

NORTH COAST TOURISM STUDIO | 10.16.18 – SEASIDE, ORE.

VISITOR TRANSPORTATION FOR HIGH-USE DESTINATIONS

INTRODUCTORY SPEAKERS:

Michelle Poyourow – Transportation Options

- Transit solutions are put in place to solve land use issues
- Transportation challenges originate from land use decisions and where things are located
- People dislike being taken out of their way; ex: when movie theater/airport has stanchion posts up and you need to walk through the full line

Ken Shonkwiler, ODOT – Overview of Oregon Congestion Management

- Adaptive signal technology in place (Lincoln City, Portland/Tigard) communicates with signals helps reduce congestion tension in corridors
- *[Action team action item suggestion to work on down the road: rideshare programs on the coast]*
- Tripcheck local entry will launch in 2019. Will allow locals to input info about events constructions etc and it will help populate google and let travelers know status of roadways
- Connect Oregon
- Hwy 101 is now a place of recreation, which is something new that we're beginning to deal with

Susan Law – Muir Woods National Monument Case study

- New concept to help manage visitor congestion: reserve a parking space at national park during your visit (similar to making a reservation at a restaurant!)
- Identified the maximum threshold of manageable visitors (@4500 people) and crafted solution around this level of users
- Still fine tuning the system to help people recreate here without driving or by making reservations to park a vehicle. Cannot make reservation onsite.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION - UNDERSTANDING THE LAYERS OF TRANSPORT

SPEAKERS: EXPLORING LOCAL TRANSPORTATION LAYERS AND OPTIONS

1. North Coast: Ken Shonkwiler
 - a. Rockaway Beach has highest congestion dailies in the region; Seaside is a close second
 - b. Certain days of the week are higher than others (weekends, special event days, high temperatures inland increase coastal visitation)
 - c. In other congested regions of Oregon, you see congestion year-round; on the North Coast it is a highly seasonal issue
 - d. Long range planning: in 1973 the government said that ODOT cannot continue building and expanding roadways; asked ODOT to develop a transportation system plan to address needs and respond to community needs
 - i. Previous school of thought dictated that the solution to heavy congestion issues was to add roadways and lanes
 - e. Highways bisect all towns on the North Coast
 - i. Gearhart example: 101 is known as a dragstrip – speeding & safety are an issue
 - f. Highways are shared by many different users; visitors, locals, hikers, trucks, RVs
 - g. How do we address congestion in the future?
 - i. ODOT is going to pursue multi-modal solutions; increase opportunities for walking, biking, and other modalities
2. Jenna Berman, Oregon Coast Bike Route Plan
 - a. History:
 - i. Designated in the early 80's
 - ii. 380mi/612km in length
 - iii. Bicycle tourism in Oregon is ~400million/year (\$1.2 million/day!)
 - b. Identify areas of improvement that are needed on the bike route
 - i. Possible physical, operational, or programmatic improvements
 - ii. Policy or street design changes that could be implemented in local plans
 - c. Who is this plan meant to accommodate? This is specifically designed to address needs of recreational cycling enthusiasts
 - i. Riders typically start/end the route in California or Astoria
 - d. Good amenities are in place which help visitors and riders along the route
 - e. Transportation opportunities; wider shoulders are beneficial to all on the roadway
 - i. Decreased congestion means higher safety

