

Oregon Public Transportation Plan

Policy Advisory Committee Meeting #1 Summary

Friday, April 22, 2016, 1:00 – 4:30 PM

Location: Chemeketa Center for Business and Industry, 626 High Street, Salem

Committee members present

David Lohman (Chair), Oregon Transportation Commission

Craig Campbell, AAA Oregon

Karen Girard, Oregon Health Authority

Amanda Hoey, Mid-Columbia Economic Development District

Sharon Konopa, City of Albany

Mark Labhart, Tillamook County

Robin McArthur, Land Conservation and Development Commission

Neil McFarlane, TriMet

Tonia Moro, Rogue Valley Transit District

Dan O'Halloran, Rockwell Collins

Cosette Rees, Lane Transit District

Bob Russell, Oregon Trucking Association

Lisa Scherf, City of Corvallis

John David "JD" Tovey, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

Elaine Wells, Ride Connection

Committee members absent

Steve Dickey, Salem-Keizer Transit

Ben Duncan, Multnomah County

Jeff Monson, Commute Options

ODOT staff present

Jerri Bohard, Transportation Development

Hal Gard, Rail and Public Transit

Marsha Hoskins, Rail and Public Transit

Brooke Jordan, Transportation Development

Jean Palmateer, Rail and Public Transit

Amanda Pietz, Transportation Development

Lucia Ramirez, Transportation Development

Consultant staff present

Kirsten Pennington, CH2M

Ryan Farncomb, CH2M

Jeanne Lawson, JLA Public Involvement

Meeting Purpose

Provide a foundation for the committee's work, including background on purpose and context for the plan, committee charge and operating protocols, and report on stakeholder outreach to-date.

Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Lohman welcomed the group, provided opening remarks, and introduced the Oregon Public Transportation Plan (OPTP) project to the committee.



Jeanne Lawson, Consultant Team Facilitator, reviewed the agenda and purpose of the first meeting and started introductions. As part of the introduction, she asked each PAC member to answer the question, “In 10 years, what is one thing you hope will be different about public transit in Oregon because of this plan?”

The PAC members responded as follows:

- Addressing gridlock through Wilsonville on I-5
- Doubling of public transportation ridership in the Rogue Valley
- Establishment of a shared, statewide aspirational vision for public transportation as well as addressing future projected growth in urban and rural areas
- Increased access and connections between transit modes
- Increased access and consistent service to support economic vitality of rural regions; ensuring options for rural residents who are transportation disadvantaged
- Implementation of cost effective alternatives to the automobile
- A broad and shared understanding of public transportation in Oregon while making real changes on the ground
- A change to viewing transit systems as a critical element of the transportation system by the business community and the public
- Dedicating a funding source for public transit as well as intercity public transportation, while fulfilling state and local funding partnerships for state of “good repair”
- Ensuring that public transportation is on an equal playing field with other transportation projects in the state
- Ensuring greater interjurisdictional coordination, closing system gaps, and creating an interconnected, “smart” system

After introductions, Chair Lohman emphasized that the plan will address rural issues in addition to those in urban areas.

The OPTP and Oregon Transportation Plans and Policy

Hal Gard, ODOT Rail and Public Transit Director, described why ODOT is conducting the OPTP, and why now. He noted that public transportation is an integral part of the transportation system, and that it benefits everyone. The landscape at this time offers new opportunities, as well as shifts in system demands. He noted that the project is called the “public transportation” plan in order to be inclusive of urban and rural areas and different modes.

Amanda Pietz, ODOT Planning Manager, described the role of public transportation, and the purpose of the statewide planning framework. She described the desired outcomes of a



statewide plan (visionary and implementable, multimodal and intermodal, statewide, substantive but not prescriptive, accountable, adaptive), as well as how the OPTP fits in the overall statewide plan framework. Amanda emphasized that the plan will be a living document and updated frequently. Amanda stated that the plan will direct the work of ODOT, but will also be an important policy foundation for regional and local planning, investment, design, construction, maintenance and operations in Oregon.

Kirsten Pennington, Consultant Team Project Manager, started a discussion to address what the definition of “public transportation” should be for purposes of the plan. She reviewed what ODOT has heard from stakeholders and the PAC to-date. Kirsten noted that the proposed focus for the plan would be those services that have a public funding component, and invited comment from the PAC.

