



**Agenda
Linn-Benton Loop TAC Meeting
Remote Only**

Date: Tuesday, May 4, 2021
Time: 2:30 – 4:30 pm
Location: Via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85247999349>
Phone: 1-669-900-6833
Meeting ID: 852 4799 9349
Passcode: 2020
Contact: Nick Meltzer, Transportation Manager, 541-758-1911

1. **2:30 Call to Order** **Chair, Catherine Rohan**
2. **2:35 Agenda Review** **Chair**
3. **2:40 Public Comment** **Chair**
4. **2:45 Minutes of March 9, 2021 (Attachment A)** **Chair**
Action Requested: Approval of Meeting Minutes
5. **2:50 Budget and Ridership Reports** **Barry Hoffman**
Action Requested: Information Only
6. **3:10 Loop Marketing Discussion** **All**
Continuation of discussion from previous meeting on efforts to market the Linn Benton Loop service
Action Requested: Discussion
7. **3:30 Historical 5307 Fund Discussion Update (Attachment B)** **Meltzer**
Update on direction received from Policy Board and next steps.
Action Requested: Informational
8. **3:45 Local Service Coordination and Outreach** **All**
Discussion of ongoing transit projects and schedule coordination with CTS, ATS, and the Linn Shuttle.
Action Requested: Discussion
9. **4:15 Updates and Other Business** **All**
10. **4:30 Adjournment** **Chair**

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. Sign language, interpreter services or other accommodations can also be provided by contacting Emma Chavez at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Emma can be reached at 541-967-8551 (TTY/TTD 711) or echavez@ocwcog.org.

LINN-BENTON Loop TAC Meeting
Teleconference
Tuesday, March 9, 2021
3:00 – 5:00

MEETING MINUTES

TAC Members: Tim Bates, Mark Bernard, Ken Bronstein, Sarah Bronstein, Brad Dillingham, Stephen Dobrinich, Sheldon Flom, Barry Hoffman, Andrew Koll, Catherine Rohan, & Mark Volmert

Interested Parties: Jeff Babbitt, Ted Fraizer, Jenny Glass, Tiffany Plemmons, & Gary Stockhoff

Staff: Nick Meltzer & C. Clark

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	DECISION / CONCLUSION
1. Call to Order (3:03 pm)	The Chair, Catherine Rohan, calls to order at 3:03 pm and introductions were conducted.	The Chair continued with the meeting at 3:03 pm.
2. Agenda Review (3:08 pm)		There were no changes to the agenda.
3. Public Comments (3:09 pm)		There were no public comments.
4. Minutes of February 2, 2021 (Attachment A) (3:09 pm)	Sheldon Flom moved to approve the minutes Barry Hoffman wanted add a clarification that the “bad spot” was on Monroe Avenue, not “in” Monroe city. Sara Bronstein 2 nd the movement with the added change.	Sheldon Flom moved to approve minutes and it was approved with a minor change to the minutes.
5. Historical Federal 5307 Funds Discussion (Attachment B & C) (3:11 pm)	<i>Continuation of discussion from last meeting on allocation and spend down of FTA 5307 Funds</i> Action Requested: Comment for Forwarding to Board	The TAC moved to recommended to the Board that for next biennium, AAMPO and CAMPO will contribute

	<p>Nick Meltzer discussed the Loop 5307 documents, Attachments B & C. He discussed that the funds have requirements, such as a matching percentage, and what is allowed to be reimbursed. Starting in 2014, there was an increase of 5307 that outpaced the local contributions that were able to be reimbursed.</p> <p>Mark Volmert asked for clarification on page 1 in Attachment B, and stated that the local funds being outpaced by the federal funds was incorrect. Both programs increased their funding and it has not been outpaced.</p> <p>Meltzer continued to discuss that the match percentage of the 5307 federal funding could not be fully captured, thus building up over time. Volmert said that the federal and the local funds are drawn down at the same time, and cannot be outpaced due to that.</p> <p>Tim Bates said that there is a monthly invoice that they pay in full amount, then they get reimbursed through federal dollars. If CTS gets a 200k invoice, they pay it in full, then they get reimbursed 100k which goes back to the transit fund. Federal funds, such as 5307, gets drawn down, but invoices are always paid from the local funds.</p> <p>Mark Bernard commented to emphasize that there is a difference between rural and metro funding. The rural providers has a small match rate that reduces the impact of the match. The burden of increased funding from the feds, at a 50/50 match rate, is greater for metro areas than what the rural areas usually experience. Volmert and Bernard discussed matched rate differences.</p> <p>Barry Hoffman discussed that STF is considered local dollars that can be used for match. However, it comes in as a reimbursement</p>	<p>\$179,655 each in 5307 funds in FY22, and \$188,640 in 5307 funds in FY23. These contributions will be used for capital expenditures, while the Loop continues to use the previous 5307 funds to reimburse operating expenses.</p> <p>The TAC also moved to recommended to the Board for both AAMPO and CAMPO contribute \$24,000 in FY22 and FY23 preventive maintenance.</p>
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basis, which includes 5307 funds. The reimbursement is done at one time to collect as much as available to capture. The budget that has been expended, is local dollars, including OSU and LBCC funds that can be reimbursed. STF is able to be matched, but comes in and is handled differently.