- ii. Less people on the roadway
- 3. Sandra Hikari, ODOT – Tourism and Oregon Scenic Byways
 - a. A Scenic Byway is more than a road to drive on and experience scenery from the car; can also be a route for alternate modes of transport
 - b. 6 intrinsic qualities need to exist for a scenic byway designations:
 - i. Cultural, recreational, economic (3 others? Ask Sandra) elements
 - c. Designations:
 - i. All American Road
 - ii. National Scenic Byway
 - iii. Oregon Scenic Byway
 - iv. Tour Route
 - d. 29 Scenic Byways in Oregon, covering over 3000 mi/4830 km
 - i. One the largest Scenic Byway states
 - e. North Coast region includes two scenic byway designations:
 - i. Pacific Coast Scenic Byway (All American Road)
 - ii. Trees to Sea Scenic Byway (Oregon Scenic Byway)
 - f. Opportunities on the North Coast:
 - i. Collaborate on transportation options programs
 - ii. Install wayfinding signage to optimize user experience
 - iii. Manage viewsheds
- 4. Oregon Coast Trail (Robin Wilcox, Oregon State Parks)
 - a. Currently working on refining the trail system and identifying amenity and functionality issues along the trail
 - b. Holding a public meeting to hear public feedback about trail
 - c. Current focus of state park – ongoing projects
 - i. Neakahnie Mountain trail
 - ii. Otter Crest Loop
 - iii. (see robin's other slides)
 - d. Oregon is the only state that has public access on the entire length of the coast
 - e. Opportunity to be America's first coast to coast trail
 - f. Establish off-trail opportunities to bring people off of the trail and into coast towns to experience local communities
 - g. Working to establish user-friendly amenities such as
 - h. "Oregon has done something precious with its coast that few states have ever dreamed of."
- 5. NW Connector (Jeff Hazen, Sunset Empire Transportation District)
 - a. Important to have consistency of transfer sites/connection points along transit routes

- b. Obtained a grant to improve the website and reinforce visitor communications
 - i. Trip planner tool
 - ii. Plan trips from Yachats all the way up to Astoria
 - iii. Upcoming events
 - iv. Featured Trips section showcases common routes that may interest users
 - v. Schedule and fare calculator
 - 1. Suggestion: implement info on gear/baggage capacity on the route you are taking
- c. Local transit agencies are using a data aggregate system called Swiftly to capture real-time data of bus system/transit route performance
 - i. i.e. whether bus is on time or running 15 minutes behind
 - ii. this helps agencies design better transit schedules
 - iii. also using staff to capture data of rider patterns; where people are getting off and on the most

EXPERT ROUNDTABLES – KEY LESSONS & GROUP REPORT OUTS

EXPLORING LOCAL TRANSPORTATION LAYERS, OPTIONS, & POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

- 6. NWConnector table (Jeff Hazen, SETD)
 - a. Clearly establish linear routes and schedules
 - b. Establish consistent communication channels between transit agencies and local agencies
 - i. Keep transit agencies informed about event schedules throughout community it serves
 - c. Improve information accessibility to users at their origin point at trip planning phase
 - i. PDX airport connectivity
 - ii. Make available at multiple points that a visitor would encounter during the trip planning phase – links on booking websites, DMO websites, booking agents
- 7. North Coast Transportation & Long-Range Planning table (Ken Shonkwiler, ODOT)
 - a. Educational campaign aimed at local jurisdictions regarding land use decisions
 - i. Example: people are asking for things like residential improvements and affordable housing, but the primary type of

development happening is commercial; disconnect from what people need

- b. Park and ride system; discourage individual car trips to the coast
 - i. Establish shuttle system to transport people from transit connectors into cities without bringing additional vehicles
 - 1. *Caveat*: more shuttles will mean more people higher transportation density:
 - ii. Rideshare app to connect users coming to the coast from the valley, Portland, other regions
 - c. Establish marketing campaign for options like the Point Bus
 - i. People aren't well informed about alternative transportation
 - d. Informational pamphlet about local land use & its relationship to transportation
 - e. Regional park and ride plan
8. Oregon Coast Bike Route table (Jenna Berman, ODOT)
- a. Safety challenges; walking/ biking on shoulder and narrow sections
 - i. Example: Glacier National Park messaging study
 - ii. Promote pods and accommodations
 - b. Car-free event to help educate users that they can travel this route car-free
 - c. Promote case studies and recommendations for infrastructure and issues around liability for recreational cycling routes
 - i. Safe Lock zones
 - ii. comfort
 - d. Test segment for more all ages/all abilities usership
 - e. Cape Meares access road – leave it closed
9. Scenic Byways table (Sandra Hikari, ODOT):
- a. Touring and road-tripping is a primary activity in Oregon; promote increased opportunity for interaction with local communities & landscape
 - i. Interpretive signage
 - ii. Incentives such events or signs to draw people into towns
 - b. Connections and loops ideal to move people efficiently
 - i. Shuttle tour or independent drive
 - c. Safety for multi-modal use; improve user awareness and safety messaging
 - i. Add warning lights on blind corners and tunnels to signal "bikes ahead"
 - d. Explore Scenic Byway designation on Hwy 30 between Portland and Astoria
 - e. Can a Scenic Byway designation help disperse seasonality of visitors?
 - f. Promote seasonal focused ad campaigns – "spring flowers" & "fall colors"

