

Meeting Notes

RTP TAC Transit Subgroup

August 29, 2016 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, 1400 Queen Ave. SE, Albany

Attending: Chuck Knoll, Jamey Dempster, Ken Bronson, Edna Campau, Chris Bailey, Jon Goldman, Barry Hoffman, Scott Chapman, Chris Maciejewski, Theresa Conley

1. Agenda Review

Theresa Conley, AAMPO staff, called the meeting to order at 10:03 am and reviewed the agenda. There were no changes to the agenda.

2. Public Comment

There were no members of the public present and no public comment.

3. Minutes of July 25, 2016 RTP TAC Transit Subgroup Meeting

The minutes of the July 25 2016 meeting were approved as written.

4. Meeting Overview and Transit Needs Review

Scott Chapman, with Nelson Nygaard, reviewed the meeting agenda and meeting goals. Meeting goals were to: shape service design scenarios (short, mid and long-term), define evaluation criteria to assess scenarios, and identify geographic priorities. He provided a brief recap on two approaches to transit service design – coverage and productivity. Coverage-based services seek to provide equitable distribution of service and provide as much geographic availability as possible. They are usually circuitous. Productivity-based services seek to increase the transit mode share by improving reliability and frequency and focusing on specific transit-oriented corridors. They are more simple and direct.

Subgroup members asked how future needs, beyond what is identified in a constrained system scenario, will be discussed. Staff confirmed that ‘aspirational’ transit system needs will be discussed in the AAMPO Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transit Development Plan (TDP). It was mentioned that the Oregon Transit Association is using the Remix tool to look at transit needs at a statewide level. A member asked if demand responsive services would be considered ‘coverage’, and staff responded that fixed-route services can also be ‘coverage’; for example, Albany Transit Service (ATS) is currently more of a ‘coverage’ service, and is not as efficient if a rider wants a direct connection. However, ATS doesn’t provide lifeline service for the full region.

Transit Subgroup members agreed to recommend that “Regional Connectivity” be added as a new objective in the RTP. Members also discussed and agreed to look into adding an objective regarding collaboration with regional transit partners. Members discussed the importance of partnering with other providers to cover areas like Jefferson or Lyons, Mill City and Gates, in the Santiam Canyon. ATS receives calls regarding connectivity to Salem, and currently Amtrak and Bolt Bus are the two options. The Linn County TSP will include ‘Northeast’ and ‘Southeast’ working groups.

Scott reviewed sample Level of Service (LOS) guidelines and was asked if we could combine typologies – for example a ‘commuter’ and ‘standard’ service. Members commented that is currently more frequency midday, but that frequency could be shifted to am/pm peaks to better serve commuters. ATS, the Loop, Shuttle and other regional services should be better coordinated.

5. Transit Evaluation Criteria

Scott reviewed and requested feedback on potential route design evaluation criteria (level of service, simplicity, directness, minimal deviations, arterial focus, symmetry, optimal use of resources, service availability). Members discussed which criteria were most important. “Percent of routes meeting frequency of service goals”, “number of below-poverty level households within ¼ of stop”, and “percent of routes meeting span of service goals” ranked the highest. Discussion included:

- ‘Simplicity’ is too qualitative as currently described. ‘Simplicity’ helps staff explain the system to new riders and should include simplicity of transferring and fare consistency.
- It is important to reduce non-productive service hours when drivers are paid but not picking up riders, but this is not as important as other measures. Dwell time can help keep routes on schedule by allowing for ‘catch-up’ time.
- Projected congestion areas should be considered when looking at key destinations and origin-destination pairs.
- How do we balance coverage and directness and quantify changes in ridership? There is a trade-off when trying to create more direct and frequent service – some out of the way service areas may need to be trimmed.
- Serving high-density lower income areas is important. Are we currently serving those areas effectively? We need to first address the needs of ‘captive’ riders and then think about expanding services to better serve ‘choice’ riders
- It is difficult to transition riders from Call A Ride (CAR) to fixed-route service, and it would be difficult to redesign ATS to attract CAR users. The current CAR service is robust and there is no intention of changing it.

6. Transit Service Options

Scott discussed geographic priorities for transit and Transit Subgroup members were asked to provide feedback on the Top Ten Trips by Transit and Transit Priorities by Planning Horizon.

7. Definition of Short-Term Scenarios

This agenda item was postponed due to lack of time.

8. Next Steps

Theresa Conley briefly discussed next steps. She will send out ‘homework’ for the TAC, demographic maps, and establish the next meeting date. Based on TAC input, Nelson Nygaard will develop two future service scenarios for consideration. The consultant team in revising the Transit Funding memo. Regional transit projects may be considered for the Mosaic project lists being tested.

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm.