

Agenda Item Number 7.

Annual Report on MPO Activities

Action Recommended: None. Information Only.

Issue Summary:

At its December, 2002 meeting, MPC formally accepted delegation from the LCOG Board of substantially all of the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) policy making responsibilities. For over a decade, the MPC had performed some of these tasks on behalf of the LCOG Board. The Board's action four years ago, together with the MPO's redesignation to Transportation Management Area status, created a locally controlled partnership more effective and efficient in meeting federal requirements and guiding the region toward achieving its transportation goals.

As part of its resolution, the LCOG Board included a provision that:

"the Metropolitan Policy Committee shall provide a report to the Board of Directors at least annually on performance of its Metropolitan Planning Organization duties, including the results of any federal certification review;"

As requested by the Board, this memo provides a summary of the MPO's accomplishments since October 2005. MPC Chair Bobby Green will be attending the Board's December 14th meeting to deliver this report.

Accomplishments over the Past Year (Since October 2005)

The primary purpose of the MPO is to provide for a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process within the Central Lane metropolitan area. This process consists of 5 core products adopted and amended by MPC:

- 20-year Financially Constrained Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- 3-5 year Financially Constrained Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP)
- Air Quality Conformity Determinations as needed to support the RTP and MTIP
- Public Participation Plan
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Timely development and adoption of these products ensures that federal and state funds continue to flow to projects vital to the region's economic development and quality of life. The year's accomplishments are listed below in 8 broad categories.

Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

- Developed and discussed report on the integration of the federally-required RTP and state-required local Transportation System Plans
- Passed Resolution 2005-12 amending the RTP to add the Middle Fork Willamette River multi-use path from Dorris Ranch Living History Farm to Clearwater Park in Springfield which had received a \$3 Million earmark through SAFTEA-LU.
- Continued work on updating the RTP to meet new federal requirements called out in SAFETEA-LU – targeted for adoption by MPC in late Spring 2007.
- Received presentations on and provided comments to the update of the Oregon Transportation Plan.
- Began to scope the next phase of study along I-5 at Franklin/Glenwood.
- MPC and CAC received presentations on the development of Alternative Mobility Standards. This process applies to the state highway system and is required when the region's plan indicates that the state's adopted standards are not expected to be met. The resulting proposal will need to be adopted by both the MPO and the Oregon Transportation Commission. Staff also provided presentations to the Eugene and Springfield Councils and the LTD and Lane County Boards.

Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP)

- MPC passed several resolutions amending the MTIP. These amendments are necessary to keep federal funds flowing to support top programmed projects. Typically, amendments reflected changes in the schedule or budget of projects.
- Programmed MPO-discretionary Surface Transportation Program – Urban (STP-U) funds. Approximately \$3 Million per year is programmed for a wide range of regional priorities.
- FY06-09 MTIP adopted as update to FY04-07 MTIP
- Discussed setting priorities for FY08-11 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds for MPO area.
- Continued to use the www.KeepUsMoving.info website (developed last year) to keep the public aware of several regionally significant projects taking place over the past year.

Public Involvement and Citizen Advisory Committee

- The CAC developed a draft Public Participation Plan due for adoption by the MPC in January 2007.
- MPC and the CAC held a joint meeting to review the Public Participation Plan (PPP), conduct a public hearing on the PPP, and discuss other matters of mutual concern.
- The CAC began work on developing a public outreach strategy for the update to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) currently underway.
- MPC amended the Citizen Advisory Committee's (CAC) bylaws, specifically adding language allowing an at-large member from outside the MPO boundary,

changing the committee's quorum requirement, shortening the advance notice requirement for amendments to the CAC Bylaws, and making several housekeeping changes.

- MPC appointed additional members to the CAC to increase membership up to the level allowed in the CAC bylaws.
- The CAC received a presentation on the regional transportation model
- The CAC received presentations from several public participation experts including Kathy Wiltz, Ed Bergeron, and Jane Williams.
- Both the CAC and MPC received status reports on and provided input to the development of an update to the MPO's website, termed 'e-MPO'. e-MPO strategies are being developed to address a number of issues at various levels including the public, the MPO, and staff at all levels (federal, state, regional, local) as well as coordination among local, state, and federal jurisdictions. The public will be provided with less complicated, more graphically-oriented information on the 'frontend' as well as easier opportunities to interact with the planning process. Staff is also developing systems that will facilitate planning coordination among agencies on the 'back-end,' improving efficiency and cost effectiveness. Finally, the jurisdictions will be able to utilize both the public and planning coordination efforts and work together to leverage other regional transportation programs and coordinate major projects more effectively.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

As required, MPC adopted the MPO's work program for FY07 at its April 2006 meeting. One of the fundamental products of the MPO process is the development of an annual UPWP. The UPWP details the work elements to be accomplished in a given fiscal year. These activities allow the MPO to maintain compliance with federal regulations related to the core functions listed below:

- Maintaining the transportation model and the underlying GIS and demographic data,
- Updating the regional transportation plan,
- Updating the Transportation Improvement Program, development of revenue forecasts, allocating MPO discretionary STP funds, and providing ODOT with MPO STIP priorities,
- Conducting air quality conformity determinations and other air quality planning needs (the MPO is the cognizant local agency for attainment of federal Carbon Monoxide standards),
- Maintaining a public involvement program,
- Providing technical assistance to local agencies, consultants, and developers
- Providing staff support for MPC, TPC, the LCOG Board and various ad-hoc groups as needed.
- Coordination with federal, state and local agencies regarding regional transportation issues

Air Quality Conformity Determinations

Updates and amendments to either the regional transportation plan or the Metropolitan transportation improvement program must be shown to meet national air quality standards. MPC adopted an air quality conformity determination for the MTIP update adopted in July, 2006. Because of the use of federal funds, each action taken by MPC to adopt or amend the Regional Transportation Plan or MTIP must be assessed to establish the need for a conformity determination. This process is briefly described below:

In response to the federal Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency has established health-based National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for multiple air pollutants. Areas that fail to meet the NAAQS are designated “non-attainment” and are required to develop plans to come into compliance with the standards.

A conformity determination demonstrates that the total emissions projected for a plan or program are within the emissions limits (“budgets”) established by the State Implementation Plan (SIP), and that transportation pollution control measures are implemented in a timely fashion.

The Eugene-Springfield region has only two pollutants for which air quality conformity must be determined: particulate matter of less than 10 microns (PM10) and carbon monoxide (CO). There has not been an exceedance of PM10 standards since 1987. There has not been an exceedance of CO standards since 1980.

Advocacy

Over the past year, MPC approved letters of support for the following:

- Transportation Enhancement grants for Eugene and Springfield – this process is still underway.
- United Front transportation projects – several projects in the region received federal earmarks as a result of this effort.
- ConnectOregon grant applications for LTD’s Pioneer Parkway EmX, Eugene Airport, and the Eugene Passenger Rail Station. Both the LTD and Eugene Airport projects received funding through this process.

Regular Reports and Information Sharing

- MPC receives monthly reports from the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). Chair Green has served as MPC’s liaison to the CAC for the past year and a half.
- MPC received periodic reports from the Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC); a group that is comprised of policy officials from each of the 6 MPOs in the state. Four meetings were held by OMPOC over the last year, largely focused on discussion and collaboration on issues of common concern, addressing federal requirements, and development of MPO legislative priorities.

- MPC receives monthly reports from the ODOT Area Manager.
- Starting at its November meeting, MPC is receiving a regular summary of the previous month's Oregon Transportation Commission meeting.
- MPC received information on the following specific topics in the past year:
 - Recent cost trends affecting state, county and city road construction and maintenance activities;
 - An overview of the Portland Cost of Congestion study;
 - A report on the 50th anniversary of the Interstate system with a focus on I-5;
 - A report developed for Portland Metro entitled "Future Oil Supply Uncertainty";
 - Information on the statewide "Drive Less, Save More" campaign;
 - A summary of a conference on peak oil and water supply issues facing Oregon.

Other Business

- MPC approved Resolution 2006-16 recommending designation of Lane Transit District as the direct recipient of Federal Transit Administration Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funds and New Freedom Program funds made available in the latest federal transportation bill (SAFETEA-LU). The JARC Program is designed to provide transportation services in urban, suburban and rural areas to assist welfare recipients and other low-income individuals in accessing employment opportunities. New Freedom funds are intended to encourage services and facility improvements to address the transportation needs of persons with disabilities that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- MPC has discussed possible alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and possible changes to the MPC bylaws at several meetings. At their November 9, 2006 meeting MPC members agreed to meet with the LCOG Board Executive Committee to further discuss alternatives.
- MPC approved Resolution 2006-06 endorsing the Locally-Preferred Alternative for the Pioneer Parkway EmX. The Pioneer Parkway EmX extends the Franklin EmX from downtown Springfield into the Gateway/RiverBend/International Way area of northwestern Springfield. The MPC action taken does not constitute project approval. Rather it allows the project to move forward to the next steps, which are the release of an Environmental Assessment and the submittal of an application for New Starts funds.