

OREGON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting February 18, 2016 Salem, Oregon

On Thursday, February 18, 2016, at 9:00 a.m., the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff held a premeeting briefing session and agenda review in Room 240, the Stuart Foster Conference Room, at the Transportation Building, 355 Capitol Street NE, Salem Oregon. Highlights of the premeeting were:

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ODOT Director Matt Garrett reviewed the agenda.

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STIP: ODOT Highway Division Administrator Paul Mather indicated that, given the tight timeline for obligating these funds, ODOT will want some direction from the commission on what sort of discussion ODOT should have with the Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs) about projects ODOT is proposing adding to the 2015-2018 STIP. Commissioner Baney suggested that ODOT may want to have the Oregon Freight Advisory Committee weigh in on freight projects. Commissioner O'Hollaren indicated he is uncomfortable at the commission taking unilateral action and wants to know what level of buy-in ODOT has from ACTs and other stakeholders; he wants ACTs to support ODOT and have confidence because they have been consulted. Commissioner Morgan noted given the partnership between ODOT and the ACTs ODOT should inform its partners about what we're planning to do and why we're doing it, not solicit input, and move ahead.

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Bicycle/pedestrian plan: After a review of the agenda for the bicycle/pedestrian plan, Commissioner Baney indicated the commission will have the opportunity to refine the plan based on public comment. TDD Administrator Jerri Bohard clarified that after comments are received, ODOT will develop a matrix of comments and proposed responses.

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Legislative update: ODOT Government Relations Manager Leah Craft gave an update on happenings in the 2016 legislative session. Craft indicated that the speed limit technical fix, which will add two short sections of road to those with increased speed limits, is expected to pass and be signed by the governor by March 1st, allowing ODOT to roll out higher speeds on all routes at the same time. In addition, a bill to reallocate funding between Jobs and Transportation Act projects will be moving to the Senate floor soon. While a transportation funding bill introduced by Rep. John Davis didn't receive a hearing and thus has died, there is still some talk about using bonding to potentially help leverage federal grant funds. The minimum wage bill would have very limited impact on ODOT in the near future.



The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. in the Gail Achterman Conference Room at the Transportation Building.

Notice of these meetings was made by press release of local and statewide media circulation throughout the state. Those attending part or all of the meetings included:

Chair Tammy Baney
Commissioner Dave Lohman
Commissioner Susan Morgan
Commissioner Alando Simpson
Commissioner Sean O'Hollaren
Director Matthew Garrett
Asst. Director for Public Affairs Travis Brouwer
Trans. Development Div. Admin. Jerri Bohard
Highway Division Administrator Paul Mather
Communications Section Manager Tom Fuller
Government Relations Section Mgr. Leah Craft

Rail & Transit Division Admin. Hal Gard
Trans. Safety Division Admin. Troy Costales
Int. Deputy Director Central Services Kurtis Danka
Chief Human Resources Officer Jane Lee
Technical Services Branch Manager Tom Lauer
Region 1 Manager Rian Windsheimer
Region 2 Manager Sonny Chickering
Region 3 Manager Frank Reading
Region 4 Manager Bob Bryant
Commission Assistant Jacque Carlisle



Chair Baney called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.



***OTC Chair Remarks
Agenda Item A***

Chair Baney had an opportunity to be in Klamath Falls and John Day recently. She said a section of Hwy 97 outside Klamath Falls receives a heavy amount of traffic, resulting in significant pot-holes. Baney was encouraged to hear the support and appreciation of the folks in that area; the work was done in a very quick and efficient way and crews used a new material not typically used in the winter. It helped make sure the traveling public is not only safe, but heard and taken care of by their region manager. They were also very appreciative of the work, partnership and dedication of ODOT Region 4 Manager Bob Bryant. Bryant and his team have worked with the governor's Visioning Panel, and through those discussions, a lot of the needs across the state are being brought up in those conversations.

Those conversations are not just about the needs of Klamath Falls, but also about what Hwy 97 means to the state, and in particular a lot of discussion around the resiliency of the state with Cascadia. Knowing the Cascadia is something anticipated to occur, it's nice to hear the eastern and southern parts of the state talking about how they are coordinating to be ready to respond.

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**Director's Report
Agenda Item B**

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Two Busy Portland DMV Offices Move

Director Garrett talked about two of the state's busiest DMV offices which will move mid-March. The first move comes as a long-needed renovation and expansion to the ODOT-owned DMV office on S.E. Powell Blvd in Portland was completed. The year-long project added about 2200 square feet to the existing 8700 sq. ft. facility. This work included expanding the customer lobby space, redesigning the floorplan to gain more efficient use of space, replacing the roof, installing more energy-efficient elements to the interior and structure, and adding customer parking spaces. The SE Powell facility serves over 100,000 customers each year, or about 450-600 customers a day.

While the renovation was engaged at the Powell site, the DMV's operations were moved to the Mall 205 Complex – (just off I-205) and this site proved to be an excellent location to conduct business transactions. With completion of the renovation, DMV will move into its newly remodeled SE Portland home and reopen on March 14th.

The second major move involves the Northeast Portland DMV office, which has been in its 82nd Avenue location since 2002. Rather than continue to use the leased location at N.E. 82nd Avenue, DMV decided to make the location at Mall 205 the new permanent home for the NE Portland DMV Office. With this transaction, square footage was nearly doubled, going from 4362 square feet at the NE location (\$7,000 per month), to 8000 square feet (\$8,000 per month). This move, and the reopening on March 16th, will accommodate customer growth for many years. Garrett said that is good for business no matter what side of the DMV counter you stand on.

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Website Redesign – Card Sorting

ODOT is in the midst of a two-year project to redesign its website. The goal is to improve the agency's ability to communicate with customers and stakeholders, help customers find needed information, use resources more efficiently, and to improve accessibility and transparency. By redesigning the site, it can be turned into a well-managed source of information and action.

As part of the Web Reinvention Project, several rounds of user testing will be conducted with the audiences who use the ODOT website. Last week, the first round of testing was started with an open card sort. In an open card sort, participants create their own names for the categories. This helps reveal not only how they mentally classify the cards, but also what terms they use for the categories. This information will help organize the new website in a way that makes sense to customers. The results will show:

- How end users expect to see information organized and how navigation is structured on the site.
- Ideas for new or more appropriate categories and naming conventions.
- How users see the relationship between items.

This endeavor will help inform, educate and allow people to engage ODOT in a more efficient way. The new site should launch in the spring of 2017.

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OReGO Wins National Award

Director Garrett said the OReGO program has struck gold – again. The “Welcome to OReGO” animated video, created totally in-house by our own ODOT Communications team, has been awarded a gold-level AVA Digital Award by the Association of Marketing Communications Professionals. This international award honors outstanding work in video, public relations, marketing and advertising. Late last year this same video won gold from the MarComm Awards. This simple video illustrates the benefits and ease of use of the OReGO Road Usage Charge Program in a light and friendly format. Congratulations to Tom Fuller and the Communications Team, and to OReGO.

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Thank You to ODOT Staff

Director Garrett read a letter ODOT received recently thanking a member of Team ODOT.

“My family would like to offer our sincere appreciation for the ODOT service we received on Christmas Day 2015. While in route from Happy Valley to our home in Washougal, my daughter got a flat tire. By 1:00 she called back to let us know that the Oregon State Incident Response vehicle had arrived and offered to change her tire. With lights flashing and a friendly disposition, John Lundberg had the job nearly finished when I arrived at 1:05. Even when I offered a tip for this fabulous service John declined saying, “No thank you... I’m just glad to have a job where I can be out here helping people on Christmas.”

Traffic was fairly heavy as John changed that tire. The cars whizzed past without a thought about moving over one lane and making it safer for John. He was truly putting his life on the line – I know, I was standing next to him. John demonstrated distinguished courage, is admired for his brave deed, and displayed noble qualities. John is by definition, a HERO. . . . Gratefully yours, Jerry Terkelson.”

Director Garrett said that clearly John made an impression on the Terkelson family – his professionalism, respect and integrity did this agency proud and is representative of the caliber of people who wear the ODOT uniform. “Additionally,” Garrett said, “this letter made me pause and reflect on the thousands of other unsung heroes among Oregon’s highway maintenance workers.”

Over the last several months, maintenance forces have stepped up to face snow events, torrential downpours, windstorms, dust storms, sinkholes, landslides, fallen trees, car crashes, and countless other hazards. They are out on the roads keeping our fellow Oregonians safe at all times of the day and night, on weekends and holidays, braving the worst of the elements while most of us are home staying warm and dry. Our crews take tremendous pride in their work, and we should take tremendous pride that they do that work for ODOT.

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Public Comments
Agenda Item C

Public comment was received from:

Ron Swaren of Portland spoke in support of a sensible, alternative solution to putting a freeway over the Columbia River, as proposed in the CRC project. Swaren suggested the completion of an Oregon ring road. A ring road is an essential planning feature used around the world and Portland has three quarters of one now with I-205 and Hwy 217 in the southwest. His proposal for the “Western Arterial Highway” would go from U.S. 26 at Cornelius Pass Road, to highway Hwy. 30, connecting at Mill Plain Blvd. to move north and end at Fruit Valley Road outside Vancouver. This proposal will accomplish what everyone wants done, but in a compact package where the costs are not so high. Swaren said he has been examining new types of bridge structures around the country that would be well received, but ODOT needs to own it in the sense of it being an ODOT project that can request a study. Public support already exists in Washington and Clark counties for a western arterial.

Swaren also spoke in favor of updating the defensive driving program for today’s conditions. It would benefit bicyclists to learn that defensive tactics are the best way to avoid trouble. Even though he is a bicyclist himself, Swaren said it is stressful to have a lot of bicyclist that don’t pay attention to the rules like obeying lighting and signage, and basically being alert. Three principals for a public program would be communication, consideration, and caution.

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David Bowman, Depot Bay, said in the last few days on Hwy. 101 at Whale Cove, they are close to losing the Depot Bay waterline heading south on Hwy. 101. Something needs to be done now; it was started five years ago but put on hold and now the road is terrible, both from the sinking and from the seaward side. A lot of this isn’t noticed because it’s land sliding and not bluff erosion. On a different note, Bowman said a job well done on the Hwy. 217 to I-5 merge lane to Lake Oswego. The new Wilsonville exchange is needed also. He congratulated the Safety Action Plan and the Visioning Panel for a job well done, and suggested not making things too specific because when you put out a vision of no deaths or serious injuries, it limits the scope.

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City of Newberg Mayor Bob Andrews congratulated the commission, Director Garrett, and ODOT staff for the success of the Newberg/Dundee project to date. Going forward, Mayor Andrews asked the commission to focus on the protective purchase of right-of-way for the next phase or phases, and identifying actual funding to construct the rest of the project. This request is brief, but the impact is immense for the entire region. To fully realize the benefits of the bypass is to complete the project. The next step is the acquisition of right-of-way and it is projected that \$10 million needs to be dedicated immediately to begin the protective purchase of right-of-way. Properties along the path of the next phase of the Newberg/Dundee bypass are under immediate threat of development, which if completed, would make the bypass significantly more expensive and could endanger the effectiveness of the entire project. This project could very easily be a project ready for those discretionary funds in the FAST Act.

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**Federal Surface Transportation Authorization
Agenda D1**

The commission received an informational presentation on safety, transit, rail, and other programs and policies in the recently passed federal surface transportation authorization. ODOT Transportation Safety Division Administrator Troy Costales, ODOT Rail and Public Transit Division Administrator Hal Gard, ODOT Senior Federal Affairs Advisor Trevor Sleeman, ODOT Transportation Development Division Administrator Jerri Bohard, and ODOT Planning Section Manager Erik Havig gave the presentation. **(Background materials in Director/Commission/History Center File, Salem.)**

Background:

In late 2015, Congress passed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) which authorizes federal highway, transit, transportation safety, and rail programs through the end of federal fiscal year 2020. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff members have already briefed the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) on the major reforms and funding elements in the highway-focused sections of the FAST Act. However, there are several other titles within the bill that will have impacts on ODOT, the agency's partners, and the traveling public in Oregon. This presentation will provide a more detailed overview of each of these subject areas.

Safety – Federal highway safety programs focus on both funding the construction of physical highway safety improvements as well as on human behavior. FAST Act changes to safety programs will prove both positive and negative for Oregon. A number of the behavioral highway safety programs and funding administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) were changed by this legislation. While these changes allow Oregon to qualify for start-up funding under the Distracted Driving (DD) grant program, Oregon will continue to be ineligible for the full DD program funding and the Graduated Driver Licensing program funding. Oregon's distracted driving law and the teen driver licensing system do not match the federal criteria for eligibility. The FAST Act creates a new grant program for non-motorized safety that is specifically aimed at bicyclist and pedestrians. Oregon will qualify for funding under this program.

Every behavioral incentive program includes expectations and restrictions on how that funding is used for highway safety programs and grants. In the Federal Highway Administration's Highway Safety Improvement Program, Congress eliminated flexibility to allow education or enforcement activity to be coupled with safety construction (i.e. enforcement in areas where rumble strips are being applied for road departure safety.)

Transit – The core structure of federal transit funding programs will largely remain the same. Funding growth among transit programs will generally align with the modest growth seen for the highway programs. The FAST Act reinstates the popular Buses and Bus Facilities competitive grant program discontinued under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), which will allow Oregon transit districts to compete for federal funding for bus purchases and related activities. ODOT's Rail and Public Transit Division may apply for funding on behalf of rural transit providers. In addition, FAST Act created a new initiative, "Rides to Wellness," which places an emphasis on access to non-emergent medical transportation services.

Rail – The FAST Act’s freight rail title strengthens design standards and requires new safety equipment for tank cars. Additionally, as a result of the legislation, railroads will be required to share real-time information with public safety officials on the movement of hazardous materials. The FAST Act also includes a passenger rail title which authorizes Amtrak programs through 2020. The legislation includes a number of reforms to Amtrak and its operating procedures. However, the passenger rail title is not expected to provide any additional funding for state-supported routes like Amtrak Cascades. The FAST Act does establish an Amtrak State-Supported Route Committee to more formally organize the relationship between Amtrak and those states, like Oregon, which operate state-supported Amtrak routes.

Road Usage Charges – The FAST Act establishes a new competitive grant program for demonstrating alternatives to the gas tax for raising revenues. States and multi-state groups are eligible to apply. Projects must employ a user fee based structure to demonstrate an ability to maintain the long-term financial health of the Highway Trust Fund. In FY 2016, \$15 million in grant funds will be available, with \$20 million available each year thereafter. Congress mandated that funding go toward implementation of two or more user fee alternative revenue collection mechanisms. As the nationwide leader in road usage charging, ODOT plans to apply for funding to partner with other states and continue development of the OReGO program.

Other policy and program changes:

- *The motor carrier title makes several changes to existing motor carrier safety grant programs that, in concert with potential changes to state law, could lead to better access to federal funding for Oregon.*
- *The FAST Act continues the work of MAP-21 and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) in streamlining regulatory processes. A number of changes to permitting and environmental review processes could streamline project delivery.*

Presentation:

Trevor Sleeman said previous briefing discussions on implementation of changes that have come as a result of the FAST Act primarily focused on the highway and freight portions of the bill. This discussion gave an overview of the more important changes in the other titles in the bill, not related to those programs. Highlights of the presentation were:

- Highway safety reform – overview of the NHTSA Section 402 program. In order to qualify for the program, the state must participate in three mandatory enforcement campaigns, two related to impaired driving and one related to occupant protection.
- A new requirement of the FAST Act is for all Highway Safety Offices to do a new biennial survey on automated enforcement.
- Any program area or project must be linked to the state’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan.
- The second portion of the highway safety reform deals with the Section 405 incentive grant program, which takes effect on October 1, 2016 and has seven programs:
 - Occupant Protection
 - Impaired Driving
 - Distracted Driving
 - Motorcyclist Safety
 - Graduated Driver License

- Traffic Records
- Non-motorized Safety (Bike/Ped)
- Rail key reforms for Oregon include passenger rail, freight rail and rail safety, and public transit. Under the FAST Act, rail gets a lot more attention but no money appropriation.
- Innovative funding and finance reforms and potential opportunities for Oregon through an alternative grant program, TIFIA loans, and the Innovative Finance Bureau.
- Other key reforms for Oregon include Motor Carrier safety reforms in grant consolidation, compliance, safety, and accountability. Environmental reforms include streamlining, NEPA assumption, and project delivery.
- There were very few substantive changes for Transit.
- A review of a few new funding opportunities, particularly for the OReGO program.

Discussion:

Commissioner Lohman said Section 402 funding is by formula, and asked what Oregon can expect from that? Costales responded that Oregon’s formula for this program, as rated at 2009 math, is 1.18 percent of the national 402 bucket, just shy of \$3 million the first year and growing to \$3.2 million by the fifth year of the FAST Act.

Lohman noted that the grants in Section 405 are incentive grants and asked if they are competitive among the states. Costales said this is correct and noted that funding will always be a year delayed so we have actual cash in hand the following year for projects identified in the performance plan the previous year.

Commissioner O’Hollaren said if we were to qualify for the distracted driving program and graduated driver license program, (the two programs Oregon did not qualify for at this time), how much would that mean in additional funding for the state? Troy Costales responded the funding if Oregon qualified for the distracted driving funds would be \$250,000 per year and the graduated driver license would be just under \$200,000 annually.

Commissioner O’Hollaren noted the need to be aggressive in going after any safety funds available and said the commission will do anything it can to help obtain those funds or affect the changes necessary for eligibility.

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***Oregon Freight Plan Compliance
 Agenda D2***

The commission received a presentation on the enhancements to the existing Oregon Freight Plan to comply with the freight planning requirements under the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). ODOT Transportation Safety Division Administrator Troy Costales, ODOT Rail and Public Transit Division Administrator Hal Gard, ODOT Senior Federal Affairs Advisor Trevor Sleeman, ODOT Transportation Development Division Administrator Jerri Bohard, and ODOT Planning Section Manager Erik Havig gave the presentation.

(Background materials in Director/Commission/History Center File, Salem.)

Background:

On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed into law the FAST Act. The FAST Act provides long-term (six years) funding certainty for surface transportation projects throughout the county. Relevant to freight, the act establishes both formula (National Highway Freight Program) and discretionary (Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects Program) grant programs to fund transportation projects that will benefit freight movement. For Oregon, the National Highway Freight Program will provide approximately \$14.5 million in 2016 with a steady increase to \$19 million in federal fiscal year 2020. Changes to the Oregon Freight Plan (OFP) will need to be completed prior to the obligation of approximately \$49 million into the 2018-2021 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

The discretionary program will make \$800 million in FY 2016 increasing to \$1 billion in FY 2020 to states, large metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, ports, and tribal governments. Minimum project size for these discretionary funds is \$100 million with at least a 40 percent applicant match.

The FAST Act also establishes minimum planning requirements that states must meet in order to be eligible for the aforementioned funding. These requirements, outlined below, must be completed by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) within two years of passage of the FAST Act (December 2017). Generally, the planning requirements revolve around updates to the OFP and state highway classifications. The act requires ODOT to update the OFP every five years. The initial update of the OFP will include:

- o Performance Measures: ODOT will need to identify appropriate freight system performance measures and amend the OFP to include these measures.*
- o National Goals: The act establishes national freight goals. ODOT will need to ensure the OFP or other statewide plan (Oregon Highway Plan (OHP), Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP)) contain language addressing the goals.*
- o Inventory: The act requires ODOT to identify and include in the OFP a listing of surface transportation facilities with freight mobility issues.*
- o Investment Plan: ODOT must develop a five-year investment plan that addresses issues associated with the aforementioned freight mobility issues.*
- o System Definition and Classification: In addition to miles designated as the national Primary Highway Freight System (PHFS) by the Act, ODOT may designate up to 155 miles as Critical Rural Freight Corridors and up to 77 miles as Critical Urban Freight Corridors.*

Process and Timelines – ODOT will meet the December 2017 deadline for implementing the OFP changes and system designation. Much of the work to effectuate the changes is currently underway. ODOT will seek input from various stakeholder groups including the Oregon Freight Advisory Committee (OFAC), Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs), and local jurisdictions to ensure the updates represent the concerns of all those impacted. General timelines for main components of the updates are as follow:

- o Background work and products: 2016*
- o Draft Revised OFP: Early Summer 2017*
- o OTC adoption of revised OFP: November 2017 (required)*

Presentation:

Transportation Development Division Administrator Jerri Bohard gave a brief history of the Oregon Freight Plan and talked about the implementation going on and the remaining things necessary for the plan to be in compliance. She said staff is still looking for a lot of guidance. That will be particularly important when getting into some of the designations. In addition, one of the AASHTO committees Bohard sits on raised a series of questions with regards to some of the freight planning work that needs to be done. Highlights of the presentation were:

- The plan, adopted in 2011, was developed with an emphasis on improving freight connections; it was the state's first multimodal plan, and emphasized what freight meant to the state's economy.
- Five strategic corridors were established.
- Implementation of the Freight Plan has been fortuitous because a number of things are now in process that will align up very well with requirements necessary for the plan to be FAST compliant. These include an update on Oregon's bottlenecks from a more data-driven, tiered aspect. A number of intermodal connectors (areas where freight moves through different modes of transportation) were identified in 1995 and need to be evaluated to validate if they are the right intermodal connectors, if there are new connectors and where they are, and do they meet the criteria. Pinch points for over-dimension loads are also being examined to determine where the choke points are for those wide loads like windmills and other big equipment moving through the state.
- Oregon has two years to get in compliance; and in order to obligate 2018-2021 STIP funds, we need to have a Freight Plan in compliance. The existing Freight Plan already has a lot of the necessary elements, and some of the things still necessary are:
 - Performance measures.
 - Inventory.
 - Designation of rural and urban corridors.
 - The investment plan – a 5-year capital plan.

