

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee
Springfield City Hall—Library Meeting Room—2225 5th Street
Springfield, Oregon

July 10, 2008
11:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Sid Leiken, Chair; Anne Ballew (City of Springfield), Bobby Green, Peter Sorenson (Lane County), Kitty Piercy, Alan Zelenka (City of Eugene); John Thiel (City of Coburg); Greg Evans (Lane Transit District), Sonny Chickering (Oregon Department of Transportation), members; Jeff Towery for Gino Grimaldi (City of Springfield), Mark Pangborn (Lane Transit District), Jon Ruiz (City of Eugene), *ex officio* members.

Kathi Wiederhold, Byron Vanderpool, Ann Mortenson, Susan Payne, Jamon Kent, Andrea Riner, Paul Thompson, Petra Schuetz (Lane Council of Governments); Savannah Crawford, Tim Dodson (Oregon Department of Transportation); Rob Inerfeld (City of Eugene), Susie Smith, Greg Mott, Len Goodwin (City of Springfield), Celia Barry, Mark Bernard (Lane County), Rob Zako, Carlene Riley, guests.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

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

Mr. Leiken introduced Susie Smith, the new Public Works director for the City of Springfield. He noted that a quorum was not yet present and the agenda would be revised to defer action items until a quorum was present.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Rob Zako, Eugene, speaking as a member of the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) program advisory committee, reported that the recent Moving Forward Together conference was well attended and participants agreed that the next 20 years would be very different; changing travel patterns and demographics would alter lifestyles. He recommended viewing the website at www.movingforward.net for more information and thanked conference sponsors.

Mr. Leiken and Ms. Piercy both commended the conference and thanked those involved in organizing it.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) ISSUES

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

Ms. Wiederhold conveyed the CAC's thanks to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Lane Transit District (LTD) for hosting its May field trip. She said the committee at its June meeting continued to deliberate the recommendations that resulted from the Committee's evaluation of the Public

Participation Plan. She said two of the nine recommendations previously presented to the MPC were identified as suitable for immediate implementation: establish a central clearinghouse of information for transportation-related projects and establish a first point of contact. She said staff would work with the CAC to further define those recommendations in terms of the geographic area and measures of success and the refined recommendations would be presented to the MPC in September. She said the CAC was planning another field trip to learn more about LTD operations and had unanimously passed a motion to encourage the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to take every opportunity to help LTD resolve its anticipated funding problem.

Mr. Vanderpool noted that another outcome of the discussions of public involvement was that MPC meetings were now available via webcast at www.lanecounty.org/WebCastLCOG.

Willamette River Bridge Project Status Report

Tim Dodson, ODOT project liaison, used a slide presentation to provide an overview of the OTIA (Oregon Transportation Improvement Act) III State Bridge Delivery Program and the Willamette River Bridge. He said the purpose and need for the project was to improve safety and maintain connectivity and mobility for all users of Interstate 5 (I-5) over the Willamette River in the Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area. He reviewed project activities to date and asserted that ODOT was committed to working with the local community to design a new structure that fit the surroundings in a pleasing and functional way.

Mr. Evans arrived at 12 p.m.

Mr. Dodson described the public involvement activities, which adhered to the Context Sensitive and Sustainable Solutions (CS³) framework. He said once the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) had signed the environmental assessment the final design phase could begin. He said the cost of the 1,800 feet of structure to cross the river, the railroad and Franklin Boulevard was \$70 million; the work associated with work bridges, road work, retaining walls, the canoe canal bridge, all other aspects of the project and a contingency fund would cost an additional \$110 million, for a total of \$180 million committed to the project. He said \$150 million was from OTIA III and the remaining \$30 million was federal funding.

Mr. Dodson reviewed design constraints and the bridge types being considered. He displayed pictures of the bridge types, which included I-girder, haunched box girder, deck arch and through arch structures. He said a community advisory group (CAG) representing a variety of stakeholders would provide input during the design and construction phases. He anticipated the new bridge would be open to traffic in late 2012.

Mr. Sorenson asked how much of the OTIA III \$1.3 billion was allocated to the I-5 Columbia River crossing project. Mr. Dodson replied that no OTIA III funds were involved in the Columbia River crossing project.

