project whole.

John Vial, when the Board of Commissioners sat down and prioritized the list for Jackson County the top three were Fern Valley, Redwood Highway and the truck climbing lanes. The County does have a concern though regarding the Redwood Highway project in that project met with a lot of struggles. The bottom line of those struggles is the local governments and the state does not agree on what Redwood Highway should function as. It is a basic fundamental disagreement on what the character of that facility should be. Our suggestion would be that if that project is added to the list, and we think it should be because there was commitment by this group that it would be a high priority in the future, but we think there needs to be some level of dialog between the city, the county and the state on agreeing on how they would work together, otherwise we are concerned that project would fail.

Tim Cummings thinks the city's conclusion on that discussion is that whether it is a build or a no-build solution that a no-build solution is not the answer. There were several different opinions on the outcome and there are some folks that thought the other preferred alternative was the better one. I think none of us at the city believe that no-build is the solution and I think that we are supporting leaving the funding to complete that project. I believe that the county commissioners would agree with that.

Jim Raffenburg thinks that something needs to be done for the highway. One issue is the Fairground Rd light. He is confident that we will be able to reach some kind of accommodation on that. He doesn't think there is anything that is going to hold up the project.

Stacey Kellenbeck agrees that if five is the number we are shooting for then it would be great to have as many projects as we can but at the same time there is this general consensus around the table that these three are the obvious projects. She thinks that it is somewhat unfortunate to then go into an extended debate on what two we are going to add to this list and then send them off as equals when it took an hour of debating and arguing verses the three that are very obvious that are equal.

James Lowe suggested that you take these three and submit them as strongly supported by the RVACT and then submit the rest of the projects underneath in case there is the funding.

Al Densmore said the Medford city council deliberated on the projects. He is completely in accord with forwarding these three as part of five. From our council's point of view, we would be missing out on an important element of leveraging economic development as part of a complete package, specifically the South Stage project. This project went from a project not being on our list to becoming one of the priorities, not only for ourselves but for the city of Phoenix and the county. It has come up in discussions with our member of congress. We think it would be a mistake not to include South Stage on a list of five because it has been an item of discussion in congressional delegation visits. He is in accord of the idea that we should forward our top five.

Tom Humphrey said that given some of the comments that Mike made earlier regarding the freight routes and the statements I made regarding Table Rock I think that rounds it out to five.

Vicki Guarino said the MPO looked at the projects in the MPO planning area and they identified five projects that were needed for the region. Some of the reasons they are supporting continuation of Oregon 62 corridor solutions project, a very large project that needs an earmark to be able to move forward. Of course as others have said the Fern Valley Interchange nearing

completion of the NEPA process needs support for construction. Table Rock Road for the support that it has from the local jurisdictions and the freight movement issues, Scenic Drive really is a safety concern and this issues of the proximity of the road to the railroad tracks makes that a more complicated project and a more costly project and needs to be done. South Stage Road, in addition to the support that it has had from a mix of jurisdictions, there is also the issue of providing the east-west connectivity to the southern region of the MPO, Phoenix, Medford and the county and relieving the state system. The South Stage overcrossing will provide a local alternative.

John Morrison asked two questions. In regard to Highway 199, I understand that the support is for a build alternative but is there a disagreement over the alternative? Is there much cost difference in those alternatives? There are two projects on the list that involve transit. Are transit projects liable to be looked as better or less for strategic favor up north?

Mike Baker transit projects are on a separate list. They will be forwarded separately and they do have support.

Art Anderson answered, the Hwy 199 project went through an EA process and Alternative A was selected. But as Commissioner Raffenburg was saying we are at the point now of where we are looking at how we phase the project in and how we phase the different design elements. We have an alternative approved. Now we are looking at how we phase the project and how we phase it with the different elements and how it is brought together. We have an alternative approved. The funding of the phases is yet to be seen. I think that we can work through that. The bottom line is we have county and city support and we have Federal Highway's FONSI. We have to have to get the total funding to be able to complete the phases. The first phase is going to wrap up this summer, from Rogue Community College to Midway.

Motion:

Craig Stone regarding support of the two RVTD projects: Craig moved that we support the transit projects, No. 1 and 2 on the list, as a separate matter to accompany our other recommendations. Mike Montero seconded the motion.

A vote was taken. The motion was passed unanimously. A letter of support for the transit projects will be written.

Art Anderson said he hasn't mentioned much about Highway 62. It is not diminished as a priority but the cost to build is so huge, \$300M. We have about \$20M now. Discussing this project in the same vein as the other projects that we already have funding on, diminishes the values that we need.

