

**LOWER JOHN DAY AREA COMMISSION  
ON TRANSPORTATION MEETING MINUTES  
(LJDACT)**

\*\*\*\*\*

Meeting held January 30, 2017 at 10:00 am  
Bob's Texas T-Bone Restaurant  
101 Main Street; Rufus, OR 97050

In Attendance:

- |                         |                                                         |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Gary Thompson        | Sherman County, Judge – LJDACT Chair                    |
| 2. Mike Weimar          | Gilliam County, Commissioner                            |
| 3. Brad DeHart          | ODOT, The Dalles, Project Delivery                      |
| 4. Rod Runyon           | Wasco County, Commissioner                              |
| 5. Kathleen Fitzpatrick | City of Mosier, City Manager                            |
| 6. Kathryn Greiner      | City of Condon, City Administrator                      |
| 7. Jeff Bufton          | City of Arlington, Mayor                                |
| 8. Dewey Kennedy        | Gilliam County, Roadmaster                              |
| 9. Pat Cimmiyotti       | ODOT, The Dalles, District Manager                      |
| 10. Rich Eberle         | Mid-Columbia Council of Governments, Transportation     |
| 11. Tom McCoy           | Sherman County, Commissioner                            |
| 12. Joe Dabulskis       | Sherman County, Commissioner                            |
| 13. Nate Stice          | Regional Solutions                                      |
| 14. Jonathan Asher      | Wheeler County Community Transportation                 |
| 15. Arthur Smith        | Wasco County, Public Works Director                     |
| 16. Chuck Covert        | The Dalles Airport                                      |
| 17. Bob Bryant          | ODOT Region 4                                           |
| 18. Dan Hoyt            | MCEDD                                                   |
| 19. Dennis Ross         | City of Maupin, City Council                            |
| 20. Brenda Snow Potter  | Wheeler County, Finance & Administration – LJDACT Admin |
| 21. Gary Farnsworth     | ODOT Region 4 Central & LJD Area Manager                |
| 22. Jon Justesen        | Sherman County Rancher                                  |
| 23. Amy Pfeifer         | ODOT, Planning and Environmental Manager                |
| 24. David Amiton        | ODOT, Transportation                                    |
| 25. Michael Duncan      | ODOT, Planner                                           |
| 26. Della Mosier        | ODOT, Region 4                                          |
| 27. Michael Eliason     | Association of Oregon Counties, Transportation Lobbyist |
| 28. Les Ruark           | Citizen                                                 |
| 29. Steve Shaffer       | Gilliam County, Judge                                   |

1. **Call to Order, Introductions, Agenda Review** - Chair Thomson
  - a. Opportunity to provide comments on the Draft 2018-2021 *Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*
  - b. General Public Comments
    - G. Farnsworth provided a map and a review of the STIP program
    - J. Justesen, Sherman County expressed his concern regarding safety issues on Shear's grade, specifically Buckhollow Bridge on 197 from milepost 52-53. He recommends the bridge being widened.

Rod Runyon has heard compliments on the potholes being repaired on the bridge.

Per Gary Farnsworth, at the end of each winter the roads and needs are reviewed routinely to determine if there needs to be an amendment to the capital program. 2018-2021 will contain major amendments to the entire program. During the draft period comments are used to determine those amendments.

Chuck Covert was asked about the 197 bridge project. He was asked if the bridge will be closed during the project.

Gary Farnsworth explained that the expectation is 2019-2020 and the plan will include how to manage traffic and stage construction. They will look at impacts/trade-offs and how to handle the traffic. Bridge deck project should be considered a major event. There could be extended periods of closure.

Brad DeHart has been asked several questions but it is too early to tell what the solution will be. He gave several examples of how the project might go.

Bob Bryant stated that the work is not going to happen without significant effects on traffic.

Chuck Covert stated that it will have an effect on the airport

Per Gary Farnsworth, this is a chance to collectively address the impacts and how to manage travel on both sides of the river.

## 2. **LJDACT Business**

### a. Review/Approve past meeting minutes

Motion made by Rod Runyon to accept the October 3, 2016 minutes, second by Chuck Covert. Vote passed unanimously.

### b. Membership Review

- i. Wasco County – Rod Runyon, Arthur Smith, Dave Anderson
- ii. Gilliam County – Mike Weimar and Dewey Kennedy
- iii. City of The Dalles – Dave Anderson (not present)
- iv. Sherman County – Gary Thompson and \*New\* John Dabulskis
- v. ODOT – Gary Farnsworth and Brad DeHart
- vi. City of Rufus – Dan Pehlke (not present) and Scott Holiday (not present)
- vii. Wheeler County – \*New\* Debbie Starkey (not present) and \*New\* Lynn Morley (not present)
- viii. Warm Springs – Randy Scott (not present)
- ix. City of Fossil – Mary Mountain and Bill Potter (not present)
- x. City of Condon – Kathryn Greiner and \*New\* Tim Weatherall (not present)
- xi. Aviation – Chuck Covert
- xii. Transportation Options – \*New\* Dan Hoyt and Amanda Hoey (not present)
- xiii. Bicycle & Pedestrians -
- xiv. Transit – Rich Eberle and \*New\* Brent Olson (not present)
- xv. Rail – Peter Mitchell (not present) and Ron Wilson (not present)
- xvi. Marine – Jeff Kaser (not present) - Appoint an alternate and possible replacement for Jeff.

Rod Runyon explained that only members have a vote – alternates do not.

Gary Farnsworth verified that this is the case. This is at the will of the voting members to determine the role of the alternate. This will be discussed further during

the ACT 101. There is to be one representative from each County and one from each City. The Charter was last revised in 2014.

3. **Region 4 Active Transportation Needs Inventory**

– David Amiton

This is an opportunity to focus on active transportation in connection with biking, walking, etc.; prioritize needs and opportunities for input. Handout was provided. Update on needs inventory process is a three step process that started at the beginning of summer for sidewalks, shoulders, shared use, bike lanes, etc. The process includes inventory, evaluate and prioritize. Inventory of existing facilities inventory includes reviewing their condition. The evaluation period will include selecting criteria to determine gaps and deficiencies in order to address the highest needs throughout the state and determine how to make good decisions on solving those problems. The summer program provided a complete assessment of substandard conditions, such as width of sidewalks and/or bike lanes or the lack of either.

High level categories are safety and connectivity. The goal is to identify the best way to measure those things as meaningful for all regions. They must be objective, consistent in quality/good crash data, available for the entire system, and is not redundant with other measures.

Safety Category: Using a 5 year crash history; level of traffic stress, potential risk exposure, volume of traffic; connectivity is still being decided. One factor is the distance between urban areas. Another factor is if it serves as a main street to get to needed services; connection to a facility; transit and other essential destinations; An additional factor is popular routes for recreation or other tours. They are considering population density. They are seeking stake holder input in the form of local agencies for feedback. They are doing a complete review of local plan projects on the highway system; using collected inventory to determine where the weight needs to be put.

Rod Runyon asked if this is for ODOT/state roads only.

The primary focus is on the state highway system. They can only identify substandard areas on the current system.

Rod Runyon added that most of his input is from wheat farmers and they do not care to interact with bicycles.

Dennis Ross added information on a bike trail between Mopin and the bridge, on the old BLM railroad grade. There are issues with the bikes sharing the road.

Per David, Oregon State Parks is working with identifying the Oregon Scenic Bikeway.

Only in tune with bike routes on the state highway system

Gary Farnsworth stated that we need ways to connect for the whole system.

There is a meeting next week to discuss that area.

Gary Farnsworth added that even though emphasis is on the state highway system, other areas are considered to determine how they connect, and how to get the best value. He asked how a needs list he is creating fits in with past projects for enhancement. He asked how this plays into building funding.

David's goal for the project is to help other efforts that are already going; to use this as a resource to look to for help to enhance those proposals.

Gary paraphrased that if someone is assessing priorities to make a proposal, the review group can refer to this list to help inform for how to prioritize for the capital program.

Bob Bryant stated that the goal is to optimize the use of limited resources to maximize the benefit to the public. It is hard to assess one relative to another without the kind of work David is doing for active transportation. This is useful to take a broader look.

Rod Runyon asked if when a county road is chosen as a scenic byway is money available to help with that county road.

Per Bob Bryant, the programs are managed through Oregon State Parks and they do not come with anything more than minor funding for signage. The group looks at the routes for safety, infrastructure, traffic volumes, recreational benefits, and interacting with the jurisdiction to gain input. As ODOT, they have partnered with State Parks on the scenic bikeway program to a minor degree to provide some minor enhancements on the selected routes. Counties with an interest have invested with State Parks.

Gary Farnsworth added that enhanced proposals have come forward that have overlapped onto existing bikeway systems. This helped inform the prioritization. With the inventory list, the group can cross reference David's list to justify improvements. This creates opportunities.

Bob Bryant stated that The Dalles Bridge is an example of that. In addition to the deck replacement, there are other enhancements that can be included.

Gary Farnsworth added that they are in discussions with Wash DOT.

Dennis Ross asked about OPRD.

Bob Bryant yes, OPRD administers the scenic bikeway program.

David explained that Alex Phillips works on this.

Bob Bryant offered more information on her role and the program. Her group considers additional routes. With the scenic bikeway program, some of the bikeways occupy federal jurisdiction. They have some of the same concerns and interests expressed here. When promoting the bikeways, it elevates usage when designated as a bike route. The liability on the agency when a route is designated is a concern. That led to the Federal lands access program to answer that question. What is the criteria to balance the safety of all users on a particular route with bicyclists when a route is designated as a scenic bikeway? He will bring that decision back as it takes form.

Gary Farnsworth added that this is another potential funding source to use as leverage.

4. **ODOT Statewide Freight Plan Update** - Amy Pfeiffer-Region 4 Planning and Environmental Manager

Handout was provided.

In 2011 the freight plan was updated. There were actual formula funds available for freight. Statewide, the freight plan is being updated. The three main areas to be updated are to inventory the need, define the system, and come up with an investment plan. They will include freight delay areas, bottlenecks and pinch points. This is data driven. They are looking at inter-modal connectors and non-highway modes. This should include rail, marine, aviation, and some inter-modal type facilities. This is being done by the ODOT Statewide Planning Unit. They will come back to ACT to determine if anything was missed. I-84 and I-5 formula funds can be used. In addition to this, they are able to designate critical urban and rural corridors. They need to identify 77 miles of critical urban and 155 miles as critical rural corridors. There is not a lot of money. Statewide there is 80 million total to use on all designated freight routes. They are using the data to identify the critical corridors over a five year period. They plan to complete the inventory in February and finish in the spring 201. They will development an investment plan in late summer 2017. Adopt in November 2017.

Gary Farnsworth asked about FASTACT and the new Trump administration and how that will affect priorities for freight in Oregon.

Per Amy, she has not heard any discussions yet.

Gary Farnsworth added that the better job done evaluating priorities around freight, the better off we will be.

Amy stated that if anyone knows of any areas of known safety areas, please pass that information along.

There was a brief discussion about the last week's weather related traffic issues.

Brad DeHart asked about the 155 miles of statewide rural.

Amy stated that yes it is statewide but this may include small areas of 97.

Gary Farnsworth asked to clarify the parts of the map that show the areas already designated. The timeframe for the 80 million is through 2022.

Rod Runyon asked if this is a possible research option for John Justesen and the Buckhollow Bridge.

Brad DeHart stated that this would qualify.

Amy explained that the link to the website on the ODOT sit has more information and data. She will provide a link. Scott Turnoy's information is on the handout.

Gary Farnsworth provided a recap. ACT will have a chance to weigh in and give input for this area.

Dennis Ross asked if restrooms and truck parking are included.

Per Amy, this is included in a separate pilot. It could be included in the last mile connection to an inter-modal or freight areas.

5. **Winter Conditions/Roundtable** - Chair Thompson

Gary Thompson: Hwy 97 has been treacherous. A three mile stretch had 14 semis and numerous cars upside down or on their sides over a two day stretch. This is one of the most dangerous highways in Oregon. There are more deaths per population than any other highway in Oregon. He would like to see some this money considered to correct these problems. The bulk of the accidents occurred where the new passing lane was put in. The new pavement iced over. The older pavement was rough enough to not cause problems.

Pat Cimmiyotti: Without partners, they could not have achieved what they were able to this year. He commended Dewey Kennedy and other areas for their help. There are typically a small number of events. This year, they had a month and a half of continuous weather events. I-84 was closed due to snow fall. It was challenging for equipment and personnel. The ice storm on 97 with sleet and freezing rain blew up in a short time period and short distance. This involved a significant number of trucks. Signs were up but trucks did not have chains. There were some issues with the new pavement. Not a lot can be done with freezing rain. They used three times the normal amount of sand/deicer in The Dalles. This year has been challenging for crews and partners. Addressing it together is important. Typically they are not set up for extended winter conditions.

If the roads are not kept open, there is not an easy route from Sherman & Gilliam County to the hospital. They may shift resources to account for this and to keep the freeway open. This is done statewide as well. There were 8-10 graders working in The Gorge with approximately 2" of ice.

Chuck Covert asked if there were cost estimates.

Pat did not have the numbers at this time. They expended a lot of material, overtime hours and they hired contractors to help. From Biggs to the Port of Hood River there were trucks parked along the freeway. Crews cannot maintain roads if these trucks are parked on the freeways. The focus was getting the trucks off of the freeway. Additional resources were used. They are always trying to improve. The Dalles has limited fueling resources for trucks, resulting in additional travel for trucks.

Dewey Kennedy: Gilliam County had the same issues but with 8-10 foot drifts. Big equipment was used to clear the roads. Problem is after the snow stops and it starts to melt. Ditches are full and they will need to pull culverts to remove the gravel.

Mike Weimar stated that the Road secretary broke her ankle in the Courthouse parking lot and has been out of work for over a month.

Dewey only uses his resources. Some farmers do their roads out to the highway Per Pat, The Dalles Bridge has a significant amount of pot holes. All trucks were using the bridge because other roads were not open yet. There will be summer projects to improve pavement conditions. Westbound bridge at mile post 91 the conditions went the wrong way. There was delaminating from the bridge deck. This will be addressed this spring.

Art Smith: Echoed Pat's sentiments regarding the partners. They worked with the school superintendents. Everybody has done a good job. He ran some numbers. December 8-22 the crews worked 15 straight days for 1200 total hours, 350 hours of which were overtime. New Years Day through the 21<sup>st</sup> – 21 days straight, 1700 total hours, 650 of which were overtime. All together 2900 total hours, 1,000 hours of overtime and 2,000 cubic yards of sand. This was done with a 15 person crew countywide. Commended the crews.

Kathleen Fitzpatrick: Wasco County was critical in keeping Mosier open. She commended the Wasco crew. There was a Wasco Emergency Management Planning meeting with partners to preplan for the event.

Gary Farnsworth recommended an emergency management planning discussion at the next meeting.

6. **2017 Transportation Investment Strategy Topics** - Gary Farnsworth

Review/discuss OTC Investment Strategy

Commissioner Tammy Baney joined telephonically

Handout was available. Tammy walked through the handout regarding the legislature update, the ODOT update and the long term investment strategy. The plan is to prioritize and make roads resilient to the Cascadia event.

Tammy asked those present if there is there anything missing. She asked how to paint a picture for the legislature that includes the cities and counties.

Gary Farnsworth asked how we can help.

Tammy explained that there are challenges in legislature articulating the need; being able to talk about businesses struggling to get their goods through Portland and the added capacity on 97. Everyone needs to stand up and say what is needed.

Paul Mather, highway division admin, will be sending a letter asking to work with commissions on freight bottlenecks – proposed projects by April. Region 4 proposed 350 million. The requirements are that they are a benefit, eligible for highway funds, safety, seismic, quality – important that these needs are submitted by April

ACT needs to be ready with stories of what it means. Legislature needs to hear what would benefit the businesses in the area.

There was a short discussion on the current political situation.

Tammy expressed that there are some concerns about what has been put on the list based on the laying out of where those investments would occur.

Per Mike Weimar, when looking at the investment strategy background and the limited resources, we are totally left out. It looks like it focuses on urban areas.

Tammy explained that the region shows significant investment opportunities on the 97/84 corridor, including bridge and highway investments. The areas of the state look at

it as a lifeline corridor. Highlight those investment needs to add to this plan. ACT must provide information on these needs.

Tammy would like to be invited to future meetings. Management letter went out today. 52 ACT members weighed in. Gary will have Brenda forward this information out.

7. **Project Updates/Roundtable** - Chair Thompson
  - a. Deferred
8. **Next meeting/Adjourn** - Chair Thompson
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Monday in March, send out a poll to determine availability - March 6<sup>th</sup>Bob Bryant added that looking at getting all representatives to meet. It might be beneficial.  
Adjourned at 12:05 pm