

REGION 1 AREA COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION

Meeting Minutes

September 2, 2015 Portland, Oregon

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Attendees: Bill Avison, Bernie Bottomly (alternate), Sam Breyer, Tom Chamberlain, Mayor Krisanna Clark, Mayor John Cook, Mayor Jef Dalin, Mayor Doug Daoust, Mayor Lori DeRemer, Councilor Craig Dirksen, Mayor Denny Doyle, Jess Groves, Councilor Jeff Gudman, Commissioner Diane McKeel, Bill Merchant, Brian Newman, Commissioner Steve Novick, Chris Oxley, Commissioner Roy Rogers (Chair), Steph Routh, Joseph Santos-Lyons, Commissioner Paul Savas (Vice-Chair), Pam Treece, Pia Welch, Rian Windsheimer

Absent: Steve Bickford, Councilor Peter Cornelison, Mayor Brian Hodson, Chair Ron Rivers, Julie Wehling, Bill Wyatt

Commissioner Roy Rogers called the meeting to order and opened a round of introductions.

### **Region 1 Manager Updates**

Rian Windsheimer provided the following ODOT Region1 updates:

- Congestion is increasing in the area, and the media have been covering it. ODOT is focusing limited funds on strategic improvements such as Intelligent Transportation Systems, which have shown a reduction in crashes between 12-20%. Travel time reliability is increasing substantially. Queue warning and variable speed signs are giving drivers information on what to expect ahead. ODOT is also adding capacity in Clackamas County through the Sunrise Corridor and in Washington County through the widening of U.S. 26. Those projects are both the result of a legislative funding package.
- ODOT is utilizing photo radar enforcement in a work zone for the first time on an interstate during some bridge work on I-5 in September. A crash happens in a work zone in Oregon every 19 hours. Four out of five of those injured in those crashes is a member of the traveling public. This project is to raise awareness, not revenue. ODOT is partnering with the Portland Police Bureau for this project on the Hood Street overcrossing on I-5.
- There was a recent signing ceremony for the Greater Portland Area Incident Management Team. This coordination effort brings ODOT, fire, police and other first responders to work better together to clear crashes and best support the different needs in the event of an incident on the transportation system.
  - Commissioner Steve Novick added that he was a convener of the group, and that it was great to see the first responders getting together and realizing how many ways they can work better together. The cost of crashes is greater than the cost of

congestion, to by better responding to crashes we can decrease the cost of congestion.

- During the recent protest on the St. Johns Bridge, ODOT made sure that safety came first both for the traveling public and for the protesters. ODOT coordinated with the City of Portland and U.S. Coast Guard to make sure everyone involved stayed safe.

Councilor Jeff Gudman asked about roads being at capacity, and whether that is before or after these measures were implemented.

Rian Windsheimer answered that they are not at capacity all day long, but at capacity at certain peak times, and that those peak hours are expanding. Everything we can do to make sure those roads are running smoothly and to manage congestion, the better off we are. ODOT can share some maps about that.

Commissioner Paul Savas asked if, in light of the congestion issue and the study that has been done, there is an opportunity for this group or Region 1 staff to look into which projects could be proposed as a fix if future funding were to become available. As legislators and the JPACT funding subcommittee move forward with these conversations, ACT members would be prepared with a list of strategic investments that would make a difference.

Rian Windsheimer responded that ODOT has some documentation on certain projects such as the Rose Quarter that are already developed, and ACT members can look to the Regional Transportation Plan and the City of Portland's Transportation System Plan for other projects.

Commissioner Paul Savas asked about population growth and continued economic growth, and if there is a foreseeable future project list or criteria that could be considered.

Commissioner Roy Rogers commented that the issue is the size of the inventory, and in other parts of the state some roads have plenty of capacity and serve more as local roads than state roads, so from the region's perspective, what large projects do we spend money on that take money away from smaller projects?

Councilor Craig Dirksen agreed and expressed interest in looking at project lists.

Steph Routh asked about the Region 1 active transportation report.

Kelly Brooks answered that the ACT doesn't have time for everything but wants to know how much members want to know about as the work plan moves forward.

Rian Windsheimer added that this is a good overview of how we can fit active transportation projects into the scope of other Fix-It projects.

## **Commission Administration**

Motion: Mayor Denny Doyle moved, and Commissioner Paul Savas seconded, to approve the minutes from the July 16 meeting.

- ✓ The meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

## **Draft Work Plan Discussion**

Kelly Brooks gave a presentation on the work plan and upcoming deadlines. The Oregon Transportation Commission has some set deadlines that the ACT must plan for. There is also an obligation to share this work with Metro, the Regional Transportation Council, coordinating committees and other groups for their input. There is a lot of interest in the ACT's work, but we also want to respect members' time. The work plan is an attempt to balance those elements.

The work plan draft is broken into four sections: funding recommendations, ODOT information sharing and feedback, information sharing with other regional groups, and commission administration.

Kelly Brooks gave an overview of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) process.

Rian Windsheimer clarified that the STIP runs in three-year cycles, and that \$11 million is what is available to Region 1 for the Enhance program for three years.

Commissioner Roy Rogers said that at some point this group will need to discuss the overarching principles of how the project list will be created. We need to consider how we prioritize: what if Multnomah County has two great projects and Washington County has a terrible one? At some point there need to be criteria for how projects are rated so it won't be a free-for-all.

Rian Windsheimer explained that there is quite a bit of information on the website to guide what makes good proposals.

Kelly Brooks added that the December ACT meeting will include a conversation about what makes a good proposal, since there will be more proposals than funding allows.

Brian Newman asked about the match requirement and how it is set, adding that 10% seems a little low.

Kelly Brooks answered that 10% is a minimum, and this group could decide to support a criterion for proposals that include over-match. 10% is a minimum federal match.

Bill Avison asked about the *ConnectOregon* match, saying that 30% is high for very small communities.

Kelly Brooks answered that *ConnectOregon* is a legislature-approved lottery-backed program, so that requirement is set by the legislature. They bumped that match up this year.

Commissioner Paul Savas mentioned that in previous processes he's seen it considered to use the ranking criteria to include over-match, but that it can put out smaller communities that can't afford it.

Kelly Brooks clarified that the ACT will need to determine whether they want to use over-match as a criterion.

Commissioner Roy Rogers asked about Safe Routes to Schools, and whether they will be informed so they can submit projects for this money.

Kelly Brooks responded that Safe Routes to Schools can apply for capital projects through this process, and that she has discussed it with the regional Safe Routes to Schools Partnership organizer.

Jess Groves agreed that over-match can be a great deal, but that Hood River County can't match large dollar amounts, so he wouldn't want that to preclude those communities from funding projects because they can't make a higher match.

Kelly Brooks explained the Fix-It Leverage program, which with the same equity allocation will provide \$18 million for Region 1. ODOT has developed some project lists for the ACT to review, but it's not an open solicitation for projects. That list will be presented at the October meeting, and that discussion can be extended into December if needed. This process is early in the workplan because ODOT is scoping Fix-It projects now, so that feedback needs to come in early.

Mayor Doug Daoust asked about projects such as the Rose Quarter, and what category that would fit into.

Rian Windsheimer responded that in the last STIP cycle some funding was allocated to design, but the full extent of that project would be \$350 million, so it would require a separate statewide funding package to include.

Councilor Craig Dirksen asked about opportunities for local dollars that could be added into a Fix-It Leverage project. If ODOT is applying funds to a project, could local communities add dollars to a project? How?

Rian Windsheimer clarified that the Fix-It projects are already available. If local agencies have something they would like to add, ODOT would be open to having that conversation.

Kelly Brooks explained that *ConnectOregon* is the other main workplan item with strict deadlines. Applications are available on October 5 and due on November 20. This program is run by ODOT's freight planning unit in Salem. The ACT is part of a regional review process in the

spring, which will be done on April 4, and also May 2 if needed. She clarified that the *ConnectOregon* boundaries match the ACT boundaries.

Kelly Brooks then moved on to the section on sharing information about ODOT plans and projects. This is grouped into major categories: plans, unfunded needs, funded projects.

The next section is information sharing with JPACT, coordinating committees, other ACTs and Regional Solutions Teams. This coordination is important, but we know we can't do it all in meetings. NWACT uses a newsletter to help share information between meetings. If there's interest, we can do something along those lines. The MPO/state relationship is also very important and we must coordinate how to track how federal dollars are spent.