Mark Volmert wanted emphasize that the drawdown is done at the end of the year, with the local funds and the federal funds that are budgeted, assuming you got the local match. Hoffman pointed out that there are expenses that are not eligible to be 5307 or 5310 reimbursed. Once funds have been federalized, it cannot be used again for another federal match, and so the best match option goes first. Mark Bernard noted that most of the 5307 recipients has a reliable local funding which is essential for maintaining a 50% match.

A discussion was had between Hoffman and Volmert about match percentage, budget management, and uncontrolled expenses.

Sheldon Flom asked for clarification on the discussion topic, and how the Loop accumulated the excess 5307 funds. Mark Bernard responded that it is hard to use all of the 5307 funds because the match rate is 50%. Albany has been leaving some 5307 funding on the table for a lack of match. Nick Meltzer agreed that there is leftover 5307 funding and it built up over time with a lack of total match.

Mark Volmert asked for an end of year statement on how the match funds works. As an example, he states that the budget needs to show a deficit when 5307 funds haven't fully been utilized. He wants a budget that shows the expenses, the year end balances, and financial statements that are from the end of the year budget. Sheldon Flom stated that going under budget will

	<p>show even more if that's the case. Volmert said not drawing down all the 5307 funds is not a balanced budget.</p> <p>Sarah Bronstein asked Barry Hoffman if it is accurate to include the entirety of the 5307 contributions of the Loop budget on an annual basis. If the budget has been developed but the total expenses planned for don't include the entirety of the 5307, then that would lead to the picture in the memo (attachment B).</p> <p>Barry Hoffman said that there are annual 5307 contributions and annual expenditures. Additional 5307 funds can be captured with more expenses through operations, the Loop could have drawn down more from the 5307 funds. But since the Loop didn't, those 5307 funds could not have been captured. There is no negative in the budget and so there is no deficit.</p> <p>Mark Volmert disagreed that if we had a balanced budget, then we could've used all 5307 funds. A discussion was had between Hoffman and Volmert.</p> <p>Nick Meltzer reviews the 3 options in how to move forward with the 5307 funds. Hoffman says the City of Albany wants to move forward with option 3, which would temporarily pause AAMPO add CAMPO contributions, allowing existing 5307 funds to be drawn down to a reasonable level. Meltzer is asked the TAC which option they want to push forward to the Board.</p> <p>Sarah Bronstein asked that the challenge we're facing is either increase the funding from partners or seek other local match sources, such as STIF, but noted that other sources may not be continuous. Bronstein said that she is curious if STIF discretionary is also a potential source of a match, which could be used for capital projects.</p>	
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	<p>Mark Bernard said that the discretionary could be an option, or at least better than formula match. However, discretionary is problematic because the Loop doesn't currently qualify. If there is support for it and we make a good case for it, it could be approved.</p> <p>Mark Volmert disagrees it could be a good option because 90% of STIF funds is allocated to formula. That discretionary requests are only good for 2 years, and local boards of commissioners may opt to not renew a discretionary grant.</p> <p>Barry Hoffman wanted to address Sarah's question directly. If the Loop were able to take STIF funds to capture the unreimbursed 5307 funds, even if the STIF doesn't run out, the extra 5307 will run out, and then we would've extended our expenses without that extra funds. 5307 grants are used in the order they were received, oldest to youngest.</p> <p>Volmert and Hoffman had a discussion about expansion of the Loop service and the definition of a balanced budget.</p> <p>Catherine Rohan gave the floor to Sarah Bronstein.</p> <p>Bronstein said that she was wondering about the combination of 5307 and STIF discretionary grant to help with OSU's transit hub. There is currently a 2 year grant for the design, which can help support the construction of the hubs, if that is a possibility to use those funds to help with the construction of the transit hub. Mark Bernard agrees that it's a good idea and is doable.</p> <p>Hoffman addressed Bronstein's question, noting that that this and next year, the Loop can program 5307 dollars as capital projects,</p>	
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	<p>either the bus barn or hub project, and then be putting money away for that project. And in the meantime, we use the excess 5307 funds to reimburse operating expenses.</p> <p>Sheldon Flom asked about maintaining the current level of operations with the proposed reduction of 5307 operating funds. Hoffman said we are currently expanding it but yes, with the STIF funds operations can continue. Consider that, Flom said he supports the addition to the OSU campus.</p> <p>Nick Meltzer asked if the TAC agreed that there is consensus in continuing to accept the 5307 contributions but programing those contributions as capital funding instead of operation funds.</p> <p>Take the recommendation of shifting the 5307 funding as capital in the next year, which will draw down from the 5307 operation funds to the Board.</p> <p>Hoffman wanted to clarify that in the budget, there will still be drawdown from the old 5307 funds, but will be building the 5307 capital reserve.</p> <p>Tim Bates said Corvallis supports this plan, and ODOT is giving them pressure to let them know what that number is as soon as possible to get their stuff handled, and asked for an exact dollar amount. Nick Meltzer said this is option #4 (from Attachment B), with the adjustment of the value.</p> <p>Barry Hoffman moved to suggest to the Board the direction of moving the 5307 funds to Capital for 1-2 years, and use the existing 5307 operating funds as projected in the budget. A discussion was had over the numbers on what value to suggest.</p>	
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	<p>Meltzer asked the TAC for a motion, to direct 2 years of 5307 funds into Capital, \$147,000 from each AAMPO and CAMPO.</p> <p>Tim Bates said that \$147,000 covers the operations part, but not the preventative maintenance. An overall number should be what we're contributing this year, which is \$171,100 (2020-2021), and then add on 3-5% for the next year, and again for 2022-2023.</p> <p>The discussion continued on which total should be suggested.</p> <p>Mark Bernard suggests to increase the inflation rate for the adjustments. Tim Bates said that his numbers for what AAMPO and CAMPO each will contribute, including preventative maintenance, is \$179,655 in 2021-2022, and \$188,640 in 2022-2023.</p> <p>Mark Volmert thanks CAMPO and AAMPO for their continued support and increasing their contributions to the Loop.</p> <p>Sarah Bronstein motioned for the TAC to make the recommendation to the Board that for next biennium, the amounts of \$179,655 in FY22 and the amounts of \$188,640 in FY23, are set aside from the 5307 contributed by both AAMPO and CAMPO to be used for capital, while the Loop continues to use the previous 5307 funds to reimburse operation expenses.</p> <p>Hoffman clarified the intent is to utilize the 80/20 match rate and use the STIF grant for the revenue offset.</p> <p>Tim Bates clarified that those numbers need to account for the \$24,000 per year for preventive maintenance. Bate's clarification was noted and retroactively included in Bronstein's motion.</p>	
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	<p>Sheldon Flom seconded the motion. There were none opposed. The motioned passed.</p>	
<p>6. Loop FY21-23 Budget (Attachment D) (4:30 pm)</p>	<p>Barry Hoffman thanked everyone for their attention on the hard look on the budget and where we want to be in the next couple years.</p> <p>Hoffman discussed that the current budgeted 5307 does not reflect the new 5307 request for capital. He highlighted the STIF funds from Linn and Benton County for operations will help with the expansion in 21-22. Bus fares, have not been collected since March 2020, and so budget reflects half of a normal year but there is still uncertainty when we'll go back to charging fares. Hoffman explains that the capital expense is for existing fare boxes, and with the four new buses, there will be fare boxes that will be able to provide change and accept cards, which in turn will require upgrading the older buses' fare boxes, since it is unfair for riders to be allowed to use a card on only some buses and not others.</p> <p>On the expense side, Hoffman highlights the break out costs by employee benefit, and appreciates the city of Albany breaking it down as shown in Attachment D, page 2. The bottom line budget of 1.16 million includes the expansion of service, including driver hours, fuel, maintained, and increased cost of services. The displayed budget draft is close to being balanced and will be close to the final budget, even when considering the new adjustments that were decided today.</p> <p>Mark Volmert said the reserve is about 3% and appreciates the breakout budget because it is very helpful. Tim Bates said that the benefits usually matter more for the older drivers than the salary.</p>	<p>Support the staff's recommendation in the draft budget and finalize it to bring to the policy board.</p>

	<p>Sarah Bronstein asked for a clarification regarding the previous discussion, if the 5307 capital funds will not show up in the budget, and will be accumulated in a reserve in the FTA. Jeff Babbitt said that is correct, it won't show on the budget until a project has started, it'll show up in that fiscal year. Mark Volmert said it is not in the city budget account because it sits in the FTA account, but it might sit in the CIP. A discussion was had about where the funds would sit in the next fiscal year and how it will be displayed in the city budget. It will be listed as a 105. Sarah Bronstein thanked the group for the clarification.</p> <p>Mark Volmert emphasized that this budget will be different than previous years. Hoffman said in prior years, it was an expected revenue but wasn't able to be fully drawn down due to the expense/match rate.</p> <p>Nick Meltzer asked the TAC for a review and comment to bring forward to the Loop Board.</p> <p>Barry Hoffman said his recommendation is the updated version of the budget, once it is fully balanced.</p> <p>Sheldon Flom makes a motion to support the staff's recommendation in the draft budget and finalize it to bring to the policy board. Mark Volmert seconds the motion. There were no opposed. With no opposition, the motion passes.</p>	
7. Upcoming Fiscal Year Contributions (4:50 pm)	<p>Sarah Bronstein wanted to note that OSU has not finalized their budget, and while she anticipates to put in a request for the amount and it should be fine, nothing is official yet. Sheldon Flom said LBCC is in the same situation. Barry Hoffman said he understands and that the Loop is in a better shape now and we're happy to have a number beforehand.</p>	No additional comments to be forwarded to the Board.

