



Meeting Notes

Rural Transit Coverage Stakeholder Inquiry

Tuesday, January 26, 2016

Present

Michelle Apparcel, Eugene Area Senior & Disabled Services Connections Coordinator; Nicole Baschleben, PSU Intern - Senior Connections Fern Ridge Service Center; Paul Biaylock, Eugene Resident; Theresa Brand, Transportation Options Manager, Point2Point Solutions; Jim Coey, Mayor Oakridge; Alene Goddard, Oakridge Diamond Express; Susan Hekimonglu, LTD Accessible Services Specialist; Suzanne Huebner, Cottage Grove Area Senior & Disabled Services Connections Coordinator; Sasha Luftig, LTD Service Planner – Long Range; Becky McMurrick, Oakridge Area Senior & Disabled Connections Coordinator; Gene Organ, Central Lane Area Commission on Transportation; Don Patton, Florence Transit Advisory Committee; David Reesor, Oregon Department of Transportation; Greg Rikhoff, Lane County Director of Operations; Ken Rivernider, President, Emerald Valley Chapter, American Council of the Blind of Oregon; Kate Scott, Eugene Area Senior & Disabled Services Connections Coordinator; Tim Simon, LTD Service Planner – Short Range; Kristine Sirmans, Florence Area Senior & Disability Connections Coordinator; Glen Southerland, Assistant Planner, staff to Transportation Advisory Committee; Becky Taylor, Lane County Senior Transportation Planner, Meeting Facilitator & TSP Manager; Sandi Young, Florence Transit Advisory Committee

Meeting Purpose

This meeting provides a forum for a more focused discussion on public feedback received as part of Lane County's Transportation System Plan Update regarding the need for additional transit service in rural areas. The goals for this meeting are for stakeholders to: understand the needs and limitations regarding rural transit coverage; and discuss opportunities that could be explored to meet those needs and overcome those limitations.

Discussion

This was a roundtable discussion of user needs and provider capabilities and limitations, followed by a preliminary brainstorm of opportunities to explore as next steps. Refer to 1/25/16 Rural Transit Coverage memo for more information. The following are items that were otherwise not included in that memo.

- **Understanding Needs**
 - This is a quality of life issue.
 - Accessibility is not just ADA, but about connections between communities.
 - The needs are much greater for people who don't drive.

- The rural transit need is greater than just the connections between Eugene and Florence and between Florence and Yahats.
 - Harrisburg, Veneta, Oakridge, Cottage Grove and Junction City have service needs.
 - Rural residents have similar needs throughout Lane County, such as: youth being able to participate in metro area activities; and people in treatment programs needing to access metro services and attend court hearings.
 - Veneta, Oakridge (other rural communities) have home-bound clients that need door-to-door service; they can't get to and from the bus stop.
 - Creswell doesn't have a grocery store; it's difficult for residents to access the bus for shopping in Eugene.
 - Rural residents outside communities, like High Prairie Road, and smaller communities like Walton, Mapleton, Noti, and Reedsport, also need transportation assistance.
 - Economic development needs for weekend routes (i.e. Oakridge).
 - Florence has a need to maintain and expand the Rhody Express.
- **Existing Conditions**
 - Taxi fare is \$150 for trip between Eugene and Florence.
 - The Rhody Express in Florence has infrequent service and is expensive to operate
 - Pacific Crest Buslines (formerly Porter Stage) doesn't connect to Florence System. It runs twice a day to Portland for \$25.
 - LTD provides service to Veneta, McKenzie Bridge, Cottage Grove, and Creswell
 - Rhody Express runs 10 AM to 6 PM hourly on weekdays
 - Diamond Express has three round-trips a day, which may be expanded in March.
 - South Lane Wheels in Cottage Grove is open to the public and has routes around town
 - Oakridge has dial-a-ride services on Tuesdays and Thursdays
 - No service between River Road and Junction City
 - **Exploring Opportunities**
 - Reach out to state legislature
 - Rails to Trails
 - 10-years ago Kiwanis used to provide trips once a month
 - South Lane Wheels
 - More travel training (transferring is difficult for people to navigate)
 - More volunteers
 - Funding alternatives
 - Changes to funding priorities at LaneACT
 - Changes to enable use of ConnectOregon funds

- Gas tax: Florence recently tried for roadway preservation, but ballot failed; Oakridge is considering for recreational bicycling.
- Federal programs for rural transit assistance
- Pacific Crest (through Greyhound) receives public funding
- ODOT STF funds
- Payroll tax
- Hotel Tax
- Coordinate with Casino to combine transit needs and services
- Florence to Yahats: initiated work group with Lincoln County Transit and mayors of Florence and Yahats; didn't receive TGM grant for planning work in 2015.
- Portland model: public/private partnerships
- LCC campus in Florence

Stakeholders

Please review the attached list of stakeholders and identify others to be included in the conversation.

Include:

- Tribes
- Travel Lane County
- Someone from Governor's Vision workgroup
- League Oregon Cities
- National Parks Service
- ODOT Transit
- Walton and Mapleton representatives

Next Steps

- All
 - Please review (and get edits to Becky Taylor)
 - stakeholder list
 - 1/26/16 assessment memo
 - Send Becky resources that would be useful for stakeholders
- Becky
 - Meeting Minutes
 - Update stakeholder list and assessment memo based on feedback
 - Create library of resources on webpage for stakeholders
 - Schedule meeting to further explore options

Contact

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