



The BAT's Mobile in Bend



Bend residents are excited. Since the mid-1950s, the area has not had a fixed-route bus system, until now. Beginning at 6:15 a.m. on September 27, 2006, people began taking the regularly scheduled seven routes across town to work, shop, and attend school.

On September 26, 2006, the City hosted a ribbon cutting event to launch the system. Many people put countless hours of hard work into moving Bend Area Transit (BAT), with its bat logo, from a long awaited hope to actual service. From city council members and the local area council on transportation members to public works staff, Mayor Bill Friedman recognized the efforts involved in making the fixed route system happen.

"The service will attract new businesses to the area," Friedman said, "as well as reducing congestion and air pollution."

"It's been a very busy year," said Heather Ornelas, current

Transit Manager. Wanda Gray, former Bend Area Transit Manager said, "I'm happy after all the hard work to see the system come to fruition."

Bob Bryant, Oregon Department of Transportation's Region 4 Manager, said, "The turnout here today is testimony to the kind of support the community has for the new transit system."

The City of Bend has operated a dial-a-ride system for seniors and people with disabilities since 1989, opening up the service to the public in 2002 as space was available. The city will continue to provide dial-a-ride service for seniors and people with disabilities.

A seven-year veteran driver, Bill Pieters was very enthusiastic about the new system. "When I started driving Dial-A-Ride buses for Bend, they were little vans. Tomorrow, I'll be driving this bus," he said as he patted the newly paint-

ed 32-foot, 40-passenger bus. "To start with a van and go through all the transitions to a 40-passenger bus is really exciting."

The city purchased six used buses from the Salt Lake City, Utah fleet to start the service. Brent Jacobs, another BAT driver, said, "Our plan is to buy three more of the big buses so we have enough to run all of the routes with backups. Until then, we'll use three of the smaller dial-a-ride buses that have been painted with the new color scheme and BAT logo."

Troy E. Costales, ODOT's Public Transit Division (PTD) Interim Administrator, attended the ribbon cutting event. He said, "Besides being good for the people of Bend, the shift from general public dial-a-ride to fixed route service will provide efficiency and cost savings."

The BAT's Mobile in Bend - Continued

Commute Options, central Oregon's resource for biking, vanpools and other alternative transportation services, had a booth at the ribbon cutting. Jeff Monson, Executive Director, proudly placed his bicycle in the bus-mounted bike rack to demonstrate. He is also very pleased that fixed route

has arrived in the area, "Congratulations to everyone in Bend."

In evaluating results of the first day of service, Ornelas said, "The riders are thrilled and we blew away all of our projections on ridership. We expected 10 to 12 riders per vehicle hour by the end of the first year, and we made that

goal on the first day."

With the motto, "Now you can fly around town," the BAT system should provide a swift improvement to traffic flow in the Bend area.

For more information, visit: http://www.ci.bend.or.us/bend_area_transit/index.html

Upcoming Events and Training

OTA Conference

October is a busy month for transit conferences, kicking off with the Oregon Transit Association conference in Seaside from October 10-12.

Held annually, it offers an opportunity for interaction and education among Oregon transit industry partners.

Coordination, financial management and program development are among the topics to be discussed. A bus simulator and training session will also be available. For more information and complete list of sessions, see: <http://www.oregontransit.com/conference/index.php4>.

TRB Rural Conference

Another important opportunity is the National Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation Conference, held October 22-25, 2006 in Stevenson, Washington.

This biennial conference is for anyone who is interested in learning about the latest in best practice and current research in rural public and intercity bus transportation.

It includes training on: coordination and planning; hazard, security planning and response; funding and financial management; and technology and program management. For more information, visit: <http://www.trbruralconference.org/>

ODOT Discretionary Grants

About \$28 million will be awarded via PTD's biennial discretionary grant solicitation. PTD is planning related training sessions on the following days:

Salem	Nov. 9
Bend	Nov. 14
La Grande	Nov. 16
Roseburg	Nov. 21
Portland	Dec. 5
Salem	Dec. 7

For discretionary grant application training details and other transit events within Oregon, please select "Events, Conferences, and Trainings" from the PTD home page, <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/PT/>.

At the OTA Conference

On the last day of the OTA conference (see above), PTD Interim Administrator Costales will address the transit community.

Mr. Costales has not shared exactly what he will discuss, but sources say that he might have something with which to surprise the audience.

So, resist the urge to race back to the office, and stay for the final lunch to see what he has in store.

■ *Your feedback on this newsletter and the Public Transit Division web site would be appreciated. Please send your comments, suggestions, questions, or information that you would like to share with the transit community to Adam Torgerson, at adam.m.torgerson@odot.state.or.us.*

ODOT Public Transit Division
555 13th. St. NE, Ste. 3
Salem, OR 97301-4179
503.986.3300

www.oregon.gov/odot/pt/