Motion:

Tom Humphrey made a motion to forward the following projects to the OTC for consideration as earmarks:

1. Fern Valley Interchange
2. I-5 Truck Climbing Lanes
3. Table Rock Road – I-5 to Biddle
4. US 199 – Grants Pass
5. South Stage overcrossing

Bob Lewis seconded the motion.

Fern Valley EA and Hwy 62 bypass EIS: These projects are kind of in lock steps as far as timeline now. We are looking at Dec/Jan for release of the EA for Fern Valley and the EIS on Hwy 62 Corridor. We have been working on these projects for quite some time and hopefully we are going to wrap up the development phases.

7. Oregon Transportation Commission/Legislative Updates

Paul Mather

The Oregon Transportation Commission meets tomorrow to approve the draft STIP that we have been working on for the last year. They will approve the draft STIP tomorrow and then release it for public comment.

Another thing we are struggling with is the statewide available funding issue on a number of different fronts, specifically with our projects using asphalt. Asphalt prices went through the roof about a year ago. We have indications from some of our contractor that starting next month asphalt may not be available at all. On the revenue side with fuel prices being what they are we continue to see to people driving less. People that are driving vehicles that are more fuel efficient. That means our gas tax receipts are down. Over a five year period we could see as much as a \$100M less in highway funds available than we thought we were going to have. We could come back to this table to potentially reprioritize things. On the federal grounds I am sure many of you have seen the media, the Federal Trust Funds are going into the negative and federal highways is going to start restricting the amount of payments that they make on contracts. In the short term I don't see impacts to Oregon in that we have the bridge program; we have a lot of opportunities. We have bonding to cover our past flow to help this situation in the short term. The payments will be there. We should be able to make it from a cash flow standpoint.

At the state level the governor continues to work on a funding package for next session. I haven't seen the details of those discussions. The discussions have centered on such things as registration fees, title fees and an increase in gas tax. These seem to be the most popular combination of things that are being tossed around. I don't anticipate seeing anything happen until after the elections in November. At the federal level we have the reauthorization. The current transportation bill runs out about a year from now. The reauthorization discussions will probably happen after the elections in November.

The bridge work continues to go on up and down the freeway. We are at about the peak of construction. That peak is this summer and next summer. For about the next twelve months you will see the level that you are experiencing now continue and then you will see a very rapid drop off.

Questions and Comments:

James Lowe asked if there was feedback from the asphalt industry as far as oil is concerned next spring when the next cycle comes around. With the escalation clauses that we have in the specs we are taking a hit from the escalation of oil prices. Paul said he is not getting any feedback. I am sure there are others who may have but I think speculating out over six months is anybody's guess.

Mike Montero commented regarding funding initiatives, the Commission had a robust discussion a couple weeks ago in Redmond. Whatever decision gets made is going to have an impact on this ACT as far as our ability to meet some of these various demands.

It is important for us to be up to speed. Paul thinks this discussion could be a future agenda item.

Craig Stone, we have all had concerns about the growth in vehicle miles travelled and the miles per gallon per car and it seems that awhile back when gasoline hit \$4 a gallon that was a price point of a sorts. The price point did cause people to drive fewer miles. To get more fuel efficient autos we are seeing SUV plants close down in favor of building smaller more efficient cars. If that trend was to continue and the vehicles were to become increasingly smaller, at some point will that increase highway capacity? Paul is not sure whether a SUV or a Prius would make big a difference. By the time you have your headways you are not talking more than a car or two an hour.

Al Densmore spent last week at the conference (Beyond Oil) sponsored by Cascadia. It might be helpful as we talk about future policy that might impact our decisions to include some of the things presented during this conference. It was clear that both presidential candidates are very focused on electrifying transportation with the plug-in hybrid system. They are talking about increasing capacity from a personal standpoint: to be able to predict our routes and how congested they will be that in affect the capacity will be altered by devices that will have either built in our cars or own personal internet connected devices. He thinks it is worth our discussing this at some point as we have to wrestle with reprioritizing projects how we integrate this thinking into that reprioritization.

Mike Montero, in Jackson County the Regional Problem Solving process is regional planning at the highest level. These kinds of things can become strategies that communities implement into their comprehensive plans as they go along. Mike was at a sustainable city's seminar a month ago in Portland. A presentation was given about a pilot program that they did in King County where they installed devices on cars. It is brave new world and it will be important to stay in touch with it.

Rob Brandes asked if a model has been done at the state or federal level regarding utilization verses environmental concerns. It seems that some people are going to ride the bus if they want the same amount of accessibility to get to all points. Paul thinks the jury is still out on whether people will actually drive less. The current situation is probably short term because of the cost of gasoline.

8. Agenda Build/Next Meeting
Jeff Hunter/Art Anderson

The next meeting is scheduled for the third Tuesday of November (November 18) due to Veterans Day. The meeting may be cancelled if there is not a full agenda.