

RVACT *Rogue Valley Area Commission on Transportation*

155 N. 1st Street • P.O. Box 3275 • Central Point, Oregon 97502 • 541-664-6674
FAX 541- 664-7927

To: Members, Rogue Valley Area Commission on Transportation
From: Pat Foley, RVCOG
Re: Summary of May 10, 2016 RVACT meeting
ODOT Conference Rooms B & C

Members and Alternates in Attendance: Mike Faught, Ashland; Tom Humphrey, Central Point; Ruth Jenks and Robert Miller, Eagle Point; Dan DeYoung, Grants Pass, Jim Lewis, Jacksonville;

Simon Hare, Josephine County; Daniel Bunn, Medford; Pam VanArsdale and Fred England, Rogue River; Jim Ulrich, Shady Cove; John Bullion, Rail; Mike Quilty, RVMPO; Rob Brandes, MRMPO; Arthur Anderson, ODOT; Bern Case and Robert Russell, Aviation; Jon Elliott and Terry Bateman, RVTD; Steve Haydon, Bike and Pedestrian; Mark Gibson and Donald Stone, Trucking; Mike Montero, Earl Wood, Justin Gerlitz, Larry Ford and David Kellenbeck private sector representatives from Jackson County and Josephine County

Members Absent: Butte Falls, Cave Junction, Gold Hill, Jackson County, Phoenix and Talent.

Staff: Frank Reading, Lisa Cornutt, Michael Baker and Gary Leaming, ODOT; Pat Foley, RVCOG

Other Attendees: Alison Wiley, ODOT; Jenna Marmon, Jackson County; Alex Georgivich, Medford; Paige Townsend, RVACT; Scott Chancey, Josephine Community Transit; Corey Haan SWACT; Alex Campbell, Regional Solutions Team; Cindy England, Rogue River; Jonathan Wright, Reedsport City Manager; Jim Zimmer, Fred Wahl Marine

1. Welcome, Roll Call

Mike Montero

Roll was taken. A quorum was present.

2. Review Agenda – Additions or Deletions

Mike Montero

Letter from Governor Brown.

3. Consent Calendar

Mike Montero

Approve January 12, 2016 RVACT minutes:

Mike Quilty made a motion to approve the minutes. Jim Lewis seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

4. Public Comment

Mike Montero

Reedsport city manager.

5. Amend Bylaws

Lisa Cornutt

Bylaws approved

Justin Gerlitz Vice Chair

6. Enhance

Lisa Cornutt

Lisa PowerPoint Presentation

RVACT Enhance projects

Rogue River Greenway: Rock Point to Twin Bridges (Jackson County)

Funds Requested: \$2,828,000

Josephine Community Transit Station (Josephine Comm. Transit)

Funds Requested: \$1,052,000

OR-99: Birch Street to Coleman Creek Culvert (ODOT)

Funds Requested: \$2,569,000

JOSEPHINE COMMUNITY TRANSIT STATION

Art Anderson: Regarding the Josephine Community Transit Station project: The big thing that I like is that it kills two birds with one stone. I like the idea that it gets them to a safer place off of the main drive on 6th Street and it also improves the safety at that location. There are a lot of people getting off the bus at that location and some of them cross the street in front of the bus. That is a big thing to stress is the safety aspect. It helps our system as well as helping the transit system.

Mike Montero: I think that one what we have contextualize for this meeting, while we do not know who the representatives are for the Super ACT, it would be good for everybody at the table to imagine that they are one of the four. As we hear this additional information or if you have questions while you are listening to the presentations in Roseburg, what are the kinds of things that are going to matter to you? It might come in the form of questions or comments. I second the comments made by Art about the Josephine Community Transit project. Remember the photo of the buses parked against the curb. They have limited space there. Just from a safety perspective they way that they are required to park they are partially on the travel lane it is seriously a safety problem. Given that the project is modest in cost and also has some phasing options from my perspective those are real strong characteristics.

Tom Humphrey: I suggested this last time. It would help if they could do some kind of conceptual design because the problems are obvious but if you could portray what it would ultimately look like. I think this would portray a real strong case. Response (Scott Chancey): that has been done and will be a part of the presentation. I think my scoring would have been higher if my presentation had been different so I will be doing that. I also have the video of the pedestrian that was hit by a car that will further emphasis the safety aspect.