Mr. Sorenson noted the impact of the Willamette River I-5 bridge on interstate commerce and asked if there was any involvement from people outside of the Eugene/Springfield area. He also asked whether there would be a change in traffic patterns. Mr. Dodson said that issue was addressed between ODOT and FHWA when decisions regarding bridge width and staging were discussed. He did not anticipate any change in traffic patterns with the new bridge.

In response to further questions from Mr. Sorenson, Mr. Dodson said the planned life of the new bridge was 125 years. He would email a list of CAG members to the MPC.

Mr. Leiken noted that each of the jurisdictions would be required to take action on the item and he advised MPC members to discuss with their legal counsel whether they would need to declare *ex parte* contacts as a result of the presentation.

Continuing, Mr. Dodson stated that a Metro Plan amendment would be required before ODOT could apply for FHWA's signature on the environmental assessment. He hoped the amendment, which would allow ODOT to apply to jurisdictions for the necessary permits, would be approved in July 2008. He explained the CM/GC delivery method ODOT would use for the project, which would allow good owner control and accelerated construction work. He expected construction activities to begin in 2009.

Mr. Evans expressed concern with ODOT's lack of use of minority contractors in previous projects and asked if due diligence would be performed to address that issue on the Willamette Bridge project. Mr. Dodson replied that the CM/GC approach was ideal for aggressively pursuing a diversity program as ODOT could put pressure on the general contractor with respect to its hiring of subcontractors.

Mr. Evans asked if the I-5/Beltline flyover project was using minority contractors. Mr. Chickering said he would research that question.

Mr. Zelenka asked about the process for selecting the bridge type. Mr. Dodson said the CAG was providing input on the weighting of selection criteria and those recommendations would be forwarded to the project development team, which would finalize the weighted criteria. He said scoring of bridge types would be done by the general contractor, an ODOT group and an engineering group. He said that selection criteria included impact to the environment, impact on the parks, maintenance of connectivity for bike paths and associated facilities, economic stimulus and the five goals of the OTIA program. He said jurisdictions were involved in the process through their representatives on the project development team; the final determination of bridge type rested with ODOT, but it would likely confirm the project development team's recommendation. He stressed that the scoring matrix was only one aspect of the selection process.

APPROVE APRIL 10, 2008, AND MAY 8, 2008, MINUTES

Ms. Piercy, seconded by Mr. Evans, moved to approve the April 10 and May 8, 2008, minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously, 9:0.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) ISSUES (continued)

2010 Campaign for Active Transportation Case Statement

Ms. Schuetz said the 2010 Campaign for Active Transportation was a national initiative by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy to enhance biking and walking infrastructure beyond traditional trail infrastructure. She said the Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area was a potential candidate to receive significant federal investment in the future. She said one of the first steps was to develop a Case Statement describing how a \$50 million federal investment would be used to enhance mobility and mitigate congestion. She directed the MPC's attention to a draft Case Statement in the agenda packet and asked for its endorsement of a letter supporting the 2010 Campaign for Active Transportation and the community Case Statement.

Ms. Piercy declared her support for the initiative and commended the collaboration between jurisdictions.

Ms. Ballew, seconded by Mr. Zelenka, moved to approve the letter endorsing the 2010 Campaign for Active Transportation Case Statement.

Mr. Zelenka opined that the \$5.7 million cost for the South Bank Trail project seemed high. He asked if it involved land acquisition. Mr. Inerfeld said the project information came from the Regional Transportation Plan and noted that the Case Statement project list was illustrative and only intended to provide a sense of the type of projects that could be funded. He said the South Bank Trail project would be complicated and fairly expensive. Ms. Schuetz added that she asked jurisdictions to provide project costs in 2010 dollars.

Mr. Zelenka asked if it was likely the Eugene/Springfield area would be awarded funds. Ms. Schuetz felt that Eugene/Springfield would be very competitive and was well-positioned to receive funding, should it become available.

Mr. Evans asked if regional bike parking stations would be integrated with transit stops and the transit system. Ms. Schuetz replied that would be the goal.

The motion passed unanimously, 9:0.

FY2009-2010 Commuter Solutions STP-U Funding

Mr. Thompson provided a brief overview, explaining that the regional program Commuter Solutions was requesting \$240,000 in Surface Transportation Program-Urban (STP-U) funding to continue its transportation demand management (TDM) activities. He said the MPC had allocated funding to Commuter Solutions in previous years and the Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) had unanimously recommended approval of the request.

Ms. Ballew, seconded by Ms. Piercy, moved to approve Resolution 2008-03 programming FFY09 STP-U funds in support of the Commuter Solutions program. The motion passed unanimously, 9:0.

MPO Priorities for Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC)

Mr. Leiken declared a conflict of interest involving the Coburg interchange project and recused himself. He turned the meeting over to Mr. Green, MPC vice chair.

Mr. Thompson reviewed the OTC's process for preparing earmark recommendations for the next federal transportation bill. He said the MPO was asked to present its earmark priorities and those priorities would be forwarded to ODOT and, in lieu of an area commission on transportation (ACT), Lane County, which would develop a list of countywide priorities for earmarks to present to ODOT and the OTC. He said the earmark priority process relied on the same criteria as the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) process that the MPC had just gone through for 2010-15 modernization projects. He said the TPC unanimously recommended the following earmark priorities, mirroring the priorities previously established by the MPC for the 2010-15 STIP modernization program:

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|----|---|----------------|
| 1. | I-5 @ Beltline Interchange | \$35.0 million |
| 2. | Gateway/Beltline: International Way to Postal Way | \$15.0 million |
| 3. | I-5 @ Coburg Interchange | \$19.5 million |

4. Beltline Highway: River Road to Coburg Road (Phase I) \$20.0 million

Mr. Thompson said the TPC was asking the MPC to add two projects to the list:

5. Franklin Boulevard, Ferry Street Bridge to Springfield Bridge, including EmX improvements \$25.0 million
6. Eugene/Springfield Highway (SR 126) @ Main Street Interchange Construction \$50.0 million

Ms. Piercy asked if the projects were listed in order of priority. Mr. Thompson said the TPC had listed them in the order of priority, although that was not required by ODOT.

Ms. Piercy stated she supported the order of priority for all six projects.

Mr. Sorenson asked what rationale had been used to select the six projects. Mr. Thompson said the TPC had followed ODOT's guidance that accompanied OTC's policy on earmark requests. He said the guidance asked each body from which earmark priorities were requested to forward one to five projects in the range of \$2 million to \$25 million per project. He said ODOT was a member of the TPC and was supportive of both the number of projects and the amounts requested.

Mr. Sorenson said the OTC policy on earmark requests referenced consideration of requests from ACTs, MPOs and other advisory bodies. He questioned why the MPC would forward its list to Lane County instead of asserting its authority as a decision-making organization and submitting its list directly to ODOT. Mr. Thompson explained that the MPC was taking both actions by forwarding its requests to ODOT and Lane County in accordance with ODOT's direction.

Mr. Sorenson said it appeared that cities and counties could make recommendations independent of MPOs and ACTs. Mr. Chickering said that was permissible because ACTs did not necessarily have representation from every city within their boundaries.

Mr. Zelenka requested the addition of Eugene's \$20 million West 11th Avenue from Terry Street to Green Hill Road as the seventh project on the list. Mr. Thompson indicated that he saw no impediment to adding that project.

Mr. Zelenka, seconded by Ms. Piercy, moved to approve the following MPO earmark requests in priority order:

1. I-5 @ Beltline Interchange \$35.0 million
2. Gateway/Beltline: International Way to Postal Way \$15.0 million
3. I-5 @ Coburg Interchange \$19.5 million
4. Beltline Highway: River Road to Coburg Road (Phase I) \$20.0 million
5. Franklin Boulevard, Ferry Street Bridge to Springfield Bridge, including EmX improvements \$25.0 million
6. Eugene/Springfield Highway (SR 125) @ Main Street Interchange Construction \$50.0 million
7. West 11th Avenue: Terry Street to Green Hill Road \$20.0 million

Mr. Evans emphasized the importance of integrating transit in transportation projects and expanding the transit infrastructure and footprint. He urged as much collaboration as possible between transportation and transit projects. Mr. Thompson noted that the fifth project incorporated both transportation and transit.

Ms. Ballew agreed with Mr. Evans about the need for collaboration instead of competition for resources. She pointed out that participants in the United Front effort strongly advocated for transit resources for the area. She said there should be a focus on inter-modality that included freight and rail.

Ms. Piercy concurred that United Front advocated for transit and integration of transportation modes was a top priority.

Mr. Zelenka asked if there were transit vehicles such as buses that could travel on railroad tracks. Mr. Pangborn said an option was encasing the railroad tracks in concrete strips to allow buses to operate on them like the light rail system in Portland.

The motion passed, 8:0; Mr. Leiken abstaining.

ODOT Planning Activities

Mr. Leiken resumed the chair.

Ms. Crawford distributed handouts describing ODOT's planning activities related to design concepts for OR 126 at 52nd and Main Streets in Springfield and evaluation of OR 569: Beltline from River Road to Coburg Road. She provided an overview of both planning studies.

Mr. Green asked if any other areas in the state had issues of complexity similar to the Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area. Ms. Crawford said there were planning concerns in the Salem and Portland areas, but she was not very familiar with them. She agreed there were many unique aspects of projects in the local area.

Mr. Zelenka commented that one of the most dangerous intersections in the metropolitan area was Beltline and Delta Highway. He asked if planning activities would include trying to find solutions to that problem. Ms. Crawford said evaluation of the traffic issues at that intersection would be part of the planning studies.

Mr. Sorenson remarked that Sheriff Berger had identified that as the most dangerous intersection in Lane County and Representative Nancy Nathanson was working on legislation to address it in some manner. He asked if there was more information available on the legislative component. Ms. Crawford said she was aware of the legislative initiative, but did not have specific information. She would follow-up on the issue and assure it was considered in ODOT's planning. Mr. Chickering added that grant applications for improvements such as variable message signs were being prepared by local jurisdictions.

Ms. Piercy asked that the information on Rep. Nathanson's legislative efforts be shared with MPC members.

Ms. Ballew pointed out that OR 126 at Main Street was on the State's list of top ten safety problems.

ODOT Update

Mr. Chickering reported that ODOT was in the process of scoping projects in all categories for the 2010-13 STIP and draft results would be available for review and comments in October or November 2008.

Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) Amendment

Mr. Thompson reviewed the three administrative amendments to the FFY08-11 MTIP as set forth in the agenda packet. He said the TPC had unanimously approved the amendments at its May 22 and June 26, 2008 meetings.

Mr. Zelenka asked if the project to replace existing traffic signals would synchronize those signals. Mr. Chickering said the signals to be replaced were on the state highway system and might or might not be synchronized, depending on a number of factors, including cost.

LCOG Board Actions

Mr. Vanderpool stated that the June MPC meeting had been canceled for lack of a quorum and there were two time-sensitive items that came to the MPO for consideration. One was a request from ODOT to provide a letter of support from the MPO for the Baucus-Grassley bill to cover the deficit in the Highway Account of the federal Highway Trust Fund. He said the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) Executive Committee met on June 12 and unanimously authorized LCOG board chair Greg James to sign the letter of support, although the committee was reluctant to act in the MPC's stead.

Mr. Vanderpool said the second request was for endorsement of four applications for projects under ODOT's Transportation Operations Innovation and Demonstration Program, which required MPO endorsement of projects located within the MPO. He said details of the projects were contained in the agenda packet. He said the LCOG board at its June 26 meeting had unanimously authorized board vice chair Chris Pryor to endorse the application.

Mr. Sorenson questioned why the MPC could not have held a meeting via telephone to take action on the items instead of referring them to the LCOG board for action. Mr. Vanderpool said staff had considered email and conference calls as alternatives, but did not provide for adequate public process.

Mr. Sorenson asserted that conference calls were allowable with 24-hour notice and other groups had used that approach.

Mr. Evans asked that the August meeting agenda include an update from LTD regarding the status of funding and service cuts.

Mr. Zelenka agreed that a telephone conference call should be used for MPO business instead of referring items to the LCOG board. He wanted a discussion of a single transportation plan on a future MPC agenda.

Ms. Ballew asked for a report from Lane County on any transportation concerns related to its financial problems. She indicated she was not interested in further discussion of a single transportation plan.

Ms. Piercy noted that the Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area was listed as one of the least congested in the nation for areas of its size and it had the third highest number of people who walked to work.

Regarding transportation funding in Lane County, Mr. Sorenson said the Board of County Commissioners had approved intergovernmental agreements with Eugene and Springfield for the provision of general fund dollars to the County in exchange for the County's Road Fund monies. He said a briefing would be provided to commissioners by the director of Public Works and MPC members could be provided with a copy.

Mr. Leiken said there was some momentum behind changing the State allocation of transportation funds among the County and cities, but that decision rested with the legislature. He said that transit was also a topic of concern and the focus was not entirely on new capacity.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)