10. Oregon Coast Trail table (Robin Wilcox,)

- a. Incorporate private sector rideshare/transit options into Google (add dial-a-ride layer into google?)
- b. Tools for people who are planning their trip on the coast trail
- c. Multi-day trip planning tool
- d. "Towns to Trails" initiative
- e. Connecting the gaps
 - i. Water transportation – requires in depth planning
 - ii. Sections of trail on highway or railway
- f. Connecting with ODOT & Oregon Coast Bike Trail
- g. King tide initiative partnership to inform future changes
- h. Scheduled group dropoff and pickups with private sector providers
- i. List of available transport options that are accessible along the route
- j. Incorporate private sector options into Google ecosystem in the same way that public transit is incorporated
- k. Consistent shuttle system – increase trip frequency and access points

Community sharing of existing ideas and initiatives

- What's going on now? What exists?
 - Bayocean Spit to Garibaldi pier: there is an "unofficial" water taxi that you can arrange onsite
 - Astoria has a historic ferry based on the WA side; raising money to relaunch the pier 39 ferry boat
 - Astoria Glam Tram to get groups around town for leisure outings
 - NW Connector is well-established but there are issues with user-friendly accessibility
 - Seaside and other local beach communities offering free beach wheelchair rentals – applied for a grant that would install lockers for user wheelchairs while you're renting beach wheelchairs
 - Design project underway: 24 stops in NW Oregon; will incorporate multi-modal users and cover both Clatsop and Tillamook counties
 - City of Astoria has purchased four enclosed bike lockers; each has four sections inside for storage. Users are the only one with the key/combination so bikes are safe while users are working or recreating
 - Cannon Beach has had trouble implementing a timed parking system
 - Oregon Coast Rail Riders is a good connection example

ROUNDTABLE ACTION PLANNING GROUPS

COLLECTING ALL OPTIONS AND CREATING SOLUTIONS - ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS ON SOLUTION DEVELOPMENT

- Astoria, Warrenton
 - Problems:
 - Lack of parking
 - Resistance to leaving parked cars unattended
 - There has been a recent push for new development in money to the community; need to ensure that this is SMART development and not just money-driven
 - Missing connections between transit
 - Parking issues; none available at the transit hubs
 - Infrastructure; local roads are over-whelmed and the city was not planned for such heavy use and density
 - Solutions:
 - Improved signage and wayfinding
 - Expand services such as the trolley and implement multi-modal connections
 - Charge parking fees – currently none in place
 - No edge parking available at the downtown core; people currently drive from site to site instead of walking downtown
 - Establish who is accountable for parking and transportation management on the city level and get them involved in tourism conversations
 - Get elected officials in the room

- Seaside, Manzanita, Cannon Beach
 - Problems:
 - Lack of parking
 - Lack of buy-in and follow through from residents; lots of pushback received related to tourism
 - Funding challenges
 - Ideas presented but action seldomly taken; no accountability
 - Employee transportation and housing challenges
 - Solutions:
 - Utilize open space that's available; large gaps exist between developed areas
 - Hotels give discounts for using public transit or leaving cars onsite (subsidized?)
 - Tax incentive for landowners and business owner contribution

- Apply for grants to get shuttle service/support
 - Focus on how to change transportation habits of day trippers since they are primary source of increased traffic density
 - Solutions need to be implemented at regional and statewide scale to activate solutions locally; solutions should fold into greater systems
 - Park and ride off Hwy 101 south of Seaside
 - Paid/permit parking, especially on weekends of peak seasons (locals receive "locals pass" and not be charged)
 - Improved signage and communications outlining transportation options
 - Form a Transportation Management Association
 - Sunset Empire Transportation District, chambers of commerce, visitor centers, city organizations, state and national parks
- Tillamook Bay area
 - Problems:
 - Lack of parking infrastructure natural destinations
 - Tillamook County and Tillamook Bay area has many natural recreational opportunities but destinations get congested due to inefficient infrastructure
 - Hwy 1 bike shoulder gaps; small gaps make bike travel very dangerous (especially on Hwy 131)
 - Frequency of existing transit – not enough options and routes, especially for employees getting to and from their shifts
 - Workforce housing availability
 - Solutions:
 - Improving bike and shoulder routes within Oregon Coast Bike Route
 - Collaboration between tourism agencies/ tour operators and transportation agencies
 - Increase frequency of transit services
 - Establish funding sources, apply for grants
 - Increase communication between regional organizations
- Pacific City:
 - Problems:
 - No through transit service that connects to Pacific City; it's an outlier in the existing regional transit system
 - Primarily related to infrastructure and amenities
 - Limited parking
 - Private lots are seeing encroachment
 - Increased congestion at southern end of town
 - No sidewalks whatsoever to walk, no bike lanes, no public transit

- Currently only one bike rack
- Holiday shutdowns- turning visitors away during busy season due to lack of infrastructure and capacity
- Lack of parking access to beaches
- Solutions:
 - Improve streetscape, add sidewalks and bike lanes; multi-modal accessibility
 - Add more 4 way stops & pedestrian crossings
 - Boat ramp fees
 - Implement gasoline tax
 - Explore cannabis tax funds; will they be used to help municipal issues?
 - Parking shuttle from the new parking lot at Cape Kiwanda
 - Add roundabouts
 - Provide increased promotion and information about parking lots and shuttle options
 - Add parking in Tierra Del Mar
 - Restrict car access on the beach (controversial; this is a recreational draw to community)
 - Workforce shuttles – worker vehicles are getting ticketed during their shifts,
 - More public bike racks, more public restrooms

Plenary discussion about key action steps & solutions

- Prioritize Main Street and downtown walkability
- Identify action leaders and potential funding sources
- Collaborative support networks
- Engage communications with stakeholders
- Always stay positive; the end goal in sight is going to create a better solution
- Ensure that the regional goals fall in line with statewide initiatives
- Parking management
 - Cannon Beach has done studies and had traffic specialists come in and propose solutions but residents and businesses do not support it
 - Figure out how to get local buy-in for these solutions
 - Permit system for parking; residents have a locals pass so that they can have parking at all times
 - Flexible timing in terms of parking lot time limits
 - Employees typically not allowed to park near their place of employment; Implement a shuttle system to employee lots/remote lots
- Discounts for guests using transit systems; shouldn't be supported by local business owners – incentive program could be subsidized by govt agencies
- Building Collaborative Strategies:
 - Tourism alliances and cross functional agencies

- Forming of a Transportation Management Association; could be funded by parking fees and help pay for beautification, programs, etc.
- Improve Iconic Trails – how to connect the gaps between communities?
- Wayfinding and signage - help visitors understand what is available, how to get there
- Trail experiences: ages, use-type (rating systems based on elevation and difficulty)
 - Help identify which trails are better by use/user type

Can you see potential action projects in the future after the studio?

- Establish a Transportation Management Association (Sunset Empire Transportation District potentially serve as regular convener)
 - TMA's typically arise when there is a source of revenue. If you start implementing a revenue generating system, local cities will want to retain control over that system.
 - Potential challenge: Public Works would need to be involved to monitor locally generated revenue
 - Model after the Mount Hood Transportation Alliance; establish North Coast Transportation Alliance made up local providers

What steps might we want to take between now and the Teaming for Action workshop to get a jump start on solutions?

- When will we talk about getting to a place where we can hire someone to manage this body of regional transportation work?
- Parking is going to be our biggest challenge to transportation management in this region