

# ***RVACT*** *Rogue Valley Area Commission on Transportation*

155 N. 1st Street • P.O. Box 3275 • Central Point, Oregon 97502 • 541-664-6674  
FAX 541- 664-7927

**To:** Members, Rogue Valley Area Commission on Transportation

**From:** Pat Foley, RVCOG

**Re:** Draft Summary of May 13, 2008, RVACT Meeting, ODOT Conference Rooms B and C, White City, OR

**Members and Alternates in Attendance:** Al Densmore, Medford; Ernest Garb, RVTD; John Morrison, Ashland; William Cecil, Talent; Carlos DeBritto and Bob Lewis, Phoenix; C.W. Smith and John Vial, Jackson County; Tim Cummings, Grants Pass; Ruth Keith, Shady Cove; Jim Raffenburg and Rob Brandes, Josephine County; Mike Quilty, MPO; Arthur Anderson, ODOT; Reeve Hennion, Mike Montero, Craig Stone, John Watt, Richard Smith, Jeff Hunter Stacey Kellenbeck and James Lowe private sector representatives from Jackson and Josephine Counties

**Members Absent:** Butte Falls, Cave Junction, Central Point, Eagle Point, Jacksonville, Gold Hill, Rogue River, and private sector representative Alan DeBoer

**Staff:** Mike Baker and Gary Leaming, ODOT; Pat Foley, RVCOG

**Other:** Jerry Marmon, Jane Randleman, Debbie Timms and Allie Cyr, ODOT; Alex Georgevich, Medford; Jim Olson, Ashland; Terry Helfrich, Phoenix; Robert Kortt, RDK Engineers; Meg Landers, Mail Tribune

**1. Roll Call**  
Mike Montero

Roll was taken. A quorum was present.

**2. Approval of Minutes**  
Mike Montero

Mike asked if there were any changes to the March 11, 2008 RVACT minutes. Correction: Add Tim Cummings' question regarding the Foothill-Delta Waters project. The minutes were approved with changes.

**3. Public Input**  
Mike Montero

Mike invited members of the public to make comments. There were no comments.

#### 4. Modernization Project Plus-Up Selection

Mike Baker

*Handouts: 1. Memo STIP reductions and allocations, 2. Plus-Up application, 3. Scoring Summary, 4. South Stage MOD application*

Mike Montero introduced the Modernization Project Plus-Up Selection agenda item. The RVACT has been given direction by the Oregon Transportation Commission to assemble a list of projects that are currently unfunded; projects that the region considers being of great significance. At the last meeting there were two motions made, voted on and approved: 1) if there are any additional revenues the first priority is to provide funding for the Hwy 199 project in Josephine County and 2) provide funding for the Fern Valley Interchange.

Art Anderson reviewed a letter addressed to all Region Managers from Doug Tindell. The letter explains the four assignments given to ACTs to resolve a shortfall of funds. The RVACT has completed two of the assignments. The two remaining assignments which will be done today are: 1) develop lists of potential STIP projects to be funded in the \$50M and \$75M budgets and, 2) look at large projects to be funded as part of the \$100M plus list. These lists will be sent to Salem so that they can be used in the 2009 legislative session.

Mike Baker referred to the handouts; 1) RVACT potential projects map and 2) spreadsheet listing submitted Modernization projects. The below listed projects were scored using the RVACT criteria.

Scored Modernization Projects using RVACT Goals					
Project No.	Project	Scoring Criteria Points	Match	Total Project Cost	Project Funding Request
1	US 199 Expressway Upgrade (Grants Pass)	78	\$ 596,000	\$ 39,400,000	\$ 26,600,000
2	I-5 Fern Valley Interchange Unit 2	73	\$6,800,000	\$ 55,000,000	\$ 15,300,000
3	OR 238 Unit 2	72	\$ 000	\$ 13,900,000	\$ 13,900,000
4	Or 62 Unit 2 (I-5 to White City)	70	\$ 000	\$375,000,000	\$375,000,000
5	OR 99 @ Hersey/Wimer (Ashland)	68	\$ 300,000	\$ 1,485,000	\$ 1,185,000
6	I-5: Interchange 35 Unit 2	63	\$ 000	\$ 14,000,000	\$ 14,000,000
7	Foothill Road: Hillcrest to Delta Waters	63	\$2,000,000	\$ 20,000,000	\$ 18,000,000
8	I-5: Exit 61 Interchange (Merlin)	60.5	\$ 000	\$ 5,100,000	\$ 5,100,000
9	OR 238: New Hope to UGB (Grants Pass)	60	\$ 000	\$ 12,400,000	\$ 12,400,000
10	OR 99: Rapp Rd to Creel (Talent)	60	\$ 000	\$ 4,300,000	\$ 4,300,000
11	OR 99 @ South Valley View	59	\$ 000	\$ 10,200,000	\$ 10,200,000
12*	OR 62: Mall/Target Access	58.5	<del>\$ 750,000</del> \$2,000,000	\$ 4,824,000	<del>\$ 4,074,000</del> \$ 2,800,000
13	I-5 Truck Climbing Lanes (Sexton Summit)	57.5	\$ 000	\$ 22,500,000	\$ 22,500,000
14	OR 140: Freight Extension (Unit 2)	57	\$ 000	\$ 7,300,000	\$ 7,300,000
15	OR 62: Linn Road to OR 234	56.5	\$ 000	\$ 15,600,000	\$ 15,600,000
16	I-5 Truck Climbing Lane (Smith Hill)	55.5	\$ 000	\$ 19,000,000	\$ 19,000,000
17	I-5 Truck Climbing Lane (Stage Pass)	55.5	\$ 000	\$ 15,400,000	\$ 15,400,000
18	Blackwell Road: I-5 to Kirtland Road	50	\$ 000	\$ 9,300,000	\$ 9,300,000
19	OR 238: Ruch to Jacksonville	42	\$ 000	\$ 12,300,000	\$ 12,300,000
20*	<del>I-5: Exit 55 Interchange (Grants Pass)</del>	<del>27.5</del>	<del>\$ 000</del>	<del>\$ 11,400,000</del>	<del>\$ 11,400,000</del>
21	I-5: Exit 19 Lowe Road Realignment	25.5	\$ 000	\$ ?	\$ ?

