

October 1, 2003

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Tom Schwetz
Subject: Item 4e(1)(a): Annual MPO Report to LCOG Board

In October 2002, the LCOG Board, through Resolution 2002-08, delegated responsibilities associated with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) process to the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC). As part of that resolution, the Board included a provision that:

“the Metropolitan Policy Committee shall provide a report to the Board of Directors at least annually on performance of its Metropolitan Planning Organization duties, including the results of any federal certification review;”

At its September 25th meeting, Lane County Commissioner Bill Dwyer, as Chair of the MPC, provided the LCOG Board with a review of MPO activities over the past year. His presentation covered the topics summarized in the attached memo distributed to the Board on September 25th.

Action Requested: Information only.

Attachments: LCOG Board Memo regarding Annual Report on MPO Activities

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September 25, 2003

To: LCOG Board
From: Commissioner Bill Dwyer, MPC Chair
Subject: Annual Report on MPO Activities

At its December, 2002 meeting, MPC formally accepted delegation from the LCOG Board of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) policy making responsibilities. This action, together with the MPO's redesignation to Transportation Management Area status, creates a locally controlled partnership more effective and efficient in meeting federal requirements and guiding the region toward achieving its transportation goals. As requested by the Board, this memo provides a summary of the MPO's accomplishments over the past year.

Accomplishments over the Past Year

With the addition of Coburg, we changed the MPO's name to the Central Lane MPO to better reflect the broader regional representation. Beyond the name change, we have completed a number of tasks associated with our MPO responsibilities:

1. Formed a MPC Subcommittee on MPO's Public Involvement Process – MPC formed a subcommittee to discuss options for improving the MPO's public involvement process. The committee met four times and developed a series of recommendations focused on providing the public with more effective options for being involved in the development of the MPO's various products – the Transportation Improvement Program, the Regional Transportation Plan, etc. To date, there have been several improvements made to the public involvement process used by the MPO. Specifically:
 - All MPC materials are posted on the LCOG website.
 - MPO Plan and program materials are posted on the LCOG website.
 - A practice has been put in place to provide 30-day review periods for all major MPO decisions.
 - Public workshops have been held as part of the public review process to allow the public the opportunity to learn more about a particular issue and provide more detailed comments.

2. Adopted the Unified Planning Work Program for FY04 – As required, MPC adopted the MPO's work program for FY04 in April. This work program outlines the tasks necessary to carry out the MPO process. The work described in this memo represents the primary tasks included in this work program.

3. Completed a Federal Certification Review – The redesignation to Transportation management Area status meant that the region was subject to closer scrutiny by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. Representatives from these agencies spent three days in early May meeting with staff, the public and MPC to assess our MPO process. The outcome of this review was that the FTA and FHWA have jointly certified the planning process in the Central Lane MPO, subject to corrective actions and recommendations provided in their final report. This outcome ensures that the region remains eligible for federal transportation funds. Several of the corrective actions and recommendations have already been implemented or are currently in progress and are summarized in this memo.
4. Amended the FY02-04 TIP – MPC approved several amendments to the region’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to reflect the addition of new projects, changes in funding levels or construction years.
5. Adopted a New MPO Boundary – The 2000 Census resulted in an expansion of the geographic area of the MPO, taking in the City of Coburg on the north and portions of Goshen on the south. MPC approved the new boundary at its August meeting.
6. Revised the Process for Allocating Surface Transportation Program Funds – As a result of redesignation to Transportation Management Area status, the region will receive additional funds available to local agencies within the MPO boundary. Approximately \$6.75 million is available for inclusion in the FY04-06 TIP. In response to a corrective action identified in the federal certification review, MPC approved revisions to the method for allocation of these funds. These revisions included development of a set of objective criteria and a project evaluation process to be used to determine the region’s priorities for use of these funds.
7. Advocated for a Walkable Communities Grant – MPC provided a letter of support to the National Center for Bicycling and Walking as part of an application for a Walkable Communities Grant. We recently received notice that we were successful in receiving this grant which will provide the resources for staff training and 4 community workshops focused in specific parts of the region.
8. Provided Comment to ODOT on STIP Project Selection Criteria – MPC proved comments to the OTC and ODOT on their proposed criteria for selecting and prioritizing projects to be included in the FY06-09 STIP.
9. Nearing Adoption of the FY04-06 TIP Update – We are near completion of a major update to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP needs to reflect projects expected to be constructed in the region over at least a three year period. This update adds two years (FY05 and FY06) of projects.

Upcoming Work Activities

Results from the federal Certification Review are providing a focus to the MPO work activities this year. Specifically, we need to do work in the following areas:

1. Revise the MPO Planning Boundary (described above)
2. Update the TIP and Project Selection Process for STP-U Funds (described above)
3. Develop a Congestion Management System (CMS) Plan - A CMS is a systematic process that provides information on transportation system performance and alternative strategies to alleviate congestion and enhance the mobility of persons and goods. The intent of the CMS is to protect the region's investment in, and improve effectiveness of, the existing and future transportation networks.
4. Update the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) - The Certification Review indicates that this next update needs to address, at a minimum, the new TMA boundary and an updated planning horizon (2025).
5. Update the Public Involvement Process Including the Citizen's Guide to Transportation Planning - The MPO is required to have an up to date Public Involvement Plan (PIP) which describes the process the MPO will follow in conducting its various processes (plan or TIP development, air quality conformity determinations, etc.). The Citizen's Guide was last updated in 1995. MPC will be following up on its subcommittee recommendations for additional improvements to the public involvement process.
6. Update the Air Quality State Implementation Plan - The region is currently half way through a 20-year maintenance period for carbon monoxide (CO) pollution. The MPO needs to update the area's implementation plan (SIP) to verify that the area is on track toward maintaining the CO standards over the last 10 years of the maintenance period.
7. Update the Assessment Process for meeting Title VI and Related Requirements - The MPO is required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to actively ensure that there is no discrimination in the MPO process on the basis of race, color, or national origin. We are also required to ensure that there are no disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects stemming from the MPO programs, policies, or activities on minority populations and low-income populations (Environmental Justice requirements). A baseline analysis of 2000 Census data needs to be completed to allow the MPO to demonstrate compliance with these requirements on an on-going basis.