

OREGON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting
February 21, 2007
Salem**

On Wednesday, February 21, at 8:00 a.m., the OTC and Oregon Department of Transportation staff held a briefing session and reviewed the agenda in room 135 of the Transportation Building, 355 Capitol Street NE, Salem. The regular monthly meeting began at 9:30 a.m. in Conference Room 122.

Notice of these meetings was made by press release of local and statewide media circulation throughout the state. Those attending part or all of the meetings included:

Chair Stuart Foster	Transp. Development Administrator Jerri Bohard
Commissioner Gail Achterman	Field Services Manager Paul Mather
Commissioner Randy Papé	Region 1 Manager Jason Tell
Commissioner Janice Wilson	Region 2 Manager Jeff Scheick
Director Matthew Garrett	Interim Region 3 Manager John Vial
Chief of Staff Joan Plank	Region 4 Manager Bob Bryant
Deputy Director for Highways Doug Tindall	Region 5 Manager Monte Grove
Deputy Director for Central Services Mike Marsh	Commission Assistant Kim Jordan
Communications Administrator Patrick Cooney	

● ● ●

Chair Foster called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

● ● ●

Director's report highlights:

On February 16, a joint meeting of Oregon and Washington Senate Transportation Committees met to discuss the challenges, opportunities and activities that surround the Columbia River Crossing project. The discussion was comprehensive in nature. If there was a theme, it was the need for a shared vision and a political consensus in order for this signature project to move forward. If consensus cannot be reached at the federal, state, regional and local levels, many projects will compete for some of the funds needed to construct a Columbia River crossing and the fixtures along the corridor. Overall, the meeting went very well, and the day ended with a tour of key points along the corridor.

ODOT is continuing a very aggressive legislative agenda. Over the last month, issues discussed with the Legislative Assembly included workforce diversity and emerging small business, innovative partnerships and a history of tolling in Oregon. Today may be a red letter day for transportation as we hope to move *ConnectOregon II* out of the House Transportation Committee.

Kudos goes to ODOT's Motor Carrier Transportation Division. It announced that Oregon has achieved Level 1 status in the U.S. Department of Transportation's Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks program. This has been a long-range goal, as MCTD has been coordinating the effort since 1996. Oregon joins 14 other states that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration recognizes as having completed and deployed core competencies. Level 1 acknowledges states that have identified core competencies in electronic screening, safety information exchange and credentials administration. This is a significant job well done by Division Administrator Gregg Dal Ponte and the Motor Carrier Transportation Division employees.

Several years ago, Public Transit Division began work to add a regional trip planner to ODOT's TripCheck travel information web site to provide a better service to the public by improving accessibility to public transit options. A "soft launch" of the regional trip planner has happened without public notice, because users who find their way to the new features will provide the final step of testing. While the project team is confident that all will go well, there is a possibility that minor hiccups will need to be addressed. If there are no problems found, the new features will be publicly announced in March. The Commission will receive a demonstration of all the features at its May 2007 meeting.



Commission member reports:

Commissioner Achterman met with Senator Metzger on February 2 to discuss the Oregon Transportation Plan and issues related to the agency's funding challenges. On February 20, she and Commissioner Wilson received a detailed briefing on the Columbia River Crossing project.

Commissioner Papé attended the Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation meeting on January 25. There are several new members on the CWACT, so much of the time was dedicated to bringing them up to speed on the role of the ACT. The CWACT also discussed *ConnectOregon* and wanted the OTC to know that it would appreciate more time for considering project options if *ConnectOregon II* is established, than was provided in the first *ConnectOregon* process. Commissioner Papé also worked with the Oregon Business Plan and its transportation initiative.

Commissioner Nelson was not present.

Commissioner Wilson attended the February 20 Columbia River Crossing briefing with Commissioner Achterman. She attended the February Audit Committee meeting, the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation meeting, and spent time with Region 1 Manager Jason Tell and Metro representatives regarding the Metro Regional Transportation Plan.

Chair Foster appeared before the Senate Transportation Committee, whose members wondered why it took so long for ODOT to launch the *ConnectOregon* projects.

Obviously, there are two different views whether or not the process was swift. Chair Foster is reading a study commissioned by the British government on congestion issues and how to address them. The report is titled, *The case for action: Sir Rod Eddington's advice to Government*. The study is relevant to the congestion, freight mobility, sustainability issues Oregon faces, particularly in highly urbanized areas. He recommended the report to Commission members. This report is available at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/eddington_transport_study/eddington_index.cfm



Tom Lauer, Statewide Project Delivery Manager, provided the monthly status report on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, Oregon Transportation Investment Acts of 2001, 2002 and 2003, and the OTIA III State Bridge Delivery Program. *(Background material in General Files, Salem.)*

The OTIA III Bridge Delivery Program continues on track. Some commodity prices have started to move in the agency's favor. For example, oil and steel have moderated slightly.

As design on these projects advances, ODOT continues to manage scope challenges. In general, ODOT looks to balance savings to unexpected additional costs.



The Commission received an informational update on the Highway 97/20 Refinement Plan and transition to an environmental analysis process. *(Background material in General Files, Salem.)*

Region 4 Manager Bob Bryant reminded the Commission that ODOT has been in the process of evaluating a refinement plan for Highway 97 and Highway 20 on the north end of Bend. Over the last two years, a steering committee made up of representatives from ODOT, the City of Bend, Deschutes County and the community evaluated a number of alternatives to address the congestion occurring on those two highways north of Bend. The steering committee recently concluded rather than trying to resolve the final two alternatives into a preferred alternative under the refinement planning process, it was prudent to add an additional level of detail that can be achieved through a National Environmental Policy Act environmental study process. In October, the steering committee agreed to transition from a refinement plan to a NEPA process.

A group of many of the stakeholders involved in the refinement planning process has come together as a citizens' advisory committee for the NEPA study. The steering committee will provide oversight to the project as it moves into the NEPA process. Through that process, we will achieve a level of detail that will better inform us and enable us to decide on a preferred alternative.

Mr. Bryant reviewed the project area with the Commission.

The Commission wants to know what the normal interchange spacing standard is on a major highway like U.S. 97. Mr. Bryant believes that inside an urban area, normal spacing of interchanges is at one-mile intervals. Outside an urban area, spacing is approximately two miles. Mr. Bryant will confirm this information for the Commission.

Mr. Bryant responded to questions from OTC regarding potential interchange options, local road connections and the two project concepts under consideration.

There seems to be a conflict between moving through trips on U.S. 97 and improving congestion and freight mobility. In the confluence we start to build local convenience access points that drive the cost up and cause potential conflict with land use planning laws. The Commission is troubled by all the connections in the alignment illustrated in Concept 1B, particularly if another interchange is added someplace between Cooley Road and Deschutes Market Road. Discussion with the locals may be needed to find out what the goals are.

The Commission is also troubled by project Concept 1B's parallel alignment of Highways 20 and 97 at the south end of the project, and the lack of connections to Highway 20 from Highway 97. It may not make sense to begin the NEPA process and expend funds on this particular approach.

Mr. Bryant will come back to the Commission in March for a more in-depth conversation about this issue.

The Commission wants to know what the percentage of local vs. through trips is on Highway 97. Mr. Bryant believes average daily traffic is approximately 30,000 on the north end of Bend. North of Redmond, average daily through trips is approximately 4,000. He will bring a more definite answer to the Commission in March.

Commissioner Papé disclosed for the record his company's interest in approximately 12 acres of property at Robal Road and U.S. 97.

In August 2005, the Commission provided clear direction that before moving forward with expending funds to improve the intersection at Cooley Road, a refinement plan must be completed and have clearer direction on a more regional perspective of this section of Highway 20 and Highway 97. ODOT will continue the refinement planning work through the NEPA process to bring a greater level of detail to the options that emerged from the refinement planning process.

The refinement plan will come to the OTC for its endorsement. The local jurisdictions will also need to amend their transportation system plan or comprehensive plan. A NEPA process does not have the same loop back to the OTC for ODOT staff to get concurrence in the final alternative of a NEPA environmental study. It is incumbent on Mr. Bryant and his staff to keep the Commission informed and look to for opportunities to get feedback from the Commission on the alternatives that emerge and evolve from the NEPA process.

There will be an opportunity for members of the Commission to meet with members of the refinement plan steering committee to discuss the project's purpose, needs, goals and objectives. The goal of the meeting will be to determine the locals' and state's goals and come to a clearer understanding of what the project needs to achieve.

The Commission is still committed to completing a refinement plan before moving forward with this issue. If, because of the complexity of the project, NEPA work is needed to help inform the development of the refinement plan, the Commission agreed to it. The refinement plan must be completed and approved by the Commission before any money is spent.

The Commission understands there is a high interest to move toward development of Juniper Ridge. The Commission is also interested and is glad the development is moving forward, but will not sacrifice the objectives without getting through all the steps needed to evaluate and clearly look at the overall transportation system in that area, including local connectivity to Highway 20.

The Commission needs to stand back and take a global, long-term look at the transportation issues on the north end of Bend. The number one priority is through traffic on U.S. 20 and 97 over the long-term. It is not appropriate to use state highways to solve local trip issues. The City of Bend and Deschutes County also need to look at what is needed on their systems for arterials.



The Commission considered approval of 14 Transportation Enhancement projects for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and four additional projects as alternates (Reserve List). The Commission also considered a request to authorize the Deputy Director for Highways to advance Reserve List projects to the STIP if sufficient funds become available in 2007 or 2008. (*Background material in General Files, Salem.*)

Doug Tindall recognized Pat Fisher's and Commissioner Nelson's efforts with the Transportation Enhancement Advisory Committee (TEAC).

Transportation Enhancement Program Manager Pat Fisher said that the TEAC received 75 applications. Those applications were reviewed and evaluated by ODOT staff and the 11-member TEAC before recommendations were made for the Commission to consider.

The Commission commented on the importance of the Corvallis-Albany Trail project. Questions have come up regarding whether Union Pacific Railroad is or is not going to approve the use of the property. From talking with Benton County Commissioner Linda Modrell, design work is needed before the county can have a conversation with the railroad about how much of its right-of-way will be involved in the project. The

Commission recognizes that the intergovernmental agreement must address the status of those issues, and it must also be done by the August 31, 2007, deadline. Commissioner Nelson could not attend this meeting, but he has been briefed about this situation.

Commissioner Achterman moved to approve the 14 Transportation Enhancement projects for inclusion in the STIP, and four additional projects as alternates (Reserve List). Commissioner Achterman further moved to authorize the Deputy Director for Highways to advance Reserve List projects to the STIP if sufficient funds become available in 2007 or 2008. The motion passed unanimously.



The Commission received an informational briefing on the *Immediate Opportunity Fund Annual Report* for State Fiscal Year 2006. (*Background material in General Files, Salem.*)

Transportation Development Division Administrator Jerri Bohard introduced Jack Svadlenak, Transportation Economist, and Ann Hanus, with Oregon Economic and Community Development Department.

Mr. Svadlenak noted that this annual report includes the four projects approved by the Commission during fiscal year 2006 in Molalla, Fairview, Lebanon and Union County. Even though the IOF category of Type C (preparation for Oregon Certified Project Ready Industrial Sites) was not approved until October, a definition was added to the FY 2006 annual report.

Ann Hanus and Bev Thacker, OECDD's Program Manager for Industrial Land Certification, responded to the Commission's questions about Oregon Certified Project Ready Industrial Sites. Currently, there are 47 certified industrial sites. ODOT and all the Area Commissions on Transportation are aware of these sites and are working with OECDD to make sure the associated transportation projects get worked into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, so that the Immediate Opportunity Fund does not need to be used unless absolutely necessary. A process document was developed that sets forth issues and criteria that ODOT will review for certified sites as well as for Type A (specific economic development projects that affirm job retention and job creation opportunities) and Type B (revitalization of business or industrial centers to support economic development and livability) projects.

It would be helpful to the Commission, as we get close to realizing a Type C project, and before it is brought to the OTC for approval, that the OTC receive a briefing on the project so it can provide appropriate feedback.



The next two meeting dates are:

- Wednesday and Thursday, March 21 and 22, 2007, in Salem.
- Wednesday, April 25, 2007, in Monmouth.



The Commission considered approval of the following Consent Calendar items.
(*Background material in General Files, Salem.*)

1. Approve the minutes of the January 24-25, 2007, Commission meeting in Salem.
2. Adopt a resolution for authority to acquire real property by purchase, condemnation, agreement or donation.
3. Approve the following Oregon Administrative Rule actions:

a.	Amendment of OAR 735-062-0150 relating to commercial driver license passenger endorsements.
b.	Adoption of OAR 741-060-0025, 0035 and 0095, and the amendment of OAR 741-060-0010 through 0110 relating to state oversight of rail transit agencies.

4. Appoint Curtis Shuck Jr. to the Winter Recreation Advisory Committee. The appointment will be for the balance of the term, which runs through June 2009, vacated by Beth Royce. Mr. Shuck was selected by the Pacific Northwest Ski Association as its representative. He is willing to serve on the Winter Recreation Advisory Committee.
5. Approve an amendment to the 2006-2009 STIP to add a project that will provide funding for the inspection of bridges owned by the Ports of Hood River and Cascade Locks. The funding will come from the State Bridge Program. The planned program year is 2007, and the total project cost is \$100,000.
6. Approve a modification to the OTIA I/II condition of approval (to adopt by means of an intergovernmental agreement an Access Management Plan) to require the implementation of an Access Management Strategy for the U.S. 101 at Long Prairie Road project (Tillamook County).
7. Approve the cancellation of two Transportation Enhancement projects from the 2006-2009 STIP: The Greenwood Inn - SW Scholls Ferry Road project, in the amount of \$1,363,000 (Beaverton), and the Oregon 126 Business: Brooklyn Avenue - McVay Highway project, in the amount of \$633,000 (Springfield).
8. Approve an amendment to the 2006-2009 STIP to add the Oregon 22: Cordon Road SE Over-crossing project (Bridge #08473, Marion County). The project is currently part of the 2008-2011 Draft STIP. Total project cost is estimated to be \$3,782,000.

