

Mount Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

APPENDIX B

Outreach (2 of 5)



Document: Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan (MHMTP) Project Leadership Group (PLG) Meeting Notes (PLG Meetings, #1, #2, #3, and #4).

Date of Delivery: December 19, 2013

Description

This document includes notes taken from the four PLG meetings held over the course of the project on December 3, 2012, July 19, 2013, September 27, 2013, and December 19, 2013, at ODOT Region 1 headquarters.

The meetings resulted in the PLG's approval of the 38 MHMTP projects, the 14 projects in the Implementation Plan, and a continued partnership through the 15-year plan time frame. The MHMTP will continue as a rolling plan until 2029.

Status Update

These materials provide a record of the project's decision-making process.

Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

PROJECT LEADERSHIP GROUP

Meeting #1

Dec. 3, 2012

2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Meeting Summary

Attendees: Project Leadership Group

Oregon Dept of Transportation: Jason Tell, Region 1 Manager

Hood River County: Karen Joplin, Commissioner

Mt Hood National Forest: Chris Worth, Supervisor

Clackamas County: Jamie Damon, Commissioner (Absent)

Agency and Consultant Staff

ODOT: Kirsten Pennington, Mike Mason

FHWA-WFLHD: Susan Law

USFS Mt. Hood National Forest: Rithy Bein

Clackamas County: Cam Gilmour, Karen Buehrig

David Evans and Associates: Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara, KC Cooper, Kevin Bracy

Other

Grand Ronde Tribe: Michael Karnosh

Sen. Merkley's Office: John Valley

Mt. Hood Ski Bowl: Hans Wipper

Timberline: Jon Tullis

Mt. Hood Meadows: Matthew Drake, Greg Leo

Clackamas Tourism: Jae Heidenreich

Facilitator: Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara and KC Cooper, David Evans & Associates (DEA)

MEETING PURPOSE: Review past decisions, re-engage in corridor planning and move the Mt. Hood Multimodal Plan process forward.

WELCOME

Project Status (Kirsten Pennington, ODOT)

The last time the PLG met was in March. At the time, the project partners were seeking to obtain funding to conduct the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan (MHMTP). The funding was subsequently awarded, a scope of work drafted and a consultant – David Evans and Associates – hired.

The project scope was approved at the last PLG meeting. It focused on two broad elements in the Mt. Hood Corridor:

1. Enhancing safety
2. Improving travel options

The other major activity that has taken place since the last PLG meeting is the Mt. Hood National Forest-led transit study pilot program. This pilot program resulted in a recommended pilot program with a set of short-term projects that will inform the MHMTP.

Introductions (KC Cooper, DEA)

Meeting attendees introduced themselves and talked about their involvement in the project. Cam Gilmour, Director of Transportation and Development at Clackamas County, said the County has named Commissioner Jim Bernard to the PLG (to replace outgoing Commissioner Jamie Damon).

FOREST SERVICE REPORT ON PILOT PROJECT (Rithy Bein, Mt. Hood National Forest)

The PLG heard a report on the Forest Service's recently completed *Alternative Transit Opportunities and Transportation Demand Management* in the Mt. Hood National Forest. The study looked at US 26/Highway 35 (Mt. Hood Highway) from Gresham to Hood River and US 26 (Warm Springs Highway) from the Highway 35 junction toward Warm Springs.

The study's objectives were to:

1. Reduce congestion on US 26 and OR 35
2. Improve highway safety for visitors to the public lands and all travelers
3. Increase ability for the ski areas to operate to their permitted capacity
4. Reduce environmental impact of vehicle use
5. Increase economic opportunities for recreation-related commercial enterprises for local communities within the US 26 and OR 35 corridors.

The Forest Service-led project had a Partnership Group that included public and private transit providers, ski area operators, and state and county transportation staff and local residents. The study was conducted from November 2011 to September 2012. It focused on identifying a Pilot Program that could be implemented in a 1-5 year timeframe.

Outcomes of the Pilot Program were grouped by priority level:

- High-priority strategies included developing a transportation management association, enhancing transportation system management and intelligent transportation systems; increasing and extending existing public transit, creating a one-stop Mt. Hood Traveler Webpage; and increasing cell phone coverage on the Mountain
- The medium-priority strategy was to advertise and improve carpool information sharing
- The low-priority strategy was to increase and extend the existing private transit operation

Participants in the study decided to continue meeting as a Mt. Hood Transportation Alliance, to continue to coordinate to implement Pilot Program recommendations. The first meeting was held Sept. 20, 2012, with the next meeting set for Jan. 8, 2013. At the January meeting the Alliance will discuss expansion of the Mountain Express service to Timberline Lodge. The Forest Service and Clackamas County are awaiting word on whether they will be awarded a Paul S. Sarbanes TRIP Grant to fund Mountain Express buses; ski area operators have agreed to help fund expanded service to Govt Camp, Ski Bowl and Timberline. FTA expects to announce grant recipients in December 2012.

PLG Questions/Comments:

Q: How much work was done on the case studies as part of the Forest Service Pilot Program and what is the hand-off from that effort to the MHMTP?

A: The case study work was thorough but there are gaps that will be filled by the MHMTP. The MHMTP will learn from what was done during the Pilot Program and use that work as a basis for further investigation.

Q: New bus service would likely require a big expense. What work from a policy level does the PLG need to do now?

A: The MHMTP has been phased into two parts. At this point, the PLG does not need to work at a policy level.

MT. HOOD MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara, DEA)

- Two Phases

The MHMTP has been divided into two phases for several reasons: extensive analysis has already been done; there are numerous potential solutions; there is a need to move from analysis to implementation; developing a project partner agreement is essential to implementing a successful plan; and the two phases will allow us to focus on what will meet the communities' needs and be implementable.

During Phase 1, the alternatives will be narrowed for in-depth analysis. Some ideas will be taken off the table as the PLG comes to agreement on what should move forward to the next phase of the plan.

Phase 2 will analyze only alternatives that are can feasibly be implemented. Issues that impact implementation will be explored so that structures for success are ultimately created.

- Major Committees and Roles, Decision Process

The MHMTP will use several committees to produce decisions. The Project Leadership Group (PLG) is the decision-making body made up of ODOT, Hood River County, Clackamas County and the Forest Service. The Project Management Team (PMT) is made up of managers and staff of ODOT, the Forest Service, Clackamas County, Hood River County and FHWA-WFLD. The third committee is the Technical Working Group (TWG), which will be comprised of two sub-groups – Highway Safety and Transit Options.

The role of the PLG is to provide leadership for the project, rank values and measures that differentiate options, review potential issues and determine how they relate to their agency's goals and objectives, prioritize and select options for Phase 2 and remove options from further consideration in the MHMTP. The PLG will meet four times during Phase 1.

PLG Questions/Comments:

Q: Will the TWG members be determined by what the PLG chooses to pursue?

A: The TWG will be working in Phase I to analyze potential projects. There were many good technical people working on the FS STudy that the MHMTP will draw from.

- Major Tasks, Deliverables and Timeline

The major project deliverables in Phase I were discussed. They include creating a Project Management Plan, Communications Plan, Baseline Conditions Report, Values Matrix and Measures, Implementation Framework Memo and Prioritization of Options Memo.

In Phase 2, when the Plan will analyze, select and implement solutions, the deliverables include an analysis of options selected by the PLG in Phase 1, Value Analysis, TWG, PMT and PLG meetings, stakeholder outreach, implementation plan, Memorandum of Understanding and the Draft and Final MHMTP.

DEA said the team would be analyzing the current schedule to see if it needs to be extended. The current schedule calls for the PLG to meet in late February 2013, late March and April.

PLG Questions/Comments:

Q: The schedule has PMT meetings scheduled for January and February followed by the next PLG meeting to discuss and rank values and measures related to the options. Should the PLG not meet in between these PMT meetings? Otherwise, there may be too many PLG questions about staff and TWG work that can't be answered in a timely manner.

A: PLG members should stay in touch with staff as the planning process nears the next PLG #2 meeting. In addition, there should be email correspondence providing an update as well as a PLG conference call between PMT meetings if necessary. It was agreed that these measures would likely negate the need for an additional PLG meeting prior to the currently scheduled PLG #2

meeting, but that the PMT would monitor the situation and adjust as necessary as Plan work continued.

Q: How will the new Clackamas County PLG member Jim Bernard be briefed?

A: Clackamas County staff said that they intended to brief Commissioner Bernard on today's PLG meeting and the project in general as soon as possible. PLG member Chris Worth said that he would be available to participate in the briefing as needed.

PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVEMENT PLAN SUMMARY (KC Cooper)

The goal of the public involvement plan is to get as diverse a stakeholder group to provide input and support MHMTP elements. The principal decision-making process is called Choosing By Advantage, which is a value-based decision-making process that is used to select preferred alternatives from multiple options. To inform decision-making, the MHMTP process will use internal and external surveys and will include a website that is capable of taking comments, posting surveys and linking to and from other agency and partner websites.

Media questions should be directed to Mike Mason, co-ODOT Project Manager.

The PMT will use the Basecamp project management tool to store, manage and share documents.

PLG Questions/Comments:

Q: Looking at the MHMTP timeline, the PMT should be reserving time on Commission agendas as soon as possible. This project's success requires cooperation from the counties.

A: The PMT will work with the counties to schedule these briefings in a timely manner.

RELEVANT PARTNER PROJECTS UNDERWAY

PLG members and staff had a chance to share key construction and planning projects under way or recently completed in the Mt. Hood Corridor. A list of agency and county projects was provided and the PLG agreed that this list should be maintained and updated as new projects came up and others were completed.

ODOT's discussion of its Mt Hood Safety Project elicited a question from Matthew Drake, CEO of Mt. Hood Meadows, who wondered if ODOT had been working with Oregon State Police to increase law enforcement actions on the Mt Hood Highway. ODOT has not had recent formal meetings with OSP on this issue, but does plan to work with OSP in the future as the agency's projects move ahead toward construction.

Susan Law with FHWA-Western Federal Lands said that MAP-21 has produced a new grant program and process called the Federal Lands Access Program. The deadline for project submissions is in the next two months and transit and transit operations projects are eligible. The program seeks applications from state DOTs and counties. The PLG discussed the need to monitor the process but that project selection for the MHMTP would not take place until after the deadline for submitting proposals for this Federal Lands Access Program.

Cam Gilmour of Clackamas County briefed the PLG on Government Camp's recently passed Road District measure. Funds raised by the district fee (about \$67,000 per year) will go toward lighting, sidewalk snow removal and snow removal on roads not maintained by ODOT.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Tullis, Timbeline Lodge: Mr. Tullis said he was surprised to hear that the MHMTP had about a 1-year planning schedule. He believed it was a bigger, longer-range planning effort. He suggested that the PLG not give up on larger projects that had been discussed in the past, such as gondola links, park & rides, Mirror Lake access, among others. Mr. Tullis also said that the Mt Hood Transportation Alliance was monitoring the Sarbanes grant

because it wants to keep and expand Mountain Express bus service. He also wondered if the concept of a Transportation Management Association would be investigated during the MHMTP work.

MHMTP Response: Staff responded that while the consultant contract for the MHMTP will last about one year, the plan itself is intended to lay the foundation for implementation beyond the 1-year time horizon. The focus will be on what can be implemented in the next 5 years, or steps to accomplishing items for the next 20 years. The larger project alternatives that Mr. Tullis mentioned would be summarized in one of the planning project deliverables – a matrix that will describe potential options and what it would take to implement them. The PLT will review the matrix, gauge the appetite for specific options, and then will advance specific, implementable projects to Phase 2 for further study. The Transportation Management Association concept will be examined through the matrix of options deliverable.

Hans Wipper, Mt. Hood Skibowl: Mr. Wipper said that he wants the tram/gondola concept and parking options to be considered as options.

NEXT STEPS

- Finalize project schedule and set up committees and meeting schedule
- Define TWG composition
- Do baseline conditions analysis; look for gaps in studies that have already been completed
- Finalize the partner and stakeholder outreach plan

Meeting Notes prepared by: Mike Mason, ODOT R1



**Mount Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan
Project Leadership Group
Meeting #2
July 19, 2013
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
ODOT R1 Headquarters - 123 NW Flanders St., Portland OR
Meeting Summary**

Project Leadership Group (PLG) Attendees:

Jason Tell – Oregon Dept. of Transportation, Region 1 Manager
Karen Joplin – Hood River County Commissioner
Lisa Northrop – Mt. Hood National Forest Acting Supervisor
Jim Bernard – Clackamas County Commissioner

Project Management Team (PMT) Attendees:

George Fekaris – Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Susan Law – FHWA
Rithy Bein – Mt Hood National Forest
Don Wiley – Hood River County
Karen Buehrig – Clackamas County
Kirsten Pennington – ODOT
Mike Mason – ODOT

Guests:

Sherrin Coleman – ODOT
John Erickson – The Resort at the Mountain
Marston Morgan – Mt. Hood National Forest
Dennis Chaney – Friends of Mt. Hood
Tom Keenan – Keenan & Partners
M. B. Drake – Mt. Hood Meadows
Steve Wise – Sandy River Basin Watershed Council
Danielle Cowan – Clackamas County, Tourism and Cultural Affairs
John Valley – Sen. Jeff Merkley Field Representative
Greg Leo – Mt. Hood Meadows
John Tullis – Timberline Lodge
Andi Howell – City of Sandy

Facilitator/Consulting Team: Elizabeth Mros-O’Hara, KC Cooper, and Adam Argo from David Evans & Associates (DEA)

Meeting Notes: Sandra Koike – ODOT

Meeting Purpose (Elizabeth Mros-O’Hara, DEA):

1. Introductions
2. Project status update
3. Public outreach summary
4. Review PMT-recommended list of projects in the MHMTP
5. Discuss next steps as the project moves toward a PLG decision on the project list and into the implementation phase
6. Public comment

1. Introductions – Elizabeth led introductions of the PLG, PMT and public in attendance.

2. Project Update – Elizabeth gave a project update. There were no questions from the PLG during this portion of the meeting.

- Phase I (Nov. 2012 to Sept. 2013) – alternatives are being narrowed and approved by the PLG
- Phase II (Sept. 2013 to winter 2013/2014) – create implementation plan for small set of projects
- Project Status – the Baseline Conditions report has been completed; project evaluation criteria and analysis has been done by the PMT; the PLG has met once prior to today’s meeting; there have been three Technical Working Group meetings and four Project Management Meetings; public outreach has taken place

3. Public Outreach Summary – KC Cooper, DEA, provided the public outreach summary. There were no questions from the PLG during this portion of the meeting.

Outreach and Input Overview

- Core Values: improve safety for all users; expand travel options year-round to enhance mobility and access to recreation and rural communities; projects must be financially feasible and sustainable; projects must be implementable in next 15 years
- Secondary Values: promote environmental stewardship; meet the needs of multiple stakeholders; provide economic benefit or opportunity; strengthen relationships between stakeholders; provide a “bang for the buck” of investment

Public Survey – there were 851 respondents to the survey. Results are posted on the project website and were distributed prior to the PLG meeting

4. PMT-Recommended List of Projects – Elizabeth led this overview of the decision-making process. There were no questions or discussion during this portion of the meeting.

Decision-Making Process

The PMT started with more than 100 project possibilities. Project screening based on core values helped create a smaller list of projects. Then the Technical Working Group, PMT and consultants reviewed this smaller list of projects for implementation potential based on eight categories: funding potential, permitting/regulatory compliance, administrative/organizational needs, capital cost, ongoing costs, effective time-frame to implement, dependency on other projects, and leader/champion.

Project Recommendations

The process yielded a list of 40 projects that were categorized into four priority groups: A, B, C, Future Study. Group A projects: first priority for implementation in the MHMTP. Group B projects: second priority for implementation in the MHMTP. Group C projects: third priority for implementation in the MHMTP. Those projects in the Future Study group have high core values but require more information before they are put in group A, B or C. There are 18 projects in Group A, 14 projects in Group B, 2 projects in Group C and 6 projects in the Future Study group.

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan is an action plan that will have a subset of projects in the MHMTP that will be implemented first. These projects will have high core values, a lead agency/champion, identifiable funding (or an identified path to funding), programmatic and operations strategies and partner commitment. The Implementation Plan is a blueprint for implementing the projects in this category. Memorandums of Understanding or other agreements between project partners may be part of the Implementation Plan.

5. Next Steps – KC led the PLG through the Next Steps discussion

- The PMT will meet in early August to review and respond to comments from the PLG.
- PMT staff should meet with their respective PLG representatives to identify issues, potential changes or additions to project recommendations.

- PMT staff will devise an outreach strategy to get public feedback to the Review information compiled thus far and gather concerns, additions, so the PLG and PMT can work out details before the beginning of September. If you need more information to make a decision, let us know.

Following the Next Steps presentation, there were comments and questions from PLG members and the public:

Jason Tell recommended that the next step be another public outreach campaign. KC responded that the next step is to send out another public survey from the 1st-3rd week of August to get feedback regarding the list of projects. There will also be an online interactive map where people can zoom into the project sites. There will be outreach to stakeholder groups.

Jason Tell felt that it is worth repeating that the list of projects in the Mt Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan is not just a wish list, it's a list of projects that are implementable, have funding potential and have a sponsor to deliver the project. Many past plans just stated the needs of the future with a weak implementation component. For this project, if things change in 5 years -- such as funding or ease of project implementation -- then some projects may become a higher priority. The focus is to get things done and solve what we can now. We are not solving 30 years of problems in 5 years. Lisa Northrop suggested that it would be worth describing in the Plan the process for adding projects.

Elizabeth clarified that we are creating a rolling plan, which is typically created for transit agencies. The rolling plan is more of a short-term plan that lists projects we'd like to get done, but includes longer-term projects as well. The project partners would follow up with a check-in after three years to see if priorities and ability to get the projects done may have changed.

Karen Joplin mentioned that the Project Leadership Group spent a lot of time creating core values. But she is not seeing how the list of projects was scored based on the core values. Elizabeth clarified that the PMT did talk through each project of a longer list of projects and scored each based on the core values. The ones that ranked low are no longer on the list. KC shared that we were looking at the level of support by the PMT. This process was a device to get to a point where we identified those projects that did meet the core values. Staff can make the scoring available on request.

Lisa Northrop inquired whether the Group A projects had the highest core values. Elizabeth reviewed the 4 category description A, B, C, to describe how each one met the basic core values.

Karen said she was looking for another process that would include another strong, good or moderate evaluation against the core values. KC responded that the projects that meet core values were the first screen, next is determining funding, the lead agency and other requirements to make a project move forward.

Jim Bernard asked whether the team was going to look at traffic analysis. Do we know how much funding we have to implement projects?

Jason responded that yes, we know what we have. The projects that ODOT supports for the implementation plan will have funding. Other projects, in the future, may not have funding available, but if the projects have high core values, they will be revisited.

Jim said that there are also possible revenue possibilities that may come up in the future to help fund projects. (If the legislature, for example, makes a decision to fund some projects.)

Danielle Cowan, Clackamas County Director of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, said it sounds like the PLG has not been able to vote on the projects based on the core values and that the PMT is saying take our word for it. This may not be very satisfactory to those who were not there. It may be worthwhile for the PLG to walk through the projects. The PLG may want to rate them based on their knowledge and their constituents' desires.

Jason responded that the opportunity for comments will address this and the team will need to put together the methodology. The PLG will not be making a decision until the next meeting. In the meantime, this is a listening process and if there are any projects that you have, you should engage the team and offer comments. Jason said he feels comfortable with the current project list because ODOT staff have been in communication with him along the way. He noted that the list at this point is just in draft form and is a recommendation by the project team only. The PLG has not made any decisions.

KC shared that these projects were taken from other plans, partner representatives, using public process and these projects have been pared down. The PMT primarily drew project ideas from existing plans.

6. Public Comment

Steve Wise with the Sandy River Basin Watershed Council shared that environmental stewardship as a primary or secondary value is important, particularly projects that touch the Sandy River Basin and Hood River side. Core environmental stewardship values beyond views relate to habitat and water quality. The Sandy River is an anchor habitat for Lower Columbia salmon recovery. Any transportation or

infrastructure project to benefit water quality and salmon habitat would be a good opportunity. For example, during the planning stage for ODOT's I205 multi-use path improvements, stakeholders recognized that integrating tree planting and water quality measures would benefit the project and the community. Mr. Wise suggested allocating capital resources to improve habitat and water quality so that the (MHMTP) projects support environmental stewardship values.

Jason said he appreciated Mr. Wise's input. He said that stakeholders should go through the project list and tell the project team if they see opportunities for environmental stewardship.

Steve Wise added that where there are instances where you have to knock over down large trees for infrastructure projects, the repurposing of trees can be helpful for stream restoration projects. Sandy Basin partners have a huge inventory of need for large trees, which is an expensive material for restoration projects. Jason shared that ODOT has worked with the Forest Service in the past to help with tree materials. He reiterated that a quick scan of the projects for this type of opportunity should be done so that the project team doesn't miss a chance to improve the Sandy Basin.

Dennis Chaney representing Friends of Mt. Hood said he wanted to comment on the list of core values. If he didn't know that the project name was Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan, somebody could tell him that the list was for Powell Blvd. and he would say great. He said he believed that there should be recognition that Mt. Hood is one of the most iconic natural resource areas in the state and that this would be addressed as a core value. He would think that there would be mention that this resource would be preserved, protected, conserved to every extent possible and recognized as such.

Jon Tullis from Timberline Lodge shared that regardless of the specific list, when this project is rolled out to the public, there may be more concern about the fundamental core values than the list. He thinks it is perhaps too prioritized towards safety initiatives, and while that may sound politically incorrect, he feels at this point it is important to point out from a standpoint of the initiatives that the plan will produce. He said he believes that the plan should be more site specific to Mt. Hood and that a lot of people's expectations for the plan are more than just rolling out previously unfunded initiatives – that this narrow view might be practical to a fault. He referenced the recent ODOT safety audit and resulting projects, and said he didn't believe the purpose of the (MHMTP) plan was just to roll out additional safety initiatives, but rather it was an opportunity to look at more innovative transportation needs and potential solutions particular to the mountain environment and conditions, and create an exciting long-term planning vision.

KC said that there is a place for comments online and that the project team is tracking all comments. People can go to the website and email project ideas and they will add it to our list for consideration.

Danielle Cowan from Clackamas County asked if there was an opportunity to change the core values to reflect sensitivity on the mountain? She wondered if there is another measure that could be put in to speak more specifically to Mt. Hood and environmental stewardship and sensitivity or is the plan more of an engineering solution to get things moving in 15 years or less? KC responded that the core values were taken directly from the project charge and were put together after a year of negotiating with all the project partners.

Jason added that it would be particularly helpful in this discussion if those raising the issues about the values look at the list of projects and see if the outcomes are the wrong outcomes or not. Then give us your comments about the specific projects because that's where we are in the process: identifying projects. If people think the projects are the wrong ones, then that is what we need to hear.

Lisa shared that what she is hearing is a question about the genesis of these projects. What was the mandate and how did it translate through the project charge into the core values? Telling that story as a preamble to this list would get at the issues raised and why it's focused in this general direction. The things that are brought up are good to highlight because maybe it shows that there is a need for the back story before it gets rolled out. Jason agreed that this back story has to be there during the public outreach. And if the outcomes are right, wrong, or missing anything, that this is what we need to know.

Danielle Cowan asked if the public would see the projects that were not included on the recommended list of projects or whether they would only see the final 40. KC said that the project team can post a link to the list on the website.

Jim shared that when he is considering the project list, he's not just looking at the project core values but including his core values too. If taking a curb out just gets people down the mountain faster, but doesn't save a life, then he probably isn't that interested in it. Or if it destroys the environment or something that everyone feels is important to protect, he would not support having that project on the list.

Karen said that some of the early discussion when the Project Leadership Group was just getting started and formulating the core values revolved around fatalities for people that were trying to visit Mt. Hood to recreate. There was a lot of discussion about keeping the (MHMTP) plan narrow and keeping the core values list small. Maybe some words are missing here or there, but the discussion was about safety, reducing fatalities, and creating some options to create better usage of the areas

and better availability of the recreation areas for those that might not be able to currently get there.

KC concluded by thanking everyone for being there and that the project team would continue to keep everyone informed and involved. She said that the next public meeting of the PLG would take place in late September. In the meantime, the project management team would gather public input on the draft list of recommended projects before the PLG approves them for the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the PLG will be schedule for late September/early October.



Mount Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

Project Leadership Group

Meeting #3

September 27, 2013

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

ODOT R1 Headquarters - 123 NW Flanders St., Portland OR

Meeting Summary

Project Leadership Group (PLG) Attendees:

Jason Tell – Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) R1 Manager

Karen Joplin – Hood River County Commissioner

Lisa Northrop – Mt. Hood National Forest (MHNF) Acting Supervisor

Jim Bernard – Clackamas County Commissioner

Project Management Team (PMT) Attendees:

George Fekaris – Federal Highway Administration – Western Federal Lands Highway Division

Susan Law – Federal Highway Administration – Western Federal Lands Highway Division

Rithy Bein – MHNF

Karen Buehrig – Clackamas County

Kirsten Pennington – ODOT

Mike Mason – ODOT

Guests

Sherrin Coleman – ODOT

Tom Keenan – Keenan & Partners/Ski Bowl

Danielle Cowan, Clackamas County – Tourism and Cultural Affairs

Greg Leo – The Leo Company LLC/Mt. Hood Meadows

John Tullis – Timberline Lodge

Nick Rinard – Government Camp Community Planning Organization

Facilitating/Consulting Team: Elizabeth Mros-O’Hara, KC Cooper and Adam Argo from David Evans & Associates (DEA)

Meeting Notes: Sandra Koike – ODOT

Meeting Purpose (Elizabeth Mros-O’Hara, DEA):

1. Introductions
2. Overview of Process/Activities to date, Summary of Public Outreach, Review of PMT Project Review Process, Recommended Project List
3. Public Comment Period
4. PLG Discussion and Approval of Two Project
5. Next Steps

1. Introductions – (KC Cooper). Introductions of the PLG, PMT, staff and public in attendance.

2. Overview of Process/Activities to date (KC Cooper)

- The Project Management Team discussed and ranked numerous projects after looking through several plans. We are now in the process of getting ready to draft the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan (MHMTP) and hope to be finished by the end of the year.
- Why this matters: Mt. Hood Area is an iconic area that has access to natural, cultural and historic resources. It sits within two counties, has state highways running through it, and is part of the National Forest system.
- Traffic demand is outpacing capacity. Often and especially during peak ski season, highways become very congested with less than safe driving conditions in some areas. People who wish to travel to and from the mountain have very few options other than to drive a personal vehicle.
- MHMTP took form because of the 2009 Wilderness Bill and interest from the Oregon Transportation Commission to address multi-modal transportation needs on Mt. Hood.
- Clackamas County, Hood River County, Forest Service, and ODOT have transportation and land use authority in the Mt. Hood area.

- Additionally, there are major stakeholders – specifically, the ski areas and cities of Sandy & Hood River, the villages, business and user interest groups among others who will benefit or be affected by the decisions within the MHMTP.
- The Project Leadership Group, Project Management Team and Technical Working Group have guided the process during the past 11 months.
- FHWA Western Federal Lands Highway Division has provided technical support, guidance and information along the way.
- Project charge: Develop a transportation Plan for the Mt. Hood Highway (US 26-OR 35) corridor to and through the north portion of the Mt. Hood National Forest.
- This planning effort has strived for affordable and achievable solutions by focusing on:
 - o Improving highway safety for all users and;
 - o Expanding travel options year round to enhance mobility and access recreation and rural communities.
- Project Core Values:
 - o Improve highway safety for all users
 - o Expand travel options year-round to enhance mobility and access to recreation and rural communities
 - o Financially feasible and sustainable
 - o Can be implemented within 15 years
- Decision Making Process:
 - o Decide which projects should be further analyzed
 - o Adopt the list of projects to go into the Plan
 - o Select a subset of projects for immediate action that will be the Implementation Component of the Plan.
 - o Adopt the MHMTP – a “Rolling Plan”
- Project Outreach: Mike Mason, ODOT, spoke with many interest groups. A second online survey with an interactive map was conducted. It was not a scientific survey, but the information was helpful in determining the list of projects that was created. The Fall 2013 survey showed that safety was the #1 concern.
- The PMT recommended 38 projects for the MHMTP for PLG consideration:
 - o Highway System Management and ITS
 - o Public Transit
 - o Private Transit
 - o Parking
 - o Organizations, Programs and Legislation
 - o Pedestrian and Bicycle
 - o Safety and Road Improvement

3. Public Comment Period

- Nick Rinard, chair of the Government Camp Community Planning Organization (CPO), said he represented the local community. Community members have been particularly involved over the past 10 years in two project ideas that are related to this survey and the resultant plan: the aerial tram and the eastbound turn-off from US 26 to E. Multorpor Road. Both of these projects were thoroughly discussed as part of previous area tax (TIF) committees. Approximately 8 years ago, there was a push to investigate one leg of the tram from Government Camp across Highway 26 to Ski Bowl East. It was dropped by the TIF

committee. There was only limited support for that project. (Disclaimer: Mr. Rinard noted that his residence was in the alignment, and he therefore opposed it, but that the majority of community members also opposed this project.) The majority of the community is not necessarily opposed to the entire tram network, but only this alignment was discussed by the TIF committee. People are very concerned about the alignment of the tram, parking options, and how the alignment would affect privacy, access and traffic flow. The Ski Bowl East turnoff to Multorpor Road was discussed and it raised issues. An off-ramp to Multorpor Road would lead to many problems. It would lead to a dead end side of the community without an easy exit – and there is no practical way to construct one. This off-ramp would bring a lot of parking and traffic to an area that isn't supported right now. Even with the new overpass, which has helped a lot, vehicles with 2-wheel drive and without chains have a difficult time getting up and over the overpass and back to the core, which is the only way out and cannot handle a high volume of traffic -- nor is it desirable to route traffic through the core. Mr. Rinard said a better solution has been discussed and has been outlined in an MOU between the ski areas. This solution would provide a cloverleaf overpass to get eastbound highway 26 into Government Camp and a remote parking area that would not crowd the core.

- Tom Keenan, representing Ski Bowl, said that the projects Mr. Rinard mentioned were adopted in the 2006 MOU in conjunction with community input. The 2010 version updates the original 2006 framework, and those items are still in there. Ski Bowl plans to address both projects moving forward.

This completed the public comment section of the meeting.

4. Discussion and Decision on PMT Project Recommendations (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara)

- PLG comments regarding the PMT-recommended Project List:
 - o Jason Tell, ODOT, said that the list has been jelling for some time. He was ready to adopt the list today and get going on identifying projects to implement in the short-term. He noted that the MHMTP process has taken a different approach than typical planning. In the past, planning efforts have tended to include all possible projects in the plan. Due to financial constraints, the MHMTP has instead focused on the implementation of projects. Mr. Tell said that having an implementation project list makes a compelling case for seeking funding. Mr. Tell said he felt comfortable moving forward with the recommended list of projects.
 - o Karen Joplin, Hood River County, wanted to discuss the preliminary recommendations for the "Future Study" category. She noted that some project shifting had taken place and asked for clarification.
 - o Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara, DEA, shared that two of the projects previously being considered for Future Study had been joined with two other existing projects that describe Road Safety Audits. The reason for this move was due to overlap amongst the four projects. Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted that no project had been removed from the list. Other project movements included shifting the Snow Park Permit Legislation project from Group A to Group B because there wasn't a champion to lead this project at this time.
 - o Ms. Joplin, Hood River County, asked if there was discussion at the Project Management Team level of how to implement projects that may have several components -- some elements easier to fund than others. For example, Ms. Joplin

noted that the description for project Safe-6 – one aspect is costly; the other is less costly and involves marking lanes and new signs. She asked how the MHMTP would address opportunities to take a project with many elements and do some of the simpler elements while not losing track of the overall project goals?

- Mr. Tell, ODOT, said that some projects could be defined in more detail as the process moved forward. He said that putting together the Implementation Plan could allow for an exercise to flag which projects – or project elements within a broader project -- have immediate funding, a champion, or possible funding sources. He asked ODOT staff to work with MHMTP partners and stakeholders to identify opportunities to complete simpler project components ahead of more complicated or costly ones.
- Ms. Joplin, Hood River County, said that overall she was comfortable with the list. Hood River is mostly concerned with safety. And on the other side of the hill there is more need for transit. She said that the MHMTP included enough safety projects to satisfy needs on her side of the hill and that several of the projects are small and doable.
- Lisa Northrop, Forest Service, agreed with Ms. Joplin. She said she, too, would like to see the easier projects teased out and implemented.
- Jim Bernard, Clackamas County, also liked the list. Safety is number one and transit is an important part of what Clackamas County needs to accomplish on their side of the mountain. Mr. Bernard said that he has experience with TMAs. He said that it will be important to identify continued funding for the TMA. Mr. Bernard added that while the small projects on the list will get done, it's important to keep the bigger projects in the MHMTP.

DECISION - Project List Approval by the PLG

- **Mr. Bernard, Clackamas County, moved that the PLG support the project list as recommended – Mount Hood National Forest, Hood River County, and ODOT supported this decision.**

KC Cooper, DEA, said that the MHMTP would be a rolling plan in that project partners would check in with one another and with stakeholders to assess project position in the MHMTP.

Further Study Projects

- Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara, DEA, discussed the two projects that were recommended for further study (called "Immediate Study" projects):
 - She said that the PMT did not have enough information about the TMA and Park-and-Ride projects to identify where they should be in the MHMTP. Therefore, the PMT recommended that:
 - 1) A cursory park and ride analysis be done to see if there are underutilized areas that could become park-and-ride areas. A more comprehensive analysis would need to happen in the future to make sure changes to transit service is taken into consideration.
 - 2) An investigation into whether a Transportation Management Association – an organization that can help with parking management, funding improvements, transit service funding, and/or other functions that require private/public partnerships – makes sense for the Mt. Hood area be

undertaken. At this point, Ms. Mros-O'Hara said it is not clear if there is a champion to make a TMA successful.

DECISION – PLG Approves Immediate Study Project Research

- Ms. Northrop, Forest Service, **moved that the PLG offer support for Immediate Study of these two projects – Org-1 and PubT-4. Mr. Bernard, Ms. Joplin and Mr. Tell voiced support.**

Additional discussion took place regarding the TMA and park-and-ride projects:

- PLG members noted that leadership, support, funding and structure issues for the TMA were critical ones
- At this point, the TMA is a concept that needs to be defined.
- The Mt. Hood Alliance could provide the basis for the TMA
- Mr. Rinard, Government Camp CPO, said that he believed Government Camp residents would offer their assistance with the park-and-ride facility investigation.

5. Next Steps (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara, DEA)

- Identify Implementation Plan projects from the MHMTP project list
- Bring a TMA consultant on-board the MHMTP team for further study
- Set up Project Management Team meetings
- Set up a final PLG meeting in December to confirm the Implementation Plan projects

END



Mount Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

Project Leadership Group

Meeting #4

Dec. 19, 2013

3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

ODOT R1 Headquarters - 123 NW Flanders St., Portland OR

Meeting Summary

Project Leadership Group (PLG) Attendees:

Jason Tell – Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Region 1 Manager

Karen Joplin – Hood River County Commissioner

Lisa Northrop – Mt. Hood National Forest (MHNF) Acting Supervisor

Jim Bernard – Clackamas County Commissioner

Project Management Team (PMT) Attendees:

George Fekaris – Federal Highway Administration – Western Federal Lands Highway Division

Susan Law – Federal Highway Administration – Western Federal Lands Highway Division

Rithy Bein – MHNF

Karen Buehrig – Clackamas County

Kirsten Pennington – ODOT

Mike Mason – ODOT

Guests: Tom Keenan – Keenan & Partners/Ski Bowl
Danielle Cowan, Clackamas County – Tourism and Cultural Affairs
Greg Leo – The Leo Company LLC/Mt. Hood Meadows
Scott Turnoy – Mid-Columbia Economic Development District
Julie Stephens – City of Sandy Transit
John Valley – Sen. Merkley’s Office
Dan Schwanz – Hood River County Transportation District
Heidi Beierle – Gresham Chamber of Commerce

Facilitating/Consulting Team: Elizabeth Mros-O’Hara, KC Cooper and Adam Argo from David Evans and Associates (DEA)

Meeting Notes: Mike Mason – ODOT

Agenda (Elizabeth Mros-O’Hara, DEA):

1. Introductions and Overview
2. Project Updates
 - Park-and-Ride and Transportation Management Association analysis
 - Implementation Plan Projects
3. Public Comment
4. PLG Confirmation of Implementation Plan Projects
5. Next Steps

1. **Introductions and Overview** – (KC Cooper lead). Introductions of the PLG, PMT, staff and public in attendance. KC gave an overview of the meeting agenda.

KC reminded the PLG of the Project Charge and described the project milestones to date (meetings, baseline conditions report, outreach and project screening).

The process to date had resulted in the September 2013 PLG decision to include 38 projects in the MHMTP. KC noted the multimodal make-up of the project list: public transit; private transit; parking; organizations, programs and legislation; pedestrian; bicycle; safety and road improvement; and Intelligent Transportation Systems.

Today, the PLG will decide whether to accept the Project Management Team’s recommendation for a subset of MHMTP projects be included in the Implementation Plan component of the plan

(projects that will be implemented in the first six years of the plan's 15-year implementation period.

2. Project Updates (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara lead)

Ms. Mros-O'Hara described the analysis that had taken place on the Park-and-Ride project (PubT-4) and Transportation Management Association project (Org-1), which had been in the "Immediate Study" needed project list category following the September PLG meeting.

A. Park-and-Ride (PubT-4)

DEA focused on 10 additional sites (six along US 26 on the west side of Mt. Hood and four in communities north of Mt. Hood). These were new potential park-and-rides and/or carpool access sites for near-term (0-6 months) implementation.

The analysis, which included interviews with private businesses, transit organizations and ski area operators, among others) concluded that no new sites should be developed in the immediate term. This is due to satisfactory current use of existing sites given existing transit service patterns. However, the analysis concluded, but many should be tracked and recommended in the longer term as current transit service to the mountain develops and new service is considered and implemented.

PMT Recommendation: PubT-4 Comprehensive Analysis project should be in the MHMTP's Group A (high priority) category.

Jason Tell, ODOT: So what I heard was that the current sites are adequate but there are promising sites for the future. How far did the analysis go?

Ms. Mros-O'Hara: we did look at the sites in detail. What they look like, what people think about them. But DEA found that there would not be easy sites to expand to and that there isn't current demand for others.

Mr. Tell wondered about ridership volume for the Mt. Hood Express bus service since its expanded re-launch.

Julie Stephens, City of Sandy, said that the previous service had about 1,800-2,000 riders per month. In its first month of expanded service, Mt. Hood Express had about 1,500 riders as people started getting used to the new schedule. In its second month, ridership grew to 1,800. And now midway through the third month there are already more than 2,000 riders.

Jim Bernard, Clackamas County Commissioner, noted that ridership should be looked at through a multi-year lens, especially given the low snow totals in 2013 to date.

B. Transportation Management Association (Org-1)

Ms. Mros-O'Hara gave an overview of what a Transportation Management Association (TMA) is. She said that a TMA could help implement projects in the MHMTP. She said DEA sub-consultant Rick Williams helped engage several stakeholder groups during the additional analysis phase, including the Mt. Hood Transportation Alliance as well as the MHMTP's Technical Working

Group (TWG) members. The consensus among the TWG was to continue exploring a TMA for the area.

One issue to sort out is who the champion (leadership group) is of the TMA. The agencies and jurisdictions working on the MHMTP did not feel that they could champion the TMA concept. However, there is significant interest from private stakeholders to lead the effort to form a TMA, with MHMTP project partners involved in the process. Rick Williams presented a path to TMA formation that stakeholders found useful. He helped answer questions about TMA formation at two meetings during the past few months.

PMT recommendation: include the TMA project (Org-1) in Group A (high priority projects).

Jim Bernard said that it's clear that stakeholders on the mountain are very interested in forming a TMA. He agrees that it should be a Group A high priority project.

C. Implementation Plan Projects

Ms. Mros-O'Hara talked through the Implementation Plan (IP) projects. There will be an action plan for each of these projects, which were drawn from Group A (most promising) and recommended by the PMT. The IP projects have funding and a partner champion.

Each of the projects in the IP will have an action plan that calls out the key issues and who is responsible for each task. There are 14 projects in all recommended for the IP.

Ms. Mros-O'Hara noted that there are a lot of good projects in the MHMTP that aren't in the IP. That doesn't mean that they won't get funding in the longer term. Jason Tell credited stakeholders for helping to narrow the project choices.

The plan is flexible and will be revisited regularly by partners. The MHMTP has a "rolling plan" element with yearly partner check-ins and a more detailed review every 5 years.

3. Public Comment (KC Cooper lead)

Greg Leo of The Leo Co., representing Mt. Hood Meadows, offered the following public comment: "We stand with our other ski area representative, Tom Keenan of Ski Bowl. (Mr. Keenan joined Mr. Leo during his comment and noted that Jon Tullis of Timberline Lodge could not attend today's PLG meeting, but also supported Mr. Leo's public comment.) The three groups stand before you today in agreement with the concept of the Transportation Management Association moving forward. Each of the three ski areas is willing to contribute \$5,000 towards a feasibility study of the Transportation Management Association. We invite partnership with some of the counties and agencies to make the TMA a possibility."

Tom Keenan of Ski Bowl:

"I would like to elaborate a bit on what Greg (Leo) said. A full feasibility analysis of a TMA would cost about \$45,000, according to the TMA consultant who worked with us during the Mt. Hood planning process. We'd look to the counties, Forest Service and ODOT to also contribute. We'd

like to reconnect after the holidays to see if the public entities can contribute to get this feasibility study going.

4. PLG Confirmation of Implementation Plan Projects (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara lead)

Ms. Mros-O'Hara said the PLG would now consider approving the 14 projects in the Implementation Plan.

Jason Tell, ODOT, said he thought the work done on this was great. He thanked partner staffs for putting a lot of time and energy into this plan. Mr. Tell said he also appreciates all the stakeholder input received from a wide-ranging area. He said the outreach effort was impressive. He added that given budgets are dwindling, it is great to see planning that moves forward in a focused way to get projects done. There will be more things built having done this plan this way than if we had done it another way, said Mr. Tell. He concluded that he is prepared to support the plan.

Lisa Northrop, Forest Service, said she appreciated the strategic nature of the planning effort. The Implementation Plan will allow us to build strong partnerships to get projects done, she said. Partnerships are really what are needed to make improvements during a time of declining budgets. Ms. Northrop said she really appreciates the technical work that the group did and that she, too, supported the 14 projects selected for early implementation.

Karen Joplin, Hood River County, said she felt the outcome's deliverable is definitely in line with the Project Charge that was created upfront. She said she liked that the project scope was narrow enough that it resulted in a product that can be utilized. Ms. Joplin liked the idea of the action plan and the balance between travel options and safety projects, which was called for in the Project Charge. And Ms. Joplin added that she also liked the balance of projects between the two counties. The plan has the ability to be successful, she said.

Jim Bernard, Clackamas County, said that what's obvious to him is that Mt. Hood businesses and resorts have gotten together to champion the Transportation Management Association. A year ago, Mr. Bernard said the Clackamas County Commission created different districts that each commissioner represented. He got the Mt. Hood area. He said he started getting more and more involved in the area's planning efforts. This planning effort, he said, has brought many groups and public agencies together. It's been a tremendous process and great partnerships have been created.

Mr. Bernard moved that the project management team adopt the plan as written. Mr. Tell seconded and Ms. Joplin and Ms. Northrop supported the action.

5. Next Steps (Elizabeth Mros-O'Hara lead)

Ms. Mros-O'Hara said that her consultant team at David Evans and Associates would work with partners to finalize the plan in January.

She said the rolling plan would continue to 2029. She noted that there have been several successes already:

- US Forest Service Plan
- Mt. Hood Express bus expansion
- Safety and ITS projects will be built in 2014/2015
- Mirror Lake safety improvements led by FHWA-Western Federal Lands Highway Division

END