

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee
Springfield City Hall – Library Meeting Room – 225 5th Street
Springfield, Oregon

February 10, 2005
11:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Anne Ballew (Springfield), Chair; Bobby Green (Lane County), Vice Chair; Sid Leiken (City of Springfield), Kitty Piercy, David Kelly (City of Eugene), Judy Volta (City of Coburg), Gerry Gaydos, Susan Ban (Lane Transit District), Robert Pirrie (Oregon Department of Transportation), members; Mike Kelly (City of Springfield), Dennis Taylor (City of Eugene), Ken Hamm (Lane Transit District), Bill Van Vactor (Lane County), Jamon Kent (Coburg) *ex officio* members.

Randy Papé (Oregon Transportation Commission), Tom Boyatt, Karl Wieseke (Oregon Department of Transportation), Tom Stinchfield (Lane County), George Kloeppe, Tom Schwetz, Paul Thompson, Kathi Weiderhold, Petra Schuetz, Ann Mortenson (Lane Council of Governments); Cynthia Pappas (City of Springfield), Sam Grosbeck, OBEC.

ABSENT: Bill Dwyer (Lane County), Gary Ross, Blake Hastings (Willamalane) members; Bob Keefer (Willamalane), *ex officio* member.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Ballew welcomed those present to the February 2005 meeting of the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC). Members of the MPC introduced themselves.

Mr. Green reported that Bill Dwyer, Lane County representative, was unable to attend the meeting.

2. CALL TO ORDER/APPROVE DECEMBER 30, 2004, AND JANUARY 13, 2005, MINUTES

Ms. Ballew called for a motion on the minutes.

Ms. Ban, seconded by Mr. Kelly, moved to approve the minutes of December 30, 2004, and January 13, 2005.

Mr. Pirrie noted that Karl Wieseke, Oregon Department of Transportation staff, was incorrectly identified in the December 30 minutes as a member of the Oregon Transportation Commission.

By unanimous vote, the minutes of December 30, 2004, were adopted as amended, and the minutes of January 13, 2005, were adopted as submitted.

3. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Rob Handy, 455-½ River Road, highlighted the letter from Junction City to ODOT regarding that community's opposition to the freight route designation of Highway 99 as it passed through Junction City. The letter expressed skepticism about the availability of funding for such designated routes, and Mr. Handy recommended that the Metropolitan Policy Committee keep that in mind when considering the designation of Highway 126 between Eugene and Florence.

4. MPO ISSUES

a. I-5/Beltline Project Update

Mr. Schwetz introduced Karl Wieseke of Oregon Department of Transportation and Sam Grosbeck of OBEC, who were present to provide an update on the I-5/Beltline project and associated bicycle and pedestrian bridge. Mr. Wieseke, project leader on the I-5/Beltline project, provided a brief overview of the project, noting it was a \$75.5 million project that would go out for bid late in 2005. He briefly described the project and called the committee's attention to information distributed by staff regarding the bicycle and pedestrian crossing proposed between the Willakenzie area and Gateway Mall.

Mr. Wieseke reviewed the funding package for the project, which included \$18 million in Oregon Transportation Improvement Act (OTIA) I funds, \$13.125 million in OTIA III Bridge funds, \$7.8 million in OTIA Modernization Equity funds, \$13 million in OTIA Advance Construction funds, \$11.95 from the State Transportation Improvement Program, and an anticipated earmark of \$8.625 million from the Transportation Efficiency Act (TEA) 21.

Mr. Kelly asked about the origin of the OTIA III moneys that ODOT staff intended to seek for the project. Mr. Wieseke said it included Surface Transportation Program-Modernization funding and right-of-way acquisition funding. Some money was made available from State projects that came in under bid.

Responding to a question from Mr. Kloeppe, Mr. Pirrie confirmed that the federal earmark was the least certain element of the project funding. Mr. Kloeppe asked what would happen if the funding was not available. Mr. Pirrie said ODOT supported the designation of \$28 million in federal funding for the project. If the federal funding was not forthcoming, the State would have to reprioritize other projects to make up the shortfall. However, he continued to be hopeful about the federal earmark.

Mr. Leiken noted that the United Front representatives would be requesting the full project amount when they visited Washington, DC, in March because of the need to pay for key acquisitions due to the skyrocketing price of land. Mr. Wieseke said that \$10 million was required for right-of-way acquisition. Mr. Pirrie added that sum did not take care of the entire right-of-way acquisition needed for the entire project.

Mr. Boyatt said that ODOT was also lobbying for the full \$28 million allocation at the federal level.

Mr. Kelly noted his past membership on the decision team associated with the project, and said it was good to see the project move forward. He determined from Mr. Wieseke that the combined project phases did include any improvements to the Gateway-Beltline intersection project.

Mr. Kelly asked about the sound wall proposed for the south quadrant. Mr. Wieseke said there was no funding identified for noise mitigation in the project. Mr. Kelly believed that was contrary to the project decision document. Mr. Wieseke clarified that not all of the elements of Phase 1 were proposed for initial construction. For example, no improvements were being made to southbound-westbound movement, and the new signal work on Beltline was not included. He said much would include on the federal earmark because ODOT had made a commitment to the community regarding noise mitigation.

Mr. Kelly was pleased to see the inclusion of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge. Ms. Ballew said she hoped the bridge was not the first element of the project to be constructed simply because it was the smaller project. She thought the flyover was the first priority. Mr. Wieseke noted that there was considerable interest in the pedestrian/bicycle bridge.

Mr. Grosbeck reviewed the plans for the proposed pedestrian/bicycle bridge, noting it was a cable stay bridge design.

Responding to a question from Ms. Ballew, Mr. Wieseke indicated the bridge would touch down at Chateau Meadows at one end and in the Sears parking lot at the other end.

Responding to a question from Ms. Piercy, Mr. Grosbeck said the design had been in use for more than 25 years in Europe and employed a technology similar to that used in suspension bridges. In the United States, the design had been used in highway bridges in Boston, Tacoma, and Kennewick.

Mr. Wieseke offered to provide a similar presentation about the project to other groups.

b. Draft Oregon Transportation Plan Policies

Mr. Schwetz introduced Gail Curtis and Carolyn Gassaway of ODOT, who were present to discuss the policies in the draft Oregon Transportation Plan. He said that four committees had been working for a year to develop the draft policies, which were provided to members in the meeting packet. He said the agenda item was an opportunity for the MPC to provide interim input to the State in regard to the policies. There would be more formal comment opportunities in the upcoming year.

Ms. Curtis welcomed the MPC's input. She indicated that policies regarding cooperation/coordination and funding were still in the development stages. She asked that the MPC provide input through Mr. Schwetz. She said the plan update was an opportunity to examine statewide movement and how the various modes interact with each other. Ms. Curtis said staff was working with three policy committees and a steering committee in the plan update, and noted that Mr. Schwetz served as a member of the steering committee. She said that following the formal input period occurring later in the year, the public input would be reviewed by the four committees and the plan would be further refined.

Ms. Curtis briefly reviewed a flow chart that showed the relationship between various State transportation plans, noting that the State land use program required that there be consistency between the plans. She noted the policy frameworks established through previous updates.

Ms. Curtis said that Commissioner Gail Achterman framed the update in terms of the goal of achieving a seamless transportation system, with an opportunity to focus on system improvements that increase efficiency in partnership with other agencies, maximizing current investments in a sustainable manner. Ms. Curtis defined sustainability as a three-legged stool where economic, environmental, and community values were considered in the decision-making process, with a long-term view on investments.

Mr. Schwetz said that underlying all of what Commissioner Achterman established as a framework was a user focus. Ms. Curtis added that a term that was frequently used was the concept of “mobility management.”

Ms. Gassaway reviewed some of the trends that ODOT was responding to in the update:

- Additional population by 2025, mostly in the Willamette Valley; all Oregon counties were expected to grow to some degree, but there will be a bigger disparity between the populations of eastern and western Oregon than there currently is
- Oregon will continue to have a diverse economy less reliant on forestry and agriculture, with a continuing reliance on service industries, including high-tech, with some manufacturing, creating a need for a transportation system with links to everywhere in the state
- Oregon will need to provide choices for business and tourism. Oregon will continue to rely mostly on the automobile in most parts of the state, but it must provide options
- Higher fuel prices may have an impact as soon as next year or as far out as 2040, and the impacts of that could lead to an emphasis on public transportation, shorter trips, compact land use, and alternate fuels and more fuel-efficient vehicles
- Tourism was growing as an economic sector and its continued growth depended on good links between different transportation modes
- Trends toward globalization required more focus on overseas flights and shipping facilities; use of the internet and other types of service deliveries will lead to more smaller, trucks using the roads, requiring transportation facilities that allow for flexible, on-time service
- Congestion will continue to increase and the State was not keeping up with it in terms of building new road capacity; subsequently, the State was considering major congestion spots and potential solutions, such as extra lanes or improvements such coordinated signalization and increased use of technology
- Increased demand for transit and an increased demand for coordination among transit providers
- An aging population that had implications for transit and pedestrian travel; it was likely those individuals would continue to drive longer because they were healthier
- Fatalities for all modes except motorcycles were going down, but the State would continue to study fatalities and their cause to determine how road safety could be increased—the design of future vehicles would likely help lower fatality rates

Ms. Gassaway said that the draft policies reflect many of those trends through a call for increased connectivity, more transportation options and information, and a variety of solutions to congestion where it existed.

Ms. Ballew said that frequently, people seem to think that transportation should control land use. She disagreed, saying that one was integral to the other. Referring to Action 2.12 on page 6, which referred to the need to control incompatible land uses around transportation facilities, Ms. Ballew asked who

determined if a land use was incompatible. Ms. Gassaway said that it would be joint decision of the State and local government. She cited as an example incompatible land uses around airports, such as tall buildings that interfere with communications equipment needed for takeoffs and landings. Other example was incompatible land uses close to interchanges, where the issue was less the use itself than the proximity of the access to the interchange. Ms. Curtis said that ODOT had an interest in protecting local communities from the impacts of State facilities such as interstates or highways.

Responding to a question from Mr. Kelly regarding changes between past policies and the draft policies, Ms. Curtis said that the draft policies were almost completely new. There were at least five policies in the current plan carried forward into the draft plan.

Mr. Kelly acknowledged the need for broad policy statements but asked about the practical and legal implications of the policies. He believed they were broad enough to accommodate almost any project. Ms. Curtis responded that the policies created a framework for identifying transportation investment priorities and accompanying strategies. She said the policies had no actual legal standing as they were broad and subject to interpretation. Mr. Kelly asked if the actions in the plan, which were fairly specific, were suggestions. Ms. Gassaway said no. She believed the actions had a status similar to the policies. Mr. Kelly suggested that the document include a preamble that stated what status the policies and actions had. Ms. Curtis agreed. She said that the document would also include text about the relationship between the plan and the local metropolitan planning organizations.

Mr. Leiken asked if regional offices would be more empowered by the plan to work with local governments. He cited the PeaceHealth development proposal as a situation where a local government received mixed signals from the local region and the State offices in Salem. Ms. Gassaway did not think the plan addressed that issue.

Mr. Leiken referred to Ms. Curtis' remarks about partnerships, and said that there needed to be give and take in such partnerships. He said it was clear that the State could expedite issues when needed, as demonstrated by short time needed for issuance of the Willamette Greenway permit required for the temporary bridge. Local government had an expectation that, as they moved forward with ODOT on projects, there would continue to be such partnerships. He believed the issue related to the level of discretion given to the regional offices. Ms. Curtis suggested that ODOT was "at the table" sooner now than in the past. Mr. Leiken said that was true, but what was frequently unclear was what rules applied, and if the rules would be changed. He stressed the importance of relationships and continuing dialogue to the success of projects involving the State and local governments.

Mr. Papé said the ODOT director had indicated an interest to decentralize the agency to some degree, making more services accessible to local governments at the regional level. The plan itself was a broad set of principles and guidelines that the commission would use to guide its decisions in the future. Ms. Gassaway added that the plan was a statewide plan and only three of the fifteen steering committee members were ODOT representatives. She emphasized that ODOT was seeking statewide consensus on the plan.

Mr. Kelly asked for more information to the reference to "pricing." Ms. Gassaway interpreted it as tolling and congestion pricing. She concurred with a statement from Mr. Kloepfel that those could be transportation demand management strategies.

Mr. Green asked where Mr. Leiken's concerns would be addressed. Ms. Curtis believed that the issue was addressed to some degree through Goal 7, Coordination, Communication, and Cooperation, and the other

goals yet to developed in regard to coordination/cooperation and funding. She said that to some degree, the State had held off on those tasks because of uncertainty about what to say. She emphasized the State's desire to work cooperatively with local governments for the best transportation system. It was her perception that the situation had improved.

Mr. Schwetz said it was important to capture, through the policies to be developed, what local government wanted the relationship with the State to be. That might not make the relationships better, but it would give local governments something to point to in the future and for the State and local governments to work toward achieving.

Ms. Curtis said that more information about the plan could be found on the Oregon Transportation Commission's Web page, <http://egov.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP>

Responding to a question from Mr. Schwetz, Ms. Curtis said that the State would be happy to accept input from the MPC's March 10 meeting. Mr. Schwetz agreed to create a framework for an MPC discussion, which he would share with the steering committee.

c. Central Lane MPO Legislative Priorities

Mr. Kloeppe called MPC members' attention to Resolution 2005-01, and noted the background material included in the meeting packet. Mr. Schwetz reminded the MPC that the resolution was a joint effort by the State MPOs endorsing a State legislative funding proposal for transportation. The resolution had been modified since the last meeting to reflect the MPC's concerns about the use of lottery funds to underwrite the cost of the funding package, using the following language: "The Central Lane MPO does not support the use of lottery funds for the purpose of funding this package either through an increase or redirecting those funds."

Ms. Ballew said no matter one's personal feelings about the use of lottery dollars to fund State activities, the lottery was started to finance economic development and later, education. She questioned whether the MPC actually needed to make a statement about the source of the funding. She believed it would be foolish to turn away the funds.

Mr. Kelly recalled the committee's discussion about the trend toward continued expansion of the lottery programs and its regressive nature and addiction implications. He did not want to send the message that if the lottery was not expanded the money could come from education. Mr. Kelly was pleased with the added text.

Mr. Kelly said he liked what he termed the "three-legged" nature of the funding proposal and recalled that he had asked if there was any way to include language regarding the interconnectedness of the three elements. He asked what chance there was that some elements would proceed alone. Mr. Schwetz indicated that text could be added to the exhibit accompanying the resolution stressing the importance of all three elements and the MPO's interest in seeing them move forward as a package. He could not speculate about what the State Legislature would do, although he noted that the legislation was supportive of the governor's Connect Oregon initiative.

Mr. Kelly asked if the proposed \$1.5 million for transportation demand management was considered the best that could be hoped for. Mr. Schwetz said yes.

Ms. Volta shared Ms. Ballew's concerns. While she personally did not support the use of lottery funds,

she questioned the appropriateness of making such a statement in this context. She recalled that the MPC had discussed its concerns about the use of lottery funds but had reached no conclusion or given staff any direction about what should be in the resolution. She preferred not to include the text in question.

Mr. Gaydos concurred with the remarks of Ms. Ballew and Ms. Volta. He did not like the use of lottery funds either, but pointed out that was the governor's choice. He thought it important to move the transportation package forward and emphasized its importance to the Lane Transit District because of the need for funding to support the Pioneer Parkway extension project.

Mr. Green agreed with the comments of those who opposed the inclusion of the text. He believed if the MPC was to express any concern it should be about the State's over-reliance on bonding for debt.

Ms. Piercy asked if the MPC should use this opportunity to add language encouraging further discussion of fuel efficiency and biodiesels. She thought it important to make such a statement. Mr. Papé noted that the Road User Fee Task Force was examining those issues.

In response to Ms. Piercy's suggestion, Ms. Ban said the focus of the resolution was on influencing the State's allocation of transportation funding. She was concerned about diluting that message with additional issues. She agreed increased fuel efficiency and alternative fuels were important issues that the MPC should keep in mind for the next legislative session. Mr. Schwetz noted that other MPOs had expressed a similar concern.

Ms. Volta, seconded by Mr. Green, moved to support Resolution 2005-01 with the deletion of the text opposing the use of lottery funds.

Mr. Kelly believed that if members did not like the use of lottery dollars, the MPC should state its opposition now. He believed the practical impact of expanding the lottery was to tax poor people for the transportation system.

Mr. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Piercy, moved to amend the motion to restore the text regarding the lottery proposed for deletion.

Ms. Ban suggested there was an unintended consequence to the amendment in that if the MPO could not secure such flexible funds, even in small amounts, it was forced to return to the local jurisdictions for money for local matches for such projects as Pioneer Parkway.

Mr. Green said he could not support the amendment. He said if the legislature endorsed the governor's package, it was a "done deal." He could not recall a local government that had rejected lottery dollars and said if anyone could, they should point it out.

Mr. Kelly clarified that his concern was about a possible expansion of the lottery or the redirection of lottery dollars away from education.

Ms. Volta believed that the morality of the use of lottery dollars was a separate issue from the issue of transportation funding. Mr. Kelly did not agree.

The vote on the amendment failed, 7:2; Mr. Kelly and Ms. Piercy voting yes.

The vote on the main motion passed, 8:1; Mr. Kelly voting no.

Mr. Schwetz noted the upcoming MPO summit scheduled on March 2-3. He briefly reviewed the agenda.

d. I-105 Preservation Project Update

Mr. Pirrie provided the MPC members with a handout describing progress on the project.

e. Follow-up and MPO Calendar

1) Follow-up

i. Citizen Advisory Committee Status

Mr. Green reported that an orientation meeting had occurred with 12 of 14 members in attendance. He anticipated the first actual meeting would occur in late February.

ii. Project Coordination Status

Mr. Schwetz called members' attention to Attachment 1 of the agenda item summary, an updated spreadsheet entitled *2004-2006 Central Lane MPO Project Coordination Matrix*, saying it listed all MPO projects scheduled for construction over the next three years. Staff would continue to provide updates.

Responding to a question from Mr. Green, Mr. Schwetz said he would add project costs to the next spreadsheet.

iii. Draft Fiscal Year (FY) 2006-09 STIP Project List for Lane County

Mr. Thompson called members attention to a spreadsheet in the meeting packet entitled *2006-09 DRAFT Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)—Lane County*, and indicated that the information was prepared in response to a request that the information be sorted by categories. Members asked questions clarifying the information in the project list.

iv. Junction City Letter to ODOT Concerning Freight Route Designations

The letter was included for members' information.

v. Road User Fee Task Force (RUFTF) Pilot Status Update

Mr. Thompson noted the inclusion of information about the pilot project from the ODOT Web site.

2) Upcoming MPO-Related Activities

i. MPO Calendar

Mr. Thompson called members' attention to the MPO calendar, included in the meeting packet.

Ms. Ballew adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)