

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee
Eugene Public Library, Bascom-Tykeson Room, 100 W. 10th Avenue – Eugene, Oregon

October 14, 2004
11:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Bonny Bettman, Chair, Jim Torrey (City of Eugene), Don Hampton for Bill Dwyer, Bobby Green (Lane County), Tammy Fitch for Sid Leiken, Anne Ballew (City of Springfield), Judy Volta (City of Coburg), Susan Ban (Lane Transit District), Robert Pirrie (Oregon Department of Transportation), members; Dennis Taylor (City of Eugene), Cynthia Pappas for Mike Kelly (City of Springfield), Mark Pangborn for Ken Hamm (Lane Transit District), Bill Van Vactor (Lane County), Jamon Kent (City of Coburg), *ex officio* members.

Tom Boyatt, Eric Havig (Oregon Department of Transportation), Randy Papé (Oregon Transportation Commission), George Kloeppel, Tom Schwetz, Ann Mortenson, Paul Thompson, Kathi Wiederhold (Lane Council of Governments), Greg Mott (City of Springfield), Lisa Gardner (Lane Transit District), Jim Carlson (City of Eugene), Rob Handy, Laurie Segel, Rob Zako (guests).

ABSENT: Gerry Gaydos member

1. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Bettman called the meeting of the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) to order and those present introduced themselves.

2. APPROVE SEPTEMBER 9, 2004 MINUTES

Mr. Torrey moved, seconded by Ms. Volta, to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2004, MPC meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

3. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Mr. Pirrie announced that the 2006-2009 draft State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) public review meeting for the metropolitan area would be held on December 1, 2004. He said the STIP was available online at the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) website and public meetings would also be held on October 25, 2004, at the Veneta City Hall and on November 15, 2004, at the Florence Events Center.

Rob Handy, 455 ½ River Road, Eugene, commented that he had difficulty understanding the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update and asked staff to provide a simpler explanation of the amendments for the public. He noted that the letter contained in the agenda packet relating to the draft freight route proposals did a good job of explaining Springfield's concerns with the designation of Highway 126. He

said that there were similar concerns in Eugene regarding the designation and noted Mayor Torrey's comments requesting clarification from ODOT on the status of the West Eugene Parkway. He said if the parkway was not going to be built, flexibility was needed to develop alternatives in west Eugene and the freight route designation would not be helpful.

Rob Zako, 1000 Friends of Oregon, expressed his confusion over the relationship of the RTP update to the Transportation System Plan (TSP, TransPlan), which was a component of the Metro Plan and represented the area's regional transportation plan. He said the RTP update was necessary to satisfy federal requirements and would not be acknowledged in the Metro Plan and questioned how that would affect requests to ODOT for Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding if projects had to be part of an acknowledged TSP in order to be eligible.

4. MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) ISSUES

a. Preliminary Draft Regional Transportation Plan Public Review

Mr. Thompson distributed replacement pages and additional pages for the draft RTP: revised Chapter 3, pages 76-77 reflecting modifications to the *Air Quality Conformity* section and a section on Transportation Demand Management (TDM) implementation actions. He also distributed a memorandum from Tom Schwetz related to additional work still underway on performance measures. He noted that references in the draft to TransPlan had been updated to RTP where appropriate and an appendix H, which will consist of a complete project list sorted by project number and alphabetically, would be added before final adoption.

Mr. Thompson said the requested action was to approve release of the draft RTP for public review and to open the public comment period through December 9, 2004. He explained the intent was for a minor update to the federal plan that was necessitated by growth from an MPO to a Transportation Management Area (TMA) and consequent boundary expansion primarily to include Coburg and a portion of the area around Goshen. Additionally, he said the update would extend the planning horizon to 2025 and update the financial constraint analysis. He highlighted several of the RTP modifications outlined in his memorandum of October 7, 2004, to the MPC. He said that an updated version of the draft would be printed for the November 18, 2004 MPC meeting only if there were significant comments and revisions; otherwise, an updated version would be published on December 9, 2004, and asked that comments and questions be forwarded to staff as quickly as possible.

Responding to comments from Mr. Zako, Mr. Thompson clarified that the MPC was being asked to adopt a federal RTP that would satisfy federal requirements for the MPO; the Eugene-Springfield TSP would remain in effect as the adopted metropolitan TSP and both Coburg and Lane County have their own TSP. He said that to the extent the two plans had to be consistent, there were some projects that were being added to the federal RTP that were not yet reflected in the appropriate TSP and those might need to be amended into one of the TSPs by the local jurisdiction(s) at some point. He said it was not necessary for both plans to be consistent at all times and because of the separate processes there was occasionally a lag between updates.

Ms. Ballew asked if there was a way to combine the federal and state plan processes to avoid future inconsistency. Mr. Thompson said that the plans were coordinated as federal and state guidelines required consistency. Mr. Schwetz said that staff had hoped there would be an opportunity to extend the federal plan cycle to align with the state cycle, but the federal reauthorization process prevented that.

Mr. Thompson remarked that the replacement pages and the TDM projects list would be incorporated into the next draft of the plan and become part of the financial constraint analysis. He noted that the implementation items on the back page of the TDM handout were financially constrained. He said that staff was still developing projected plan performance measures and the figures in the memorandum from Mr. Schwetz were very preliminary; final figures were expected by the end of the month and prior to the public workshop.

Ms. Bettman observed that all of the information was not yet available and she wanted to see a legislative version of the draft that included explanatory notes from staff for all changes. She said she was also confused by the designation of a minor update to the TSP when the RTP was essentially a new document that would exist alongside the TSP. She suggested that a public hearing on November 18, 2004, would be premature. Mr. Thompson said the adopted TransPlan did serve and was recognized by the federal government as the regional transportation plan. He said the draft RTP was a legislative format of the adopted TransPlan, revising it for RTP purposes, but not for TSP purposes.

Ms. Bettman suggested that because of the complexity of the issues the first public hearing should be postponed until December 9, 2004, in order to provide all pertinent information and allow more time for public review and comment.

Mr. Green asked if there were consequences to extending the timeline for adoption of the RTP. Mr. Thompson said it was not clear what the actual consequences might be; however, the certification of the plan as the federal RTP would lapse on December 12, 2004 and if lapsed, it was possible that the MPO could be determined to be in nonconformity and federal funding and processes would be frozen.

Ms. Bettman said it appeared that there were more changes in the document than the three modifications: extending the planning horizon to 2025, updating the financial constraints analysis, and expanding the RTP boundary to include the new MPO boundary. She suggested that changes unrelated to those three areas be eliminated from the draft, more public outreach be conducted, and the first public hearing scheduled for December 9, 2004. Mr. Thompson said the changes largely addressed the three modifications, with the exception of the incorporation of references to several reports and documents. He said that rescoping of projects was part of either the financial constraint analysis or planning horizon extension.

Ms. Fitch said she was unwilling to delay release of the update for public comment, particularly with the possibility of losing access to federal funding if the MPO was determined to be in nonconformity, and suggested that staff and MPC members increase their efforts to educate the public on the update.

Mr. Schwetz said that incorporation by reference of other documents in the update could be eliminated if the MPC felt that would simplify the process as another update process would commence in January 2005 and the documents could be incorporated during that process.

Ms. Bettman suggested that confusion over the project list could be mitigated by identifying projects for which the scope had changed and whether projects were in the RTP or TSP.

Mr. Kloeppe asked the MPC how staff could structure the changes and updates that were project-specific to clarify the modifications. He noted that the Association of Oregon Counties meeting on November 18, 2004, could preclude having a county commissioner participate in a public hearing for the RTP update on that date and asked whether the MPC would address the RTP at its November 2004 meeting.

Mr. Green said he would be more comfortable with immediate release of the document and with the schedule proposed for adoption if more aggressive public outreach and involvement could be achieved through more frequent hearings and workshops. Mr. Thompson said that more aggressive public outreach was possible, including additional workshops and more presentations to community groups and organizations. Mr. Schwetz suggested that a public workshop could also be held on December 1, 2004, in conjunction with the public meeting on the 2006-2009 Draft STIP and other outreach could include presentations to neighborhood and business organizations. He noted that smaller group discussions were an effective way to educate people. Mr. Thompson added that staff had developed an extensive email distribution list of interested parties that would be used in addition to direct mailings and newspaper display advertisements.

Ms. Bettman asked that the Congestion Management Study be included in the public information campaign as it impacted people who lived along those corridors selected for study.

Mr. Green moved, seconded by Ms. Fitch, to release the preliminary draft Regional Transportation Plan for public review, incorporating the suggestions for expanded public outreach and education activities. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Statewide Freight Route Analysis Project

Mr. Schwetz reviewed the materials in the agenda packet and the staff recommendation that additional time be taken for a more deliberate approach to analyzing the impacts of the proposed State freight route designations. He drew the committee's attention to a proposed letter to Bruce Warner of ODOT raising several issues and requesting an extension of the comment period. He noted that the Freight Route Analysis Project (FRAP) Advisory Committee consisted of several statewide stakeholders and although both the League of Oregon Cities and Association of Oregon Counties were invited to participate, no representatives from either organization attended the meetings. He said that the FRAP recommendations did not consistently reflect some of the local issues raised by staff. He said that the project represented both opportunities and issues and the need to more completely understand those in order to provide thorough and comprehensive responses prompted the staff recommendation to request additional time to provide comment to the Oregon Transportation Commission.

Ms. Ballew agreed with the staff recommendation for an extension of the comment period as much of the freight route was in Springfield's eastern business district and it was important to fully understand the impact of designations. She invited ODOT to make a presentation to the Springfield City Council.

Mr. Torrey agreed it would be helpful to have additional time for analysis of the designations and comments to the OTC. He commented that he did not see the value of designating the highway along the McKenzie River as a freight route even though trucks now used that route. He preferred to see improvements made to Highway 58 to enhance it as a true freight route. He expressed concern about designation of an arterial as a freight route and asked if that placed a legal obligation on the local jurisdiction to develop the road to meet that requirement before allowing any permitted uses along the route. He noted that designation did not guarantee additional funds; it only added some points during prioritization of projects.

Ms. Bettman suggested that the issue could be placed on a future Eugene City Council agenda with an invitation to ODOT and OTC to participate in a discussion. She agreed with the staff recommendation for a time extension and asked whether the OTC was willing to provide that time.

Mr. Papé observed that he was one of five OTC members and not empowered to speak for the body; however, the OTC wanted broad input on the freight route designations and would likely agree to an extension of the comment period beyond December 1, 2004. He indicated that an ODOT presentation could be made at the November 2004 MPC meeting, time permitting.

Ms. Fitch asked if ODOT could make a presentation to each of the jurisdictions, cities and the County, prior to the end of the comment period.

Mr. Green suggested a two-month extension to the comment period which would allow new elected officials and policy-makers an opportunity to be involved in the issue.

Mr. Papé said he would convey to ODOT the request for a presentation on the freight route designations to each jurisdiction and the request for a 60-day extension of the comment period.

Mr. Torrey raised the question of where the Beltline freight route started and ended. He said it appeared to start at Interstate 5, but it was not clear whether it ended at West 11th Avenue or extended west on West 11th Avenue to Fisher Road. He said there were major implications for current businesses and new development along West 11th Avenue. He asked that the question be answered during the ODOT presentation. Mr. Schwetz noted that the State designation for Beltline extended on West 11th Avenue to a point west of Fisher Road where it became Highway 126.

