

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 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 five 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 January 2007. MPC Chair Mayor Kitty Piercy will be attending the Board's December 13th meeting to deliver this report.

Introductory Remarks

2007 has been a busy year for the Central Lane MPO. We have completed the work outlined below, but much policy work and discussion remains. I would like to highlight several challenges facing the MPO.

With the passage of the RTP, State law requires a reexamination of local transportation plans. Some MPC members are concerned that the Regional Transportation Plan and TransPlan are not in sync with each other and believe a commitment should be made to bring the federal RTP into closer concert with other transportation/ landuse planning efforts.

We recognize a changing world of funding for transportation, and the need to respond to the pressures of finite resources and climate change. Our area, like all

of Oregon is strapped for financing for road repairs and backlogs are soaring far beyond local capacity to respond. The public concern is growing.

We are in the midst of developing a nationally recognized EmX transit system to reduce congestion.

There is a broad based collaborative of business, agency, government and environmental partners working on short and long term traffic and transportation solution recommendations for West Eugene. They are on an 18 month timeline.

MPO Accomplishments over the Past Year (Since January 2007)

On a four year cycle, the US Department of Transportation reviews the MPO's planning processes to ensure that its duties are conducted in accordance with federal law. On May 1-2, 2007 this review was carried out, and the MPO was found to be in compliance.

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 five core products adopted and amended by MPC:

- Financially constrained Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) with at least a 20 year horizon
- Financially constrained Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) with at least a four year horizon
- 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) and Long-Range Planning

- Adopted Resolution 2007-09 adopting an RTP through 2031. The 2031 RTP meets the new requirements of the SAFETEA-LU transportation bill.
- Developed environmental consultation and coordination materials for long-range transportation planning purposes in accordance with SAFETEA-LU requirements. Submitted materials for review and comment by federal and state resource agencies.
- Updated Commuter Solutions Strategic Plan.
- Assisted in the development and adoption (January, 2007), and subsequent on-going update, of the MPO's federally-required Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan.

Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP)

- MPC adopted a SAFETEA-LU compliant MTIP for FY 2008-2011, containing the funded short term projects for the Central Lane MPO jurisdictions. This has been forwarded to the State for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- MPC approved \$4.66 million in projects funded by the MPO-discretionary Surface Transportation Program – Urban (STP-U) funds. Approximately \$2.8 million per year in these federal funds is available for programming by the MPO for a wide range of regional priorities. From 2004 through 2007, the MPO has distributed over \$17 million to local jurisdictions in the MPO area for roadway, transit, bike/pedestrian, transportation demand management, and planning projects.
- Forty-one amendments to the MTIP were approved during 2007 in order to adjust timing and funding of transportation projects in the region.
- Provided comments to ODOT and the Oregon Transportation Commission on STIP funding eligibility criteria and prioritization factors for FY2010-2013.
- Discussed setting priorities for FY10-13 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds for MPO area.
- Continued to use the www.keepusmoving.info website to keep the public aware of several regionally significant projects taking place over the past year.

Public Involvement and Citizen Advisory Committee

- The MPC adopted the Public Participation Plan (PPP) developed by the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) in January 2007. The PPP is used to guide public outreach for the MPO's activities.
- The CAC developed a Citizens Guide to Transportation for release by the MPC in early 2008. The concept of the guide is a friendly, colorful, easy to use introduction to regional transportation planning. It includes a timeline showing changes in transportation through time, a bus pass coupon, and original artwork and historical photos for visual interest.
- MPC amended the Citizen Advisory Committee's (CAC) bylaws, allowing the appointment of new members in mid-year, allowing for an alternative officers structure, and making several housekeeping changes.
- MPC appointed additional members to the CAC to increase membership up to the level allowed in the CAC bylaws. There are now 14 members.
- MPC received recommendations from the CAC on the update of the Regional Transportation Plan, STP-U funding allocations, and the STIP.
- 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 'front-end' 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.

- Completed development of the beta version of Phase One of the e-MPO project and involved the CAC members in beta testing of the web site functionality.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

MPC adopted the MPO's work program for FY08 at its April 2007 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:

- Coordination with federal, state and local agencies regarding regional transportation issues
- 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 federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds, and providing ODOT with MPO State Transportation Improvement program (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.

Air Quality Conformity Determinations

- Adopted Resolution 2007-10 approving the Air Quality Conformity Determination for the 2031 RTP and the FY08-11 MTIP
- Provided routine air quality review of all amendments to the current MTIP to ensure compliance with federal and state conformity rules.

Because of the use of federal funds and the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act, any actions taken by US Department of Transportation must be shown to not cause adverse effects on the national air quality standards. In the MPO area, this means that the MPO must demonstrate that updates and amendments to either the Regional Transportation Plan or the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program will not adversely affect the air quality in the region. This demonstration is made through an analysis of the projected travel volumes by all modes of transport

on the future transportation network as described in the RTP and MTIP. The analysis is documented in an Air Quality Conformity Determination.

This analysis was performed for the new RTP and MTIP, and MPC subsequently adopted the Air Quality Conformity Determination in November, 2007. USDOT approval is required, and is underway.

The Eugene-Springfield region has only two pollutants for which the US Environmental Protection Agency has required specific actions to address past issues: particulate matter of less than 10 microns (PM10) and carbon monoxide (CO). The latter is the only one for which a transportation analysis must be made. 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:

- ConnectOregon grant application for Eugene Passenger Rail Station improvements. This process is ongoing. From efforts in 2006, LTD and Eugene received funding through this process.
- Transportation Growth Management Program application for the Coburg Multi-modal Loop planning project. Coburg received \$65,000 from this proposal.
- Redeployment of \$3.5 million in funds from the cancelled West Eugene Parkway project to the I5/Beltline project. While this was accomplished, it now is likely that due to budget problems and cost overruns in other projects outside this area, these funds will be withdrawn by ODOT.
- Transportation Enhancement grant applications for two Eugene multiuse path projects. Eugene's Delta Ponds multiuse path project subsequently received a grant of \$1 million.

The MPO also:

- Advocated for direct representation from the MPO and Lane County at the statewide level on the STIP Stakeholders Committee.
- Provided input on the development of statewide Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC) *Legislative Policy Concepts and Objectives*
- Advocated for MPO project priorities in the development of the 2007 ODOT Region 2 Large Project Strategy

Regular Reports and Information Sharing

- MPC receives monthly reports from the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). Chair Piercy has served as MPC's liaison to the CAC for the past year.
- MPC received periodic reports from OMPOC - a group that is comprised of policy officials from each of the 6 MPOs in the state. Several 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.
- MPC received information on the following specific topics in the past year:
 - Replacement of the Willamette River Bridge
 - Redeployment of West Eugene Parkway funds
 - Development of extended “commute-sheds” around Oregon MPOs, encompassing surrounding small cities beyond the borders of the MPOs.
 - Safe Routes to School program and applications for funding by several school districts
 - ODOT budget and program funding
 - Commuter Solutions strategic plan for transportation demand management activities within the MPO area
 - TravelSmart Individualized Marketing results

Other Business

- At a state-wide level or regional level, the MPO participates in the Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC), the ODOT Freight Advisory Committee, the Oregon Transportation Modeling Steering Committee, the ODOT Lane County Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Committee, the Statewide Transportation Options Committee, the Statewide STIP/TIP Financial Group, the Statewide Revenue Forecasting Group, and more.

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