



June 6, 2007

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Paul Thompson
Subject: Item 4.h: MPO USDOT Certification Review: Initial Report

Action Recommended: None. Information and discussion only.

Background

On May 1-2, 2007, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), via the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), conducted the *Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Transportation Planning Process Review*. Federal regulations specify that the USDOT must conduct these on-site reviews at least every four years for all Transportation Management Area MPOs.

Note that the certification review is a planning process review – USDOT’s focus was on the review of the MPO’s process in conducting metropolitan transportation planning as specified by SAFETEA-LU, not necessarily on the local decisions or products.

Over the course of the two days, USDOT focused on over twenty topic areas with MPO staff, held a listening session with MPO Policy Board members and local officials, and held a public meeting during which eight members of the public discussed regional transportation planning with the USDOT representatives.

Discussion

Although USDOT is not expected to provide their report on the review until later this summer, several initial findings arose over the two days, and during the final “Wrap Up and Initial Findings” session:

- The MPO has successfully addressed the eight “corrective actions” and twenty-eight “comments and recommendations” noted in the prior certification review report issued in August, 2003. (Corrective actions are items that require follow-up, while recommendations are comments intended to assist the MPO in improving its transportation planning processes.)
- The USDOT informally indicated that it appears that the MPO’s processes are in full compliance with the requirements of SAFETEA-LU – a significant accomplishment achieved ahead of the July 1, 2007 deadline. USDOT provided the MPO with guidance on following this up with further documentation and a

request for formal acknowledgement of compliance. MPO staff is currently involved in that effort.

- Although this may change in the final certification review report, USDOT indicated that their initial findings resulted in one corrective action and six recommendations, as follows:

Corrective Action

- The MPO should complete development and integration of its Congestion Mitigation Process into its planning processes.

Recommendations

- Continue to develop a Title VI Plan (Environmental Justice). Build on the baseline Environmental Justice analysis the MPO has conducted and integrate this information into the MPO's planning processes.
- Complete development of a regional transportation planning memorandum of understanding that specifies the roles and responsibilities of the MPO, the Oregon Department of Transportation, and other local and regional transportation planning agencies.
- Develop a matrix that shows how the MPO's long-range plan (RTP) Goals, Objectives and Policies address the planning factors specified in SAFETEA-LU.
- Develop an economic analysis component of project planning, prioritization and selection.
- Enhance the MPO's project delivery tracking, monitoring and reporting.
- Enhance the MPO's consideration of the Safety planning factor in the RTP and MTIP by coordinating with the Oregon Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

It should be noted that work to address all of the bullets above is already reflected in the MPO's recently-adopted FY08 UPWP (Unified Planning Work Program).

MPO staff will be available at the June 14th MPC meeting to answer questions. A further report on the outcome of the certification review will be provided to MPC after the MPO receives the final certification review report from the USDOT.