



May 11, 2006

TO: Metropolitan Policy Committee

FROM: Tom Schwetz

RE: Item 4.c - Locally-Preferred Alternative for the Pioneer Parkway EmX

**Action Recommended: Approve Resolution 2006-06**

Pioneer Parkway EmX was selected in 2001 by the Springfield City Council and the LTD Board to be the second bus rapid transit line in the Eugene/Springfield area. The Franklin EmX, which links downtown Eugene and downtown Springfield, is under construction and scheduled to open in December 2006. Pioneer Parkway EmX extends the Franklin EmX from downtown Springfield into the Gateway/RiverBend/International Way area of northwestern Springfield. The Franklin and Pioneer Parkway EmX corridor would operate as one continuous route, providing direct connections between some of the most significant activity centers in the community.

LTD anticipates using New Starts funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for most of the project cost. Application for these funds, which have typically been used for rail projects, must follow a precise series of steps. One required step is MPO approval of a Locally-Preferred Alternative (LPA).

The LPA serves two functions:

1. It will form the basis for modeling that is used to generate performance data for the proposed project. The results of the analysis are used by FTA to rate the project for funding eligibility.
2. It will be evaluated in the Environmental Assessment.

It is very important to note that the MPC action requested at this time does not constitute project approval. Rather it allows the project to move forward to the next steps, which are the release of an Environmental Assessment and the submittal of an application for New Starts funds. Those two activities are expected to occur this summer.

Attached is a description of the LPA (Attachment 2). This LPA has been approved by the Springfield City Council on April 17, 2006 and by the LTD Board on April 26, 2006. There was significant public outreach prior to those decisions that included direct contact with businesses and residents along the corridor,

mailings, an open house, and a stakeholder meeting. In addition, the Springfield City Council held a public hearing on April 17, 2006. Information on public comment received is available upon request.

The recommended LPA includes exclusive EmX lanes on Pioneer Parkway, RiverBend Drive, and International Way (approximately two-thirds of the corridor). On Gateway and Harlow, the LPA includes a Transportation Systems Management (TSM) option pending completion of a Springfield transportation study of Gateway Street. The TSM design includes transit signal priority and transit priority in mixed-traffic operation. Options to install a higher level of transit priority along portions of Gateway and Harlow will be considered as part of the Springfield transportation study. Approved EmX enhancements resulting from that process can be incorporated into the design and constructed as part of the project. If all goes well and funding is approved in a timely manner, the project could be in construction in 2008, with service starting in late 2009 or early 2010.

**Attachments:**

Attachment 1 – Resolution 2006-06

Attachment 2 – Exhibit A to Resolution 2006-06