

Safety & Mobility Policy Advisory Committee

MEETING SUMMARY

February 25, 2026
10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Via Microsoft Teams

MEMBERS:

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| ☐ Steve Bates, OTA | ☐ Brodie Harvey, Knife River |
| ☐ Kevin Campbell, AAA | ☒ Erik Havig, ODOT |
| ☒ Ed Chamberland, ACEC | ☒ John Hickey, APAO |
| ☒ Marie Dodds, AAA | ☒ Jana Jarvis, OTA |
| ☒ Jason Fender | ☐ Angela Kargel, ODOT |
| ☐ John Gambatese, OSU | ☒ David Kim, ODOT (Chair) |
| ☒ Walt Gamble, AGC | ☒ Evan Sether, OSP |
| ☒ Mark Gibson, OTA | ☒ Erik Zander, OTA |

RESOURCES:

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| ☒ Christy Jordan, ODOT |
| ☒ Justin King, ODOT |
| ☒ Justin Moderie, ODOT |
| ☒ Oscar Njuju, ODOT |
| ☐ Audrey Lawson, ODOT |
| ☒ Tova Peltz, ODOT |
| ☒ Carla Phelps, ODOT |
| ☐ Katie Scott, ODOT |

GUESTS:

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| ☒ David Babb, ODOT CCD OD Permits |
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FACILITATOR:

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| ☒ Bill Gross, ODOT |
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AGENDA TOPIC	DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS AND OUTCOME
Roll Call, Minutes & Agenda Review Bill Gross David Kim	Bill Gross convened the meeting took roll call, and requested approval of the November 14, 2025 minutes (the committee approved). David Kim welcomed everyone and reviewed the discussion items on the agenda.
ODOT/Legislative Session Updates All	Tova Peltz reported that the legislative session is entering its final stretch, and the budget outcome will likely be finalized in an omnibus budget bill at the end of session.. She said the Governor has emphasized: • Avoiding ODOT layoffs • Addressing agency budget pressures • Managing a significant number of vacant positions Tova also highlighted several categories of legislation under review by ODOT: • Accountability & Oversight Bills: Proposals focusing on ODOT oversight and portfolio management are not moving forward. • HB 1544: A transportation-focused bill still active in Ways and Means.

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	• Right-of-Way Permitting & Access: Numerous bills related to permitting and ROW management have been a major session theme. John Hickey provided an update on Work Zone Automated Enforcement (Speed Safety Cameras): • The bill has passed out of the Transportation Committee. • It is currently in Ways and Means, awaiting action expected late this week or early next week. • Hickey is “cautiously optimistic” that it will pass, noting strong momentum for a short session. He also noted outreach efforts to legislators during the Safety Symposium. Jana Jarvis added context on some Senate bills: • SB 1542 & SB 1543: Introduced by environmental groups, aimed at: ◦ Changing Oregon Transportation Commission composition (adding legislators) ◦ Shifting funding priorities away from capacity-expansion projects ◦ Treating new construction as a “last resort” She said these bills did not advance but will likely return in future sessions. Overall Takeaways: • The legislative session is in its final phase, with major budget issues pending. • Several high-visibility oversight bills stalled, while HB 1544 remains active. • Automated work zone enforcement legislation is progressing and may pass. • Stakeholders (ODOT, industry, advocacy groups) are heavily engaged, especially on funding priorities and work zone safety.
2026 Work Zone Safety Symposium Debrief John Hickey	John Hickey reported that the 2026 Work Zone Safety Symposium was successful, with strong content but somewhat lower attendance due to weather challenges and scheduling conflicts. Despite this, the event delivered high-value sessions and several key takeaways. Attendance & Numbers: • 221 registered; 191–195 attendees • Down ~50–60 participants from the previous year • Weather and travel constraints (especially from Southern Oregon) contributed to reduced attendance Operational Discussions & Future Considerations 1. Symposium Frequency – Potential Shift to Every Other Year John Hickey initiated discussion on whether the Work Zone Safety Symposium should move to an every-other-year cycle instead of taking place annually. Key reasons shared: • Resource Burden: Organizing the symposium requires significant staff capacity, planning time, and coordination—time that could be redirected to other high-need efforts such as developing driver education materials for work zone safety.

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	- Alignment with Partner Events: David Kim pointed out that the AGC–ODOT Conference already follows a biennial format. Alternating the symposium in opposite years could create a smoother cycle of major safety events without overloading agencies or industry partners. - Maintaining Content Quality: John Hickey emphasized that content is not the limiting factor—there is always more than enough valuable material. The shift would be primarily about sustainability, logistics, and ensuring strong attendance each cycle. - Next Steps: SMPAC will revisit the symposium schedule during upcoming meetings once financial and attendance data from the 2026 event is finalized. 2. Opportunity to Deliver Symposium Content to Legislators A recurring theme from the discussion was that the powerful messages delivered at the symposium—particularly the safety videos and work zone hazard demonstrations—are not reaching policymakers. - Desire for Legislative Visibility: John Hickey noted it was unfortunate that state legislators rarely attend the February symposium even when invited—largely due to the session being active at that time. - Proposed Solution: A Targeted “Transportation 101” for Lawmakers: Jana Jarvis shared that she had already been asked to consider offering a “Transportation 101” briefing to legislators at the start of a legislative session, when schedules are more flexible. She committed to keeping SMPAC updated if such a session is organized. - Summit-Style Delivery: Walt Gamble suggested an interim “summit” where select high-impact sessions could be presented directly to targeted policymakers rather than waiting for the full symposium cycle. 3. Benefits of Freeing Up Time in “Off Years” If the symposium becomes biennial, John explained that ODOT and partners could devote the “off year” to other major initiatives: - Driver Education Materials for Work Zone Safety: John shared he has long wanted to partner with ODOT and DMV to create standardized driver’s education materials focused on work zone behavior—including the potential use of powerful video assets such as the distracted-driving “blackout screen” demonstration. Jana strongly supported collaborating on materials that also help drivers understand how to interact safely with commercial trucks in work zones. - More Strategic Coordination with AGC, Local Agencies, and Law Enforcement: Extra time could allow for deeper cross-agency planning, such as: - Enhancing Narcan deployment (AGC is exploring an Oregon initiative modeled on Colorado) - Integrating automated enforcement alignment with ODOT policy - Building more robust partnerships with city/county transportation agencies

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	4. Consideration of Session Timing and Seasonal Constraints Participants acknowledged challenges of hosting the event in February: • Legislative Conflicts: Lawmakers are in active session, reducing their ability to participate. • Travel Limitations: Winter storms routinely affect travel from Southern Oregon and Eastern Oregon, reducing attendance and sometimes affecting presenters. Future planning may explore adjusting dates, offering hybrid or recorded components, and hosting legislative-focused versions separately. 5. Post-Symposium Evaluation and Data Review John shared that a formal post-event recap and analysis—including participation numbers, cost breakdowns, and attendee feedback—will be circulated to SMPAC once finalized.
Highway Restriction Notice Process with the CCD ORION System David Babb	David Babb (CCD OD Permits Manager) explained how temporary highway travel restrictions are managed, what has changed under the new ORION system, and address industry concerns: 1. Core Overview of the Restriction Process OD permitting requires accurate, timely data about road restrictions caused by construction, maintenance, or emergency work. Regions/Districts (ODOT Delivery & Operations staff) remain responsible for: identifying restrictions; entering them directly into the ORION system; and ensuring restrictions align with agreements made during project development (Mobility Considerations Checklist). 2. What Has Changed Under the ORION System ORION replaced several outdated systems previously used for tracking restriction data. Regions now enter restrictions directly into ORION, eliminating the old two-system workflow. Restriction notifications are now sent by email, not physical mail: ○ Annual permit holders receive updates via daily emails showing all new/updated restrictions. ○ Single-trip permit holders receive notifications when route-specific restrictions affect their permit. Published restriction lists remain available on the ORION homepage. 3. Improvements & Transition Support • CCD trained D&O staff on ORION usage. CCD partnered with the Mobility Unit to raise awareness about why advance notice matters, and how restrictions affect OD freight operations. • CCD is reviewing all ORION entries for accuracy until at least June 2027. • Minor ORION enhancements have been made to simplify data entry for staff.

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	4. Data & Trends • Restriction volumes have not decreased under ORION. ◦ Apr–Sep 2024: 302 entries; Apr–Sep 2025: 304 entries • No increase in work zone incidents involving OD loads has been observed (anecdotally). 5. Future Directions & Safety Monitoring • After mid-2027, CCD will stop the “second review” back-check and rely fully on the regions’ ORION entries. CCD may support future integration with upgraded systems (likely TRIPCHECK modernization). CCD is exploring methods to track incidents potentially tied to missing or inaccurate restriction data, using ODOT’s digital incident reporting tool. 6. Discussion & Key Issues Raised by Committee Members • Mark Gibson described a Hwy 6 restriction where the MAC (Mobility Advisory Committee) was still reviewing a proposed weight limit change. The restriction went live before MAC input was fully incorporated. ODOT acknowledged this as a timing/communication issue and corrected the restriction. • Several members discussed revising the longstanding 35-day notice requirement for contractors. Key points: ◦ The original 35 days included several days for postal mailing, which is no longer relevant. ◦ CCD stated that they no longer need 35 days. ◦ Shortening the notice period could improve contractor flexibility and reduce over-restrictive planning. ◦ Mobility Program and CCD will work internally to identify updated timelines and bring recommendations back to SMPAC. ◦ Any change requires updates to specifications — raised by Justin King. • Walt Gamble asked whether ORION increases flexibility when emergency conditions arise. David Babb confirmed that ORION allows rapid emergency notifications and enables industry to receive updates in real time. Email Delivery Concerns • Industry had concerns that carriers change email addresses more frequently than physical addresses. • CCD is exploring bounce-back monitoring to catch invalid carrier email addresses and follow up to maintain accurate contact info.

