

NWACT December Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, December 11, 2025

Time: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Location: Clatsop Community College, South County Center

1455 N Roosevelt Dr,

Seaside, OR 97138

*Members bolded were in attendance

ODOT

Region 1 Transportation Infrastructure Development & Project Manager

Region 2 Maintenance and Operations Manager

Region 2 Senior Planner

Bill Jablonski

Mark Buffington

Caroline Crisp

Clatsop County

Commission (v)

Commission (a)

Large City (v)

Large City (a)

Small City (v)

Small City (a)

Citizen-at-Large

Citizen-at-Large

Mark Kujala

Terry Hendryx

Elisabeth Adams

Steve Wright

Kathy Kleczek

John Nygaard

Citizen-at-Large

Patrick McHugh

Washington County

Commission (v)

Commission (a)

Large City (v)

Large City (a)

Small City (v)

Small City (a)

Citizen-at-Large

Citizen-at-Large

Jerry Willey

Stacy Shetler

Marsha Kirk

Jolynn Becker

Don Odermott

Columbia County

Commission (v)

Commission (a)

Large City (v)

Large City (a)

Small City (v)

Small City (a)

Citizen-at-Large

Citizen-at-Large

Casey Garrett

Michael Russell

Dave Sukau

Bob Brajcich

Scott Jorgenson

Rosemary Lohrke

Betsy Johnson

Transit Districts

Columbia Co (v)

Columbia Co (a)

Clatsop Co (v) Debbie Boothe Schmidt

Clatsop County (a) Craig Johnston

Tillamook Co (a) Brian Vitulli

Benton County Charlene Pech

Sunset Empire **David Carr**

Tillamook County

Commission (v)

Commission (a)

Paul Fournier

Chris Laity

Large City (v)

Large City (a)

Small City (v)

Small City (a)

Aaron Burris

Sean Lewis

Liane Welch

David McCall

Ports

Port of Astoria (a) Will Isom

Port of Columbia Co (v) **Nancy Ward**

Port of Columbia Co (a) **Sean Clark**

Port of Tillamook Bay (v) **Michele Bradley**

Port of Garibaldi (a) Mike Saindon

Others in attendance or online:

Calvin Marvich

Matt Mumford

Gail Henrikson

Tony Walters

Ben Griffith

Will Chappell

Sarah Lu Heath

Arla Miller

1. Call to Order and Meeting Minutes

- The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.
- **Correction:** The date of the previous meeting was October 9, 2025 (not the 11th).
- **Attendance update:** Add **Tony Bunkers** to the attendee list.
- **Citizen-at-large (Tillamook): Pat McHugh** (name to be bolded in the notes).
- **Motion:** Suzanne Weber moved to approve the **edited** meeting minutes for October 9. The motion carried.

2. Broadway & US 101 Signal Discussion (Astoria)

- Sarah Lu asked questions about the traffic signal at US Broadway and US 101. Bill had recently spoken with the City about adjustments to this signal.
- Bill has reached out to the Astoria downtown business community to get feedback on how the signal is working and any needed changes.
- Sarah Lu also referenced a text message about speed and conditions on US 26. Bill explained that water is pushing on the roadway in that area, and Sarah Lu thanked Bill for getting that on the record.

3. Bridge Modernization and Preservation Projects

- One member joked about what the **new bridge** should be called, in contrast to the “old bridge.”
- From the City of Tillamook to Banks, multiple bridges are being modernized and standardized for travel; this represents roughly \$10 million in projects.
- Preservation work is planned on OR 6, with the goal of making safety improvements. Many of these projects fall within the OR 6 corridor, and project websites will be available.
- Bill noted that ODOT does not have access to some of the larger funding sources people often assume are available.
- Bill reported ODOT is spending approximately **\$12 million from Rock Crest to the US 101 signal**, which will be a significant improvement for Columbia County.

- Sarah Lu asked for clarity on “new modern barrier.” It refers to a safety barrier between lanes, which ODOT will be able to use on upcoming projects.

4. Introductions – Staff

- **Calvin** and **Ben** were introduced.
- Ben has been with ODOT for about 2½ years and is providing administrative support (taking notes, keeping meetings on track, and helping manage processes). He is focused on making a good impression and managing things the right way.
- Calvin is working as an assistant resident engineer as part of the graduate engineering program and is doing several rotations. He previously worked for the City of Portland and as a private consultant.
- Bill stated that both Calvin and Ben are **instrumental**. Calvin has ramped up quickly, especially after the departure of Matt Johnson, whose role Calvin is now effectively taking on.
- Ben will take over the administrative role that supports the ACT.

5. OR 47 – Messing Creek Bridge Project (Calvin)

- The Messing Creek Bridge on OR 47 washed out and needed to be replaced.
- The project objectives were to support emergency response, improve community resilience, and maintain statewide mobility. Messing Creek failed in 2022, causing the roadway to wash out.
- The replacement is a new, fish-passable structure with improved roadway approaches, upgraded striping, environmental benefits, and community benefits. The new culvert includes added fish rocks and root wads to improve water quality and runoff, and it improves driver safety.
- The structure was built on a spread-footing foundation against hard, non-erodible rock, with stem walls and concrete spread footings. A plate structure was fully assembled and then removed; downstream headwalls face west.
- The project provided a strong opportunity to work with multiple utility partners in a rural location and used proactive outreach to ensure transparency with the community.
- Overall, the project enhanced the environment, made Messing Creek safer, and strengthened community connectivity. The project was delivered on time and on budget. Members of the public commented that it was a great presentation, though the detour was long.

