

# Meeting Minutes

## Central Oregon Area Commission on Transportation COACT January 14, 2016

### Members:

Attendees: Alan Unger (Deschutes County), Mike McCabe (Crook County), Andrea Blum (Sisters), Kim Curley (Transportation Options), Bill Braly (BPAC), Charlie Every (Trucking Representative), Cheryl Howard (BPAC Alternate), Matt Wiederholt (Rail Representative), Gary Judd (Aviation Representative), Gus Burrell (Madras), Jeff Hurd (Madras Alternate), George Endicott (Redmond), Jeff Monson (Transportation Options), Ken Mulenex (La Pine), Lonny Macy (Warm Springs), Mike Folkestad (Jefferson Co. Stakeholder Representative), Patrick Hanenkrat (Metolius), Andrew Spreadborough (Transit Alternate), Gary Farnsworth (ODOT), Wayne Fording (Jefferson County), Ron Cholin (Crook County), Zachary Bass (Aviation Alternate), Dennis Scott (La Pine Alternate), Nick Arnis (City of Bend)

### Guests:

Bill Duerden (Redmond), Phil Stenbeck (Prineville), Joni Bramlett (ODOT), Chris Cheng (ODOT), Casey Burgh (OSU-Cascades), Marcos Romero (Deschutes National Forest Service), Matt Rogers (Century West Engineering)

Phone: Pat Fisher (ODOT)

### Staff

Shelby Knight (COIC).

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

Chair Alan Unger called the meeting to order at 3:06 pm. Introductions were made. The newest board member, Crook County Stakeholder Representative Ron Cholin, was introduced. Ron Cholin runs Stinger Transport Trucking in Prineville.

### **2. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **3. COACT Business**

- a) Approve January 14, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Ken Mulenex motioned to approve the January 14, 2016 minutes. Wayne Fording seconded the motion. Minutes were approved by consensus.

### **4. Governor's Vision Panel Debrief**

Gary Farnsworth introduced documented community feedback for the Governor's Transportation Vision Panel that took place January 14, 2016. The handouts included notes taken by COIC staff and official notes received from the Governor's facilitator. Gary Farnsworth reminded the board that panel attendees covered, in detail, a range of modes and discussed mode interaction in the region. He informed the board that he has received positive feedback in regards to the discussion. Alan Unger added that attendees were asked what challenges the region faces in regards to transportation and discussed the vision for transportation in Central Oregon and the state for the future. Oregon's current vision includes the Oregon State Transportation plan. The purpose of the Vision Panel was to cover any topics that may not exist currently as a part of that plan.

Gary Farnsworth stated that he attended a similar forum earlier in the week for the LJACT area in which Karmen Fiore discussed, with transparency, the 2017 state legislative session and funding package.

Gary Farnsworth stated that for him, a highlight from the COACT GTVP was the amount of dialogue regarding airports and seismic resiliency.

Alan Unger added that he benefited from this discussion. He did not know that there would not commercial air traffic at Robert's Field Airport in the wake of a Cascades seismic event until it was brought up at the GTVP.

Ken Mulenex agreed that the vision panel session was informational. He added that representatives from a variety of modes were able to share their interests, needs, and discuss opportunities.

Gary Judd commented that conversation regarding the role of Central Oregon airports in the wake of a seismic event was engaging. He added that the region has become a hub of aviation in Oregon.

Pat Hanenkrat asked if the handout came from the Governor's office or was sent to them?

Gary Farnsworth responded they are from the facilitator. The Governor's office will compile the findings from each forum across the state into a final report.

Pat Hanenkrat added that the notes are a good summary of what was discussed.

Charlie Every provided feedback saying that discussion at the GTVP led to insight regarding how different modal industries tie in together such as trucking with airports. He asked for clarification on a point made in the facilitator's notes that states "The key driver of your region's economy is lumber and recreation."

Alan Unger responded that remanufacturing of lumber is still prevalent in the area, making it an obvious part of the Central Oregon economy. However, the region's economy is changing. He added that this should be reflected in the notes and that agriculture should be included.

Charlie Every responded that there is mention of agriculture as an economic driver for Jefferson County within the notes. He'd like to see rail and trucking included as well.

Gary Farnsworth stated he'd like to see the range of economies the region supports reflected in the notes. Examples being technology, tourism, and other industries the region serves. He will clarify this with the director's office.

Charlie Every responded that looking at new businesses and growth of existing businesses in the area, that economic drivers would be technical or industry rather than lumber.

