Cascades East Transit
Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council
334 NE Hawthorne Ave, Bend, OR 97701
cascadeseasttransit.com

Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee (RPTAC)

Wednesday, October 16 @ 1:30-3:00pm
Hawthorne Station Conference Room

Join via Zoom

Meeting Agenda

Call to order

Welcome and introductions

Approval of minutes from meeting on August 21, 2024

Chair and Vice Chair appointments • RPTAC members (20 minutes)

- Call for nominations
- Discussion
- Vote of RPTAC members

Introducing CET's new Transportation Director • Bob Townsend (5 minutes)

- Bob joined CET in September and comes from ODOT

Transit Services Report • Eric Lint (5 minutes)

- Ridership statistics
- Project updates
- Recap of Legislative Joint Transportation Committee visit to Bend

Summer Recreation Services • Eric Lint (10 minutes)

- End of season report
- Possible RPTAC vote on recommended service levels

Fiscal Report • Michelle Williams + Bob Towsend (10 minutes)

- Overview of recent grant applications:
    - STIF formula, FTA Section 5310, Innovative Mobility Program

Vanpool program changes • Michelle Williams + Bob Towsend (10 minutes)

- New program changes in effect starting November 1, 2024

Local Agency Updates • (10 minutes)

- Hear from agency partners about transportation projects and programs in our region

RPTAC Next Meeting, Committee Organization • RPTAC discussion (5 minutes)

- Next meeting's regularly scheduled date is December 18
- Discuss approach to agenda setting
- Consider length of meeting – is 90 minutes enough?

Public comment (5 minutes)

- We encourage public comment to be submitted by email at rptac@cascadeseasttransit.com
- Participants joining by Zoom may use the "raise hand" feature to request to speak

RPTAC Member Report Outs

Good of the order

Meeting adjourns

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Zoom meeting details

Download and import an iCalendar (.ics) file here.

Join by phone at: (253) 215-8782

Meeting ID: 891 4459 8795
Passcode: 9anWxB

Upcoming events

Oct 23	Crook County STIF Advisory Committee meeting
Oct 27-30	Oregon Public Transit Conference in Seaside
Nov 6	Bend MPO Technical Advisory Committee meeting
Nov 7	COIC Board meeting
Nov 11	Veteran's Day parade in Bend (CET participating)
Nov 15	Bend MPO Policy Board meeting
Nov 29	Mt Bachelor Opening Day (targeted)
Dec 5-7	Oregon Outdoor Recreation Summit in Sunriver CET presenting: *Transit to Trails: Celebrating Access to the Outdoors Via Public Transit*
Dec 18	RPTAC meeting

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Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee (RPTAC)

Meeting Minutes from August 21, 2024

Committee members present:

John Livingston

Bob Bryant

Denise LaBuda

Trevor Johnson

Jordan Ohlde

Greg Bryant

Jovi Arellano

Brian Potwin

Janet Llerandi Gonzales

Eileen Kiely

Gary Farnsworth

Casey Bergh

COIC/CET staff present:

Eric Lint

Derek Hofbauer

Guests present:

Maria Madden

Meghan Weaver

Public comment:

- Trevor has a list that he'll present at the end of the meeting

Approval of minutes from meeting on June 12

- Meeting minutes were unanimously approved

Transit Services Report – Eric Lint

- Looked at the ridership data
- Bend fixed routes are approaching pre-pandemic level
- Increase in ridership for July
- Recreation service number of participants exceeding expectations
- Community Connections showing heavy usage, pretty steady overall
- Not included on the ridership data charts – van pools. More date is on the COIC reports.
- Service changes in recent weeks, with a couple still ahead of us
- Route 4: This week Empire and Robol will be opening; want to see how that connection works. Hopefully taking 3rd street all the way up
- Bryan question to Eric: is CET trying to hit less than 30 minutes for wait times at the bus stops? Eric reply: probably not this year. Requires adding more vehicles, asking for more funding. The goal is to get down to 15 minutes.
- More drivers means extending service hours.
- Greg question to Eric: Are we having more trouble with drivers? Eric reply: not as bad
- Trevor question to Eric: will there be more weekend services? Redmond residents are confused about routes A and B as well, think it's dial a ride. More signage is needed. Eric reply: working on changing signs, adding more drivers will help with all of this as well
- Jordan question to Eric: any talk about changing schedules on Saturdays? There was an event a couple of weeks ago, where he had to wait 2 hours for route 4. Was not aware of this changing schedule. Same thing happened another day, where route 2 was cancelled because of an event. He had trouble getting to Old Mill because of this. Eric reply: issues are on our radar.
- Casey question to Eric: was there any specific destination or event that drove July Community connector ridership vs. previous years, less students taking that? Eric reply: when the school year begins, more students will be taking the bus.
- Derek brought up recent CET outreach events, trying to get a lot of press attention to increase ridership.
    - Redmond Senior Center – event showing seniors the routes with trivia and prizes, hopefully will continue to ride.
    - Transit to Trails – Bend bikes, discover your forest with Smokey.
        - Janet asked a question: accessibility need-help keep background noise down to help folks on zoom hear.
    - Bend Night Out
    - Bend City Fest – Eric got route 9 to run later, so that folks could ride it. The mayor also took this bus to the event. Posted on our social media.
    - Starting to wrap up our recreation season.