\*Indicates change

\*\*An application for the South Stage Road was submitted by the city of Medford and Jackson County. This project application came in late. It was not scored.

The RVACT is to develop two project lists today: 1) a \$50M list for potential permanent funding to share with the legislature and, 2) another list of projects that totals \$75M. We are looking for: projects with sizzle, projects that could garner some excitement and projects in both counties. Because of the criteria used for scoring, there are a lot of urban projects toward the top of the lists. Urban projects typically score higher because the criterion considers things such as transit and bike/pedestrian facilities. In the rural areas where you have passing or truck climbing lanes, they didn't score as well because of the criteria. Just because the project is down in the list does not mean it is a bad project. It may be a very good and needed project.

#### Discussion/Questions/Comments

James Lowe asked about Project No. 20 – I-5, Exit 55 Interchange (Grants Pass). Art Anderson asked that this project be scratched. ODOT was looking at this interchange but decided to take it off of the list because there are too many complexities involved. He doesn't think that \$11M is the right dollar amount. Mike Baker said the original project was to address the southbound ramp and access. Additional planning is needed.

Al Densmore apologized for the lateness of the South Stage Over-crossing project proposal. The city council recently took this project from a Tier 3 in the City's Plan to a Tier 2 project. It has emerged more in priority from what it has been in the past due to the nature of what is going on in this general area. This project was identified during the Oregon Gateway planning exercise that the legislature engaged in. The city recognizes that this project hasn't been scored but would like to add it to the list simply because if a legislator identifies this project as something that he/she thinks might be a significant idea or issue it would at least be on the list.

Because this new project has been added to the list Mike Montero said that for the record members need to identify any conflict of interests.

Mike Montero stated he had a conflict on every one of the projects on the list last time and has one here as well.

John Watt said he has a conflict. He has clients who provide instructive services.

Craig Stone has a conflict with many of the projects including the newly mentioned South Stage Road overpass.

Tim Cummings has a conflict on the Highway 199 project. He owns property that would probably be affected by that improvement.

Al Densmore suggested that a mega-project like Highway 62 should be on a separate list. Do we have the ability to separate it out? John Vial said the direction to the Region Managers in Mr. Tindell's letter had four tasks. Are we going to do Task No. 4, develop mega-project list? It seems that the Highway 62 project would be the first to go on it. Mike Baker said we are going to do that today.

For discussion purposes, using chalk-board graphics Art showed four potential options:

- Option 1 - Scored using RVACTs developed criteria. \$50M list, Equity = 53:47, \$75M list, Equity = 58:42.
- Option 2 – Phased projects as criteria. \$50M list, Equity = 47:53, \$75M list, Equity = 51:49.
- Option 3 – Phased and strategic items as criteria; \$50M list, Equity = 45:55, \$75M list, Equity = 51:49.
- Option 4 – Mix and match of all criteria elements plus strategic element. Equity portion to be determined.

Art reaffirmed that the priority list is not binding. Although we recognize these are priorities right now, we don't know what the legislature is going to in terms of total funding. So if they come up with additional funding maybe we as an ACT can come back later and reconsider other projects.

Discussion/Comments/Questions:

Mike Montero said that Mike Quilty and I sit on the Oregon Freight Advisory Commission. At the last two meetings it appears that the Freight Commission is beginning to adopt a process to determine whether or not there is measurable economic output for projects i.e. fourth bridge over the Columbia River. They are having those kinds of projects scored with regard to the economic return of investment to the State. Whether or not this process is going trickle down, with some kind of modification to the priority factors that we are obligated to use, we don't know. About four years ago when the STIP was last modified freight was not included as a priority factor. The OTC said, given the projected increase in freight movements, this is one of the priorities we want you to consider when you are making the prioritization of dollars in your ACTs jurisdictions. Projects like the climbing lanes may not have much urban value to Josephine or Jackson counties but from the state's perspective they may have substantial value. The only reason he is tossing this out is to insure that we are fully aware that as we go through process, this is going to be an integrative thing. We are likely to get direction that we don't have today that may alter how we prioritize these projects.

John Vial asked if there is a problem with sending the whole list of projects up to Salem. We can prioritize the \$50M and \$75M projects and draw lines and say here is the \$50M list and here is the \$75M list and send the whole list. The purpose of the list is not to pick projects but to give the legislature a flavor of what we need. Mike Baker said he thinks that we can easily do that. We could just list them in the order that they are listed because of the scoring and say here are the other projects that we considered. He thinks that would be a smart idea to show that there is a large group of projects.

