

REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16 FROM 1:30-2:30 PM

Advisory Committee Members

Bob Bryant, Chair
Annie Marland
Kim Curley, Co-Vice Chair
George Conway
Casey Bergh
Brian Potwin
Richard Ross
Cora Ives
Zach Bass
Jordan Ohlde
Nick Snead, Vice Chair
James Halliday

Guests

Eddie Montejo

Staff

Andrea Breault
Derek Hofbauer
Ashley Mohni
Rachel Zakem

Members of the Public

Louis Capozzi
Theresa Conley
Andrea Napoli

Public comment - Bob Bryant, RPTAC Chair

- Mr. Ohlde shared that the current Saturday schedule for Bend fixed routes is really challenging for people who rely on public transportation to get to work. He requested a meeting to discuss ways to return to regular service as soon as possible. Additionally, he asked why CET plans to increase frequency for Routes 1 and 6 but not on other routes at this time.

- Ms. Breault responded that the driver shifts for Routes 1 and 6 were added since these are CET’s highest ridership routes. She anticipates Routes 2 and 4 will be the next round of routes with increased frequency, pending driver availability.
- Ms. Marland mentioned the City of Sisters is in conversations to purchase the Forest Service land in Sisters that has potential for a new transit hub location.
 - Mr. Hofbauer replied that CET is interested in this new site as well due to its potential location for a new mobility hub.

Review and approval of 12/15/21 meeting minutes - Bob Bryant, RPTAC Chair

- All committee members approved the meeting minutes.

CET service updates and driver recruitment efforts - Derek Hofbauer, CET

- Starting on February 5, CET temporarily suspended Saturday service for regional Community Connector service due to driver shortages.
- CET plans to incrementally return Bend fixed-route service starting with Routes 1 and 6.
- All services (except for Mt. Bachelor) continue to operate without fares.
- MTM Transit, CET’s contractor, is responsible for the hiring and recruitment of drivers for Bend fixed-route service, while CET is responsible for hiring drivers for regional service.
- Mr. Potwin asked if CET plans to remain fareless.
 - Ms. Breault responded that CET has looked to alternative funding sources to supplement fares (COVID-Relief Funds and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund, STIF). She added that staying fareless is not based on a financial argument, but the transit behavior shift created when all services became available at no cost. CET’s Dial-A-Ride (DAR) service, which is curb-to-curb and more convenient, is at capacity and CET is exploring a model that applies fares to DAR to incentivize riders to utilize fixed-route service, which is more cost beneficial for the agency.
- Mr. Hofbauer asked Dr. Conway to share the latest information regarding COVID-19.
 - Dr. Conway responded that we are moving in the right direction but we still have a long way to go. Deschutes County still has 700 cases a day. He does believe that the recent downward trend will continue.
 - If asked, he would have advised that masks not be done away with in schools until children are able to be vaccinated, as well as in any confined space such as grocery stores and buses. He shared a graphic about layered health and safety measures in schools and said that precautions necessary in school are very similar to those required on public transit.
 - Dr. Conway encouraged CET to encourage riders wear face coverings and practice good hygiene. He also recommended that smaller, Dial-A-Ride vehicles keep the windows open during operation.
- CET has continued to advertise for the driver positions available on the CET website and social media. Mr. Hofbauer noted the agency had initial success reaching potential employees with using boosted Facebook posts.

- Wage increases will most likely be a component of future STIF requests.
- CET and MTM have both seen some success recently with hiring.
- Mr. Potwin recommended CET to utilize Ziprecruiter for future hiring needs.
- Mr. Halliday shared that as a former bus driver, the most challenging thing he had to deal with was split shifts. He recommended moving away from these to make the position more attractive.

Deschutes and Jefferson County 5310 Discretionary Project applications overview and STF committee prioritization - Ashley Mohni, CET

- Ms. Mohni shared that Deschutes and Jefferson county both applied for discretionary grant funds.
 - Deschutes County applied for just over \$1,013,000 in grant funds to support four projects:
 - Hawthorne Station On-Site Services
 - Enhancing Mobility Management & Travel Training
 - Transit Security Equipment and Technology
 - Integrated Transit Asset Management and Work Order Software.
 - Jefferson County applied for \$1,015,000 in grant funds to support rural transit operations through gap funding.
- The timeline for decision making is in April. If awarded, the grants would be executed on July 1st.

Bend Mobility Hub Feasibility Study overview & public engagement plan - Eddie Montejo, Parametrix & Derek Hofbauer, CET

- Mr. Montejo explained the concept of mobility hubs and noted they are very customizable, allowing them to be implemented in different parts of the country in various ways.
- Parametrix is studying how to best support the implementation of mobility hubs in Bend.
- The Best Practices review is the first part of the project that has been completed. It highlights lessons learned from peer cities similar to Bend.
- The next steps include creating an evaluation framework, conducting market assessments, establishing mobility hub types/features, and designing guidance and implementation strategies.
- The draft Public Engagement Plan for the Bend Mobility Hub Feasibility Study is available on [CET's website](#).
- Surveys and in-person tabling events at Hawthorne Station will allow for a more inclusive and equitable approach for soliciting information from transit riders, the general public, and traditionally underserved audiences.

Adjourn RPTAC meeting and transition to Bend Mobility Hub Feasibility Study TAC meeting #2