

Cascades East Transit – Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee



Meeting Minutes

CET Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee (RPTAC)

May 24 from 10 am – 12 pm at COIC offices (334 NE Hawthorne) in Bend

Meeting attendees:

Kim Curley – Commute Options
Richard Ross – RPTAC Chair
Molly Taroli – PacificSource
Tyler Deke – Bend MPO
Jordan Ohlde – Citizen Member
Casey Bergh – OSU-Cascades

COIC/CET Staff

Michelle Rhoads
Steve Jorgensen
Derek Hofbauer

A quorum was not present at this meeting

Introductions

Ms. Rhoads welcomed Steve Jorgensen, the new Senior Transit Planner for COIC/CET. Mr. Jorgensen brings a wealth of knowledge to COIC/CET regarding transit planning. Chair Ross commented that Mr. Jorgensen's arrival is timely with the new HB2017 statewide transit funding (STIF) and CET's upcoming Transit Development Plan efforts.

Review of 2/21 meeting minutes

The group reviewed the meeting minutes and had a discussion regarding Mr. Douglas's presentation at the February RPTAC meeting and his ADA requests to CET. Ms. Rhoads was asked about a follow up regarding Mr. Douglas's presentation and noted the complaint is in the hands of the Department of Justice and a resolution will be determined in the near future. Ms. Rhoads also noted CET's FTA Triennial review is scheduled for 5/30 and 5/31.

A motion was made to accept the minutes. Mr. Ohlde seconded and all members approved.

CET staffing update

Ms. Rhoads indicated that Dylan Corbin is leaving CET and taking a fellowship position at Fish and Wildlife in San Diego. Andrea Breault will also be joining CET in June and comes from Tufts University where she was the Assistant Director of Transportation and Parking. CET is also close to staffing the rural supervisor position.

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Public comment period

Mr. Hofbauer read Richard Gilbert’s emailed comments regarding low ridership of route 12, buses potentially going over the posted speed limit, and the loud noises generated from route 12 buses traveling through Northwest Crossing. No other public comments were offered.

Bend Transportation Planning Projects Update

Mr. Deke discussed the purpose of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) boundary. Chair Ross mentioned the MPO can apply for special funds at the Federal level. Mr. Deke discussed some background information regarding MPOs, such as the need to develop a long term plan and make sure they are compliant with federal policies. They need to address tourism as part of their planning process. The MPO also develops a Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Deke referenced some planning projects that are being implemented throughout the region. Below are a few that were discussed.

- City of Bend transportation plan update
- MPO long-range plan update
- US 97 Parkway Study
- US 97 Freight Plan
- Bend area Transportation Safety Action Plan
- Deschutes County Transportation Safety Action Plan
- Intelligent Transportation Systems Plan update
- US 20 planning
- CET Master Transit Plan Update

Chair Ross indicated the Hamby Road crossing (Hwy 20 and Hamby) was a traffic hotspot with an uptick in crashes. City staff is getting started on Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) work. NW Crossing housing and population is going to grow. The density isn’t quite there yet for efficient transit.

Some current transportation projects discussed include:

- Annual preservation/maintenance projects
- NW 14th Street reconstruction
- Empire Ave. extension
- Murphy Road extension (3 phases)
- Oregon HB 2017 for work on north US 97
- US 20/3rd Street: Empire to Greenwood (engineering and public process begins this summer)

Ms. Rhoads asked if there are Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) opportunities to explore prior to the construction of these facilities.

CET Service Modification Proposal

Ms. Rhoads discussed the 2015-2018 Service Expansion Pilot Project that added routes 7 and 12 and increased frequencies along other routes. There were mixed results in terms of ridership from the pilot project. Route 12 ridership never materialized as envisioned. Due to the June 30, 2018 sunset of the Service Expansion Pilot Project funding from community partners, the City of Bend, OSU-Cascades,

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COCC, and St. Charles, there is now a \$470,000 shortfall in the CET budget. To address this shortfall, CET developed proposals to eliminate route 12, potentially eliminate route 6 and make on time performance better on route 7. Meetings with 2015-2018 Service Expansion Pilot Project partners were held on May 5 and May 23 to present ridership information and discuss potential impacts to the community. During the May 23 community partner meeting, proposals were solidified to eliminate route 12, preserve route 6 (provided City Council and COIC approve funds), and modifications to route 7 to improve on-time performance.

CET developed and initiated a robust public outreach process to solicit feedback for CET service modification proposals, which were posted at Hawthorne Station and along affected bus routes and stops. Comment cards regarding proposed route modifications were also handed out by bus drivers on routes 6, 7, and 12. Additionally, the press was present at the RPTAC meeting to record images of the presentation and talk with Mr. Rhoads about the CET service modification proposals that were placed throughout the community. CET also hired a consultant, Jacobs Engineering/CH2M Hill, to assist with the data analysis process and facilitate meetings with 2015-2018 Service Expansion Pilot partners.

Recreational services update

2018 Ride Bend Service

- City of Bend, Visit Bend and COIC are the sponsors of the service
- Extended service from 2 - 10 pm in 2017; the 2018 service is from Noon to 10 pm)
- There were slight route modifications in Old Mill so the bus can dwell and pick up passengers on Bluff Drive, which is closer to Old Mill compared to the 2017 stop.

Ms. Rhoads noted that a lesson learned from last year was that Ride Bend was frequently used as a substitute for Ride the River. CET has evolved the service to help encourage people to use the Ride the River shuttle for actual river floating trips.

2018 Ride the River

- Park and Float (a parking lot and tube rental at Columbia and Simpson) was added to the service
- A shuttle service will provide transportation between the Park and Float and Riverbend.
- A third bus will be added starting June 30.
- A pilot project will operate June 16 –July 13 to start service at 10 am to test the demand of the earlier service. The pilot may be continued for the rest of the summer season if demand justifies it.

FLAP update

Mr. Hofbauer presented a one page document that highlighted COIC's FLAP application for a two-year pilot summer transit service from Hawthorne Station to Devils' Lake, with stops at Mt. Bachelor and popular trailheads. The service (if funded) will help alleviate traffic and parking congestion along Cascades Lakes Scenic Byway. Mt. Bachelor supported the application and provided the local match contribution for the application.

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TriCounty Summit

Ms. Curley provided an update regarding the TriCounty Summit. Casey Kaiser (a speaker at the summit) talked about population growth in Prineville and how millennials are choosing to locate based more on preference and less on job opportunities. Ms. Curley also noted there was a discussion about the many economic and tourism benefits for transit, particularly for recreation services. Bicycle tourism was also a popular topic at the Summit and Mr. Jorgensen noted Prineville just built a bike park and pump track. Mr. Hofbauer presented CET transit initiatives and updates at the Summit. Ms. Curley also noted new employment opportunities in Prineville with the new Facebook server facility.

The meeting was adjourned at Noon.