Discussion:

Commissioner O'Hollaren commented that the impact of the loss of a port by the Port of Portland is a noticeable increase in truck traffic on the freight corridors, and asked how this fits into the planning and does the FAST Act give us any opportunity to help mitigate that? Erik Havig said, yes, the FAST Act will allow us to engage in those conversations, using some of the bottleneck and congestion data gathered. FAST also gives several opportunities for addressing some of those things through its freight grant program.

Commissioner Morgan said the value of having a tool that looks at all the modes, and all the places they intersect and have problems, is going to be a huge document to assist in planning. She did caution that in the intersections between the plan that's going to emerge from this, and tying it too closely to funding, we need to remember that a lot of funding opportunities end up just popping up and being able to take advantage of those funding sources, even if it means getting outside the priorities of the plan, is a really important thing to keep in mind.

Commissioner Lohman noted that developing bottleneck lists and performance measures are things we hear of in every freight plan. They are things we have identified and said we would do over time and are the nature of a 20-year freight plan, rather than having the performance

measures set at the time you develop the plan. That is something we need to remember when we look at other plans as well. Lohman appreciates the matrix being developed on the bottlenecks, but said he is also glad to hear Jerri Bohard's caution that just looking at freight volume is not the answer. That is important, but there needs to be judgement used, just like we need to remember on the investment side that this is not a replacement for the STIP. There is a process for the STIP, and that can be informed by the investment plan, but it is not a substitute for the STIP.

Commissioner Simpson asked what measurements are currently being tracked. Jerri Bohard responded that the only key performance measure being tracked is a little bit on congestion. Simpson said we could add on to that with a measurement on the cost of congestion, which could be important in terms of the prosperity of the entire ecosystem, for example, in terms of greenhouse gas emissions. When looking at these, Simpson encouraged staff to take into account the trajectory of the state and major metropolitan regions in terms of growth and the impact that can have on the costs.

Chair Baney said recognizing that the bike/ped plan also talks about freight and mobility, what do we see in terms of conversations as we go through with the improvements that will be made when looking at the freight plan? Jerri Bohard responded that the work now is more around needs and not solutions yet. When a bottleneck is identified, once we get to a place where we are looking at potential solutions – that would be when it would play into whether or not it meets the needs of the bicycle bill.

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Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act)
Agenda E

The commission received input about allocating unanticipated federal funds received under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act). The discussion will include amending additional projects into the approved 2015-2018 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and additional allocations to programs in the 2018-2021 STIP currently under development. ODOT Assistant Director Travis Brouwer, ODOT Highway Division Administrator Paul Mather, and ODOT Transportation Development Division Administrator Jerri Bohard gave the presentation. ***(Background materials in Director/Commission/History Center File, Salem.)***

Background:

The FAST Act authorizes federal highway, transit and safety programs through 2020, with small annual funding increases over the course of the bill. The funding levels in the FAST Act provide additional funding above the levels assumed when the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) developed the 2015-2018 STIP and the 2018-2021 STIP. As a result, the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) has the opportunity to program additional funding in both STIPs. Much of the additional funding coming to ODOT must be allocated to freight-related projects on high-volume, high-priority truck freight routes, primarily the interstate.

In the 2015-2018 STIP, \$39 million is available to program for freight projects under the new National Highway Freight Program. In addition, about \$30 million is available for other projects. During development of the 2015-2018 STIP, the OTC provided direction to focus additional funding on Fix-It projects. Based on this direction as well as input from the commission at the January 2016 meeting, ODOT staff will propose projects that could be funded with these additional resources.

At the January 2016 meeting, the commission provided direction to propose a mix of projects for the freight program that includes both shovel-ready construction projects (such as auxiliary lanes and truck climbing lanes) as well as project development work that could ready projects for other funding opportunities, including the federal Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects competitive grant program. ODOT will request that the OTC amend projects into the 2015-2018 STIP in late spring in order to ensure that ODOT can meet federal obligation timelines.

ODOT estimates approximately \$147 million in additional unanticipated federal funding as well as \$49 million for freight projects will be available for the 2018-2021 STIP. Based on input the OTC provided at the January meeting, ODOT will bring forward a potential allocation of the additional funding between different programs.

ODOT will request OTC approval of the funding allocation at the OTC's March 2016 meeting. This will allow for project selection under the Enhance Non-Highway and other programs to move forward on the current timeframe and keep the STIP development process on track. Later this spring, ODOT will also bring forward a proposed process for selecting projects under the freight program, with a goal to complete project selection by the end of 2016.

Presentation:

Travis Brouwer started the discussion with a brief overview of the FAST Act and then turned the meeting over to Paul Mather to talk about the projects for the 2015-2018 STIP and then the 2018-2021 STIP. Highlights of the presentation were:

- The FAST Act provided modest increased funding that will allow us to amend projects into the current 2015-2018 STIP and the 2018-2021 STIP that is under development.
- Areas for commission input were 2015-2018 STIP amendments and 2018-2021 STIP scenario selection for proposed allocations.
- A number of assumptions were made for projects to be amended into the 2015-2018 STIP.
 - About \$75 million available.
 - Regional equity.
 - Freight funds just on the interstate.
 - Freight projects a mixture of design and construction.
 - Look for leverage opportunities.
 - Safety and seismic focus for 2015-18 STIP funds.
 - Funds need to be obligated in 2016, 17 & 18.
 - Non-freight projects will be brought to the commission in March to amend into the STIP so they can start very soon.
 - Freight projects to amend into the STIP will be brought to the commission after consulting stakeholders.