- The PAC commented that they thought plan should include private entities that receive public funding, and noted that this is very important for rural Oregon. An example is subsidies for intercity bus service in eastern Oregon
- A PAC member stated that there is substantial interest from public sector agencies in understanding how new private services can support paratransit services, and that private models should be considered
- A PAC member asked about the treatment of passenger rail in the plan, and staff noted that passenger rail will be part of the plan. A PAC member pointed out that many have expressed a need from the private sector for additional public transportation services, and that it is possible that this service may be receiving money from the private sector to provide service in the future
 - Staff responded to note that interactions with employers within the private sector are important to keep in mind
- A PAC member noted that they thought the definition should be broad to be inclusive of private entities and opportunities. Staff clarified that these services can be covered, but the scope of policies and strategies would be more limited to the areas for which the state/region/locals have authority

After further discussion, the PAC agreed that the working definition of “public transportation” should ensure that private transportation services (including those that receive public funding) are adequately addressed by the plan. The consultant team committed to continuing to clarify “public transportation” at PAC meeting #2, scheduled for May 18, 2016.

Project Overview and Roles

OPTP Project Timeline

Kirsten reviewed the different components and chapters of the OPTP as well as the project schedule. There are 13 total proposed PAC meetings, spanning almost two years. PAC meetings



will be oriented around discussion topics that will help develop OTP document content. Public involvement will occur throughout the project, particularly around certain milestones. The three key milestones for the project include: Vision and Goals; Policies and Strategies; and Investment and the draft full OTP.

Discussion followed:

- A PAC member asked how a potential transportation funding package, considered by legislature prior to project completion, would fit with the project schedule
 - Staff responded that the project team is currently working on understanding needs and investment scenarios. The work of the Governor’s Transportation Vision Committee will also inform legislation in the future
 - Commissioner Lohman stated that the OTP will bring attention to the matter, and that this process is timely, so issues can be raised in advance of the legislative session. He noted that the plan also will guide the work of ODOT staff, and in turn, proposals that are brought to the OTC in the future
- A PAC member stated that they thought the mission and long-term focus of the OTP should not be distracted by the potential transportation package

Staff noted that for the duration of the project, the PAC’s help in getting stakeholder feedback on the plan would be appreciated.

PAC Charge

Chair Lohman reviewed the [PAC charge](#). Jeanne further explained the PAC’s role described in the charge. The PAC agreed with the charge. A PAC member requested the TAC committee roster and charge be provided to PAC.

Operating Protocols

Jeanne walked through the draft PAC protocols. The PAC discussed several protocols and communication:

- One member noted that verbal affirmation of some important items should be required
- A member stated that the possibility of a minority report should be formally allowed by the committee, and suggested adding a public comment period at the beginning of the meeting
- The committee agreed to the protocols as written, with the following changes:
 - Addition of an online PAC resources library;
 - Provision enabling a minority report if a unanimous decision is not reached by the group;
 - Provision allowing alternates;
 - Clarifying that email communications to the PAC go through Lucia Ramirez;



- Adding an additional opportunity at the beginning of meetings for public comment.

Public Transportation in Oregon

Kirsten reviewed the “Case for Public Transportation” and led a group discussion around the findings. The group provided the following feedback and suggested revisions/additions to the document:

- Include greater emphasis on the role of public transportation in meeting land use objectives and supporting strong metropolitan regions
- Add information on the role of public transportation in congestion management in urban areas
- It is just as important in rural areas as urban areas to have walking, biking, and transit options. For rural areas, public transportation can expand to the workshed for employees
- Several PAC members would like to see more economic and financial findings in the document. Transit contributes to the financial health of Oregon in many ways, including supporting business. The group suggested quantifying more benefits and adding more statistics if possible, noting that elected officials are responsive to these facts and figures (e.g. jobs, dollars)
- The PAC suggested creating an executive summary with infographics designed for the public
- One PAC member noted that a study in his community concluded that an estimated \$10 million could be injected into the area’s economy if 10% of the population chose not to own a second car
- One PAC member noted that the health impacts of public transportation could be emphasized more in the document
- The section containing health effects is understated, and should possibly be expanded upon
- A PAC member suggested considering engaging the TAC to help supplement the document
- A PAC member also stated that other items could be addressed including insufficient funding and land to continue building highways; making transportation options a necessity; and discussing issues associated with vehicle parking
- A PAC member noted that many people drive and that investments in public transportation are very beneficial, but unlikely to result in a fundamental shift in travel behavior



- The PAC agreed that whenever possible, it would be best to provide Oregon data/sources in the document and to make sure to cite original source material
- A PAC member suggested it is apples and oranges to draw a comparison between public transportation roles in Hurricane Katrina and in Oregon earthquake recovery. An earthquake and tsunami will devastate roads, rail and bridges to an extent different from the hurricane. Recommendation to reconsider how this subject is treated in this section

At the end of the discussion, staff asked PAC members to send any specific statistics and resources to Lucia, especially Oregon specific studies and statistics of public transportation benefits and impacts.

