

Agenda Item Number 10.A.

Countywide Project Priorities for Needs and Issues Inventory

Presenter: Steve Dignam, LCOG, Liz Cawood, Lane Economic Committee (LEC) member

Action Recommended: Approve Recommendations on Needs and Issues Project Priorities as Submitted by the LEC

Background:

During the past nine years, the LEC and the LCOG Board of Directors have coordinated the project prioritization process within Lane County for the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative (NEAI) and the subsequent Needs and Issues Inventory. The NEAI was the funding mechanism, established under a Memorandum of Understanding, among various Federal agencies and the State of Oregon to assist timber dependent communities in their response to the economic losses, suffered by reductions in Federal timber harvests. Although the NEAI has now ended, the State and Federal agencies have agreed to continue the process of project development and prioritization in order to more effectively respond to the economic and community development needs of the communities as defined at the local level. This process is now called the Needs and Issues Inventory Process.

The Needs and Issues Inventory serves two purposes. First, it provides the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECDD) with a list of Community Facility, Infrastructure, and Community Readiness (i.e. planning) projects that local jurisdictions hope to undertake in the near future. OECDD will use the database developed from this inventory for their long-term planning and budget development. Projects that are not on the Needs and Issues Inventory in many cases will not be funded by OECDD.

Second, the Needs and Issues Inventory provides Federal and State agencies with prioritized lists from each county, which will be used as the first step in inviting applications for funding. The primary agencies involved in the review of these

projects for funding are OECDD at the state level, and the Economic Development Administration, USDA Rural Development, and U.S. Forest Service at the Federal level. Projects must be on this list to receive funding from these agencies. In addition, other agencies and private foundations are beginning to use the list for guidance on their funding decisions.

On August 28, 2002 a packet was sent to a mailing list of approximately 360 contacts, which included all Lane County cities, Lane County, special districts, non-profits, and tribes, to request projects for inclusion on the Lane County Needs and Issues Inventory. Packets were distributed via email to those with email addresses, and hard copy to those without email addresses.

Projects were submitted in three categories: Community Facilities, Infrastructure, and Community Readiness. Project sponsors provided local priority lists, indicating each project's priority relative to the others. An LEC Subcommittee reviewed and prioritized all of the projects on October 10, 2002. The full LEC unanimously approved the Subcommittee's recommendations, with three revisions, at its meeting on October 21, 2002.

The FY2003 Needs and Issues Inventory Countywide Priority List must be submitted to OECDD by December 31, 2002. Federal and State agencies will meet and assign lead agency assignments in January 2002.

Attached to the LCOG Board Agenda members' packet are:

- three spreadsheets showing the LEC-recommended Countywide Priority lists for Community Facilities (Attachment A), Infrastructure (Attachment B), and Community Readiness (Attachment C);
- the August 28, 2002 solicitation cover letter for projects (Attachment D);
- the Evaluation Criteria used by the LEC to prioritize projects (Attachment E); and
- a summary of funding awards within Lane County for FY1994-FY2001 (Attachment F).

Two sets of project forms and Local Priority Lists will be available at the Board meeting.