- 2018-2021 STIP – Approximately \$147 million for general purposes and \$49 for freight, with proposed allocations in three categories: Fix-It, Enhance, and freight, which will generally be Enhance.
 - Fix-It: \$77 million for additional bridge, pavement, safety, and other Fix-It projects, with \$35 million to take care of two bundles on Phase 1 of the Seismic Plus program and \$5 million to ADA ramps.
 - Enhance: put an additional \$5 million to Enhance non-highway.
 - Freight: \$49 million highway freight program. The last presentation discussed how we are addressing the freight policy and planning provisions of FAST. Projects in this category can't be selected until the bottleneck study is complete, but work continues to define the details of the process so the OTC can make a decision once the bottleneck work is done. Staff recommends tentatively committing some of this as matching funds for a grant application under the new federal competitive grant program.
 - Strategic investments: \$25 million strategic investments because of all the leverage opportunities that could be available. Staff propose a Strategic Investments Program for both development and construction opportunities on the state system.
 - Next steps
 - March - Amend the non-freight projects into the 2015-2018 STIP and approve the scenario for the 2018-2021 STIP.
 - June - Approve freight projects for the 2015-2018 STIP.
 - December - Identify freight projects for 2018-2021 STIP and identify strategic Investment projects.

Discussion:

Commissioner O'Hollaren said the asterisk on some projects on the list notes that "some projects not fully funded at this level, will seek additional funding from other sources." He asked if we start a project, do we know that we can finish. Also, do they reflect the highest priority recommendations from the ACTs and are they aligned with the funding strategies of local stakeholders?

Paul Mather said if the commission wanted certainty around funding those projects, one option would be to cancel funding for one project and take those monies and put it into other projects that are slightly underfunded, to fully fund those other projects. But that potentially misses the opportunity for all those projects to be competitive in what we are seeing as the competitive grant process for the freight funds. Last-dollar-in projects tend to do better in the competitive process than first-dollar-in projects.

In terms of whether these projects are the highest priorities around the state, that's part of the reason we are here today, to get the commission's and other advisory committees' reaction. Mather did caution again the need to be sensitive to the limitations these funds have. They are not able to be used on just any freight project; they have to meet FAST Act requirements.

Commissioner Lohman asked for more information on the four freight projects on the list with asterisks, and what it would cost to remove those asterisks. Mather talked about the leverage

opportunity of each project, what caused it to be on the list, and cautioned again to remember the restriction of being confined to the interstate, the need for regional equity, and that the funds must be allocated in 2016, 17, and 18. Those are key points that are going to limit our creativity and opportunities.

Lohman noted that this is such an interesting portrayal of how complex all the factors are, and it's more than just a matrix. For example, taking into consideration cable barriers, which are a legislative priority and something we don't have much choice about.

Director Garrett asked if the direction we are going places any financial hardships on our partners. Mather said the projects \$5 or \$7 million short of fully funding will have plenty of opportunities over the next 3 or 4 years to fully fund. The question is more for the three very, very large, forward-looking projects that the commission would have to set as priorities.

Commissioner Simpson asked if there is a threshold on these grants amounts. Travis Brouwer responded that yes, there is a small amount of money available for smaller projects (under \$100 million) and we've started to target funding there. Most of the grants are to go to projects over \$100 million, and you have to bring at least 40 percent to the table as the minimum required match. As we have seen over time, the minimum to be competitive really needs to be about a 50-60 percent match.

Commissioner Lohman clarified that in March the commission will be asked to decide whether \$5 million goes to ADA ramps, or \$7 million. Travis Brouwer agreed.

Public comments were received from:

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Mark Lear, Portland Bureau of Transportation, provided four specific recommendations: fund the Portland/Rose Quarter project so it is ready and competitive; in allocation of 2015-2018 non-formula funds, the \$100 million from Transportation Enhancement into construction should stay on the table so people can see where it's going; with jurisdictional transfers we need to make sure those are the best dollars and we're not just solving a paperwork problem but really fixing streets; and still pursue getting back to the 75/25 distribution between Fix-It and Enhance.

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Craig Dirksen, Metro Council and Joint Policy Advisory Committee for Transportation Chair, said we are coming out of a decade of low expectations for funding because of the dramatically reduced funding support from both federal and state governments. It has been a time of taking care of the basics the best we can, and not initiating large capital projects. As a result, the region's project pipeline is largely empty. Many big highway projects have been completed, but a new set of projects need to be developed. On the transit side, components of the north/south light rail system have been built, and the region is currently involved in planning for the southwest corridor and the Powell/Division corridor. In order to succeed, both will require voter-approved funding and a state contribution with a prospect of being able to leverage

significant federal funding. A regional ballot measure, with any realistic prospect of voter approval, needs to be comprehensive with demonstrable benefit for the public.

In putting together this investment portfolio, they recognize the continued rapid growth in the Portland/Metro region, and the mounting frustration about congestion and safety. The solutions won't come from Washington, D.C. or Salem without us contributing a significant regional investment. However, some money has come to be available through the FAST Act, but if we want our small dollars to grow into big investments, we need to get our projects ready. This means getting back in the project development game, have agencies agree on a core set of first projects that are most advanced at planning and scoping, and can move quickly into a coordinated funding strategy.

Dirksen proposed a strategic partnership between ODOT, TriMet, and Metro so both regional flexible funds and FAST Act funding can be used to initiate a slate of project development activities and send clear signals about our intent to secure future funding through the legislature, through the ballot box, and through federal highway and transit discretionary sources.

Dirksen encouraged the OTC to reconsider its previous decisions on the distribution of Fix-It and Enhance funds. While the commitment to Fix-It is commendable, that decision was made in the absence of FAST Act funding information. He further encouraged the OTC to prioritize to put project development on the state system ahead of smaller, near term construction projects.

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Chris Rall, of Transportation for America, said there are three significant discretionary grant programs coming out late March or April and that locking up the FAST Act funds entirely is premature and will limit Oregon's ability to nimbly compete for funds in these grant programs. Local economies are key to Oregon's overall economic health and have a greater understanding of local needs. We need that input.

Rall also talked about the opportunity to flex funding in the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the fact that the certainty around federal funding allows us an opportunity to go back to the original split between Enhance and Fix-It and see that the rationale for shrinking the Enhance component is no longer there.

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The commission adjourned for a working lunch at 12:25 p.m., in the Stuart Foster Conf. Room 240.

Following the discussion on the STIP in the regular meeting, the commission continued discussing the STIP over lunch. Reacting to testimony provided by the public, Director Garrett said he believes ODOT's primary purpose is to maintain our multibillion dollar investment, which pushes toward focusing investments on the Fix-It program. Commissioner Morgan indicated that ODOT won't be receiving that much more funding under the FAST Act that would

justify shifting strongly toward a higher allocation to Enhance. Commissioner O'Hollaren asked how the commission would respond if the Region 1 ACT came back with a consensus proposal on allocation of funds among programs in the 2018-2021 STIP. Assistant Director Travis Brouwer indicated that while the commission typically leans heavily on ACTs for project selection, allocation of funds among programs is a commission decision, though they do take input from the public and advisory groups. Chair Baney indicated that the commission would continue the discussion on the STIP when the regular meeting reconvened after lunch so commissioners could provide input to ODOT on the STIP proposal.

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Chair Baney provided an update to the commissioners on the status of the performance audit requested by the governor. While the effort is in a holding pattern, they hope to get the steering group moving soon.

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ODOT Government Relations Manager Leah Craft provided the commission a brief preview of the department's proposed legislative concepts. The department is developing 11 legislative concepts, including placeholders for transportation funding and *ConnectOregon*, as well as more specific solutions on a variety of topics. These will be brought forward to the commission for review and approval in March. Once the commission takes action, ODOT submits them through a process coordinated by DAS and the governor's office.

