

## MINUTES

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

May 8, 2008  
11:30 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Sid Leiken, Chair; Anne Ballew (City of Springfield), Bobby Green, (Lane County), John Thiel (City of Coburg); Greg Evans, Mike Dubick (Lane Transit District), Sonny Chickering (Oregon Department of Transportation), members; Gino Grimaldi (City of Springfield), Mark Pangborn (Lane Transit District), Jon Ruiz (City of Eugene), *ex officio* members.

George Kloeppe, Kathi Wiederhold, Byron Vanderpool, Ann Mortenson, Susan Payne, Jamon Kent, Andrea Riner, Paul Thompson, Petra Schuetz (Lane Council of Governments); Savannah Crawford, Erik Havig, Travis Brouwer, Terry Cole (Oregon Department of Transportation); Kurt Yeiter, Rob Inerfeld, Kurt Corey (City of Eugene), Tom Boyatt, Greg Mott, Len Goodwin (City of Springfield), Celia Barry (Lane County), Tom Schwetz, Mary Archer (Lane Transit District), Dave Jacobson (Citizen Advisory Committee), Rob Zako, Carlene Riley, Fergus McLain, guests.

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Leiken called the meeting of the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) to order and welcomed those present. Members, staff and guests introduced themselves.

Mr. Kloeppe announced that representatives from the City of Eugene were unable to attend and therefore a quorum could not be established. He said agenda items would be informational as no action could be taken.

### APPROVE APRIL 10, 2008 MINUTES

Action on this item was deferred to the June 2008 meeting.

### COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

**Rob Zako**, 1280B East 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene, announced that a group consisting of the business community, local jurisdictions and state agencies was planning a daylong conference to be held on June 11, 2008, at the Hilton Eugene & Conference Center. He distributed a flyer describing conference activities and encouraged MPC members to attend.

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

### **Status of Local Transportation and Land Use Planning Activities**

Mr. Vanderpool distributed a draft handout entitled *Local and Regional Transportation & Land Use Planning Framework Within the Central Lane MPO Area*. He said the framework represented the various planning activities that had to occur over the next few years and illustrated their relationships and plans for coordination. He said the framework would tentatively be discussed at joint elected officials meetings in May, July and September with the goal of obtaining local approval of a work plan focused on an update of TransPlan in order to present it to the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) at its October meeting. He said some details of the planning processes were still being worked out.

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

Dave Jacobson, CAC vice chair, reported on recent committee activities. A detailed description was provided in the agenda packet. He noted there were two vacancies on the committee. He said the committee was planning a field trip to view two Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) projects on site.

### **CAC Recommendations Regarding Public Involvement**

Mr. Jacobson said the CAC had spent the last four months evaluating the Public Participation Plan (PPP) and was not recommending any changes to the plan at this time, but had developed recommendations for local jurisdictions regarding ways to enhance public involvement. He reviewed the nine recommendations included in the agenda packet.

In response to a question from Mr. Chickering, Mr. Jacobson said the CAC was not recommending changes to the PPP, only providing some suggestions for improving the public involvement process that jurisdictions could implement if they wished. He anticipated that at some point in the future the recommendations might be incorporated into the PPP.

Mr. Thompson clarified that the CAC's general assessment of the PPP was that it was successful. He said the committee and staff were seeking feedback from the MPC on implementing the broad recommendations for further improvements to public involvement activities.

Mr. Evans asked if there were any suggestions for the first point of contact or referral for people seeking information on transportation activities. Mr. Jacobson said a website—[www.theMPO.org](http://www.theMPO.org)—was still in beta testing but expected to eventually fulfill a part of that function.

Mr. Green concurred with the recommendations related to clear and concise communications without the use of "shop talk." He asked if efforts in other jurisdictions studied by the CAC had been successful in generating more public interest and involvement in transportation planning. Mr. Jacobson said people were interested in local activities that could affect them and it was important for jurisdictions to use common terms with clear meanings so the public would understand the nature of a project or activity. He said that Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) had a glossary of transportation planning acronyms that could be made available to the public.

