

NW Oregon Area Commission on Transportation

May 5, 2005

Cannon Beach City Hall

Cannon Beach, OR

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

Robyn Bassett – City of Vernonia	Don McDaniel – Port of Astoria
Rita Bernhart – Columbia County Commission	Ray McFarlane – City of Rockaway Beach
Clark Berry – Washington County	Heather Ornelas – Tillamook Transit District
Steve Carter – ODOT Region 2 Operations	Kathleen Newton – Tillamook Cty Citizen-at-Large
Tevis Dooley – City of Cannon Beach	Don Otterman – City of North Plains
Mark Ellsworth – Gov’s Econ Revitalization Team	Shawn Reiersgaard – Tillamook Citizen-at-Large
Lylla Gaebel – Clatsop County Commission	Carole Richardson – ODOT Region 2
Valerie Grigg Devis – ODOT Region 2	Billy Schreiber – Port of Garibaldi
Blair Henningsgaard – Astoria City Council	Charlie Sciscione – ODOT Region 1
Jim Hunt – Clatsop County Citizen-at-Large	Stephanie Scordia – Seaside Signal
Mark Labhart – Tillamook County Commission	Aaron Suko – Tillamook County Roads
Mike Long – ODOT Region 2	Carmen Swigart – City of Cannon Beach
Rosemary Lohrke – Columbia Co Citizen-at-Large	Lonny Welter – Columbia County Roads
Shirley Kalkhoven – City of Nehalem	Tim Wilson – ODOT Region 1

Excused: Mark Gervasi, Randy Hamlin, Ed Weggener

1. Welcome and Introductions: Members introduced themselves.
2. NWACT Minutes/Public Comment/Legislative Comment
 - April 27, 2005 minutes. Approved as written. (Berry/Reiersgaard)
 - Public comment – None
 - Legislative comment – Before any legislative bills were introduced, NWACT took a position opposing designating Hwy 101 a freight route. SB 566 also addresses freight route designation, but excludes Hwy 101 from the Cannon Beach junction to Florence. However, it also states that ODOT has to give priority to highways designated as freight routes. Preliminarily, it looks as though next STIP criteria will have some freight component to it. Rep Boone is specifically asking for input from the jurisdictions in the NWACT region, now that there may be a funding component related to being designated as a freight route. Members were encouraged to talk to their respective jurisdictions.

Heather spoke to SB 71, the Governor’s Connect Oregon Plan. Allows for infrastructure improvements for ports, rail, and transit. Shirley mentioned two AOC bills, one of which would have added two seats to the Oregon Transportation Commission, one representing counties and one representing cities. The second would be to put into statute the Local Officials Advisory Committee under ODOT. If established by statute, the committee would be required to establish specific guidelines for members and mission/responsibilities.

- ODOT Updates
 - Region 1 – Finishing the projects that are currently underway in Scappoose and Clatskanie. Jon Hanken, in a meeting with local legislators, is working on finding resources for the City’s portion of the intersection. Fixing the Dennis/Sunset Tunnel looks as though it will be happening in 2008, with an interior fix rather than opening it up. A Staley’s Junction’s committee will be formed later this summer, which NWACT will need to select a member to sit on it. The Van St intersection in Clatskanie is also starting up.

- Region 2 – Carole introduced Mike Long as new Project Delivery Manager for the region. Steve Carter spoke about a culvert failure just south of Cannon Beach on Hwy 101, which will be fixed within the next month. Will be doing some paving in Clatsop and Tillamook counties. Lewis and Clark signs will be up tomorrow. Just starting on the Fort to Sea tunnel. Wrapping up the Blanchard preservation project in south Tillamook county.
 - Other Updates – The STIP Stakeholder Committee will start meeting again, to look at 2008 – 2011 STIP criteria. Shirley would be tracking the progress of this committee, particularly to watch to ensure that ACTs are well represented. Robyn complimented ODOT on the excellent work, both in terms of speed and quality on their project through Vernonia. Kathleen thanked Carole for the excellent ODOT work happening in the Cloverdale area. Lylla and other members underscored satisfaction with ODOT.
3. 2008 – 2011 STIP Criteria – Preliminary Discussion
 Carole presented the criteria used last time. For construction STIP projects, minimum eligibility criteria: Consistent with an acknowledged Transportation System Plan (TSP) or Comprehensive Plan. Once a project meets minimum criteria, the prioritization factors include: Project readiness, best supports Oregon Highway Plan policies, supports freight mobility (proposed factor), leverages other funds and public benefits, has a completed environmental milestone.

Developmental STIP projects are those that need the first steps taken, such as looking at the various options, or those that may need some preliminary environmental assessment done.

NWACT can also add its own prioritization factors. Last time’s criteria included: Congestion, traffic volume, safety, freight mobility, bicycle and pedestrian elements.

Comments from NWACT members:

- Bassett: How do projected (future) needs factor into prioritizing projects today. Currently, those projects are not included because they are not “project ready.” There is a need to be pro-active and plan for projects needed in the future. While a TSP is supposed to be a plan for future transportation needs, they often either don’t or its impossible to look far enough forward. Changes to the TSP still end up being reactive rather than pro-active. Uncomfortable giving too much weight to TSPs, if they are not easy to keep current and looking forward.
- McDaniel – Need to look at in terms of system-wide transportation, rather than looking at projects on a piecemeal basis.
- Swigart – How deal with safety of existing roads and highways, eg, striping of highways?
- Ornelas – Given rural areas can have a lack of local match for projects, another criteria may be how a project can be integrated into another project or leverages a community partnership.
- Newton – What about intermodal connections, projects that connect to other modes of transportation.
- Kalkhoven – Shall we also be looking at projects for the Development STIP, such as Hwy 101 and Hwy 6 intersection in the City of Tillamook. And how a project gets onto the D-STIP.
- Gaebel – How can there be more coordination between cities and ODOT, to look at their projected needs, and plans for their own transportation projects.
- Bassett, Newton, Gaebel – Need to include economic development/impact criteria. Define what is considered economic development, eg, access to industrial parks.
- Swigart – What happens to projects such as Pacific Dooley, if it doesn’t pass, that will have fall out for surrounding communities. Perhaps a project regional consensus criteria.
- Berry – Cost effectiveness, bank for the buck.
- Hunt – Connection to industrial areas, efficient movement through more congested areas such as through a city.
- Labhart – Also consider using the previous NWACT criteria.

- Bassett – Smaller, rural communities will not have the same traffic or freight volume that larger urban areas have.
- Berry – For safety, there may be other more qualitative ways to measure safety than SWIS, eg, those places that have a lot of near misses or accidents waiting to happen.
- Newton – Lifeline roads, those where if something goes down, there are no other options.

A straw poll of the criteria resulted in the following general priorities: Safety, economic development, system-wide congestion or benefit/safety

Members expressed an interest in having a presentation on TSP and how it rolls into the STIP.

4. NWACT Bylaws

Three potential amendments have surfaced since the Bylaws were adopted in November, 2004:

- Adding a tribe member should a tribe become federally-recognized, which is an Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) requirement.
- Alternates – Citizens at large will not have alternates.
- Executive Steering Committee – Having one member from each of NWACT’s four counties.

Members agreed to forward on for a vote next month the first two amendments, and table the amendment on make-up of the Executive Committee until feedback is received from jurisdictions as to need for the change.

5. Port/Uniontown Waterfront District Refinement Plan

Valerie described how the planning includes the Port of Astoria West Mooring Basin site and the “Uniontown” neighborhood at the base of the Astoria/Illwaco interstate bridge. A series of developments are planned for this area that will involve multiple modes of transit: trolley, cruise ships, car, truck and pedestrian/bicycle. The purpose of the plan is to provide an integrated multimodal transportation plan in and surrounding the Port of Astoria site, addressing transportation needs for a 20-year planning horizon (future year 2025). The Refinement Plan involves both the City and the Port, and updating their respective community and master plans. This is also an overlay of the current Urban Renewal District, which will help with financing the improvements.

The Port and City of Astoria are commended for having a working waterfront that citizens can also enjoy.

6. Next Meeting

Next ACT meeting will be June 2nd at the Tillamook Transportation Center. Agenda items to include:

- 2008 – 2011 STIP Criteria (proposed)
- STIP Sub-Committees
- Bylaw Amendments (require a 75% vote of members)
- Tillamook Refinement Plan
- ODOT Innovative Partnering Program (Art James)

Recorded: Mary McArthur, Staff

Lylla Gaebel, Chair