



ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LCOG BOARD OF DIRECTORS December 2008

INTRODUCTION

In the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area, planning our highway, rail, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation system is a coordinated effort between a number of local, regional, state, and federal agencies, including the Cities of Eugene, Springfield, and Coburg, Lane County, Lane Transit District, and Oregon Department of Transportation. The Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) works with these agencies to provide **continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive** transportation planning within the metropolitan area.

The primary activities of the MPO consist of developing, maintaining and implementing five core transportation planning products adopted and amended by the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC), including:

- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP);
- Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP);
- Air Quality Conformity Determinations;
- Public Participation Plan; and
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Timely development and adoption of these products ensures that federal and state funds continue to flow to projects vital to the region's economic development and quality of life.

MPO and the LCOG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In 2002, LCOG Board designated all of the region's MPO policy making responsibilities to the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC). For over a decade, the MPC had performed some of these tasks on behalf of the LCOG Board. As part of its resolution, the LCOG Board included a provision that the Metropolitan Policy Committee provide an annual report to the Board of Directors describing their performance of Metropolitan Planning Organization duties.

The MPC met nine times in the 2008 calendar year. This report provides a summary of the MPO's accomplishments since January 2008, including policy activities of the MPC and ongoing operational tasks of the MPO staff.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Probably the single most significant transportation planning effort of 2008 was the completion of a Regional Transportation Work Plan. Throughout 2008, staff for Lane County and the Cities of Springfield, Eugene, and Coburg worked cooperatively with representatives of the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and the Oregon Department of Transportation to develop a long range work plan for completing a Regional Transportation System Plan (RTSP).

The need for the work plan was due to the fact that the MPC-approved Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was not consistent with the state-required TransPlan. To comply with state law, DLCD required the development of a work plan to describe how the agencies would proceed with the planning activities needed to make the two plans consistent. The transportation planning activities are interdependent with a number of land use planning activities, including the Coordinated Population Forecast for Lane County, the implementation of HB 3337, and the completion of buildable lands assessments in Eugene and Springfield.

The final approved work plan includes a description of major work items, interim products, and critical milestones within a five-year timeline. Drafts of the work plan were presented at both the July 15, 2008 and the September 15 meetings of the Joint Elected Officials. In addition, staff from the individual jurisdictions presented the work plan to the Springfield City Council, Lane County Board of Commissioners and to the Eugene City Council. Following approval by the Joint Elected Officials at their September meeting, staff then submitted the work plan to the Land Conservation and Development Commission who approved the plan in October 2008.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2008

Following are highlights of MPO activities between January and December 2008:

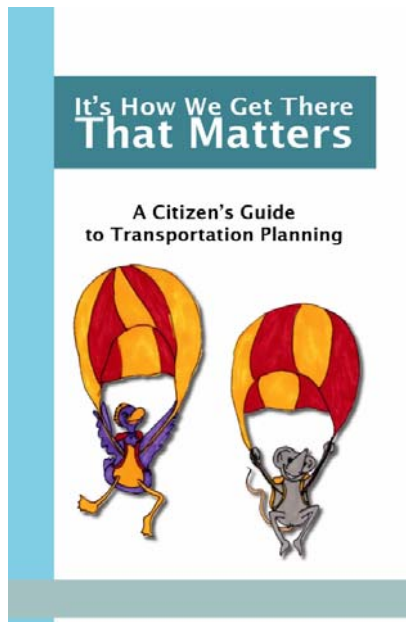


I-5/Beltline Flyover

- Completed construction and dedication of the flyover at Beltline Highway and Interstate 5. Construction of the pedestrian and bicycle bridge has also been completed.
- Approved the FY08-11 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) along with the Oregon Statewide TIP (STIP) in January 2008.
- Approved \$4.66 million in projects funded by Surface Transportation Program – Urban (STP-U) funds. Approximately \$2.8 million per year in these federal funds are available for programming a wide range of regional priorities.
- Adopted the FY 08 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) which serves as the MPO's work program on an annual basis and is one of the fundamental products of the MPO. The UPWP details the work elements to be accomplished in a given fiscal year and ensures that the MPO maintains compliance with federal regulations. It outlines all regional planning efforts, promoting coordination between agencies.



