

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 7
10 am to 11:30 am



Crook County Annex, 320 NE Court St, Prineville, OR

STIF Advisory Committee Attendees

Allen Dendy
Dan Swearingen
Keya Rohovit-Wrolson
Nick Widmer
Neva McPherson
Kim Curley
Joshua Smith
Shannon Dearth
Andrea Breault

COIC Staff

Derek Hofbauer
Ashley Hooper

Citizen Attendees

Theresa Conley
Jeff Wilson
George McCart
Lori Ontko
Colleen Ferguson
Marylou Bernard
Jeff Caldwell
Jerry Brummer

Welcome and Introductions

- Attendees were asked to sign in and make introductions to the group. A quorum was present.

Public Comments

- No public comments were made

Overview of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF)

- The STIF program resulted from the passage of House Bill 2017. STIF is funded through a payroll tax (one-tenth of 1%), which totals about \$110M annually across Oregon to improve and enhance public transportation services. The cost for the taxpayer is roughly \$1.00 per week per employee in each county; funds are intended to be used in specific areas of the county from which the tax is collected (e.g. larger cities and employment centers/areas). The STIF rules were approved by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) in 2018. A new dedicated and

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permanent source of funding for public transportation will help transit agencies better plan for near-and long-term services and operations.

- The Crook County STIF advisory committee is tasked with reviewing and prioritizing STIF projects. The STIF advisory committee will then recommend a list of prioritized projects for the Crook County Board of Commissioners to include in their STIF Plan. The county is considered a “Qualified Entity (QE)” and COIC is facilitating the STIF process (via an Intergovernmental Agreement) for the QE (Crook County).
- Crook County’s Special Transportation Fund (STF) advisory committee meeting, which focuses on transportation needs for seniors and people who are disabled, is happening concurrently in a different meeting room. STF members were invited to attend this STF meeting once their meeting was adjourned.
- Three main categories of STIF funding include:
 - Formula funding (90%) is the portion that automatically comes to the QEs. These numbers are based on population and employment. This roughly equals \$280,000 for Crook County for the first funding biennium. The advisory committee will help decide how best to prioritize and allocate these funds. Funded projects need to focus on low-income households per legislative intent. It was noted that any transit service enhancements in Crook County will improve services to low-income households.
 - STIF Projects need to be referenced in a local plan such as a Transportation System Plan (TSP). For Crook County, many projects will be derived from the [2017 Crook County TSP](#). If the committee desires to see the local plans, they can request to review those plans through the designated STIF Program Administrators, which is Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC). If possible, 1% of the formula funding needs to serve students grades 9-12, which includes shuttles for students for activities (e.g. not yellow school bus transportation). An example of this type of service could be a shuttle for swimmers to the MAC for high school students. It was advised that QEs provide a public notice to ask if other Public Transportation Service Providers want to submit projects, which would come to this committee first to be reviewed and prioritized.
 - Discretionary Funds (5%) are one time expenditures, with grant applications being accepted by ODOT.
 - Intercommunity Funds (4%) help connect transit services to and from areas outside of Central Oregon, such as the POINT bus.
- Mr. Hofbauer expressed the deadline for the STIF application is quickly approaching; therefore, the STIF Plan needs to be submitted by the County Board of Commissioners by mid-April to provide time for any necessary revisions before the May 1 hard deadline.

Review of STIF bylaws

- The formation of the Crook County STIF advisory committee is a mandatory component of the STIF process. This body advises the County Board of Commissioners. Top tier STIF projects that were prioritized by the STIF advisory committee will go to the Board of Commissioners for approval. The county is the QE and will submit STIF projects to ODOT. Some of the main goals of the STIF advisory committee are to discuss how the projects rank and advise on where the money is spent.
- Definition of low income households: Crook County as a whole has an 11% higher than the state average of poverty level. Therefore, public transportation projects that are implemented in Crook County will serve low-income populations.

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- The submitted STIF plan becomes the grant agreement, which cannot be amended.
- Mr. Hofbauer explained that there will be staggered terms for the STIF committee, so committee members have terms that expire at different times. The terms will be determined during the April 4 meeting.
- STIF Discretionary Grants: The STIF committee will review STIF discretionary grants during the next meeting.
- CET operates services within the tri-county area and Warm Springs. As such, there needs to be an adequate level of coordination among the counties and tribes regarding these services. Up to two members from the Crook County Advisory Committee will serve on the Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee (RPTAC), which advises the COIC board, to learn about proposed STIF-funded projects from other counties and to also report out on proposed Crook County STIF-funded projects. Committee members can learn more about the Transit Master Plan process, such as the planning and implementation of transit projects and any potential changes in service.
- The next RPTAC meeting is on April 3 from 1:30-3:30 at COIC offices located at 334 NE Hawthorne Ave in Bend. A call-in number will be available and agendas are posted on the Cascades East Transit [RTPAC page](#).

