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

Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee (RPTAC)
Meeting Minutes from February 19, 2025

Call to order

Welcome and introductions

Attendees:

Jordan Ohlde
Brian Potwin
Greg Bryant
Tobi Marx
Denise La Buda
Bob Bryant
Trevor Johnson
John Livingston
Freddy Finney-Jordet
Casey Berg

COIC Staff:

Eric Lint
Bob Townsend
Derek Hofbauer
Tammy Baney
Kirin Stryker

Guests:

Rod Foster
Jovi Arellano
Kristin Reidelberger

Public Comment

Kristin Rilenberger from Central Oregon Landwatch noted future agenda topics should focus on CET's Coordinated Human Services Plan that needs to be updated to ensure opportunities to apply for state and federal grants. Additionally, a long-term Capital Plan should be developed. Mr. Lint responded CET is aware of these needed plan updates and will take steps to use grant funding to pursue these initiatives.

Mr. Lint read submitted public comment from Hal De Show, indicating long routes and transfer times in Bend are barriers for people to ride the bus and recommended CET look at Bellingham's transit system as a model to replicate.

Mr. Ohlde noted the recent inclement weather has posed challenges for access on the system, particularly on Route 3 that accesses COCC and NW Crossing.

Approval of minutes from meeting on December 16, 2024

Mr. Ohlde moved to approve; Mr. Livingston seconded. Motion carried.

Transit Director Update

CET Draft Mission Statement presented by Mr. Lint

The following Draft Mission Statements were presented to the committee for feedback:

1. "Provide people across Central Oregon with access to a safe, reliable, convenient, and accessible transit service that connects people to services, employment, healthcare, and a variety of transportation mobility options."

2. "Connect people across Central Oregon to services, employment, healthcare, and recreational destinations with safe, reliable, friendly, and accessible public transportation services."

3. "Provide public transportation to Central Oregon with an emphasis on connecting people to services, employment, healthcare, and recreational opportunities through safe, reliable, and accessible services."

4. "Connect people and communities across Central Oregon to foster purpose, prosperity, and independence through a safe, reliable, and accessible public transportation system."

5. "Connect people and communities across Central Oregon to foster prosperity, independence, and adventure through a safe, reliable, and accessible public transportation system."

Advisory Committee member comments about the draft Mission Statement:

- Mr. Potwin noted he likes the specific call out of the services for employment and healthcare. Mission statements tend to be generalized, so it's good to think about all those different places in the community that need transit services.

- Mr. Bob Bryant indicated it seems like these initiatives need to go hand in hand somehow, as what's realistically possible under our current funding and financial model for public transportation.
- Mr. Greg Bryant noted the first reference is usually the biggest priority. Then you go down in sequence from most important to least important.
- Mr. Marx mentioned this is a great opportunity to reinvent and think about what CET can do better to provide an excellent service, which may not be feasible at this point in time.
- Mr. Johnson indicated the mission statements are great; however, there is more work to do to make those visions a reality.

2025 initiatives overview

June 2: Weekday extended hours in Bend, 6:00 am – 7:30 pm

June 2: Transit Pass introduction

July 14: Launch of Route 8 in northeast Bend

Sept 1: Transit Pass requirement

October 1: Fare Implementation

Advisory Committee member comments regarding the 2025 initiatives:

- Mr. Johnson asked if CET is considering a tap system where the balance on the card is deducted each tap. Mr. Lint responded this is the preferred method, as well as an open payment system where anyone with a credit card can tap; however, it depends on the system we get based on the Request for Proposals. He also indicated disposable fare cards/paper tickets will be offered to riders as well as CET reintroduces fares. Farecapping is also a preferred option that allows riders to make multiple trips and not get overcharged.
- Mr. Greg Bryand mentioned CET should consider having extra drivers available to provide additional support and cover shifts during expansion if someone gets sick or isn't able to work. Other drivers or staff can also potentially assist with fare collection if there are any payment issues during boarding.
- Mr. Johnson asked if there is a potential timeline for Saturday Redmond Flex Route service, to which Mr. Lint responded not at this time.
- Mr. Lint also described staff hiring efforts for positions that will support expansion.

Fare rate structure

The draft fare structure table that included fares from other Oregon transit agencies was presented to the committee.