Councilor Craig Dirksen said that the plan is great for a draft, but asked for clarification of Goal 1 and to the schedule to provide time for the ACT to discuss what the ACT needs to develop recommendations. How will the ACT be supported in understanding what a specific project's performance is? How will the ACT consider public input? Are there supplemental Region 1 criteria we should consider, and how will those be supported in the process? A lot of this evaluation needs to go on at a technical committee level to make recommendations to the ACT. We don't have the timeframe to do all this work, so we need a staff-level supporting body, specifically regarding the coordination between JPACT/Metro and the ACT. At some point JPACT comments on the 150% list prior to the recommendation. Where do we as the ACT get to comment on MTIP and RFFA? Where does the ACT provide input into the RTP development? At present there is a memorandum of agreement between the MPO, the transit agency and ODOT. We should update that MOA to include the ACT so we know what the relative roles are between the MPO and the ACT. And that should happen soon so we know what the expectations are as we begin these processes.

Commissioner Roy Rogers responded that the technical committee analogy might be problematic in this group, since only a few members have professional staff. Some are business community representatives, and school districts and nonprofits where they would not be able to participate in such a process. How would that work logistically? He also clarified that we don't necessarily need to adopt the work plan tonight.

Rian Windsheimer added that ODOT has STIP stakeholder committees and statewide committees, and direction from the Oregon Transportation Commission on what the criteria are for those project applications. The idea is that we're not doing a fill-an-application, but actually requiring a proposal resulting from a conversation with ODOT. So we need to make sure that we have a good outline of what a project is and what outcomes it achieves. This group was pulled together because of different needs and perspectives, and we expect you all to bring those to the table as the process moves forward. We expect a lot of input and feedback. The coordination isn't just with JPACT but with coordinating committees, school districts, business groups, etc.

Kelly Brooks explained that ODOT has a whole host of requirements from the federal government for robust public involvement. The new website will make it easier for people to comment. ODOT is here to staff the ACT and do what the group wants to do. We want to right-size this workplan to make sure ACT members' time is being used effectively for a relatively small amount of money. There is a lot of ground to cover, but if there are key things going on at Metro that the ACT should be providing input on, let's add that to the workplan. We can't drastically shift the timelines, but there shouldn't be any major hurdles with the Metro MOA.

Councilor Craig Dirksen agreed, and said he wants the ACT to have a chance to see that memo.

Rian Windsheimer clarified that what we're discussing is the ACT workplan, not the entirety of the STIP outreach plan. ODOT will do a whole host of outreach activities that will come back to help inform this group.

Commissioner Paul Savas appreciated the comment about some other ACT members not having staff, and recalled the last STIP process in which this process went seamlessly. Acknowledged that six JPACT members are at the meeting tonight, and that those ideas will be well represented here. During the formation of the ACT a concern of Hood River County and rural Clackamas County was that because they aren't in the MPO boundary, they would like to have a voice in the regional discussion.

Commissioner Steve Novick asked how the ACT will be involved in the OTC discretionary funds.

Kelly Brooks responded that there won't be an OTC discretionary fund. That was one scenario that was considered, but they ended up going with Fix-It Leverage instead because they would not get enough value out of a discretionary program.

Bernie Bottomly commented that one of the important pieces for the ACT will be to work toward creating a need statement for additional resources. We have a great machine here for allocating resources, but no gas for that machine. We need a gigantic infusion of additional resources to even come close to addressing the needs. Legislative races are beginning now, and candidates and legislators will be out over the next year talking to constituents and making commitments about what they will or will not do in Salem. If ACT members aren't talking to them now, they may not be fully informed about those commitments. For instance, a "no tax increases" pledge could exclude a user fee such as the gas tax. He would like to see a calendar-specific item for the need statement that could come out of the ACT.

Kelly Brooks mentioned that ODOT staff have heard that from other ACT members, and would like to know what other items should be added to the workplan.

Commissioner Roy Rogers asked if there is a parameter put on the ACT by the OTC that we can't get too far ahead of the state. Is there an advocacy constraint?

Kelly Brooks answered that she would need to do some homework and check with Salem and the Governor's office to find out what parameters they want to set and what they want from the ACT. They hope this will be part of the ACT's mission, but we should learn about any boundaries that exist.

Jess Groves added that this conversation should start now if there's hope for a transportation bill in the next session.

Rian Windsheimer responded that this is something ODOT needs to hear about. We have a rumble strip project on Highway 35 and can't move before 7:00 am because they're shipping fruit on the highway. We need to hear these sorts of things to have a joint understanding of where our needs are and start piecing together that statement.

Pam Treece mentioned that the private sector plays a big role in advocacy efforts, and it's important to remember to use that piece to support the ACT mission.

Rian Windsheimer said that it might even be as simple as providing the necessary information and letting other people run with it.

Commissioner Roy Rogers adjourned the meeting.