

May 9, 2003

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee Subcommittee on Public Involvement
From: Paul Thompson
Subject: Recommended Changes to Central Lane MPO Public Involvement Process

Background

At the conclusion of the third meeting of the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) Subcommittee on Public Involvement (Subcommittee), Subcommittee members provided direction to staff on a number of potential changes to the Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) public involvement process. Staff has compiled those recommendations into a set of proposals contained in this memo.

The intent of this memo is to provide the Subcommittee with an initial package of proposals from which discussion may ensue. That discussion should result in a final set of recommended changes to the MPO's public involvement process. Staff will then return to the Subcommittee's 4th and final meeting with that final set of recommendations fully developed for the Subcommittee's approval and forwarding to the full MPC membership.

Recommended Changes to MPO's Public Involvement Processes

The list below comprises staff's response to the Subcommittee's input to date on potential changes to the MPO's public involvement policies and procedures. As a result of reviewing the existing Central Lane MPO public involvement process, and the review of other jurisdictions' processes, these recommended changes have risen to the top in an attempt to achieve the primary goal of the Subcommittee – formulating a public involvement process for the Central Lane MPO that is in compliance with the Oregon Transportation Commission's (OTC) draft *Policy on Formation and Operation of Area Commissions on Transportation* requirements for public involvement. In addition, the Subcommittee has recognized that any recommended changes to the MPO's public involvement process should also address the following two points:

- Compliance with Federal requirements for public involvement and participation
- Responding to public input calling for improvements to the MPO's public involvement program

The recommendations listed below are presented as specific modifications or additions to the MPO's existing public involvement program. The list does not provide all of the details

necessary to implement each recommendation – for example, the addition of citizen representatives to the Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) will require decisions as to how many citizen representatives are appointed, how they are appointed, how long is their term, and other details. It is staff's recommendation that those details be set aside for the time being at the Subcommittee level, keeping the focus on the overall package of changes to be recommended to the full MPC. Once the Subcommittee completes its work and the final set of recommendations to MPC is determined, the full MPC will then need to consider and approve the recommendations as submitted or modified by MPC. At that time, with final clear direction on the MPC-approved set of recommendations, staff work will commence on the details of implementing each recommendation.

This approach also meshes with the MPO's FY03-04 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) as adopted by MPC in April. As of July 1, 2003 (the date when the FY03-04 UPWP is in effect), MPO staff plans to commence several work tasks specified in the UPWP that directly implement or support the recommendations listed below. (The recommendations which are already referenced in the FY03-04 UPWP are noted as such below.) At that time, the UPWP budget will provide resources not available in the current fiscal year to carry out the work of implementing improvements to the MPO's public involvement program.

Draft Recommendations for Modifications to the MPO Public Involvement Process

- Add citizen and special interest group representation to the MPO's Transportation Policy Committee (TPC)
 - Recommend three citizen/special interest group representatives appointed by MPC for one- or two-year terms
 - Voting or non-voting positions?
- When appropriate, identify potential freight and other specific-interest stakeholders for inclusion in the MPO advisory committee processes on an ad-hoc basis (Note that this is an element in the MPO's FY03-04 adopted work program.)
- Add public notice, public review/comment period and public hearing components to MPC development of metropolitan STIP priorities for statewide STIP project selection process
- Expand public notice and comment period for TIP amendments and updates – such as the 30-day public comment period currently in progress for the TIP amendments pending in June 2003 (Note that improving the public involvement component and the general process for TIP amendments and updates are both elements in the MPO's FY03-04 adopted work program.)

- For all public notice opportunities, maintain an “interested persons and stakeholder groups” mailing list. Advance notices should go to all entries on this list, plus any news media which have requested notice, preferably one week in advance
- Maintain MPO (LCOG) internet web site with technical and supporting documentation and other materials relevant to MPO decision items, and with copies of MPC agendas and minutes (Note that this is already standard procedure)
- Provide MPC members and other MPC meeting attendees with copies of all correspondence received related to the MPO transportation planning processes
- Develop and adopt formal Central Lane MPO Public Involvement Goals, Objectives and Policies
 - State specific intent to expand public involvement and interaction at early stages of all processes
 - Clarify and document that all public comment shall be considered during decision-making processes
- Review and update the Central Lane MPO Public Involvement Plan (PIP – currently known as the Eugene-Springfield Area Citizen’s Guide to Transportation Planning) to ensure that interested parties have the opportunity to be involved in the early stages of the federally-required MPC public involvement process. The Citizen’s Guide was last updated in 1995 as part of the TransPlan update process. (Note that this update is an element in the MPO’s FY03-04 adopted work program.) The update should address, at a minimum:
 - Document timelines and frequency of major public involvement opportunities (TIP updates, STIP priority setting, update of the long-range transportation plan, etc.)
 - Document policy guidance for public notification and information publication & dissemination
 - Document policy guidance for collection, summarization & distribution of public comment/testimony to decision-makers
 - Document policy direction for responding to public input
 - Document all relevant plans, studies and other documents that are relevant to the MPO transportation planning process
 - Document the responsible decision-making body(ies) throughout the MPO process

- Develop and adopt formal TIP project evaluation framework, including process and criteria (Note that this is an element in the MPO's FY03-04 adopted work program.)
 - Ensure that the framework also serves the statewide STIP priorities process
 - For any specific application of the project evaluation framework, publicly document the application of criteria and the outcome
- The MPO and Lane County should work together to review the Lane County/MPO process for developing STIP priorities with the goal of streamlining process and better integrating the currently separate processes used to determine the priorities for the MPO area and for the non-MPO balance of Lane County

At the start of this agenda item staff will present a short introduction and overview. Staff then recommends utilizing the 90 minutes allocated on the agenda for this item to review and discuss each recommended change individually.

Action Requested: Review recommendations, provide staff direction on development of final recommendations to full MPC membership.

Attachment: TPC Bylaws