



ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LCOG BOARD OF DIRECTORS December 2009

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 the 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 13 times in the 2009 calendar year. This report provides a summary of the MPO's accomplishments since January 2009, including policy activities of the MPC and ongoing operational tasks of the MPO staff.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2009

The past year was an extremely busy but also a very rewarding year for the Central Lane MPO. The agency helped to secure over \$15 million in federal funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and significant progress was made on a number of important transportation infrastructure improvements and key regional planning efforts. The information on the following pages provide highlights of MPO activities between January and December 2009.



Map of ARRA Funded Projects



Interstate 5/Beltline/Gateway Construction



Springfield EmX Line

FUNDING

- Received and distributed over \$6.5 million in projects funded by the federal economic stimulus legislation, known as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). These funds are aimed at creating new jobs and maintaining existing jobs while working to preserve and improve the state's highways, transit systems, and bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure. In addition to those projects funded through the MPO, LTD also received over \$6.4 million in ARRA funding, and ODOT allocated over \$2.9 million to local projects within the MPO area.
- Approved \$2.66 million to projects and programs funded by Surface Transportation Program - Urban (STP-U) during Federal Fiscal Year 2009. STP-U funds planning activities, transportation demand management activities, and preservation and modernization.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Completed construction and dedication of the pedestrian and bicycle bridge crossing over Interstate-5 at the Beltline Highway. Initiated construction of the next phase of I-5/Beltline/Gateway Construction to widen Beltline and Gateway Streets, add a new northbound I-5 on-ramp and a new sound wall on the west side of I-5.
- Completed construction and opened a new Lane Transit District transit station at Gateway Mall (Gateway Station) in Springfield.
- Initiated construction on the Gateway EmX to extend the existing EmX between downtown Eugene and downtown Springfield to the Gateway area in northwest Springfield.
- Initiated work on the I-5/Willamette River Bridge Replacement in the Eugene/Springfield Metropolitan area. The project will help improve safety and maintain connectivity and mobility for all users of I-5.
- Initiated construction of improvements to Beltline Highway at the Coburg Road Interchange.
- Initiated construction of the Delta Ponds Bike Path and Bridge which will complete a missing link in connecting Eugene neighborhoods to the Riverfront Path System.

OREGON HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITY SURVEY

Central Lane MPO is engaged in a statewide effort to administer the Oregon Household Activity Survey (OHAS). This survey will collect detailed information on the travel behavior of a sample of at least 1,500 households within the MPO area. Data to be collected includes trip locations, purposes, times, travel durations, mode used, costs, vehicle characteristics, and other travel-related information. The data will be used to update key assumptions and model parameters, and will also be used in later specification and estimation of more advanced tour-based models.

GREENHOUSE GAS PLANNING

Over the past two years, MPO staff have been anticipating and preparing for the need to incorporate planning for climate change into the MPO's activities, plans and programs. In 2009, the State Legislature adopted Oregon House Bill 2186, establishing a 16-person statewide MPO Greenhouse Gas Emissions Task Force. The charge of this Task Force is to:

- Study and evaluate the utility of developing alternative land use and transportation scenarios that accommodate population and employment growth while reducing greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles;
- Evaluate fiscal and other resource needs to implement these scenarios, including staffing and resources needed by state agencies, local governments and each MPO;
- Evaluate impediments to implementing land use and transportation scenarios that reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and
- Recommend legislation related to transportation and to the environment establishing a process for adoption and implementation of plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).

MPC Member and Eugene City Councilor Alan Zelenka was selected to serve on the Task Force on behalf of the MPO. The final of four meetings of the Task Force is scheduled to occur on December 4, 2009, after which it is anticipated that the Task Force will issue final recommendations.

It is anticipated that federal regulations may also be drafted in the upcoming year, further defining the parameters within which the MPO must operate.

The MPO's two-year Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) anticipated significant work in this area, in both the Air Quality Planning and the Transportation System Modeling and Data Maintenance tasks. The MPO is in the process of implementing a new advanced land use model that will link transportation with land use development scenario planning, as needed under the legislation. It is expected that this greenhouse gas planning will continue to expand in 2010 with implementation of recommendations coming out of the Task Force and potential federal legislation.

REGIONAL COORDINATION

The MPO provides a forum for cooperative transportation decision making with the Cities of Coburg, Eugene, and Springfield, Lane County, Lane Transit District, and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). The following highlights some of the key coordination activities over the last year in which the MPO has participated:

A New Vision for West Eugene



WEC Land Use Discussion 10/2008

March 2009
West Eugene Collaborative



Rendering of proposed I-5 Willamette River Bridge



City of Eugene

- Served as a member on the West Eugene Collaborative, which has issued a Final Report: A New Vision for West Eugene containing recommendations for short, medium and long term solutions that address transportation, land use and natural resources.
- Assisting in study of Beltline Highway to identify system needs and identify future improvement projects.

City of Springfield

- Started work on the update of Springfield's Transportation System Plan.
- Participate with ODOT and Eugene in refinement planning for Interstate-5 at Glenwood.
- Participating in OR 126 Expressway Management Plan (EMP).
- Participating in the I-5/Glenwood Area Planning Study (IGAPS).