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Work Zone Blue Light Agreement Follow-Up Justin King John Hickey	Justin King (ODOT Work Zone Engineer) provided an update on the revised Blue Warning Light Agreement, which allows the use of blue lights on certain paving equipment to improve visibility and safety in work zones. The agreement is nearly finalized but has not yet been signed due to minor last-minute edits. It will be sent to AGC for signature soon. Key Changes in the Updated Agreement • Blue lights may now be used on interstates, freeways, multi-lane highways, and conventional highways, expanding beyond the original scope. • They may be used when traffic is free-flowing, not in stop-controlled or flagger situations. • Use is now permitted on both the paver and the roller closest to the paver. • Blue lights cannot be used when law enforcement—either in person or via automated enforcement—is present. Committee Feedback • Walt Gamble (AGC) suggested future improvements, including allowing blue lights even when some positive protection exists, and considering daytime use, since blue lights are effective in all lighting conditions. • Mark Gibson (OTA) asked about red-and-blue lights on speed feedback trailers; ODOT clarified these are not legal because red lights are reserved for police. • Walt requested notification when the agreement is sent over so they can return it promptly.
Use of Automated Flagger Assistance Devices on Lower Speed Roads Justin Moderie	Justin Moderie (ODOT State Construction and Materials Engineer) reported that AFADs have been used on about 70 projects statewide over the past five years and have helped improve safety by keeping flaggers out of traffic. Some AFADs have been struck by vehicles, demonstrating their value in protecting workers. However, feedback from contractors shows AFADs are not always practical in certain environments—particularly tight urban downtown areas (Salem, Corvallis, Brookings, Tigard). In these locations, limited space or road geometry makes AFAD deployment difficult, and contractors often choose not to use them even when included in project plans. ODOT is reviewing these cases and working with staff and designers to better determine when AFADs are appropriate. The committee agreed that AFADs remain valuable but require continued education, clearer guidance, and flexibility when site conditions make them impractical. Committee Questions & Concerns About AFAD Use:

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	• Committee members raised concerns that AFADs were being included in project plans even when they are not practical in tight downtown or urban settings (e.g., Salem, Corvallis, Brookings, Tigard). They questioned whether AFADs should be called out on these types of projects at all. • Members emphasized that contractors should not be forced to use AFADs in locations where they cannot be deployed safely and that resident engineers should be receptive when contractors say an AFAD will not work in a specific location. • Concerns were raised that some flaggers remain too close to AFAD units instead of moving to a safer location, showing a need for education and clearer procedures to optimize AFAD setup and use. • Members noted that certain AFAD models (especially truck-mounted units) are too large for narrow shoulders or constrained roadways, creating operational challenges that need to be considered in design and planning.
Roundtable Updates All	Walt Gamble (AGC) • Reported continued concerns about speeding in I-5 work zones he regularly travels through. • Recommended placing radar speed display units in the A-lane on both I-5 projects to help slow traffic. • Suggested the committee consider a future in-person SMPAC meeting at OSU, noting Dr. Gambatese had offered to host. Mark Gibson (OTA) • Announced the upcoming Oregon Trucking Association Spring Safety Conference scheduled for April. Noted the conference date conflicts with the next SMPAC meeting. Bill Gross will poll the members to find a different date for the April SMPAC meeting. John Hickey (APAO) • Requested agenda time at the next SMPAC meeting to discuss the future of the Work Zone Safety Symposium (including frequency, costs, and planning). • Suggested moving to an every-other-year symposium to free time for developing driver education materials on work zone safety. Jana Jarvis (OTA) • Expressed support for collaborating on driver education initiatives, emphasizing the need to teach new drivers how to interact safely with trucks. Bill Gross (ODOT – SMPAC Coordinator) • Announced that Dr. Hurwitz (OSU) will present findings from the Roundabout Truck Access Study at the April SMPAC meeting.

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Final Comments and Close David Kim	David thanked all committee members for their participation and contributions during the meeting. He noted several follow-up items had emerged and would be addressed before the next meeting. David also invited members to submit agenda topics or ideas to Bill Gross for the next meeting.
Action Items	• John Hickey: Share the Work Zone Safety Symposium post-event recap and analysis with the SMPAC once finalized. • Mobility Program and CCD will work internally to identify updated restriction notification timelines and bring recommendations back to SMPAC. • Bill Gross: Poll the SMPAC members to re-schedule the April 22nd SMPAC meeting to avoid conflicting with the OTA Safety Conference.