

Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Preservation and Modernization

**Meeting Summary – Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation working lunch,
Albany tour**

Monday, October, 2016

**Members Present: Sen. Beyer, Co-Chair; Sen. Edwards, Sen. Girod, Sen. Monroe;
Rep. Bentz, Rep. Lively, Rep. Olson, Rep. Smith**

Visiting Legislators Present: Sen. Gelser; Rep. Rayfield

**Members Excused: Sen. Boquist, Sen. Johnson, Sen. Winters; Rep. McKeown, Co-Chair;
Rep. McLain, Rep. Smith-Warner**

Working Lunch with Members of Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation

Committee members shared a networking lunch with members of the Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation (CWACT). Welcoming remarks were provided by Annabelle Jaramillo, Benton County Commissioner and CWACT Chair. Other attendees included: Susan Morgan, Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) member; Roger Nyquist, Linn County Commissioner; Doug Hunt, Lincoln County Commissioner; Josh Wheeler, Benton County Public Works Director; Fred Abousleman and Phil Warnock, CWACT; Ray Kopczyński, Albany City Councilor; Eldon Albertson, City of Halsey; Darrin Lane, City of Millersburg; Janet Steele, Albany Area Chamber of Commerce; Hal Brawner, Corvallis City Councilor; Walt Perry, Jefferson City Councilor; Jeffrey Goodwin, City of Sweet Home; Gerry Powell, Tangent City Councilor; Theresa Conley, Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization; Ali Bonakdar, Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization; Loyd Henion and Bob Conder, citizens; Angela Beers-Seydel, Frannie Brindle, Sonny Chickering Leah Craft and Paul Mather, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT); Robin Maxey, Senate President's Office; Jackie Mikalonis, Governor's Office; and Andrew Downs, staff for Rep. Bentz, Pamela Fitzsimmons, staff for Sen. Johnson and Nicole Stoenner, staff for Rep. McLain.

Albany Tour

The Committee boarded a charter bus for a tour of local transportation facilities. Welcoming remarks were provided by Sonny Chickering, ODOT Region 2 Manager, and OTC Commissioner Susan Morgan, who discussed congestion and safety issues plaguing Highway 20 between Corvallis and Albany. Commissioner Morgan noted that traffic fatalities are up significantly, both in Oregon and nationwide, from two years ago. She also discussed the impact of the closure of Terminal 6 at the Port of Portland on truck traffic moving agricultural and other goods from the mid-Willamette Valley to market.

Roger Nyquist, Linn County Commissioner, discussed safety improvements on Highway 34, including installation of a new signal, a \$1.4 million project, and a centerline barrier project.

Rep. Andy Olson reviewed recent interchange improvements and commented on the need for additional southbound access to Interstate 5 in Albany.

International Paper Site/Millersburg

Rep. Olson reviewed the concept of an intermodal transload/reload facility that is being planned for the International Paper site in Millersburg. With closure of Terminal 6 at the Port of Portland, goods could be trucked to the site and reloaded onto train cars for delivery to ports in Washington or in California. Commissioner Nyquist outlined the reasons why the site is a premier location for a transload facility.

Terry Fasel, Oregon Department of Agriculture, said that the Department is developing plans for movement of Oregon agriculture products with or without Terminal 6. He indicated that an intermodal study is due in 2017. Oregon's high-value agricultural products, including blueberries, grass seed and alfalfa hay depend on a competitive strategy that can overcome Oregon's shipping disadvantages without active container service.

U.S. 20 Safety Issues

Sen. Sara Gelser described the effect that the confluence of increased traffic volumes (now as high as 20,000 vehicles a day) and safety issues (right turn lanes that block visibility, too many access points, cars forced to wait on train tracks to enter crowded highway) on Highway 20 between Corvallis and Albany, particularly at the intersections with Granger and Independence

Van Buren Bridge

Commissioner Annabelle Jaramillo, Benton County, commented on the traffic congestion that can occur on the Van Buren bridge, particularly on days with Oregon State University football games. The bridge is a swing bridge to allow passing river traffic.

OR 34 Safety Issues

Commissioner Nyquist discussed safety needs on Highway 34, including the need for rumble strips, centerline safety features and a frontage road, to address safety concerns. There have been seven fatal accidents in recent years, all involving crossover collisions.