	<p>It was decided this topic was already covered and moved on with the agenda.</p> <p>There was no additional comments to be forwarded to the board.</p>	
<p>8. Linn-Benton Loop Service Summer 2021 (4:53 pm)</p>	<p>Barry Hoffman shared the Loop Service Development Plan from 2018, the full plan is available on the LB Loop website (https://loop.cityofalbany.net/governance/). The document breaks the Loop into 3 types of service: the US-20 Commuter, Regional Route, and Campus Connection.</p> <p>Hoffman explains the plan is now moving to phase 2 and phase 3. The campus connector in phase 3 increases to 30 minute headways, which probably won't happen until after COVID-19. It will add a bus and driver.</p> <p>In total, it will be a 3 bus system, one for the Regional Route, one for the Campus Connector, and one for the US-20 Commuter. He said then plan is set and doable to get in place, but the challenging part is finding enough drivers to run it, once the budget gets approved.</p> <p>The \$600,000 STIF grant is expected to be used for this plan to move forward. The funding has been applied for, and with COVID-19 still happening, it is more likely for this to be ready by September, instead of July. This is a service increase. The Highway 20 service isn't currently available during midday use.</p> <p>Mark Volmert asked about when the availability to start hiring a new bus driver. Hoffman said that he cannot advertise for a full time driver until the budget has been approved by the city. Volmert</p>	<p>Informational discussion only.</p>

	<p>said that since the Linn Shuttle operates close with the Loop, to make sure that we communicate these changes with them.</p> <p>Volmert and Hoffman had discussion on the pros and cons of specific times for operating the bus and its expansions, and trying to match the times with the other services.</p>	
9. Future Agenda Items (5:09 pm)	<p>Barry Hoffman mentioned that Linn County has lost a long time TAC chair, Tim McQueary, and John Lindsey, who was a Linn County commissioner for many years. They, plus others were instrumental in the formation and the service of the Loop system.</p> <p>Mark Volmert added that two of the people who have had the longest history with the Loop, Bob Lowry and Ralph Reed, and would like to have a small tribute to them by a stenciled name on the side of the bus, thanking them, assuming their families are in support of this idea. Volmert would like to talk about this in the next governing board meeting.</p> <p>Mark Volmert wanted to have access to updates on the new 5307 changes in the future, and brought up marketing for the Loop in the upcoming year.</p> <p>Sarah Bronstein asked Nick Meltzer if we had received the STIF grant by the next meeting, she would like that to be brought up during the next meeting.</p>	Informational discussion only.
9. Adjournment (5:14 pm)	Catherine Rohan thanked the TAC and staff, and adjourned the meeting.	Meeting adjourned at 5:14 pm.

MEMORANDUM

Linn Benton Loop



Date: April 28, 2021
To: Linn Benton Loop TAC
From: Nick Meltzer, Loop Staff
Re: Board direction on Historical 5307 funding

At the March 23rd Linn Benton Loop Board meeting, staff discussed historical carryover, allocation, and spending down of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5307 funds. After some discussion, the Board had concerns with how the situation arose in the first place, and wanted to insure it wouldn't happen again in the future. In this sense, they directed staff, in collaboration with the TAC, to review the historical funding spend down, and clarify how the large reserve came to be, and then report back to the Board. This memo outlines the steps staff intend to take to fulfill the Board's request.

1. Loop staff will work with ATS, primarily Barry Hoffman and Jeff Babbitt, to further clarify the Loop's historical 5307 funds and better understand ATS's accounting practices. Information will be compiled in a memo and presented in a logical manner. The memo will include a breakdown of annual 5307 grant amounts and drawdowns. It will also discuss the differences between the FTA fund and City of Albany budget, and describe how those can differ.
2. Staff will present the draft memo to the Loop TAC at their August 3rd meeting for feedback. TAC feedback will be used to further refine the memo for the Board. This memo will include steps to aid in preventing this issue in the future.
3. Staff will present the final memo to the Board at their August 31st meeting.

Staff hope that the final memo, having undergone TAC review, will bring the TAC and Board into an aligned understanding of historical 5307 funds. This aligned understanding will set the stage for further conversations about appropriate levels of 5307 contributions in the future.