Mike Montero: Art just made a comment that I think is important for us to understand. What you see on the list that we discussed before, they are all moving forward. This should not be interpreted as a scoring sheet. This is just for information that is provided here by staff represents solely the input provided to staff by the applicants. Response (Lisa Cornutt): that is correct. There may be things that maybe incurred in the presentation or things that you know about but we had to go off of what was written in the application. This is why having your input

today would be very helpful, what really stands out as something that can be highlighted. Again this wasn't scoring but to consider how well the projects met the modal attributes and criteria. We are not asking for a specific format but if you have something that you think is important we can highlight that. For the Super ACT we have been charged with developing a strawman proposal to discuss at that meeting. We are taking the information from the proposals and the information that we gather today.

Dan DeYoung: Under 'readiness' it says that it doesn't meet the readiness criteria. What would it take to bump that up? Lisa Cornutt: The reason it is in there is that it wasn't in an adopted plan. It will be in the Grants Pass TSP, they are working on that now.

Rogue River Greenway: Rock Point to Twin Bridges

Jenna Marmon: I am sorry I missed John's presentation. I would like to make a couple of comments. Based on my experience in reviewing projects for OBPAC and the Transportation Enhancement Program I totally understand that this looks like more of a recreational trails project it doesn't meet the half-mile connection from city to employer. We struggled with that over the years as well. What it does do is expand the vision of the 50-mile corridor from Emigrant Lake to Grants Pass. It also expands family-friendly biking. Trails are the number one amenity that people cite when relocating. Walking in the state of Oregon is the number one recreational activity. I know that it doesn't seem like as much of a pure transportation connectivity project but it is a good one. The number one reason is, and I hope that John hit this real hard, is the tremendous opportunity that we have, that we won't have as soon as we start spending this money that we were able to secure through the TE and Bike/Ped program for the \$500K match for the right-of-way acquisition. So if this is truly \$3.3M for ODOT scoping project that is a \$330K match. Ride-the-Rogue maybe comes in at about \$30K to \$40K a year so that is ten years of private/non-profit fundraising. By the time they can raise the match to pay for construction of this project we are looking way down the road. This opportunity is golden. I think this is the biggest single trail project if it is funded and Alex you can correct me if I am wrong, but it is pretty rare to see a trails project of this magnitude. It is a huge step for the valley realizing the connection between Emigrant Lake and Grants Pass. I want to make the point, the question between a transportation type project and a recreation project it is really hard to balance. *ConnectOregon* had a hard time with this question but I think from a statewide perspective building these regional trails is so important for our community's health and economic development standpoint.

Mike Montero: I think it is important to the origin and destination of a project and who uses it. I was really struck by the number of users at the Valley of the Rogue Park. It is huge and then for them to have that type of facility to make their way to Gold Hill. It is something beyond being just a trail. It is not just recreational it is economic development.

Dan DeYoung: From a perception standpoint the Bear Creek Greenway does not have a good reputation for homeless and security. I have talked to people who have said that I am not going to walk there strictly because of this. Is there anything in the weeds about security along the trail because they seem to be a hotbed of criminal activity? That is a real black eye on a good project. This one out in the middle between towns and I don't anticipate that on this particular section but just overall the hiking and biking trails seem to get a bad rap because they do attract a certain amount of transients and homelessness. I don't know if you can add something from the Jackson County Sheriff's Department stating that regular patrols will be done or cameras or something. That might add to the attractiveness of this project because if we are going to spend this kind of money and nobody is going to use it.

Mike Quilty: I think the city of Medford has stepped up their patrols. I have actually biked through a squad of twenty or thirty homeless and that is not a very good feeling. I agree with that.

Dan DeYoung: We want the trail to be used by everybody. In your presentation it would be nice to be armed with having some sort of a commitment from the Sheriff's Department that they recognize there is a problem and that they are working toward addressing the issue.

Mike Quilty: This project runs adjacent, not on the road, but it runs on the other side of the trees from the road. It is actually very visible for the most part. You have the patrols inside of the park and basically this runs along the road into the town and I think with that you are not going to have the problem.

Dan DeYoung: It is the perception. This part of the trail is probably going to be the safest part of the trail. It is just general perception.

Mike Quilty: The police department in Central Point has done a lot with clearing and moving folks out on a regular basis. It is like water. It flows downhill. You can move them out and they roll back in but they do a pretty reasonable job of mastering it.

