



Mount Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

Project Leadership Group

Meeting #4

Dec. 19, 2013

3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

ODOT R1 Headquarters - 123 NW Flanders St., Portland OR

Meeting Summary

Project Leadership Group (PLG) Attendees:

Jason Tell – Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Region 1 Manager

Karen Joplin – Hood River County Commissioner

Lisa Northrop – Mt. Hood National Forest (MHNF) Acting Supervisor

Jim Bernard – Clackamas County Commissioner

Project Management Team (PMT) Attendees:

George Fekaris – Federal Highway Administration – Western Federal Lands Highway Division

Susan Law – Federal Highway Administration – Western Federal Lands Highway Division

Rithy Bein – MHNF

Karen Buehrig – Clackamas County

Kirsten Pennington – ODOT

Mike Mason – ODOT

Guests: Tom Keenan – Keenan & Partners/Ski Bowl
Danielle Cowan, Clackamas County – Tourism and Cultural Affairs
Greg Leo – The Leo Company LLC/Mt. Hood Meadows
Scott Turnoy – Mid-Columbia Economic Development District
Julie Stephens – City of Sandy Transit
John Valley – Sen. Merkley’s Office
Dan Schwanz – Hood River County Transportation District
Heidi Beierle – Gresham Chamber of Commerce

Facilitating/Consulting Team: Elizabeth Mros-O’Hara, KC Cooper and Adam Argo from David Evans and Associates (DEA)

Meeting Notes: Mike Mason – ODOT

Agenda (Elizabeth Mros-O’Hara, DEA):

1. Introductions and Overview
2. Project Updates
 - Park-and-Ride and Transportation Management Association analysis
 - Implementation Plan Projects
3. Public Comment
4. PLG Confirmation of Implementation Plan Projects
5. Next Steps

1. **Introductions and Overview** – (KC Cooper lead). Introductions of the PLG, PMT, staff and public in attendance. KC gave an overview of the meeting agenda.

KC reminded the PLG of the Project Charge and described the project milestones to date (meetings, baseline conditions report, outreach and project screening).

The process to date had resulted in the September 2013 PLG decision to include 38 projects in the MHMTP. KC noted the multimodal make-up of the project list: public transit; private transit; parking; organizations, programs and legislation; pedestrian; bicycle; safety and road improvement; and Intelligent Transportation Systems.

Today, the PLG will decide whether to accept the Project Management Team’s recommendation for a subset of MHMTP projects be included in the Implementation Plan component of the plan

(projects that will be implemented in the first six years of the plan's 15-year implementation period.

2. **Project Updates** (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara lead)

Ms. Mros-O'Hara described the analysis that had taken place on the Park-and-Ride project (PubT-4) and Transportation Management Association project (Org-1), which had been in the "Immediate Study" needed project list category following the September PLG meeting.

A. Park-and-Ride (PubT-4)

DEA focused on 10 additional sites (six along US 26 on the west side of Mt. Hood and four in communities north of Mt. Hood). These were new potential park-and-rides and/or carpool access sites for near-term (0-6 months) implementation.

The analysis, which included interviews with private businesses, transit organizations and ski area operators, among others) concluded that no new sites should be developed in the immediate term. This is due to satisfactory current use of existing sites given existing transit service patterns. However, the analysis concluded, but many should be tracked and recommended in the longer term as current transit service to the mountain develops and new service is considered and implemented.

PMT Recommendation: PubT-4 Comprehensive Analysis project should be in the MHMTP's Group A (high priority) category.

Jason Tell, ODOT: So what I heard was that the current sites are adequate but there are promising sites for the future. How far did the analysis go?

Ms. Mros-O'Hara: we did look at the sites in detail. What they look like, what people think about them. But DEA found that there would not be easy sites to expand to and that there isn't current demand for others.

Mr. Tell wondered about ridership volume for the Mt. Hood Express bus service since its expanded re-launch.

Julie Stephens, City of Sandy, said that the previous service had about 1,800-2,000 riders per month. In its first month of expanded service, Mt. Hood Express had about 1,500 riders as people started getting used to the new schedule. In its second month, ridership grew to 1,800. And now midway through the third month there are already more than 2,000 riders.

Jim Bernard, Clackamas County Commissioner, noted that ridership should be looked at through a multi-year lens, especially given the low snow totals in 2013 to date.

B. Transportation Management Association (Org-1)

Ms. Mros-O'Hara gave an overview of what a Transportation Management Association (TMA) is. She said that a TMA could help implement projects in the MHMTP. She said DEA sub-consultant Rick Williams helped engage several stakeholder groups during the additional analysis phase, including the Mt. Hood Transportation Alliance as well as the MHMTP's Technical Working

Group (TWG) members. The consensus among the TWG was to continue exploring a TMA for the area.

One issue to sort out is who the champion (leadership group) is of the TMA. The agencies and jurisdictions working on the MHMTP did not feel that they could champion the TMA concept. However, there is significant interest from private stakeholders to lead the effort to form a TMA, with MHMTP project partners involved in the process. Rick Williams presented a path to TMA formation that stakeholders found useful. He helped answer questions about TMA formation at two meetings during the past few months.

PMT recommendation: include the TMA project (Org-1) in Group A (high priority projects).

Jim Bernard said that it's clear that stakeholders on the mountain are very interested in forming a TMA. He agrees that it should be a Group A high priority project.

C. Implementation Plan Projects

Ms. Mros-O'Hara talked through the Implementation Plan (IP) projects. There will be an action plan for each of these projects, which were drawn from Group A (most promising) and recommended by the PMT. The IP projects have funding and a partner champion.

Each of the projects in the IP will have an action plan that calls out the key issues and who is responsible for each task. There are 14 projects in all recommended for the IP.

Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted that there are a lot of good projects in the MHMTP that aren't in the IP. That doesn't mean that they won't get funding in the longer term. Jason Tell credited stakeholders for helping to narrow the project choices.

The plan is flexible and will be revisited regularly by partners. The MHMTP has a "rolling plan" element with yearly partner check-ins and a more detailed review every 5 years.

3. Public Comment (KC Cooper lead)

Greg Leo of The Leo Co., representing Mt. Hood Meadows, offered the following public comment: "We stand with our other ski area representative, Tom Keenan of Ski Bowl. (Mr. Keenan joined Mr. Leo during his comment and noted that Jon Tullis of Timberline Lodge could not attend today's PLG meeting, but also supported Mr. Leo's public comment.) The three groups stand before you today in agreement with the concept of the Transportation Management Association moving forward. Each of the three ski areas is willing to contribute \$5,000 towards a feasibility study of the Transportation Management Association. We invite partnership with some of the counties and agencies to make the TMA a possibility."

Tom Keenan of Ski Bowl:

"I would like to elaborate a bit on what Greg (Leo) said. A full feasibility analysis of a TMA would cost about \$45,000, according to the TMA consultant who worked with us during the Mt. Hood planning process. We'd look to the counties, Forest Service and ODOT to also contribute. We'd

like to reconnect after the holidays to see if the public entities can contribute to get this feasibility study going.

4. PLG Confirmation of Implementation Plan Projects (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara lead)

Ms. Mros-O'Hara said the PLG would now consider approving the 14 projects in the Implementation Plan.

Jason Tell, ODOT, said he thought the work done on this was great. He thanked partner staffs for putting a lot of time and energy into this plan. Mr. Tell said he also appreciates all the stakeholder input received from a wide-ranging area. He said the outreach effort was impressive. He added that given budgets are dwindling, it is great to see planning that moves forward in a focused way to get projects done. There will be more things built having done this plan this way than if we had done it another way, said Mr. Tell. He concluded that he is prepared to support the plan.

Lisa Northrop, Forest Service, said she appreciated the strategic nature of the planning effort. The Implementation Plan will allow us to build strong partnerships to get projects done, she said. Partnerships are really what are needed to make improvements during a time of declining budgets. Ms. Northrop said she really appreciates the technical work that the group did and that she, too, supported the 14 projects selected for early implementation.

Karen Joplin, Hood River County, said she felt the outcome's deliverable is definitely in line with the Project Charge that was created upfront. She said she liked that the project scope was narrow enough that it resulted in a product that can be utilized. Ms. Joplin liked the idea of the action plan and the balance between travel options and safety projects, which was called for in the Project Charge. And Ms. Joplin added that she also liked the balance of projects between the two counties. The plan has the ability to be successful, she said.

Jim Bernard, Clackamas County, said that what's obvious to him is that Mt. Hood businesses and resorts have gotten together to champion the Transportation Management Association. A year ago, Mr. Bernard said the Clackamas County Commission created different districts that each commissioner represented. He got the Mt. Hood area. He said he started getting more and more involved in the area's planning efforts. This planning effort, he said, has brought many groups and public agencies together. It's been a tremendous process and great partnerships have been created.

Mr. Bernard moved that the project management team adopt the plan as written. Mr. Tell seconded and Ms. Joplin and Ms. Northrop supported the action.

5. Next Steps (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara lead)

Ms. Mros-O'Hara said that her consultant team at David Evans and Associates would work with partners to finalize the plan in January.

She said the rolling plan would continue to 2029. She noted that there have been several successes already:

- US Forest Service Plan
- Mt. Hood Express bus expansion
- Safety and ITS projects will be built in 2014/2015
- Mirror Lake safety improvements led by FHWA-Western Federal Lands Highway Division

END