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For Immediate Release

**COIC BOARD ANNOUNCES KAREN FRIEND AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
***Karen Friend Promoted After Serving as Interim Executive Director***

December 8, 2016 – Bend, ORE – The Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) Board of Directors are pleased to announce the appointment of Karen Friend as Executive Director. Karen Friend was previously selected as the Interim Executive Director for COIC by the Board of Directors earlier this year. Ms. Friend has served COIC for twenty years in several capacities, and most recently as Transportation Manager and Deputy Director in addition to the Interim Executive Director position. The announcement of Ms. Friend’s Executive Director appointment was made at the COIC Board meeting last week and ends a six-month transition period for the organization.

“The COIC board of directors unanimously agreed to promote Karen Friend to the role of Executive Director,” said Jason Carr, COIC Board Chair. “Karen’s 20 years of service to the organization, and her numerous leadership roles in finance and transportation, demonstrate a wealth of knowledge that will ensure stability for the organization. As Central Oregon continues to grow, COIC will be facing several important challenges around workforce and economic development and ensuring the Cascades East Transit (CET) system meets the needs of the entire region in the most cost-effective way. The board believes Karen is the right person to move COIC through these challenges over the next couple of years.”

Ms. Friend has managed numerous COIC departments including Fiscal and Community and Economic Development, as well as leading in the development of the regional transit system, Cascades East Transit, and the Cascades East Ride Center during her tenure with COIC. As Transportation Manager, Ms. Friend negotiated the contract for the medical ride brokerage system, launched a volunteer ride match program, partnered with Mt. Bachelor and the US Forest Service to expand recreational routes, led the transit expansion of the Bend fixed-route system which resulted in a 35 percent increase of transit service, and secured grants and local funding to develop the new Redmond transit hub coming in 2017.

“COIC has had tremendous growth and changes in recent years. I am pleased with the hard work of our staff and departments to improve our programs,” commented Karen Friend. “COIC is poised to increase our support of the Central Oregon communities and contribute to our region’s highest priorities like responding to population growth and changing demographics, meeting the transportation needs of our region, and collaborating with community partners on economic development strategies.”

The Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council serves the local governments of Central Oregon, providing regional collaboration, efficiencies and service delivery for a stronger local economy and quality of life. COIC was designated a Council of Governments in 1972 under ORS 190 and provides service to the counties of Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson as well as to the cities of Bend, Culver, La Pine, Madras, Metolius, Prineville, Redmond, and Sisters. COIC provides workforce development, economic development, and public transportation services.

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