

## **1.0 MEETING SUMMARY – TRIBAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE JUNE 5, 2009**

### **1.1 Meeting Synopsis**

A summary of the meeting is provided below from highlights of the power point presentation.

I. Introductions and Welcome – Linda Koenig, ODOT Long Range Plan Project Manager began the meeting and introduced John Bowman, ODOT Deputy Planning & Research Engineer who welcomed everyone. After brief introductions from all in attendance, John described the role of the Committee and the meeting purpose to be one of information sharing and the gathering of key input. It was stated that what the committee knows about transportation issues will be of great help in conducting the long range plan update. John concluded by reviewing the agenda topics for the meeting.

II. Long Range Plan Process – Tom Ryden, Consultant Team Project Manager continued by describing the basic format the Plan will take, the Plan connection to current Federal regulations and SAFETEA-LU; the goal of the Plan; the project schedule; and the essential elements of the State transportation system to be covered by the Plan.

III. Types of Transportation – Modal Perspectives for People and Projects – Consultant Team members Becky Blatnica and Ira Hirschman provided an overview of the primary modes for personal travel and goods movement respectively. Key supply statistics and usage changes over the last 5 years were provided where available. It was particularly noted that highway usage has been declining recently and transit usage is increasing. Regarding goods movement, it was discussed that recent economic trends indicate a slow down in activity both statewide and nationally. It was noted that how this will impact assumptions out to 2035 and must be carefully considered. Tom Ryden next discussed the distribution of 2009 state level transportation expenditures by mode and the fact that Oklahoma offers a wide variety of mode options with two thirds of the expenditures applied to roads and bridges.

IV. Summary of Interviews/Surveys – Tom Ryden and Becky Blatnica of the Consultant team reviewed the results of the Advisory Committee interviews. The review was in four parts:

1. System overview,
2. Transportation system objectives,
3. Funding and
4. Transportation system challenges.

Results were tallied by individual committee and combined where questions were asked of multiple committees. The results reflected 80 interviews completed in time

for the meeting. From a **system overview** perspective, the interview comments received reflected both positive comments and room for improvement. Regarding **system objectives**, connectivity issues were noted and specific strategies to improve safety, air quality and energy were noted as those that seemed the most favorable. Preferences were given regarding possible new **funding** sources and specific priorities for use of those funds.

A number of transportation **system challenges** were summarized for person movement and goods movement based on individual comments obtained from each interview. Common themes regarding challenges included:

1. Insufficient capacity on highways and bridges,
2. Funding concerns and
3. Desire for more modal choices.

V. Transportation Issues and Concerns – Committee Members – Linda Koenig next posed two questions to the Committee:

1. What issues should the Plan address going forward for person/passenger movement in 2035?
2. What issues should the Plan address for goods movement in 2035?

(Section 1.2 contains a summary of the comments by topic area from the meeting)

VI. Policy Themes – Tom Ryden provided a summary of the emerging federal transportation policies that may impact the Long Range Plan. He reviewed both topics under consideration as part of SAFETEA-LU re-authorization as well as the potential for new federal legislation on climate change. John Bowman next reviewed some policy themes that ODOT is suggesting be pursued as part of the Plan. Nine themes were discussed from which more specific actions will be defined as the Plan process evolves. These include: replacement of major structures such as bridges & interchanges; preserve the aging highway system; maximize efficiency of the existing system; maintain existing investments including major transportation corridors; improve transit and person transportation opportunities; emphasize safety of all modes; consider expanded options for goods movement; emphasize air quality and energy conservation; and explore new funding sources, concepts, and partners.

VII. Conclusions – Linda Koenig concluded the meeting by providing a quick overview of the themes from the discussion (also see section 1.2), and indicating that a summary of the meeting will be made available to the committee members.. She reminded everyone that they should visit the project website to follow the progress of the study and thanked everyone for their time and participation.

## 1.2 **Comment Summary**

For this portion of the meeting (agenda item V), Committee members were asked to offer their comments on two basic questions as noted below. The Committee was advised of the guideline that this was meant to be a brainstorming session with no ideas debated and with everyone being allowed to have a voice in the discussion.

## 1. What issues should the plan address going forward for person/passenger movement in 2035?

Comments were offered from each tribe represented

### **Muscogee Creek Nation (MCN), Okmulgee headquarters**

*(Tribal jurisdiction includes all or parts of Creek, Hughes, McIntosh, Muskogee, Okfuskee, Okmulgee, Tulsa, and Wagoner counties in the vicinity of the Tulsa metro area of Oklahoma)*

- MCN Passenger Transit
  - Majority of MCN members live in rural areas within an 8 county service area. Service began in 2003. 85% of the routes are rural
  - Ride-to-work issues
    - Challenge: no common pick up area
    - Tribe is working on providing a system within a system
  - Funding sources
    - Portion of IRR (Indian Reservation Roads) dedicated to transit
    - FTA
    - Fares
- Other Transportation
  - Every part of transportation affects tribe
  - Trails program benefits fitness and diabetes control

### **Citizen Potawatomi Nation (CPN), Shawnee headquarters**

*(Tribal jurisdiction includes parts of Oklahoma, Cleveland and Pottawatomie counties in the eastern OKC metro area vicinity of Oklahoma)*

- Transit
  - Would like to incorporate short line passenger rail service with OKC metro transit system ...Short line from Shawnee to OKC, with access point at edge of county or metro area
  - CPN Passenger Transit is on demand
    - Provided for elders to activity centers
    - Provides for transport to OKC for medical care
  - Not interconnected with Shawnee area Central Oklahoma Transit (COTS) transit for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities.

### **Chickasaw Nation, Ada headquarters**

*(Tribal jurisdiction includes all or parts of Bryan, Carter, Garvin, Grady, Jefferson, Johnson, Love, Marshall, McClain, Murray, Pontotoc, Stephens counties in south central Oklahoma)*

- Transit
  - Passenger transit system coordinates with other systems
  - Some services reserved for tribe
  - Ride-to-work is primary
  - Provides access to jobs

- Long commutes for employees (60-70 miles) including commutes from as far away as DFW, Tx. area to Winstar Casino near Marietta, OK.

### **Cherokee Nation, Tahlequah headquarters**

*(Tribal jurisdiction includes all or parts of Adair, Cherokee, Craig, Delaware, Mayes, McIntosh, Muskogee, Nowata, Ottawa, Rogers, Sequoyah, Tulsa, Wagoner, and Washington counties in northeastern Oklahoma)*

- Transit
  - Long commutes for employees.
  - Service area covers 14 counties
  - Started with ride-to-work. Focus is on rural areas
  - Coordinates with other existing systems
  - Teamed with KATS (Ki Bois Transit System) to offer specific routes to include Stillwell to Tahlequah; Big Cabin to Catoosa, and Sallisaw to Tahlequah. Service orients to/from the tribal complex at Tahlequah.
  - Health care funded transit for on demand service
  - Ridership directly proportional to gas prices

### **Road Network Comments – all tribes**

- All roads within Tribal Jurisdictional Areas are County or State roads
- Tribal transportation departments work closely with county commissioners
  - County owns the road but tribes own ROW and give county easement
  - Roads usually built by county (manpower and equipment)
  - Roads can be funded by tribes
- IRR Funding
  - Regulations limit amount of funding dedicated to maintenance
  - More funding available for road improvements but requires substantial effort to coordinate and manage improvements

## 2. What issues should the Plan address for Goods Movement in 2035?

Comments were offered by committee members on goods movement

### **Citizen Potawatomi Nation**

- ODOT needs to improve shoulders on rural two lane roads
- U.S. 177 between Shawnee & Tecumseh needs improvement
- Short line railroad between Shawnee and McAlester (currently out of service/not in operation) could relieve freight being handled by truck. Munitions and rock quarry materials are the main products shipped
- Freight Rail/ AOK-operated shortline railroad from OKC to Shawnee
  - Currently, railroad (immediately south and east of North Canadian River) is not in good location to adequately serve tribe's needs
  - Shortline connection is important for future economic development
  - New industrial park development in the planning stage, east of Shawnee in Pott. County