

City Manager's Report

Information and Updates for the Mayor and City Council

October 6, 2023

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

MEETING/EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Joint Meeting with Deschutes County	October 10	2 p.m. – 4 p.m.	Council Chambers
Transportation Fee Roundtable #3	October 11	9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Municipal Court
Council Meeting	October 18	4 p.m. Quarterly Update 5 p.m. Work Session 7 p.m. Regular Meeting	Council Chambers / Virtual

[VIEW THE FULL COUNCIL SCHEDULE](#)

PUBLIC AGENCY AND COMMUNITY PARTNER UPDATES

Cleveland Commons Groundbreaking October 16th, 2pm

We are excited for an upcoming groundbreaking of the first dedicated Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) development in Bend. This development is for folks who are chronically homeless and have a medical condition requiring long term support. This particular development is a result of many years of collaboration between the City, our housing authority, public health, and countless service providers and community members who stepped up to make it happen. Mayor Kebler is scheduled to speak, and Andrea Bell, OHCS Director, and Bryan Guiney, Oregon HUD Field Office Director, will be in attendance.

Cleveland Commons Groundbreaking Invitation

Join us on Monday, October 16th, at 2:00 PM at 1024 SE 4th St.



Central Oregon Villages Open House October 14th

Central Oregon Villages invites Council to an open house on **Saturday, October 14 from 10:00 – 2:00**. You're welcome to park along Benson way behind Desert Streams Church (access by Wilco). If you haven't had a chance to tour this facility and see how COV is supporting folks transitioning to permanent housing, this is a great opportunity to learn more.

League of Oregon Cities Bulletin

Read the most recent LOC Bulletin here. Included are articles addressing Oregon Supreme Court's refusal to review a case concerning recreational immunity, a joint legislative committee on Addiction and Community Safety, and a Housing Supply Accelerator Webinar hosted by NLC.

ODOT Structural Revenue Challenges, Service Reductions

Please read the below announcement from ODOT regarding **structural revenue challenges and service reductions**. Representative Emerson's response is also included.

Good afternoon Senators and Representatives –

I hope you've all had a restful summer, spending time in district and hopefully taking some real downtime, and have had a successful legislative days. As many of you know/have heard (many of you have unfortunately been subject to my broken record on this), ODOT is facing tough budget challenges ahead.

The way we fund transportation in Oregon has structural flaws. The majority of our funds for day-to-day operations + maintenance come from the gas tax, which because of increased vehicle fuel efficiency and increased numbers of hybrid and electric vehicles, is declining. That decline, coupled with increased costs (inflation, labor cost increases, material costs increases), means that, despite our very best efforts over the past few years, the only way we can further reduce costs and live within our budget is by reducing services. These reductions have already started and will become increasingly visible and tangible in the coming months.

Because ODOT has historically maintained a relatively high level of service (and when/where we can't you often hear about it!), I wanted to share this information with you as far in advance as possible of the material consequences of our reductions. See below some information about these



reductions, including some FAQs. Also see attached a **fact sheet** about what this means both at the statewide level and at a more local/regional level (organized by ODOT Regions 1-5).

What is “Operations + Maintenance”?

In its simplest form, Operations and Maintenance is everything that ISN'T capital improvements/capital construction projects. Importantly, operations and maintenance is work largely performed by ODOT staff/crews. It's DMV (field offices, processing staff, call centers), central services (HR, IT, procurement/contracting), and roadway maintenance (incident response/roadside assistance, pothole patching, lane striping/markings, guardrail repair, litter/graffiti removal, snow plowing).

What is being reduced and what are the impacts?

Because of the Legislature's action last session, DMV funding is stable (for now) and therefore DMV services won't be reduced this biennium. We're reducing services elsewhere, which includes roadway maintenance functions noted above. Roadway maintenance reductions are largely in three categories: winter maintenance (plowing, deicing), roadside maintenance (litter, graffiti removal), and pavement maintenance (striping on low-volume roads, preventive pavement repair). The consequences of these reductions will be visible; folks will see more potholes and ruts on the road, along with more trash and debris in bike lanes, medians, and along highways. Folks may spend more time waiting for roads to reopen after a crash, see lowered speed limits because of poor pavement conditions, and fewer ODOT responders on the road. During winter, folks will notice more snow and ice build-up, more chain requirements, longer delays and fewer open roads.

How were these reduction decisions made?

Over the past few years we've cut costs where we could, focusing on increasing efficiency and minimizing impacts to customer service. At the point where we couldn't cut any more without impacting service levels, we made the difficult reduction decisions noted above. We focused on service reductions that preserve service for the most people, minimize safety risks to the best of our ability, and equalize the impacts across the state to the extent possible.

We'll continue to look for opportunities to increase efficiency and cut costs while minimizing impacts to customer service levels. However, unless and until structural changes are made to modernize transportation funding in Oregon, we can reasonably expect to see this (downward) trend continue.

As these reductions are implemented, you'll hear more from constituents, businesses, and communities across the state and in your district about the reduced service levels and what can be done to increase them. We'll certainly aim to provide as much service as possible, but with



reduced staffing, fewer materials, and increased demand, we'll unfortunately be unable to meet the need for everyone.

We're not alone: many states across the country and many transportation agencies across the state are dealing with this same structural funding challenge. Some states have enacted different funding models and mechanisms; others are in the same boat as we are right now. We look forward to working with you and our transportation partners across the state to build stability and sufficiency into our transportation funding structure so we can continue to build and maintain a safe, modern transportation system for Oregon.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks –

Lindsay Baker
Assistant Director – Government and External Relations
Oregon Department of Transportation

Response by Representative Levy Emerson to District 53 Mayors:

Mayors,

Attached please find a recent update from ODOT sent to the Legislature on Friday. I want to direct your attention to Changes to Region 4 (Page 9), specifically:

“With fewer seasonal employees, our crews must prioritize key routes, including I-84 and U.S. 97, along with sections of U.S. 26 and U.S. 20. Our crews will plow and sand other highways, including OR 140 and U.S. 395; however, sanding and plowing will occur less often.

We encourage area communities and travelers to prepare the possibility of extended delays, closures, more chain restrictions, and varying degrees of traction as they navigate roads.

With smaller budgets for staff and materials needed to plow, sand, and deice, the potential for traffic jams and crashes increases. Incidents will take longer to clear.

We strongly recommend travelers carry a fully stocked emergency kit, including a phone charger and weather-appropriate clothing, and refuel or recharge their tanks often...”

Please know that I view this reduction in road maintenance services as completely unacceptable, as ODOT has a total budget of \$5.7m of federal and state dollars. ODOT's maintenance budget has 48% of their dollars going to responding to emergencies, acknowledging that the lack of maintenance will lead to more emergencies and unsafe situations for Oregonians. Additionally, I



have requested the gas tax numbers to confirm the decline as this report states and will share upon receipt.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Warm regards,
Emerson

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Monthly Social Media & Media Report

For the month of September, the top community topics and themes observed in media and social media by Communications Department staff included:

- State of the City Community Gathering: Media coverage on the changes to the event this year.
- Transportation Fee: Media stories, social media comments and emails regarding the proposed fee.
- National Preparedness Month: Coverage on the topic and plans that the City has in place in case of emergency.

For more information, including media coverage of the City and social media engagement, see the **Monthly Social Media and Media Monitoring Report**.

VIEW PREVIOUS CITY MANAGER'S REPORTS



Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, etc. please contact Meghan Goss at mgoss@bendoregon.gov or 541-323-7165.