Fare Type	CET (Draft Proposed)	Rogue Valley	Cherriots	Tri-Met	Lane
Per Trip	$ 2.00	$ 2.00	$ 1.60	$ 2.80	$ 1.75
Max Daily Rate	$ 6.00	$ 6.00	$ 3.25	$ 5.60	$ 3.50
Monthly Pass	$ 60.00	$ 56.00	$ 45.00	$ 100.00	$ 50.00
Annual Pass	$ 500.00	N/A	$ 540.00	N/A	N/A
Reduced Fare	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Reduction Qualifications	60 Years and Older FTA Disability Low Income	62 Years and Older Passengers 10-17 Medicare Cardholders Disabled Veterans FTA Disability	Medicare Card Holders Seniors 60 and Older FTA Disability	OHA/Medicaid Free & Reduced Lunch HUD Housing Choice Voucher WIC Home Energy Assistance Income	Medicare Veterans FTA Disability
Dial a Ride	$ 4.00		$ 3.20	$ 2.80	$ 3.50
Dial a Ride Month	N/A	N/A	$ 90.00	N/A	N/A

Advisory Committee member comments regarding the 2025 initiatives:

- Mr. Bryant suggested providing a pilot launch for fares, maybe not going to this extent for the first 3 or 6 months, and then maybe go to full fares after a trial period to let people get used to a fair and then increase it over time.
- Mr. Jordet noted RVTD has a pass reduction for passengers between 10 and 17 years of age and hopes CET will honor a similar fare for that age range.
- Mr. Marx noted fares do not generate much revenue compared to the service, asked about demographics of CET riders, and noted some transit agencies have moved to microtransit services that are efficient to provide services for people of all income ranges, as well as help support fare recovery. Mr. Marx indicated the future of public transportation is not buses. Mr. Lint noted CET needs to provide value in the system before charging for fares and indicated travel distance is a factor with microtransit services.
- Mr. Johnson indicated more frequent service to 15 minutes will ultimately provide more benefit; however, that comes at additional costs of vehicles and drivers.
- Mr. Livingston noted fares will ultimately increase safety on buses and the perception of safety, which is a good thing.

Fare recommendations for recreation services

Route 18: Transit to Trails summer service suggested increase from $5 one-way/$9 roundtrip to $10 flat fee (roundtrip)

Route 19: Lava Butte suggested increase from $3 to $5. With kids under 5 free.

Advisory Committee member comments regarding fares for recreation services:

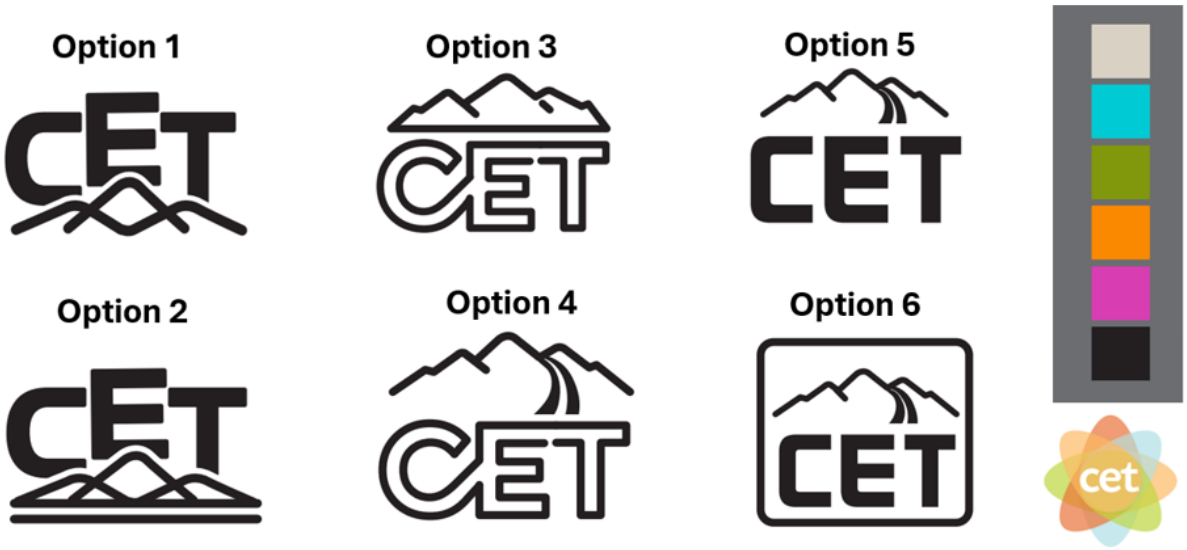
- Mr. Potwin asked if the increase for Transit to Trails was consistent with Cog Wild's request, to which Mr. Lint responded the fare increase is on the lower end of the spectrum. Mr. Bob Bryant echoed that comment to ensure fares are more comparable to Cog Wild's services.
- Mr. Marx suggested a 10-pass card for regular Transit to Trails riders and consider an E-fare pass that can integrate with micromobility services such as bikeshare.
- Mr. Johnson asked if RPTAC members and other committee members can receive discounted fares, to which Mr. Lint responded CET can explore those options.
- Committee members were supportive of the increase in fares for Lava Butte.
- Mr. Bob Bryant motioned to approve a minimum of $10 per ride fare for Transit to Trails. Mr. Livingston seconded. The vote was five yes and four no. Although a majority of voting members support the Transit to Trails increase, Mr. Bob Bryant recommended tabling this agenda item out due to not reaching full consensus on these fares.

