

**South East Area Commission on Transportation
Regional Partner with
South East Regional Alliance
*Grant, Harney, and Malheur Counties***

BOARD MINUTES
March 29, 2021
VIA TEAMS Meeting

Board Members:

Grant County:
Jim Hamsher
Nick Green
Tory Stinnet

Harney County:
Kenton Dick
Judy Erwin
Kirby Latham
Pete Runnels
Dan Brown

Malheur County:
Dan Joyce
Dan Cummings
Jim Maret

At Large Positions:
Angie Jones, Transit
Adam Brown, Bike/Ped

State/Regional Agencies:

Craig Sipp, ODOT
Sean Maloney, ODOT
Ken Patterson, ODOT
Tom Strandberg, ODOT
Michelle Tragesser, ODOT
Frank Thomas, ODOT

Courtney Warner-Crowell, EORST
Allison Field, RDO, Business Oregon
Neal Christiansen, FLAP Program, ODOT
Katie Parlette, FLAP Coordinator, ODOT
Kayla Hootsman, Legislative Coord, ODOT

GEODC Staff

Judy Moore

Guests:

Kathleen Cathey, Senator Wyden's Office
Todd Fuller, City of Vale
Andy Perry, Anderson Perry & Associates
David Van Etta, Keller & Associate
Justin Walker, Keller & Associates
Larry Meyer, Argus Observer
Barbara Canady, Private Citizen

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Judge Pete Runnels. Self-introductions were made; Quorum present.

Angie Jones made motion to approve minutes of January 27, 2020.

Dan Cummings 2nd the motion

Motion Carried Unanimously

Public and/or Stakeholder Comments:

- None received

Guest Speaker: Legislative Update, Kayla Hootsmans, ODOT Legislative Coordinator:

- Joint Committee on Transportation are moving through bills now
- HB 2139 Rural Veterans Transit Program Bill; codifying pilot program and moving through process – waiting for approval at Joint Ways and Means
- ODOT had budget committee hearings meetings in March and that went well.
- Wildfire funding request will be submitted for ODOT
- DMV and ability to get appointments - backlog is significant in eastern Oregon; HB 2137 is an ODOT efficiency bill – now sitting on house floor waiting for a vote
- HB 2411 has to do with coordination for trenching/laying down broadband fiber; requires level of coordination between ODOT, Business Oregon and broadband providers - provides better coordination for providing lines in areas where needed/cost efficiency
- HB 2546 Study Bill for more sustainable funding for wildlife corridor passages; tasking research office of legislature to work with ODOT, insurance companies and others in order to expand features and decrease wildlife hits
- HB 2674 – diesel emissions – response to previous bill, no consensus on this bill yet

Guest Speaker: Western Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) / Federal Highway Administration, Neal Christensen, Program Manager:

- Update and PP presentation on FLAP program
- Construction oversight and planning services for public access issues
- Joint projects with local, tribal and state agencies with land/roads adjoining federal lands
- (State, local federal) members make up the Committee - decides scope, size and funding for projects
- Technical Advisor Group assists decision makers/committee
- Goal is to maximize funding for access and to preserve assets
- Proposals: In general: look at percentage of traffic using facility/road to access federal lands, priorities of specific agencies involved, funding shares/leverage from partners, delivery schedules, agency capabilities. Contingent on available funding
- Oregon – 10.72% match - cash (non-federal funds), in-kind, materials)
- Anticipating call for projects in a few months

OTC & Region Updates:

Region Program Update – Craig Sipp, ODOT

- OTC Update – meeting every two months; keep in mind when planning projects
- Director Kris Strickler recognized efforts during winter storms
- Troy Costales, Administrator Transportation Safety Division, is retiring in his position and recognized for his efforts in Safety programs with communities and law enforcement
- Wildfire cleanup oversight provided by ODOT; identified 2197 home sites 41,000 trees marked for removal and over 40,000 tons of debris removed to date. In it for the long haul
- Climate office update – looking at adaption, sustainability and climate – STIP cycle, adding a climate lens to project and how elements may fit; including outreach and advisories groups
- Interstate bridge replacement update – Columbia River Crossing Bridge, multi-State project; tentative timelines: design 2024; construction 2025
- Update on Strategic Action Plan: It has been adopted and the focus is on 3 key areas: equity, modern transportation system and sufficient and reliable funding. A focus is broadband access; particularly in rural areas