Ryan Farncomb, consultant team staff, then briefly reviewed the existing conditions information collected to-date. The PAC made the following suggestions:

- Need to refine the distinction between minority and low income populations (minority does not equal low income)
- Summarize demographics trends on a regional basis
- Competition from new services, like Uber, are in some cases costing providers business
- More information on existing barriers to using public transportation would be useful
- It is important to discuss issues around housing affordability and displacement, in both urban and rural areas
- Key findings will be dependent on assessing future conditions to understand future opportunities, challenges, and trends
- A PAC member stated that the focus of existing conditions should be on what's happening today, and not necessarily including future conditions. However, some PAC members expressed interest in better understanding future trends

Staff noted that existing conditions information will be vetted with the TAC as well and the PAC will receive an existing conditions report later in the summer.

Key Considerations

Lucia Ramirez, ODOT team staff, then reviewed the results and major themes that emerged from outreach conducted to-date. Key themes and ideas included:

- Connections and access – within regions, within the state, to neighboring transportation systems
- Access to services, jobs, community, stops, vehicles, etc.
- Coordination and collaboration – agencies working with each other, the private sector, land use decisions, etc.



- Planning for the future
- Equity – public transportation has a role in providing basic access.
- Economic development
- The OPTP will help with communication – to legislators, to the public, and others
- Safety and security – perceptions of, station design, new technologies

Lucia then reviewed the “indicators of OPTP success” as described by PAC members individually. The committee then had a brief discussion:

- PAC members stated that public transportation is fundamentally helping to meet the transportation needs of the public, and that this needs to be stated strongly in the plan and the documents that lead up to its creation

Jeanne asked PAC members to write down key considerations and add them to the “sticky wall.” These considerations will be summarized and used to inform the development of the vision and goals. Comments added to the sticky wall were:

- To address future “projected” growth not only in urban Oregon but also rural Oregon for public transportation
- Doubling of ridership for public transportation
- Gridlock in Wilsonville
- Dependability of funding is as, if not more, important than the quantity of funding
- Demographic shifts and having planning capacity to accommodate it
- Equity – service to entry or low skill job centers (e.g. Columba Corridor)
- Barriers to use (sidewalks, bike routes)
- Increased access for all modes of public transportation
- Meet the needs of seniors
- Transportation options for transportation disadvantaged persons throughout tri-county area
- Equity – ladders of opportunity, housing cost – displacement to outlying areas
- Increased public transportation access with consistent service that supports economic vitality of rural regions in the state
- High speed rail from Eugene to Portland – are we going to talk about this
- Interconnected smart system; gap closing; jurisdiction coordination
- That public transportation will be seamlessly integrated with other modes



- Coordinated transportation system that allows a person to connect seamlessly from one system to another
- Foster partnerships by channeling transit funding to communities that are building transit oriented places
- Issue: Silos: lots of individual transit districts funded by taxpayers. Need to discuss ways to improve efficiency across districts (i.e. combining, sharing, scheduling)
- Funding stability for long term service planning
- To elevate transit statewide as a viable, vibrant transportation mode and make it competitive for funds that may become more limited
- Sustained funding for transit and intercity transport for people
- Fulfilled state/local funding partnership for operations and state of good repair
- Provide transparency for public transportation finance
- Issue: that there is full and adequate funding to meet the key considerations by the PAC members
- Broad understanding of the importance of public transportation for all Oregonians' health
- Transit viewed by the business community and public as critical element of our transportation system
- Shared statewide aspirational vision and understanding of the importance of public transportation in Oregon
- Ensure transit is on equal field within the transportation plan; better understood and represented
- We can identify the ideal model for all modes of the transportation system: (a) reality is with the population; (b) funding will drive the path for the ideal model
- Land use policies that encourage co-location of mode access to facilitate easier transition between modes. Perhaps services or consumer centers could be located there as well
- Business Case: Transit and land use (F.A.R. studies of streetcar and light rail; trips "avoided" because of land use build-out)

Wrap up and next steps

The group would like to schedule as many meetings as they can into the future using Doodle Polls, with a preference for afternoons.



Documents will be sent out ahead of time as frequently as possible. Lucia asked the group to contact her if paper copies of meeting materials are not needed by individual PAC members.

Staff and Chair Lohman thanked the members for participating in the process and attending the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 18, 2016, and will focus on developing the OPTP vision.

Items for Follow-up

Item for Follow-Up	Responsibility
Continue to clarify the term “public transportation” at next meeting	Consultant team
Provide TAC roster and charge to PAC	ODOT staff
Revise draft protocols with PAC’s edits	Consultant team
Send specific studies, statistics related to public transportation benefits to Lucia	PAC members
Contact Lucia if members do not want paper copies at meetings	PAC members

