

Work Plan for the South East Area on Transportation

Dates Covered: 2023-2025

Introduction – Purpose

Area Commissions on Transportation (ACT) offer venues to discuss regional transportation issues and provide input to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) to help in their decisions. Per the OTC [Policy on Formation and Operation of ACTs](#), each ACT is expected to prepare a two-year Work Plan that identifies their areas of interest and priorities. Doing so is intended to help focus the work of each ACT and clarify how the group will engage and inform regional and statewide issues. The Work Plan is pre-populated with statewide items that the OTC and ODOT have identified will benefit from ACT engagement. Within this Work Plan the ACT should identify the topics to be covered over the next two years, recognizing things will arise that will require ACT attention that are not yet anticipated. Any identified topic should have a transportation nexus and be tailored to the ACTs ability to contribute or influence.

ACT Chair

Malheur County Judge Dan Joyce, ACT Co-Chair

Harney County Judge Bill Hart, ACT Co-Chair

Interest Areas and Priorities

Preserve and maintain our transportation needs.

The SEACT realizes its responsibility to support our area as a destination for travelers and a pass through for travelers headed to western Oregon and other states. The Region transportation system supports farm to processing, processing to market, market to consumer, tourism, and recreation. The inclement weather and fires place an extra burden on our transportation system which directly affects our basic needs of farm to market transportation, supplies and goods availability, food, fuel, medical supplies, and other basic necessities.

Two-Year Goals and Initiatives

The SEACT will:

- provide a forum for local government agencies and the private sector to discuss, understand, and coordinate long-range transportation issues affecting the southeast Oregon region.

- collaborate with local governments, appropriate stakeholders, and ODOT on the development process and application of criteria for determining transportation infrastructure, capital investments, and project prioritization in the southeast Oregon region.
- make recommendations to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) on priorities for state transportation infrastructure and capital investments through the development of an implementation strategy. This will be based on staff recommendations through technical committees and appropriate state and local transportation plans.
- advocate southeast Oregon regional transportation issues to the public, neighboring regions, area legislators, and other interested organizations.
- advise the OTC on state and regional policies affecting the southeast Oregon region's transportation system.
- provide a forum for communicating, learning, and understanding transportation issues as they affect the area's economic opportunities and livability.
- review Transportation System Plan updates, as needed.
- perform ODOT modernization project reviews.
- review the status and content of current and future STIP projects in Malheur, Harney and Grant counties and the Burns Paiute Tribal Government.
- review and make recommendations regarding Connect/Oregon project proposals.
- provide continued education on transportation funding, programs, and processes as they relate to the SEACT area.
- prioritize area modernization project recommendations for the Development STIP and Construction STIP based on state and local transportation plans related to the SEACT area.
- make recommendations to ODOT regarding special funding opportunities and programs.
- communicate and coordinate regional priorities with other organizations, including the following:
 - Other ODOT Regions and ACTs
 - Governor's Regional Solutions Team
 - Regional Partnerships and Regional Investment Boards
 - ODOT advisory committees
- consider all modes and aspects of the transportation system in formulating recommendations, taking into account the provision of elements and connections between air, marine, rail, highway, trucking, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- provide documentation to the OTC of the public process and resulting recommendations forwarded by the SEACT, including alternative solutions and outcomes of decisions.

- provide a report to the Oregon Transportation Commission at least once every two years.

Goal 1

Communicate to the public and the Oregon Transportation Commission the continuing challenges of maintaining and operating the SEACT transportation network in a time of uncertain funding. This is an ongoing effort with the knowledge that funding opportunities, known and unknown, will be explored as they become available.

Goal 2

With the known funding hurdles, the SEACT will champion our area legislators and the OTC on the realization of the critical importance of our region's transportation network on our livelihood and economic stability. This role began in 2023 knowing that our challenges begin now and will last for a minimum of two years.

Goal 3

Highlight and prioritize the need for real time maintenance and preservation of regional transportation assets. This is a daily and ongoing goal of all SEACT parties.

Goal 4

Open and welcome the opportunity to participate in pilot projects and innovative solutions to challenges. Be diligent in identifying projects, funding, and processes that become available at state and federal levels.

SEACT Meeting Topic Plan

The SEACT meets the last Thursday of every odd month. Meetings start at 11:00am Mountain Time and typically last three hours. Presentations are scheduled by topic experts as they become available.

The standard agenda includes:

- Call to Order; Introductions
- Public Comments
- Regional Updates
 - IIJA/ACT/OTC & Region Updates
 - Small Cities Allotment/Local Projects
 - Transit Update
 - 24-27 STIP Development
 - Regional Solutions Team Projects
 - City/Tribal Updates (round table discussion)
- Presentations
- Business
 - ACT Work Plan Development

The minimum list for 2023-2025 includes:

- 2027-2030 STIP development
 - May-June 2023: This phase will focus on introducing the public to the STIP and the funding constraints for the 2027-2030 STIP. ODOT is seeking ACT input on funding priorities.
 - August-October 2023: This phase will focus on seeking input on the funding scenarios.
- Connect Oregon
 - Likely early – mid 2024
- Oregon Highway Plan
 - ACT engagement in this plan update to begin in 2024
- Rail Plan
 - ACT engagement in this plan update in 2024
- Transportation Safety Action Plan
 - Next update on this plan to begin in late 2024
- Issues of statewide interest (e.g. revenue and funding discussions, legislation, etc.)
- Identify regional funding needs and priorities
- Seek support for legislative funding requests
- Equity and transportation
 - Engage diverse voices
 - Consider equity in transportation plans, projects, and processes

Reference: OTC ACT Formation Policy

https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Get-Involved/ACT/OTC_ACTpolicy.pdf