Jeff Hurd responded lumber is a significant economic driver for Jefferson County, specifically because of Bright Wood.

Andrew Spreadborough provided feedback on the GTVP stating that having a higher level of legislative representation listening to the communities' needs was beneficial. He reviewed the key preliminary findings regarding transit needs throughout the state before the forum and hopes he made a strong point regarding the different needs surrounding transit for rural areas. This includes how rural transit is focused on *access* to jobs, healthcare, and amenities rather than congestion relief. He wonders how this information will be used in the next legislative session. He suspects it will be related to a legislative package centered around transportation funding.

Gary Farnsworth responded that at the recent forum he attended, Karmen Fiore discussed, in detail, how the information obtained will be translated into funding opportunities.

Jeff Monson stated that he was pleased with how the forum went and that representatives were able to provide feedback and watch the different modal needs blend.

Gary Farnsworth encouraged board members to review both the notes taken by COIC staff and the Governor's facilitator's notes and bring to his attention any additional comments, questions, and feedback.

Mike Folkestad asked for clarity regarding issues surrounding container size, double stacking, and tunnels.

Matt Weiderholt responded that the issue is that tunnels built in the early 1900's are short and prevent rail from double stacking containers. Other factors affecting rail's ability to compete within the state include the relatively small margins of

a container for the BNSF or UP inbound and Central Oregon being more of a consumer than an exporter of goods. He also addressed issues he sees with the current model for container hub yards throughout the state. He worries that in the future, freight trains will be obsolete and focus will be on intermodal container systems and what effect it will have on smaller rail companies in Central Oregon competing with others located along the I-5 corridor. Our region does not have a container facility. If infrastructure issues such as short tunnels can be addressed, possibly through ConnectOregon funding, it will help Central Oregon compete in rail.

Alan Unger responded that he has heard the issue involves two short tunnels and a bridge and he doesn't think it will be an easy problem to solve. He would like to schedule a discussion on rail at a future meeting.

Matt Weiderholt responded that moving forward, Central Oregon communities will need to be able to compete in freight on a national level.

## **5. FAST Act - Federal Program Funding and Policies**

Gary Farnsworth introduced the "FAST ACT Federal Program Funding and Policies" handout. The FAST Act or the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act was passed by Congress in late 2015. It is a federal reauthorization of federal highway, transit, transportation safety, and rail programs for the next 5 years. The Act provides ODOT with additional funding to put towards projects in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Gary Farnsworth briefly summarized the content of a letter from ODOT to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) as containing recommendations regarding FAST Act funds. He added that COACT members will have the opportunity to provide feedback on ODOT's recommendations and will ultimately motion to give Chair Alan Unger authority to sign the final copy that was to be presented to the OTC the week of March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Gary Farnsworth informed board members of a proposal to bump the non-highway Enhance funding target by 5 or 6 million dollars as well as a proposed increase in the Fix-It program funding through the FAST Act. The Act also emphasizes funding for freight and major freight highway-related improvements. He added there will be freight-specific grant funding programs as well.

Gary Farnsworth stated that the increase in funding through the FAST Act compels Oregon to leverage state for federal dollars by meeting match or overmatch requirements.

Ken Mullen asked about the Wickiup Junction project – is there any discussion associated with picking up from Sunriver and continued widening in the area south to four lanes?

Gary Farnsworth responded yes. There is a project development effort to continue to expand lane capacity beyond Wickiup Junction with savings from that project.

Andrew Spreadborough asked if the competitive grant funding for freight will be for large, regional scale projects?

Gary Farnsworth responded that is something still to be learned. He hopes to have a better sense of what to expect in regards to the types of projects Central Oregon should leverage for those funds as the process continues. He added that over the course of the next year, there will be significant efforts at the state level to study freight bottlenecks, and to then identify priorities and associated projects. He will feed information back into the group as the process progresses and provide guidance on projects the region might put forward.

Charlie Every added that he is part of a Highway Bottleneck Committee that will be meeting the week of March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. This is a working group involved in the process described above. Alan Unger added he is a member of OFAC as well.

Gary Farnsworth noted a few more things that came out of the FAST Act. There will be an increase in percentages of funding going to Cities and Counties that will affect various modes. Oregon also received an increase in funding from the Federal Lands Access Program.

The ODOT recommendations were approved by consensus and the final document will be signed by Alan Unger as Chair of COACT.