Intercampus transit discussion

- Input from Andrew Caruana, student and advocate at OSU-Cascades, who noted a lack of accessible transportation options for students to access classes and amenities between OSU-C and COCC. Andrew sent a copy of the letter of support that was provided to the City of Bend's Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- Mr. Marx indicated this is a great idea and would be a great opportunity to move towards mobility as a service that can help with parking demand, especially if the colleges could use student parking fees to help support fares purchases. He also noted vanpools could also possibility support transportation needs during peak times and perhaps could be used as a microtransit option between peak times.
- Ms. La Buda noted microtransit would be a more feasible approach to provide transportation to students between campuses as opposed to a fixed route. Council on Aging could be a good partner for microtransit – they have two vans that are ADA accessible. She also noted vans are less likely to get stuck on the hill going to COCC as opposed to a large bus.
- Mr. Bergh noted it was July 2018 when the fixed route service was discontinued and the microtransit pilot performed well until the pandemic hit.
- Mr. Livingston asked about next steps for microtransit initiatives and how this committee can help support those initiatives. Mr. Lint responded staff will enquire about staff capacity, budget, and possible partnerships and future funding initiatives.
- Mr. Lint discussed route schedule alignment with COCC classes and fall 2025 initiatives that support public transit. Mr. Jordet noted he is supportive of this initiative and it's great to hear this is a potential remedy to aligning CET bus schedules with COIC class schedules along Route 3.

CET new logo development

Mr. Hofbauer presented five draft logo designs to the committee for feedback and received the following input:



- The current logo doesn't represent transit in Central Oregon and has too many colors.
- Option 4 is preferred with CET connected to the road in open lettering – comments from Mr. Snead and Mr. Halliday .
- Options 5 and 6 are preferred by majority of committee members.
- Mountains should better reflect the Three Sisters mountain range
- Next steps for finalizing the new logo include:
    - CET staff input, including drivers, maintenance & call center staff
    - Selection and approval of final logo by COIC Board
    - Branding and taglines
    - Ensuring logo design fits appropriately on buses and promotional materials

RPTAC Next Meeting, Committee Organization:

- Next meeting is Wednesday, April 16
- CET is hosting an open house event on May 8, with a Walk and Roll event in the late afternoon.
- Committee retreat discussion and possible date.
    - Committee members preferred a four- hour meeting with lunch in the middle to allow ample time to set procedures on how this committee functions and decide future agenda topics.
    - Next steps include committee members sending their suggestions for what they want to learn and achieve during the retreat.
- What topics do you recommend CET staff to bring to the committee in 2025?
    - Mr. Ohlde asked for guest presentations every other meeting, such as Hawthorne Security Staff and other CET staff.
    - Ms. La Buda's seat on RPTAC will be open – this is her last meeting. Mr. Hofbauer recognized her many years of service on the committee.

Committee Member Reports:

- Mr. Snead noted Madras City Council is exploring the development of a potential mobility hub in Madras.
- Mr. Marx is working on a permanent mobility program in Bend, which will involve some code changes, as the program is currently a Pilot. The City of Bend received a carbon reduction grant that may focus on building two additional mobility points.

Meeting Adjourned