The regular monthly meeting was reconvened at 1:27 p.m.

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***Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act)
Agenda E - Continued***

Travis Brouwer closed the discussion by giving a little context on the split between Fix-It and Enhance and talking about what needs to be done next in terms of STIP discussion and the FAST Act. In addition, he asked for any further feedback the commission might have on the proposal staff will bring back in March.

The original allocation approved in July 2015 was 10.2 percent Enhance and 89.8 percent Fix-It. The proposal brought forward for potential approval next month recommended 40 percent of the funding go to Enhance. That is a much richer mix toward the Enhance side of the equation. Because FAST Act did not really provide that much more money, that changes the mix in the STIP from 10 percent Enhance to 16 percent Enhance. Brouwer also noted that even though there is not dedicated non-highway funding the same ways as in the past, the STIP still has \$135 million in non-highway funds just from our state federal highway funds and our state highway fund dollars that is just dedicated funding not including any project specific elements that are in a highway project. Brouwer asked for any further comments the commission might have.

Chair Baney said during prepping for the current STIP package, deep outreach was done with the ACTs to really engage communities to determine their needs. Fairly consistently, fixing and maintaining the current system was of critical importance. With that stated, the question in terms of direction for the team would be is there a desire for this body to look at that allocation for Fix-It and Enhance, and if so, where should we start?

Commissioner O'Hollaren said one of the questions was, does the FAST Act give us latitude to make significant changes here? The answer heard from ODOT was that it is not significant enough to do a wholesale change. While there might be tweaks along the way, we really need to go back to the ACTs and look for them to identify projects, but it is our job to identify the allocation formula that has been done through an arduous process and the change in the FAST Act doesn't warrant the wholesale shifting of that deliberation that has taken place over a long period of time. In terms of Region 1, they still need to bring their project priorities to the commission as a region, and the ACT is the appropriate place to do that.

Commissioner Morgan concurred with Commissioner O'Hollaren's comments. She said the FAST Act is a great step forward, but because there isn't a lot of additional funding put in there, we have certainty over a longer period of time but we don't have a lot of extra money to work with. The OTC had a pretty great discussion with the ACT chairs on where they would put their priorities, and the consensus was maintaining what we had rather than adding new capacity at this time. The FAST Act has not changed the tenor of that discussion at all. Morgan said she would support just maintaining the split as it is but noted the importance of going back to the ACTs and outline the 2015-2018 allocation changes, give the reasons why, the limitations on the timeline to commit the funds, and the leveraging that was enabled by doing these kinds of things. We also need to get feedback from the ACTs on the 2018-2021 STIP.

Commissioner Lohman said he couldn't have said that better than his two previous commissioners and he has nothing to add.

Commissioner Simpson said he also couldn't agree more with his fellow commissioners. He noted it's important for the local Region 1 stakeholders to hash out what their goals, strategies, and aspirations are collectively and then follow the standard process for the OTC to hear from that body.

Chair Baney said she looks forward from hearing from the ACT on its priorities in an update in March in terms of that conversation.

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Draft Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
Agenda F

The commission received a presentation on development of the Draft Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (OBPP), and considered releasing the draft plan for formal public review.

ODOT Transportation Planning Unit Manager Amanda Pietz and ODOT Principle Planner Savannah Crawford gave the presentation. ***(Background materials in Director/Commission/History Center File, Salem.)***

Background:

The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) reviewed the draft Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan at the November 13, 2015, OTC meeting and released the draft plan for public review and comment.

As part of this public review period, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff consulted with Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), and interested stakeholder groups through meetings, presentations and notification of public review information. Statewide press releases, an online open house, and other information supplemented consultation efforts. This public hearing will provide an additional opportunity for interested stakeholders to provide comments as well as provide a venue to testify directly to the commission.

ODOT staff will review the outreach process and summarize comments to date. Written comments, including online responses received by the date of the public hearing, will be shared with the OTC.

The public comment period will close at 5pm, February 18, 2016. At that time, ODOT staff will compile comments and share the input with the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Policy Advisory Committee at its meeting scheduled for March 22, 2016. Following final edits to the draft plan, ODOT staff will present the revised document and “Findings of Compliance with Statewide Planning Goals” to the commission for consideration of adoption at the May 2016 OTC meeting.

Presentation:

ODOT Transportation Planning Unit Manager Amanda Pietz introduced ODOT Principle Planner Savannah Crawford who gave the presentation on the Draft Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (OBPP). Highlights of the presentation were:

- The plan was developed over a 2 ½ year period and highlights maintenance, inventory, design, speeds, linkages, equity, data and prioritization.
- Public outreach was conducted using online open houses, in-person open houses, tabling events, publications and media releases.
- Public comments have been received and reviewed with some concerns noted about regional paths, Safe Routes to School, performance measures, and inventory gaps equity analysis. The public hearing closes as of this date, February 18, 2016.
- The plan will be brought back to the commission for adoption in May, and staff will come back in November with an authoritative document that starts to populate how to implement these ideas and concepts and proposals.

Discussion:

Commissioner Lohman has read through all the comments received through last weekend and said there were a lot of good comments on why certain things would work and why other

things wouldn't. Lohman said when staff comes back in November, he hopes they bring their responses to these comments, set up in a way for the commission to wrestle with. For example, one of the comments was ODOT ought to commit to a policy of street and highway design that places higher priority on safety for bikers and pedestrians than vehicle through-put. That is a big policy direction someone is asking be put in the plan, and it is worthy of discussion. Amanda Pietz responded staff are putting together a disposition matrix so we can respond individually and be very transparent on how we respond. That will be reviewed by the policy advisory committee.

Commissioner Morgan said the extent of public input into this is something we should all be really proud of, and it's great to see this piece be put into the overall network of plans.

Public Hearing:

Public Hearing. (Note: *Public comments will be limited to no more than three minutes each. Individuals providing similar testimony on the same topic are requested to appoint a spokesperson. The commission has allocated 90 minutes for this item, but will hear all those who wish to testify.*)

Chair Baney called the public hearing to order. Public comments were received from:

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Mark Lear of the Portland Bureau of Transportation provided verbal and written testimony. He said state facilities make up so much of the critical connections in cities and towns across the state, and more specificity would add some value. Lear recommended extending the process to make sure everything that needs to be done gets done and that there should be more clarity and specificity around the plan goals and strategies, with part of that being identifying the state system of bikeways and walkways. Some of the regional plans are really deep and well-supported at regional levels, and might help solve some of these problems because they have that specificity.

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Bob Cortright of Salem provided verbal and written comments. He said more needs to be done in the plan to translate the good intentions expressed in the plan into on the ground changes to policies and practices. After two years preparing the plan, we have a good idea of what the problems and issues are, along with what the effective solutions are. We need to translate those into operating policies and practices. He suggested directing the department to come back in May with an action plan of immediate actions to take steps to make these changes. Cortright said the implementation plan will roll out over five years and that just kicks the can down the road in terms of taking action. He highlighted a couple areas that evidence this and recommended three things that could be done immediately; 1) updating the highway design manual, 2) amend the policy for resurfacing the state highway to look at narrowing travel lanes and adding or widening bike lanes and 3) as the department scopes projects for the 2018-2021 STIP, look at ways those projects could incorporate those recommendations.

