



February 6, 2007

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Susan Payne
Subject: Item 4.d.1.ii – Oregon MPO Consortium Meeting

Action Recommended: None. For information only.

On Friday, January 26, the Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC) held a board meeting at LCOG. The MPO was represented by alternate voting members Anne Ballew (Springfield), Gerry Gaydos (LTD), and by Mayor Volta, Coburg. Policy board members from all MPOs except Bend and MPO directors from all six MPOs were present. Linda Modrell, Benton Co. Commissioner and Corvallis Area MPO board member, was elected as OMPOC chair; Rex Burkholder, Metro Councilor, was elected as vice-chair for 2007.

State Representative Terry Beyer of Springfield attended the meeting.

The following items were discussed:

- Connect Oregon II – With the success of Connect Oregon I, there will likely be a follow-on program. The emphasis will be on projects that add to the whole transportation system and not just isolated pieces. While the business community is interested in capacity increases, they are also supportive of preservation/maintenance funding. New criteria will likely be developed so that transit can better compete with the other modes. There may be an increase in the available funding to around \$250 million.
- Gas taxes – are acknowledged to be insufficient to meet future needs; indexing won't solve the problem since the base is currently insufficient. OMPOC representatives roundly discouraged state pre-emption of local taxing authority.
- Road user taxes – not likely in this legislative session. Pricing would be based on time of day facilities are used.
- Tolling – Several bills are being considered. One would prohibit tolling on existing infrastructure. ODOT is to prepare a report on tolling. Metro reported that road use pricing is being considered as a strategy in the new Metro regional transportation plan.
- Dept. of Human Services Medicaid Brokerage – This is an initiative to help Medicaid clients with their medical transportation needs. They are referred to specified transportation brokers who broker resources such as volunteers, transit buses, shared-ride taxis, etc. The goal is to increase client access to medical services, decrease the cost of medical rides, and reduce the load on case workers. This effort is particularly important with the demise of fixed bus route systems in the rural areas. In the Benton county area, Cascades West COG

reported that medical providers had given \$15,000 to augment the DHS services for the many needy people not covered by Medicaid. In Polk, Marion and Yamhill counties, requested rides have numbered around 10,000 per month, exceeding DHS funding. (LTD is working on developing a brokerage for this area).

- Multi-modal funding – Metro is asking the Governor and the Legislature to develop a multi-modal transportation finance package supporting transit, transportation demand management, and rail. **Attachment 1 is a draft copy of the letter that Metro will be asking other MPOs to endorse.** Rep. Beyer agreed that this was a needed conversation. Jerri Bohard, ODOT Transportation Development Division administrator, indicated that OTC will begin consideration of freight issues in March and that \$2 million has been set aside for rail planning and inventory analysis.

Following on from the OMPOC Summit held in Bend in October 2006, Metro staff presented an analysis of auto travel times in the Bend and in the Rogue Valley regions. The posters (**Attachment 2**) show that so-called “super regions” are emerging around the major population centers as defined by the significant volumes of traffic measured on the state and county roads connecting smaller cities and rural areas to the regional centers. These super-regions or “commute-sheds” extend beyond the MPO planning areas. It was the general consensus that this challenges MPOs and their partners to develop an approach to deal with this urban/rural, cross-jurisdictional interface. Land use development due to Measure 37 may exacerbate this situation. (Central Lane MPO staff will be mapping traffic volume data for roads entering our MPO area so that a similar analysis can be provided for this area).

Jerri Bohard, ODOT TDD, suggested that these posters be presented to the full Big Look committee.

The next board meeting will be held on May 4 in Salem.

Attachment 1. JPACT Multi-Modal Transportation Funding Concept – letter to Governor and Oregon Legislature.

Attachment 2. Draft poster of “super-region” in Bend area.