Roles and responsibilities of committee members

- If the county submits a project that is not consistent with the STIF committee's recommendations, there is a risk of the project being rejected by the State of Oregon Public Transit Advisory Committee subcommittee that reviews projects. This does not mean the whole plan is rejected, just that one project.
- The timeframe between the sending of the project list and the subsequent committee meeting is stated as at least 14 days in advance in the bylaws. Due to the tight timeline with the May 1 STIF Plan application deadline, Mr. Hofbauer asked committee members if a seven-day notice would suffice to review the list of projects for this current round of STIF funding. The group agreed to accepting materials seven days in advance for this round.
- Ms. Rohovit-Wrolson asked if the projects are private, or if she can share them and get feedback. It was noted that the STIF program is a public process and that project lists shared with the committee will be accessible to the public.
- Committee Chair and Co-chair appointments:
 - Mr. Hofbauer explained that it is important to designate a Chair and Co-chair at this meeting. The Chair keeps the business of the meeting on track, oversees Roberts Rules of Order (e.g. voting procedures), and takes responsibility for sending out the project list to the committee.
 - All committee members were asked about their potential interest to volunteer to become the Chair and Co-chair. Mr. Smith expressed an interest in the Chair position and Ms. Curley expressed interest in the Co-chair position.
 - Ms. Curley made a motion to select Joshua Smith as Chair. Ms. McPherson seconded. A discussion opportunity was offered (no discussion was had). The committee members unanimously voted Mr. Smith as Chair.
 - Mr. Smith made a motion to select Kim Curly as Co-chair. The motion was seconded and a discussion opportunity was offered (no discussion was had). The committee members unanimously voted Ms. Curly as Co-chair.

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- Mr. Hofbauer expressed that it is important to have a quorum at these meeting, which includes a majority of members either attending by person or by phone.
- A question was asked regarding where riders come from and how they access bus stops. It was noted that CET will be conducting on-board rider surveys in May and E-fare systems help track this information.

Goal setting conversations

- The sub allocation process of distributing funds will be explored in more detail during the April meeting. Committee members generally agreed to the importance of allocating funding to geographic areas that contribute the most dollars collected through the tax. The committee will also need to explore how best to allocate funds to potentially different public transportation service providers.
- Mr. Dendy asked if Band of Brothers (a non-profit that serves veterans) can apply for some of these funds to help finance services offered to all veterans (not to the general public). Ms. Conley explained that Band of Brothers could become a public transportation provider who would be eligible for funding, but if it is not an enhanced service, it may not qualify for STIF. It was also noted that research projects and planning work can be funded by some of these dollars.
- Ms. McPherson explained that there is also a transportation need for seniors who aren't veterans. Many seniors do not have family members or live far out of town. At times, where seniors are using transportation services from the senior centers, the vehicle does not show up on the time requested. It was also noted that population in Juniper Canyon is growing.
- Ms. Rohovit-Wrolson asked what is required by the Band of Brothers to provide service (i.e. driver's licenses, insurance, and liability). It was noted that Band of Brothers covers the vehicle and driver insurance. If there was a potential project, it would have to be vetted with ODOT state standards.

Discussion of performance measures and reporting

Ms. Conley will bring back more information regarding this topic. Mr. Hofbauer will send a link to the [COIC Coordinated Human Services Plan](#), is necessary for the allocation of STF and 5310 funds.

Additionally, the plan provides collaboration opportunities between transit providers and human service providers, health care, and non-profits for Senior and Disabled individuals. The regional plan was adopted this fall for the three counties and Warm Springs. Five main priorities are as follows:

#1: Improve affordability of transit services to low-income individuals and veterans. Provide subsidized fares for low income clients and veterans needing access to health and human services.

#2: Ongoing coordination – establish a structure for ongoing dialogue on coordination needs and opportunities among public transportation providers and the human and health services communities. This includes a proposal to explore developing one regional STF Committee for Central Oregon with members from Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson Counties and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and to use this group for high-level regional coordination activities.

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#3: Expand public transportation services to late in the evening and on weekends. Work with human and health services stakeholders to identify priorities for expansion of services to later in the evenings and when/where to provide weekend services.

#4: Education and Outreach. Develop a comprehensive marketing and awareness campaign. Provide more information to riders, the public, communities, and elected officials and leaders about the benefits of public transit and existing transit services.

#5: Create a Dedicated Local Public Fund for Transit. Identify priority geographies/communities and develop a local public tax base to provide additional services.

If desired projects don't exist in any plan, committee members were asked to provide ideas to Ms. Breault to make an effort to weave them into the 2040 Master Transit Plan if applicable. Mr. Brummer asked about any updates regarding House Bill 2745 that allowed for local option taxes. It was noted that the passage of HB 2017 and the collection of revenue through a payroll tax is the main focus in the near term.

CET Open House Events in March

Committee members were encouraged to attend the CET open house in Prineville on March 19. Dates and times of all open house events are as follows:

CET Open House Dates/Locations

- Sisters: March 12, 3:30 - 6:30 pm at Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire Station (301 S Elm Street)
- Madras: March 13, 3:30 - 6:30 pm at Jefferson County Library, Rodriguez Annex, Upstairs Conference Room (134 SE E Street)
- Warm Springs: March 14, 5 - 7:30 pm at Warm Springs K-8 Academy (50 Chukar Road)
- Prineville: March 19, 3:30 - 6:30 pm at Crook County Fire and Rescue Department (500 NE Belknap Street)
- Redmond: March 20, 3:30 - 6:30 pm at Deschutes Public Library (827 SW Deschutes Avenue)
- Bend: March 21, 3:30 - 7:00 pm at Trinity Episcopal Church (469 NW Wall Street)

Next Steps

The next meeting is on Thursday, April 4 from 10 am to Noon. The third STIF meeting will be held in late summer or early fall of 2019.