



# Lane Council of Governments

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July 7, 2005

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee  
From: Kathi Wiederhold  
Subject: Item 4.c: Central Lane MPO Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

**Action Recommended:** Discuss development of Public Involvement Plan; provide direction to the Citizen Advisory Committee and staff.

## Issue Summary

In April 2004, staff presented an overview of an update to the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Public Involvement Plan to the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) and discussed a new approach to public involvement for the MPO that is more citizen-friendly. Shortly thereafter, staff put the update to the PIP on the back burner in anticipation of the appointment of the MPO's Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), whose charge, in part, would be to update the Public Involvement Plan. The current Public Involvement Plan for the Central Lane MPO is the *Eugene-Springfield Area Citizen's Guide to Transportation Planning*, adopted in January 1995.

The updated Public Involvement Plan will take a new approach to respond to MPC direction and direction received in the federal Certification Review completed in spring 2003. The charge to the Citizen Advisory Committee in the bylaws includes providing recommendations to MPC during preparation of the MPO Public Involvement Plan.

Staff proposes working with the CAC to draft an updated Public Involvement Plan to recommend to MPC in spring 2006 (prior to the next federal Certification Review) which will:

- Be citizen-friendly—easy to read, brief, non-technical, and use graphics such as flow charts and timelines to assist the public in following the MPO process
- Clearly inform how and when citizens can get involved in MPO transportation planning
- Serve as the framework for public involvement for key MPO products
- Build in a tool to evaluate the MPO's public involvement process
- Be one component of a broad ongoing public involvement program that also includes an array of other outreach tools, such as fact sheets, and use of the website and email communications

Staff requests that MPC and the CAC discuss the update of the PIP, including ideas and concepts for the new document and concerns it should address. The update presents an opportunity to continue to move the MPO in a new direction to make it easier for the public to understand and get involved in transportation planning. The new PIP can serve as a prototype for revamping other key MPO products into a more citizen-friendly format. The CAC officers and staff are prepared to develop a work program and schedule for the CAC to draft an updated MPO Public Involvement Plan.

## Background

Federal regulations require the MPO to have a Public Involvement Plan. The *Eugene-Springfield Area Citizen's Guide to Transportation Planning*, January 1995, is the current Public Involvement Plan for the Central Lane MPO. The federal Certification Review completed in spring 2003 included the following corrective action:

- “LCOG’s *Citizen’s Guide to Transportation Planning* needs to be updated to reflect the revised MPO structure within two years from the date of this report.”

The review also included the following comments/recommendations (summarized):

- Include a flow chart of the transportation planning process, including identifying the linkages between the various phases of planning and public involvement, and identifying the approval process and the applicable responsible decision makers. The flow chart should be formatted so citizens know how to influence their jurisdiction's commitment to proposing projects and how jurisdictions make choices on which projects are to be funded and how citizens may comment at each stage of the process.
- Review and consider the use of resources that facilitate public outreach in other languages, particularly Spanish.
- Updating the Citizen’s Guide offers an opportunity to help address concerns that have been raised about access to and understanding the planning process.

The MPC Public Involvement Subcommittee met over the winter and spring of 2003 and made the following recommendations regarding the PIP at the July, 2003 MPC meeting:

Review and update the Central Lane MPO Public Involvement Plan (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 MPO public involvement process. The Citizen’s Guide was last updated in 1995 as part of the TransPlan update process. . . . The update should address, at a minimum:

- Document [the] timelines and frequency of major public involvement opportunities (Transportation Improvement Program updates, Statewide Transportation Improvement Program 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 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