

## Meeting Notes

**COTOP  
Technical Committee Meeting  
November 30, 2012  
9-11:30am  
Housing Works Community Room, 405 SW 6<sup>th</sup> St., Redmond**

---

### **Attendees:**

Karen Swirsky (DLCD)  
James Lewis (City of Redmond)  
Peter Russell (Deschutes County)  
Patrick Hanenkrat (City of Metolius)  
Eric Porter (City of Sisters)  
Joni Bramlett (ODOT)  
Jeff Monson (Commute Options)  
Tyler Deke (Bend MPO)  
Joe Bessman  
Karen Friend (CET)  
Carol Fulkerson (COCA)  
Scott Edelman (City of Prineville)

### **Staff:**

Scott Aycock and Tamara Geiger (Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council)  
Scott Chapman, Oren Eshel and Paul Lutey (Nelson/Nygaard)

### **Introductions**

The meeting began with a brief overview of the goal of the project: to create a long-term plan to help identify cost-effective investments that meet 2030 intercommunity trip demand Central Oregon. Emphasis is placed on alternative investments (i.e. public transit, longterm land use policies, carpool, vanpool) because the region is unlikely to be able to afford all planned transportation infrastructure improvements (large and expensive infrastructure improvements). Jeff Monson commented that the group should make an effort to avoid giving the community the impression that these projects were chosen just because we don't have the money to do big projects. Scott C. emphasized the message of alternative things, not lesser things.

Scott A. mentioned that the public involvement for the project would probably be one community meeting for the tri-counties as a whole.

### **Review Project Goals**

Scott announced that Jim Bryant (ODOT) accepted the extension request for the COTOP project, now due May 2013 (possibly June if needed). He also reviewed the desired outcome of providing a data-driven framework for making transportation project decisions.

- Informing transportation investment decisions
- Multimodal focus
- Updated survey results

### **Project Methodology**

- Definition of Baseline

The baseline conditions for this project include current highway conditions plus already financially-committed highway projects plus current levels of transit and TDM for the year 2030. Only state highways are included because they have easily comparable data available, county roads (such as those connecting Prineville and Bend) are not included.

- Analysis scenarios/packages
- Key output measures
- Demand estimates methodology

### **Baseline Conditions**

Even projected out to 2030, Travel Demand is not forecast to be very high and congestion is not a major concern. There are pinch points on certain corridors, but not for any whole corridor. Peter Russell suggested adding the number of lanes in each corridor onto the Travel Demand tables. He stated that about 1800 vehicles/lane is capacity and so knowing the number of lanes will help determine which corridors are at least nearing capacity.

### **Action Item: Add number of lanes to the Travel Demand tables**

- Multimodal
- By corridor

The consultants described that Culver-Metolius is overstated (Daily Intercommunity Share of Corridor column) because the TAZs are significantly larger than the communities and so the numbers represent travel in an area much larger than Culver and Metolius. Despite this, the corridor still shows a high volume of specific trips. Scott A. commented that members of those communities may make more trips because they don't have as many services available within their community. Patrick Hanenkrat commented that its not unusual for him to travel to Madras 3x/day.

### **Action Item: Clarify TAZ area for Culver/Metolius OR 361 Corridor.**

Some TAC members questioned the hour used for the PM Peak, which is 4-5pm in this case and cannot be changed. Karen stated that her understanding of the slightly early PM Peak was to capture school trips (school gets out about 3:30pm); however, it was discussed as unlikely that there are very many intercommunity school trips.

Sisters-RDM and Redmond-Madras (Terrebonne in between) have the most significant potential for future congestion in 2030, not Bend-Redmond as may be expected. Jeff Monson requested the current data in order to compare the growth, but Scott explained that the baseline for the project is 2030 and so current data is not relevant. Oren looked it up and stated that the average growth across the corridors 2012-2030 is 54% (2-3% annually).

Karen stated the general take-home message from the 2030 Baseline data: the need for increased capacity (due to congestion) will not drive the alternative investments identified in this project.

