

Mount Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

APPENDIX B

Outreach (4 of 5)



Document: Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan (MHMTP) Spring (2013) Survey Results

Date of Delivery: July 8, 2013

Description

This report summarizes the online survey posted on the ODOT MHMTP project website to gauge visitor travel habits, familiarity with travel options and information sources, perceptions of safety, and preferences for travel option projects to improve the Mt. Hood corridor.

This survey was open from May 1 through May 31, 2013. There were 851 respondents. Although this was not a scientific survey, it provided valuable information on the opinions of people who travel the corridor for the Project Management Team (PMT) and Project Team to consider in the project screening process.

Status Update

The information gathered in the survey can be used when considering project solutions over the 15-year plan time frame.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 8, 2013
TO: Project Management Team
FROM: KC Cooper
SUBJECT: Mount Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan Spring Survey Results
PROJECT: Mount Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

INTRODUCTION

From May 1 through May 31, 2013, the project posted an online survey on the ODOT website to gauge visitor travel habits, familiarity with travel options and information sources, perceptions of safety, and preferences for travel option projects to improve the corridor. Although this was not a scientific survey, it does provide valuable information on the opinions of people who travel the corridor.

Requests were made to the project partners and approximately 20 stakeholder organizations to either: (1) post a link to the survey on their websites or (2) send emails that included a link to the survey to their constituencies. In addition, 300 postcards with survey information were given to 10 organizations (the partners, ski resorts, mountain businesses) for distribution. The survey had 851 respondents, 227 of whom requested to receive project update emails.

The survey was a combination of single choice and multiple choice questions, rating scale (1 to 10 levels of support for statements, with 1 being “no support” and 10 being “complete support”), and open-ended questions. Not all respondents answered every question. In the following tables, the number of respondents for each question is shown in parentheses in the column headers.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The majority of respondents (77%) reside in the Portland Metropolitan Area (PMA); 10.6% live in the Villages; and 4% live in Hood River or the east side of Mt. Hood. Sixty-seven respondents work for employers on the mountain. Table 1 below indicates their travel demographics.

Table 1: Respondent Demographics

Survey Respondent Demographics	All Respondents (833)	PMA (641)	Village Residents (89)	Hood River Area Residents (33)
Visit Mt. Hood Attractions	63%	67%	28%	51.5%
Cross Mt. Hood to other destinations	48%	52%	24.7%	48.5%
Work for an Employer on Mt. Hood	8%	2.65%	43.8%	12%

RESPONDENTS' TRAVEL HABITS

The majority of respondents use a single occupancy vehicle (SOV) or carpool to access the corridor; the PMA residents are most likely to carpool (63.4%). A very low percentage of respondents use transit to or across Mt. Hood. However, Village residents' use of transit was nearly 6%.

Table 2: Travel Mode To and/or Across Mt. Hood

Primary Mode To and/or Across Mt. Hood	All Respondents	PMA	Village Residents	Hood River Area Residents
Travel by SOV	38.7%	32%	69%	54.5%
Carpool (2 or more people)	56.4%	63.4%	23%	42.2%
Transit	1.5%	.78%	5.75%	0%
Bicycle	2.7%	2.8%	2.3%	3%
Freight Trucks	<.5%	.78%	0%	0%

Once they are up on the mountain, to travel between mountain destinations, 89% of respondents use private vehicles, 4.9% use transit, 11.5% use a bicycle, and 29.2% walk. Of the PMA respondents, once they are on the mountain, to travel between mountain destinations, 67% travel by private vehicle, 8.4% travel by bicycle, 22% walk, and 2.8% use transit.

FAMILIARITY WITH TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

All respondents were asked about their familiarity with transportation alternatives or programs that serve Mt. Hood. Most respondents were unfamiliar with the alternative transportation services and programs available for access to the mountain, with the exception of familiarity with ODOT Trip check (92%), the Sno-Park program (88%), and SAM (Sandy area transit service) (42%). However, respondents who work on the mountain were much more familiar with transportation alternatives than other respondents, as shown in Table 3.

The lack of familiarity with these services shows that many people might not be using the services because they are unaware of them. Marketing of existing services and any newly developed services is essential for increasing alternative transportation mode share, particularly for people that are not commuting (employees).

