

Workable funding plan eludes transportation panel

By HILLARY BORRUD
Capital Bureau

A subcommittee of Gov. Kate Brown's transportation panel spent the last month learning about various options to finance highway maintenance and other state transportation projects, but the group has yet to identify whether any of those options would work.

Each transportation panel subcommittee has only a couple remaining meetings scheduled. The group is supposed to present recommendations to the governor by March.

One of the finance subcommittee members, state Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, has grown impatient with reviewing a list of transportation funding ideas state officials revisit every few years. Bentz said that during the latest meeting of the panel's finance subcommittee on Oct. 22, he suggested the group could learn from an attempt to pass a transportation funding package in the 2015 legislative session. That might help the group narrow down

options that could actually gain enough support to pass in the Legislature.

"I seemed to me the committee should be focusing its time on what it was that had caused the last effort, the 2015 transportation package, to go off the track, and should look at that carefully and say, 'OK, what happened?'" said Bentz, who was a member of the bipartisan group of lawmakers from the Oregon House and Senate known as the "Gang of Eight" who met with Brown behind closed doors to craft the 2015 funding transportation funding proposal. Bentz was also among the lawmakers who crafted a 2009 transportation funding package known as the Oregon Jobs and Transportation Act, which has allowed the state to spend \$3.7 billion on transportation projects, according to the Oregon



Cliff Bentz

Department of Transportation website.

The 2015 transportation package lost support soon after its release when Oregon Department of Transportation director Matt Garrett said during a hearing that the plan would result in a smaller reduction in greenhouse gas emissions than the agency originally estimated, and therefore would not cut emissions as much as the low-carbon fuel standard that would have been repealed under the deal. There is little to no prospect that lawmakers will attempt to pass a transportation funding package in 2016, when they will meet in Salem for a short session that lasts approximately one month.

At the end of the 2015 session, Republican lawmakers remained opposed to any increase in the state gas tax — currently 30 cents per gallon — as long as the state's low-carbon fuel standard remained in law, because Republicans consider it to be a hidden gas tax that would disproportionately affect rural Oregonians. State regulators expect the fuel standard,

which takes effect in January, will result in a gas price increase of 4 to 19 cents per gallon over the next decade. Democrats in the Legislature have said they would not consider repealing the fuel standard unless it is replaced by a program that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by the same amount.

"I said, 'Where do we get the votes?'" Bentz said of the meeting last week. "It's one thing to talk about maybes and what ifs. It's another to talk about the political challenges that face people when they go back to their communities."

Specifically, Bentz said "any conversation now that's going to deal with roads has to take into consideration climate." Bentz also said "it's not possible to ignore state actions that increase the cost of fuel when you're talking about another state action that's going to increase the cost of fuel, like a gas tax."

Bentz said the end of the meeting was "very productive, because we started for the first time to focus on the challenges politicians face when they

go back home and say, 'How do you want me to find money for your roads?' ... There was big enthusiasm for the next meeting."

The Governor's Transportation Vision Panel was initially created by then-Gov. John Kitzhaber in December 2014 and recently reactivated by Brown. The group is tasked with recommending both short and long-term strategies to pay for maintenance and improvements to the state's transportation system. ODOT created a website for the Governor's Transportation Vision Panel, visionpanel.oregon.gov, where the agency posted some of the panel's agendas and meeting information. The next finance subcommittee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Nov. 10.

Travis Brouwer, assistant director of ODOT, said the finance subcommittee might need to meet three more times — including Nov. 10 — before it can issue recommendations.

Brouwer and Sam Haffner, and ODOT employee serving as project manager for the

Governor's Transportation Vision Panel, said the transportation finance subcommittee has so far discussed the these following funding strategies and others:

- Increases in the state gas tax and vehicle registration fees, both of which were included in the 2015 transportation funding package proposal, along with a surcharge on driver's licenses.
- Payroll tax: this tax, which is paid by employers and self-employed individuals, already provides money for some public transit agencies including TriMet.
- Transportation utility commission: a body that would set tax rates necessary to cover the cost of the state's transportation system, instead of relying on local and state elected officials to set taxes. The model would be similar to the way the state Public Utility Commission oversees utility rates, although in the past there have been concerns about whether the Legislature could delegate its authority to set tax rates to an executive branch agency.

Flagger certification training on tap at CCC

The Daily Astorian

Clatsop Community College offers flagger certification training through the Evergreen Safety Council, which meets Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana requirements.

This one-day training is 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday at the college's main campus, 1651 Lexington Ave. in Astoria.

The cost is \$90, and students must preregister and pay at least two days before class. Register <http://bit.ly/1MC1jCP> or call 503-338-2402.

ACCUWEATHER® FORECAST FOR ASTORIA

Astoria 5-Day Forecast

Tonight
A shower early; otherwise, mostly cloudy
46°

Tuesday
Clouds and sun with a shower in spots
58° 44°

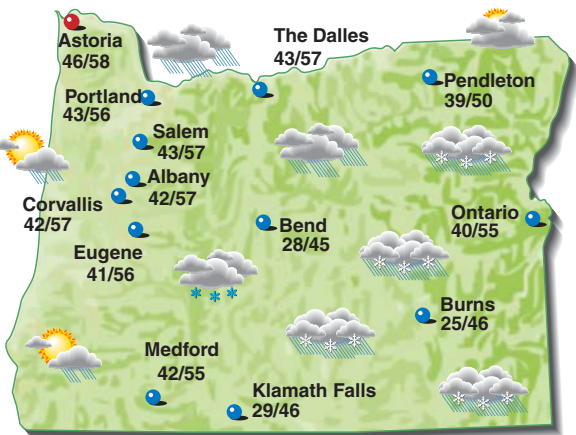
Thursday
Mostly cloudy with a brief shower or two
57° 47°

Shown is tomorrow's weather. Temperatures are tonight's lows and tomorrow's highs

Wednesday
Clouds and sun with a shower in the area
57° 47°

Friday
Cloudy with a shower in spots
59° 49°

Oregon Weather



Almanac

Astoria through Sunday.

Temperatures	
High	60°
Low	50°
Normal high	57°
Normal low	42°
Precipitation	
Yesterday	0.69"
Month to date	7.20"
Normal month to date	0.30"
Year to date	38.44"
Normal year to date	46.52"

Sun and Moon

Sunset tonight	5:00 p.m.
Sunrise Tuesday	6:58 a.m.
Moonrise today	11:02 p.m.
Moonsset today	12:49 p.m.



Regional Cities

City	Today			Tues.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Baker City	50	29	c	46	23	pc
Bend	48	28	pc	45	26	sn
Brookings	57	47	c	58	46	s
Eugene	57	41	sh	56	41	c
Ilwaco	57	52	c	57	47	pc
Klamath Falls	47	29	sn	46	26	sn
Medford	56	42	c	55	39	c
Newport	56	46	sh	56	45	pc
North Bend	58	47	c	58	46	pc

City	Today			Tues.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Olympia	55	38	c	52	35	pc
Pendleton	55	39	pc	50	33	c
Portland	56	43	sh	56	42	pc
Roseburg	57	44	c	56	44	c
Salem	59	43	sh	57	41	c
Seaside	58	51	sh	58	46	pc
Spokane	50	33	sh	48	28	pc
Vancouver	56	42	sh	53	40	c
Yakima	59	31	pc	57	27	pc

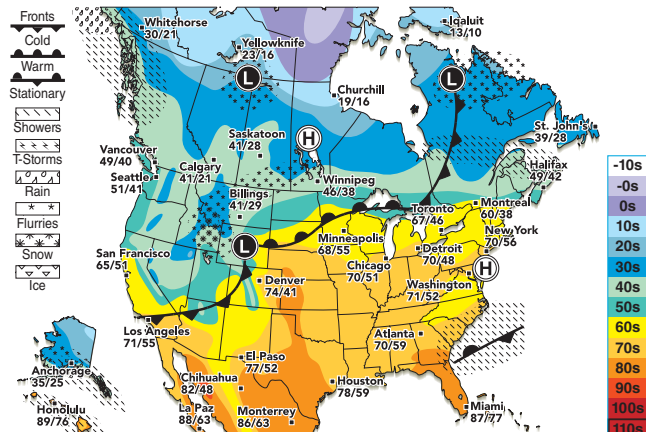
Under the Sky

Tonight's Sky: Tuesday before dawn, brilliant Venus will be close to Mars. Jupiter will be to their upper right, above the eastern horizon.

National Cities

City	Today			Tues.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Atlanta	70	60	r	70	59	c
Boston	61	46	pc	66	49	s
Chicago	70	47	s	70	51	s
Denver	75	45	pc	74	41	pc
Des Moines	73	51	s	69	57	s
Detroit	68	47	s	70	48	s
El Paso	76	50	s	77	52	s
Fairbanks	31	17	sf	27	20	sn
Honolulu	89	76	sh	89	76	s
Indianapolis	72	47	s	73	54	pc
Kansas City	73	51	s	73	57	s
Las Vegas	83	55	s	66	49	c
Los Angeles	71	58	s	71	55	pc
Memphis	74	57	pc	79	61	pc
Miami	87	76	pc	87	77	pc
Nashville	75	56	c	76	59	pc
New Orleans	78	65	c	78	62	s
New York	66	52	pc	70	56	s
Oklahoma City	72	54	s	75	57	s
Philadelphia	68	49	pc	71	51	s
St. Louis	71	50	s	74	56	s
Salt Lake City	70	52	sh	67	57	sh
San Francisco	64	53	sh	65	51	s
Seattle	53	43	sh	51	41	pc
Washington, DC	67	51	c	71	52	s

Tomorrow's National Weather



Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day. Forecast high/low temperatures are given for selected cities.

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.

No clamming until at least December

EO Media Group

LONG BEACH, Wash. — Razor clam season on south Washington beaches will remain closed until at least early December due to lingering effects of a marine toxin bloom that began late this spring.

"The latest razor clam do-moic acid results just came in and they are still elevated at both Long Beach and Twin Harbors, which means the earliest we might open

that fishery will be early December (at least on those two beaches.) We are still waiting for the Copalis and Mocrocks results," Washington Coastal Shellfish Manager Dan Ayres said Thursday.

Levels of the toxin, which causes amnesic shellfish poisoning, must be below 20 parts per million in razor clams for two tests in a row before a season opening is allowed.

Clamming is one of Western Washington's most popu-

lar traditional outdoor activities, attracting thousands to beaches in what is otherwise an economic off-season. Cancellation of an entire season has been estimated to keep at least \$10 million in direct spending out of coastal cash registers and bank accounts.

The Long Beach Peninsula and the Twin Harbors beach between the mouths of Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor account for the majority of clamming in most years.

North Coast Home Care hosts open house

The Daily Astorian

North Coast Home Care, a local medical supply company, is celebrating its 20th anniversary in Astoria and 30th in business.

The company is inviting the public to an open house and celebration from noon

to 4 p.m. Friday at 2230 Exchange St., the former Owl Drug building.

Owners Larry and Linda Slawson started North Coast Home Care in Tillamook in 1985 and have had an Astoria location since 1995. The company fits people for wheelchairs, home oxygen systems

and other equipment. Its staff includes respiratory therapists, delivery drivers, repair technicians and 24-hour emergency repair.

The company is accredited with the Healthcare Quality Association for Accreditation. For more information, visit www.nchc.net

Birth

Oct. 19, 2015

WILSON, Tracy and Dan, of Astoria, a girl, Charlotte Anne Wilson, born at Columbia Memorial Hospital in Astoria. Grandparents are Fred and Melinda Shackelford of Davidson, N.C., and Allan and Alison Wilson of Shrewsbury, England.

Death

Oct. 28, 2015

KING, Nancy Ellen, 73, of Seaside, died in Hammond. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary is in charge of the arrangements.

Public meetings

MONDAY
Youngs River Lewis & Clark Water District Board, 6 p.m., 34583 U.S. Highway 101 Business.
Astoria City Council, 6:27 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.

9 a.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.
Clatsop Care Health District Board, noon, special meeting, Clatsop Care Memory Community, 2219 S.E. Dolphin Road, Warrenton.
Port of Astoria Commission, 5 p.m., workshop, old Port offices, 422 Gateway Ave.
Cannon Beach City Council, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Lotteries

OREGON	
Sunday's Pick 4:	1 p.m.: 0-7-3-4 4 p.m.: 0-1-1-6 7 p.m.: 2-9-5-8 10 p.m.: 4-1-1-7
Saturday's Megabucks:	4-5-16-17-38-46 Estimated jackpot: \$6 million.
Saturday's Powerball:	9-20-25-47-68, Powerball: 7 Estimated jackpot: \$127 million.
Saturday's Pick 4:	1 p.m.: 2-5-3-3 4 p.m.: 0-2-2-0 7 p.m.: 5-5-1-6 10 p.m.: 8-4-1-1
Friday's Pick 4:	1 p.m.: 0-7-3-4 4 p.m.: 0-1-1-6 7 p.m.: 2-9-5-8 10 p.m.: 4-1-1-7
Saturday's Hit 5:	01-03-05-37-39 Estimated jackpot: \$280,000.
Saturday's Keno:	03-10-13-17-18-26-28-30-35-43-55-57-58-64-65-66-73-74-76-79
Saturday's Lotto:	01-03-24-30-31-48 Estimated jackpot: \$1 million.
Saturday's Match 4:	11-18-21-22 Estimated jackpot: \$1 million.
Friday's Daily Game:	2-2-1 Estimated jackpot: \$129 million.
Friday's Keno:	01-05-07-08-15-17-28-29-30-36-37-49-50-51-53-64-70-71-73-74
Friday's Match 4:	07-10-13-14 Estimated jackpot: \$129 million.
Friday's Mega Millions:	17-41-51-53-56, Mega Ball: 15 Estimated jackpot: \$129 million.

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