



September 5, 2007

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Paul Thompson
Subject: Item 4.c: Final Draft 2031 Regional Transportation Plan

Action Recommended: Hold Public Hearing on Draft 2031 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP); Review and Discuss Draft RTP and Provide Feedback to Staff.

Background

The Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was last adopted in December, 2004. The RTP provides the policy and planning framework for long-term regional transportation planning and contains the financially-constrained long-term transportation priorities over a twenty-plus-year planning horizon. Under Federal law, the RTP must be updated at least every four years, and must contain at least a 20-year planning horizon.

The current update of the RTP extends the planning horizon to 2031, updating the Roadway, Transit and Bicycle/Pedestrian project lists, financial forecasts and other elements.

In March 2007, MPC reviewed the draft RTP financially constrained and illustrative project lists for all of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) projects contained in the RTP. At that time, MPC provided input on the ODOT project lists, which were incorporated into the draft lists and presented again to MPC in April.

At the April 2007 MPC meeting, MPC discussed the RTP's updated 2031 planning horizon in light of local planning horizons. As was discussed at that and subsequent meetings, the 2031 RTP reflects anticipated growth in the MPO area through 2031 under current planning assumptions, and, once local policy and planning direction is updated beyond the current local horizons, subsequent RTP updates will reflect those new directions.

At the June 2007 MPC meeting, all of the draft 2031 RTP project lists were presented for review. This review included a summary of all of the new, changed and deleted

projects since the 2025 RTP. In addition, at the June meeting the RTP environmental consultation materials were presented for review.

The August 2007 MPC meeting included a review of the complete Preliminary Draft RTP.

Discussion

The final draft 2031 RTP attached to this memo represents the adoption-ready Regional Transportation Plan. All elements of the draft RTP are complete, and direction provided by MPC at the August 2007 meeting as part of the review of the Preliminary Draft RTP has been incorporated into the Final Draft.

Specifically:

- The “Clarifying Language on Federal and State Plan Interaction” proposed at the August MPC meeting has been incorporated into the Final Draft RTP at the very front of the document immediately following the “Context of Transportation Planning in the Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Area” language.
- Part Three (formally) of Chapter 4 and Appendices E and F (formally) of the Preliminary Draft RTP have been removed from the Final Draft as a result of the discussion regarding further distinguishing between the federal RTP and the local Eugene/Springfield/Lane County Transportation System Plan (TSP, or TransPlan). (Additional references throughout the RTP to the removed sections has also been deleted.) Following the discussion at the August MPC meeting, MPO staff consulted with staff from all of the local jurisdictions, and the Transportation Planning Committee unanimously reached consensus agreement to remove these sections which are related to state requirements of the TSP and do not need to be part of the federal RTP.
- Lane County has provided updated language in Chapter 3 regarding the County’s financial constraint. This is reflected in both Tables 4 and 5, and the language in Chapter 3 accompanying those tables.

Public comment on the Preliminary Draft RTP was presented at the August MPC meeting by Rob Zako of 1000 Friends of Oregon. Those comments have been carefully reviewed by MPO staff, and by all staff (MPO, local jurisdiction, and ODOT) at the Transportation Advisory Subcommittee (TASC) and Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) meetings. In addition, the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) has reviewed the comments submitted by Mr. Zako and provided input to the MPO in response.

As part of the TASC and TPC discussions of the points raised in Mr. Zako’s comments regarding the interaction between land use and transportation planning, the following summary outline regarding that interaction was developed:

How to think about Federal and State Transportation Planning Requirements and the Adoption of the RTP

1. The inextricable relationship is the relationship between land use and transportation
2. What is clearly not inextricable is the relationship between state and federal transportation planning requirements. Those requirements are separate of each other. Legal case law and legal opinion support this.
3. In a public policy context, where local policymakers can have the greatest influence on improving the relationship between land use and transportation is in the coordination of their respective land use and transportation decision-making processes.
4. The underlying purposes of both the state and federal planning requirements support this. The underlying reason for the existence of federal transportation planning requirements is to require that transportation investment decision-making be done in a regionally coordinated way. Federal requirements purposely stay away from mandating or even referring to land use planning and decision-making processes. The federal expectation is that the coordination of land use and transportation happens at a local level.
5. In contrast, the underlying basis for state transportation planning requirements is a requirement that local agencies demonstrate that their transportation systems are adequate to support future land use and specifies decision-making processes to ensure this coordination.

To summarize, the most effective way for a local agency to manage the relationship between its land use and its transportation system is to ensure close coordination of its land use and transportation decision-making processes at the local level, and carry that forward to the regional level. Collectively meeting the federal transportation requirements ensures that transportation investments are made at a regional level that support those local land use and transportation decisions.

Public Outreach

In addition to the individual elements of the draft RTP mentioned above that have come before MPC over the past six months, more formal public outreach on the draft 2031 RTP has been underway since late July. An open house was held on July 30, at which the preliminary draft RTP was available for review and comment. The public comment period on the 2031 RTP is currently open through October 8, and extensive notification has occurred, including:

- Placement of notices on LTD buses, in both English and Spanish
- Email notice to the MPO's interested parties list
- Advertising notice of the open house
- Copies of the draft RTP at the Eugene and Springfield public libraries

As of the writing of this memo, the only public comment received on the draft RTP is the August 9 memo from Rob Zako of 1000 Friends of Oregon (mentioned above). A public hearing is scheduled as part of this agenda item at the September 13 MPC meeting,

and any additional public comments received through October 8 will be brought to MPC at the October 11 meeting.

Action Requested

- Hold Public Hearing on Draft 2031 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- Review and Discuss Draft RTP
- Provide Feedback to Staff
- Direct Staff to Prepare RTP for Adoption at October 11 MPC Meeting

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Final Draft 2031 Regional Transportation Plan (including map sets)