John Vial made a motion stating that as we go through this exercise we send the entire list up to Salem. We will prioritize the \$50M and \$75M cut line but the whole list is sent up to help the legislature to understand what our needs are. Mike Quilty seconded the motion.

Motion discussion:

Craig Stone asked if the South Stage project would be included. John amended his motion to include the South Stage project. Mike's second includes South Stage.

Craig went on to ask, if the South Stage overpass is to be included in the motion, how will it be scored? Art Anderson's recommendation is to add it to the end of the list for now since it wasn't scored. When we come back at a later time and revisit this list we can score it.

Vote: A vote was taken on the amended motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Discussion/Comments/Questions:

James Lowe said the F-Mix is failing miserably along Hugo. Hopefully there will be some maintenance money to do something. A climbing lane would be the perfect match. Does ODOT have any projections? Art Anderson said we recognize that we are having issues because of a chain of issues. We are going to do an emergency contract this summer to repair the southbound slow lane from Exit 11 to Exit 14. We are going to replace all the F-Mix with dense grade

asphalt because it wears better. We are seriously looking at that as the permanent option wherever we have chain-up areas. In the area that you are talking about I don't have the answer. Our District Manager isn't here although John Vial has had a lot of experience with this. John Vial said there is a project in the STIP that is going to repave and replace all of the F-Mix on I-5 from Grants Pass to Hugo. From Hugo north there is not a project currently. We have a project that is preliminary in the STIP to repave that section. The hope is to get seed money from truck climbing lanes to add to that.

Mike Montero added the Modernization Goals that are listed are the goals that we developed. One of the primary factors that the OTC adopted a few years ago dealt with leverage. There are different kinds of leverage. As we go through this list and process this is something that we are going to want to have on our radar screen. When ODOT, the counties or cities can identify a preservation project or some other kind of project that can be leveraged, those projects can really make the best use of the state's resources. A recent example, the city of Medford and ODOT joined forces to leverage two projects. They realized about a \$.5M savings by doing them in the same contract.

Mike Quilty said ODOT's Upton's I-5 overpass and Central Point's realigning Scenic/10<sup>th</sup> and Upton was a project where we did that.

Stacey Kellenbeck speaking for Josephine County said we got together to look at our list of projects. We think that OR 238: New Hope to UGB is a very valid project. There are definitely some safety concerns but in the spirit of compromise and trying to put a lot of projects into a very little amount of money, we think that OR 238: New Hope to UGB isn't possibly ready for this cycle. As far as the priority goes we don't mind seeing that dropped down a little bit. Part of the thought here is that there is a lot of developable land in the area and it might be better to let the development process catch up a little bit for ROW acquisition purposes. That will bring the costs down hopefully. Speaking for herself regarding the project, Foothill Road: Hillcrest to Delta Waters, she couldn't possibly support any option that includes this project. She thinks that ODOT opening the door to county arterial roads for funding is a can of worms and this commission shouldn't get into it. It doesn't make any sense to her to do that. We are also open to the idea of phasing Hwy 199. She thinks this might help with the funding. We would like to see it broken into more feasible and timely projects.

James Lowe mentioned that the west section of the Hwy 199 project awarded a bid for construction last Thursday. He would like to see how close the bid price was to the engineer's estimate to see if the money we are talking about is realistic. Art Anderson responded by saying the bid was very close, a \$300,000 difference from the engineer's estimate. James said this phase does not take care of the Hubbard Lane issue and some of the other dangerous areas. As Stacey said we would really like to see the project phased. The city didn't even know what the new contract was going to be which was from RCC to Midway. We are not sure what the next step is. Art Anderson said we are in design for the section from RCC to Dowell Road which we are estimating at about \$7.5M. This phase will basically include a low median, minor widening of the road, a signal at Hubbard, minor landscaping and some ROW purchases to accommodate the widening of the road. There will be a path on the north side of the road.

Stacey Kellenbeck (regarding project No. 8, Exit 61 Interchange at Merlin) said we continue to see \$00.00 local match. That is not actually the case. Rob Brandes said Paradise Ranch has made verbal commitment. Mike Baker said no match was reflected on the scoring sheet because

the application termed it as a possible match. Rob Brandes added that the match is tied to the development at Paradise Ranch. Stacey added that it also tied to a couple of new projects in the North Valley Industrial Park.

Mike Montero added, as with the TE process, when you provide for match there is a requirement that there is evidence in order to grade the quality of it. As we go forward with any project it is important for the separate entities to provide concrete evidence. Referring back to Stacey's question about the Foothill project he said, when funds were available in the past they were used for projects that could demonstrate a reduction in congestion. He believes the west side of Coker Butte Road from Hwy 62 back to Lear was funded that way. He asked Mike Baker if that is that the way that we are looking at this project? Mike Baker said we are looking the Foothill project as an alternative to Hwy 62, to remove some of that traffic from the highway. This project is eligible under state law.

