

## 1/14/16 Governor's Transportation Vision Panel: Community Feedback

### Bottlenecks: What do you see as the major challenges in this region?

Matt Wiederholt (Prineville Railway) suggested that our region get double stack containers. He believes that having a container yard would help our community become more competitive in the railway business. He expressed that low tunnels throughout Oregon that are not tall enough for the double stacks to pass through are a major hurdle to this idea.

Charlie Every (Trucking Rep.) stated that highway 97 all of the way up into Washington isn't functional enough. His belief is that not having enough passing lanes is a major contributor to bottleneck in Oregon. His solution would be 4 lanes on 97 from state line to state line.

Ken Mulenex (La Pine) agreed with Charlie Every that it is imperative that attention be given to a four lane pathway, specifically from Sunriver down to La Pine.

Bob O'Neal (Crook Co.) stated that sight issues are a reason for bottleneck. It is his belief that highway 97 has severe vertical sight issues. He supports the idea of expanding to four lanes as well for this reason.

George Endicott (Redmond) added that we should look at a road as a corridor, as with the Trip 97 process.

Anne Graham (Redmond) raised attention to the congestion caused by commuters from Bend to Redmond and vice versa. She asked if there is a way to promote job swapping between those commuters so that local jobs are being worked by those who are living within that community?

Bob Bryant (ODOT) stated that there is evidence that making investments in the highway 97 corridor that enables higher volumes of traffic can help with statewide bottleneck and provide redundancy to I-5.

### Is there a nexus between transit and congestion in your region?

Andrew Spreadborough (COIC/CET) stated that congestion is important but that it is not the main transit issues he sees in this region. He sees the needs of transit being providing access to jobs, and education, specifically in rural areas where access is an issue.

John Condon (OSU Cascades) added to this by discussing the non-traditional students that the OSUCascades Campus attracts. Many do not live on or near campus due to jobs, families, etc. OSU-Cascades sees opportunity in budgeting by limiting parking space in order to clear room for more facilities. Access to reliable means of transit plays an important role in this goal.

What are our region's major economic drivers in transportation?

Alan Unger (Redmond) expressed that in Deschutes Co, recreation is a major economic driver and in Jefferson Co. it is agriculture.

Wayne Fording (Jefferson Co.) stated that because of the agricultural nature of Jefferson County's economy, getting goods out of the county is essential and that getting water to the county is an issue.

Alan Unger (Redmond) responded to this by stating that lack of containers/a container yard contributes to the issues discussed by Wayne Fording.

Scott Aycock (COIC) stated that our workforce is a key issue for the local economy, and other regions have identified this as their #1 issue as well. He said that, while there are strengths to our existing workforce, there are obvious gaps in the qualification/quality of the workforce for certain types of jobs. He believes that attracting a greater workforce is dependent, in part, on investing in transportation and education.

Andrew Spreadborough (COIC) added that access to transportation-getting people to their jobs-will help to improve workforce quality.

Mike Hollern (Regional Solutions) stated that it is important to recognize an economic shift in our region, that being the rise of the creative class. What can our region do to attract the type of employees that employers want?

Recreation was discussed again as a major economic driver in our region. The idea of "you can't play if you can't get here" was discussed as a reason for investing in improvements to transportation in Central Oregon.

Kahseuss Jackson (Confederate Tribe of Warm Springs) stated that Warm Springs has the economic potential to attract more tourism, being an important stop along a major travel route. He stated that their concern regarding transportation is fast moving traffic through their corridor. He believes that Warm Springs should create a safer corridor and find ways to attract more tourists from this high traffic area.

George Endicott (Redmond) identified not having access to an interstate as an issue due to a lack of access to trade.

What can we do in the short term to address our region's issues?

It was discussed that an inland port is important for us to compete for affordable transportation

Moving forward on a legislative funding package was also discussed as a short term solution

Gary Farnsworth (ODOT) stated that there is opportunity to expand on rail especially because the Burlington trunk line runs along the highway 97 corridor in Oregon. He stated that this expansion could be a financial benefit for Oregon.