The Baseline Conditions report followed with a description of Commute Options and their TDM programs (Drive Less Connect, Vanpool program) to identify a method to determine a baseline number that could be forecast for 2030. Jeff Monson explained that Central Oregon is the only region in Oregon with a rewards program for Drive Less Connect and that the rewards program makes it outperform urban areas (per capita). Scott A. commented that it is hard to know how many people are currently carpooling/telecommuting or working a compressed work week even with the program and the rewards because there is no data. Drive Less Connect keeps track but only for the people who have signed up for the program and it focuses mainly on work travel. It is very difficult to determine a baseline on a self-reporting mechanism. Jeff hopes to expand the program beyond existing participating employers and to include non-work trips as well.

**Action Item: Ensure that ‘Reward’ is the descriptor used in the Drive Less Connect program, not Incentive.**

James suggested looking at the program’s impact for reducing the number of vehicles on the road. Peter Russell questioned whether enough people could participate to remove a significant number of vehicles and improve pinch points of the corridors. Scott A. responded that that concept was the original point of the project – to invest in projects that improve livability, access, and to make a bottom line financial case (are cheaper than traditional infrastructure investment).

Scott C. requested that the group focus on identifying which projects should be brought in and out of consideration. Peter Russell recommended removing any unfunded projects from consideration. Scott A. explained that the project is only considering projects that are financially committed as part of the baseline, but that they are trying to figure out how to analyze proposed highway projects.

**Identify available investments for each corridor**

The TAC suggested adding the Burgess/Wickiup Jct. project to the financially committed projects on the Bend-La Pine corridor.

**Action Item: Add Burgess/Wickiup Jct. to the financially committed projects list**

- Multimodal options

The consultants ran the team through different types of multi-modal investments and their effectiveness on reducing the number of SOVs. These alternatives include: intercity transit, vanpool, commuter rail, and pricing (taxes, toll roads, parking fees, etc).

Land use policy: Joni suggested considering the addition of a bus shelter as an inexpensive improvement to any financially committed road projects.

Intercity transit: Scott C. posited a question: What will make people change from SOV travel? He proposed more convenient frequency of transit service and ease of service. However, the long distances separating the Central Oregon communities present a double-edged sword. While the Community Connector may be more convenient for people to ride, it may also be more expensive to run.

Joni asked what would be the improvement investment for the corridors that already have existing transit service. Suggestions for improvements included: frequency of service, longer hours, days/week, shelters, WiFi to get choice riders, real-time information, outreach and marketing. Scott shared that while fares cannot be used as match, group pass programs can and they present a double benefit (people get a discount and COIC can use dollars for match).

Commuter Rail: The price tag of commuter rail should rule it out for Central Oregon; however it will be analyzed as per ODOT.

Vanpool: Vanpools were presented as another multi-modal option that serve more choice riders (not a traditionally transit-dependent market). Jeff corrected some language used in the description of the existing vanpool program – instead of guaranteed ride (in case of emergency), should be described as an emergency ride.

**Action Item: Change language from guaranteed ride to EMERGENCY ride.**

Scott C. asked if the state provides vans for vanpools and if the region needs a fleet of vans to make it easier to distribute them. Jeff explained that the statewide TDM includes statewide vanpool planning. Pat asked if there is any vanpool activity in Jefferson County since he has never seen any marketing about it. Jeff explained that specific businesses are targeted to do outreach to their employees.

Considerations for increasing vanpool include Park & Ride Lots and increasing rewards program.

Pricing: Scott A. described the tactics used to make it more expensive to drive a car and motivate people to choose alternative modes of transportation. For example, while Central Oregon probably wouldn't pass a regional VMT tax independently, COTOP could analyze the impacts of a statewide VMT tax and, if it makes sense, state that C.O. supports a statewide tax. Outcomes of the project could allow participation in the political process.

Other TDM Options: Jeff suggested infrastructure improvements for walking and biking that could remove congestion from the first intersection. Joe (Kittelson) shared that in the TRIP 97 project, they are looking at moving the cargo trucks onto rails rather than commuters. This solution would take advantage of existing infrastructure, save maintenance cost, and reduce greenhouse gases.

The TAC questioned the pertinence of many of the Characteristics of Effectiveness Level to Central Oregon (for example, referencing HOV lanes, which we don't have). Joni encouraged revising the presentation of data to speak more to Central Oregon and the specific needs here. Scott stressed the importance of clearly stating that this is background information. It may not all be applicable to Central Oregon, but it is a resource to use to determine which situations are best suited for which transportation modes. Peter Russell described it as a tool box, from which we can choose which tools to use. Jeff suggested also considering a high cost of gas as increasing/decreasing the effectiveness of different modes, but Scott explained that because cost of gas is not under local control it should not be included.

**Action Item: Include a description of the characteristics and their reason for being included as an Appendix to the document. Cost of gas may also be referenced as an influence (without analyzing the relationship).**

- Fit with corridor conditions

Scott asked for specific improvements corridor to corridor. Jeff responded that it may not be necessary, since there are not many corridor specific differences in our area. Scott A. used the map of major employment locations as an example, since it clearly shows that employment is not distributed evenly across the region. He suggested that higher population and more businesses might lend to transit, and vanpool may serve specific employment centers.

Joni suggested also considering any knowledge of new businesses or housing developments that may need to be served in the future. Scott A. recommended considering the employers with transportation in mind, some employment does not lend well to transit. Also need to consider keeping the Community Connector trips direct because people do not like it when time is added to their commutes (and 3 or more stops requires providing complementary para-transit service for the whole corridor). Karen and Scott explained that the purpose of the Community Connector is to be efficient, not the same as for local trips.

- Desired investments
- Support scenario/package development

### **Next Steps**

Fixed-route will most likely be in Redmond by 2030, and Karen suggested in Prineville as well. Joni and Karen explain that fixed-route could be almost cost-neutral in Redmond (low cost for service (\$3/ride on fixed-route) balanced by high cost for paratransit (\$20/ride)).

The Enhance It/STIP process could increase the number of projects that are financially committed. Those that were submitted to the project should be denoted.

**Action Item: Denote projects submitted to Enhance It process as potentially financially committed.**

Some TAC members questioned the selection of certain 1<sup>st</sup> intersections: should be J Street in Madras and 1<sup>st</sup> street in La Pine – the current intersections are too far out of town resulting in underestimation of VMT impacts. Also, noted that the 80 million second phase of Wickiup should be removed from consideration.

**Action Item: Review selection of first intersection in Madras and La Pine.**

**Action Item: Remove \$80 million 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of Wickiup Junction from Bend-La Pine corridor.**

Jeff brought up an issue of the timeline of the project in relation to COACT deciding on STIP submissions. He suggested that COACT should have COTOP's list of priority project list before making decisions. Joni explained that COACT's 150% list is supposed to be complete in December but would probably not be done until Spring and final decisions are not made until October. COTOP will have an opportunity to present findings before decisions are made.

Timeline: Cost analysis (February) including feedback from the technical committee, and additional analysis (public health, etc) will be considered. Findings to be presented to COACT and the COIC Board to discuss steps and feasibility issues. Stakeholder and public engagement is planned for April/May.

- Scenario development and analysis
- TAC Reviews

Post meeting, additional TAC Feedback:

Peter Russell: Per the recently adopted Deschutes County TSP, Peter Russell made the following suggestions for changes to Appendix A of COTOP Tech Memo #2.

Segment 3b, US 97, Madras-Redmond: **Add** Grade separation at Lower Bridge Way (Terrebonne), \$21 M

Segment 5b, US 97, Bend to La Pine: **Delete** Grade separation at Wickiup Junction (Burgess Rd), Phase II, \$80 M

Segment 5b, US 97, Bend to La Pine: Wickiup Junction Phase I in Deschutes County Jurisdiction AND Wickiup Overpass Project in La Pine jurisdiction are describing the SAME project.

Segment 8b, US 20, Bend to Sisters: **Delete** US 20/Old Bend RDM Hwy grade separation, \$26.5M is not in the list of planned projects.

Adjustments have been made to Appendix A per this information.