Table 3: Respondents' Familiarity with Alternative Transportation Services

Familiarity with Alternative Transportation Services	All Respondents (842)	PMA (634)	Employees – All (67)	Employees – From PMA (17)
Mt. Hood Express	39.2%	30.3%	93.8%	88.24%
ODOT Trip Check	92%	92.3%	92.4%	100%
Central Oregon Breeze	33%	27.9%	64%	60%
Fusion Bus	26.8%	20.2%	85.2%	73.3%
Porch to Powder shuttle	8%	5%	30.2%	16.7%
Sea to Summit shuttle	24.6%	21.42%	66.1%	41.7%
CAT (Hood River service)	10.2%	5.2%	17.6%	0%
SAM (Sandy area service)	42.4%	35%	92.2%	81.3%
Ski area employee shuttles	24.2%	14.8%	73.3%	61.5%
Sno-Park Program	87.6%	86.7%	92%	100%
Drive Less Connect (carpooling)	21.2%	19.5%	39.2%	41.7%
Private Charter Services	28%	26.2%	54.2%	6%

Note: Blue indicates that more than 50% of respondents indicated familiarity with a program/service.

RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ABOUT SAFETY WHILE TRAVELING ON THE MOUNTAIN

Respondents felt that safety was inadequate for pedestrians and bicyclists along the Mt. Hood Corridor. In indicating support on a scale of 1–10 (1 being no support and 10 being complete support), respondents averaged 3.4 when asked if pedestrian safety is adequate along the Mt. Hood Corridor, and 3.2 when asked about bicycle safety. Respondents rated pull-out areas as 5.3 in adequacy, and signing as 6.4. The difference in ratings between all respondents and just those of the largest segment (PMA) was statistically insignificant.

Respondents were highly supportive of intersection improvements at key intersections to improve safety. Respondents averaged a 7.1 rating of support for improvements to the US26 and OR 35 intersection. Other intersections that were most often suggested for improvement were at the following locations:

- The entrance to Government Camp
- The intersection of Timberline Road and US26
- Entrances to all the major ski resorts
- Bicycle and pedestrian improvements, especially clearly marked pedestrian crossings (e.g., across US26).

RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ABOUT USING TRANSIT AND SHUTTLES

All respondents were asked if they would consider using other transportation options to and around Mt. Hood. Table 4 shows the high and low ratings for each option—those ranking 8 and higher, and 3 or lower. The far ends of the scale (10 = would always use the option and 1 = would never use the option) are shown for each alternative. The average isn't as telling for this type of question, because there will always be markets that are willing (8–10) and never willing (1–3) to use alternative transportation. Therefore, the size and demographics of

the willing group are important to understand who should be targeted for services and marketing of those services.

Table 4: Likelihood of Using Transit and Other Travel Options

Transit/Parking Options Ratings for All Respondents	Total Number of Respondents (842)	Percentage Ranking 8 or Higher (rated 10)	Percentage Ranking 3 or Lower (rated 1)	Average Rating of All Respondents
Would carpool if more/better carpool parking available	(782)	20.2% (8.3%)	36.2% (16.1%)	4.88
Would use transit if reliable/ensured seat	(793)	46% (22%)	22.6% (12.5%)	6.41
Would use a circulator bus between villages and Government Camp	(790)	21.1% (9.5%)	46.5% (22.3%)	4.45
Would park and ride from Portland/Hood River and shuttle to designations at Government Camp	(786)	35.2% (15.6%)	29.3% (15.6%)	5.71
Would park and ride from villages and shuttle to Mt. Hood destinations	(781)	24.9% (8.2%)	40% (19.2%)	4.85
Would take a circulator within Government Camp	(777)	23% (9.5%)	41.7% (19.4%)	4.74

We can filter this question further to determine the ratings by respondents based on where they reside, or if they are an employee on Mt. Hood. As shown in Table 5, there was good support for transit from the valleys, with employees most likely of all categories to use transit and other travel options and Hood River residents showing the least proclivity to use travel options overall, except for transit to the mountain.

Portland residents would consider transit and using park and rides from the valley to the mountain, but are less likely to care about improved carpool parking, or park and rides and circulators on Mt. Hood. Not surprisingly, Village residents would be inclined to use circulators on the mountain. A significant portion of Village residents (23%) gave a “1” rating to using transit between the valleys and the mountain.

Employees are a major travel market for transit. Of the 59 respondents who are employees of mountain businesses, when asked if they would use a shuttle that coincided with their work shift, 86% rated this travel alternative 8 and higher.

Table 5: Likelihood of Using Travel Options by Origin

Transit/Parking Options by Where Respondents Reside/Work	PMA (641 resp.) (8 or higher) <3 or lower>	Villages (89 resp.) (8 or higher) <3 or lower>	Hood River (33 resp.) (8 or higher) <3 or lower>	Mountain Employee (67 resp.) (8 or higher) <3 or lower>
Would carpool if more/better carpool parking available	(20.5%) <34%>	(28.8%) <39%>	(12.5%) <46.9%>	(28.6%) <30.2%>
Would use transit if reliable/ensured seat	(46.6%) <21.3%>	(49.4%) <27.2%>	(40.6%) <15.6%>	(66.1%) <9.67%>
Would use a circulator bus between villages and Government Camp	(17%) <28%>	(57.1%) <22.6%>	(6.45%) <58%>	(59.4%) <20.3%>
Would park and ride from Portland/Hood River and shuttle to designations at Government Camp	(36.62%) <27.8%>	(24.4%) <44.9%>	(28.8%) <34.4%>	(40%) <26.7%>
Would park and ride from villages and shuttle to Mt. Hood destinations	(20.3%) <43.5%>	(59.5%) <21.4%>	(10%) <40%>	(59.4%) <15.6%>
Would take a circulator within Government Camp	(16.8%) <43.6%>	(51.2%) <26.8%>	(3.2%) <45.2%>	(50%) <21.9%>

In the general comments section, at least 36 of the 231 comments were focused on improving transit to and on the mountain. Commenters were focused on the affordability of transit options (so as to be competitive with driving) and the frequency of buses. Some of the most common suggestions were:

- Transit from the Portland area to the Mountain, especially in the morning and later in the evening to make day trips worthwhile.
- Bus service from Government Camp up to Timberline.
- Need shuttles that go all the way to Mt. Hood Meadows, SkiBowl, or Timberline, not just to Government Camp.
- Need a frequent shuttle between Government Camp, Ski Bowl, Timberline, and Meadows during ski season. The Fusion Pass shuttle fills up fast, is infrequent, and only runs on weekends for a couple months. The parking lot at Meadows fills fast, and you run the very real risk of accidents shutting down Highway 35 between Meadows and Government Camp.
- Transit options equipped with bicycle and ski/snowboard racks.
- The reality of transit is that it doesn't get to trailheads or off-highway sites. For very popular locations, a bus service that accesses off-highway sites could be useful but needs to be convenient and reliable.
- Employee shuttle from Sandy to the mountain.

Where the transit options connect in Portland is a key issue for respondents. For low car or car-free households, a pickup point within reasonable biking distance could make transit to Mt. Hood more feasible and attractive. One commenter mentioned the Hollywood MAX station as a location for pickup that is fairly central to the inner east side of Portland.

WALKING AND BIKING

The average of the level of support from all respondents, regardless of where they live, for improving pedestrian facilities along the corridor was high, averaging 7.5 for pedestrian improvements and 7.3 for bike improvements. The average rating for supporting more parking at trailheads was 7.3. A notable 41% of Village residents rated walking improvements a 10, and 37.3% rated bike improvements a 10.

While some cyclists would be happy with well-maintained bike lanes on US26 and Highway 35, there were a significant number of comments that suggested a separate bicycle and pedestrian mixed-use path instead. Typical comments include the following:

- Bicycle access on US26 and Highway 35 is inadequate and dangerous. Mt. Hood is a desirable recreational destination, and improvements to cycling infrastructure would be heavily used.
- Better bike access and regular maintenance of the bike lanes would rank in my top three priorities.
- No rumble strips as they're unsafe for cyclists.

Pedestrian safety was also of high concern to survey respondents. Crossing US26, crossing at the west end of Government Camp to SkiBowl, and accessing Mirror Lake Trailhead were mentioned multiple times.

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (ITS) AND WEBSITE

There is a great familiarity with the ODOT website. Support of phone/computer applications that provided information about weather conditions, parking, traffic, etc. received a high rating of 8.3. All respondents, regardless of where they reside, would like to see more cell phone coverage on the mountain. More information kiosks and more information at existing kiosks were rated 6.28 and 6.34, respectively.

Many comments focused on better signage on the mountain and cellphone applications to improve the travel experience. Comments are summarized below.

DESIRED SIGNAGE AND STRIPING

- Informational signs alerting people to the various ski areas as they approach the mountain, similar to the large signs south of the I-5 and I-205 junction for northbound travelers entering the Portland area, would be helpful for visitors to the mountain. For example, "If you're driving through on US26, you don't know about Cooper Spur, and if you're coming from OR 35, you don't necessarily know that Timberline or Ski Bowl are ahead."
- More road signs indicating the number of lanes, and uphill/downhill traffic flow for when lane stripes are covered in snow. Many people drive in the middle, blocking the passing lane, leading to unsafe passing by crossing into oncoming traffic.
- More accurate signage that tells you to carry traction tires when the weather is poor.
- There needs to be more focus on putting down reflective striping and maintaining it. When lane lines disappear in poor weather when it's dark, that decreases the safety of the roadway.
- Better marking of the lanes in the winter and signs indicating that vehicles with chains must stay to the right.

REAL-TIME INFORMATION

- During winter, the chain-up reader board, flip-up signs, and website often do not match and need to be more reliable.
- Some kind of real-time social networking site allowing people to connect about adventure carpooling—when the next group of people are heading to the mountain for skiing, biking, etc.
- A parking application to alert drivers of how much parking is available at certain trailheads.
- Repairing the webcams, because they indicate road conditions, weather conditions, and traffic. One commenter uses weather.com for a forecast, uses ODOT and resort information before leaving home, and uses an app called ROAD CAM that is very helpful.
- Ongoing advertisement of services as well as easy-to-find resources for trip planning.
- Good roadway information coupled with good shuttle and transit information to help riders know of the arrival time of the next bus.

PREFERENCES FOR TYPES OF PROJECTS

Respondents were asked to select their top three choices for project types. The 793 respondents selected these top six project areas. Table 6 below shows the percentage of support by specific residential areas. Transit to Mt. Hood was the most the top project area for people from the PMA. This was the second most important project area for Village and Hood River area residents, with better cell coverage being first. In addition, Hood River and Portland metropolitan area residents rated roadway safety features very high.

Table 6: Top Rated Project Types by Respondent Origin

Top Rated Project Types by Respondent Class	All Respondents (793)	PMA (601)	Village Residents (81)	Hood River Area Residents (33)
Transit to Mt. Hood	42%	42.4%	37%	36.4%
Better cell phone coverage	36%	35.8%	40.7%	48.5%
More roadway safety features	35%	34%	24.7%	36.4%
Improved bike facilities	33%	35%	30.9%	24.2%
More parking options at trailheads	31%	33%	18.5%	24.2%
Intersection improvements	24%	25%	21%	21.2%

SUMMARY

Many regular travelers to or across Mt. Hood are not familiar with alternative transportation modes. Greater marketing of existing services may help increase that mode share. There is an interest in transit, but frequency and reliability are issues. Mountain Village residents and Mt. Hood business employees are much more apt to take a shuttle or transit around the mountain. (An employee shuttle had an extremely high level of support.)

Roadway improvement also ranked high among most groups, including improvements to intersections along the corridor. Cyclists, in their comments, listed concerns about more rumble strips, which are a hazard for bikes. Bike improvements were fairly evenly supported by the different residential origins.

Mount Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan Spring Survey Results

July 8, 2013

Page 8

Cell phone coverage was a recurring theme in the comments. It would be needed to support any phone/computer applications for those on the mountain. This is an improvement that would need to be led by private industry.

A copy of the comments, coded by topic, and a printout of the SurveyMonkey survey are on the MHMTP Basecamp site.

Attachments/Enclosures: n/a

Initials: exm

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