

Agenda Item Number 13.

Reports of State and National Associations

Presenter: George Kloeppe

Action Recommended: None. Information Only

Background:

This familiar, “standard” agenda topic has not been frequently used; but it remains before us each month to provide an opportunity for sharing about what the various associations to which LCOG and its members belong are doing. I know that there will be times when relevant reports can be offered, not only concerning the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), the Oregon Regional Councils Association (ORCA) or the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A), but also the LOC, AOC, Oregon Mayors Association, etc. This month, I will “prime the pump” with two items: A report on the Western COGs Conference in Bend earlier this month and a prospective on the annual meeting this October of regional council directors from around the nation in San Francisco.

Western COGs Conference, August 12-15, Mt Bachelor Village, Bend

Representation at this meeting was about evenly divided between regional organizations in Oregon, Washington and California. Al King, along with Byron Vanderpool, Tom Schwetz and myself carried the LCOG banner (figuratively). My sense is that this two-and-a-half day event was very well organized and that the *out-of-staters* found Bend and Mt. Bachelor Village enjoyable and pleasant. I did as well, by the way.

We were fortunate to have with us directors and key staff from three important national associations: NARC, AMPO and AASHTO. Their insights from within the Beltway were useful, particularly as we contemplated the reauthorization of federal transportation legislation. In addition, we profited from a very thoughtful session dealing with the “West Coast Corridor”—essentially following I-5, but also considering the coastal and inland north-south arteries, 97 and 101. Bruce Agnew and Glenn Pascall (who have previously spoken to the LCOG Board) from the

Discovery Institute described the efforts and successes of a three-state coalition in achieving recognition and support for this highly important inter-state and international corridor. The LCOG Executive Committee is working on an agenda item that will come before the Board in pursuit of corridor improvements to enhance the efficiency of trade and travel on the West Coast, border to border.

A three-hour session at the conference focused on the reauthorization of (the federal) “TEA-21” legislation. We were able to learn, not only from the national “experts,” but from our own professionals as well. Tom Schwetz represented the Oregon Metropolitan Planning Organizations on a panel with two counterparts from the north and south.

Another interesting feature of this year’s conference was a presentation and then a tour of a 480 acre development on the west side of Bend called Northwest Crossing. This private venture was touted as a cutting edge example of “new urban smart growth.” Participants included both the developer and Bend City planning/development staff. The project itself was really quite something.

Another three-hour session featured John Verbanac, CEO of a public relations firm called Idea Mill. Mr. Verbanac’s was more than thought-provoking and dealt with establishing and managing a “brand” for organizations. His short title for the session was “define or be defined,” and he stressed the importance of establishing and reinforcing an understandable identity. I will be asking the Executive Committee to give some consideration to this topic in the coming months, as well.

Finally, the conference closed with a session on “national trends affecting state and regional agencies.” Again, the leaders of the national associations present were able to expand our knowledge of the federal side of this issue. But additionally, each of the three states presented a report and led a discussion concerning the trends in their back yard. (As depressing as was my colleague Bill Wagner’s report on Oregon’s fiscal and legislative situation, we almost looked good against the backdrop of a report from California)

NARC Executive Directors Conference, October 29-November1, San Francisco

I will be attending this conference in late October, having found similar sessions with the directors from around the country highly informative and useful in the past. This year’s theme is “A new direction: Regional Councils as Entrepreneurs.” Of course the proof of the pudding is always in the content, but the initial list of

topics seems pertinent. Included will be sessions on “tools and technology,” working cooperatively “beyond regional council boundaries,” a consideration of regional councils’ “leadership role in their communities,” and “board structure models.” I am not altogether certain where it fits in that mix, but I have been asked to give a presentation at the conference on LCOG’s office building ownership/management activities of the past dozen years—and to provide a perfectly reasonable answer to the question why our main office is in rented space.... For the benefit of new Board members, our ownership of two office buildings has not only provided a measure of flexibility and control for the operation of LCOG’s S&DS programs, but has yielded good appreciation and a modest, but steady, income stream.