



Lane Council of Governments

99 East Broadway, Suite 400, Eugene, Oregon 97401-3111 (541) 682-4283 Fax: (541) 682-4099 TTY: (541) 682-4567

September 8, 2005

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee

From: Kathi Wiederhold

Subject: Item 4.i.1.i – Report from Citizen Advisory Committee

Action Recommended: None. Information only.

Report

The committee held their regular meeting on September 7, 2005, with nine of the ten members in attendance. The key agenda items focused on amendments to the bylaws and public involvement—a strategy for the update of the Regional Transportation Plan, the framework MPO Public Involvement Plan, and an updated Citizen's Guide. The committee melded the public involvement items into one discussion.

Amendments to the Bylaws

The CAC operates under a set of bylaws adopted by MPC on September 9, 2004, and amended on June 9, 2005 to add the category of “employees/workers/organized labor” to broaden the representation of various interest groups on the CAC. In August, after the lack of a quorum at two of the five regular meetings, the CAC officers requested staff to start the bylaws amendment process to change the quorum requirements.

The CAC approved a list of proposed changes to the bylaws and requested that staff work with the officers to draft specific language to bring back to the committee for approval. The CAC bylaws require that amendments shall be recommended by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the committee. Other requirements for amendments are that the proposal for amendments shall appear on a published agenda and the text be sent to all committee members not less than thirty calendar days in advance. The recommended amendments must be submitted to MPC and would become effective upon approval by MPC.

The substantive changes approved by the committee are:

- Add language to allow MPC to appoint an at-large position filled by a member who resides outside the MPO boundary
- Change the quorum requirement from two-thirds to a simple majority of appointed members
- Change the requirement for sending the text for the proposed amendments to committee members from 30 days to 14 days in advance.

In addition, there are several housekeeping changes.

Public Involvement

As they did last month, the committee had a lot to say regarding public involvement. Several members suggested specific outreach techniques, many of them innovative, and often cited an example they were familiar with. One member commented that not everyone has computers, but almost everyone has a phone. But, the discussion went further and deeper than techniques, highlighting and acknowledging challenges and issues such as:

- Reaching groups, e.g. low income, new immigrants, people with disabilities, and non-English speakers that may not have access to the web or likely to attend glitzy events like electronic voting
- Timing the outreach early enough to make a difference in the product but late enough for the public to get a sense of the outcome
- Asking about each outreach technique—Was this information useful? Was it timely? Was it exciting—will you talk with any of your friends or family about this? What approach would work for you?
- Asking “What is the message?” when designing an outreach
- Enhancing public hearings, e.g. are there ways to engage citizens prior to the public hearing to achieve more meaningful input?
- Using techniques that make people feel empowered about their input
- Finding a “hook” to get people to come to meetings
- Personalizing the message—How much of your family’s tax dollar goes into transportation?

Background

On December 9, 2004, MPC approved the recommended 14-person membership slate and appointed Commissioner Bobby Green to serve as a liaison between the Citizen Advisory Committee and MPC. Twelve citizens accepted the appointment to the Citizen Advisory Committee. Two members, Melissa Girard and Larry Williams, resigned in August 2005. At the August 11, 2005, meeting, MPC directed staff to recruit for additional CAC members. The committee attended a reception and field tour on January 28 and 29, received a primer on the Unified Planning Work Program at Orientation Sessions on March 29 and 30, and have been holding regular monthly meetings since April 2005. The CAC met jointly with MPC on July 14, 2005.