

# ATTACHMENT A

## DRAFT Meeting Minutes

**Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation  
COACT  
September 14, 2016**

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### Members:

Attendees: Andrea Blum (City of Sisters), Gary Judd (Aviation), Barb Campbell (City of Bend), Jack Seley (City of Prineville), Marcos Romero (Federal Agency – US Forest Service), Mike McCabe (Crook County), Alan Unger (Deschutes County), Gary Farnsworth (ODOT), George Endicott (City of Redmond), Ken Mullenex (City of La Pine), Lonny Macy (Warm Springs), Jeff Monson (Transportation Options), Mike Folkestad (Jefferson Co. Stakeholder), Charlie Every (Trucking/Freight), Jeff Hurd (City of Madras), Karen Friend (Transit), Melvin Ewing (Federal Agency – BLM).

### Guests:

Scott Smith (City of Prineville), Chris Doty (Deschutes County), Bob O’Neal (Crook County), Rick Williams (ODOT), Kevin Haas (ODOT), Richard Ross (Public Transit Advisory Committee Chair), Nick Arnis (City of Bend), Midge Graybeal (Anderson Perry & Associates), Troy Baker (Anderson Perry & Associates), Tom Headley (Century West Engineering), Peter Russell (Deschutes County), Joni Bramlett (ODOT), Amy Pfeiffer (ODOT), Jill Pearson (ODOT), Paul Bertagna (City of Sisters), Matt Kittelson (Kittelson & Associates), Jackie Gulczynski (Kittelson & Associates), Phil Stenbeck (City of Prineville), Bridget Weighart (Parsons Brinckerhoff Engineering Services).

### Staff

Shelby Knight (COIC), Scott Aycock (COIC)

#### **1. Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 3:14 pm. Introductions were made.

#### **2. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

#### **3. COACT Business**

##### **a) July 14, 2016 Meeting Minutes (Action)**

*George Endicott motioned to approve the July 14, 2016 meeting minutes. Ken Mullenex seconded. Minutes were approved by consensus.*

#### **4. Highway 97 Freight Corridor Plan Discussion**

Gary Farnsworth introduced Rick Williams of ODOT and Bridget Weighart of Parsons Brinckerhoff Engineering Services (WSP). He noted that the purpose of the freight plan study on the 97 corridor is to identify barriers and issues that will need to be addressed as work continues on the 97 corridor.

Rick Williams referred to the PowerPoint presentation “US 97 Existing Conditions” which can be found on the website along with related supplemental material on the subject here: <https://coic2.org/community-development/central-oregon-area-commission-on-transportation/>.

Rick Williams informed those in attendance that ODOT, with the help of Parsons Brinckerhoff Engineering Services (WSP), conducted a study of existing conditions for all of highway 97 from a freight perspective. The entirety of the freight plan study consists of two phases. The first phase is focused on recording current conditions. After collecting

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feedback from Region Four, the study will move to phase two, which will look at future conditions and solutions to the problems identified in phase one. He handed out comment forms and asked those in attendance to provide feedback via the form.

Bridget Weighart stated that her presentation would cover the purpose and approach of the plan, quarter wide findings, and existing conditions in Central Oregon in comparison to other regions. She discussed that phase one was an attempt to gather and compile existing information and data on the US 97 corridor. Conducting the study included engagement of stakeholders, review of existing plans and data, and a small amount of new data analysis. She noted that more detailed analysis will occur in the second phase. In analyzing current conditions, the study looked at grades and curves, average annual daily traffic, vehicle miles traveled, operational and travel time, travel cost, and traffic incidence and collisions.

The US 97 corridor is 292 miles long and crosses five counties and eight cities in Oregon. For the analysis, WSP broke the corridor up into 11 different segments. Four of those segments are urban and seven are rural. Bridget Weighart noted that urban and rural areas have different characteristics, making it helpful to categorize them separately in the analysis.

Bridget Weighart presented maps of the corridor, analysis segments, and commodity flows. She noted that commodity information was extracted from a separate database and is therefore reported by milepost but segments are referenced on the map.

Bridget Weighart discussed corridor wide findings. She noted that highway 97 is among the top 5 highways in terms of percentage of truck traffic. 8-41% of annual average daily traffic on the corridor is comprised of trucks. She noted that this percentage may be higher. For example, the number of trucks travelling in urban areas tends to decrease as passenger vehicle traffic increases. Combination trucks were found to be the most dominant truck type travelling the corridor. The study showed that single unit trucks travel more commonly in urban areas.

Bridget Weighart stated that the FAST Act has resulted in stricter driver regulations. The regulations are not consistent with the number of rest stops along the corridor. There are 11 public and private rest areas, only four of which are significant in size and recognized truck stops. These four truck stops are located in Biggs, La Pine, Chemult, and Klamath Falls. Stakeholders noted a lack of significant truck stops as a barrier to traveling the corridor, especially with increased regulations that require drivers to take more breaks and make more frequent stops. Stakeholders reported the stretch of highway between Biggs and La Pine as a particularly lengthy distance lacking adequate truck stops.

Bridget Weighart presented a map of the Safety Priority Index System's top incident locations along the US 97 corridor. The Index is based on data acquired from the state of Oregon's Safety Priority Index. She reported that 13 sites along the 97 corridor are within the top 15% of incident locations, 6 of which are within the top 10%.

Bridget Weighart reported on existing conditions specific to the Central Oregon region. She presented maps of the region showing speed, number of lanes, and grades and curves. The maps highlight speed limit changes for trucks, single lane stretches and short passing lanes, and significant grades and curves that can be challenging for trucks to maneuver.

Bridget Weighart presented graphs and data comparing the following for all 11 segments:

- Annual average daily traffic by vehicle type
- Annual average daily truck traffic
- Daily vehicle miles traveled
- Daily vehicle miles traveled by trucks
- Corridor delay
- Incident rate by effect and segment
- Excess crash frequency
- Commodity flows

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Bridget Weighart stated that WSP also did an analysis of crash frequency by comparing how many incidents you would expect to have given the nature of the roadway to the actual crash frequency. They found most segments had a higher number of crashes than was predicted. She noted, however, that the segment of road between Redmond and Bend had less crashes than was predicted. She recommended that areas where excess crashes occurred be studied further, specifically within the more urban areas of Bend and Redmond where accident frequency was much higher than predicted.

Gary Farnsworth asked in what units are the frequency rates measured. Bridget Weighart responded she would have to check and see if the units are per thousand or per million vehicle miles travelled (VMT). She added that the measurement is not so much a “rate” as it is a comparison.

George Endicott asked if the accident frequency was measured before the speed limit went up. Bridget Weighart responded yes, the crash data analyzed was for 2010-2014.

Rick Williams stressed the importance of the freight plan study in identifying issue areas along the 97 corridor. He stated that addressing freight and traffic issues now can help alleviate traffic and traffic incidents in the future. He opened the floor for questions and encouraged attendees to fill out a comment card.

Mike Folkestad asked what constitutes a truck. Rick Williams responded that “trucks” in the case of this study are anything with dual tires or commercial vehicles.

Peter Russell asked will there be an analysis of parking lots or land use applications within this study. Rick Williams responded that within the second phase of the project, there will be studies of pinch points and truck parking. These studies will look at where the freight industry would like to see rest stops. He noted that the initial surveys for these studies have already been conducted. From the survey results and considering distance, recommendations will be made for sites for new commercial facilities.

Peter Russel asked if the study differentiates between local and non-local trips. Rick Williams responded no, but that the majority of truck traffic is through traffic.

Mike McCabe asked are representatives from the trucking industry involved in this process. Rick Williams responded that they aren't for phase one and the existing conditions report. The existing conditions report is being run through the statewide freight committee for comments. Industry representatives will be heavily engaged in phase two.

George Endicott asked how rest stops are factored into the study versus service areas and designated truck stops. Rick Williams responded that the study includes rest areas and truck stops, not rest stops.

Alan Unger noted that there are some urban segments that have zero volume delay. He asked if this is due to traffic lights and slower speeds. Rick Williams responded yes, and congestion.

Rick Williams stated there are grade and curve restrictions along the corridor in the Columbia River area that contribute to delays. He added that there are tight delays to urban areas from Shaniko to Lava Butte. Delays from Lava Butte heading south tend to be weather related due to snow and a gain in elevation.

Alan Unger asked what is our homework. Bridget Weighart replied please let us know anything we've missed, provide suggestions for the next phase, etc. Rick Williams added that facility improvement suggestions would be helpful as well. Alan Unger clarified that the study focuses specifically on freight. Rick Williams responded yes, and how freight relates to passenger vehicle traffic.

Mike McCabe asked are you tying this in with regulation. Rick Williams responded yes, specifically with regards to the eight hour rest day regulations that resulted from the FAST Act. Charlie Every clarified that under the new FAST Act regulations, truck drivers can drive for 11 hours before taking a ten hour break. He added that a discussion on limiting

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truck speeds is also in the works. Mike McCabe noted that in other states, truck speeds are not as limited. Charlie Every agreed. Alan Unger clarified that the above regulations discussed are state of Oregon rules. Charlie Every responded no, they are federal regulations.

## 5. Joint Transportation Committee Hearing Discussion

Alan Unger briefly summarized the Joint Transportation Committee visit to Central Oregon in August. The Committee toured transportation projects throughout the region, had a lunchtime roundtable discussion, and held a public hearing at the COCC campus on August 18<sup>th</sup>. He asked the COACT for feedback and observations.

George Endicott felt the Committee members were very attentive, specifically regarding the topic of Emergency Preparedness and the role of US 97 in the event of a major catastrophe.

Chris Doty attended the evening hearing as part of a concerted effort by City Managers and Commissioners to involve the business community in the discussion. He felt there was not the business presence he had hoped for. He added that the west side of Bend had a strong voice in the room.

Ken Mulenex stated the Committee members listened intently and were well informed. He noted they took interest in transit. Overall, he felt it was worth everyone's time.

Gary Farnsworth noted the attention Karen Friend received in regards to funding options for CET. He stated that the Committee provided a range of ideas for funding options.

George Endicott asked what their reaction was to the proposal to give a transit district authority to COIC. Ken Mulenex replied that the Committee asked a number of good questions and spent quite a bit of time discussing it at the roundtable.

Charlie Every felt the Committee asked pertinent questions regarding trucking. He noted their focus on what has been done and how, and if other avenues had or will be explored.

Alan Unger felt the Committee was seeking solutions and asked "the tough questions". For example, how will we get past clean fuels legislation in trying to pass a transit funding package?

Chris Doty explained work being done through the City and County Administrators group on a joint resolution to present to each city and county. He identified the local delegation as the target audience. The resolution is an effort to achieve unanimous support amongst local transportation agencies for a transportation funding package. The resolution would provide evidence that a funding package is needed and has support; that there are local political leaders willing to support the effort from a broad array of representation.

Alan Unger addressed Gus Burril and asked if Madras had been a part of the joint resolution discussion. Gus Burril responded that the resolution was passed in Madras. He stated that the need for funding is clear; it is now a matter of communicating this to the public. He added that there needs to be an indexing way to keep up with inflation, especially as more fuel efficient cars enter the roadways.

Chris Doty stated that the resolution should be ready for the local bodies of government after the general election. The resolution will be presented in December or January to each city and county.

Alan Unger asked if cities and counties should begin the discussion now. Chris Doty answered that individual entities will start their own individual discussions. The goal is to have reactions and responses from each entity by the time next year's legislative session begins.

Mike McCabe asked if a draft document is available. Scott Aycock responded that a draft is in circulation and *he will send Mike McCabe a copy.*

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George Endicott wondered what is the long term solution to funding transportation.

Bob O'Neal wondered if timber sales or rural schools funds are options being considered to fund transportation. Were these options discussed with the Joint Committee on Transportation. Alan Unger responded that the discussion was focused on how transportation works in Central Oregon and less on funding options.

Gary Farnsworth informed those in attendance that the OTC will pick this up at their October workshop. He added that Commissioner Unger received an invite to participate in the workshop. Alan Unger informed the COACT that the OTC will be hosting their annual workshop October 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> in Silverton, Oregon. The workshop will include an in-depth discussion with legislators and key stakeholders on transportation needs and issues around the state, investment needs, and priorities of multiple modes. The discussion is, in part, a preparation for the legislative funding package that is under development. Those set to attend are the Joint Committee on Transportation Preservation and Modernization, ACT chairs and modal advisory committee chairs. Additionally, there will be an opportunity for ACT and modal advisory committee chairs to provide feedback on the project selection process for the recent ConnectOregon VI and STIP processes.

Gary Farnsworth noted that there is an opportunity to utilize the information that was prepared for the Joint Committee on Transportation visit to prepare for the discussion at the OTC workshop. *Gary Farnsworth will create a document in preparation for the OTC annual workshop to be distributed to the COACT for feedback.*

## **6. ConnectOR VI Discussion**

Gary Farnsworth reported that Central Oregon received the highest percentage of funding from ConnectOregon VI of any round to date, around \$4.9 million. 39 multimodal projects were approved through ConnectOregon VI for a total of \$49,518,726. He commended Jeff Monson, Alan Unger, and others from COACT on the hard work that went in to this process and ultimately contributed to the success of the region's projects.

Alan Unger felt that having strong support from various modal committees contributed to the success of many Central Oregon projects.

Jeff Monson felt it was beneficial to the process to make the case for connections between projects. For example, showing the connection between the Redmond Transit Hub and the Redmond Homestead Trail boosted support for both projects. He noted that this would be a good strategy to use in future ConnectOregon rounds.

Alan Unger informed those in attendance that ConnectOregon is a biennial process. The next round will be in 2018, assuming that the funding is authorized again. In the meantime, it would be beneficial to think of projects that have connections and would be prioritized by modal committees.

## **7. COIC Transit Legislative Change Update**

Karen Friend informed the COACT that COIC is working on a governance legislative concept. COIC is an ORS 190 intergovernmental cooperation formed by cities and counties in order to provide regional services and support. A section of ORS 190 provides the opportunity to levy for property tax to fund transportation facilities, but not operations. COIC and partners attempted to change this at the last legislative session but were unsuccessful. COIC is now in the process of producing a new transit legislative concept.

A barrier to successfully passing such legislation is the concern that there are too many taxing entities. Karen Friend pointed out that in fact, COIC is trying to avoid spending more tax dollars by operating a transit system under a single entity. This eliminates the prospect of having multiple competing transit providers running multiple programs. Developing a system in which less governing bodies and organizations have taxing authority can lead to less transit costs for the region.

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The current legislative concept proposes that organizations would have to be receiving Federal Transit Administration (FTA) transportation operations funding in order to be eligible to utilize the new provision. These guidelines would ensure that an entity is meeting certain requirements in regards to financial capability, technical capability, etc. COIC is currently the only transit operator in the state approved to receive such funding. While the proposal is designed specifically for Central Oregon, Karen Friend noted that other areas may want to adopt a similar process but would have to prove up as qualified FTA funding recipients.

The legislative concept would also give local cities and counties control over transit development in their area. Karen noted that cities and counties within Central Oregon are at different stages of development, and have different transit needs and priorities. Therefore, the region requires a tailored system in which cities and counties are able to develop and fund transit individually, while still being served by one regional transit system. This piece of the concept states that only upon action by both the COIC Board of Directors and the city council's Board of Commissioners, would COIC propose a voter approved operating levy. For example, if a city or unincorporated area were ready to proceed with an improvement in transit, there would then be a process in which those operations would be scoped and defined, and COIC would work with that city or county to define the service boundary and discuss funding mechanisms. If a city decided that a levy for property taxes was necessary to fund the project, they would then authorize COIC to do so.

Ultimately, Central Oregon has a unique opportunity to continue to operate a coordinated transit system under one managing entity. This eliminates fragmenting the system and allows us to maintain one overhead cost and provide for economies of scale which allows dollars to go further, all while allowing each city to grow and build their transit system as they determine.

Alan Unger asked what is the strategy. Karen Friend responded that COIC is currently in the process of meeting with all of the cities and counties within the region. She noted that each city has supported the governance legislative concept thus far. The next steps will include working the City of Bend lobbyist and COCO for lobbying, and conducting outreach to businesses and the public.

Ken Mullen expressed support for the work being done on the ORS 190 legislative concept. He stated that the proposed statute change would benefit La Pine and protect its ability to mature and grow as is fit. He noted the importance of conveying the benefits within each community, specifically the opt in or opt out option for each city.

Barb Campbell asked does COIC have the authority to put an initiative on the ballot themselves. Karen Friend responded that COIC currently has the authority to put an initiative on the ballot for facilities but not for operations.

Barb Campbell stated that the City of Bend is in support of the change in the ORS 190 statute. She noted that with the current housing crisis, a number of workers are living in surrounding communities and are depending on public transit to get to and from work in Bend.

Alan Unger added that at the Joint Committee on Transportation public hearing there was much discussion and public desire to build a more robust transit system in the region.

Barb Campbell stated that the new OSU-Cascades campus has made a commitment to promoting and utilizing alternative transportation. She hopes OSU-Cascades will be a community driver for expanded transit. She also hopes that building a better transit system would be attractive to visitors and help alleviate congestion during tourist seasons.

Mike Folkestad asked is there apprehension that the proposed system might take on the form of Metro? Karen Friend responded that the proposed legislative concept is aimed at achieving the opposite. Alan Unger added that CET is overseen by all counties and governments in the region. Metro's transit district is governed by an elected board that is not affiliated with the cities and counties it serves.

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Ken Mulenex noted that the checks and balances system of the proposed ORS 190 statute change is an attractive selling point. He added that it is in the best interest of the counties and cities.

Karen Friend agreed that the proposed changes have accountability to cities and counties built in. She added that there is a balancing factor to having a system that is governed by a Board of Directors that care about all aspects and needs of the communities they serve, not just transit.

Alan Unger stated the next step is to prepare a bill that includes a narrowly focused relating clause. He added that Representative Huffman is interested in being supportive.

Barb Campbell felt that outreach will be essential for the ORS 190 legislative change proposal. For example, the failure to pass the Bend fuel tax has proven how important public outreach is, specifically when a tax is involved.

Mike Folkestad asked are there other representatives in support of the ORS 190 legislative change? Ken Mulenex responded we are currently working on gaining support from other representatives. He noted that they would like more information, specifically on mechanisms. Alan Unger stated that an important concept to convey is that ORS 190 is a governance change and not a tax.

## **8. The Value of Roundabouts**

ODOT has been conducting outreach on the importance of roundabouts to local governments, agencies, and ACTs around the state. Gary Farnsworth introduced Kevin Haas of ODOT, who presented “The Value of Roundabouts”. [The full slideshow can be found on the COACT web page here: <https://coic2.org/community-development/central-oregon-area-commission-on-transportation/>.]

Essentially, roundabouts have been shown to be safer than traffic signals. Statistics show that drivers are 2/3 more likely to engage in distracted behavior at a signal. Roundabouts have proven to reduce fatal and serious injury accidents to 0 such incidents in Oregon to date. Public opinion around roundabouts tends to be negative. This is why ODOT is working with elected officials and public figures to address negative attitudes and reactions from the public, deal with freight mobility misconceptions, and inform people of the cost benefits of roundabouts compared to traffic signals, specifically when looking at ongoing maintenance costs.

Ken Mulenex asked for more information. Kevin Haas responded that the slides will be posted for the COACT and added that ODOT is working on putting out more material. Additionally, ODOT recently created a YouTube channel that will publish more information on the benefits of roundabouts.

Mike Folkestad asked how Oregon compares to other states in terms of opinion and number of roundabouts. Kevin Haas responded that Oregon is behind in terms of acceptance and number of roundabouts. For example, Washington and California have roundabouts at ramp terminals on lower volume freeways. Oregon has yet to adopt a ramp terminal roundabout. Gary Farnsworth added that Kansas and Wisconsin are the leading states in terms of number of roundabouts. Additionally, Kevin Haas noted Caramel Indiana as a model city for roundabouts.

Jeff Monson suggested ODOT engage bike/ped groups in the discussion. Kevin Haas replied that bike/ped groups have been engaged and have had positive reactions so far. Jeff Monson stated that he is in support of roundabouts.

Charlie Every asked 1) are the state roundabouts single or double lane; 2) which is best; and 3) what type of roundabout is going in in Sisters and Prineville. Kevin Haas responded that single lane roundabouts are being built in Sisters and Prineville. The only multi-lane roundabout on the state highway system is in Astoria. Charlie Every responded that at the double lane roundabouts in Bend, trucks have to get in to the inside lane to make the turns. Kevin Haas responded that ODOT has worked with the freight industry to change legislation around that. It is now illegal to drive alongside a commercial vehicle in a roundabout in Oregon.

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Gary Farnsworth predicted that future two lane roundabouts on the state highway system will be large enough that there will not be encroachment between trucks and cars.

Nick Arnis stated that it is challenging trying to understand and plan for bike/ped interactions with roundabouts, especially for multi-lane.

Kevin Haas responded that planning for multi-lane roundabouts is more complex and that single lane roundabouts are sufficient for a majority of intersections.

The meeting adjourned at 5:09 pm.

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