Mr. Green moved, seconded by Ms. Volta, to endorse the proposed letter to Bruce Warner of ODOT and request a two-month extension to the comment period on the Statewide Freight Route Analysis Report. The motion passed unanimously.

c. MTIP Administrative Amendments

Mr. Thompson noted that there were a series of eight administrative amendments to the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) that the Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) unanimously approved on September 23, 2004. He reviewed the amendments set forth in his memorandum of October 7, 2004, and commented that four of them moved Lane Transit District projects from one fiscal year to another because of grant expenditure requirements and the remaining amendments were requests initiated through ODOT to show minor adjustments.

In response to a question from Ms. Bettman, Mr. Thompson explained that combination of the projects identified as OR99: Barger Avenue-Garfield Street and OR99: Garfield Street-Washington/Jefferson Street was done at the request of ODOT because they were two safety projects that ODOT intended to complete as a single project. He said the funding splits for the OR126/Franklin Boulevard Sidewalks Glenwood – McVey Enhancement were adjusted at ODOT's request to separate funding by fiscal year and update cost estimates because the project had been pushed back one fiscal year.

Ms. Bettman asked that future changes contain a fuller explanation.

d. Commuter Solutions' Diamond Express Service Award of Excellence

Ms. Ban announced the receipt by Lane Transit District (LTD) of an award from the Association for Commuter Transportation for its Diamond Express Service between Oakridge and Eugene. She said the Diamond Express was a notable transit solution because rural demands for access to cities and rural senior and disabled accessible service needs in rural areas. She said the Diamond Express leveraged two funding sources, one for intercity transit and one for accessible services, to create a commuter solution to meet community needs. She said that the passion and support of the local community contributed to the program's success and partnerships among agencies provided a model for cooperation and collaboration. She said that the program was so successful that additional vehicles had been added and more were planned. She commented that the program also addressed TDM goals.

Mr. Hampton thanked LTD staff for their leadership in developing the program. Ms. Ban specifically commended LTD staff Terry Parker and Linda Lynch.

Mr. Van Vactor asked if there were plans to provide service to Florence. Ms. Gardner said there were barriers to serving Florence because it would not qualify for some of the funding used for the Diamond Express. She said LTD was committed to exploring other options for service to the Florence area.

e. Status on Citizen Advisory Committee Recruitment

Mr. Green referred to the information provided in the agenda packet on the schedule for recruitment, appointment, orientation, and first meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). He noted that recommendations for appointments would come before the MPC at its November 2004 meeting.

Ms. Wiederhold reviewed the various CAC recruitment techniques that had been used, including posters on LTD vehicles. She said that staff continued to seek ways to broaden community outreach. She indicated that the deadline for applications was October 31, 2004, and while only three applications had been received to date she expected a flurry of activity prior to the deadline.

Ms. Bettman suggested that outreach materials also include an estimate of the time commitment for CAC members.

f. Second Oregon MPO Summit Status

Mr. Kloeppel announced that there would be a reception that evening for people arriving for the MPO Summit on Friday, October 15, 2004. He said there were a number of items on the summit agenda, including the prospect of a more formal association of the six MPOs in the state and determining what legislative and administrative items should be addressed.

Mr. Green asked if there would be a discussion of the freight route designations. Mr. Kloeppel replied that Commissioner Linda Modrell of the Corvallis MPO would lead discussion at the Summit about the proposed West Coast Corridor Coalition, which was somewhat broader than, but related to, the freight route designations.

g. Follow-up and MPO Calendar

Mr. Kloeppe said that staff would advise members about the status of the November 2004 meeting after consultation with the Lane County Board of Commissioners on their availability.

Ms. Ballew asked that the email address for the CAC be included on the MPO calendar.

Ms. Bettman inquired about the future topic of TPC Bylaws update. Mr. Thompson said that the bylaws had not been revised in more than a decade and the creation of the CAC made the need to revise them timely.

The meeting adjourned at 1 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)