

**OREGON FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (OFAC)**

**MEETING NOTES**

October 17, 2007 1:30 – 4:10 pm

Local Government Center

Salem, OR

**1. Call to Order / Introductions -- ..... Tom Zelenka, Chair**

Tom Zelenka, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm; and self-introductions were made by OFAC members and guests.

**2. March 7, 2007 Meeting Notes & Follow-Up – ..... Tom Zelenka, Chair**

The March 7, 2007 Meeting Notes were unanimously accepted.

**3. Legislative Update – .....Randy Papé, OTC Commissioner,  
Robin Freeman, ODOT Government Relations Manager  
and Travis Brower, ODOT Federal Liaison**

*Commissioner Papé* led a robust discussion with OFAC members reviewing the findings in the 2006 Oregon Transportation Plan concerning gaps in transportation funding and the defeat of a gas tax increase in the 2007 Legislative Session. Commissioner Papé further reported the defeated bill would have worked as a system, creating an entire funding package. A number of municipalities are proceeding on their own with gas tax increases to raise local transportation funding. The need for increased funding for freight mobility was discussed at length, with Commissioner Papé emphasizing the need to find a common basis for a successful funding program before the '09 Legislative Session.

Commissioner Papé reported the Commission is excited about ConnectOregon II funding highway congestion relief funding is the top priority. The goal, among other things, is to move freight with as little congestion as possible. OFAC expressed its appreciation for the hard work and leadership of Commissioner Papé during the Legislative session.

The Governor's transportation adviser, Chris Warner, was asked what the reaction was of the OTC and the Governor to the failure of the initiatives? Where is this leading and is it helpful to the system? Mr. Warner responded, the position is that we don't want to take a stand in any way to limit what cities are doing relative to transportation funding.

However, the more the localities take those funding initiatives at their own levels, the more there will be push-back from dealers who do not want to see competitive levels of gas tax funding. The State needs help from local governments on how we can approach this issue. The Commission is reticent to take a position to limit cities and counties –we will need considerable discussion between local jurisdictions and the state to come to a conclusion on the best approach. Mr. Warner added that the Governor's office is closely monitoring this issue and the Governor understands local government's position. Local government needs assistance and they should be at the table to help craft a package to

meet their needs. Mr. Warner is working to ensure the lines of communication stay open between the Governor's office and local governments.

Mike Montero stated the OTC has provided Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs) to look at STIP funding programs. Just looking at current projects, there are insufficient funds to get the needed work done. Any Oregon land use action that is dependent on fiscally constrained transportation improvements is in jeopardy. The potential impact is on Oregon's ability to advance economic development. The sooner the OR delegation understands that this is a shortfall we will need to work together to avoid economic catastrophe, the better off we'll all be.

**Robin Freeman, ODOT Government Relations Manager** presented an overview of successful ODOT legislative initiatives from the 2007 session:

**Toll-way Regulation:** We have updated our toll-way statutes. With SB 1022 we can build modern toll facilities. This will assist the Columbia River Crossing project, which was also recently designated as a Corridor of the Future by FHWA; ODOT received \$15 Million to assist in planning. This was one of six projects nationally selected.

**SB 994:** County funding to replace federal \$56.25 Million to counties. Will report back to 2009 assembly where funds went. Forces ODOT to lower next cycle of modernization funds in the STIP.

Commissioner Papé stated the OTC's discussion at this point has been to cease activity on statewide activities because of lack of funds. One is Columbia River Crossing, which is still underway, and another is the Newberg-Dundee bypass. Tolling does not seem to be feasible at this time and the charge is back to committees to narrow the scope. Sunrise Corridor is a huge problem and we see a great deal regarding land use issues. There is no infrastructure, transportation-wise, to handle this. We as a state, have got to step up.

Hwy 20 is going forward with a few challenges that we can navigate through. Funding is not in place and bonding is not an answer (or a sole answer). A good deal of available modernization funding will need to be used to complete Hwy 20. We can barely fund the current STIP without funding, the OTIA projects will hit a peak in 2008 and decline in the next couple of years.

Mr. Warner: As we move forward with a Freight Plan we must work together. Work with OTIA has been great. We need to take a look at the TSPs in this state. People are driving less and driving cars with better gas mileage so they are generating lower gas tax. The Governor thinks we need to take a broader eye at transportation funding. He wants to look at a multi-modal system. The system we have needs help with different funding.

