

SOUTH WEST AREA COMMISSION ON TRANSPORTATION (SWACT) Meeting Minutes - November 14, 2025 Teleconference
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❖ Roll Call ❖

Chair Nikki Messenger called the meeting to order at 10:01 am. Roll was called, and a quorum confirmed. (15 voting members present. V = voting member for this meeting. Quorum = 10 (50% of filled [currently 20] primary membership positions.)

Commission Members and Alternates in Attendance (alphabetical)

Allaway, Julie	Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians (Primary)	V
Boyer, Brant	Douglas County Stakeholder (Primary)	V
Coker, Lynn	Curry County (Primary)	V
Craddock, Rodger	Aviation (Primary)	V
Dolgonas, Dick	Bicycle/Pedestrian (Primary)	V
Dunham, Ralph	Coos County Stakeholder (Alternate)	
Early, Brian	Freight/Rail (primary)	V
Gilbert, Kristi	Douglas County City-At-Large (Primary)	V
Hamblet, Greg	City of Coos Bay (Alternate)	V
Hunter, Chris	ODOT (Primary)	V
Jensen, Matthew	Coquille Indian Tribe (Primary)	V
Kent, Scott	Port (Alternate)	V
Kutch, Ron	Coos County Stakeholder (Primary)	V
Messenger, Nikki	City of Roseburg (Primary)	V
Pederson, Glen	ODOT (Alternate)	
Pryce, Loree	Bicycle/Pedestrian (Alternate)	
Rowe, John	Coos County Stakeholder (Primary)	V
Slater, Paul	Coos County (Primary)	V

ODOT Staff in Attendance

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Baker, Michael | Region 3 Planning Manager |
| 2. Boardman, Jennifer | Region 3 Transit Coordinator |
| 3. Cornutt, Lisa | Region 3 Principal Planner |
| 4. DeWald, Teresa | Region 3 Local Agency Liaison |
| 5. Hootsman, Kayla | Strategic Initiatives Manager |
| 6. Latham, Dan | Region 3 Public Information Officer |
| 7. Neavoll, Darrin | Region 3 Manager |
| 8. Pietz, Amanda | Policy, Data, Analysis Division Administrator |
| 9. Thompson, Sarah | Region 3 Executive Analyst |

Guests in Attendance

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Bleau, Andre | Umpqua Public Transportation District |
| 2. Bleau, Sheryl | Umpqua Public Transportation District |

❖ Public Input ❖

- None

❖ Approval of Minutes ❖

- **Motion made and seconded to approve September 12th, 2025, SWACT Minutes. (Ralph Dunham/Rodger Craddock)**
- Discussion: None.
- *Motion carried.*

❖ Membership Updates ❖

- **Paul Slater has been appointed the Coos County Primary Representative – Paul gave a brief introduction of himself as the Coos County Public Works Director and Road Master, is excited for the opportunity to serve on this commission and looks forward to working with everyone.**
- **Chris Hunter pointed out there are still a lot of vacancies on the ACT. He will be working with Sarah to get an announcement out soon so we can try to fill them.**

❖ Capital Investment Plan ❖

Presentation: Amanda Pietz gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Capital Investment Plan (CIP) which is essentially a 10-year capital plan for projects that will assist in managing ODOT's portfolio. The ACT's role in the CIP is to make recommendations for the prioritization and weighting of goals that will be used to help screen investments, identify needs and investment opportunities that are high interest to the ACT and to comment on the Draft CIP. The first iteration of the CIP is anticipated to be completed in late 2026.

Per the ACT guidance document, ODOT staff will share heat maps and facilitate discussion on significant potential investment needs and/or opportunities for years 5-10 of the CIP. At this time the ACT is being asked to 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 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.)

In addition, identify other needs and investments of interest on the system (no more than 10), using the same considerations. Refine the original list with ODOT region support and submit to OTC in April/May 2026.

Discussion: *Matt Jensen* asked if the CIP is for 5-10 years, how often is it updated? **A:** It will be updated every year, and another year will be added at the end to make it a rolling cycle. Lists from ACT's will likely be solicited every two years. *Chris Hunter* stated that we will come back to the next meeting with ideas from current plans and studies being worked on. We would like to get an idea from the ACT members about what information they would need in order to help inform priority areas and identify projects. At the March meeting, we will identify the projects we want to put forth for potential selection. *Darrin Neavoll* clarified that ODOT will bring 15-20 projects to the January meeting for the ACT to pare down for the March meeting. *Nikki Messenger* asked if these are primarily ODOT facilities, local facilities or programs? **A:** ODOT projects on ODOT facilities primarily and then programs based on ACT priority. Programs targeted for local facilities through competitive grants will still run through their normal processes. *Nikki Messenger* stated that unfortunately safety data does not show up in time to program safety projects; there is usually a two-year gap, so it will be difficult to prioritize safety based on existing data. An example is the recent fatality at Powers. That section shows yellow on the map, when in actuality it should be red. She also wonders if there should be a work group between the January and March meetings to work on this. **A:** ODOT adds fatalities to the maps as soon as they occur, so there is a way to integrate current data with the historical data to get an accurate reflection. *Matt Jensen:* As a Tribe looking to partner with ODOT on bicycle/pedestrian facilities on Cape Arago Highway and looking to apply for grant funding, how does that fit into the CIP project selection process? **A:** If it is a priority for the ACT, then add it to the initial list of priority projects. *Julie Allaway:* Cow Creek Tribe has two projects with ODOT as well that do not yet have funding. Are these projects that would be added to that list as well? **A:** Yes, we should add to the original list before paring down. *Chris Hunter* suggested that after the list is compiled, each jurisdiction can look at it for priority and awareness so we can identify alternate sources of funding going forward. *Nikki Messenger* indicated that if this is 3-5 projects per year for all three counties, it will be a much larger list, especially if pavement preservation is included. She also stated that she firmly believes that preservation is a safety project. If you are dodging potholes, it is a safety concern and it doesn't only happen on the freeway. *Dick Dolgonas:* It seems there is some ignorance on the part of the public and the legislature on what projects are out there and how projects are being picked. This whole process is dependent on receiving more funding. He feels the ACT should have a wider role in the PR process if possible and would like to know if there is a space for that. **A:** Identifying the needs of the area and picking the projects that are of most need even if they don't all get into the plan can help paint the picture. *Matt Jensen:* Echoes Nikki's comment regarding preservation. Not only from a safety standpoint, but also from the standpoint that it is cheaper to preserve roads than to have to replace them if we let them go too far. *Julie Brown:* I got to participate recently with all of the ACT chairs and a lot of them are saying the same thing. How do we get our public leaders and legislators to understand? We do it by prioritizing our area needs and telling the story. The local communities will have more influence on what they see. This CIP process will also give opportunity to get the groundwork done on projects before the money comes in. As money comes in, we can look at lists for the best fit. Julie also likes the idea of a work group.

❖ Connect Oregon ❖

Presentation: Chris Hunter reminded the group that an email went out in October regarding the Connect Oregon program. Applications will open in January. There is \$75 million available in

this round for non-highway programs (port, aviation, rail). We will share additional information as it becomes available.

❖ Region 3 Manager and Budget Updates ❖

Presentation: Darrin Neavoll gave an update on events around the agency, within Region 3 and gave an update on the Budget.

Agency Updates:

Director Strickler is leaving ODOT the first of the year. Lisa Sumption, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Director, has been appointed as interim Director while the Governor works with the OTC to identify a permanent director.

OTC Updates:

The OTC meeting was held yesterday (11/13/2025)

- Major Projects Financing Plan
- Abernethy Bridge Updates
- Center Street Bridge (Salem) Amendment – added \$100 million
- 2025-2027 Bonding update
- Information update on the OHP and the TSAP
- CIAC update on revamp based on requirements of the funding bill

Julie Brown stepped in and first apologized to the ACT, as she has been assigned as the ACT/OTC liaison and has missed many meetings due to the legislative session. She went on to discuss a few of the items from Darrin's update. One of the changes in the funding bill, was that the Governor is now in charge of hiring/firing the ODOT Director. The OTC is committed to assisting with that process to ensure a smooth transition. Julie wanted to reiterate to the group that there is a lot of talent in ODOT, and they have gone through a lot through the last legislative session regarding accountability and being told that ODOT doesn't do its job. She appreciates the support from the ACTs.

Region Updates:

Region 3 received 350 hours in OSP overtime funds to address roadway departures on major highways. In addition, Winter Pass funding was allotted to Region 3 for the High Cascades for chain enforcement (new this year).

HB3991 Implementation/Impacts:

HB3991 passed legislation and will provide ODOT resources to avoid layoffs, increase local funding 30%, provide a temporary boost to public transportation funding, make major policy changes to how we fund transportation and how we tax trucks and improve accountability for outcomes through more audits and oversight.

All funds will go to operations and maintenance. Layoffs have been rescinded which will prevent deep reductions in O&M spending. Recruiting and hiring have been prioritized toward vacant maintenance positions to ensure effective winter operations. Second wave will focus on DMV and other critical vacancies across the agency, while some positions will remain vacant. Title and registration fee increases will begin in December as well as the increase in gas tax. Diesel will be

taxed as a motor fuel beginning in July 2029. Payroll tax increases from 0.1% to 0.2% on January 1, 2026, and will sunset and revert back to 0.1% on January 1, 2028.

