



**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Meeting Notes**

**FEBRUARY 11, 2008**

**Date:** Monday, February 11, 2008  
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Location:** ODOT – Transportation Building  
355 Capitol St NE, Salem, OR

**Members Present:**

Bob Lowry, Chair, Oregon Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (OPRAC)  
Claire Potter, TriMet  
Terry Parker, Lane Transit District (LTD)  
John Helm, Governors Commission on Senior Services  
Lorna Adkins, Salem Area Mass Transit  
Sally Lawson, O4AD  
Allan Pollock, Salem Area Mass Transit District (SAMTD)  
John Wenholz, Assoc. of Counties (AOC)  
Mary Jo Carpenter, Oregon Transit Association (OTA)  
Dennis Dick, Intercity Bus Service Provider

**Interested Persons Present:**

Cynthia Thompson, SMART  
Cindy Howe, Sunset Empire

**Members Absent:**

Janice Wilson, Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC)  
Frank Synoground, Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)  
Ernie Palmer, Basin Transit Service

**ODOT Public Transit Staff Present:**

Michael Ward, Administrator  
Dinah Van Der Hyde, Policy Manager  
PJ Pippin, Executive Support  
Ivan Presnyy, Transportation Analyst

**Guest Speakers:**

None.

## ITEM A

### 10:00 a.m. **Welcome, Introductions, Items of Interest**

Chairperson Bob Lowry called the meeting to order. Welcome and introductions were made.

## ITEM B

### 10:10 p.m. **Next Steps; Project Prioritization Process**

A brief recap was done of February 4 meeting work. The Committee assigned considerations for all 13 projects, A through E, which placed them into the Tiers for ConnectOregon II review. Today's meeting will be about ranking and prioritization of the 13 projects. Two Transit Review scoring sheets were given to each member to rank (from H-M-L) and prioritize the 13 projects in order of suggested funding from 1 (first) to 13.

## ITEM C

### 10:20a.m. **Review of Considerations – Staff analysis of considerations (b) and (e)**

Committee discussed the economic benefit and construction readiness of the projects. Questions of definitions came up where several applicants stated they talked with *ConnectOregon* staff and were told a different definition of construction-ready. Also, the question arose as to whether ownership of the project property at the time the Commission makes the project selection decision was necessary. Michael Ward responded that property ownership, as long as it is in process, is not necessary. He stated that projects must be ready to "break ground" before June 30, 2009 to be given credit for "construction ready" consideration. The date considered construction-ready is an important criteria. Three transit applications: City of Wilsonville, SKT and SKT, did not meet the construction-ready timeline criteria.

Clair Potter made a Comment for the Record: The City of Oregon City project did not select the "Provide Economic Benefit" column in their ConnectOregon2 application. Ms. Potter emphasized that the project does provide economic benefit and that the trolleys are Oregon made. The trolley project is not a new business and does not include manufacturing/construction jobs but the trolley business expects to expand, especially during the summer with increased service and job creation. Other Members agreed.

Regarding the Astoria project, Committee asked if the Regional Review Committee gave more consideration to use-ready projects versus construction-ready projects. PTD will get clarification from ConnectOregon2.

Committee encouraged applicants who could obtain other money through other available sources, possible more appropriate sources. If a project needs operating support a source other than ConnectOregon would be more appropriate; other projects could use JARC funding, etc.

It was noted that the Committee Notebook was missing a page of the City of Oregon City application. A replacement was provided at the February 4 meeting.

As of the last meeting on February 4, the ranking was as follows:

Tier 1: Gresham Redevelopment Center

Tier 2: Columbia County, City of Oregon City, City of Wilsonville, Lane Transit District, Salem Keizer Transit (SKT), SKT, Sunset Empire, City of Bend

Tier 3: TriMet, City of Eugene, Kah-Nee-Ta Resort, City of Bend

3:00 p.m. **ITEM D**

### **Modal Ranking of Projects**

Committee was reminded to review only the modal perspective of the Sunset Empire Transportation District and The City of Eugene projects in accordance with ConnectOregon2 requirements; and, not the rail components.

Committee ranked the projects by High-Medium-Low on the scoring sheets provided.

Discussion continued. The point was made that the City of Wilsonville and SKT are bigger, broader projects compared to the size and scale of the Oregon City Trolley project. The Committee questioned the economist's perception of value of the projects. There appeared to be a bias for the smaller simpler projects.

Committee suggested for "Lessons Learned" to include a category for "Ridership" for the next ConnectOregon and it could include the number of train box car loads for Rail. Ridership is a significant component in transit. Also suggested for "Lessons Learned" was to obtain clear definitions before going into the Regional Review Committee meeting. (Last time there was a misunderstanding and it was hard to create equity.) There was disparity in what the Regions saw versus modals; modal rankings plus regional rankings were confusing. Modal rankings were out of sync with Regional rankings. Committee wants to submit comments with each project selection to the Regional Review meeting. The suggestion was made to have the projects reviewed by the Regional Review Committees first and then to the modes (transit, rail, marine, air, highway) but it was decided that the current process works best. It was suggested that there was a better chance of a project being selected if it was in a smaller region because there are only a few projects to compete against. There is tougher competition in the metropolitan areas like Portland/Salem.

Public Comment: (Cynthia Thompson) Suggested using the questions, "What's most important to Transit to the state of Oregon?" and "What does transit need most?" as selection criteria for projects in the next ConnectOregon (Bus \$, Facilities\$, Redevelop \$, etc.) Committee brought up the point that the selection process is more complicated and that there are many components (such as, life span of ties, rails, etc.) to each project.

Also for next round of ConnectOregon, Committee said the ConnectOregon2 economic development question was confusing. Committee members felt that the scores didn't make sense sometimes and it might be better to ask a numeric value instead of "x".

Tier ranking is confusing. There should be a better way to emphasize economic benefit of a project.

Committee suggested that a better understanding of Regional project evaluation might be achieved by more frequent interaction with the 5 ODOT Regions; which may improve the communication in the ConnectOregon process.

The comment was made that the City of Bend should be a "High" priority because Bend is a growing community (new fixed route, etc.). PTD should be able to make a case with the Regional Review Committee. Further discussion continued about the importance of a central multi-modal location for the buses. City of Bend project was unanimously raised in the ranking.

Committee agreed that it was best to rank the projects here, in this arena, than to wait until the projects go to the Regional Review group. The Committee has better understanding of the projects and scoring than the Regional Review Committee; and, PTAC feels the process is more equitable with the ability to give supportive comments to the Regional Review Committee.

After project discussion, the current ranking list appears as follows:

- Tier 1: Gresham, City of Bend, Columbia County, Lane Transit, SKT, SKT
- Tier 2: Oregon City, Sunset Empire, City of Wilsonville
- Tier 3: None

Project discussion continues. Concern was expressed about the shovel-ready ability of the Sunset Empire project. The buses are primarily for cruise ship service but are available for general transit when not in use for charter service. Economic benefit and value was discussed. Committee did not feel that this project was a benefit to general public transit, and concern about future funding for operations was discussed.

12:00 p.m. BREAK – WORKING LUNCH

Committee members individually rated each project a high, medium or low value to transit. The scores were averaged in terms of points. A Motion was made by Dennis Dick that projects that averaged with two points or below when analyzed should be scored as a "High", Lorna Adkins seconded the Motion, and Committee unanimously accepted the change.

1:00 p.m. **ITEM E**  
**Modal Prioritization of Projects**

## Oregon Public Transportation Advisory Committee

A motion was made by Dennis Dick to make the High/Low ranking of projects in Tier groups more distinct and competitive by using more detailed percentages; Sally Lawson seconded the motion and Committee unanimously agreed to the proposal.

Conflict of Interest has been set aside for this ranking sort. All Committee members will be ranking all 13 projects.

1:30 p.m.

### ITEM F

#### Summary of Results, Final Recommendations

Final Committee funding recommendations are as follows:

- FIRST TIER: Gresham
- SECOND TIER: Columbia County, City of Bend, Lane Transit District, SKT, SKT, City of Oregon City, City of Wilsonville, Sunset Empire
- THIRD TIER: City of Eugene, City of Bend, TriMet, Kah-Nee-Ta Resort

The committee applied a 1 through 13 priority score to the projects in the arrayed tiers. These recommendations will move onto the next committee (Regional Review Committee) in the *ConnectOregon* II process.

For more information the *ConnectOregon* II website is <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/COMM/CO/COII>.

2:00 p.m.

### BREAK

2:10 p.m.

### Discussion continued.

Concern in future STF revenues was expressed. Dinah Van Der Hyde explained that the STF program is a formula-based program. Revenues from ID fees, cigarette taxes and the “lawnmower” fund” have flat lined; and, there could be some risk to funding from collection of ID fees.

Committee acknowledged the increased relevance of recent PTAC meetings and the ability of members to have input into the meetings and decision-making process. The Discretionary Grant process needs more attention and will be discussed in upcoming meetings.

2:20 p.m.

### ITEM H

#### Meeting Adjourned

Next meeting is March 10.

John Wenolz moved to adjourn the meeting, Allan Pollock seconded the motion, and Committee unanimous agreed to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned early, at 2:20 p.m.