
Meeting Minutes

Gilliam County Transportation System Plan (TSP)

Project Advisory Committee Meeting

March 18, 2015: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Fire Station, Arlington, Oregon

Attendance: See attached sign-in sheet

Project Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

1. Marc Butorac provided an introduction to the project for those who were not able to attend the first PAC meeting, and attendees gave brief introductions of themselves. Attendees who were not present at the first PAC meeting were asked to give their top two transportation issues. New attendees included:
 - a. Josh Bartlet & Kip Eagles of Waste Management: Their interests are in truck traffic and making sure funding & planning is coordinated with the County. The need that they've heard voiced is to figure out a way for trains not to impede traffic. Improvements to the rail yard would help at Cedar Springs.
2. KAI presented a brief overview and recap of the project goals & objectives and the information covered during the first PAC meeting.
3. KAI presented the analysis results of the future needs scenario.
 - a. The population growth projections of 25% growth, which are calculated by PSU and must be relied on for the TSP update, seemed high to the PAC.
 - b. No future operational deficiencies were identified.
4. KAI presented the draft alternatives (projects, policies, programs, pilot projects, and studies) for consideration in the TSP. The following notes summarize the discussion during the presentation.
 - a. Functional classification & street standards:
 - i. KAI to check what the existing right-of-way width is in the cities and verify that proposed standards align with the cities' vision and/or right-of-way for those streets.
 - ii. The PAC discussed the comment that the cities may never have streets with widths that meet the standard or have connected sidewalks on all streets. Many participants asked why we would set unrealistic goals. Marc discussed that the County and Cities need to pick something they want to work towards and have a process that allows the public works director to clearly say why they are deviating if standard are not built on a particular road. Setting goals allows the County and cities to move in the right direction over the next 20 years.
 - iii. The cities may also consider a cash-in-lieu payment for sidewalk improvements. This would allow the City to build a larger stretch of sidewalk when cash contributions accumulate and to do it more efficiently.

- b. Roadway projects:
 - i. Mikkalo Lane (Barnett) is currently classified as Low priority but is heavily-traveled by rafters.
- c. Programs
 - Transit
 - They now have covered parking facility in Lonerock – remove carport from program details.
 - UP trains blocking crossings in Arlington: There was a suggestion to have the City write regular (annual) letters to UP formalizing their concern.
 - The blocked crossings have the potential to restrict EMS or fire access during emergency.
 - Potential Program(s): coordination with UP re: train lengths, train power, operating errors.
- d. Pilot Project
 - Bicycle Rest Areas/Hubs
 - There is a potential for a private-public partnership to maintain/clean facilities and obtain a sponsor to fund them.
 - Consider inviting Travel Oregon to come and meet with local business owners (including a champion).
- e. Additions / Alternatives to consider upgrading in priority order:
 - There was a request to add the development of the Condon State Airport to the list of projects. The airport may have water service in the next few years, further enabling development.
 - Shutler Station crossovers: should be changed from medium to high priority. They are trying to raise Connect Oregon grant dollars.
 - Signage for I-84 for ice warning: Some attendees would like to see an increased priority for this.
- f. Eliminations / Alternatives to consider downgrading in priority order:
 - Cayuse canyon road bridge – Attendees voiced opinions to eliminate project due to its high cost and the low number of people it serves (primarily cattle land). The creek bed is also passable during some months of the year.
 - Parking permit policy for special events - Many people do not think it's necessary at this point, especially in Condon. Makes it too onerous for events.
 - We discussed that the policy could be written as an option to allow the City to request a parking management plan if a large event were to come to town. PAC members were concerned. They currently have to get an ODOT permit to close the highway in Arlington for July 4th parade. We clarified that this would be a permit the city would ask for and would not be as onerous, which was better received. Consultant to draft optional parking policy for consideration.
 - PAC members were not sure if ADA access on Main Street was necessary because there is access at 4 different spots on Main Street at different locations or off-street lots. If the project is kept, they would like to see it low priority.

- Main Street/Walnut Street options in Condon:
 - PAC members felt the all-way stop-controlled (AWSC) intersection would create crashes until people learned (due to the change in control).
 - People asked for a 3rd option which would include adding signs that say “3-way stop” and putting stop ahead legends back on the street. This was a population option.
 - People voiced concern that signage is not clear at intersection.
 - One issue with going to an all-way stop-control is that loaded wheat trucks need to be able to roll through, they have a hard time starting again after stopping. But trucks coming from west side do have to stop on grade and they just roll through it.
 - DHS building obstructs view – drivers have to pull out to see traffic around this building.
- Rumble strips: There was discussion about whether rumble strips should be included in the TSP. Dewey indicated that most of the County roads’ asphalt is not thick enough for rumble strips, and the roads are narrow – adding shoulder rumble strips would make them even narrower. KAI indicated that the policy would require rumble strips where appropriate and feasible, primarily on state highways. KAI to check with ODOT on locations where rumble strips are planned for the County.
 - Opinion was voiced that they should not be high priority.
 - There was discussion about rumble strips potentially helping in places where there is a crash issue (like Olex grade, with the curves).
 - There is concern about how it impacts motorcyclists.
- Bike parking in downtown areas – The group voiced opinions that this may not high priority for the cities. They thought it would be nice as we get more tourists, but they don’t want to distract from Main Street. (Concern that bike racks are ugly and would distract from historic Main Street buildings.) They requested bike racks be put on side streets or in parking lots (or install the nicer looking bike racks). KAI to make bike parking medium priority.
- When discussing the intersection of OR 206/Lonerock Road, PAC members indicated that OR 206 to Heppner is a bad road.

5. Funding

- Dewey is able to build the new projects (the base) but can’t finish them because they can’t afford a hard surface of asphalt for the roads. So they leave a gravel road. They try to do a new project once a year (including grade improvements, taking out blind corners, etc.).
- TGM Grants
 - Condon was close to getting a TGM grant, but they have a hurdle of convincing ODOT that their projects are of regional significance.

- Pay for your miles fee: They are concerned that this will be burden for eastern Oregon where residents have to drive farther. Discussion following about how the program could benefit those who drive very large, fuel inefficient trucks.
 - The wind farms maintained their roads as they were doing construction, which allowed county to make improvements and has kept the system better during construction even though there was no income.
 - The County is currently not getting any assistance from the State Park. This will depend on whether the Cottonwood Canyon State Park decides to develop the Hay Canyon side of the park.
 - Additional taxes and fees were discussed – There was concern about how can you impose additional taxes when there are limitations to fire and others raising rates.
 - Marc discussed that there are sunsets on moratoriums;
 - Different statutes allow for different opportunities.
6. Worksheet: PAC members filled out a worksheet with their comments on each project. Comments from this exercise will be reflected in the Preferred Plan (the next Technical Memorandum).

Public Workshop

A public workshop followed the PAC meeting. One person, Marta Mikkalo (who is also a PAC member), attended. Comments were received on several additional locations of concern or issues. These comments will be addressed in the next Technical Memorandum.

Upcoming Meetings and Deliverables

1. Thursday, May 7th, 10:00 am – Noon at the Fairgrounds in Condon (601 N Washington Street). Technical Memorandum #6 (Preferred Alternative) will be distributed prior to the meeting for review and comment.