Upcoming Projects – Eric Lint

- Travel trainer joining CET team in September -helping folks learn how to use our bus system. Go to senior centers, will set up 1:1 meetings to ride with folks. Saves us money, people use our services efficiently
    - Contract position through MTM in the Bend area ONLY. MTM is the transit provide for Bend are routes only, and dial a ride, ride the river.

    - Dial a ride – listed as a true ADA mandated paratransit service. Other cities don't have dial a ride.
- Jordan question to Eric: will travel trainer be permanent position. Eric reply: at least 2 years, Jovi also stated this. Want to build these functions into our core team. MTM has already hired someone for us, Eric has not met them yet.
- Eric mentioned the construction at Hawthorne
- Eric introduced new pilot shuttle service to Virginia Meissner Sno Park for Nordic skiers
    - Should be feasible, still need to iron out some details – cost, vehicle, driver availability, schedules, etc.
    - Hopefully start in December of this year, providing 3 round trips
    - Local Nordic club is contributing $12,000 from various providers, and will help promote this service
    - Eric asked advisory committee what they think of this, feedback.
    - Brian said that $12,000 is not a lot. Eric reply: it's a start
    - Service will come with a fee, smaller shuttle, less footprint
    - Route: Bachelor park and ride or closer to the welcome center, down Century Drive where the stop may be
    - Brain question to Eric: how will the $12,000 amount play a role with overall cost. Eric reply: the cost to operate will be roughly $1,000 per day. It would be a weekend service
    - Trevor question to Eric: will buses have a place to put skies? Eric reply: maybe basket outside like Bachelor shuttle
    - Greg question to Eric: would folks from Redmond be able to take part in this service? Eric reply: something we'll have to explore more; maybe connect at park and ride
    - Trevor question to Eric: how are people from Redmond like others not living in Bend, going to connect to the main shuttle route? In Bend we don't have a shuttle to the Bend park and ride.
    - Maria Misner?? has been the biggest contributor to this project, had overwhelming responses from Nordic club. They want a sustainable pilot program for this ski year. Have not talked about connection to Redmond yet.
        - Can we find the funds to sustain the whole year? Can folks make reservations?
    - John asked how much is the bus up to Mt. Bachelor? Mt. Bachelor does contribute to this service to help cover the costs.
    - Denise asked if there would be a fee? Eric reply: there will be a fee for this service, all rec. services come with a fee
    - Denise stated that the ridership will help with the funds. She then asked if there are other places to get more cash to help cover costs? Have to have at least 2 round trips up there and back.
    - Eric stated we'll have to look at advertisements to help pilot the program.
    - Bob stated that funds take time to process and Trevor mentioned that maybe the state has some grants to help. Eric reply: most likely this will be funded through the state
    - Trevor wants to make sure that we connect to Redmond, it would be important for all of us. See how step 1 goes, than we'll add on as we move forward. Greg, Brian, and Bob motioned for this

- Maria with the Nordic club had mentioned that turn around for this service would be about 2 hours at Virginia Meissner. Jordan asked why only 2 hours. Maria stated that most folks only want to stick around for about 2 hours.
- Service would only be on weekends to start, trying to reduce the number of vehicles on Century Drive – main goal! Maria mentioned will also help folks with accessibility, some vehicles can't drive in the snow
- Denise brought up the idea of the Mt. Bachelor bus picking up Nordic skiers at Virginia Meissner. Group thought that idea to be too dangerous on that highway, it's tough to get in and out of the ski area, not safe.
- Eric -reminder to add that survey from Nordic.
- All in favor, no opposed. With one Abstain

Upcoming Meetings – Derek Hofbauer

- Derek highlighted OSU cascades event – joint committee on transportation statewide tour visits Bend. Giving us a good idea about transportation infrastructure. Wants to increase funding for STIF.
  - If transitioning to battery electric buses is in our future, we need funding. This is an example to share at this event.
  - We don't get much city funds, and the city of Bend is the biggest partner. OTA is advocating for an increase in funding.
  - Pop – up tents outside from 3-6pm. Invites going out next week.
  - Eric mentioned that this joint committee is mainly looking for stories about how we use services, and what we want this to become; stating priorities and gain an understanding that people do use our services and appreciate them. Want to hear about the impacts
  - Denise question to Derek: can we be a part of this event electronically. Derek reply: he will follow up on that
  - Jordan stated that he will be there.
  - Derek stated that the goal is to run Route 11 later in the evening. Trevor wants to go and Derek stated that he will take Trevor back to Redmond and carpool. Trevor will be talking to various legislators to help bring in more funding
- Eileen asked if we've discussed connecting Bend to Amtrak?
  - We have a lot of people requesting for that. Derek reply: they just met with Pacific Crest buslines, and are hoping to meet with ODOT as well. Flaging it as a gap will greatly help. Eileen mentioned how they used to have connections in Sunriver. Going to need more service to south counties like La Pine and Sunriver
  - It would be great to get people on buses instead of driving their own vehicles
  - Need more frequent routes in La Pine
  - Trevor agreed that it would be great to get people connected to train networks
- Derek brought up some other meetings coming up: STIF Advisory Committee Meeting and Oregon Public Transportation Conference

