



March 5, 2008

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Susan Payne
Subject: Item 4.a: Evaluation and Report on TransPlan Alternative Plan Performance Measures

Action Recommended: None. Information only.

Background

Oregon's Transportation Planning Rule (TPR, OAR 600-012) requires that cities and counties prepare and adopt transportation system plans (TSPs). Within MPO boundaries, TSPs are required to accomplish a significant reduction in reliance on automobiles. Local governments can meet this requirement by showing that per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) will be reduced by 5% over the 20-year planning period. The TPR also allows for local governments to propose "alternative standards" to be used in place of the VMT reduction requirement.

The Eugene-Springfield TSP (TransPlan) was the first TSP to have alternative standards approved by the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC). Six alternative standards were developed around the strategies of bus rapid transit, transportation demand management (TDM), priority bikeways and nodal development – strategies reflected in the TransPlan policies. LCDC approved the standards in May, 2001 (Attachment 1).

Goals were defined for each standard for the planning horizon year of 2015. Interim benchmarks were established for 2005 and 2010. Attachment 2 describes the measures and the benchmarks. The benchmarks were established for the TransPlan Study Area, an area that encompasses the Eugene-Springfield UGB and a small surrounding unincorporated area of Lane County. Some of the measures utilize analyses from the regional transportation model; others utilize measured data.

Discussion

Analyses are being conducted to evaluate the progress of local efforts under TransPlan with respect to the interim benchmarks. Attachment 3 shows the DRAFT results.

Transit and TDM:

The most recent regional transportation model was calibrated for a base year of 2004. This calibration included the use of traffic counts, transit ridership, roadway speeds, and other system data representative of conditions in 2004. Results relating to mode share are thus representative

of conditions present in 2004. The implementation of BRT in the first EmX corridor is not included as it was not operative until early 2007. Further, the impact of increased gas prices is also not included. Nevertheless, results indicate that the interim benchmarks for Measures 1 and 2 were achieved on schedule.

Priority Bikeways:

During the development of the latest regional transportation plan (2031 RTP), the status of all projects as of 2004 were reported to the MPO by local staff. The priority bikeways list was updated, and the completed mileage was calculated. The result shown in Attachment 3 for Priority Bikeway Miles (Measure 3) indicates that progress has been good and is ahead of schedule.

Nodal Development:

TransPlan maps a set of areas that were considered to have potential for nodal development. It is also noted that other areas might also in the future be found to be suitable. Measures 4, 5 and 6 (Attachment 3) relate to progress concerning implementation of the nodal development strategy and land use policies of TransPlan. Data current as of 31 January 2008 are used.

Areas zoned as nodes:

Eleven of the areas designated in TransPlan have been approved as nodes by local government ordinances, totaling 1,314 acres. This exceeds the 2005 interim benchmark, and is only 186 acres short of the 2010 benchmark.

Development in nodes:

In the characterization of a “node,” TransPlan references the TPR definition of a “mixed-use, pedestrian friendly” development (OAR 660-00012-0060(7)(a)-(b)). Significant portions of this definition are design-oriented and require a more detailed on-the-ground examination than can be achieved using data that are readily available. Thus, this summary report provides a high level assessment of progress. It is also noted that the performance measures reference “areas designated for nodal development,” and not “areas zoned as nodes.”

Measures 5 and 6 have two components, one measuring development in a node as a percentage of total development in the area as of the interim year, and the second measuring development in a node as a percentage of total development anticipated by 2015. The former can be obtained from data, the latter uses estimates made with the land use component of the regional transportation model.

Dwelling Units – Measure 5:

Building permit data were used in analyzing construction activity through January 2008. These data distinguish between the types of residential structures. Analysis shows that 9.7% of all the growth in residential units is in multi-family structures in areas currently zoned as nodes. Also, this increment is 6.4% of estimated total residential unit growth through 2015. Thus, the 2005 benchmark is met (Attachment 3). It should be noted that this analysis could be conservative in that single family and duplex structures are not included, and depending on the design of the development, these could be consistent with the nodal development concept.

Employment – Measure 6:

Employment data were used in analyzing changes in employment within the metropolitan area through April 2004. Jobs in mining and lumber&wood were not counted as, at this level of assessment, they were assumed to be a low-intensity use, unsuitable for nodes. The results show 44.6% of employment growth through 2004 occurred in areas designated as nodes in TransPlan, and that this growth constitutes 41.2% of estimated employment growth through 2015. If only zoned nodes in 2004 are considered, 10.0% of employment growth through 2004, and 9.3% of estimated growth through 2015 are located in these adopted nodes.

A more detailed investigation of employment trends can be undertaken to better understand the movement of job types from one location to another.

Summary

Evaluation of the 2005 interim benchmarks indicates that progress has been made on the implementation of significant transit, transportation demand management, bikeways, and land use policies under TransPlan.

Action Recommended: None. Information only.

Attachment 1 – LCDC Order Approving Alternative Plan Performance Measures

Attachment 2 – Alternative TPR Performance Measures for TransPlan

Attachment 3 – Analysis of Progress toward the 2015 Goals (DRAFT)