

**BIENNIAL REPORT OF THE  
MID-WILLAMETTE VALLEY AREA COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION  
(MWACT)  
October 2019**

The Mid-Willamette Valley Area Commission on Transportation (MWACT) was created in early 1997 as the result of recommendations from the "Mid-Willamette Valley Blue Ribbon Committee on the Formation of an Area Stakeholder Group." The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) adopted a provisional charter for MWACT in February 1997, and the first meeting was held in April 1997. The OTC adopted MWACT's final charter in October 1997. MWACT was the first area commission chartered by the OTC.

MWACT's mission is described in the charter as follows:

- To provide a forum for the discussion and coordination of long-range transportation issues affecting the area's livability.
- To prioritize state transportation infrastructure and capital investments through the development of an implementation strategy based on transportation plans related to the Mid-Willamette Valley area.
- To advocate Mid-Willamette Area transportation issues to neighboring regions and other outside organizations.
- To advise the Oregon Transportation Commission on state and regional policies affecting the Area's transportation system.

MWACT adopted its first Operating Agreement in August 1997. The Agreement has been amended several times over the years to respond to the evolving needs of the Commission. The Operating Agreement is in full compliance with the OTC's "Policy on the Formation and Operation of Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs)."

The structure and operation of MWACT are described in the information below.

### **ACT Boundaries**

MWACT's boundary includes Marion, Polk, and Yamhill Counties. These three counties, and the cities and transportation stakeholders contained therein, face many similar transportation issues. Among these issues are regional travel to and through the area (including congestion on major highways), transportation and traffic safety, and provision of alternate modes of transportation. The MWACT boundary contains an area of common interest, and there is no desire to change it at this time.

### **MWACT Membership**

The amended MWACT Charter identifies the voting membership as follows:

- Salem-Keizer MPO (SKATS) Members  
Polk County (elected official)

- Marion County (elected official)
- City of Salem (elected official)
- City of Keizer (elected official)
- Salem Area Mass Transit District (elected official)
- ODOT Area Manager (non-elected)
- Yamhill County Transit Area (appointed)
- Other Cities by transportation corridor<sup>1</sup> (elected officials)
  - Hwy. 99W/18/47 (Yamhill County)
  - I-5 Corridor (Marion County)
  - Hwy. 22W/99W/51 (Polk County)
  - Hwy. 22E (Marion County)
  - Hwy. 99E/213 (Marion County)
- Yamhill County (elected official)
- Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde (elected official)
- Private sector - one selected by each County Commission<sup>2</sup>

70.5 percent (12 of 17) of MWACT’s voting members are elected officials.

MWACT’s membership also includes ex-officio (non-voting) members. The ex-officio membership includes representatives of adjacent area commissions (Cascades West ACT and Northwest Oregon ACT), the Metro Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation, and state legislators representing Marion, Polk, and Yamhill Counties.

MWACT believes its membership is broadly representative of the transportation interests in the three-county area. In addition to local elected officials, the membership includes representatives of alternate modes, tribal governments, local business, and real estate. Although not specifically listed as ex-officio members, representatives of all of the groups identified in the OTCs Policy on Formation and Operations of ACTs (Section IV.B.) receive notice of, and agendas for, all MWACT meetings and are encouraged to attend.

### **Coordination with Adjacent ACTs and the Legislative Delegation**

Adjacent ACTs and the three-county legislative delegation are ex-officio members of MWACT and receive meeting notices and agendas, and are invited to attend the Commission's meetings. MWACT has invited representatives of Cascades West ACT, Northwest ACT, and the Region 1 ACT to meet with the Commission and share information of mutual interest. Designated MWACT members periodically attend NWACT and CWACT meetings.

Members of the local legislative delegation occasionally attend MWACT meetings.

MWACT members developed and distributed an informational and educational brochure, which has been distributed to the OTC and others.

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<sup>1</sup> The Charter specifies the cities in each corridor. The cities in the corridor are responsible for selecting their representative.

<sup>2</sup> County Commissions select private sector representatives through a public solicitation process.

## **Work Program**

Attempts to prepare a six-month work program have been hampered by changing STIP development schedules and the current fiscal climate. The Commission works with staff to develop meaningful agendas based on current circumstances. The Commission has adopted an “every other month” meeting schedule unless more frequent meetings are dictated by the work load.

## **Public Involvement/Meeting Notice**

Notice of MWACT meetings and meeting agendas are provided to an extensive list of organizations, elected and appointed officials, and interested individuals. The following describes in more detail how notice is provided.