City of Coburg

- Assisted in funding the Coburg Interchange Area Management Plan (IAMP), which provides land use and transportation strategies to protect the function of the Coburg/I-5 interchange over the long-term in light of planned improvements to the interchange.
- Developed a strategy for the creation of the Coburg Loop Path, a hard surfaced bicycle and pedestrian path network that will be developed in the coming years.

point2point Solutions

- Point2point Solutions (formerly Commuter Solutions) has changed its name to signify new efforts to broaden their scope and address non-work drive-alone trips. point2point Solutions continues to offer a range of TDM programs.



Lane Transit District

- Worked on future extension of the Bus Rapid Transit System, involving a high level of public and partner agency involvement. Planning for future phases has begun, including a West Eugene Corridor.
- Addressed continuing budgeting challenges due to reduced payroll tax revenue, including use of ARRA funds, as well as changes made by the 2009 Oregon State legislature to enhance funding for public transportation. At the federal level, LTD continues to work on federal funding through the authorization of the next 6-year Surface Transportation Bill.

Lane County

- Worked with partner agencies to begin update of Regional Transportation System Plan.
- Provided support and worked with ODOT and other partner agencies on a number of regional transportation programs, including the Beltline Corridor Study, OR 126 Expressway, Glenwood Refinement Plan, Delta Highway ITS, and others.



MPC/CAC Joint Meeting

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Adopted the Central Lane MPO Title VI Plan, documenting and establishing the MPO's policies for ensuring nondiscrimination in its practices, one of the first of its kind in Oregon.
- Conducted a Community Focus Group to initiate a dialogue with groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in planning for the area transportation system.

PROGRAMMING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Transportation Improvement Plans (TIP) and STP-U Funding. The MPC has spent several months actively involved in the discussion of the funding frameworks for the STP-U dollars and will use this assessment to inform the development of a recommended framework for the 2011-2013 MTIP.
- State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). In November the MPO learned that the Oregon Department of Transportation postponed the approval process for the 2013 STIP due to substantial differences between actual revenues and those anticipated under the original guidelines for the STIP. The STIP review process is underway, and it will be important to identify how changes made to address funding shortfalls will affect MPO transportation funding.

OTHER MPO ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Additional MPO activities and accomplishments for 2009 include the following.

KEY PRODUCTS

- 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 and must be updated by November 2011. MPO staff also assisted in the update of the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, required for LTD access to certain federal funds.
- 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 ARRA-funded projects are included in the MTIP. Oregon's currently approved program is the 2008-2011 STIP, adopted by the Oregon Transportation commission and approved by USDOT on January 16, 2008. All MTIP projects are determined by the needs identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In 2009, work on the MTIP involved ongoing maintenance of the plan. In all, 78 amendments to the MTIP were approved to adjust timing and funding of projects.
- MPC adopted the MPO's 2010-2011 **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)** at its April 2009 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. For this UPWP, the MPO opted to develop a program for two-years, in order to improve efficiency and reduce staff time. A mid-year review will be conducted next spring to revise the FY11 program as needed and to secure STP-U funds for the work.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Over the past year, MPO staff have continued to provide technical assistance, project coordination, and input to partner agencies relating to a number of regional projects, including the 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. In addition, MPO staff participated in regional and statewide coordination committees, including the Oregon Metropolitan Planning Organization Consortium, Transportation Options Advisory Committee, Oregon Freight Advisory Committee, the Oregon Modeling Steering Committee, and the MPO GHG Task Force.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A critical component of regional transportation planning is the involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process. Key public participation activities last year included:

- Conducting a CAC Recruitment to fill vacant seats on the CAC and include involvement of traditionally underrepresented groups.
- Providing recommendations to the MPC on STP-U funding allocations, and the STIP. Developing background information on the current STP-U funding framework and potential options to assess for change of the existing framework.
- Conducting 13 CAC meetings, including a joint meeting with the MPC and a Community Focus Group to initiate a dialogue with groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in planning for the area transportation system.
- Evaluating the PPP implementation, including developing recommendations to MPC.

ADVOCACY

The MPC provides advocacy and support for transportation projects conducted by the MPO and our partner agencies. Over the past year, MPC approved letters of support for the following:

- Beltline/Delta Highway Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) FY10 Annual Appropriation Earmark Request.
- Unit 3 and 4 of the I-5/Beltline Highway Interchange Improvement project FY10 Annual Appropriation Earmark Request.
- Request for Active Transportation Investment Fund in the next Federal Transportation Bill.
- Completion of south bank bicycle and pedestrian viaduct connection under I-5 along the Willamette River as part of ODOT's Transportation Enhancement Program application.
- City of Springfield, Lane Transit District, and the Oregon Department of Transportation for a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant for improvements to Franklin Boulevard in the Glenwood area of Springfield, Oregon.
- Eugene/ODOT Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grant application for HWY 99 bridge at Roosevelt Boulevard and W. 5th Avenue and Seneca Road.
- Request for ODOT funding to partner in a web-based, multi-state ridesharing system.