



MEMO

Date: December 12, 2019

To: All ODOT Staff

From: Kris Strickler, Director

Re: Agency Leadership Re-organization

Introduction

Oregon is in the midst of tremendous change in the form of historic and unprecedented investments in the range of transportation choices being offered to Oregonians and in the development of new methods for financing those investments.

In order to adapt to the changes ahead, we must honestly and intentionally re-examine our functions, structure, programs and operations. In this moment of self-reflection, we must consider whether we are organized to deliver the transportation system of the future, meet an accelerating pace of change, and recognize the dramatic level of population growth we have experienced and are likely to experience in the coming years. In this environment, we must ensure our comfort with the past doesn't dictate our future or slow forward progress.

I've thought a lot about how our agency is organized and how that organization can help us meet the challenges of today and the future. This has led to ongoing discussions with the agency's senior leaders.

Background

Externally-facing: The McKinsey Report encouraged ODOT to better coordinate between divisions. McKinsey noted that most transportation departments are organized by function, rather than by customer group or mode.

Internally, our Strategic Business Plan adopted a "One ODOT" concept to help us overcome divisional barriers.

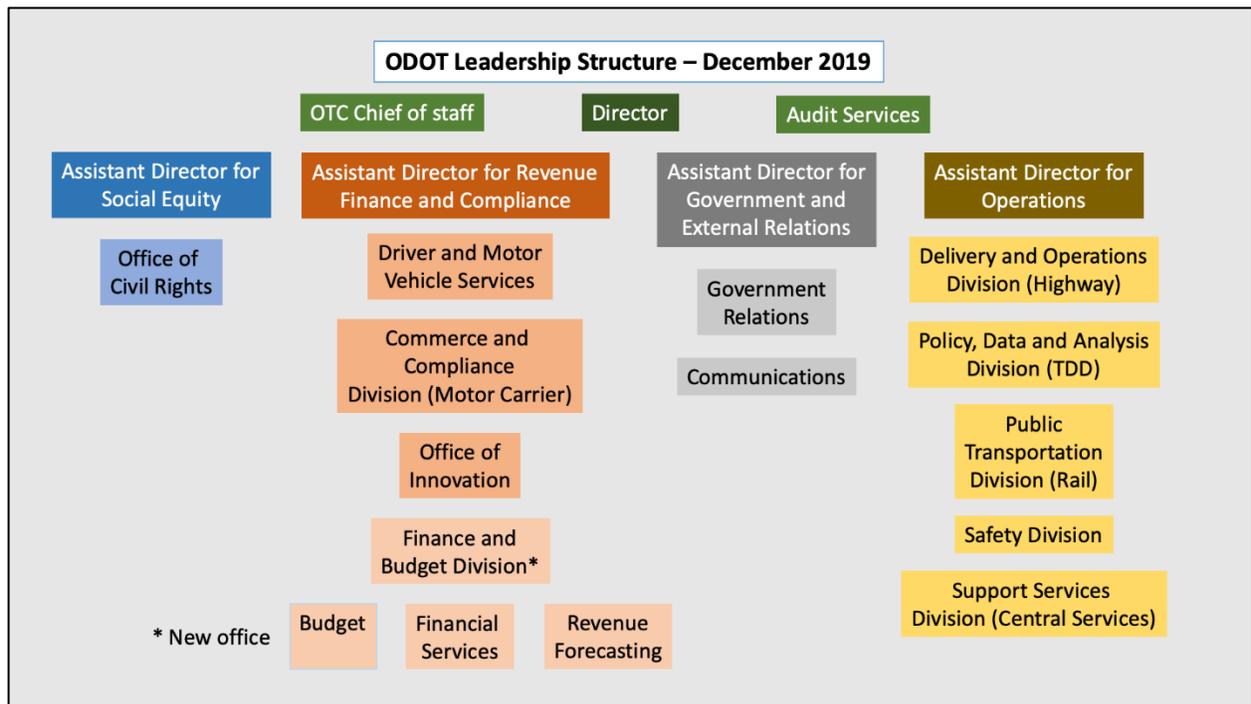
To further these concepts and better integrate the agency across division boundaries, I am proposing changes to the leadership structure of the agency that the OTC will consider for approval next week.

New Structure

Upon OTC approval, four assistant directors will lead ODOT. The four areas these assistant directors will focus on are as follows:

- *Operations* (Cooper Brown, current Chief of Staff for the OTC)
- *Government & External Relations* (Lindsay Baker, current Government Relations Manager)
- *Revenue, Finance & Compliance* (Travis Brouwer, current Assistant Director for Public Affairs)
- *Social Equity* (we will recruit for this position)

Here is how the new structure will look so far:



As we re-organize around function and integrate across modes, some divisions may have new titles and eventually parts of divisions may move to different areas of the new organizational structure. The Highway Division will become Delivery and Operations Division, for example, to better reflect its role delivering projects and operating across all modes—not just roads.

The “Why”

I recognize this may seem overwhelming. You communicated through a recent manager activity that change has been coming at a rapid pace lately. Many of you said you don’t want to see “change for change’s sake.” I agree, and therefore want to

share just some of the main reasons why it's necessary that we move in this direction, despite the change fatigue I know many are feeling:

- Integration:** This structure will allow for greater organizational health within the agency as it provides more nimbleness and adaptability to meet the challenges of the future. We're adding bandwidth at the leadership level—to better integrate our wide range of activities, programs, projects and long-term goals. This bandwidth, along with aligning our functions, will create opportunities for us to keep pace with a rapidly evolving transportation sector, and adapt our agency vision to stay ahead of the needs of Oregonians.
- **Operational Improvements:** This structure will better align transportation system modes, operations, and delivery groups under one leader, significantly improving operation and management of the system and continuing progress toward our long-held goal of an integrated multimodal transportation system. It will create alignment between planning, delivery, and operations as well as provide organizational clarity to external customers. It will also integrate an Urban Mobility Office and a Tolling Office within the broader operations group, rather than separating out these important functions into silos.
 - **Live-out Equity:** This structure creates a group whose sole focus will be to ensure that we are effectively living out our value of equity and that diversity and inclusion are embraced and integrated throughout the department – from our workforce and contracting to our transportation programs. This group will have the positional authority and influence to create a cultural impact on all aspects of the agency, and will be at the appropriate level within executive leadership to make meaningful change within our work. Embracing diversity and equity is the responsibility of all of us.
 - **Speak with one voice:** This structure recognizes the value in more closely aligning our communications and government relations strategies, and allows the agency to focus on successfully communicating our priorities and goals that impact our legislative partners, our government partners, and every Oregonian. This will help us be clearer than ever about what we are doing and how our actions will improve the lives of Oregonians.
 - **Sustainable Revenue:** This structure will create a new branch of the agency responsible for ensuring sustainable revenue and the long-term fiscal health of the agency. It will better align and streamline our revenue collection and compliance arms of the agency (DMV, MCTD), and pairs them with an efficient structure housing all finance activities in a single group. This will also provide an organizational structure that will help us integrate tolling and road usage charging into our revenue portfolio in coming years.
 - **Succession:** This structure will allow the agency to more intentionally and successfully plan for succession, making ODOT more than one-deep in critical

areas and providing greater and deeper bench strength. This is especially important as members of our senior leadership team and others choose to retire and we respond to a wealth of institutional knowledge exiting the agency. By aligning the agency around function, the cooperation amongst divisions will increase employee breadth and grow talent, and allow for more intentional mentoring and coaching for upcoming leaders.

In short, these changes will help us continue our outstanding delivery of services today while better preparing us to meet the demands of tomorrow.

Why these four?

You may wonder how I chose our new assistant directors. Let me take a few minutes to tell you about their resumes and how I envision their roles as this was a key element in my decision.

Cooper Brown – Assistant Director for Operations

- Cooper, who has served as the Oregon Transportation Commission's Chief of Staff for the past year, has led policy and management teams for the U.S. Department of Defense and served in a wide range of foreign affairs roles. He has extensive experience managing at all levels and has led diverse teams of private and public stakeholders, civil servants, and U.S. service members, many in far reaching and remote geographic areas. Cooper's ability to understand multifaceted issues and lead teams to innovative solutions make him the right individual for this role.
- He is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and graduate of Portland State University, with a bachelor's in social science, and the University of Notre Dame, with a master's in peace and conflict studies.
- I look forward to Cooper bringing his intellect, organizational experience and ability to lead large groups to our team.

Lindsay Baker – Assistant Director for Government & External Relations

- Lindsay is currently the Government Relations Manager. She brings extensive experience working within the Oregon State Legislature, representing executive branch agencies before the Legislature, and building coalitions and collaborative partnerships with external stakeholders.
- Her strategic sense, dedication to ODOT and public service, and eagerness to align our communications efforts with our key performance objectives made Lindsay a natural to head this section.

- Lindsay holds a bachelor's in political science from Texas Woman's University and a Juris Doctorate from Lewis & Clark Law School; she maintains an active membership in the Oregon State Bar.
- I'm excited to see Lindsay lead a comprehensive and proactive communications strategy that perfectly and consistently meshes with our efforts in government relations for the agency.

Travis Brouwer – Assistant Director for Revenue, Finance and Compliance

- Travis has served as ODOT's Assistant Director for more than five years, and has been responsible for day-to-day operations of the Director's Office, as well as providing oversight, strategy, and guidance to all areas of the agency.
- Travis brings a deep understanding of ODOT's revenue sources and the agency's budget and STIP developed in more than 14 years of service within the agency, including as ODOT's Federal Affairs Advisor.
- Prior to joining ODOT, he served as a congressional aide for six and a half years, and is a graduate of Willamette University with a bachelor's in politics.
- I am extremely happy that Travis will lead this new group, and bring his talent, broad understanding of the agency, and experience to this position.

Assistant Director for Social Equity – Vacant

This new leader, which we will recruit for starting this month, will be responsible for creating policy and leading efforts that will focus on:

- Work with hiring managers and Human Resources to recruit, retain, and train our teams to understand, represent, and look like the communities we serve.
- Expand our efforts to responsibly provide contracting opportunities for disadvantaged business owners.
- Increase our awareness to better align our transportation decisions with community desires, especially in historically marginalized communities.

The Path Forward

As we implement this new structure, I look forward to working together to address the diverse needs of our state and ensuring that ODOT delivers exceptional service to every Oregonian.

While the organizational reporting structure changes will take effect immediately upon OTC approval, any changes to processes and/or workload will be gradual and collaborative. Your division administrator and managers will plan meetings, communications, and activities in the near future to answer your questions and help chart our collective course forward.

We are a strong agency. As we move forward, I am excited about the opportunities ahead, and about working with you to continue to make Oregon a national leader in transportation. I look forward to continued successes in our rapidly changing environment.

Thank you for all you have done and continue to do to serve our great state.

Regards,

Kris