

Cascades East Transit – Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee



Meeting Minutes

August 15, 2018

CET Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee (RPTAC)

COIC offices (334 NE Hawthorne) in Bend

Meeting attendees:

Kim Curley – Commute Options
Richard Ross – RPTAC Chair
Jordan Ohlde – Citizen Member
Kathy Fitzpatrick – Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEED)
Theresa Conley - ODOT
Ellen Hammond – Citizen

COIC/CET Staff

Michelle Rhoads
Andrea Breault
Derek Hofbauer

A quorum was not present at this meeting.

Introductions

Chair Ross asked the committee members and meeting attendees to introduce themselves and mention one activity they like to do when it is hot outside.

Review of 5/24/18 Meeting Minutes

The group reviewed minutes from the 5/24/18 RPTAC meeting and found them to be materially accurate.

CET Staffing Update

Two new hires will assist CET staff with the Transit Master and ongoing outreach and planning efforts. Ashley Hooper from Raleigh, NC, was offered the Transit Outreach Specialist job and Rachel Zaken from Cincinnati was offered the Transit Planning Specialist job.

Ms. Rhoads indicated that Karen Friend announced her retirement in December and the two semifinalist candidates will be announced soon. Ms. Curley asked about Ms. Friend's role in the statewide Public Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) and the Oregon Transit Association (OTA). Ms. Rhoads

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indicated the OTA role will transition to the Transportation Manager and the PTAC role is to be determined.

Public Comment Period

Ms. Hammond asked if CET can develop an online map that highlights each bus stop. She also inquired how those types of questions should be asked. Mr. Hofbauer indicated communication via the [CET comment form](#) is the best way to ask those specific questions related to mapping requests. He also noted that a map will likely be developed once the new Transit Specialist staff members begin working in October. Ms. Curley indicated she uses Transit App to plan trips and that local bus stops are shown on that platform. No other public comments were offered at the meeting.

“Transit Transformation in the Gorge” – Guest presentation by Kathy Fitzpatrick

Ms. Fitzpatrick highlighted her region’s eight transportation service providers and provided examples of great partnerships that provide better transportation connectivity between The Dalles, Portland, and other areas in the Columbia Gorge. She also noted a FLAP study was submitted that will examine options for providing transit service along Highway 35. Ms. Fitzpatrick indicated the Columbia Gorge Express has been very successful, in addition to the trolley service in Hood River. The trolley service is used primarily by locals (90%), making it a great community transportation resource. Columbia Area Transit provides fixed route transit services in the area. Additionally, the Port of Hood River has been a great partner in getting people bikes across the bridge via transit. RPTAC reviewed Port of Hood River's planned transportation/transit hub, which would accommodate Gorge visitors, commuters, and transit supportive services at the South bridgehead of the Hood River Bridge. The group then discussed aspects regarding Transit Oriented Design.

Ms. Hammond asked about potential coordination with Amtrak. Ms. Fitzpatrick acknowledged there is support for passenger rail in the Gorge. There have been interesting conversations with health communities regarding transit and mobility in general and how partners can come together. Ms. Fitzpatrick noted that transit helps define the community.

Commute Options Friendly Driver Program

Ms. Curley indicated the driver safety education class is interactive and there are prizes available for winning teams. The program is targeted to delivery drivers, bus drivers, and other people who drive for a profession. A similar program has been successful in Ft. Collins, CO, and staff shared information and best practices with Commute Options. The grant will be continued into next year.

Citywide Transportation Advisory Committee Update (CTAC)

Chair Ross provided an update on the Bend Citywide Transportation Advisory Committee. He noted the committee examined the funding topic up front to explore all funding sources for all modes of transportation. The planning process will go on for about another year and there is a very good consultant team working on the project. Chair Ross noted there is a need to align the City’s Transportation System Plan (TSP) with CET’s Transit Master Plan. A transit vision for Bend will help CTAC align all of the different pieces. Ms. Conley noted the kickoff for the Transit Master Plan will be in November, 2018. Ms. Rhoads will plan to attend the next CTAC meeting to give a quick update on the timing of the Transit Master Plan.

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CET Transit Master Plan Update

Ms. Breault indicated the last CET Transit Master Plan update was in 2015. She is currently looking at existing conditions and opportunities to integrate the upcoming planning process for the new Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF). Ms. Breault has been riding the different transit routes to better understand the system and help inform the plan. Ms. Fitzpatrick acknowledged pullout sections in the plan are helpful for informing local planning efforts. She also asked how cities are contributing (e.g. local match). Ms. Rhoads acknowledged the City of Bend provides local match for transit services in Bend. Chair Ross asked to what extent CET will develop new funding approaches and if CET will explore initiatives related to House Bill 2745. Ms. Rhoads indicated CET is open to working with community partners to support transit funding for their respective communities.

Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Update

Ms. Rhoads indicated STIF funds need to be used to enhance transit services. Ms. Rhoads and Ms. Friend are communicating with Qualified Entities (e.g. Deschutes, Jefferson, Crook Counties and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs) to coordinate the timing of STIF applications and administrative processes to allow for better regional coordination and project prioritization. COIC has offered to help support this process via a joint management agreement that would allow COIC to help staff advisory committees and other STIF-related administrative duties. Regional projects for 2019 will be proposed to ODOT in the second round in May of 2019. This allows time for CET jurisdictions to identify STIF priorities and form the new joint agreement and advisory structure that meets HB 2017 criteria, as well as to initiate the Transit Master Plan. Ms. Conley asked about the potential role of a regional committee. Ms. Rhoads indicated a need to coordinate STIF activities with RPTAC to better align and leverage local advisory committee staffing. Chair Ross noted three elements that are important in the planning process: transit vision, exciting projects, and political champions.

CET General Updates

Ms. Rhoads noted CET recently went through an FTA triennial review process with no deficiencies and that no other transit agency in Oregon to her knowledge has accomplished that feat in the past year. She also noted CET is working with the City of Bend and community partners to explore what it would take to bring back service to Courtney Drive on Route 7. Ms. Rhoads mentioned that parking likely needs to be removed on one side of the road along Courtney Drive for transit vehicles to safely and efficiently navigate that narrow street and access those stops. She also indicated an E-fare soft launch in Bend was successful and a soft launch for the Community Connector service will occur this fall.

Oregon Public Transit Conference (OPTC) Update

The OPTC will be held in Bend this year at the Riverhouse Convention Center October 28-31. Registration is now open https://oregontransit.com/form.php?form_id=45&c=1

Fall Meeting Schedule

The next RPTAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 17 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm at COIC offices in Bend (334 NE Hawthorne).

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The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm