

## MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee  
Eugene Public Library – Bascom-Tykeson Room – 100 West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Eugene, Oregon

February 8, 2007  
11:30 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Kitty Piercy, Chair; Alan Zelenka (City of Eugene), Bobby Green, Peter Sorenson (Lane County), Anne Ballew, Sid Leiken (City of Springfield), Gerry Gaydos (Lane Transit District), Judy Volta (City of Coburg), Jane Lee (Oregon Department of Transportation), members; Dennis Taylor (City of Eugene), Mark Pangborn (Lane Transit District), Gino Grimaldi (City of Springfield), *ex officio* members.

Byron Vanderpool, Ann Mortenson, Kathi Wiederhold, Susan Payne, Paul Thompson, Jamon Kent (Lane Council of Governments); Ed Moore, Joe Harwood (Oregon Department of Transportation), Tom Boyatt, Len Goodwin, Dan Brown (City of Springfield), Kurt Corey, Chris Henry (City of Eugene), Tom Schwetz (Lane Transit District), David Sonnichsen, Rob Zako, Philip Farrington, Carleen Reilly, guests.

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Piercy called the meeting to order. She welcomed committee members, staff and guests. Those present introduced themselves.

### COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

**Rob Zako**, 1000 Friends of Oregon, 1280-B East 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene, said he and his wife were currently searching for a new home and while they preferred to stay in south Eugene housing was very expensive. He said they were considering some of the smaller communities outside of the metropolitan area. He said this was relevant because the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update process would soon begin and two important questions should be considered: where will people live, work, shop, go to school and recreate and how will they get around the region. He recognized that the MPC was not directly involved in determining answers to the “where” question, but most members represented jurisdictions that were making those decisions. He said the answers to those questions should inform the RTP update and those communities outside of the MPO area would have an impact as many residents would commute to jobs in Eugene and Springfield. He asked what land use assumptions would be used in the RTP update as the Metro Plan only extended to 2015 and the RTP would extend to 2030.

### APPROVE JANUARY 11, 2007 MINUTES

Mr. Green, seconded by Mr. Gaydos, moved to approve the January 11, 2007, minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously, 9:0.

## **METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) ISSUES**

Ms. Ballew distributed invitations to an open house for the Gateway/Beltline intersection refinement project on February 15, 2007, and encouraged MPC members to attend.

### **Report from the MPO Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)**

Ms. Wiederhold said the February 7, 2007, CAC meeting was canceled for lack of a quorum. She extended an invitation to attend a special CAC meeting on February 28, 2007, related to peak oil and regional transportation policies related to energy. She said there would be presentations followed by a roundtable discussion and encouraged MPC members to attend. She said the meeting would conclude with a CAC discussion regarding a possible position or statement to present to the MPC.

Ms. Wiederhold announced that the Public Participation Plan adopted at the MPC's January 2007 meeting had been published and was also available on the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) website.

Mr. Sorenson asked for a list of CAC members and their email addresses. Ms. Wiederhold said she would provide that information and a list of members was also available on the LCOG website.

### **Programming Surface Transportation Program-Urban (STP-U) Funds for FY07-09 Preservation, Modernization and Project Development**

Mr. Thompson stated that in July 2006 the MPC approved a new process for FY07-09 that allocated 10 percent of STP-U funds for transportation demand management (TDM), 25 percent for planning and 65 percent for project development, modernization and preservation projects. He said that the targeted amounts for TDM and planning funds had been programmed. He said that applications for the remaining 65 percent had been processed and a list of those projects, along with a draft proposal from the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) for funding recommendations, was included in the agenda packet. He said the TPC would take action on February 22 on a formal recommendation for programming the funds and that would be presented to the MPC at its March 2007 meeting. He said that no public comments had been received to date. He asked the MPC to conduct a public hearing and provide the TPC with any direction or feedback prior to its February 22 meeting.

Ms. Piercy opened the public hearing.

**Philip Farrington**, PeaceHealth, 123 International Way, Springfield, spoke in support of the STP-U application related to the Gateway/Beltline intersection project. He noted that the project would leverage funds as PeaceHealth was committing dollars to that project. He said the project was a vitally important part of the Interstate 5/Beltline interchange project and, independent of PeaceHealth's RiverBend development, was of great importance to the local and statewide economy. He encouraged support of the project.

There being no one else wishing to testify, Ms. Piercy closed the hearing and called for questions and comments.

Mr. Sorenson asked what role the MPC played in the allocation of STP-U funds and whether the MPC had discretion over the funds or was advisory to the Oregon Department of Transportation. Mr. Thompson said

the metropolitan area exceeded 200,000 in population in the 2000 Census and became a Transportation Management Area (TMA). He said that made STP-U funds from the Federal Highways Administration discretionary funds for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the MPC, as the MPO policy board, had authority in programming those funds consistent with federal guidelines.

Mr. Sorenson asked if the funds were restricted to construction projects or available for operational activities. He asked if STP-U funds could be used for things such as subsidizing transit to allow the buses to be free. Mr. Thompson said the funds could be used for a wide variety of activities, but the activities had to be regional in nature. He said that some operational activities such as developing operational strategies were allowed but the funds could not be used for day-to-day operations or maintenance. He would research the question of subsidizing transit.

In response to a question from Ms. Ballew, Mr. Thompson said that approximately \$2.8 million in STP-U funds would be available annually over the next three years. He would provide the total dollars available in each allocation category at the next meeting.

### **Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Projects in the Pipeline for 2007**

Ms. Lee introduced Ed Moore, ODOT Area 5 planner, to discuss ODOT planning and construction projects that would be occurring in the MPO area in 2007.

Mr. Moore reviewed planning projects, including the Coburg IAMP (interchange area management plan).

Ms. Volta commented that a significant amount of planning for the Coburg interchange project had already occurred and she hoped the IAMP was not reinventing the wheel and adding unnecessarily to costs. She felt the IAMP had been vetted thoroughly and the local jurisdiction wanted the project to move forward without undue delays to avoid the constantly increasing cost of construction. Mr. Moore said it did not appear that there would be duplicative efforts. He said the intent was to test various design and connection options because amending plans and regulations would require the cooperation of the local jurisdiction and the IAMP process would assure that the proposed measures were acceptable.

Mr. Green asked if a jurisdiction could keep a project from developing if it did not agree with the plan. Mr. Moore said that ODOT would need to evaluate what could be done to solve the situation without investing a significant amount of money in the project.

Mr. Moore noted that the Franklin Interchange project had been renamed the I-5/Glenwood Area Study. He said ODOT had concluded after an analysis that the Franklin interchange had no real transportation benefit, but both Springfield and Eugene expressed an interest in the Glenwood area so the I-5/Glenwood study was initiated in partnership with the cities. He said the LCOG was providing technical assistance.

Mr. Zelenka asked if the study was exclusive to the Glenwood interchange. Mr. Boyatt said the project parameters were the Willamette River south bank down through the extent of the existing Glenwood interchange.

Mr. Leiken said that the last ODOT report on the State's transportation system was done in 2000 and an update was not scheduled until 2010. He said much had occurred in the Glenwood area in recent years and by 2010 ODOT's conclusion about the need for an interchange could change as a result of urban renewal and redevelopment activities in the area.

Mr. Moore said the Highway 126 Expressway Management Plan was being completed and would include alternatives for the three intersections in the study area. He said a draft statement of work was being circulated and he expected efforts to be focused on the at-grade intersections: Main Street and 52<sup>nd</sup> Street. He said the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street interchange did not have any immediate problems. He said the OR69/Beltline project was ramping up and he had been reviewing the transportation data for that section of road to identify the issues. He said a statement of work would be developed in conjunction with local partners and could include consideration of a second crossing of the Willamette River to address problems with congestion and accidents.

Mr. Green asked what level of funding was currently associated with planning activities for the OR69/Beltline project and would additional funds be available in the future. Mr. Moore said that ODOT had budgeted \$450,000 towards planning efforts. Ms. Lee said that \$2.5 million had been set aside for a NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) document.

Mr. Green urged very early citizen involvement that was all inclusive to avoid having the project stall during the NEPA process. He suggested that queuing traffic be considered as an interim measure to relieve congestion.

Ms. Lee reviewed the 13 projects in development within the MPO boundary and noted that detailed information on the projects was provided in the agenda packet. She said some projects were in the very preliminary stages of design. She said in response to an MPC request last year, ODOT had improved signage in the Eugene-Springfield area and almost all of the signs identified as being a problem had been fixed or were within an existing project and scheduled to be improved. She said that two variable message signs, which allowed ODOT to change the information displayed, would be installed locally with one sign on Beltline and one on the Santiam Highway.

Ms. Ballew asked if variable message signs were part of the intelligent transportation system concept. Ms. Lee said they were and ODOT had a prioritized list of locations for installation of signs as funding became available.

Ms. Lee illustrated with pictures progress on the I-5/Beltline Interchange project. She said there would be notices of intermittent closures of Game Farm Road while work was occurring over the roadway.

In response to a request from Mr. Green, Ms. Lee said that a facsimile of the completed project would be posted on ODOT's website. She concluded her presentation by noting that three of the 14 Oregon Transportation Investment Act (OTIA) bundles in Lane County had been completed and 49 bridge projects were still in development. She expected 33 bridges to be under construction in 2007, 13 bridge projects to begin in 2008 and the final projects to begin in 2009-10. She said that contract language provided direction to the contractors to avoid working during certain periods such as the Olympic Trials. She asked local jurisdictions to let her know if they anticipated any large events in the area.

### **Follow-up and MPO Calendar**

#### **Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) Administrative Amendments**

Mr. Thompson said that MTIP administrative amendments were those that the Transportation Planning

Committee (TPC) acted on and a summary of the two amendments approved by the TPC at its January 2007 meeting was included in the agenda packet.

There were no questions or comments.

### **Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC) Meeting**

Ms. Ballew reported on the January 26, 2007, OMPOC meeting. She said that Mr. Gaydos and Ms. Volta also attended. She said that new officers were elected with Linda Modrell of the Corvallis area and Benton County serving as the new chair and Rex Burkholder of Portland serving as the new vice chair. She said Representative Terry Beyer of Springfield was one of the main speakers and detailed information on the meeting was contained in a report from Susan Payne in the agenda packet. She said the next meeting was scheduled for May 4 in Salem and a summit was being planned for the fall.

Mr. Vanderpool added that the OMPOC summit meeting was scheduled on September 28-29, 2007.

### **Air Quality Report – 2006 Carbon Monoxide Levels**

Ms. Payne said the MPO was required to monitor the carbon monoxide levels produced by vehicles in the area and demonstrate that the Clean Air Act levels were not expected to be exceeded. She said the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA) maintained a measurement program at various locations throughout Lane County. She referred to a graph in the agenda packet that illustrated the area's CO levels since 1975 and noted that the MPO could not exceed 9.5 ppm (parts per million) two or more days per year. She pointed out the actual levels were 2.1 ppm, demonstrating that CO was not an issue with respect to transportation in the area.

Mr. Sorenson asked if the measurement of CO concentration was per volume of air. Ms. Payne said it was.

Mr. Sorenson remarked that the LRAPA board had expressed concern that while the MPO was meeting and exceeding the rates needed to drive down the CO level, Lane County was experiencing an increase in respiratory problems per capita. He asked if there were pollutants other than CO that were contributing to that increase. Ms. Payne replied that she understood both ozone and particulate matter could contribute to asthma and other respiratory problems. She said the major source of particulate matter was home wood heating and backyard burning, which LRAPA responded to by identifying periods when those activities were prohibited. She said there were exemptions for some types of agricultural activities such as field burning.

Mr. Sorenson asked if there were health issues associated with transportation. Ms. Payne replied that there could be problems in particular locations but the MPO CO readings were regional in nature; transportation projects were required to conform individually through measurements and analysis.

Mr. Sorenson asked for charts illustrating ozone and particulate matter measurements.

Mr. Zelenka asked if the CO decline was attributable to higher emission standards on cars or were there other factors at work. Ms. Payne said that transportation was the major source of CO but home wood heating was a minor source. She said emission standards and cleaner wood heating technology both contributed to the decline.

## **ODOT Update**

Ms. Lee said that ODOT was developing a database of information to share with local jurisdictions. She said that a weekly email was issued during legislative sessions highlighting issues on which ODOT had testified. She asked MPC members what type of information they would be interested in and whether they would prefer to have it sent electronically or included in agenda packets.

Ms. Payne said the information could be posted on a web page and MPC members emailed a link to that page.

Mr. Green suggested using Joe Harwood's method of providing a link to ODOT advisories.

Ms. Piercy determined that members agreed with Mr. Green's suggestion.

## **MPO Calendar**

Mr. Thompson announced that the MPC/LCOG Executive Committee meeting on February 13 had been canceled and would be rescheduled.

## **Other Issues**

Mr. Pangborn announced that LTD's Pioneer Parkway extension project was designated in the President's budget for \$14.8 million in funding.

Mr. Green urged an MPC discussion around ODOT's local match requirements. He said the County was facing the loss of federal timber payments, which would mean a \$20 million reduction in revenue. He said that could significantly impact the County's ability to fund projects or be a partner in projects and the region should collectively discuss the issue.

Mr. Sorenson echoed Mr. Green's remarks. He said the County was facing a 26.7 percent reduction in its General Fund and a comparable reduction in its Road Fund, significantly diminishing the role the County had played in the past. He said that budget would be implemented over the next three months.

Ms. Piercy said that it would be important to have Randy Papé of the Oregon Transportation Commission at the meeting for that discussion.

Mr. Thompson noted that the next Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) cycle for 2010-2013 had started and next month the process calendar would be in the agenda packets. He said the second draft of the proposed eligibility and project prioritization criteria might also be available.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)