Partner Updates

- Jovi shared a slideshow she created. Will quickly run through it and give copies to the committee. She is going to give a presentation soon on Grant cycles of this year for transit programs, couple different funding sources
- Coordinating with Pacific Crest and others
- Derek question to Jovi: asked about the TGM planning grant. Jovi reply: it should open this fall
- Bob question to Jovi: when will this presentation take place? Jovi will present an overview on the 27th of this month. She will need feedback from everyone by October 22nd.

CET Major Projects – Gary Farnsworth

- Gary introduced himself, he's recently retired from ODOT
- Helping with the Hawthorne Station project through COIC
- Mobility Hubs – Troy Field Mobility Hub is one he is actively working on; wants to have this open and operating by May of next year. A lot of technical issues on site but have a good team and plan. This hub will have an informational kiosk, property is just east of troy field
    - Still working through the details and themes of the mobility hubs in Bend. Wants a strong partnership between CET and the City of Bend.
    - Brian asked about timeline: Gary stated it will hopefully be open in May of next year
- Eileen asked about the services we're envisioning at these hubs – what are the destinations? Eric reply: Troy field is a pilot project, and the services that will connect to this hub will be route 2. There is also route 11 that goes East – West. That one does not pass through this property. Still exploring how we can get the best bang for our buck.
- May look at bringing back Ride Bend – small vans
- Bob shared that some time ago, CET actually did a study to look at how to introduce these special places where buses could connect with users that use other modes of transportation; asked that Eric share that study
- Eric stated the hubs are not connecting to other bus lines necessarily, the Troy Field hub in particular is highlighting connections to other modes of transportation like rideshares and rental bikes
- City of Bend is working on mobility points. We're looking at more sites North and South of town that will be more urban with connecting bus routes
- Bob then asked to share the mobility study with Eileen
- Gary then mentioned another mobility hub at the south end of Bend, right on the edge of the city at Ponderosa street
    - Long term plan is to have a crossing there of the highway to connect those 2 roads; lots of work to do; make sure there are good connection opportunities; starting to dig into that with Eric and Jovi
- Bob asked if this location at Ponderosa would be another mobility hub. Eric reply: mentioned a stop near Walmart, connecting 3rd to east side and west side. Eric would love to see something in that general area.
- Trevor then asked how we could prevent cars from using this mobility hub as an access? Eric reply: need good, solid, visual markings for the mobility hubs; pavement markings would help. We need to figure out what would work consistently. Trevor mentioned the possibility of security cameras at each site
- Hawthorne Station Update (Gary) showed a diagram on the finished station on the screen. Eric said this new set up will no longer have buses stopping on the Safeway side of the

street. The new platforms, A and B will behind the Hawthorne Station building instead. Bringing more buses on our property and off the street
    - Target completion date is 2024. We will eventually have signage, message boards, and security cameras.
    - Bob asked if we could arrange the ribbon cutting day at an upcoming meeting
    - Eric gave Gary a big thanks, also stating that Andrea put a lot into this project as well, working after hours

RPTAC Member Reports – RPTAC discussion

- Trevor stated that he needed to leave soon, so he's going to wait to share the RPTAC Member Reports, but decided to share just a bit about transit information
    - Just a few weeks ago he was getting feedback from houseless committee. In the future we can offer free bus vouchers at homeless shelters for people that don't have money.
    - Redmond bus hub: display board for Bend to Redmond route; residents have stated that the times are not accurate and the printed schedules for the routes have font sizes that are too small, especially for folks with vision issues
    - The digital display in Redmond is not working, a technician needs to be prioritized for that.
    - 7th and Forest, need to put up a no parking sign because buses can't get in there when cars are parked; dollars for this will have to come from CET
    - Bus drivers also have concerns about schedules and holiday pay; not enough meetings in place with drivers to address certain concerns; going to have to talk about this more in the coming weeks
    - Bus drivers have also advocated to have a CET repair facility in Redmond, been a lot of breakdowns. Eric reply: we are working on that

RPTAC Next Meeting – RPTAC discussion

- Next meeting is on October 16 from 1:30-3 pm.

Good of the order

Meeting adjourns