Mike Montero: To Dan's point, that is exactly the kind of feedback that we are looking for. If he is familiar with it then there are going to be other representatives at the Super ACT asking about that. I appreciate your feedback.

Mike Faught: I think the other piece is there are wetland modifications in there clearing the blackberries. It is not just policing doing wetland medications will help.

Rob Brandes: I think you could make the argument too that the more people are using the trail in general makes it safer.

Jenna Marmon: Making those connections get more people on the trail. To your point I agree and understand. One quote that I like to use a lot is from the Medford Police Department, "Statistically the Greenway is the same as downtown Medford". You don't necessarily say you are not going to downtown Medford. I would definitely like some ideas on how to work on the perception. You are right Rob, the more people we get out there the better. There is actually quite a bit of use in the Medford area. On the average of the 20 miles we are looking at about 800 trips a day.

Dan DeYoung: I am just saying to be prepared to answer these questions. You are giving good answers today as a start.

Mike Montero: A process question Lisa: Given that John Vial is not here are these comments going to be captured so that they are available in written form for the Super ACT? Response: Yes.

Mike Quilty: This is not a problem that is unique to urban trails in southern Oregon. The American River trail in Sacramento County, I rode it religiously when I was a medic down there. I would get off work and I would go for a 30-mile bike ride and you ride through areas where just off to the side in the brambles you would have camps. When I worked as a paramedic we went into those camps on a regular basis for folks that had gotten sick or injured. It happens everywhere and to use that against a particular trail segment verses others I think is wrong.

Ruth Jenks: I have the perception correctly or incorrectly, that most of the users of the trail are from the Medford/Jackson County area. Having more information about the Josephine County people that are using the trail would make it more attractive to me in terms of having region wide availability for users.

Stephen Haydon: That is true. There are those of us that do cart our bikes over to the pathway and then spend the day.

Mike Montero: Do you have any statistical data? Response: I do not.

Dan DeYoung: I think our hope would be that it would eventually go all the way to Grants Pass. Right now there is a 'grand gapouses'.

OR-99: Birch Street to Coleman Creek Culvert

Lisa change to project. Still have Fix-It project. It will still have the same bicycle and pedestrian amenities (check notes)

Art Anderson: I would like to hear Jenna's comments about this project.

Jenna Marmon: Highway 99 is critical through this area from a regional perspective. Talk about a high travelled corridor, you see people out there trying to walk, trying to bike, trying to use mobility devices down the side of the road. It is absolutely an essential project. If I put my OBPAC hat on and review these two projects it is really hard, it is apples to kumquats. They are different in a lot of ways. Just pointing out we do need to keep in mind there are going to be continue to be questions about the Greenway project and we do need to give them some credit for being an economic driver with important strategic connections for the valley. My one wish for Hwy 99 is that it makes more consistent connections. If it went north to Glenwood Road, for example, where we have county local improvement road that I could somehow get paved and then make the connection so that people could bike to Glenwood from Hwy 99 to get to the Greenway to the north. It is absolutely an essential project. People say well you can travel on the Greenway but you need to be able to get on the Greenway.

Mike Montero: When we were looking at past STIP project, the pictures for the Linn Road project in Eagle Point one image that stuck in my mind is the senior trying to pedal that three wheel bike down Linn Road with no bike facilities at all with all the vehicular traffic trying to go to WalMart. It is like seeing some five-year old, no disrespect to the seniors, it is horrifying to even think of that.

Robert Miller: Coming back to another meeting, I literally stuck my phone out the window and took pictures of the traffic passing by.

Mike Montero: A picture is worth a thousand words. I would strongly recommend the a picture be included in your presentation.

Art Anderson: I know this is an ODOT project but I look at it as a regional project. There is an element that I keep telling is an economic/environment justice element the area between Phoenix and Medford there are a lot of lower income folks that live in that area. The infrastructure is very tight. We had an OTC tour down here on a bus and driving through there, there was a guy in a wheel chair that came out right as the bus was going by because he couldn't get by on the sidewalk. The environmental justice side because these people are on the low income side, the lack of proper facilities for them to get to locations so that they can buy food and get to work is a critical piece between Phoenix and Medford. The transit piece is huge too. There is a lot going on in that area. There is a lot of traffic in that area (ADC 15K to 18K).

Dan DeYoung: Is there an aspect there in selling this, an aid in getting those lower income people to use public transit? Is there a bus stop on one end and they have to get out in the road to get to it?

Paige Townsend: There are four bus stops along Hwy 99 that are currently using the shoulder along Hwy 99 because there are no sidewalks available and so it is a very simple bus stop with a sign at the stop. Those will be improved as part of the project and will provide better connectivity for people who are currently using those stops that really feel vulnerable being right next to the fog line. We estimate that there are about 100 passengers per day in this area alone that are using the current bus stops. The bus stops are an infrastructure element that will benefit RVTD and RVTD customers right away. The sidewalk connectivity and the bicycle lanes being installed will provide for pedestrians who are currently going from several low income trailer parks and high density neighborhoods that are walking from just north of Phoenix into the Phoenix area to get the Rays Food Place, get to the bank, to the convenience store, get to school; there are several destinations that are just south of the city center of Phoenix. The project is

connecting all of that northern part of Phoenix with the sidewalks and bike lanes to get them into their city where right now they are travelling on a very rural shoulder type of area in an urban area. The other part of this project that isn't really highlighted very well is that Rogue Valley transit is looking at transit signal priority where we are looking at scheduling issues along the corridor all of the way from downtown Medford, through Phoenix, through Talent and Ashland. One of the ways that we are looking at alleviating that without having to extend our schedule which will cost us another driver which we do not have the money for is to enhance the signal technologies so that we are able to utilize the priority system that will have a green light stay green longer or cycle the system faster if it knows that a bus is approaching and it is behind schedule. There is a corridor enhancement along all of the signals (26 signals) that will be upgraded so that we can have the transit signal priority in place. There is a complete street's project as a part of this. There is also a complete street project planned in other parts of the corridor which will potentially have cost issues for us. We are just trying to get ahead of that. This is a great project. It increases the feel of the corridor for bike, ped and traffic calming but it can also have an adverse impact on our schedule adherence. We are just trying to get ahead of that and use technology to solve some of those issues by upgrading the signals. So that although this infrastructure is just north of Phoenix but for transit is all along the corridor.

Dan DeYoung: I think that is a real selling point when you are getting people to the bus stop so that they can use public transportation especially in that demographic. Going north this should be one of your sales tools in the bag.

Mike Quilty: There is also the clinic in Phoenix. They do a ton of work with low-income or under-insured folks in the valley. That is one of the places where they have to walk from those places to get to. Just recently Andrea looked at work on our underserved communities in the valley noticed that they couldn't get from one of the transit stops across the highway to it and talked to the folks at ODOT and got a crossing so that they could do it. This is another one of those things that connects a large population of underserved folks with that medical facility in Phoenix. It is one of the things that we don't see. It is like the people in Eagle Point that couldn't get to the pharmacy at Wal Mart to get their generic prescriptions.

Ruth Jenks: By listening to everyone I am picturing this stretch of Hwy 99 and the intersection. I am down there a lot but to hear everyone talk it brings to mind the traffic, the low-income and the safety issues, so to bring that picture to the Super ACT meeting could really separate it from other projects that may focus on moving more traffic from A to B or a sidewalk is a sidewalk. But when you look at what a sidewalk would mean to this area is profound. I would emphasize that.

Rob Brandes: Explain to me more, the culvert was pulled out so it changes the scoping down.

Lisa Cornutt: It wasn't pulled out. It was a replacement. Now it is a repair project.

Jenna Marmon: The sidewalks and bike lanes will stay? Response: Nothing changes there with the sidewalks and other things. The one thing that we are changing is the culvert work.

Tom Humphrey: Are there going to be periodic medians for refuge in order to get back and forth across this highway? Response: there may be three or four.

7. **Select Super ACT members**

Lisa Cornutt

- Mike Montero – appearance of conflict of interest – one of my clients is Harry and David. No.
- Ruth Jenks
- Jon Elliot
- Dan DeYoung

Mike Quilty – Alternate
Rob Brandes – Alternate

8. ConnectOregon VI: Project Sharing & Selection of Regional Review Members
Lisa Cornutt

Regional Review Committee:

- Mike Quilty – Roseburg and Portland
 - Ruth Jenks
 - Mike Faught
 - Larry Ford
- Daniel Bunn – Alternate

9. Local Construction Projects
Gary Leaming

10. FAST Act Funding
Frank Reading

11. Agenda Build July RVACT meeting
Mike Montero and Art Anderson
Next meeting will be July 12, 2016