## **6. Federal Lands Access Program Update**

Pat Fisher, ODOT, called in from Salem to discuss the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) call for projects. FLAP is a formula funding program in which funding is awarded to states based upon the amount of federal agency land within the state and the amount of public access roads that cross through those lands. The program is administered by the Federal Highway Administration and the Western Federal Lands office. Therefore, ODOT is not in direct control of the funds. Instead, ODOT and counties and other road agencies are recipients of the funds. FLAP is the successor program of the Forest Highway program that supplied the National Forest Service with federal funds. Now, under FLAP, funding opportunities are open to roads that go to or through federal lands, expanding potential partnership opportunities to not only the National Forest Service but Parks and Recreation, the Bureau of Land Management, The Bureau of Reclamation, The Core of Engineers, and any other federal land management organizations.

The idea behind FLAP is to provide funding for roads that provide access to and from federal lands for resource users, commodity transport, and recreation/tourism. The funding is meant to help with costs associated with roads in which both a land agency and a road agency have interest.

Pat Fisher informed COACT members that there is likely to be a new call for projects due to excess FLAP funds coming out of the most recent process. The new call for projects will occur in April. Projects submitted can be for a highway, road, bridge, trail or transit system that are on, adjacent to or provide access to federal lands. Roads must be owned or maintained by state, county, tribal or municipal government. Eligibility does not include federally owned/maintained roads. Applications are jointly filed between the road agency and the federal land agency. She recommended that these groups work together from the early stages of project development. Applications are most successful when the priorities align for both the land and the road management agencies involved.

Proposals for FLAP are solicited all at once for all proposal types. Solicitation types fall under 6 categories. Projects compete against other projects within each category for funding. Capital improvement project solicitations range from \$500,000 up to \$10 million. Another category is for enhancement proposals, that being implementations of commodities such as kiosks, interpretive signs, and trail heads. This type of solicitation typically ranges from \$200,000 to \$1 million. Surface preservation project solicitations typically fall into the \$500,000 range. Types of projects that would apply to this would be preservation of roads, trails or adjacent vehicle parking areas. Projects that address a safety issue are given preference. The remaining categories are transit, planning and research. Projects within these three categories are typically less common but equally eligible.

Pat Fisher explained that match funds are required. The requirement is for the standard 10.2 7% match. Match must be local funds, state money or federal money that doesn't come from transportation agencies. The program can accommodate in-kind match, but if you are planning to use in kind match you should discuss this with the program contacts before proceeding. Credit may be awarded for the donation of services, property, etc. to meet a portion of the match.

Pat described the application process as a competitive process based on a point system. The scoring system used in the 2015 round of the call for projects can be found in the handout "FLAP example RFP". Pat Fisher stated that she expects the scoring system to be similar to that of the original. Any routes that are a scenic byway or bikeway will receive extra points. She went on to describe the review process, which includes a staff level technical review group comprised of a representative from ODOT, Western Federal Lands, AOC and a member from any federal agencies that express interest. Once it has been scored by the staff level technical group, the final selection decision is made by a three member decision committee comprised of a member from ODOT, the Federal Highway Agency and AOC.

Project delivery is delegated to the Federal Highway Administration - Western Federal Lands. However, if the ODOT region, district or county can provide a rationale for self-delivery, that case can be made on the application. For example, delivery by a county on a project such as a preservation project that requires no new footprint has been allowed, so long as the county has the staff and resources to deliver.

Marcos Romero from the Forest Service commented that the Forest Service has successfully worked with ODOT, counties, cities, and COIC in securing FLAP funds. He emphasized exercising diligence regarding the application process and contacting a land management agency early on with project proposals.

Pat Fisher added that Marcos raised an important point, that there are certain portions of the application that need early attention from both the road and land management agencies involved.

Wayne Fording stated that Jefferson County has been working with BLM to get access to create another exit through BLM land in Crooked River Ranch. There has been discussion about applying for a FLAP grant because the project would involve access to trails. He stated that the issue they're facing is that the road is in an area that is considered Deschutes County but would benefit Jefferson County. He asked if there have ever been counties that work together on a FLAP grant?

Pat Fisher responded yes. The preference being that the county responsible for the majority of road should be the primary applicant. In this situation, Jefferson County could be co-applicant and negotiate with Deschutes County regarding matching funds. The applicants could then explain the agreement through attached letters.