*Meeting Notice* - ODOT Region 2 Public Affairs staff send a press release to all media outlets in the area approximately 7-10 days prior to the regular meeting (which is always held on the first Thursday of the month at 3:30 p.m.). At this time, the agenda is also posted on the ODOT - MWACT web site. The agenda always includes time for public comment, as well as opportunities for members of the legislative delegation or the OTC to provide comments, if present.

*Meeting Materials* - the agenda package is mailed to Commission members, ex-officio members, and others requesting the full package approximately one week prior to the meeting. The agenda only is sent at the same time to individuals and organizations requesting it.

*Meeting Location* - Regular meetings are held in the offices of the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, 100 High Street SE, Salem, OR. This building is ADA accessible. In the event that this room is not available, MWACT will meet at another appropriate location – timely notice of change in location of an MWACT meeting will be provided to all interested parties.

*Meeting Summary* - Meeting summaries are prepared for each meeting. After the summaries are approved by the Commission (at the next meeting), they are posted to the ODOT - MWACT web site.

## **Operational Structure**

The work of MWACT and the Commission staff is guided by a Steering Committee that consists of the Chair, Vice Chair, ODOT Representative, the immediate past MWACT chair, and one or more Commission members selected by the membership. The Steering Committee has been empowered by the full Commission to make decisions on the Commission's behalf if such decision is required before MWACT's next regular meeting.

## Technical Assistance

MWACT receives technical assistance and information from several sources. Primary sources of technical information include ODOT, as directed by the Area 3 Manager, and the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments. MWACT has utilized a Technical Advisory Committee, made up of staff from ODOT, jurisdictions, and other stakeholders in the three-county area, to assist in the past, and will do so again, as needed.

## Key Work Efforts Addressed by MWACT Since 2017

MWACT members held a new member orientation session to familiarize several new members with the purpose and history of cooperative regional transportation planning in the Marion, Polk, and Yamhill Counties.

Work efforts and issues reviewed by MWACT members since 2017 include:

- ◆ ● Prioritize Enhance Non-Highway Fund Project Applications in the MWACT region ●  
STIP Update - FY 21-FY 24 STIP
- ◆ Review/Updates on Legislative Actions Related to Transportation Funding (HB 2017)
- Review progress/status of projects and area issues:
  - ◆ Salem-Keizer Regional Transportation Systems Plan and Air Quality Conformity Determination Update (RTSP/AQCD)
  - ◆ Oregon Greenhouse Gas Rules
  - ◆ OR 22 25<sup>th</sup> Street to Gaffin Road Facility Plan (southeast Salem/Marion County)
  - ◆ OR 22 Safety Project and Doaks Ferry Road Intersection (west Salem/Polk County)
  - ◆ I-5/Aurora-Donald Interchange (HB 2017 project)
  - ◆ OR 99W/Orrs Corner Road - Clow Corner Road Project
  - ◆ OR 551 @ Ehlen Road project
  - ◆ OR 18 Spur/S. Yamhill River Bridge project
  - ◆ OR 22/Center Street Bridge Seismic Retrofit project
  - ◆ Newberg-Dundee Bypass Phase 2
  - ◆ Review of Salem-Keizer Transit and CARTS Operations
  - ◆ Salem River Crossing Project
- Reviewed and provided input related to:
  - ◆ Federal Lands Access Program Capitol (FLAP) Projects
  - ◆ Safety Data Collection and Analysis
  - ◆ Highway 22 Safety Corridors
- Received reports related to:
  - ◆ Construction Season Previews and Post Season Reports
  - ◆ MWACT Enhance Funding and Unmet Needs
  - ◆ ODOT Strategic Business Plan
  - ◆ ODOT Transportation Safety Plan
  - ◆ All Roads Transportation Safety Program
  - ◆ Oregon Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan/Active Transportation Issues
  - ◆ Oregon Freight Plan Update

- ◆ Oregon Public Transportation Plan
- ◆ ADA Transition Plan
- Meet with the OTC

### **Commission Staffing**

Beginning in August 2003, staff support for MWACT is provided by the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments (MWVCOG) with the assistance of ODOT Region 2.

### **Decision-making Process**

MWACT uses a consensus-based decision-making process. The MWACT Operating Agreement describes this process as follows:

*MWACT will use a consensus decision-making process and will foster a collaborative approach to problem solving. Consensus means that all members agree to support the decision. Members may choose not to block the consensus even though they do not fully agree with the decision. They may need to register their view about it, but are willing to support the decision because they trust the wisdom of the group on the issue.*

The Operating Agreement also provides for a voting procedure if consensus cannot be reached. The intent is to use the voting procedure infrequently in an effort to foster collaboration between the members. The voting procedure has not been used to date.

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