Craig Stone agreed that if it can be shown that improving some local facility produces a demonstrable improvement to state facilities he doesn't think it should be categorically ruled out. He views this particular project as a parallel route to Hwy 62. He also picked up on Stacey's observation and thinks it is a good one, to pull Project No. 9 off of the in hopes that the development processes will catch up. He guesses that it will result in some ROW dedications and maybe some system's charges that can be used to leverage it and to show some equity. He thinks that is just plain good strategy because the equity projects have a better hope of surviving the cuts than the ones that aren't leveraged. It is something that we all ought to be thinking about. On the other hand we have rules that say you can't develop unless the infrastructure is adequate. Those rules are counter to that strategy. You really need to be able to allow development to get SDCs, to get ROW dedications in order to leverage these projects. It is a shame that the rules operate in the way that they do. He would like to go on record as just being this side of a rant on that subject because it really is pretty silly the way the rules operate together.

Mike Montero asked Stacey for clarification, his understanding is not to include this project on the high list but to give it a lower priority. Stacey said she was just speaking for herself in that if we are picking an option for priority that she would like to not see that in one of those options, but not that it needs to be pulled from the list.

Al Densmore said the project, Foothill Road: Hillcrest to Delta Waters is not a new idea. In his previous public service as mayor of Medford in the 70s, the Bear Creek Area Transportation Study identified the concept of a beltline around the community as an insurance policy against the failure of a lot of other facilities. This becomes more compelling when you look at the planning decisions that are going forward where Medford will become an even more of a congested area.

Mike Quilty said the transportation planning the MPO did for Regional Problem Solving for the expansion of the UGB's for the next fifty years in Jackson County looked at Foothill Road as being a road that needed significant improvement and was a major portion of the modeling for removing the perceived growth in the county over on the east side and north from Medford to White City and up to Eagle Point. Significant work is needed to increase the size of that facility. It may not be a state highway at the present time we but we are planning that it will function in the future as a highway for us locally. That is basically what is in our plans for the next forty years at the MPO.

Mike Montero said those comments would apply equally to any region in the state. When they did the analysis for the South Medford Interchange nearly 50% of the trips across the viaduct, between the two interchanges in Medford, were used for local traffic. If you think about the cost of providing additional capacity on the viaduct as opposed to providing additional capacity on at-grade structures it is the right investment because putting another lane on the viaduct is more expensive than putting another lane on an arterial that is at-grade.

Tim Cummings says this is similar to the situation in Grants Pass regarding the fourth bridge. This is an issue that nobody wants to touch because it is going to be a very expensive process. He sees a connection between Redwood Hwy and Upper River Road, which are both state highways, and probably ultimately a connection to Merlin and Galice which will be somewhat of a bypass. If we make connections similar to the Foothill project, which takes some of the traffic off I-5, we have to make the same conclusion in Josephine County. Instead of the Lincoln/Allen Creek area where the bridge is planned, he imagines the bridge will be further west. Tim has some concerns regarding putting New Hope Road project off there because of the development going on now. This is a very busy and dangerous road. There was a death there last summer. He doesn't want to see it put too far down the list. He is a little more sensitive to city issues than climbing lanes and off ramps on the freeway. He probably concurs with Stacey.

Art Anderson went on to say he feels we should probably gravitate towards Option 3 which is a mixture of phased/strategic. Some of the numbers don't match up in some of the categories because he is shooting for exactly \$50M and \$75M.

Option 3 – Phased/Strategic (\$50M list) Equity 45:55

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1. US 199 Expressway Upgrade (Grants Pass)   | \$22.4M        |
| • Because of the size of the dollar amount it seems like it would be a good project to phase but if you consider that we are already working on the second of three phases the piece from Dowell Rd on in is going to be a little bit more. There is a lot of money tied up in ROW purchase and re-working the intersection at Allen Creek. If we did look at phasing we would be cutting it in half and you would not be able to do anything. |                |
| 2. I-5 Fern Valley Interchange Unit 1  | \$15.3M        |
| 5. OR 99 @ Hersey/Wimer (Ashland)  | \$ 1.2M        |
| • This project has been on the list for quite awhile.  |                |
| 7. Foothill Road: Hillcrest to Delta Waters  | \$ 4.0M        |
| • Looked at phased approach. The exact phasing will have to be looked at to determine what is doable with \$4M.  |                |
| 8. I-5: Exit 61 Interchange (Merlin)   | \$ 5.1M        |
| • This project has been on the last two STIP updates.  |                |
| 13. I-5 Truck Climbing Lane (Sexton Summit)  | <u>\$ 2.0M</u> |

Option 3 – Phased/Strategic (\$75M list) Equity 51:49

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| 1. US 199 Expressway Upgrade (Grants Pass)  | \$26.6M |
| 2. I-5 Fern Valley Interchange Unit 1       | \$15.3M |
| 5. OR 99 @ Hersey/Wimer (Ashland)           | \$ 1.2M |
| 7. Foothill Road: Hillcrest to Delta Waters | \$ 4.0M |
| 8. I-5: Exit 61 Interchange (Merlin)        | \$ 5.1M |
| 9. OR 238 New Hope to UGB (Grants Pass)     | \$ 5.0M |

10. OR 99 Rapp Rd to Creel (Talent)	\$ 4.3M
13. I-5 Truck Climbing Lane (Sexton Summit)	\$10M

Discussion/Comments/Questions

Craig Stone expressed an interest in hearing from Medford or Jackson County regarding the Foothill Road project. This is a roadway that exists now and it doesn't carry huge volumes of traffic. It probably will in the future. How does this project stack up against the South Stage overpass which to me is a much more important project just from the standpoint of preserving capacity at the Phoenix interchange and Medford's new south interchange? Response: We do not know at this time as we haven't scored the South Stage project.