- 21-24 STIP Funding: Needs outweigh funding. Received an update with a focus on ADA requirements in regards to a settlement agreement with a completion date of 2032. Primarily addresses curb ramps. Focus on continued training to ensure an understanding of requirements. Goal is to complete 26,000 ramps by 2032.
- Federal COVID relief funding allocated to the State and ODOT. 124 million approved for ODOT use; with 45 % (55.8 Million) going to local agencies. Looking at how that will be allocated and funded. More information to come. Remainder of ODOT funds for operations and maintenance and ADA program.
- STIF funding approved for 21-24 funding for additional re-allocated funds; 60 Million towards tolling development and implementation Interstate Bridge project - 30 Million, and ADA program - 60 Million
- Enhanced Highway Discretionary Program – For the 24-27 period, a decision that it will be a statewide program instead of region-wide program; requirement rural areas will get 30 percent of funding.
- Update on ACTs – ACT Chairs met with OTC about engagement and interactions between the ACT's and Commission. Focus on coordination and communication.
- Continuous Improvement Advisory Committee Update: Committee established through HB 2017 to provide quality oversight role to Oregon Transportation Commission. They are looking at core members and augmenting with subject-matter experts in transportation-related topics. Commissioner Sharon Smith is the Chair
- Updated delegation order with OTC to delegate approval to directors - Example: approval for ATV access on highway routes.
- Consent Agenda on IRR80 Sign Project upgrades and funding – 9.5 million. Includes I-5, I-84, project goes from Cascade Locks to Pendleton. 2nd phase from Pendleton to Idaho Border; including I-82
- Increase in traffic; reminder to have patience when traveling through work zones

Small Cities Allotment/Local Projects - Michelle Tragesser, ODOT

- Michelle is now in Mike Barry's position as the local agency liaison with a background in construction, civil engineering, new highway projects and preservation projects
- Strong communication is her focus and hopes to talk to everyone on projects/what concerns are and what's going on. Michelle works in the office in La Grande
- Small Cities Allotments (SCA) - Application process upcoming in next few months for 20-22 cycle.
- Encourage folks to turn in applications for SCA projects. Currently 14 projects in eastern Oregon. COVID-19 funding puts more funding into SCA projects -1.3 million
- Restricted Bridge projects are becoming a priority – next round of application in 2023
- All Roads Transportation Safety (ARTS) program will be announcing projects soon from last year's solicitation.
- "Safe Routes to School" program taking applications every 2 years; allocating 10 million a year to program; 2023 will be awarding \$15 million a year. A good time to start developing projects this year

Current Construction Projects – Sean Maloney, ODOT

- **Local & Upcoming projects:**
 - Burns HB 2017 earmark – worked through pay requests and invoices for work done on streets
 - SCA Extension with City of Dayville, worked with City of John Day for scope clarification and worked with City of Hines for pay requests pay requests
 - 2nd Street project in Ontario is finishing up

- Critical Culvert Upgrades – US 20 & I84 – Construction starts this week
- Malheur County (Vale & Nyssa) ADA curb ramps projects have started; completed by Sept 30th
- I-84 N Huntington Interchange Bridge – overlay & rail upgrade starting in May; completed by July
- Chip seal maintenance projects – US 26, OR 201, US 20 - Vale, Ontario & Nyssa areas– start in May; complete by July

24-27 STIP Development – Ken Patterson , ODOT

- Changes to scoping and process – in part, due to funding redistributions – more funds in active transportation and enhancement
- Will provide briefings and review of projects in upcoming meetings
- Funding allocations are starting to get firmed up with draft lists of projects in May and opportunities to provide input - start scoping for projects between June 2021 through July 2022
- Local bridges will be in next STIP cycle

Regional Solutions – Courtney Crowell

- Regional Solutions has been on pause due this past year due to focus on COVID response and recovery. Now the advisory committees will start up again in April.
- Looking at regional priorities and how this could relate to the recovery effort and funding coming in through the American Rescue Plan.
- Last week, Governor put out a 10-Point Economic Recovery Plan - Identify projects and needs from local level; focus on economic recovery, economic resiliency and infrastructure projects
- The Governor put 40 million in the budget Regional Infrastructure Fund for capital projects. Working through legislature. Encourages everyone to start thinking about projects.
- Boarder Board continues to meet and they have series of bills going through the legislature related to boarder region. . There are grant and loan opportunities through the program. Feel free to contact Courtney for additional information.
- Helping City of John Day move through permitting process and hopefully beyond for their wastewater project
- Business Oregon, Oregon Dept. of Ag, Regional Solutions looking at wheat processing facilities in the SEACT area
- Working on IOF project in Hermiston with Ken Patterson
- Rep Levy and Regional Solutions working on elk depredation issue
- Ongoing work due with multiple agencies to address 2019 and 2020 flooding in Umatilla County
- Reload is making progress and moving forward
- Grassi Mt. Mine continues to move forward
- Wallowa Dam Project – Hopeful to get funding so they can start next year
- Looking at building a meat processing facility in the Industrial Park/Airport in John Day