Mr. Warner was asked if he had a sense of the statewide need for transportation funding. He responded that people/communities have needs but they seem to have different needs. The populace needs to understand the impact of transportation, not just for personal driving, but moving goods, etc. He was asked what the Governor's priority for

international trade, freight mobility, etc. is? One issue is that the state is actively seeking to draw down reservoirs on John Day. As we look at transportation only as a department or commission, we're being short-sighted by not looking at the whole picture.

**Travis Brouwer** discussed California and Washington's successful efforts to raise transportation funding: Washington secured higher revenue (\$7B to fund projects over the next 16 years); and California took dollars from general fund and then created a \$19.9B multi-facet and multi-modal funding package. Mr. Montero added that a substantial amount of CA funding comes from local measures. Mr. Brouwer confirmed that Washington's gas tax is significantly higher than Oregon's. Mr. Zelenka noted that both OR (OTIA III) and WA went with named projects so that the public can get their arms around what the new funding will provide. Ms. Bohard stated that ODOT's highway staff has a number of performance measures. OTC has a state of the system report and is in the process of putting this together.

**4. ConnectOregon II – .....Jack Evans, ODOT Government Relations**

Mr. Evans began with an overview of HB 2278 which allocated \$100M in non-highway transportation funding to CO II. This time more information is being sought on the application form to more clearly determine the need for the project. There will be 11 committees: 5 modal and 5 regional committees plus 1 Final Review Committee whose members are being appointed by Matt Garrett and the Commission.

Between late November and early January the *ConnectOregon* staff will be reviewing information internally. Viable and eligible projects go to the Modal Committees by late January, then on to the Regional Review Committees, the Final Review Committee and a Public Hearing, and finally to the May, 2008 OTC Meeting for a decision.

Mr. Evans stated there were 86 Intents-to-Apply submitted. Freight Mobility Staff has a list by mode and region. The Policy Team is still reviewing whether the prevailing wage rate needs to be applied to public/private partnerships.

Mr. Evans mentioned the Public Hearing on the rulemaking will be 10/22 from 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm in the ODOT Transportation Building, 355 Capitol Street, NE, Salem. He reminded everyone that the closing date for receipt of applications is 11/21. He also indicated the Feasibility Consultant RFP will close 10/31 and that various individuals are assembling names for the Region 1 Committee and the Marine Planning & Advisory Committee. Dates and contact numbers for CO II were distributed to OFAC members. Susie Lahsene asked if there was anything in place to make applying for a grant less attractive than applying for a loan. There is nothing in the legislation that covered this and no restrictions are being imposed. Numerous other questions concerning the application process were asked and answers will be included in the Instructions to Reviewers (due out soon).

**5. Airport Futures – .....Scott King, Port of Portland**

Mr. King presented plans for the expansion of the Portland Airport and indicated the port wants feedback as it continues with this process.

*Positives:*

On Site Rental cars	Short term guidance system
Close in – not far out of major area	Landscaping and outside ambience
Connection to MAX line	Efficiency of parking – credit card usage
Small funnel for pedestrians coming into airport	Connections with smaller communities
Great stores, same prices as elsewhere	Airport and freight and road system regarding congestion
Fast and efficient including security	

Federal law limits how airports can spend money around an airport. Note that there is no formal designee on the airport staff for freight.

*Negatives:*

Keep closing down short-term parking	15 mitigation projects to be done 6/08 and rest in 2009.
Columbia River Crossing – big box going to Jantzen Beach and would cause traffic problems.	About 20 projects in process with growth of the area.
Rush hours—proximity close to I-5 and 205 plus major retail activity causes traffic tie-ups	Signage could be better
	People want to avoid Cascade Station

Passenger feedback is gathered regularly from passengers taking busses from parking lot to flights. The Port is putting in a 3500 car garage on old footprint.

**6. Bridge Inspection Report -- .....Bruce Johnson, ODOT State Bridge Engineer**

The I-35W Bridge collapse in Minneapolis prompted action in all 50 states. This was a deck truss bridge with a variable deck. Mr. Johnson showed a security video of the collapse. The gusset plate had cracks.

Mr. Johnson then went on to provide a detailed review of the actions that have been—and are routinely – taken in Oregon to keep track of bridge condition. This PowerPoint will be provided to members separately.

**7. OFAC Annual Report to OTC -- .....Susie Lahsene, Port of Portland**

The proposal for OFAC’s annual report to OTC for 2007 is to draft a letter to OTC. Email to Susie if you have ideas.

Issues from meeting:

- Include mention of cost of congestion reports?
- Include Southwestern Oregon task force economic report.
- Create an OFAC strategic plan for next Legislative session (2009).
- Expand agricultural portion.

It was also suggested that OFAC should send a letter on the Columbia River Crossing alternatives, stating its preference. The selection of the preferred alternative is coming up in the spring.

**8. Update on Freight Planning – . . . . . Jerri Bohard, Administrator, TDD**

ODOT is in the process of finalizing the Freight Steering Committee membership list – a few are tentative and several have accepted. Julie Rodwell conducted 30 telephone interviews with stakeholders in April 2007 for their input to the Freight Steering process, and will conduct similar interviews with the additional members of the FSC.

OECCDD’s Marine Planning and Advisory Committee has not been set up yet and may provide a couple of names for the Steering Committee. December 13<sup>th</sup> is being considered for the first Freight Steering Committee meeting. ODOT will offer video-conferencing because of the distances involved for Steering Committee members.

ODOT has a two-pronged consulting process under way. The initial “small” team of freight consultants will be meeting next week with Julie and Jerri. The large freight planning RFP will be issued very soon and selection of teams under that procurement will occur promptly thereafter.

How does rail relate to the freight plan work? The rail study will be done under the same consultant contracts but exactly how it will be integrated is still evolving. The Legislature in November 2008 expects a Multi-modal study.

The statewide Rail Advisory Committee will also be working on the rail components.

**9. Columbia River Crossing . . . . . Susie Lahsene, Vice Chair**

Susie Lahsene provided a preview of the presentation to be given at the December 5, 2007 OFAC meeting and advised OFAC members they need to get involved with the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project because major decisions will be made soon and they will affect freight transportation. She asked all OFAC members to attend the December 5, meeting to hear the CRC project update.

**10. OTIA Reporting – . . . . . Teddie Baker, Freight Mobility Staff**

Ms. Baker presented two status reports -- one on the freight OTIA 3 projects and the other on other OTIA/ bridge project progress.

**11. Joint Policy and Projects Subcommittee Meetings. . . . .Martin Callery  
Projects Subcommittee Chair**

Martin Callery reported the OFAC Projects and Policy subcommittees will look at all applications (except Public Transit). They will combine the two OFAC subcommittees into one working committee and will meet every 2 weeks beginning in January, with meetings also Nov. 7 and prior to the 12/5 OFAC. Julie Rodwell stated the combined subcommittees will be addressing STIP, ConnectOregon II and the Freight Plan. ODOT wants to make sure that people are aware of the schedule and make sure they're plugged in. Decisions will be by OFAC voting members. Voting is not open to anyone who wants to participate; only general members may vote.

**12. Hot Topics – Member Round Robin**

Questions were asked about SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization and what's going on in the Department. Metro also plays an active role in regard to reauthorization. Julie Rodwell commented that there are 2 national committees working on national transportation finance. One question is how to integrate earmarks into the program. The federally funded earmarks have consumed a high percentage of discretionary funds in the current SAFETEA-LU.

Commissioner Papé: Asked how do we look at federal funding in relation to the STIP and other funding areas? Do we need more coordination?

Gary Cardwell asked if we can get a quarterly report on how CO II is doing? Local government is tracking and will bring back a more detailed report in December.

Per Secretary of Transportation, Mary Peters – there's more than enough funding going out to each state and it's an engineering problem, not a funding problem. View is that she's laying groundwork for toll bridges. She used the Portland congestion study as an example. Get rid of lighthouses and bridge problem would be solved!

Mr. Montero: Cost of congestion study is by diesel powered trucks on highway. Congestion bottleneck in freight corridors are a problem. Virtually every MPO in the state is on the edge. Agriculture is in this.

Steve Kale: The incoming Washington State DOT Director (Paula Hammond) is from Oregon. She has been involved with ODOT in many areas. Good for ODOT and freight to maintain this relationship.

Ms. Rodwell: Research problem solicitation from Research Section. Michael Bufalino has the lead on this so expect a nudge from him.

Mr. Zelenka: Need to send out email on what constitutes project priorities.

Ms. Bohard: An expert task group in Research has an excellent web page with priorities identified. Resubmit if your project did not get chosen.

**13. Other Business and Announcements – .....Tom Zelenka, Chair**

Prior to next OFAC meeting on December 5 is a Joint Projects and Policy Subcommittee Meeting at the Port of Portland.

**14. Public Comment – ..... Tom Zelenka, Chair**

None.

The OFAC Business Meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.