

Meet the Transportation Manager

By C. Clark



In my 15 years of working professionally, I can honestly say that Nick Meltzer is the single best manager I have ever had the pleasure of working with, because he truly cares about his team and providing quality transportation for his community. Nick is considerate, understanding, makes the tough calls, doesn't micro-manage, and regularly employs the ever-effective project phrase: don't let perfect get in the way of good.

Nick Meltzer joined the COG team in July of 2018 as a Transportation Planner for the Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Whoever hired him knew that Nick was a gem, because while he initially applied to a manager position the COG hired him as a planner, and within 2 years he was promoted to his current role as the Transportation Manager under Community Economic Development (CED). Nick excels in overseeing his team of 5-8 staff members as they collectively manage a myriad of programs. These include the Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO), Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO), Cascades West Area Commission on Transportation (CWACTION), Cascades West Transportation

Options Program (CWTO), the Linn-Benton Loop Board, and the Corvallis Bikeshare program. Nick admits that all of those programs are an intimidating collection of acronyms, but his genuine love of transportation and assisting others in the community allows him to effectively wrangle that alphabet soup. His dedication and consideration shine through in his passionate work and loyal team.

"I like to say our job is to help cities and counties coordinate on transportation plans and projects, while creating options for people to travel about their communities other than their personal vehicle."

Before he joined OCWCOG, Nick was following his passion in transportation, doing brilliant planning and engineering work for over 12 years for both private and public transportation groups. He was drawn to OCWCOG for the opportunities it presented, seeing it as a place to innovate, grow professionally, and contribute to the betterment of our community. He truly believes that it's a great place to live and work, but what cements his dedication to OCWCOG are the people he works with, both those within the COG and the community members that he serves. His passion comes from the people around him; that everyone shares the same vision and goal, the belief that our role at OCWCOG is to improve the lives of the people we serve, and the knowledge that by working together we can truly make a difference.

Nick has many hobbies and enjoys advancing his already-impressive set of skills in his spare time. Depending on the season, you can find Nick mountain biking, downhill skiing, wood working, or baking bread in the expansive kitchen that he built himself. He loves to travel and explore the different transportation systems the world has to offer. He and his wife travel so regularly (pre-pandemic), that they have yet to adopt any pets. While they are now considering adopting a corgi, until then they're making due by following famous corgis on Instagram.

As June comes to a close and Oregon starts to adjust to in-person office work, Nick has been reflecting on the different feelings people have with meeting formats. The transportation team has anywhere from 4-12 committee meetings a month, and with remote meetings, more people have found themselves able to attend. However, the relationship building and personal connections that come with in-person meetings aren't nearly as possible through remote meeting formats.

"While we've proven that we can work remotely, our jobs are only successful through the relationships we maintain both on our teams and with our members, so I'm looking forward to seeing everyone again and sharing in conversation!"

Nick has learned a great deal from the past 16 months; he is ready to move forward and direct his team towards our future. With Nick at the helm, the transportation team will be able to thrive like never before through this new phase of our journey.

Safety Section

Heat Waves & Excessive Heat Warnings

Summer is here, bringing high temperatures. Heat waves are defined by prolonged periods in which the temperature is above 98°F and are dangerously hot conditions. Excessive heat waves are defined by temperatures above 105°F. June 27th was the first excessive heat wave of this year. It's important to know the signs of heat stroke (see below) and how to prepare for heat waves.



Heat waves can cause power outages as well. It is important to prepare for power outages when there is a heat wave warning as they can occur due to the power infrastructure being overloaded or not designed to handle the extreme heat. The information below is provided by the Red Cross, and offers resources on how to prepare for both [heat waves](#) and [power outages](#). It is also important to keep a [Go-Kit](#) prepared for the upcoming summer months. There are three key steps on how to handle excessive heat waves: Be prepared, be alert, and know the signs of heat illness.

Program Updates

Launch of Token Transit in Linn, Benton, & Lincoln County

On June 10th, public transportation in Linn, Benton, and Lincoln County got a technological upgrade! With the support from the Seamless Transit grant at OCWCOG, riders can now pay for their bus fare online, calling Rideline or your local transit agency, or on your smartphone through the Token Transit or the Transit app.

Tickets can be purchased at any time with no expiration date, and only need to be activated before your bus ride. Credit, debit, or pre-paid debit cards are all accepted forms of payment. Veteran, senior, and student discounts are available as they would be through cash fare purchases. Find out more at [CWRide.org](#), [Token Transit](#), or watch [this video](#) to learn how to use the Token Transit app on your smartphone.



2021 May Bike Month Statistics

Wow! Can you believe that participants in our region **traveled over 2,400 miles, saved over 2,000 pounds of CO2, and burned 200,000 calories** in the month of May walking, biking, and scooting? A big thank you for those who participated and congratulations to the prize winners! We hope that you are able to maintain your activity through the summer and all year long. Here's what one participant had to say about the May Bike Month Challenge:

Log your trips to see the savings add up – switching even one drive alone trip per week to an active or shared mode (like walking, biking, carpooling, etc.) can add up to big savings and a reduction in carbon emissions.

If you're ready to try something new like a carpool or vanpool, let us know. We are here to help! **We can create a flyer for your breakroom, provide information about transportation options to employers, or work with you to identify available options.**

Contact us at (541) 812-2004 | ridemanager@ocwcog.org. Click [HERE](#) for more information. See you on the sidewalk!

"These contests have helped keep me motivated riding my bike--our family now has two e-bikes and tagalongs and we have been steadily riding more and more as this has started!" Dow Y. of Corvallis.

Agency Announcements & News

Stand by Me Program & Oregon Community Foundation launch \$BM Latinx project



In May, OCWCOG was awarded a grant from the Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) for their Stand by Me Program (\$BM).

Click [HERE](#) for more information on \$BM. The project, called \$BM Latinx, will expand \$BM-OR financial coaching program to provide services specifically appropriate to the Latinx community in Linn, Benton and Lincoln counties of Oregon. OCF funds will be used for Latinx-specific coach training, developing a Latinx outreach plan, and translating outreach materials and coaching tools to enhance our financial empowerment program for the Latinx community that has been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, income inequality and racial injustice. Learn more about local awards given by OCF [HERE](#).

Understanding the Basics of Medicare parts A, B, C, & D

The Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG), in partnership with the Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance (SHIBA) program is holding a Medicare class that will cover the basics of Medicare parts A, B, C, and D.

This class is designed for anyone who will be eligible for Medicare within a few months or is new to Medicare. Current beneficiaries who would like a better understanding of their Medicare benefits and options will also find this class valuable. Spouses and other relatives are welcome to attend.

This class will be held online via Zoom on Wednesday, July 14, 2021 from 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm. **Registration is required.** A SHIBA counselor will present this class, which is sponsored by the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of the OCWCOG. (For Linn/Benton Counties)



Call (541) 812 - 0849 to register today!

Volunteer News

Meals on Wheels – Brownsville Needs Volunteers



Meals on Wheels NEEDS YOU to help make a difference in the lives of some of our most vulnerable residents. Volunteer today to support our community by delivering hot nutritious meals to people in need. Just a few hours a day, once or twice a week, can make a world of difference in someone's life!

Have questions? Contact Scott Harper at 541-924-8455, Sharper@ocwcog.org or fill out application online at <https://www.ocwcog.org/connect/volunteer/>

Community Announcements & News

Low-Income Housing for Agriculture Workers in Lebanon

The Farmworker Housing Development Corporation (FHDC) is offering 1 and 2 bedroom units in the newly constructed Colonia Paz apartment building in Lebanon for low-income agriculture workers or those in similar professions. Amenities include a playground, 2 assigned parking spaces, a community room, on-site laundry and more. Rent is from \$500-\$800.

For more information and to see if you qualify, click [HERE](#) or call (971) 865 – 0307.



Housing for Veterans & Low-Income Families in Lebanon

Applegate Landing Apartments is available to pre-lease studios, 1, 2, and 3 bedroom apartment units in Lebanon, off of Stoltz Hill Road. Amenities include a community room, recreation area, a playground, onsite gym, 4 burner stove, washer and dryer hookups and on-site laundry facility, water, sewer, and garbage are paid, and more! Income limits apply. Rent ranges from \$285 to \$910 based upon income and unit size. For more information, click [HERE](#) or contact Applegate Landing at (541) 405 – 1388.



Juneteenth becomes a Federal Holiday

President Joe Biden proclaimed June 19th as the “Juneteenth Day of Observance”, a new federal holiday. At the end of the Civil War and the emancipation of Black Americans, it took time for the news to reach the southwestern states. By mid-June, the news reached an estimated 250,000 slaves in and around Texas, who were then freed. This was a pivotal moment in the history of the United States, as it was a key step towards equality and acknowledgement of the systematic racism embedded in its roots. Juneteenth is a holiday through which every American can celebrate freedom. It is also known as Jubilee Day, Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, and Black Independence Day. The day is often celebrated by public readings of the Emancipation Proclamation, cookouts, historical reenactments, and sharing stories of Black American history.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

With the *COVID-19* pandemic and increased isolation of the elderly, the opportunity for financial and physical abuse is at an all-time high. Please join us against elder abuse as part of an international movement to raise awareness. Adult Protective Services, within the Senior and Disability Services, investigates alleged abuse and/or neglect of seniors and adults with disabilities. Mistreatment or neglect of a senior or adult with a disability may include:

- Physical violence
- Financial exploitation
- Neglect of care or abandonment
- Emotional or verbal abuse
- Sexual abuse or unwanted sexual contact



- Harassment
- Self-neglect that leads to harm.

If you suspect an older adult is being abused, you can email us at APSCOG@ocwcog.org, or call us at (541) 924-8418 for an *APS Screener*. Alternatively, you can call 1-855-503-SAFE (7233) or contact the local law enforcement agency where the older adult lives. One call could rescue an older adult who is unable to speak for themselves.

Other Announcements

OCWCOG is Hiring!

The agency is hiring the following positions:

- **Administrative Assistant:**
This position is a limited duration appointment. Performs a variety of Finance administrative and clerical duties in support of the Finance Department, e.g., download and format reports, processes daily incoming and outgoing mail, completes forms, maintains agency archive processes, data entry and processing. Provides budget support to the Finance Director and Executive Director. Provides administrative support for a variety of special projects. Provides

back up support of the General Administration Executive Assistant. This position is open until filled. If you are interested in applying, click [HERE](#).

- **Communication Specialist – Full Time**

The Communication Specialist plans and executes internal and external public information activities of the Council of Governments, including production of staff messages, newsletters, program brochures, audio-visual presentations, and news releases. The ideal candidate we are looking for will be energetic, a quick study with the skill to share the Council of Governments story. This candidate will have the ability to engage with communities served by OCWCOG, the OCWCOG Board, and various committees with OCWCOG participation. The ideal candidate will have inspiring and inviting communication skills and will be responsible for written material for diverse audiences. This position requires someone who has the ability to create reports, track and communicate about annual events, create newsletters and event flyers. This position has the additional responsibility of moderating and curating OCWCOG's social media and online presence. This responsibility is primarily focused on content and not back-end processes. This position is open until filled. If you are interested in applying, click [HERE](#).

- **Eligibility Specialist – Full Time**

Performs specialized financial eligibility functions including initial eligibility determination, ongoing financial reviews, and/or determinations and reviews. Works with MMIS payment and client assessment systems and related forms and terminal screens. Serves as primary backup to unit staff as directed by supervisor. If you are interested in applying, click [HERE](#).

- **Meal Site Manager Siletz/Toledo – Part Time**

Manages the day-to-day operation of a meal site serving three days per week for Dining Room and Meals on Wheels. Coordinates all meal related activities including volunteer recruitments and training, community relations, record keeping and fund-raising. If you are interested in applying, click [HERE](#).

POSITION OPENINGS COMING SOON . . .

- **Case Manager Albany/Toledo**

The Case Manager opening is coming soon so please keep checking our [website](#). This position provides ongoing case management to persons needing personal care assistance to promote quality of life, independence and care in the least restrictive setting. Works with Consumer Assessment and Planning Systems (CAPS) and related forms and terminal screens.

- **Finance Director**

The Finance Director opening is coming soon so please keep checking our [website](#). This position serves as the Fiscal Officer of Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments. Oversees agency accounting operations and assures compliance with government accounting auditing standards, Oregon Budget Law, and rules regarding contracts and grants received and/or administered by the agency. Provides budget preparation and on-going management assistance, information and analysis to agency management and staff. Reviews and evaluates all financial operations, procedures in order to make timely recommendations for improvements to the Executive Director. Provides periodic budget status summaries to the Board Treasurer. Conducts assigned research and administrative studies and prepares reports and recommendations. Manages and supervises a team of professional accounting and finance staff.

- **Accounting Specialist**

The Accounting Specialist opening is coming soon (later this week) so please keep checking our [website](#). This position performs highly technical accounting services in support of the Agency's Finance Department. Responsible for accounts payable functions, vendor communication and relationships, accounts receivable and cash receipting, loan payment, processing loan disbursements, bank activity, and periodic financial reports. Assignments may include processing and preparing payroll as a backup function. Compiling annual budget trending, line item analysis for budget purposes and management information. Account analysis and budget preparation support.

Contact Information



Senior & Disability Services
(541) 967-8630

RideLine
(541) 924-8738

Economic Development
(541) 924-8465

General Administration
(541) 967-8720

ADRC
(800) 638-0510

