



**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**January 14, 2008**

**Date:** Monday, January 14, 2008  
Time: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Location:** ODOT – Human Resource Center  
2775 19<sup>th</sup> St SE, Ste A, Salem, OR

**Members Present:**

Bob Lowry, Chair, Oregon Rail Advisory Committee (ORAC)  
Claire Potter, Metro Public Transportation/TriMet  
Terry Parker, Urban Transportation/Lane Transit District (LTD)  
John Helm, Governors Commission on Senior Services  
Lorna Adkins, TOGO/Salem Area Mass Transit  
Sally Lawson, 04AD  
Allan Pollock, Urban Transportation/Salem Area Mass Transit District (SAMTD)  
Ernie Palmer, General Public Transportation/Basin Transit Service  
Dennis Dick, Intercity Bus Service Provider  
Frank Synoground, Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)  
John Wenholz, Assoc. of Counties (AOC)/Morrow County  
Mary Jo Carpenter, Oregon Transit Association (OTA), by telephone

**Interested Persons Present:**

Cindy Robert, Representing SMART of Wilsonville  
Susan Stanley, Harlow's Bus Sales

**Members Absent:**

Terry Thompson, Assoc. of Counties (AOC)/Lincoln County  
Janice Wilson, Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC)

**ODOT Public Transit Staff Present:**

Michael Ward, Administrator  
Dinah Van Der Hyde, Policy Analyst Manager  
PJ Pippin, Executive Support  
Matthew Barnes, Transportation Options Manager  
Cassandra Garrison, Intercity Program Assistant

ITEM A

1:00 p.m. **Welcome, Introductions, Items of Interest**

Chairperson Bob Lowry called the meeting to order. Welcome and introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes. A motion was made by Ernie Palmer, seconded by Sally Lawson and unanimously passed to approve the November 2007 meeting notes with no noted changes.

Items of Interest: Chair Lowry was pleased to report to the committee that increasing the frequency on one bus route in Corvallis doubled ridership. Corvallis would like to afford to do that to other routes. Claire Potter mentioned that Trimet reviewed its routes for better ridership; and saw increased service on weekdays. Members note that added frequency and route adjustment is important to transit effectiveness.

ITEM B

1:15 p.m. **Administrator Report**

1. OPTIS Update. Project is late. By the end of this month we should have a schedule for completing implementation. The past few months have been spent conducting vendor discussions on business requirements of the STIP and a couple of other issues. Indications are that implementation should be done around April/May.
2. DHS Budget Note – First meeting of the 17 member steering committee was in December. This was a “kick-off” meeting where DHS and ODOT leadership discussed expectations of the Steering Committee. At this time ODOT staff to the effort are currently developing a grant agreement with Association of Oregon Counties (OAC) for the technical work on this project. OAC will subcontract most of the analysis work with PSU Center for Population Research, who will do the analysis and report. The assessment will identify current and future gaps in public transit services to meet the needs of senior and disabled people in rural areas. The assessment will take into account population demographics and future conditions. The second part of the project is to investigate and propose sources of funding to support the services needs.

Hopefully this work will pave the way for a 2009 discussion on increased funding for public transit. The draft final report should be completed by June 2008. As information becomes available it will be brought to PTAC. The first Steering Committee meeting is January 18, and we will post the minutes to the meetings online.

3. Michael Ward updated the PTAC committee on STF Funding. Primarily, the STF program has a population driven formula. Formula estimates should be out by the first of February. ODOT financial analysts and economists are working on revised revenues of ID cards/driver’s license and fuel tax (“lawnmower fund”). The revisions

should be done by end of January. The ID card tax is very volatile. The laws responding to immigration issues may create changes in tax revenues.

PTD would like to create a small, non-obligated reserve of \$500,000, to ensure we do not overspend budget. The reserve, if unused, will be spent at a later time, possibly 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the first quarter of the following year. Committee was in agreement to the idea.

4. Discretionary Grant Process - Definition of "Innovation". Michael Ward reported work on a reasonable definition and criteria for an innovative project. After discussion with various providers, new definitions for the Innovation grants were suggested. With the new definition (truly original and never done before) and criteria, the applications that are acceptable will be approved; and the projects that could not fulfill the criteria would receive appreciative, rejection letters. If there are funds leftover from the \$2-3 million available, then the rejected projects will be reviewed for approval on a case-by-case basis. Evaluation of the applications would be done during a March meeting "off cycle" and will review, approve and obligate dollars. The suggestion of a total restructure of the program was noted, but providers are eager and need to put the money into action right away.

Sherrin Coleman asked that we remind PTAC that RTAP scholarships (covering 80% travel costs and 100% tuition, 2 scholarships per agency) are available for the Transit management certification through Willamette University. Training will be held April 7-11 and May 12-16. Michael Ward will be giving opening comments. A reminder was noted that not all providers have email. For more information, their website is: [www.willamette.edu/agsm/](http://www.willamette.edu/agsm/)

5. A tentative PTAC meeting schedule was provided to the Committee. A planning calendar is in process.

1:45 p.m.

### ITEM C

#### **ConnectOregon II - Preparation for Modal Committee Review**

Dinah Van Der Hyde reviewed ConnectOregon II (CO2) Modal Committee responsibilities and asked Committee how to handle applicant questions/presentations; and steps for final decisions. We will receive a complete list by January 17, with the possibility of the addition of several projects. March 3 is deadline for PTD selection. PTAC will review the 14 transit applications on February 4. Copies will be mailed to members before that deadline. A short discussion revolved around the question whether project applicants applying for loans vs. grant funding are/are not given preference. Rules are unclear. A CO2 Modal Review matrix was distributed to the Committee. The following ranking scale was suggested:

- Applications that "thoroughly" meet all five of selection criteria will receive a Tier 1 ranking;
- Applications that meet the preferred 3 criteria get a Tier 2 ranking;
- Applications meeting 2 criteria points will be assigned a Tier 3 ranking; and
- Applications meeting only one criteria will be assigned a Tier 4 ranking.

The three most important criteria were identified as:

- Project reduces transportation costs for Oregon businesses or improves access to jobs and sources of labor.
- Project results in an economic benefit to this state.
- Project is a critical link in Oregon's transportation system that will measurably improve utilization and efficiency.

The point was brought up that some projects may not be selected on the basis that they could obtain financing through other sources. One of the goals in this process is to be fair to all applicants; selection should be based on merit.

The PTAC CO2 review process responsibility consists of:

- Recording the meeting(s) with meeting minutes
- Post the minutes on the website
- At the beginning of the meeting(s) conflict of interest disclosure will be announced
- A "Comment" report has been added for committee input
- A Chair will preside over the meeting(s)
- Ranking sheets will be sent to the CO2 team by March 10.

The suggestion was made to invite all applicants to the Review meetings and give them 2-3 minutes to present an overview or highlight points about their project; with no time limit for Committee clarification questions. If project is important to the applicant, they will be available in person for participation.

For more information the ConnectOregon2 website is <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/COMM/CO/COII>.

2:30 p.m. Break

2:45 p.m. [ITEM D](#)  
**Oregon Streetcar Fund Program**

HB 5036 created the Oregon Streetcar Project Fund to assist operators of a public transit system to purchase streetcars for use in public transit systems. The definition of "Streetcar" is a transit vehicle that operates on fixed rails and is powered by electricity. The term is inaccurately interchanged with "Trolley". The streetcars should be purchased from an Oregon-based/Oregon-owned company.

3:00 p.m. [ITEM E](#)  
**Intercity Pilot Project**

In 2004 Greyhound cut back their service in Oregon and across America. These cutbacks especially affected the service along the Coast Highway, I-5 Corridor, and I-84. Greyhound continues to reduce Oregon routes (such as Corvallis from 4 to 2 daily runs). Matthew Barnes, Intercity Program Manager, said that money is currently

available for intercity projects although private intercity bus providers have difficulty participating in the program because of match requirements for the individual provider. Mr. Barnes reported the availability of participating in FTA pilot match project if an appropriate route, provider and match partner can be identified. The pilot will make it possible to look at statewide needs, beyond regional needs and invest into longer distance service.

Committee made the point that the program should invest in a sustainable project. There is no benefit in running a routes with a private sector partner if the match offer is available for only two years and the route is not profitable, then the route would cease. The committee felt it to be a waste of dollars to put money into n unsustainable system. Committee suggested running some routes seasonally, such as the Highway 101 corridor, which was generating some income for Greyhound. Matt reported a large number of PTD telephone calls are from out-of-state bicyclists requesting information on public transportation along the coast. They ride their bikes from Astoria to Brookings and need public transportation for the return trip.

This pilot project will give PTD the opportunity to do a needs assessment before spending tax dollars. Potential connections will be analyzed.

The point was made that private operators do not always connect the airport. The need to develop intermodalism was expressed. Another comment was made that to assist public transportation providers' revenue, freight should be allowed on buses.

Cassandra Garrison expressed the great need of transportation services and coordination for rural areas for employment purposes that she experienced during work with special needs/low income citizens.

3:30 p.m.

[ITEM F](#)

**Public Involvement Policy**

PTAC members were given a draft of the ODOT Public Involvement Policy which is now being revised and out for public comment. Those with comments should send them to Venitha Murthy, in the Planning Section.

3:45 p.m.

[ITEM G](#)

**Topics for Next Meeting and Wrap-up**

- Membership
- ConnectOregon II
- Discretionary Grant Program

3:55 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

4:00 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned.