

May 7, 2026
9 a.m.-noon
3012 Island Ave.
La Grande, OR
In-Person and virtual/Teams

NEACT Board Meeting Minutes

Members and Alternates present:

Barry Murphy, Byron Smith, Aaron Palmquist, Tim Patton, Tom Fellows, Tim Simons, Larry Wightman, Dani Schulte, Mavis Hartz, Kane Lester, Noodle Perkins, Justin Northern, Darla Linker, Commissioner Dan Dorrان, Commissioner Lisa Collier, Commissioner Michelle Kaseberg, Commissioner Jeff Wenholtz.

Guests present:

Andy Perry, Brian McDowell, Kim Curley, Sandra Alexander, Andy Lindsey, Kari Carper, Jack Howard, Tim Helbig, Jared Tesch, John Doherty, Wade Rynearson, Chuck Larsen, Melinda Miller.

ODOT Staff:

Ken Patterson, Sean Maloney, Michelle Owen, Angie Jones, Vicki Moles, Jane Kerr, Sarah Morris, Marlow Stanton, Teresa Peninger.

Opening Meeting:

- 9:01 a.m. Commissioner Dan Doran called the meeting to order.
- Roll call of voting members – Quorum present .
- Announcements: N/A.
- January Minutes: Motion made by Tom Fellows to approve, seconded by Dani Schulte. Approved.

Public and/or Shareholders Comments:

- Commissioner Lisa Collier attended the ACT chair meeting in Corvallis and reported that discussions focused on lack of funding and prioritizing the upkeep and maintenance of existing infrastructure rather than developing new infrastructure. The committee is also exploring grant ideas and other funding opportunities to increase available funds. Collaboration was also a topic of discussion. NEACT was recognized as an excellent example of successful communication and strong working relationships.
- Commissioner Dan Doran is serving on the advisory team for the Governor’s “Rebuilding Our Transportation Vision” team. A group formed by the Governor to address structural changes that may need to be made at the leadership level within the Oregon Department of Transportation. Commissioner Doran attended the first

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meeting focused on identifying and proposing meaningful structural changes. He expressed optimism that hard work and collaboration will produce meaningful change.

- Dani Schulte-Umatilla Tribes proposed topic for upcoming meeting - “Why do we allow on-road ATVs?”

Presentations:

- Speed Zone Investigations: Marlow Stanton, ODOT Region 5 Traffic Engineer
- Road Usage Charge Program Update: Chuck Larsen, ODOT Manager of Innovative Systems

Region Updates – Ken Patterson, Region 5, ODOT

- Region 5 Crews have been completing their spring safety training and gearing up for Safety Breaks.
- Chip seal work will begin in Union County and Baker County, dependent on available funding.
- Interviews are underway and nearing completion for the “High School to Highway” positions, a federally funded Section 504(c) program. Oregon Department of Transportation is hiring recent high school graduates into TMS1 roles. Region 5 has 10 positions open across multiple locations: D12 Bridge, Region 5 Striping, Burns, John Day, Vale, Meacham, Pendleton, Hermiston, Baker, Enterprise, and La Grande.
- Discussions regarding broadband use within the right of way continue to develop. The Department of Justice has confirmed that broadband is not classified as a utility and is therefore required to pay for right-of-way permits and installations. This clarification is being used to guide work on federal broadband grant requirements and to establish clear rules regarding non-transportation use of funds and project eligibility.
- A winter windstorm along North Highway-OR3 and in the Tollgate area-OR204 resulted in 60+ downed trees. Federal Highway Administration emergency funding was utilized for cleanup and repairs. Logs from fallen trees have been salvaged, with potential for donation.
- Umatilla County Commissioner Dan Doran is representing Northeast Oregon on the Governor’s vision group.
- The Oregon Transportation Commission meeting in Corvallis
 - Advisory Committee added 20 additional projects under the program, with ongoing discussions focused on improving project visibility and reporting to the legislature.
 - Right of way (ROW) cleanup funding and responsibility assignments are being addressed to clarify roles and financial obligations.

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- Aggregate source production is facing challenges of designating sources and production guidelines, working on developing guidelines that are efficient and practical for sand and rock field operations.
- ACTS priorities are now formal presentations-NEACTS and SEACTS projects are in presentation.

Local Projects – Michelle Owen, ODOT

- Small City Allotment Program
 - The program received 23 applications in Region 5, typically 5-6 grants are awarded in the Region.
- HB 2017 projects
 - Columbia Development Authority Road is under construction.
 - Hermiston N1st Place project is nearing completion.
- Federal Lands Access Program application period is open for projects until June 21.
- Local Bridge projects
 - Holbrook, Caudle Lane and city of Union projects are in design.
 - Thorn Hollow Bridge was completed at the end of April.

Current Construction Projects – Sean Maloney, Area Manager ODOT

- Current and upcoming projects for 2026 include:
 - [Tower Road Interchange Bridge over I-84](#); completed 7/31/2026.
 - [I-84: Eastern Oregon Durable Striping](#); starting 6/11/2026.
 - [I-84: Rieth Interchange and Umatilla River Bridges](#)*.
 - 3 ADA projects underway in Hermiston, North Powder and Pendleton
 - OR 11 chip seal.
 - [I-84: Bridges over North Spruce Street \(La Grande\)](#)* bidding in progress.
 - [Pole Line Lane Rail Crossing \(Haines\)](#); paved this week and highway opened.
 - [I-84: Farewell Bend - N. Fork Jacobsen Gulch](#).
 - [OR 86: Guardrail project](#); in progress.
 - [I-84: Roadway Illumination Project](#); starting 6/8/2026.

* These two projects will be constructing crossovers for highway traffic in 2026 with construction in 2027

City/County/Tribal/Transit Updates – City/County/Tribal/Transit Representatives

City updates

- Tim Simons, Pendleton – ADA curb ramp projects are finishing up. Grinding and overlay work throughout town is currently underway. Coordinating with Michelle Owen on the Goad Road project, and the city is looking into potential bridge match funding opportunities through FEMA funding.

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- Mavis Hartz, from the bike program reports a significant increase in bicycle activity with the recent nice weather, also a growing concern regarding e-bike safety due to the number of injuries and accidents. A bike tour is planned in June, and the community conversation on the taxation of bicycles continues.
- Darla Linker, Stanfield – small city allotment for Bumblebee project underway.

County updates

- Umatilla County – Tom Fellows reports that the redecking of the Edwards Road bridge in Hermiston went well and is complete.
- Wallowa County – Larry Wightman reports they are finishing up spring blading and prepping the roads for chip seal and pothole patching work. Commissioner Lisa Collier shared that the county is anticipating and rethinking congestion at the foot of Wallowa Lake due to new parking fees at Wallowa Lake State Park.
- Morrow County – Commissioner Jeff Wenholz reports that spring blading and prepping for paving are in full swing.
- Baker County – Noodle Perkins shared that the county is reducing chip seal work and focusing on shoulder work, culvert maintenance, and partnering with a mining company to inspect and repair load rated bridges in the area that are overdue on inspections.
- Union County Transit Rep – Kane Lester shared that it is currently a busy grant writing season. Union county has applied for an E1 bus and 5310 grants are currently in progress.

ODOT Public Transportation

- Angie Jones reports that the I-84 bus project from Boise to Pasco is performing well with strong participation numbers leading to good potential for a grant extension with ODOT.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

Sean Maloney proposed delaying the next meeting by one week, a poll moved the next meeting scheduled for July 9th, 2026.

Respectfully submitted, Vicki Moles, R5 Community Affairs Specialist.