Ms. Ballew observed that jurisdictions might not have the resources to dedicate a position as the point of contact for the public. She felt that a website could provide the necessary project-specific contact information for those who were interested.

Mr. Ruiz remarked that different generations had different methods of communicating and receiving information and asked if the PPP addressed how to get messages to those audiences. Mr. Jacobson said the CAC was composed of a wide range of ages and the young people on the committee would assure that communications were conducted in a multi-media, multi-modal approach.

Mr. Dubick asked if the point of contact was considered to be a person who could direct the public to the appropriate source of information for a particular project or a person who would know all the answers. Mr. Jacobson said the point of contact could be a clearinghouse for general information and then direct inquiries to a particular jurisdiction. He agreed with Ms. Ballew that the function could require some resources to implement.

Mr. Evans asked if there were federal funds available for a clearinghouse function. Mr. Kloeppe said the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) included funds for citizen involvement, of which a clearinghouse could be a part. Mr. Thompson added that the funds were allocated for public involvement around MPO activities and regional transportation planning; the CAC was emphasizing very early involvement at the local level before they rose to the regional level. He said the MPO could consider supporting the clearinghouse function as part of the MPO's responsibility for coordinating regional transportation planning.

Ms. Ballew asked if federal funds could be used for local purposes. Mr. Thompson said they could be used for coordination, but probably not implementation of local public involvement or planning processes. Mr. Kloeppe agreed that a clearinghouse function might make the process more user friendly without adding staff.

Ms. Wiederhold related a recent experience with an email to the MPO inquiring about two transportation projects. She forwarded the email to members of the Transportation Planning Committee, which consists of planners from all jurisdictions, and staff from the cognizant jurisdictions responded directly to the person who had emailed. She thought with a little more structure and protocol that could be expanded to fulfill a clearinghouse function.

#### **Information on Integration of TransPlan with the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**

Ms. Riner provided an overview and brief history of the issue. She said it would be a challenge to combine and coordinate the complex planning tasks ahead. She asked the MPC to focus on its overarching goals for regional transportation planning and be clear with MPO staff about its expectations. She said that some issues to be considered were outlined in her memorandum of April 30, which was included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Leiken expressed appreciation for staff efforts to date and the difficulty of developing information in response to a request at the last MPC meeting. He felt, as a policy maker, it was important to rely on professional staff for the information and advice necessary to make decisions.

Mr. Evans noted that TransPlan and the RTP were separate documents, one addressing federal requirements and the other addressing State requirements. He suggested providing an executive summary of the contents

of the two documents for easier reference by the public instead of attempting to merge them into a single document.

Ms. Riner liked the suggestion. She said the executive summary could also identify those items that were common to both documents, items that were slightly different and items that were exclusive to one document or the other.

Ms. Ballew and Mr. Leiken agreed with the concept of an executive summary that could act as a readers' guide to the plans.

Mr. Dubick suggested taking the processes required for each document and comparing them side-by-side to illustrate the differences and commonalities. Ms. Riner said that was the level of analysis and information staff would be bringing back to the MPC.

### **Revised Draft Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) Earmark Policy**

Mr. Thompson said the revised policy addressed comments to ODOT from the MPO and elsewhere around the state. He said staff had a brief opportunity to review the policy and agreed the revisions were positive, but did not go as far as the MPC wanted. He said there was no further opportunity to offer comments to the OTC, other than during public comments at the OTC meeting next week. He noted that Mr. Leiken had planned on attending, but had a scheduling conflict with a joint elected officials meeting.

Ms. Ballew felt the MPC had done as much as it could. She said the test of the policy was how well it would be received at the federal level.

Mr. Green stated he did not feel the policy went far enough. He questioned whether ODOT would seek supplemental funding from local jurisdictions to subsidize an earmark project for which ODOT was the sponsor. Mr. Brouwer said ODOT did not intend to change its current policy relative to its relationship with state and local agencies on State projects. He said the impacts of local systems on the State system were identified in a local government agreement and responsibilities defined. He said those would remain in place and the earmark would be used to fill funding gaps that remained after the State and local agencies had committed their funding to the project.