Wayne Fording added that the project would need to include a third entity, the Crooked River Ranch Special Road District, who would be responsible for maintenance of the road.

Gary Farnsworth responded that an intergovernmental agreement that shows each entity's roles and expectations could be recognized by Western Federal Lands as a single organization.

Gary Farnsworth stated that Bob Bryant, the region 4 manager for ODOT, will be serving on the FLAP committee. He also noted that having BLM at the table to communicate their role and intent for the project will be beneficial.

Pat Fisher added that the intergovernmental agreement and specific terms of the agreement could come after the application, so long as the applicants include a letter of understanding of the intended agreement and duties to the application.

Gary Farnsworth gave an example of a similar scenario that received FLAP funding, the Millican road project. A proposal was drafted with the expectation that the specifics of an agreement would come later.

Mike Folkestad asked for clarification on how often FLAP puts out a call for projects?

Pat Fisher responded normally it is every other year. It is only because of excess money from the last call that it is being done two years in a row for 2015 and 2016.

Gary recommended that Jefferson County connect with the representative for BLM serving on the FLAP staff level technical scoring group and discuss further.

Mike Folkestad responded that unfortunately, the representative recently passed and BLM is in the process of filling the position.

Marcos Romero commented that the Forest Service has been successful in the past securing FLAP funding through a working agreement between the Forest Service, Western Federal Lands and Crook County.

Andrew Spreadborough mentioned that COIC has received FLAP grants for transit in the past and has partnered with the Forest Service and ODOT to much success. He asked if there are any changes to the 2016 solicitation as far as priorities from the last round?

Pat Fisher responded there will be no big changes in priorities from the 2015 round. The only significant change is the amount of funds available.

## **7. Connect OR VI/2018-2021 STIP Update Process & Rankings**

Gary Farnsworth addressed the Region 4 ConnectOregon VI project matrix and the straw proposal packet for the 2018-21 STIP/Enhance process. He noted a change to the ConnectOregon project list. Unfortunately, the application from the City of Sisters did not qualify and was removed. Bike-ped projects had some eligibility issues due to policy regarding where those projects fit relative to public transportation and right of way. Otherwise, the project matrix contains a full list of ConnectOregon applications for Region 4. Gary informed the board that ODOT and partners are in the process of obtaining information that will populate a ranked scoring list. Clark Jackson and others from Business Oregon evaluated and rated applications based upon specific criteria. Modal committees have also been meeting and ranking projects. COACT will also review the applications and provide recommendations at the April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 board meeting. Gary will

then be looking for nominations for 2 persons from the COACT Executive Committee to represent Central Oregon at the Super ACT meeting May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 where recommendations from all Area Commissions within Region 4 to date will be reviewed.

Gary Farnsworth noted he'd like the Technical Advisory committee to meet before the April 14th COACT board meeting.

Nick Arnis asked for clarification regarding the multiple rankings from multiple groups.

Gary Farnsworth responded that COACT will receive the recommendations from the modal committees as well as staff recommendations from ODOT and partners that, combined, will assign tiering and tiering categories. COACT will then use this information to prioritize projects and develop recommendations, mainly for the applications for the Central Oregon region. This information will go to the regional review committee and they will give the final rankings for the projects for Region 4.

Gary Farnsworth went on to suggest that the executive committee and the technical advisory committee frame criteria for ranking and recommending projects at the April board meeting.

Mike McCabe asked if the "Economic Benefit for Oregon" column on the project list means jobs?

Gary responded yes, jobs and access to jobs.

Alan Unger added that Business Oregon provides that ranking.

Phil Stenbeck asked how much funds are given to region 4 in total?

Gary Farnsworth responded region 4 will receive roughly 10% of funds available through the program which has 45 million dollars in total. He added there is the potential for more, depending on the final rankings, but region 4 is guaranteed 4.5 million.

Alan Unger clarified that the project list present at the April COACT board meeting where ranking recommendations will take place, will include the rankings from the modal committees and Business Oregon?

Gary Farnsworth responded yes, along with the ranking criteria.

Pat Fisher commented it is helpful to look at the process as three parallel reviews working together. It includes ODOT working with the ConnectOregon ranking criteria, Modal committees working with ConnectOregon criteria and considering whether or not the projects are viable for their mode, and the ACTs looking at how projects fit into the goals and priorities for their area. Each committee has a varying enough criteria that one is not outranking the other. She added that the projects that float to the top are usually projects ranked highly for all three committees.