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Peter Fernandez, Public Works director for the city of Salem, provided verbal and written comments in support of the plan that does a good job of addressing many of the issues in the state. There was a lot of discussion about local control and needs and not have a state plan

dictate to local governments what the local needs might be. The needs of Portland are not the needs of Salem or Medford and it's important to maintain that flexibility in the plan so the smaller cities are allowed to do what it feels is best for its pedestrians and bicyclists.

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Roger Geller of the Portland Bureau of Transportation provided verbal and written testimony. He said there is a common theme in the comments that there needs to be more clarity and specificity. The 1995 Oregon Bike Plan was ground-breaking around the country. It was a very strong plan and very clear about what it wanted to accomplish, and we want the 2016 plan to be the same. Bike transportation in Portland has grown the most and rivals transit for the most trips. Bike transportation is also the mode that has done the most to minimize drive alone commute trips. Geller said they would like more clarity, specifically what the state plans to do with the roads it manages: what will be done; when it will be done; and in what priority order. There were a couple things in the plan that were especially concerning, describing certain types of facilities as being elaborate and a lesser priority, like bike and ped exclusive bridges. This plan is vague and will require significant revision to provide the clarity and specificity needed. It is the Portland Bureau of Transportation's recommendation that the OTC direct ODOT to look at this effort as a good start but recognize there is quite a bit more work to be done.

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Chris Achterman, representing the Bicycle Advisory Committee to the Portland Bureau of Transportation, provided verbal and written testimony on its significant concerns about the plan. The plan needs to be more specific as to who will be implementing it; it does not identify who will be responsible for achieving the goals outlined in the plan. In addition, it needs to be more specific about recommendations with regard to projects and funding sources. Another key element is the need to recognize that many communities in the state have implemented regional active transportation plans, and having the state mechanics impede them is a disservice to the work that's been done in many communities. Specifically, the OTC has received comments from Metro in regard to its Regional Transportation Plan, and needs to recognize that in particular, but also that cities like Eugene, Medford, and Bend likely have similar plans that need to be considered also. The last recommendation is on how the plan will be implemented on ODOT facilities that have key impacts on the roads within their region. Portland has many streets that are state highways, and how ODOT chooses to deal with those impacts bicycles, pedestrians and the safety of the users in their communities.

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Jenna Marmon of the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Policy Advisory Committee provided verbal and written testimony on the plan. Marmon said the 1995 plan was groundbreaking and considered nationally significant. This plan does not carry that torch forward and leaves many questions unanswered. There needs to be more questioning of the status quo and she encourages more demands of a better future than the one we are literally driving toward in the state. We have a great framework for a great plan, but we can do better. Marmon encouraged the commission to consider the ideas presented in the written testimony.

Chair Baney adjourned the public hearing.

Amanda Pietz said the next meeting of the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Policy Advisory Committee is March 22, and they plan to have materials out far in advance of that date so there is adequate time to consider that. The goal is to get the plan to the commission in May for adoption.

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**Increased Speed Limit
Agenda Item G**

The commission received an informational presentation on the status of increasing speed limits in eastern Oregon (House Bill 3402) and the use of innovative technologies to implement the bill. ODOT Highway Division Administrator Paul Mather, ODOT Technical Services Branch Manager Tom Lauer, and ODOT Communications Section Manager Tom Fuller gave the presentation. ***(Background materials in Director/Commission/History Center File, Salem.)***

Background:

The 2015 Legislature passed HB 3402, increasing speeds on a number of highways in eastern Oregon. In general, the bill sets one speed limit (70 mph or 65 mph) for most vehicles and a speed limit 5 mph lower for trucks with a gross vehicle weight rating greater than 10,000 pounds, school buses, school activity vehicles, worker transport buses, church activity buses, and other buses.

The highways affected by HB 3402 include:

- *Interstate 84 east of The Dalles – 70 mph / 65 mph*
- *U.S. 95 between the Idaho state line and the California state line – 70 mph / 65 mph*
- *U.S. 20 between Bend and Ontario – 65 mph / 60 mph*
- *U.S. 197 and US 97 between The Dalles and Klamath Falls – 65 mph / 60 mph*
- *Oregon 31 between Valley Falls and La Pine – 65 mph / 60 mph*
- *Oregon 78 between Burns Junction and Burns – 65 mph / 60 mph*
- *U.S. 395 between Burns and John Day – 65 mph / 60 mph*
- *Oregon 205 between Burns and Frenchglen – 65 mph / 60 mph*
- *U.S. 26 between John Day and Vale – 65 mph / 60 mph*

Where necessary, the department may designate a lower speed on segments of these highways after conducting a speed study. The higher speed limits specified in HB 3402 on U.S. 95, U.S. 20, U.S. 197 and U.S. 97 do not apply to highways within city limits. The new speeds become effective on March 1, 2016.

Since the passage of the bill, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has been preparing to post the higher speeds. Speed signs are constructed, posts installed, and additional curve warning signs are in place in anticipation of the March 1, 2016, effective date. Public information staff prepared safety messages to alert the public to safety concerns that come with higher speeds.

The presentation will demonstrate how ODOT used technology and resources from around the organization to implement the bill efficiently. One of the issues overlooked during discussion on the bill was the change needed to “no passing” zones. ODOT engineers reviewed every segment of highway and gave direction to striping crews who made striping changes before the weather changed in October 2015.

Presentation:

Paul Mather gave a brief overview of the progress implementing the new higher speed limits in eastern Oregon, Tom Fuller discussed outreach and what is being done from a public education standpoint, and Tom Lauer talked about striping needed for the high speed roads. Highlights of the presentation were:

- Outreach activity is a four-pronged approach, with the overarching value of information, not advocacy. It’s not our job to discuss the merits of the decision made to increase the speed limit, but to education factually on the impacts of those changes on the traveling public, with the aim of keeping travelers as safe as possible.
- An information campaign began last fall and was followed by a preparation phase last winter. Implementation is March 1 and will be followed by an education phase which will be sustained with things like public service announcements and commercials, education programs in high schools, and infographics in rest areas to educate the public about the changes and encouraging personal responsibility. A social media campaign began yesterday afternoon with the first post and has been seen by 95,000 individuals, shared well over a thousand times, and has 663 comments to the post. The effort is ongoing and will continue to put out the message that with increased speed comes increased responsibility.
- The top implementation priorities include speed limit signs, curve warning signs, and no-pass strips. The work is weather dependent and the time period for painting strips is very limited. The bill was signed into law on July 22, 2015 – well into the normal ODOT construction season. Due to weather, the striping could only be installed through late September or early October.
- To implement new speed limits, ODOT had to not only make the new signs and install them, but re-evaluate passing lane sight distances in both directions. There were many challenges calling for careful collaboration between the engineering plans and the district staff to make sure plans met field experience.
- ODOT’s mobile scanner uses a “point cloud” to store data in 3-D models so now, instead of measuring out in the field, an engineer can go into the point cloud on a computer and take measurements, collect data and do survey work from the convenience of an office. Design work can be done directly on top of the point cloud itself. The number of crews that have to go out into the field to take measurements is greatly reduced as is the need to set up traffic control and lane closures.

Discussion:

Commissioner Lohman asked what the cost has been of this bill imposed on ODOT. Paul Mather said the fiscal analysis showed it would cost about \$700,000 and ODOT absorbed the cost. However, that cost did not include the striping aspect of implementation so it may go well past the \$700,000 estimate. Tom Fuller noted this would not have any additional cost for the informational program because most of that work is being done in house by the

Communications Team and with possibly the repurposing of some safety grant dollars for billboards. Lohman said the general public thinks the change means just going out and repainting a few signs. They have no idea of the real amount of effort required to implement the speed change, including the need for bigger signs that people can read from farther away due to the increased speeds.

Chair Baney asked if ODOT was moving toward the technology used before the change came about. Paul Mather responded that the mobile scanner is just the latest upgrade in the mobile survey technology and gives us survey-grade data.

Commissioner Morgan asked if what was learned by this experience has other applicability within ODOT that can help gain other efficiencies. Tom Lauer responded that yes, when automated machine control can do the work, the velocity of grading goes up about 30 percent, meaning there is a lot less traffic control on the roads.

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Employee Engagement Survey
Agenda Item H

The commission received an informational presentation about the recent Employee Engagement survey results and initial findings. ODOT Chief Human Resources Officer Jane Lee and ODOT Organizational Development Manager Diana Koppes gave the presentation. ***(Background materials in Director/Commission/History Center File, Salem.)***

Background:

Two years ago, as part of its overarching succession planning efforts, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) implemented an Employee Engagement Survey designed to codify a benchmark or base level of employee engagement. The results were shared with all employees, who were encouraged to discuss how their work groups could make changes that would improve their job satisfaction. Many areas took action on those plans.

This October a second survey was sent to all agency employees. This survey had an 11.5 percent higher response rate than the previous survey and employee engagement increased by three percent. There was also a decrease in the number of employees reporting low engagement. Staff is currently preparing division level reports, and as the division administrators direct, the reports will be shared with employees over the next few weeks and months.

An employee survey is always a “snapshot” of employee job satisfaction, but the results are also a learning tool. The work tells us where we are getting it right and offers information as to where we could invest our time to “lift” employee satisfaction. This work assists the Human Resources branch and supports the agency’s overall mission to provide information that guides the agency’s efforts to attract, develop and retain a diverse and competent workforce.

Presentation:

Kurtis Danka introduced Organizational Development Manager Diana Koppes who presented the results of the employee engagement survey and provided background on what employee engagement is and how ODOT has measured employee engagement. Highlights of the presentation were:

- Employee engagement is a workplace dynamic. When the levels of engagement are high, there is a robust sense of employee well-being resulting in employees giving their best and a high sense of commitment to the agency's goals and objectives.
- There's a link between employee engagement and work productivity and quality of work produced. Also, when employees feel like their work is meaningful, that fosters innovation and renewed (or sustained) commitment or interest in the work they do. Among other things, that can lead to increased retention and reduced turnover costs for ODOT as an employer of choice.
- In the 2015 survey, the agency overall Employee Engagement Index is 66 – 3 points higher than in 2013. The survey also shows that more employees are reporting high engagement in the work they do, and the number of employees who reported low engagement has decreased. Of the other state agencies that use the same survey (i.e., DOR, DEQ, and DOGAMI) ODOT has the second highest response rate – up 11.5 percent from 2013. Of the 4,300 employees invited to take the survey, 2,600 employees took advantage of the opportunity to provide their opinions.
- A variety of things increased the rate of response like communication through Inside ODOT, emails sent by Director Garrett supporting the survey and encouraging employees to participate and a video message letting employees know the survey was coming and what to expect.
- The collected data measures several aspects: the Employee Engagement (EE) Index, the levels of engagement, and what drives engagement here at ODOT.
- The EE Index is measured by the responses to seven questions that focus on how employees feel about working at ODOT, how proud they are of the services we provide, and how working at ODOT is compared to working at other organizations.
- The survey has 43 questions with a scale of five choices ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.”
- Drivers of employee engagement include the agency's leadership, mission, supervision, and empowerment.
- The survey also looks at the differences in engagement between managers and staff and at when their views are similar and when they are different.
- Understanding employee engagement in our organization can result in many things: an increase in job satisfaction overall, increased retention, and lower business costs realized through reduced turnover costs and other aspects that can be influenced by being aware of the data produced by the Employee Engagement survey.

Discussion:

Chair Baney asked what kind of feedback was given to employees to thank them for taking the survey. Diana Koppes responded that no incentive is given to staff for participating in the survey, but Director Garrett is committed to keeping staff apprised of the progress of the survey and providing feedback on the results.

Action:

Commissioner Lohman asked for a copy of the survey and the slide presentation on the survey results.^{H1}

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Consent Calendar
Agenda Item I

The commission considered approval of items on the Consent Calendar. **(Background materials in Director/Commission/History Center File, Salem.)**

1. Approve the minutes of the January 21, 2016, commission meeting in Salem.
2. Confirm the next two commission meeting dates:
 - Thursday, March 17, 2016, meeting in Salem.
 - Wednesday and Thursday, April 20-21, 2016, meeting in Redmond.
3. Request approval to adopt a resolution for authority to acquire real property by purchase, condemnation, agreement or donation.
4. Request approval to amend the 2015-2018 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to change the scope of two projects, add two new projects and add construction for one project. Funding will come from cost savings on various projects. The net cost of these changes is \$17,060,910. The projects are:
 - Oregon 18 Spur: South Yamhill River Bridge, Region 2 (scope change)
 - U.S.101: Cathodic Protection and Concrete Repairs Bridges, in Region 2 (scope change)
 - Interstate 84: Graham Road Bridge Replacements, in Region 1 (new project)
 - Interstate 82: Bridge End Panel Replacements, in Region 5 (new project)
 - Interstate 84: Hood River Bridge Deck Replacement, In Region 1 (adding construction)
5. Request approval to amend the 2015-2018 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to add the U.S. 95: Jordan Valley-Jordan Creek project near Jordan Valley in Region 5. The funding will come from the Region 5 Financial Plan. The total estimated cost of this project is \$1,550,000.

With no issues or conflicts identified by the commission members, Director Garrett asked for approval of the Consent Calendar.

Action:

Commissioner Morgan moved to approve the Consent Calendar. Commissioners Lohman, Simpson, O'Hollaren, and Baney unanimously approved the motion.

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Chair Baney adjourned the meeting at 2:56p.m.

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Tammy Baney, Chair	David Lohman, Member
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Susan Morgan, Member	Alando Simpson, Member
<i>[Original signature on file]</i>	<i>[Original signature on file]</i>
Sean O'Hollaren, Member	Roxanne Van Hess, Commission Support