Televised MPC Meeting



Citizens Guide to Transportation

- Reviewed and made recommendations regarding ODOT's proposed reductions to FY08-11 STIP Modernization funding.
- Approved STIP Modernization funding priorities for 2010-2015.
- Approved a coordinated funding effort to improve public information and outreach by televising MPC meetings. Meetings have been televised since April 2008 and webcasting began in May.
- Approved an Intergovernmental Agreement between ODOT, the MPO and LTD relating to Transportation Planning as required by federal law.
- Provided comments to the Oregon Transportation Commission regarding a new state policy governing federal earmarks.
- Approved MPO earmark requests to OTC including I-5 at Beltline (\$35 M), Gateway/Beltline (\$15 M), I-5 at Coburg Road (\$19.5 M), Beltline from River Road to Coburg (\$20 M), Franklin Boulevard, Ferry Street Bridge to Springfield Bridge, including EmX improvements (\$25 M), Eugene/Springfield Highway 126 at Main St (\$50 M) and W. 115th Ave Terry Street to Green Hill (\$20 M).
- Improved public involvement by developing and distributing the *Citizens Guide to Transportation* released in early 2008. The guide is a friendly, colorful, and easy-to-use introduction to regional transportation planning.
- Initiated a regional staff committee to coordinate and promote operational efficiency and use of intelligent transportation systems technology. This group's activity has led to two grant awards for ITS projects within the region, with an additional project request forwarded as part of the ODOT annual appropriation process.
- Hired Andrea Riner in April 2008 to fill the Transportation Program Manager position left vacant by Tom Schwetz.

ADVOCACY

Another key role of the MPC is providing advocacy and support for transportation projects conducted by our partner agencies. Over the past year, MPC approved letters of support for the following:

- Campaign for Active Transportation Case Statement supporting additional federal funding and support bicycle, pedestrian and inter-modal transportation infrastructure and programs through a national Rails-to-Trails Conservancy initiative.
- Connect Oregon II grant application for Eugene Passenger Rail Station improvements and UP Railroad improvements; and endorsement of LTD's Veneta Station project.
- Transportation Growth Management Program application for the Coburg Multi-modal Loop planning project. Coburg received \$65,000 from this proposal.
- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technology projects funded by ODOT's Innovative ITS Program (awarded) and submitted by ODOT for funding consideration
- Transportation Enhancement program priorities, including Westmoreland Park Path and lighting, Amazon Path lighting and the West Bank Path Extension and Lighting project.

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Additional MPO activities and accomplishments for 2008 include the following.

Regional Transportation and Land Use Planning Coordination

Transportation and planning staff for Lane County and the Cities of Springfield, Eugene, and Coburg have been working cooperatively with representatives of the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and the Oregon Department of Transportation to develop a long range transportation work plan. The need for the work plan was due to the fact that the MPC-approved Regional Transportation Plan was not consistent with the state-required TransPlan. To comply with state law, DLCD required the development of a work plan to describe how the agencies would proceed with the planning activities needed to make the two plans consistent. The final approved work plan includes a description of major work items, interim products, and critical milestones within a five-year timeline. Drafts of the work plan were presented at both the July 15, 2008 and the September 15 meetings of the Joint Elected Officials. In addition, staff from the individual jurisdictions presented the work plan to the Springfield City Council, Lane County Board of Commissioners and to the Eugene City Council. Following approval by the Joint Elected Officials at their September meeting, staff then submitted the work plan to the Land Conservation and Development Commission.

Regional Transportation Plan and Long-Range Planning

The **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)** is required by the federal government for all metropolitan areas with populations over 50,000. It is a 20-year planning document identifying both long- and short-range policies, strategies, and actions that will inform federal and state requests for funding. It includes a list of all regionally significant projects and is updated every four years. The current Eugene-Springfield RTP was adopted by the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) in November 2007. MPO staff also assisted in the update of the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, required for LTD access to certain federal funds.

Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP)

The Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) describes transportation projects which are scheduled to occur within the Central Lane MPO area over a four-year time period. The MTIP primarily lists projects for which application of certain federal funds will be made or projects requiring USDOT approval to proceed. All MTIP projects are determined by the needs identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In 2008, work on the MTIP involved ongoing maintenance of the plan. In all, 65 amendments to the MTIP were approved to adjust timing and funding of projects. The MPC also provided comments to ODOT and the Oregon Transportation Commission on Statewide TIP funding eligibility criteria and prioritization factors for FY2010-2013.

Public Involvement and Citizen Advisory Committee

The MPC adopted the Public Participation Plan for the MPO in 2007 to meet federal requirements for involving public stakeholders in regional transportation planning. To implement the plan, the MPO engaged in the following activities in 2008:

- Completed, published, and distributed almost 2000 copies of the Citizen's Guide to Transportation Planning—a friendly, colorful, outreach brochure.
- Continued to use the www.keepusmoving.info website to keep the public aware of several regionally significant projects taking place over the past year.
- Worked with the MPC to amend the committee's bylaws, allowing the appointment of new members in mid-year, allowing for an alternative officers structure, and other changes. Additional members were appointed to the CAC to increase membership up to the level allowed in the CAC bylaws.
- Provided recommendations to the MPC on STP-U funding allocations, and the STIP. Developed a flow chart to show the purpose and interrelationships between key MPO documents.
- Conducted 12 CAC meetings, including field tours to the Beltline/Interstate-5 Flyover hosted by ODOT and to Lane Transit District. Met monthly with the CAC officers to coordinate CAC meetings, plan the calendar, and strategize how to implement CAC recommendations.
- Worked closely with the CAC to help them evaluate the first year of the PPP implementation, including developing recommendations to MPC. Continuing to work with the CAC and TPC to refine and carry out the CAC recommendation to develop a central clearinghouse for public outreach regarding regional transportation.
- Presented training to the CAC on an ongoing basis, including Primers on the Transportation Improvement Program and Commuter Solutions Activities
- Facilitated interaction between MPO partner staff and the CAC, including presentations on local public outreach for transportation planning and roundtable discussions on how to implement the central clearinghouse recommendation.
- Kept the CAC updated with information on regional planning activities, outreach events, and involvement of the MPO in various issues such as climate change.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

MPC adopted the MPO's work program for FY08 at its April 2008 meeting. The UPWP details the work elements to be accomplished in a given fiscal year. These activities allow the MPO to maintain compliance with federal regulations related to the core functions listed below:

- Coordination with federal, state and local agencies regarding regional transportation issues;
- Maintaining the transportation model and underlying GIS and demographic data;
- Implementing the Regional Transportation Plan;
- Updating the Transportation Improvement Program, development of revenue forecasts, allocating MPO discretionary federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds, and providing ODOT with MPO State Transportation Improvement program (STIP) priorities;
- Conducting air quality conformity determinations and other air quality planning needs (the MPO is the cognizant local agency for maintaining compliance of regional transportation plans with the carbon monoxide standards of the Clean Air Act);
- Maintaining a public involvement program;
- Providing technical assistance to local agencies, consultants, and developers; and
- Providing staff support for MPC, TPC, the LCOG Board and various *ad-hoc* groups as needed.

Air Quality Planning

Because of the use of federal funds and the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act, any actions taken by US Department of Transportation must be shown to not cause adverse effects on the national air quality standards. In the MPO area, this means that the MPO must demonstrate that updates and amendments to either the Regional Transportation Plan or the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program will not adversely affect the air quality in the region. This demonstration is made through an analysis of the projected travel volumes by all modes of transport on the future transportation network as described in the RTP and MTIP. The analysis is documented in an Air Quality Conformity Determination.

This analysis was performed for the new RTP and MTIP, and MPC subsequently adopted the Air Quality Conformity Determination in November, 2007. USDOT approval was provided in January 2008.

The Eugene-Springfield region has only two pollutants for which the US Environmental Protection Agency has required specific actions to address past issues: particulate matter of less than 10 microns (PM10) and carbon monoxide (CO). The latter is the only one for which a transportation analysis of regional plans must be made. The area has not exceeded PM10 standards since 1987 and CO standards have not been exceeded since 1980. MPO staff work with Lane Regional Air Pollution Authority staff on issues regarding maintenance of Clean Air Act standards.

Climate Change

In accord with the State's goals and other activities regarding Climate Change, MPO staff have attended multiple meetings concerning reporting of greenhouse gas emissions, policy discussions and analysis techniques. These have been conducted with EPA, FHWA, ODOT, DEQ, other MPOs, and with University of Oregon Climate Initiative staff. MPO staff have also undertaken training and peer exchanges to keep abreast of the current situation. It is expected that this area of work will expand considerably in 2009.

Special Projects

Over the past year, MPO staff have continued to provide technical assistance, project coordination, and input to partner agencies relating to the following projects:

- West Eugene EmX Extension;
- West Eugene Collaborative;
- Beltline Special Area Plan;
- I-126 Expressway Management Plan;
- I-5 Gateway Area Planning Study (IGAPS); and
- LTD 2009 service adjustments.

Regular Reports and Information Sharing

MPC receives reports on a regular basis from a number of transportation stakeholders, including the following:

- Monthly reports from the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy served as MPC's liaison to the CAC for the past year.
- Periodic reports from the Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC). This group is comprised of policy officials from each of the 6 MPOs in the state. Meetings held by OMPOC over the last year largely focused on issues of common concern, addressing federal requirements and developing MPO legislative priorities.
- Monthly reports from the ODOT Area Manager.
- Informational presentations relating to projects and programs such as the replacement of the Willamette River Bridge; ODOT budget and program funding; Commuter Solutions; and LTD budget issues and service reduction proposals.

Other Business

At a state-wide level or regional level, the MPO participates in the Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC), the ODOT Freight Advisory Committee, the Oregon Transportation Modeling Steering Committee, the Statewide Transportation Options Committee, the Statewide STIP/TIP Coordination Group, and the Statewide Revenue Forecasting Group.