9. Approve an amendment to the 2006-2009 STIP to cancel the Region 2 Fish Passage project (Lane County). Total project cost is estimated to be \$138,000.
10. Approve an amendment to the 2006-2009 STIP to cancel the Terminal 4 Access Improvements project (Portland), an OTIA III Freight Mobility project (applicant Port of Portland). Total project cost is estimated to be \$1,000,000.
11. Approve an amendment to the 2006-2009 STIP to cancel the Interstate 5: Myrtle Creek Curves portion of Interstate 5: Myrtle Creek – Tri City – Bundle 306 (Douglas County). The current cost estimate is \$78,458,000. Canceling this portion of the project will reduce the current estimate by \$21,017,000.
12. Approve the 2006 Flat Fee Study results. Flat fee rates are reviewed biennially by ODOT and the Commission, and any adjustments deemed appropriate are presented to the Legislative Assembly as set forth in ORS 825.482. The results of the 2006 Flat Fee Study indicate that adjustments to current statutory rates should be considered by the Legislative Assembly.
13. Approve a request to seek legislative approval to apply for grant funds under the Federal Highway Administration's Intelligent Transportation System Operational Testing to Mitigate Congestion program in order to continue research and development on Oregon's mileage fee concept. ODOT will request \$14.8 million in grant funds.
14. Approve a request to seek legislative approval to apply for grant funds under the Federal Highway Administration's Transportation, Community and Systems Preservation Program for two projects: 82nd Avenue Pedestrian, Bicycle and Safety Improvements (Portland) in the amount of \$2 million; and Douglas County Fairgrounds/McLain Avenue Multi-use Path (Roseburg) in the amount of \$1 million.
15. Approve a request to seek legislative approval to apply for grant funds under the Federal Highway Administration's Public Lands Highways Discretionary (PLHD) Program for several projects: Interstate 84 at Exit 18 (Sandy River Confluence Project, Portland) in the amount of \$4.5 million; With significant improvements needed on both the Historic Columbia River Highway and Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail, ODOT intends to apply for PLDH funds to address needs. However, ODOT is still assessing which project is the best candidate for funding under this program and will develop a grant application once this determination has been made. The grant will request approximately \$4 million in funding for this project; Highway 26 at Government Camp (Preliminary Engineering and Environmental work only) in the amount of \$1.5 million; Oregon 140 North Fork Little Butte Creek - Green Springs Highway (Jackson and Klamath Counties) in the amount of \$975,000; Lava Lands Visitor Center and Lava River Cave access roads (Deschutes County) in the amount of \$3.8 million; U.S. 26 Beaver Creek Refinement Plan (Warm Springs) in the amount of \$200,000; Study of West Rim Drive Road

Bench Erosion (Crater Lake) in the amount of \$250,000; and South Century Drive Reconstruction (Deschutes County) in the amount of \$4 million.

16. Approve a request to seek legislative approval to apply for grant funds under the Federal Highway Administration's Interstate Maintenance Discretionary Program for a number of priority projects: Columbia River Crossing (Portland) in the amount of \$6 million; Interstate 5/Wilsonville Road Interchange Improvements in the amount of \$5 million; Interstate 5 Preservation and Environmental Demonstration/Safety and Operational Improvements (Clackamas County) in the amount of \$3.2 million; and Interstate 84 Burnt River Canyon (Baker County) in the amount of \$5 million.

17. Approve the cancellation of a previously approved Type A Immediate Opportunity Fund Grant at the Port of Morrow East Beach Complex for Stanford Chemical in the amount of \$500,000 awarded in 2000. No funds have been expended to date on this grant.

Commissioner Wilson moved to approve the items on the Consent Calendar. The motion passed unanimously.

• • •

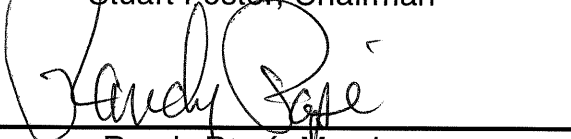
Chair Foster adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

The Commission had an opportunity to view ODOT's fleet trailer with its new curtain. The trailer was on display in front of the Capitol in Salem. The message on the curtain reads, "Slow Down. Better Roads Ahead."

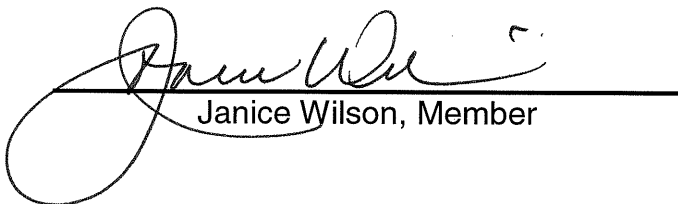
• • •


Stuart Foster, Chairman


Gail Achterman, Member


Randy Papé, Member

Not present.
Mike Nelson, Member


Janice Wilson, Member


Kim Jordan, Commission Assistant