Mr. Green asked why a local contribution would be required if the project was fully funded. He said the intent was for earmark funds to supplement first, rather than supplant State and local resources already dedicated to the project. Any resources beyond that level, once the project was fully funded, could be applied to that local contribution.

Mr. Green felt there were inequities in the arrangement and local government would bear the brunt of trying to determine how to complete the project. He used the Beltline/I-5 interchange project as an example of a local jurisdiction being expected to make up the funding difference.

Mr. Brouwer remarked that implementation guidance was contained in a separate document that would not be approved by the OTC. He said that document was still subject to change before it was finalized and distributed by ODOT and some issues could be addressed that way.

Ms. Ballew commented that the State had taken care of its interests, but not those of its partners.

Mr. Leiken noted that Mr. Green's comments generally represented the MPC's position on the matter.

## **2010 Campaign for Active Transportation**

Ms. Riner described the 2010 Campaign for Active Transportation (CAT), which is an effort by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy to fund community efforts to promote trails, walking and biking for improved mobility. She said that in previous years four communities across the country had received \$25 million each to demonstrate that a significant investment in promoting alternative transportation could result in significant shifts in behavior. She said a consortium of local partners was meeting to discuss the potential for CAT funding and a proposal would be presented to the MPC at its next meeting.

Mr. Green commended the effort and expressed an interest in being involved.

Mr. Leiken agreed with Mr. Green's remarks. He asked if EmX was a part of the planning effort. Ms. Riner said EmX was included in an integrated approach to the interface among transportation modes.

Mr. Leiken noted that the Springfield City Council had unanimously approved the EmX thirty percent design for its next phase. He said EmX was an important alternative transportation system linking employment centers in the area.

## **ODOT Update**

Mr. Chickering reported that sound wall aesthetics were eligible for transportation enhancement funding. He said the recent application process was closed, but there would be another opportunity in two years. Regarding themes, he said that some architectural or aesthetic themes could emerge during the design process for the I-5 bridge and those could be continued in the corridor.

Mr. Chickering stated that the CAC field trip would involve visits to ODOT's Beltline/I-5 interchange and Highway 99 projects. He said the MPC's comments on ODOT's public involvement policy had been incorporated and a draft would be issued for comment. He said ODOT wanted to make a brief presentation on planning projects at the next MPC meeting.

## **ConnectOregon II ODOT Region 2 Application Rankings**

Ms. Ballew asked if the State would need to sell additional bonds for *ConnectOregon II* and whether there was consideration of a *ConnectOregon III* program. Mr. Havig said bond sales would be necessary, but he did not know the timing as the OTC would approve the project list in June. He was not certain about a *ConnectOregon III* program.

Mr. Havig noted that Region 2 had done well in the project list, with eight of the top nine in line for funding. He said the list of recommended projects would be emailed to MPC members shortly.

Mr. Pangborn thanked the MPC for its support of the Veneta Park and Ride facility, which ranked high on the list.

Mr. Green said the Oregon Association of Counties was concerned about paying the debt associated with bonding for transportation projects, although it acknowledged it was the only funding mechanism currently

available. He hoped the general public understood that was how infrastructure, which was the basis of the economy, was funded.

### **FFY08-11 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) Amendments**

Mr. Thompson referred to the agenda packet materials describing the four administrative amendments. There were no questions.

### **MPO Calendar**

Mr. Evans asked to have an item added to the June meeting agenda to discuss LTD's impending service delivery crisis due to budgetary concerns and high fuel prices, and the potential impact on the community.

Mr. Thompson announced that the Oregon MPO Consortium meeting had been moved to June 13 and Mr. Leiken and Ms. Piercy would attend. He encouraged everyone to participate in the online survey related to the new Willamette River bridge. He said action on the FY09 funding for Commuter Solutions was scheduled at the next MPC meeting and the public comment period was currently open.

The next meeting was scheduled for June 12, 2008.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)