



Benton County
Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund
Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
August 5, 2024

Virtual, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm.

Committee Members Present:

Chair Heidi Henry - Environmental Advocate
Vice-Chair Janece Cook - Representative of Low-income Persons
Kate Hunter-Zaworski - Representative of People with Disabilities
Greg Gescher - Public Transportation Service Provider
Sarah Bronstein - Representative of Educational Institutions
Kristen Jocums – User of Transportation Services
David Rabinowitz - Bicycle and Pedestrian Advocate
Gary Stockhoff - Ex-officio

Staff: Lisa Scherf - Public Transportation Services Supervisor
Tiffany Plemmons - Transit Program Assistant

Guests: Tim Bates – City of Corvallis
Corum Ketchum – Oregon Cascade West Council of Governments

1. Call Meeting to Order/Introductions

Chair Henry called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 am and attendees introduced themselves.

2. Public Comments

None.

3. Approval of December 11, 2023, and March 25, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Cook moved to accept the corrected December 11, 2023, and March 25, 2024, meeting minutes.
Rabinowitz seconded the motion and minutes were approved.

4. OSU Mobility Hub Project Update

Ketchum gave an update on the Mobility Hub project. There have been design delays, but by the end of September, 100% of the design plans will be complete and ready to go out for bids. Construction is anticipated during the summer of 2025. Rabinowitz asked about any plan changes. Ketchum shared that the number of shelters will vary depending on bids, and that the LBCC curbside driver restroom has been cut from the plans for budget purposes.

Scherf asked about OSU investments for SW Jefferson Avenue and Bronstein confirmed OSU will be widening the sidewalk to 10 feet on the north side of Jefferson Avenue. It's possible there will be a pedestrian path connecting to the park area to the north.

Scherf asked Ketchum about applying for money in the next STIF cycle for charging stations at the Mobility Hub; they will consider it. Hunter-Zaworski asked whether the new path will be pedestrian use only. She strongly recommends separate paths for people on foot vs. wheels, along with appropriate

signage designating that. Bronstein offered to take Hunter-Zaworski's concerns back to the OSU planning committee.

Ketchum agreed to provide the draft project plans to the Committee with the understanding that they are still subject to change.

5. Update on STIF Timeline and Funding Estimate

Scherf stated that letters of Interest for STIF Discretionary grants were due in late July. Unlike past cycles, staff expects to get feedback about whether these projects will advance for funding prior to when STIF Formula projects are being developed. STIF Plans for Formula funds are due January 16, 2025 and staff would like to get the Benton County Plan to the Board of Commissioners (BOC) in December, so there is time for adjustment if needed.

Cook asked about the proposed Highway 99W bus service between McMinnville and Junction City and if there has been any movement. Scherf stated that it took a long time for both Benton County and partner Yamhill County to get the necessary buses, but that has finally happened. The next step is developing the service design and with new staff scheduled to start August 16, we should be ready.

6. Discussion of Proposed Committee Operational Work Group

Scherf presented three options for the Committee and noted some pros and cons to consider:

1) Operational Work Group. Form a work group of the STIF Committee as proposed by a Committee member.

Pros: Responds to a direct request of a Committee member and would formalize the working group with a paper trail and meeting minutes for identifying and discussing issues.

Cons: Doesn't respond directly to the explicit purpose of working groups as referenced in the bylaws. Another set of meetings with published agendas, minutes and subsequent discussion with the full Committee would take considerable staff time.

2) Multimodal Advisory Committee. This option would have the BOC create a new advisory committee to address operational issues. This would be something unique, as the County doesn't currently have any comparable operational committees.

Pros: Has the express purpose of responding to operational issues.

Cons: This would be a new type of committee for the County and would require BOC authorization. If it is multimodal, it includes modes that aren't relevant to the operational issues at hand and will take staff time and commitment.

3) Ad hoc Stakeholder Group. This group would exist outside of the STIF Committee and include a CTS staff member, a BAT staff member, 1-2 reps from DAB, and 1-3 current ADA/BAT lift users. It could have a structured calendar, with quarterly or semiannual meetings, to discuss operational issues. Meeting would not be public and there would be no required noticing nor formal minutes. Members could change as needed depending on issues.

Pros: Is specific to operational issues, flexible regarding membership and agenda requirements, and the least staff intensive.

Cons: Not an official Benton County Advisory Committee and may not be perceived to have leverage.

The Committee discussed the various options. Chair Henry introduced a scoring system called "Fist to

Five”, with a fist representing zero (not likely to support) to five (absolutely support). The Committee used this system to narrow the options, which led to a vote on Option 3.

Rabinowitz moved to create the Ad Hoc Stakeholder Group, to advise staff on operational issues of Corvallis Transit System and Benton Area Transit and Gescher seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-1. Chair Henry requested that progress reports be provided periodically to evaluate work group progress. Committee members Rabinowitz and Hunter-Zaworski both agreed to join the work group.

Bronstein asked about a timeline for how to measure progress and Scherf responded it would probably take a year. Scherf cautioned the group that not every idea brought forth can be implemented. It’s possible that issues are brought to the group, staff researches potential options, and the group discusses them, but for various reasons the changes aren’t feasible. That should not be considered a failure, as the group will have done its work to review and discuss the service and what changes are possible within the resources.

7. Adjournment

Chair Henry adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:30am.