



April 13, 2006

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee

From: Tom Schwetz

Subject: Item 4.c – Ranking of Local ConnectOregon Applications

Action Recommended: Discuss Proposed Ranking of Local ConnectOregon Project Applications. Approve Rankings for Submittal to Lane County Board.

Issue Summary:

At its March meeting, MPC indicated a desire to take the opportunity to provide the MPO's ranking of local ConnectOregon project applications. This memo outlines the overall review and evaluation process being used to establish statewide ConnectOregon priorities, and provides a recommended ranking for projects submitted within the Central lane MPO area.

ConnectOregon Application Review Process and Schedule

As noted at MPC's February 9 meeting, MPC provided endorsement letters for the following projects:

- Eugene Airport Air Cargo Facilities Improvements
- Eugene Depot platform and vehicular improvements
- Lane Transit District Pioneer Parkway BRT

Applications for ConnectOregon grants were due February 17th. ODOT received 103 applications for funds from the program. Applicants requested a total of \$238 million for a variety of projects including air freight, business aviation, passenger air, marine, rail freight, bus and/or rail transit, and multiple mode projects.

The general schedule for review of the applications is included at the end of this memo. The applications have been screened by a consultant for completeness and technical feasibility. They are currently being reviewed by four advisory committees (air, rail, freight and public transit) and the Area Commissions on Transportation to ensure a wide and comprehensive discussion of which projects to recommend to the Oregon Transportation Commission. This review will culminate in a set of recommendations to the OTC to be developed by a Consensus Committee composed of representatives from the various review committees involved. The review committees must complete their review by May 19th. The Consensus

Committee must complete its work by June 27th. The OTC is scheduled to take action on a set of priorities on July 19th.

Attachment 1 provides the details for the evaluation process being used by the Region 2 ACTS and Lane County. Lane County must complete its prioritization of Lane County applications by May 5th. These priorities will be fed into a straw proposal developed by Region 2 staff which will be acted upon in a ‘Super-ACT’ meeting scheduled for May 16th. The Region 2 recommendations will be submitted to the Consensus Committee process on May 17th.

MPC’s recommendations will be fed into the Lane County Board’s ranking process. The Board is scheduled to take action on the County-wide set of applications on Wednesday May 3rd with a Public Hearing on the topic scheduled for 1:30 that day. The applications submitted from Lane County include:

- Creswell Airport Fire Suppression Project
- Port of Siuslaw Maple Street Landing and Transient Dock Project
- Eugene Airport Air Cargo Project
- Eugene Depot Passenger Improvements
- Lane Transit District BRT Project
- Union Pacific Railroad - Eugene New Thru Running Track/Passenger Layover Track

Evaluation Considerations

Applications will be evaluated on specific considerations as defined in the legislation (SB71):

- Whether the project reduces transportation costs for Oregon businesses;
- Whether it benefits or connects two or more modes;
- Whether it is a critical link in a statewide or regional transportation system;
- How much of the cost can be borne by applicants;
- Whether the project creates construction and permanent jobs in the state; and
- Whether the project is ready for construction.

In addition, by direction of the OTC, the project applications must be assigned to one of four groups or “buckets”:

1. Projects that have demonstrated that they meet all six considerations in the rule.
2. Projects that have demonstrated that they represent strategic investments and connections – two or more modes of transportation, system improvements, and jobs/economic development; but may not be fully ready to construct, able to demonstrate lower transportation costs for Oregon business, or leverage other benefits.
3. Projects that achieve one or more of the strategic considerations, but not all of them.
4. Projects that cannot demonstrate any of the strategic or regionwide considerations.

Proposed Ranking of Local applications

ODOT staff has prepared two spreadsheets to assist in the evaluation of ConnectOregon Projects. The first provides for an assessment of a project's appropriate Bucket. The second provides for a ranking of a project in terms of how well the project meets each of the considerations listed above.

Local ConnectOregon Applicants were asked to evaluate their individual applications using these spreadsheets. Attachments 2a (Bucketing) and 2b (Project Ranking) summarize their efforts. As part of the evaluation effort, each applicant provided text for the Bucket screening explaining how their projects met each of the Bucketing considerations. They provided similar text in the project ranking table outlining more specific information on how each project leverages other investments and how much match is being provided for each project. The project ranking was done on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being low and 5 being high.

The results of this evaluation are as follows:

| Project | Bucket | MPO Ranking |
|--|---------------|--------------------|
| Eugene Airport Air Cargo Facilities Improvements | 1 | 1 |
| Lane Transit District Pioneer Parkway BRT | 1 | 2 |
| Eugene Depot Platform And Vehicular Improvements | 1 | 3 |

TPC reviewed and discussed this material at their March 30 meeting and unanimously recommended the ranking presented above. As can be seen in the Project Ranking Summary, all 3 projects scored very well on each of the ConnectOregon criteria. Because of this, while the projects are ranked 1-3 above, it is important to convey the message that all three projects are very good projects. Staff feels that all three projects will compete well against similar projects submitted statewide.

Union Pacific Railroad Application

A fourth project was submitted within the MPO area by Union Pacific Railroad. This project involves two elements as described in their application:

- (a) upgrading and extension of an existing side track to a running track / controlled siding to provide for the efficient ingress and egress of trains from the main track to the side tracks, and
- (b) a layover track for storing Amtrak equipment while it is working in Eugene without blocking the mainline, sidings or yard tracks.

Overall, this project will improve the fluidity of the main track for both passenger and freight trains by eliminating the need for freight trains entering Eugene yard to stop on the mainline and wait for space to enter the yard. This project will allow any necessary waiting to take place on an adjacent track. This will reduce congestion and add capacity in a very constrained area

Staff attempted to contact Union Pacific representatives but have not yet received a response. Additional information on this application will be provided to MPC at the

April meeting. TPC elected not to try and rank the project without information similar to that developed in the attached spreadsheets for the local projects. However, it was acknowledged that the project is likely a Bucket 1 project and that it would score well against the ConnectOregon criteria. Based on information received at its meeting, MPC could elect to include this project in its ranking recommendations to the Lane County Board.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Region 2 ConnectOregon Review Process

Attachment 2a: Bucket Screening Summary for Local Applications

Attachment 2b: Project Ranking Summary