Tribe/City/County Updates:

City of John Day – Nick Green:

- Two active SCA's – Sent out notice of intent to award on one project and received environmental clearance received to repair 4th Avenue from 2019 flood damage
- Sidewalk improvement projects – construction next summer
- Major renovations in town
- Installed first Rapid Vehicle Charging Station with OTECT – Hwy 395S
- Downtown on Main Street – ½ acre lot - Awarded \$35,000 from Travel Oregon to put in a public restroom, fire pit, on-highway lockup cyclist facility, possibly food trucks
- Open up first Riverfront Park – completed by October of this year

City of Prairie City – Jim Hamsher:

- Finishing up Sewer System project. Already more efficient
- Continue to move forward with Compost Site
- Getting ready to start water project

City of Ontario – Adam Brown:

- Housing has picked up with 9 new homes constructed
- SE 2nd Street work is wrapping up
- Started Engineering on Safe Routes To School (SRTS) project
- SE 5th Avenue Project scope of work approved and should be underway soon
- Approved engineering on two utility extensions
- Working with grant writers to work on funding in order to finish up SE 2nd Street Ave project
- EDA grant for NE 2nd for a design for a total rebuild
- Transportation Plan – getting close to approving the plan
- Working on the Tatar Tot Trail – trying to secure land and work on design – budgeted \$300,000 for the part of the process
- Working on full-street build-out SE 5th Avenue – 170-unit RV park under design and in for final approval
- Issuing permits for 70-unit townhouses on east side

City of Nyssa – Jim Maret:

- Continue working on Reload Facility -
- SCA grant for redoing 3rd and 4th streets
- Curb ramps coming soon
- Dollar General coming to town
- Working on a grant for the Waste Water plant to increase size & looking at Master Plan
- Working on a Parks Master Grant Plan

City of Vale – Todd Fuller (new City Manager)

- Working on curb projects
- SRTS – hope to complete by Sept.
- Working with a local businessman to add a Compositing Site
- Working on funding for a Master Parks Plan
- Applying for a grant through Malheur Co. Economic Development to add restrooms to a kiosk park
- Moving 35 MPH speed limit sign on US20 on the west side

- Dollar General making presence known
- A businessman is looking to add an RV park west of town
- Working on grant funding for a Wastewater Master Plan
- Applied for a grant to improve a lift station

Burns-Paiute Tribe – Kenton Dick:

- Since last meeting processed tribal resolution for closure of most tribal programs due to COVID-19 including transit
- A portion of the CARES Act funding received will be used for the development of a subdivision. The subdivision includes 8 lots with 4 units part of the CARES Act funding. Working with several agencies and organizations to include needed infrastructure, broadband, utilities, street paving, etc.
- CARES Act funding also helped to securing funding to build a new fire station
- Tribal Health Office - 186 tribal members and staff vaccinated
- COVID-19 direct impact to Tribe – sadly, two members died
- Starting today, tribal authority for a partial open. Staff are able to start working in the office. Next Monday the rest of the staff will be able to report to work and resume normal operations; including public transit
- Secured funding through economic development for needed improvements to the Tribal RV Park

City of Burns – Dan Brown:

- Identifying projects for the next go-round of HB 2017 funding
- Moving ahead on Water Master Plan
- Looking at broadband infrastructure projects at the same time as Water Master Plan – 1 stop
- Looking at ODOT's intersection improvement plan for Burns
- A lot of rehabilitation work being done in downtown area
- 100-Unit Hotel project in downtown area soon
- Nearing completion of a Dollar General store

City of Hines – Kirby Latham:

- Completed a SCA project last fall on major bus route
- One more active SCA grant - \$100,000 SCA chip seal overlay project to be completed by end of summer
- Last fall a measure for a fuel tax passed; tax will be implemented April 1st
- The water improvement project continues to move forward, new distribution lines and a new tank will be done by the end of summer
- Potential for new projects with new businesses and housing – City of Burns and County working together to jumpstart it

COAR Grant Update – Postponed

Business:

- NEACT Area Strategy Pilot Project: Pete and Angie have attended the first meeting. More information later as we learn more about the project. One aspect they are looking at is how do we approach transportation to support livability and economic development in our communities. Everyone is welcome to attend meetings.

Membership Review:

- There are a few vacant positions – an attendance sheet will be emailed out so you can see the vacant positions. Please consider recommendations for the vacancies.

Future Guest Speakers:

- State GIS Parks Program – Adam to follow-up

Other Business:

- DMV office closures are difficult for citizens; particularly seniors whom don't do online work. Hybrid-openings to roll-out possibly in May.

Next meeting:

Joint ACT Meeting – May 24th - Cancelled

Meeting Adjourned: 12:27 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy Moore

DRAFT