Gary Farnsworth moved on to the Enhance/STIP process update. He referred to the straw proposal packet for 2018-21Enhance/STIP. The packet includes a table of projects, a summary of the evaluation criteria and a timeline. Gary Farnsworth explained that the evaluation criteria for proposals for the 2018-21Enhance/STIP proposals is different from that of the last round. This is due to significant differences in this rounds call for proposals and the amount of funding, which has been bumped to 3.5 or 3.6 million for the region.

Gary Farnsworth informed members that ODOT staff created a straw proposal for ranking projects across the region. They did so by using a review process that included scoring based on the project's benefit to the state system, benefit to the larger regional area, and leveraging/match. He pointed out the comments regarding these criteria on the project table. The staff group then ranked projects as high, medium, or low. Finally, the group organized the projects by priority through a consensus-focused approach. Gary added that the reviewers ranked projects individually and came up with similar conclusions and rankings.

The STIP/Enhance 150% list deadline is August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The goal for the next COACT board meeting in April, where members will review and rank projects, is to finish a 150% list, which funding wise, translates to \$5.4 million dollars.

Between April and August, COACT will have the opportunity to look at scoping, scaling and timing of projects with ODOT, local jurisdictions and other partners in order to best utilize funding.

Gary Farnsworth opened the floor for questions.

Mike Folkestad asked when the application for FLAP closes?

Gary Farnsworth responded it will close 3 months after the call for projects in April, which will be the end of June or early July. He added that FLAP funds are something to consider when ranking projects for Enhance/STIP.

With no further questions, Alan Unger asked the board for a motion to approve an April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 full Board meeting from 3:00-5:00pm at the Redmond Training Room. The meeting will be dedicated to reviewing ConnectOregon VI and Enhance/STIP projects and to work on the ACT ranking recommendations for them.

Bill Braly motioned to approve. Andrew Spreadborough seconded. The meeting was approved by consensus.

Alan Unger asked when members can expect to have the ranking materials to date?

Gary Farnsworth responded that it depends on whether or not the TAC committee would like to meet and weigh in on projects and how soon voting members provide feedback but that it will be at least a week in advance to the April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Gary Farnsworth asked is there any input or feedback on work that can be done in preparation to the April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting? Meaning is there any follow up on input to date that needs to be done? Do members have any reactions to the straw ranking for the STIP/Enhance project list?

Andrew Spreadborough asked if process happening at the April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting is for ConnectOregon VI projects only?

Gary Farnsworth clarified that the meeting is for ranking and prioritizing projects for both ConnectOregon and Enhance/STIP processes. He expects that for ConnectOregon, members will be provided with packets that include all staff and committee rankings to date, any notes from those reviews, and the criteria used. COACT will then provide their ACT region rankings. COACT will have until the May 12<sup>th</sup> Super ACT meeting to finalize their recommendation.

For STIP/Enhance, Gary Farnsworth provided members with a number of process options. He suggested one approach would be to have each of the voting members of COACT provide their prioritization which will be used to create a final proposal. He proposed another option would be to schedule one on ones in person or via email where COACT members would share comments, concerns, and questions. The final method he suggested would be to provide members with scoring and ranking materials for the projects prior to the April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting and have members come to that meeting prepared with their rankings.

Gary Judd recommended that the Oregon Department of Aviation and other modal committee members be invited to the April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting in order to brief COACT on their process for ranking projects.

Gary Farnsworth agreed that that would be beneficial. He then asked members if they had any preference or recommendations on how to move forward with the STIP/Enhance recommendation process?

There were no preferences or recommendations by members and it was decided that Gary Farnsworth would decide how to move forward. He recommended that he set a timeline and identify voting membership representatives to whom he will provide the scoring used across each category for each project. The voting members will then send him their rankings for STIP/Enhance projects and the reasoning behind those rankings by a date set by him. He will compile those materials and create a recommendation from them.

Gary Farnsworth stated that the above process is not necessary for ConnectOregon due to the fact that staff and modal committee rankings will be provided.

It was asked if there will be an applicant presentation for ConnectOregon at the April board meeting?

Gary Farnsworth responded it would be best to have a targeted briefing time for applicants. He added that COACT will focus on Central Oregon projects, of which there are 8 in total.

### **8. Roundtable Project Updates**

Bill Duerden reported that Robert's Field Redmond Airport construction areas are set to open May 2nd through May 21<sup>st</sup> for public review of the new additions thus far.

Alan Unger asked if there would be a chance for a group to do a tour and how to arrange that?

Bill Duerden responded yes, if there is a group of 5 or more persons interested in a tour, they should talk to Zach Bass.

It was mentioned that the construction happening at Robert's Field is impacting Prineville, Bend and Madras airports. For example, Prineville airport is booked for the month of May.

Gary Judd commented that Robert's Field is experiencing difficulty with this as well. The airport is booked out, making it difficult for people to find a place to land their aircraft in the coming months.

Alan Unger stated that Deschutes County is working on a roundabout on Powell Butte highway. There is a contractor on board that will be turning the worst intersection at Neff and Powell Butte into a roundabout. He is unsure of the exact timeline, but the project is set to begin sometime this spring.

Kim Curley informed members that the 25th birthday of Commute Options will be celebrated mid-June. She also discussed the first Bend Open Streets event in Central Oregon in which car access is limited at a section of roadway and is limited to alternative modes of commuting only in order to promote commute options. This event is scheduled for September in Northeast Bend.

Gary Farnsworth discussed The Oregon Transportation Commission meeting at Eagle Crest April 20th and 21<sup>st</sup>. At the meeting, the OTC will be looking for a report out from COACT and RST members. Invites will go out to area commission members for a dinner the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup>. The OTC will also be looking to set up tours for different projects in the area. He stated that there will be more to come on this at the April 14<sup>th</sup> board meeting. He added that he'd like to look over the guidelines beforehand to make sure they're current.

Gus Burrell discussed the ground breaking for phase 1 of the Madras Airport expansion for the Daimler facility, which is an 87 acre development scheduled for Monday March 21<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 am near the Madras drag strip. All COACT members are invited and can contact Gus for more information or directions.

Alan Unger asked is Madras considering a Large Lot Industrial Application?

Gus Burrell responded that a portion of the airport is within city limits but a majority of it is not. For purposes of permits and sustainability, the Large Lot Industrial program seems the most logical. He stated that they went through what the DLCD calls the Economic Employment Opportunity Analysis that concluded Madras did not need more industrial land. However, there was no parcel in that process. Therefore, they are unable to put Daimler in city limits. The Regional Lot program would help work around difficult and inflexible state regulations. He added that they're working through the process for phase 2 and 3.

Bill Duerden informed members that the City of Redmond voted for an annexation of property in South Redmond.

It was mentioned that the Bend gas tax failed.

Phil Stenbeck discussed a 160 acre UGB expansion on the west side of the Prineville airport based on a request from a land owner. He added that work has also begun on two new data centers. Prineville is seeing steady continued progress in development.

Ken Mullen informed members that the overpass project for the city of La Pine is moving forward. They've begun to clear the land for the project. It is expected to be completed in the spring of 2017. He added that Gordy's Truck Stop is

changing hands and the new owners have plans to expand. Ken stated that this is exciting because it will bring more jobs to the area. He mentioned that there are several plans to put a roundabout at the Finley Butte and Highway 97 intersection in La Pine as well.

Gary Farnsworth informed members that he is partnering with Rick Allen to work on ideas regarding how to continue leveraging work that the region is doing. There will be more to come on this most likely in April.

Ken Mullenex mentioned that corridor work in La Pine is set to begin next spring of 2017. This includes new lighting systems and work on sidewalks along highway 97. He credited Rick Allen, Deschutes County, and ODOT for moving this collaborative work for the City of La Pine forward.

Mike McCabe stated that at a recent Regional Solutions meeting he attended, Tony DeBone showed him La Pine's Industrial Park. He noted that he believes the area to be very attractive for potential businesses.

Ken Mullenex responded that La Pine has an Economic Development group that has been in business about a year along with a local EDCO representative who've worked hard on the area's industrial development plan. He stated that there is opportunity land wise and they are seeing interest in the industrial park.

Wayne Fording updated members on the Jefferson County courthouse project, which he reported is nearing completion on the inside portion. He mentioned there will be a tour Friday March 11<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am and encouraged members to attend. The project work is in partnership with the state and is set to be completed in August or early September.

Gary Judd informed the board of a pilot shortage that is having a big impact on the aviation industry. The shortage is pushing airline companies to pick up persons currently in training and expedite their program completion. He believes airports will see construction on fixed wing areas pick up as a result.

Ron Cholin added that the trucking industry is facing a similar shortage issue. He believes it is due to too much regulation.

## **9. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm.