

## MINUTES

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

March 9, 2006  
11:30 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Kitty Piercy, Chair; Faye Stewart, Bill Dwyer (Lane County), Sid Leiken, Anne Ballew (City of Springfield), David Kelly (City of Eugene), Judy Volta (City of Coburg), Gerry Gaydos (Lane Transit District), Jane Lee (Oregon Department of Transportation), members; Dennis Taylor (City of Eugene), Mark Pangborn (Lane Transit District), Bill Van Vactor (Lane County), Cynthia Pappas (City of Springfield), Don Schuessler (City of Coburg), *ex officio* members.

George Kloeppel, Tom Schwetz, Paul Thompson, Ann Mortenson, Jamon Kent, Byron Vanderpool, Kathi Wiederhold, Petra Schuetz (Lane Council of Governments); Tom Boyatt (Oregon Department of Transportation), Randy Papé (Oregon Transportation Commission), Greg Mott, Nick Arnis (City of Springfield), Chris Henry, Lisa Gardner (City of Eugene), Tom Stinchfield, Peter Thurston (Lane County), Anita Yap (Lane Transit District), Connie Bloom Williams (Commuter Solutions), Robert Schroeter (Comcast), Terry Connolly (Eugene Chamber of Commerce), Rob Handy, Kevin Matthews, guests.

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Piercy welcomed those present to the March 2006 Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) meeting and announced that Bobby Green was in Washington D.C. and she would be chairing the meeting.

MPC members introduced themselves.

### APPROVE FEBRUARY 9, 2006 MINUTES

Mr. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Volta, moved to approve the February 9, 2006, minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously, 9:0.

### COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

**Rob Handy**, 455-1/2 River Road, questioned the inclusion of correspondence from Larry Reed in the meeting agenda packet when the MPC had decided in June 2005 to post correspondence on the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) website. He complained that no written information related to the report on an LCOG Board discussion, such as minutes of the meeting, was included in the agenda packet. He cautioned that any efforts to simplify or personalize transportation planning information for the public as part of the integration of plans must have the financially constrained list as the most prominent feature. He characterized the use of interactive technology to organize and communicate information as sounding more like a chat room for the transportation challenged or a dating service for the transportation enhanced.

Mr. Thompson said that the two items of correspondence included in the agenda packet were copies of letters addressed to the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution and copied to the MPC. He distributed copies of a response from the U.S. Department of Interior received after the agenda packet was mailed.

Mr. Kelly said that the June 2005 MPC decision to post all correspondence to the website was to assure that it was accessible to everyone and all correspondence should either be posted or included in the packet.

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

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

Ms. Wiederhold reported that the CAC had spent the majority of its March 1, 2006, meeting learning about the e-MPO proposal to use interactive technologies to integrate transportation planning information. She said the proposal fit exactly with the committee's suggestions for public outreach, which emphasized electronic accessibility to transportation information. She said the April meeting would include a review the CAC's first year and development of reflections and suggestions for presentation to the MPC, completion of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) review and revisions and beginning of the Citizen Guide review. She stated that recruitment activities for new CAC members were under way and recruitment materials were also available in Spanish.

Mr. Schwetz pointed out that because of the short period of time between CAC and MPC meetings each month a printed CAC report was not included in the MPC meeting agenda packet but as a matter of practice any materials available by the meeting were posted on the LCOG website.

### **Chair Report: February 23, 2006, Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) Board Discussion of MPC's MPO Responsibilities**

Mr. Kloeppe remarked that formal minutes of the February 23 meeting would not be available until adopted by the LCOG Board at its April 2006 meeting; however, draft minutes could be provided to anyone who requested a copy with the understanding that they were not yet adopted by the Board.

Mr. Kloeppe reported that a number of LCOG Board members had raised questions about how effectively the MPC was discharging the transportation planning responsibilities that had been delegated to it. He said that MPC Chair Bobby Green had made an effective presentation to the Board on the MPC's tasks and work pursuing those tasks. He said that some uncertainty remained on the part of some LCOG Board members as to whether the MPC process was effective although no action was taken. He said several suggestions were discussed and the Board expressly requested that it be kept informed on the matter at subsequent meetings.

### **Draft FY07 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Mr. Schwetz explained that the UPWP purpose was to identify all of the anticipated work related to the regional transportation system. He said the UPWP also included planning activities for Eugene, Springfield, Lane County and Lane Transit District. He referred to his memorandum dated March 1, 2006, which outlined the MPO functions and relationship to the UPWP and contained a summary of key issues

and activities in FY07. He briefly reviewed a few of the key issues, such as compliance with new federal planning requirements, preparation for the next federal certification review, adoption of an MPO public involvement plan and continuing work on electronic accessibility.

Ms. Ballew asked how dollars were allocated among planning activities. Mr. Schwetz replied that experience gave staff a sense of where resources were needed but it was frequently a balancing act.

In response to a question from Mr. Kelly, Mr. Schwetz said that an update on STP-U evaluation criteria for FY07 through FY09 would be presented to the MPC at its April meeting. Mr. Thompson added that the MPC had previously programmed FY07 STP-U modernization funding and would begin the process at the April meeting to program the FY07 planning dollars and discuss the process and criteria for future years.

Mr. Kelly expressed concern about taking action on pieces of the STP-U funding in isolation. He reminded the MPC that when Eugene MPC delegates approved STP-U allocations those decisions had to be passed first through the Eugene City Council and those scheduling issues should be kept in mind. He noted that the UPWP did not include any work activities to update the metropolitan transportation system plan (TransPlan). Mr. Schwetz said LCOG anticipated that would be a local staff work issue.

Mr. Kelly commented that there were some projects that could not go forward unless they were synchronized in both the RTP and TSP and asked if jurisdictions were tracking those issues. Mr. Schwetz said there were two issues: a complete TransPlan update and TransPlan amendments. He said new Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) language provided guidelines.

Mr. Kelly said the UPWP document did not discuss new origin/destination studies and some transportation modeling was using trip origin/destination data that was 14 or 15 years old. He asked when and how new data would be available. Mr. Schwetz replied that the UPWP included a discussion of the statewide update of the household travel survey under development. Mr. Thompson added that the statewide survey consisted of samples within each MPO area and would provide statistically valid data for the Central Lane MPO.

### **Report on Integration of Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation System Plans (TSPs)**

Mr. Schwetz said the work on integration of transportation plans had resulted in the identification of four policy issues or interests that could be well addressed through the use of electronic and interactive technology:

1. Reduce public confusion around regional transportation planning
2. Increase the efficiency of regional transportation planning processes
3. Ensure that whatever process is used does not compromise the federally-required process and deadlines
4. Ensure that the process developed to address these interests results in coordination of the federal and state requirements in as efficient and understandable a manner as possible

Ms. Schuetz gave a PowerPoint presentation illustrating the e-MPO concept. She said the e-MPO was electronic technologies, digital processes, illustrations and graphic delivered through a computer network but also readily available on other media once the network was established. She said the e-MPO would provide more dynamic opportunities for interactive public engagement and offer more descriptive

information on projects and activities across jurisdictions. She said the nexus of the e-MPO would be an interactive map that would allow users to access information geographically and obtain a wealth of current data with as much detail as desired. She said another benefit of the e-MPO was better coordination among local jurisdictions with a database repository that included templates to improve consistency and efficiency of staff efforts and allow for real time ability to update information for the public. She said the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) had reviewed the e-MPO concept, was very enthusiastic and strongly supported the direction staff was taken. She said the CAC provided staff with helpful feedback from a public participation perspective and would be involved in the design process. She said the personalization feature, visuals and ability to link to diverse information sources were particularly appreciated by the CAC, which did offer some cautions for staff during the development process, including a reminder to focus on the end user product.

Ms. Schuetz listed the following tasks to be accomplished during phase one of the e-MPO development process:

- First generation of regional maps to allow users to view the MTIP and RTP geographically
- Conversion of the RTP to an electronic format
- Directional summary
- Establishing primary links to other regional transportation processes
- Identification of the data format for the data repository
- Establish a pilot project

Continuing, Ms. Schuetz said that refinement and sophistication would occur over the next two years to create a truly interactive mapping system, and improvements would be ongoing based on feedback for ease of use. She hoped the e-MPO would become a mainstay of the public outreach process. She used State of Washington and Atlanta Regional Commission websites to demonstrate the use of electronic and interactive technologies.

Mr. Kelly said that the agenda packet information did not contain a work program for e-MPO development. He wanted the CAC's involvement to be more formalized and suggested that e-MPO specifications should be developed and presented to the CAC and the MPC for approval. He pointed out that there were applications that would present problems for dial-up users. He asked about the e-MPO project budget. Mr. Schwetz replied that current fiscal year expenditures would be between \$10,000 and \$12,000. He said that staff would going through a specification process and could not estimate final costs yet but they would include upfront development costs and ongoing costs. He said that information would be presented to the CAC and MPC when available, along with e-MPO specification.

Mr. Dwyer agreed with the need for different iterations of an e-MPO to accommodate dial-up users.

Ms. Volta supported the e-MPO concept and urged staff to continue consultations with the CAC and communication specialists throughout the development process to assure a user-friendly product. She also stressed the importance of having many points throughout the site where people could provide feedback.

Mr. Thompson said the pilot project referred to in the presentation would be one or more projects used to test each phase of the e-MPO as more functionality was added. He said the CAC would be used extensively to test the pilot projects and provide feedback on the "user-friendly" aspects.

### **Status of RTP 2030 Update Work Program**

Mr. Thompson said the RTP update work program had been adjusted from an adoption target date of July 2006 to March 2007 because of the new SAFETEA-LU requirements. He said two options were to complete the current update and adopt it in July 2006 without meeting the new SAFETEA-LU requirements and then complete another update in the next year to incorporate the new requirements, or extend the current work program to incorporate the new SAFETEA-LU requirements. He referred to the revised update schedule included in the agenda packet that established new timelines for the update tasks and noted that the CAC had been informed of the new schedule. He commented that staff was still reviewing the new requirements and awaiting final instructions from federal agencies; meanwhile technical work to update the transportation model was moving ahead.

Mr. Kelly asked why the revised schedule did not include a review of the RTP by the CAC before it came to the MPC for adoption. Mr. Thompson replied that the CAC review was inadvertently omitted and he would include it in a new version. He said it was staff's intention to process items through the CAC and provide its comments, along with staff information, to the MPC for consideration.

### **Status Report on the West Eugene Parkway (WEP) Collaborative Process**

Ms. Piercy reported that the Osprey Group had been selected to conduct the assessment and she expected the assessment to commence sometime in April 2006.

Mr. Stewart, who participated in the selection group, indicated that three applications to conduct the assessment had been received and telephone interviews were conducted with two finalists before selecting the Osprey Group.

Ms. Piercy referred anyone wishing more information on the Osprey Group to their website at [www.theospreygroup.com](http://www.theospreygroup.com).

Mr. Papé asked if the assessment was considered to be part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process with a record of decision expected by December 2006. Ms. Piercy replied that it was.

Ms. Ballew noted that projects had been amended into the current MTIP through June 2006 and she thought there would be some resolution prior to that date. She asked how soon the MTIP could be updated following the collaborative process. Mr. Thompson replied that MTIP amendments that needed to be processed through June 2006 had been completed and the next time critical amendment was in October 2006, although if anything arose earlier staff would present it to the MPC. He said within a month or two of the completion of the collaborative process the FY06-09 MTIP could be presented for adoption.

Mr. Kelly said it was important to be clear about terminology and while he hoped to eventually have a fully collaborative process that would lead to a solution all could accept; only an assessment was being conducted currently.

Ms. Piercy cited portions of a letter from the Osprey Group describing the conflict assessment they would be conducting.

### **ODOT Region 2 Straw Proposal for FY08-11 Statewide Transportation Improvement**

### **Program (STIP) Modernization Priorities**

Ms. Lee drew the committee's attention to a February 16, 2006, letter from Region 2 Manager Jeff Scheick that included the proposed assignment of dollars for modernization. She was pleased that all of the projects supported by the MPC were on the list and the area had done well.

In response to a question from Mr. Kelly, Ms. Lee explained that the Noti project would include several features such as passing lanes, widening and safety improvements as determined by the environmental study and budget considerations.

### **Report from February 24-25 Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC) Meeting**

Mr. Kloeppe referred to a written report of the meeting included in the agenda packet. He announced that a one-day OMPOC meeting on June 16, 2006, would be hosted by LCOG in the Eugene/Springfield area. He encouraged all MPC members to attend as the OMPOC meetings provided opportunities for useful cross-communications among policy-makers from the six ODOT areas.

Ms. Ballew said that Springfield would be willing to host the June 16 meeting. Mr. Kloeppe accepted the offer.

Mr. Thompson noted that a fall OMPOC meeting was scheduled for September 22-23 in Bend and would be a larger workshop setting with the intent of encouraging attendance from entire MPO policy board memberships instead of only the OMPOC representatives. He asked members to let staff know if they were interested in attending.

Mr. Kelly pointed out that September 23 was the Jewish New Year.

### **March 14-15 Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) Meeting in Eugene**

Mr. Schwetz said the purpose of the agenda item was to remind everyone that the OTC's meeting would be held in Eugene.

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

#### **ODOT Update**

Ms. Lee said at a recent meeting with the Eugene City Council the need for clarity in Interstate 5 signage was discussed and ODOT was in the process of researching the problem. She said a small committee was being formed and asked members to email her if they were interested in participating or if they had any suggestions for signage.

#### **ConnectOregon Status**

Mr. Schwetz distributed a graphic illustration of the ConnectOregon review process. He said a consensus committee was being formed to develop final recommendations based on the priority perspectives of the nine review committees. He said the review process would be concluded by July 19, 2006.

In response to a question from Mr. Van Vactor, Mr. Schwetz explained that the "Super ACT" (Area Commission on Transportation) shown on the graphic was essentially the equivalent of an all-area group.

Regarding the Super ACT process, Ms. Lee said that the six Lane County projects would need to be prioritized by May 5, 2006, and submitted to Region 2, which would then submit a straw proposal for the ConnectOregon process.

Mr. Kelly asked who would be responsible for prioritizing the Lane County projects.

Mr. Dwyer said the Lane County Board of Commissioners would prioritize projects with MPC input.

Mr. Schwetz determined that there was consensus to prioritize the three MPO projects at the MPC's April 2006 meeting.

### **United Front Trip Follow-up**

Ms. Piercy commented that the trip was enjoyable and all of those who participated were effective in presenting projects. She felt the trip was also useful in terms of being able to bring issues and information forward from one meeting to another.

Mr. Stewart said his first United Front trip had been a very positive experience. He related that Representative Peter DeFazio was not optimistic about future road transportation projects and funding and the State and local jurisdictions would need to take the lead in moving projects along as the State had done well in the last round of federal appropriations.

Ms. Volta said it had been her third United Front trip and she found it to be a great collaborative partnership.

Mr. Gaydos said there was much positive energy and mutual support among the delegation. He particularly thanked Mike Kelly of the City of Springfield for his efforts in support of transit.

### **MTIP Administrative Amendment**

Mr. Thompson stated that the purpose of the amendment was to combine two adjacent projects on the same facility into one project to ease contracting.

### **Interstate 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Mr. Schwetz announced that complete copies of the document had been distributed.

The next meeting was scheduled for April 13, 2006, at the Springfield Library meeting room.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)