Mike Montero said a number of issues have been discussed today that may refine or effect the order of the project list. Are obligated today to come up with a priority list, and if we do, can we revisit the list when we have further information? Art Anderson answered no and yes. We are not obligated to come up with the actual priority listing. It just naturally falls in its place because of the scoring and yes in fact we could shuffle projects around.

Mike Baker thinks there needs to be further discussion on some of the projects such as South Stage and the fourth bridge because we have to look at what benefits are created for the state in terms of taking trips off of the state system. The only way you can get a fair assessment of prioritizing those projects or considering them is to do a thorough traffic analysis which is not done as part of the application.

Mike Montero said this is particularly true with the fourth bridge. This project idea has been around for as long as we have been an ACT. The project from Medford (Foothill), certainly we can go over that. The local street network program always opens the door for that. There is going to have to be some analysis to demonstrate just what the relief to the state system is. South Stage Road will have the same issue. By the next meeting we will all be charged to come back with any additional information that could refine the list.

Mike Baker said this list needs to be developed today. We are going to come back if there is a funding package. Today we are just coming up with a general list that essentially will lobby the legislature. There may be additional projects that we will have an opportunity to add and to refine costs depending on the legislation. There may be certain requirements in the bill that will have to be considered or added.

Mike Montero commented the list that goes to Salem is going to be any one of the lists shown on the chalk-board. Everything listed below the line is representative and is not prioritized. Mike Baker responded that is right.

Al Densmore, in order to be clear about this, if I'm Legislator "A" do I get just a list of priority projects for this region or do I get a list that has asterisks by the other projects stating that these are contemplated to be the first tier or second tier.

Mike Baker said the reason we have two lists is because of a contemplated a dollar total that we think that we can approach the legislature with. There is a formula that divides dollars out to the various regions. That is why we have a target list. We figured two STIP cycle's worth of dollars. That is about \$50M for the Rogue Valley area. Realizing that sometimes there is additional money, as we have learned in the past through some of the OTIA programs, it doesn't hurt to

have a little more. We have been asked to do a 100% list (\$50M) on this target number which hasn't been determined as yet and then a 150% list (\$75.M).

Al Densmore added there would be another list, non-priority projects that we identified today. Mike Baker confirmed this. These projects will be left in the order as listed. Al Densmore added that having been a legislator at one point he suggested that there is a little danger in what we are doing in that if we have a legislator that likes one of the projects that is on the list that isn't identified as a priority it gives them an easy out for not voting for the package.

John Vial agrees that is a danger. The other danger though is that we talked about the gas tax in past legislative cycles. The question was constantly asked what do we get and the state couldn't give an answer because they couldn't say you get this money, so what do you vote in favor of? The idea was to give them a list. Give them something that they can see and say we can support this. It is dangerous in both directions. If they have no list, what are they supporting no one knows. If they do have a list they get to shoot holes in it.

Art Anderson, as mentioned earlier this list is not binding. It is advisory to the legislators. That is the tactic that the highway office in Salem is taking to the legislature. Here is a list of projects that each of the regions can build. They know that between now and 2009 things could change. We could have a new priority pop up. As long as the legislature doesn't feel that they need to craft another bill I think they will understand what we are doing.

John Watt thinks Al and John have brought up good points. John encouraged everyone to no longer use an increase in gas taxes as a funding source. We need to talk about an increase in transportation revenues because we are going to see another idea out there which is something else that we are going to have to keep in mind in addition to the comments that Mike made earlier. One of the things that will help legislators is if each region, county or city call their legislators and brief them before the legislative session starts so that you are not catching legislator's cold up in Salem once this discussion begins.

Mike Montero feels that giving them no advice is very dangerous. Giving them incomplete advice is just as dangerous. He is concerned about that.

Mike Quilty serves on the National Policy Committee for AMPO. MPOs have a slightly different look at things than the ACT does but we have decided that if we are going to do our job we cannot stay silent. In the past we have asked for what we thought we could get from Congress. It is our responsibility to plan for our area whether it is as an ACT or a MPO. If we know that we have huge shortages in funding to do what we need to do to provide the infrastructure for our community and we do not raise that red flag to our legislature we are failing to do our job. We need to tell them exactly how big a hole has been dug because for twenty years we have been riding on a past investment in our infrastructure for highways in this country. We have used up what we got with the Eisenhower highway system. We built it. It was finished in the seventies. We have used up that capacity in the last thirty years. If we don't tell them that we need to reach into our pockets and build the infrastructure that this country needs to be economically competitive on a worldwide basis in the next fifty years we shouldn't be sitting at this table.

Mike Montero referred to the four Options. What direction do we to give the staff as we look forward to the assignment that we have been given by the OTC?

### Discussion/Comments/Questions

Rob Brandes has trouble with just allotting \$2M for the climbing lanes. Art responded we have almost \$3M in the bank so it gives us \$5M to put toward the project. If you look at the numbers we have \$70M worth of requirements.

William Cecil would like to see the RVACT consider moving the Talent project up on the lists. The reason is it's a small project and it is ready to go. He would replace No. 7 which is a phased project that isn't even a sure thing now. He thinks the Talent project is really important to the city of Talent. A lot of our new development and commercial businesses are in the Creel Road area. He would like to see putting this project on the \$50M list.

Craig Stone is not sure how urgent the Foothill Road project is in comparison to the South Stage overpass which seems like a much more important project to him.

Al Densmore said this project (South Stage) is working rapidly up the city's priority list. He is mindful of the discussion that we had with regard to an analysis of just exactly what facility would be better or which would be preferred. We are not far enough along on the analysis of weighing these two projects to see which one would be better. He doesn't have the right information to answer this question today.

Mike Montero reminded the group that we made a decision to send the whole list to Salem. Additional information has been introduced and perhaps there is information that has yet to be introduced. We can adopt a list today and then come back in two months with pertinent information and say is the list still right under these new criteria or new information. Mike Baker said he has to have the list in Salem by the end of this month.

Jeff Hunter likes the idea of Option 3 (\$50M list) with the addition of the Talent project in place of the Foothill project. Put the Foothill project on the \$75M list in OR 238 place.

John Morrison made a motion that we adopt Option 3 as amended by Jeff's last comment, Switching Project No. 7 (Foothill Road: Hillcrest to Delta Waters) and Project No. 10 (OR 99 Rapp Rd to Creel). The motion was seconded by Jeff Hunter.

### Motion Discussion:

Stacey Kellenbeck said we had talked about replacing No. 7 with No. 10 on the top. Is that part of the motion? Yes that is part of the motion.

James Lowe (Project No. 9 - OR 238 New Hope to UGB) agrees with Stacey to some degree but unfortunately Hwy 238 has one of the highest accident rates.

Mike Montero added we need to be crystal clear that if there is new information that comes forward on either the fourth bridge, South Stage or other projects this list is subject to change with compelling new information.

Mike Baker doesn't want to promise that there is going to be an opportunity to make a change before the lobbying begins.

Craig Stone said the representative from Talent indicated the project was ready to go. On the list with criteria scored, this project is ranked at the bottom for readiness. William Cecil replied that he is not sure what the ranking means. This project was part of a project that ODOT was going to do and then it was cut. This would be a continuation of what should have been completed in the last improvement phase in Talent.

John Vial said this project was never designed and never a part of a larger project. It is not ready to go. It is not an overly difficult project to build. It can be moved ahead pretty quickly.

Mike Quilty thinks that by 2011 or 2013 they could very easily have everything they need to proceed.

Mike Montero said we have a motion and a second with additional changes that we adopt and send up Option 3 to the Commission as our list in addition to the complete list and that we have determined as a commission that if there is compelling new information we are going to reserve our right to provide that as additional input to the commission.

Vote: Motion was unanimously approved.

RVACT Approved \$50M list to be sent to Salem

1. US 199 Expressway Upgrade (Grants Pass)	\$22.1M
2. I-5 Fern Valley Interchange Unit 1	\$15.3M
3. OR 99 @ Hersey/Wimer (Ashland)	\$ 1.2M
4. I-5: Exit 61 Interchange (Merlin)	\$ 5.1M
5. OR 99 Rapp Rd to Creel	\$ 4.3M
6. I-5 Truck Climbing Lane (Sexton Summit)	\$ 2.0M

RVACT Approved \$75M list to be sent to Salem

1. US 199 Expressway Upgrade (Grants Pass)	\$26.6M
2. I-5 Fern Valley Interchange Unit 1	\$15.3M
3. OR 99 @ Hersey/Wimer (Ashland)	\$ 1.2M
4. Foothill Road: Hillcrest to Delta Waters	\$ 7.5M
5. I-5: Exit 61 Interchange (Merlin)	\$ 5.1M
6. OR 238: New Hope to UGB	\$ 5.0M
7. OR 99: Rapp Rd to Creel	\$ 4.3M
8. I-5 Truck Climbing Lane (Sexton Summit)	\$10.0M

Art said we need to vote on one other thing. We have to send up projects of \$100M or greater. I propose that we put in OR 62 at \$375M, and lump all of the climbing lane projects into one which will end up between \$58M to \$68M in conjunction with SWACT as a combined Region 3 Project equaling \$100M.

Motion made by Reeve Hennion reflecting Art's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mike Quilty.

Motion discussion

Al Densmore asked if OR 62 would incorporate Project No. 12 (OR 62 Mall/Target Access). Art said that No. 12 is a project at the North Medford interchange.

The motion was approved unanimously.

RVACT Approved \$100M or larger list to be sent to Salem

- |                             |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| 1. OR 62 Unit 2             | \$375M |
| 2. I-5 Truck Climbing Lanes | \$100M |

**5. Break**

**6. Local Construction Projects**

Gary Leaming

- Fern Valley Interchange: The draft Environmental Assessment will be released in June or July. There will then be a thirty day comment period and a public hearing.
- Highway 62: The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be released in June or July. There will then be a forty-five day comment period. There will be two open houses, one at each end of the project.
- Highway 199: The Revised Environmental Assessment has been released. A contract for construction for the western portion of the project, from Rogue Community College to Midway Avenue, has been awarded to Copeland Sand and Gravel. The work includes a center median. This is to address safety and to avoid head-on collisions.
- Siskiyou Rest Area: Recently there was a third Planning Commission meeting to discuss issues surrounding the project. These meetings will be continued.
- South Medford Interchange: Forty beams have been installed. The installation of these beams went smoothly. The beams were installed during the night over a six day period.
- Highway 199, Laurel Creek Bridge: This project is scheduled to be completed by the end of the summer.
- OR 62 – Trail to Casey State Park: This project included new pavement and will be finished by mid June.
- I-5 – Exits 11 and 14: Southbound repaving will be done during July and August.
- I-5 Pacific Highway MP 10-17: This project replaces the interstate bridges over Neil Creek, Bear Creek and Eagle Mill Rd.

**7. Equity Discussion**

Mike Baker

*Handout: 1. Equity Memo*

Mike said this agenda item is in response to a question that Laurel Samson, Grants Pass, asked at the last RVACT meeting. Laurel wanted to look back at the equity since the RVACT was created. The Equity Memo describes when the RVACT was created in 1997 and was one of only two provisional ACTs in the state at the time. In 1998 the STIP 2000-2003 cycle began. At that time no criteria had been developed. We were a test case to develop our own set of criteria. Later on when the OTC developed their criteria they modeled their criteria a lot after the RVACT criteria. We haven't had to change ours. We worked around the table to develop a list of projects. The criteria were used for the first time to identify projects under the OTIA 1 and

then for the selection for 2002-2005 STIP. This was prior to the equity resolution that the RVACT passed as an amendment to their by-laws.

The breakdown of projects before the resolution showed there was definitely a need for an equity resolution. After the equity resolution (70% Jackson County – 30% Josephine County) was passed the RVACT has pretty much abided to that with the exception being the reductions that were made to projects recently. Before the reductions we were in good balance, after the reductions we weren't. It looks like some of the prioritizations voted on today gets us back into balance. The Equity Resolution does say that ODOT will present updated statistics every five years which we should have done last year. Every ten years we will make sure that we are being equitable. We have two more STIP cycles to go. We started out with the 70:30 split and the numbers now indicate that the split is at 71:29. This split is well within the 3% that the by-laws call for. If we exceed the 3% difference from the 70:30 then it calls for a new resolution or new agreement to occur.

## **8. Greenway Update**

Art Anderson

Art Anderson reported that at the last RVACT meeting Shayne Maxwell talked about a Greenway issue involving the I-5 to Kirtland/Blackwell Road Improvements project. We did a little research and Mike Baker found out that we cannot spend Modernization Funds on building the Greenway Trail. As a part of the Kirtland Road realignment project we are working with the Greenway now to go to the Transportation Enhancement Program to get a discretionary grant for \$1M. We are also talking to the bicycle/pedestrian group to help us make an undercrossing just south of the railroad tracks. Even though we can't spend Modernization funds we are trying to work with them to get an answer to some of their problems.

## **9. Operations/Safety/Preservation/Bridge Projects 2012-2013 STIP**

Art Anderson

*Handouts: 1. Short Memo List, 2. Bridge-Ops-Safety-Pres. Map, 3. STIP Ops & Safety, 9. 2012-2013 Preservation Projects, Lane Mile Costs, 5. Field Scoping – Bridge*

Art Anderson announced that Jerry Marmon has been selected as the new District Manager. He is replacing John Vial. Jerry will be in charge of all maintenance and operations activities.

Art referred to a map handout which shows all locations of operation/preservation/safety and bridge projects throughout our two-county area. This agenda item is informational only because when it comes to projects other than Modernization the Region prioritizes projects based on safety and operational issues. Preservation projects are in a cycle where asphalt is replaced every so many years. Operations and safety projects are where our biggest issues are located. The bridge projects are handed to us by the bridge folks in Salem because they track the sufficiency ratings of all the bridges outside of the OTIA III program.

### Discussion/Comments/Questions:

James Lowe asked when the Highway 199 bridge (Applegate River) replacement will begin. Response: The year for this replacement has not been determined. James wants everybody to know that this project's issue is related to weight restrictions. Trucks are now sent around to the Robinson Bridge/Upper River Road route. Also, recently there was an accident on the Highway 199 Bridge. The rail was temporally replaced.

Al Densmore asked for more information on the TDM Rideshare Program. Mike Baker said that is a program run by RVTD to help with carpools, etc.

## **Connect Oregon II Update**

Jeff Hunter

*Handouts: 1. Connect Oregon Memo, 2. Connect Oregon II final review list*

Jeff Hunter reported that he and Art Anderson were participants in a conference call to discuss the Connect Oregon II project selection. The projects on the list were briefly reviewed. Our Region had two projects on the list: 1) Rogue Valley – Medford Airport Multi-Modal Express Air Cargo Expansion (\$4,760,000) and 2) Coos County Airport District – Air Traffic Control Tower-Southwest Oregon Regional Airport (\$624,000). The Region fell well below the funding level. There was a quick vote. They approved both projects for funding.

Art Anderson referred to the list of all the Connect Oregon II recommendations. He feels that it is unusual that the Region did not max out their Connect Oregon II funding allocation.

Mike Montero commented that in the future if there is a Connect Oregon III, it should be incumbent upon our ACT and the SWACT to try early on to get their heads together and start scouring for qualified projects. It is disappointing to leave \$5M worth of funding on the table.

Jeff Hunter said Coos Bay brought that up during the conversation. Art Anderson feels that if they had known how many dollars were not used in the area they would have been able to submit an application that would have pretty much funded their entire project.

Mike Baker said we had applications that totaled almost \$12M from the Region. The two rail projects which were submitted by the Port of Coos Bay were dismissed. If you have followed the news and the edict from the Governor's office you can understand why those projects were dismissed.

Mike Montero said in defense of Coos Bay. unfortunately they made their match with CORP. The newspapers today reported that Rail America's parent company has directed their attorneys to petition the Surface Transportation Board for abandonment of that line.

Ernie Garb suggested that Connect Oregon III change the criteria for looking at the local contributions because the current criteria are based on costs. The cost of the particular item might be priced out fifteen years ago. What good is that?

C.W. Smith said that the recent action by Rail America on the abandonment of the line is going to create a substantial change in public policy in relationship to the rail line. It is going to impact our decision making very quickly because when they contemplate abandoning the line from here to California, if that is the case, the statutes call for a reversion of those rail lines to fall back to public domain. If that is the case, we are looking at different dynamics in relationship to funding our local transportation. Mike Montero added in regard to their options under abandonment, they have a salvage option. Local decision makers should watch that very carefully because if they exercise this option and salvage the material, it is gone.

## **11. Bike/Pedestrian Grant Announcement**

Mike Baker

*Handout: 1. Bike/Pedestrian letter to cities/counties*

In April all of the cities and counties were sent a notification of a pending bike/pedestrian grant process. Those applications are due on July 25, 2008. Mike explained that bike and pedestrian projects can be almost anything that enhances the bike and pedestrian experience, i.e. lighting, landscaping, bike paths/lanes - as long as it does not engage vehicular capacity. If you have a current bike-pedestrian project, to be eligible for this round of grants you have to complete that project by October 2008. If it is not going to be completed by that date they are not eligible for this round. You are only allowed one bike pedestrian project per jurisdiction. The grant requires a 5% match from the jurisdiction. If you provide more than a 5% match you get bonus points.

James Lowe asked if any schools related issues help scoring. Mike said that as far as he knows that is not part of the criteria but it could be.

Art said we have been successful with these grants. ODOT partnered with Grants Pass on a project on Highway 99. Grants Pass was able to get a bike/ped grant. At the same time ODOT had a preservation project on the road. When we are done with that project there will be a new roadway and bike/ped facilities.

Mike Quilty asked if there are sign-offs. Mike Bakers said the grant has to go through the local ODOT office if they are on state highways by June 27<sup>th</sup> for review.

## **12. ACT Input on Earmark Process**

Art Anderson

Art said that he recently received additional information on this process. He will email this information to the RVACT in the future. This agenda item will be put on the next RVACT meeting agenda.

## **13. Multimodal Tradeoff**

Art Anderson

*Handouts: 1. Multimodal Memo, 2. Multimodal Tradeoffs Paper*

Art said the handouts emailed to the RVACT are informational in nature.

Mike Montero commented that this paper talks about what he raised earlier with regard to what may be a different direction for the OTC - to balance the type of investments in the comprehensive evaluation of what you get for your money. If they if are going to make the same investment in urban transit how does that benefit the system. Freight mobility or freight congestion relieves cost per projects. If you read through this, see the direction that this may be headed then you can at least have some expectation that this may be the flavor of what comes our way in the future of updating the STIP cycle.

John Morrison said he read through this material. He thinks it did a good job of describing what some of the potential benefits are in looking at the tradeoffs and what it means in terms of investments. He thinks it is a good place for us to get grounded. We have to make these decisions all of the time. As body we often wrestle with what is the true benefit and what is a hidden benefit and where is it going to come in and at what point and when do we start to see

return on our investments in terms of actually providing incentives to move people from one mode to another. I thought this is a very good starting point for that.

Mike Quilty said there is federal legislation that talks about signing carbon budgets to transportation and transit funding. This is something that we should start taking a look at because as these things start getting signed off and become law, if we understand how they are going to implement that before the next group of people do we may put ourselves in a position to make use of that money when it comes up because you understand how to write the application that makes use of it before the next guy does. It is something that we should take a close look at as it comes out. As I get more information from AMPO I will forward it to Art so that we can make use of this. They are changing radically in Washington on how they are going to look at transportation funding and there are some things out there that we need to get our heads around fast if we want to be on the cutting edge and make use of it rather than get left behind.

John Watt said that last month several people from the area went back to Washington D.C. for a transportation convention. Mike mentioned earlier that we need to make Washington aware of all of the issues that are out there with regard to transportation. They have been presented with the fact of how far behind we are falling in dollars at all levels of government throughout the United States. The next question is how to solve this shortfall. Historically the answer has been to increase the gas tax. Whereupon when that discussion came up every single person said an increase in the gas tax is non-start. It is not going to happen. They are going to be looking at other revenue sources. They are going to be very creative in how they are going to do that and it is not just at the national level. At the Oregon level we are going to have a member of the Governor's staff explain 'Cap and Trade' at today's TRADCO meeting. You are going to see this as an issue coming up in the next legislative session. The Governor has travelled to Europe and Israel to look at token countries that are using 'Cap and Trade' now. He has indicated that he will develop a proposal to present to the next legislative session that will institute 'Cap and Trade' into Oregon. I understand it as an environmental protection that will affect companies and everybody who is running transportation in any way shape or form, from cars to trucks right on through businesses. We need to make ourselves aware of these things because they are coming down the track.

#### **14. Agenda Build**

Art Anderson, Mike Montero

1. Update on Governor's Initiative to assault alternatives fuels, green house gas and global warming strategies.
2. Review additional compelling facts regard project discussed today, if any.