Referendum:

- Secretary of State Elections Division approved the circulation of signature sheets on Wednesday
- Organizers and volunteers have until Dec. 30th to submit roughly 78,000 signatures
- Secretary of State Elections Division has 30 days to review and approve signatures after submitted
- If successful the bill funding(gas tax, payroll tax, registration and title fees) would stop until the outcome of the Nov. 2026 vote.

Discussion: *Nikki Messenger* asked if the signatures are turned in on December 30th, is the intent then to stop the January implementation? **A:** They have to implement the bill until it gets stopped by the process. *Chris Hunter* stated as he understands it, the Road User Charge and other pieces of the bill will still be implemented, just the taxes and fee increases will be referred to the voters.

❖ Winter Preparation Updates ❖

Presentation: Glen Pederson gave a status update on Winter Preparation and staffing levels in Region 3. Of 35 vacant permanent positions we are recruiting 21 and of 41 temporary positions, we are recruiting all 41. For District 7 (Coos, Curry and Douglas Counties), we are hiring 4 full time and one 50/50 in addition to 7 FPA (Fire and Ice) employees and 2 temporary winter help employees. ODOT partners with the Coos, Curry and Douglas Fire Protection Agencies on the Fire and Ice program to keep workers employed year-round, working fire protection in the summers and plowing for ODOT in the winters. Partnerships, communication and coordination with the FPA's, OSP and other local agencies ensure successful operations for winter maintenance.

Discussion: None

Nikki Messenger moved the meeting to the next topic and informed the group she would have to leave at 11:30; Brant Boyer (Vice-Chair) will run the remainder of the meeting.

❖ Region 3 Construction Updates ❖

Presentation: Dan Latham gave an update on projects currently under construction in Coos, Curry and Douglas County. There are 10 projects that are in, will be or have recently completed construction for Summer/Fall 2025.

1. Reedsport Pedestrian Crossing – the first project initiated and funded with ODOT's Vulnerable User Crash Response Program installs push button pedestrian beacon and signs at Juniper Street. Expected completion is Fall 2025.
2. Chandler Bridge – repaints the bridge, replaces tower ladders and platforms on OR241 at MP 3.5. This is a two-year project that started this summer and continues until fall 2026.

3. US101 to Cedar Point Road – will pave nearly 10 miles of OR42, add rumble strips and replace several culverts. This is a two-year project that started this spring and will continue until fall 2026.
4. Bearhead Mountain – replaces a culvert under US101 at MP281.9 in difficult terrain. US101 will close for one weekend for rapid replacement of the culvert. Expected completion is October 2025.
5. US101 MP303 – has a failed culvert that is too deep to dig out so the project will tunnel in from the side to replace it with a new pipe that is 48” wide and 370’ long. Construction started in September and is expected to be completed by November 2025.
6. Arizona Slide Repair - will construct a new vertical shaft and horizontal drains. This work started in late March and will continue through Fall 2026. This work will not impact the roadway.
7. Lookingglass Creek to Interstate 5 – paves OR42 from Winston west to I-5, adds traffic signal and other safety features, and adds or replaces ADA sidewalk ramps. This two-year project started in February. The first year will be concrete work and the second year will be paving. The anticipated completion for this work is September 2026.
8. Southern Oregon Wrong Way Driver Mitigation – is a project to add features that alert drivers they are entering interchange off-ramps from the wrong direction. This work is taking place on all I-5 off-ramps from the California border to Curtin (MP 1-163) and is expected to be completed by January 2026.
9. ADA Curb Ramps – are being built in four communities; Brookings, Gold Beach, Myrtle Point and Roseburg. This work is anticipated to be completed by Summer 2026.
10. Stewart Park Drive Bridge – paints the 1933 bridge, repairs steel truss, replaces the pedestrian walkway and adds new handrail. Construction is anticipated to be completed by November 2025.

Discussion: Brant Boyer asked who is responsible for paying for the power on signals and lighting on the highways? **A:** Sometimes there are agreements with the jurisdictions where they pay and sometimes it is ODOT’s responsibility to maintain the equipment. **Loree Pryce** asked how the vertical drain on the Arizona project mitigates landslides. **A:** The vertical shaft is for water collection and also has horizontal drains coming out of it to redirect water back into the hillside toward the beach. **Greg Hamblet** inquired whether there has been a start date determined for the North Bend/Coos Bay curb ramp project. He spoke with Josh previously and was under the impression that this project would start in about a month but hadn’t heard any updates. **A:** We don’t have an update yet but will find out and get back to you.

❖ NOA’s and Adjournment ❖

Chris Hunter asked the group to please send thoughts and ideas for CIP lists and priorities and be prepared for a robust conversation at the January meeting.

Chris Hunter reiterated there are a lot of vacant positions on the ACT. Please reach out to anyone you know that might be interested and have them get ahold of him or Sarah.

Brant Boyer adjourned the meeting at 11:5 a.m.

Next SWACT Meeting: Friday, January 9, 2026, at 10 am. Meeting will be via teleconference.