Cost and Detour Feedback

- Michael Russell thanked ODOT for the strong coordination and for establishing an effective detour route. He noted ODOT was very responsive and good to work with.

- ODOT spent about **\$4 million** on this project, not \$6.8 million; Calvin was not sure where the higher estimate originated. The project came in under budget.

6. Clatsop County Transportation Update (Terry)

- Clatsop County received a grant that involves many community members. Two task force meetings have been held with DKS so far.
- They are reviewing collected data and are developing a Transportation Safety Action Plan; information is posted on the county's main webpage.
- Final reports from each city will support future federal funding applications.
- The majority of serious crashes occur on state highways, and the highest-impact roadways are mostly state routes.

Other Clatsop County Projects

- The **Westport Bypass** project will create a new two-way road with a multi-use path. They are still awaiting the final grant decision from ODOT and are aiming for a late spring/early summer start. Terry thanked ODOT and Connect Oregon for the opportunity.
- There was also mention of a slide event where the shoulder was lost; the road will be restricted to one-way traffic. Lianne Thompson was congratulated on her new role.
- Stacey asked Terry whether the crash data revealed anything notable. Terry mentioned issues at a key city/county intersection.
- Don Odermott (Tillamook County TSP) asked if there is a correlation between crashes and seasonal or weekend traffic. He noted, in reference to Senator Weber, that her constituents are indeed experiencing crashes.
- Terry reported roughly a **30% increase in crashes during summer**, and that elk collisions account for about **1%** of crashes; elk are not a major share of total crashes.

7. Capital Investment Plan (CIP) – Presentation by Kayla Hootsmans

- Kayla presented on ODOT's Capital Investment Plan (CIP), which is intended to bridge long-range plans with the STIP. This concept was discussed at the ACT Modal Chair meeting and stems from a strategic review following the 2025 legislative session.
- Other states have similar "lessons learned" plans. The goal is to ensure projects come from:
 - Asset data
 - Plans and studies
 - Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) lists

- Criteria are based on technical information and policy. The CIP process is intended to help ODOT better plan and sequence projects and to allow “pausing” if geotechnical issues or public engagement concerns arise.
- Sarah emphasized that the **STIP is not going away**; the CIP is an overlay to improve planning, not a replacement.
- Project types include safety, mobility, accessibility, sustainability, and climate-related work, recognizing that there are many co-benefits between these categories.
- Timeline: feedback is being gathered through 2025 into late 2026, with the goal of finalizing ACT lists from a finalized CIP. The process is still being refined.

Requests to ACT Members

- ACTs are being asked to:
 - Identify 3–5 key needs that Alex has worked with the group on.
 - Place those projects on a list that will elevate them in the workplan.
 - Identify significant data-driven needs, such as culvert washouts or emergency needs.
 - Note opportunities to scale or phase projects.
- Liane wants to review the workplan again and clarify what counts as a **CIP project** versus a **maintenance** project. Kayla indicated pothole-type “fix-it” work will generally remain in maintenance.
- Bill said the main projects in the region are fix-it projects (culverts, roads) that show up on an inventory. He can pull reports to see where failing areas are.
- It may make sense to phase parts of some projects to remain reasonable and manageable.

- At the **next meeting**, the group will dive more deeply into the CIP-related project list.

Identify Needs and Investments of Interest

Per ACT Guidance document:

- ODOT staff will share heat maps and facilitate discussion on significant potential investments needs and/or opportunities for years 5-10 of the CIP
- Identify the top 3-5 needs and investments of highest interest to the ACT, considering:
 - Reasonableness: an engineering solution is possible and affordable
 - Urgency: there is an immediate and clear need for the investment
 - Regional and statewide benefit(s): the investment would have clear benefits that are evident within the ACT and beyond
 - Alignment with OTC investment priorities: investment ties directly to the outcomes (e.g. safety, state of good repair, etc.)
- Identify other needs and investments of interest on the state system (no more than 10), using same considerations
- Refine initial list with ODOT Region support
- Submit to OTC in April/May 2026

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8. Winter Operations – Mark Buffington

- Mark shared that there is about a **71% chance of a La Niña** winter. Recent weather has been very wet, but OR 6 has remained stable so far.
- Typically, movement is not seen until after the rain stops.
- For local winter maintenance, they are recruiting for four positions: two at Manning (one position still short) and two at Warrenton (two positions short), but they will make do with day and night shifts.
- The bump on US 26 has reappeared.
- Bill noted that the current ODOT director has submitted a resignation; there will be an interim director from Parks.
- Commissioner Fournier (Tillamook) thanked Bill and Mark for their work on OR 6, noting heavy water issues and that the county has declared a state of emergency.

9. Roundabouts and Art in the Right of Way

- Senator Weber raised concerns about a proposed roundabout at Aerts Road. Marsha is concerned about a sculpture or pillar being placed in the center and asked whether ODOT approves artwork in roundabout centers.
- Mark explained that ODOT has an **Art in the Right of Way** policy. There are examples in St. Helens and on I-5, but the approval process is complicated and strict.

- There are stringent rules and regulations for approving such installations, especially for safety.
- Senator Weber is concerned about potential crashes caused by objects in the middle of roundabouts.
- Mark noted that most features are engineered to break away, and ODOT will look for that in designs. He promised to vet any proposal carefully. Marsha provided Bill with a copy of the proposed artwork photo.
- The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) recently adopted a **new Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices** with updated requirements.
- The Secure Rules Schools Act passed; it appears Tillamook is the only county in the region that will receive funding under this program.

10. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned.