

CORTPO Technical Board
November 5, 2026, 11:15 a.m.
COEDD 400 N. Bell, Shawnee OK 74801

Technical Meeting Minutes

Jim Greff	P	Crystal Stevens	E	Tanner Mikles	
Amy Hill	P	Melissa Fesler	A	Ron Brown	P
Randy Heisler	P	Wendy Rutter	A	Mathew Mitchell	
Cory Swearingen	P	Petya Stefanoff	A	Trapper Parks	
Tina Lowery	P	Chris Odneal	A		

1. **Call to Order @ 11:15**
2. **Roll Call JIM GREFF – PRESENT, AMY HILL – PRESENT, RANDY HEISLER – PRESENT, CORY SWEARINGEN – PRESENT, TINA LOWERY – PRESENT, CRYSTAL STEVENS – EXCUSED, MELISSA FESLER – ABSENT, WENDY RUTTER – PRESENT, PETYA STEFANOFF – ABSENT, CHRIS ODNEAL – ABSENT**
3. **Introduction of Guests – MATHEW BLAKEMORE ODOT DISTRICT 3 ASSISTANT ENGINEER STANDING IN FOR RON BROWN.**
4. **ODOT Report – TANNER COULD NOT BE AT THE MEETING TODAY SO NO UPDATE**
5. **Mobility Manager's Report – KRISTEN IS AT A CONFERENCE, HER REPORT WAS ATTACHED TO THE AGENDA.**
6. **CORTPO 2026 Planning Accomplishments**
    a. **Long Range Transportation Plan -** Over the past year, we've continued developing our Long Range Transportation Plan for the seven-county CORTPO region.

    We've been working on several sections, including transportation infrastructure, traffic volumes, roadway safety, public transportation, environmental considerations, demographics, and transportation needs throughout our communities.

    One of our goals is to make sure this plan reflects what is actually happening in our rural communities. We want to identify the transportation issues that affect residents, whether that's deteriorating roadways, limited transportation options, roadway safety, or access to employment and essential services.

    We've also been reviewing data and identifying areas where additional information is needed.



As we move forward, we want to continue gathering input from our counties, municipalities, tribal governments, transportation providers, and community organizations. Their participation will help us develop a more useful regional transportation plan.

Point to emphasize: The LRTP isn't just a document. It's intended to help identify regional transportation priorities and support future planning and funding opportunities.

b. **Active Transportation Plan -** We've also made progress on our Regional Active Transportation Plan, which focuses on pedestrian and bicycle transportation, accessibility, and safety.

We've been reviewing pedestrian and bicycle crash information, identifying infrastructure gaps, and looking at challenges such as missing sidewalks, inadequate pedestrian crossings, and ADA accessibility.

Something we've learned through our community work is that active transportation isn't just about recreation. For some residents, walking or bicycling is their primary means of getting to work, shopping, medical appointments, or other destinations.

We're looking at how communities can improve connections and make walking and bicycling safer, particularly for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and residents without reliable transportation.

This plan will continue developing during the coming year, and we'd welcome information from communities about areas where pedestrian or bicycle improvements are needed.

Point to emphasize: Active transportation is part of the overall transportation network, not a separate recreational activity.

c. **AARP Age-Friendly Mobility Initiative and Walking Audits -** One of our accomplishments this year was receiving a $10,000 AARP Community Challenge grant for our Age-Friendly Mobility Initiative.

Through this project, we've been developing walking audit resources and a toolkit that communities can use to evaluate pedestrian accessibility and safety.

The purpose of a walking audit is to get people out into their communities and identify issues that may not be obvious when looking at maps or planning documents.

We're looking at sidewalk conditions, ADA ramps, pedestrian crossings, lighting, and other features that affect how safely people can move through their community.

We also conducted a walking audit in Yale, where we looked at pedestrian accessibility and safety concerns along a designated route used by older residents.

One thing I particularly like about this program is that it gives smaller communities an opportunity to identify and document their needs, even if they don't have their own transportation planner or engineering staff.

The information gathered can help communities prioritize improvements and begin looking for funding opportunities.

Point to emphasize: The toolkit is designed to help communities identify needs and turn those findings into potential projects.

You might also mention that you've been introducing the toolkit to other communities and organizations, so the program can continue providing value beyond the initial grant.

d. **SS4A Regional Safety Planning Grant Application:** unfortunately, we didn't get the grant, the response was they ran out of money by the time they reviewed our application.

e. **Regional Public Participation and Outreach -** Public participation has been another important focus for CORTPO this year.

We've continued working with communities throughout the region to identify transportation concerns and encourage participation in regional planning.

Our outreach has included community conversations, walking audits, coordination with local governments, and opportunities for residents to share transportation challenges.

We're also working to expand participation in our Technical Board meetings.

We've recently reached out to tribal governments, transit providers, health care organizations, disability service providers, emergency management, workforce organizations, and other community partners.

We recognize that transportation affects nearly every service provided in our communities, and we want to hear from organizations that experience those challenges firsthand.

Our goal isn't simply to increase attendance at meetings. We want to build relationships, improve communication, and make sure transportation concerns from across our seven counties are included in our planning efforts.

We're hoping this expanded participation will help identify regional needs, potential projects, and opportunities for organizations to work together.

Point to emphasize: Expanding participation means getting information from organizations that may not traditionally be involved in transportation planning.

As you can see, we've had several planned activities underway during 2026. Some are ongoing, some will continue into the next fiscal year, and others are helping us establish a foundation for future transportation projects.

One thing I want to emphasize is that CORTPO is here to serve all seven counties, including our smaller rural communities that may not have access to planning resources.

We want to make sure we identify transportation needs before funding opportunities become available, rather than trying to develop projects at the last minute.

That leads us into our next agenda item, the FFY2027 Planning Work Program, where we'll discuss what we're planning to accomplish during the coming year.

7. **FFY 2027 Planning Work Program – Projects and Activities**

   a. **Regional Road and Transportation Project Inventory -** One of the things we're working on this year is developing a regional inventory of transportation projects throughout our seven counties.

   We've already started gathering information on ODOT projects, and our next step is to include county, municipal, and tribal transportation projects.

   Right now, information about transportation improvements is scattered among different agencies and communities. Our goal is to bring that information together in one place.

   We want to document projects that are currently underway, scheduled for construction, in the planning stages, or simply identified as a future need.

   This could include roadway improvements, bridge replacements, intersection safety projects, sidewalks, ADA improvements, and other transportation infrastructure.

   Having this information in one location will help us identify regional priorities, understand where improvements are being planned, and look for potential funding opportunities.

   We'll be reaching out to counties, municipalities, and tribal governments to request information about their transportation projects.

   If your organization is aware of a transportation project or infrastructure concern in your community, we'd appreciate you sharing that information with us.

   Point to emphasize: This inventory isn't intended to replace the project lists maintained by ODOT or local governments. It's a tool for regional coordination and planning.

You might also mention that the inventory will help identify projects that are important to communities but haven't yet been funded.

b. **Regional Traffic Data Collection -** Another priority in our Planning Work Program is improving the transportation data available throughout our region.

   One of the challenges we face is that smaller communities don't always have access to current traffic counts, particularly on local roads that aren't part of the state highway system.

   We're working toward establishing a regional traffic-counting program that would allow us to collect information where additional data is needed.

   This information could help with transportation planning, roadway safety assessments, traffic studies, and identifying potential infrastructure improvements.

   We're currently evaluating traffic-counting equipment and data collection options to determine what will best serve the region.

   Our intent is to develop a program that benefits multiple communities rather than concentrating on a single location.

   As we move forward, we'll be looking for input from our counties and municipalities regarding locations where traffic information would be useful.

   Point to emphasize: The purpose of the traffic-counting program is to support regional planning and provide additional data for communities with limited resources.

   I would avoid announcing a specific equipment purchase until you've received the information you need from ODOT and made a final decision.

c. **Transportation Safety and Corridor Assessments -** Transportation safety will continue to be a major focus of our planning efforts in 2027.

   We're looking at ways to identify roadway safety concerns throughout the region, particularly dangerous intersections, high-risk corridors, and locations where improvements may be needed.

   This includes reviewing available crash information, traffic patterns, roadway conditions, and concerns reported by communities.

   While our SS4A grant application would allow us to expand this work considerably if awarded, we can still continue identifying and documenting transportation safety needs through our regular planning activities.

   One of our goals is to develop a better understanding of regional safety concerns so we're prepared when funding opportunities become available.

We'd also like to hear from emergency management, law enforcement, school transportation departments, and local governments about locations where they consistently see problems.

Sometimes the people who travel these roads every day can identify concerns before they become obvious in the data.

If you know of a dangerous intersection, roadway, or corridor that deserves additional attention, please let us know.

Point to emphasize: CORTPO's role is to help identify and document safety concerns, coordinate with the appropriate agencies, and support planning for potential improvements.

You could briefly mention that you've already been examining specific intersections in the region, but I wouldn't turn this into a discussion of one location unless a committee member asks.

d. **Continued Active Transportation Planning -** We'll also continue developing our Regional Active Transportation Plan during 2027.

This work focuses on improving pedestrian and bicycle safety, accessibility, and connections throughout our communities.

One of the things we've learned through our walking audits is that many communities face similar challenges, including missing sidewalks, deteriorating pedestrian infrastructure, inadequate crossings, and ADA accessibility issues.

Our goal is to identify these needs and help communities develop a clearer understanding of what improvements may be necessary.

We'll continue reviewing available data, documenting existing conditions, and incorporating findings from community assessments and walking audits.

We're also interested in identifying opportunities to connect residential areas with schools, employment centers, parks, health care facilities, and other important destinations.

As this plan develops, we want it to be a useful resource for communities seeking transportation improvements and potential grant funding.

If your community has pedestrian or bicycle safety concerns, we'd welcome that information as part of our planning efforts.

Point to emphasize: The Active Transportation Plan should help communities move from identifying accessibility problems toward developing realistic improvement priorities.

This also gives you an opportunity to connect the work you've done with the AARP walking audit project to your longer-term regional planning goals.

e. **Tribal and Local Government Coordination -** Another important part of our work in 2027 will be strengthening communication and coordination with tribal governments, counties, municipalities, and other transportation partners.

Because our region covers seven counties and includes several tribal nations, transportation projects and concerns often extend beyond individual jurisdictional boundaries.

We want to improve the way we share information about transportation needs, planned improvements, available resources, and opportunities for cooperation.

One of the steps we've recently taken is expanding our Technical Board invitation list to include more tribal representatives, transportation providers, emergency management, health care, workforce organizations, and community service agencies.

Our goal isn't simply to have more people attending meetings. We want to hear different perspectives and better understand the transportation challenges facing our communities.

We also recognize that tribal governments conduct their own transportation planning and maintain their own priorities. We want to identify opportunities for coordination while respecting those responsibilities.

During the coming year, we'll continue reaching out to local and tribal governments to gather transportation project information, identify planning needs, and look for opportunities to collaborate.

We hope this Technical Board can serve as a place where transportation partners share information and build working relationships that benefit the entire region.

The goal is better coordination, not duplicating the work of other agencies or taking over their planning responsibilities.

8. **Shawnee Community Connector Pilot Update -** The Shawnee connector pilot that has been delayed.

We're hoping to do it by June. I really wanted some additional information on it. So, we're having a few more information sessions, plus, you know, we're looking at more funding, looking. At different ideas for it. I think the comment area where the first one we're going to do is just be businesses, education, medical, and emergency management and local government and tribes. And we're going to adjust the route and the bus stops based on those needs.

Two of the routes have already been adjusted due to just. The comments that have already come in from the maps that I posted online. They're wanting to make a line, a route out to our low-income apartments out there. I remember the name. I want to call it Carter Hall, but I know they changed Prince Hall, Prince Hall. They're wanting to put a route out that way. I'm not sure how that's going to work with all the ODOT construction.

We may have to wait and do that on the second round after the first comment period. I know the Veterans Associations, the VA, and VFW and American Legion has now jumped on our meetings and they're wanting to adjust some of the bus stops. Of course, the bus stops are only north-south, except for the connector roads out by Shawnee Mall and Farrell. One absentee has asked if we can run the bus route closer to the clinics, and it's both absentee and CPN down in the south part of Shawnee and Tecumseh.

We've got it going to Fire Lake already. We'll have to see if we can go further, but that's going to be more of a conversation. None of those things I just brought up are set in stone, just suggestions by different organizations that have looked at it. Does anybody have any questions about the pilot?

9. **Discussion and Approval of 2027 Technical Board Meeting Dates — Action Item -** Approved

10. **Regional Transportation Updates and Roundtable -** Randy Heisler- Cimarron Transit

Yeah, we've been working pretty hard on Pawnee County with our senior program, and it is growing. It's doing well. As far as anything else, just like any everybody, we just need drivers. We need more drivers. That's kind of all I got.

Amy Hill - Well, there's several issues that could be taking place. You know, it's not that for lack of funding, we do have funding to hire drivers. It's we're not getting a capable pool-in to be qualified as a driver. So, I don't know how Randy and them prove, say, like fitness for duty, but I do require them to have a DOT medical certification. Even though they don't have a CDL because they are in commission of a basically a commercial vehicle within the state.

So, there are kind of commercial vehicle type restrictions that we need hereby. So sometimes that limits your people's ability to be a driver. Say some of our most qualified drivers have been our retired community where they're coming and able to help and be. After retirement. Say, like maybe they retired from a different area and they're coming back to the workforce because of essential needs. And sometimes they have challenges with their health that are prohibiting them from continuing their careers.

So, we have that issue. We have just a lot of the regulatory infrastructure that is kind of something that people.

Randy Heisler- Cimarron Transit - Thank you, Amy. Well put. I appreciate all that information.

Clorisa Brown - I knew about medical marijuana, and I knew about the over 21 drivers, but I wasn't aware of a lot of the other things that you had brought up.

Amy Hill - Sometimes a lot of the people that are unemployed have already have limitations. They've already lost a license or different things. We must have people that have licenses. We have people that must have a good driving history. There are so many different things that we must look at to have a qualified candidate that it makes it restrictive.

Randy Heisler- Cimarron Transit - Hey, guys, I'm going to have to leave. I'm sorry, but I need to get away. So, I'll see you guys. Catch you later. Bye.

Clorisa Brown - Thank you, Randy. Bye, Randy. Yeah, I just got a notice of five minutes until our meeting is over, so that's okay. I will say, um, bye, Randy.

Tina Lowery - I will say, as far as Potawatomie County, our we are staying slammed, slammed. It's um, I've got uh, let's see, three, four more vehicles coming. Uh, A lot of it is I need more drivers and then, you know, the funding to do that. So. The vehicles I've got coming is, you know, one of them is, the local match is $50,000. Yeah. So, and our insurance, you know, our insurance is like doubled. It's so crazy. So, the funding is a big deal.

Tina Lowery - And, all the certifications like Amy was talking about with the drivers in the marijuana is definitely a big deal. Because you know they don't want to add here because it's a federal regulation they don't understand. But anyway, yeah.

Wendy Rutter - the same problem as you guys, and I don't even have to have that many rules covered. But the medical marijuana, I will not allow that. And the driver's license, I've had people contact me and I'm like, yes, you have to have a driver's license and you have to have a good background. And then for Potawatomi County, then you've got these fly-by-night transit transit quote-unquote systems that come in and they're smoking marijuana while they're picking people up.

Tina Lowery - Yeah, but we've heard the same thing, but we're fighting, we're still fighting them.

Wendy Rutter - we're still staying busy, we've been crazy busy, but they have a bunch of drivers, but they don't have any. Like they don't run background checks. They don't, like I said, they smoke when they're picking them up and several different things. And so we're struggling to compete with them because I can't keep a driver. Well, I can't, I have all of mine are long tendered, but I need, I'm like, you guys, I need at least two more drivers.

Like, well, I can go work for them. I don't have to worry about not having a medical card. And I was Well, y'all are gonna get somebody hurt, though. But the same issue as you guys, and I don't even have that many rules. Yeah, yeah, yeah, it's a struggle.

Tina Lowery - Yeah, I feel bad for when some of these mom and pops haven't asked yet, and it's you know, a bad one, and then. Let's look at their insurance, you know. And I don't, I don't. Can you give me a list of those private drivers?

Clorisa Brown - Like if they have a business name, I know I see several of them driving around town and I write them, write them down. The big one is Shawnee right now.

Wendy Rutter - The big one is Shawnee right now that it looks like my, I just got a countdown.

Clorisa Brown - So we're going to go ahead and have to close up. I really appreciate all the feedback and would love more if you have any more that you would like to email me.

Amy Hill - Yeah, we can send you an email. So let's go ahead and adjourn.

Cory Swearengen - I'll second.

Tina Lowery - Thank you guys.

Clorisa Brown - Have a great day.

Tina Lowery - Thank you. Thanks for your time.

11. **New Business -** ran out of time
12. **Adjournment -** Clorisa Brown - Well, let's go ahead and adjourn at 11:27. Do I have a first? Sorry, make a motion? Tina Lowery – first Cory Swearengen - second