It was discussed that increasing rail access to industrial lands would prove to be a benefit. Improving safety along the 97 corridor was discussed as a possible short term action.

Scott Aycock suggested that enhancing our ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems) is important because in terms per unit cost it provides a great deal of safety, timing, capacity, and mobility management benefits.

Gary Judd (Aviation) suggested focusing on dedicated local funding to match large investments from funders like the FAA which match 95% to a 5% local investment.

Jeff Monson discussed opportunities to partner with school districts to get students to ride the city buses, possibly at no charge, as an option to decrease congestion issues.

Suzie Papé mentioned the use of school buses during the day for senior citizens/community transportation services has been discussed in the panel of other regions. She asked what our region thinks of this sharing of resources as a possible solution?

#### How should the state balance Investments?

Andrew Spreadborough (COIC/CET) expressed concerns regarding a lack of state and local match for Grants CET is eligible for. This lack of stability in local resources has caused CET to turn down financial opportunities simply because the local match is not there. His solution would be legislative movement for local funding.

#### Bike/Ped

Jeff Monson (bike/ped) commented that it is nice to see alignment with the bike/ped plan. He sees an issue with how to get all modes of transportation working together when construction is causing congestion? Would Transportation Options (TO) be a part of this?

He stated that anyone who is walking or biking is going to the same locations as traffic. He suggested that bike and walk paths be at the same place as roads rather than separate paths altogether.

Cheryl Howard (bike/ped) stated that there is a need for sustainable funding for bike/ped alternative modes, safe ways to travel in communities and between them, and systems for transit commuters as well as recreational needs.

## Investing in Seismic Resiliency

Gary Judd (Aviation) stated that because Redmond is the central hub center in the wake of the Cascadia Event, the Redmond airport needs more collaboration with surrounding areas in Central Oregon (e.g. airports) in order to utilize these resources when the Cascadia Event occurs.

It was discussed that assessments need to be done for local systems and roadways, not just highways.

Alan Unger (Redmond) stated that creating steps in order to become functional quickly after an event is important.

George Endicott (Redmond) stated that the city is in the process of planning to be the fallback community for a seismic event. He stated that our infrastructure in Central Oregon (and Redmond specifically) needs a lot of investment in order to support thousands of refugees.

He also expressed concern regarding the Oregon coast, specifically infrastructure, being devastated. He suggested informing citizens of ways to prepare for the Cascadia event.

Phil Stenbeck (Prineville) identified investment in our airport as a priority. He suggested collaboration with other region's airports in order to pick up air traffic slack.

Bob O'Neal (Crook Co.) stated that he is a member of the Crook County emergency preparedness committee that meets monthly regarding the Cascadia Event. The committee is working on trying to get a fuel dump in Central Oregon to fuel emergency services and vehicles. They are also partnering with coastal towns so that representatives from our area will be able to take over for the coastal representatives so that they're able to focus on family and facing the disaster on a personal level.

Suzie Papé asked if there is a way that commercial airplanes can be redirected to Redmond in case another airport in the state goes down?

Kieth Witcosky (Redmond) responded that Redmond's airport can only handle jets that are so big and cannot sustain larger commercial planes, meaning those would need to be redirected elsewhere.

George Endicott agreed that passenger air traffic will not be coming in to Redmond in the case of the Cascadia event. Traffic through the Redmond airport will be mainly military in nature. There is discussion of passenger air traffic being pushed to other large airports.

## Possible Financing Options

Timber sales were discussed as an option.

Promoting stud-less winter tires by imposing a tax on studs in order to save the roads and generate revenue was suggested.

Concern was expressed that the money from this stud tax would not come back to transportation specifically.

Raising the gas tax, specifically now that gas prices are low, was suggested as a financing option.

Again, there was concern that a gas tax would not go specifically to transportation needs.

It was suggested that a gas tax would not be helpful due to inflation.

Charlie Every (trucking) stated that an increase in the price of trucking permits could help fund a container yards. This would in turn benefit the trucking business by allowing for shorter trips and happier employees.