



January 5, 2011

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Petra Schuetz
Subject: 5.d: STP-U Funding Recommendation for Regional Transportation Options Plan

Action Recommended: Approve Resolution 2011-01 amending MTIP & programming funding.

Issue

The purpose of this agenda item is to request that the MPC program Surface Transportation Planning-Urban (STP-U) federal MPO funding for the Regional Transportation Options Plan (RTOP) project in the amount of \$74,000 each for federal fiscal years 2011 and 2012, a total of \$148,000.

Background

In March of 2010, MPC directed staff to initiate a project to develop the Regional Transportation Options Plan. The MPC approved an initial \$20,000 in Surface Transportation Program-Urban (STP-U) funds for the RTOP on March 11, 2010 following a 30-day public comment period and public hearing. At that time, it was communicated that alternative funding sources were being pursued, but that if those efforts proved unsuccessful, a future request for additional STP-U funds would be requested.

Through the process of applying for grant funding, a work plan has been developed to accomplish three primary objectives:

- Update the TDM portion of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).
- Provide a best practice document to assist both regional and local governments in expanding the reach of their TDM programs in the future.
- Create a regional 10-year Transportation Options/Transportation Demand Management strategic plan.

To continue executing the RTOP work plan within the timeline of the Regional Transportation Work Plan, the MPO requests \$74,000 for federal fiscal year 2011 and 2012; \$148,000 total. Funded work will be split between LCOG and point2point Solutions. This request is consistent with activities outlined in the FY10-11 Unified Planning Work Program which identifies development of a plan to address transportation demand management and transportation options in support of the RTP.

Public Involvement

The Central Lane MPO Public Participation Plan calls for a public comment period, a public hearing, notice to interested parties, web notice, an open house, and a newspaper display ad for proposed STP-U fund allocations. In December MPC approved the staff request to waive the requirement for an open house and newspaper display ad. The CAC also endorsed this approach.

At the December 9, 2010 MPC meeting, a public hearing was held. Two written public comments received during the public comment period prior to the December 9 meeting were reviewed by MPC, posted to the MPO website, and are included in Attachment 2 to this memo.

Public Comments

1. Bill Northrup provided an extensive set of written comments (submitted December 4, 2010) on various transportation-related topics.

Staff Response

There is no explicit reference to, support for or opposition to the RTOP funding request. No staff response is provided.

2. Phillip Carroll wrote in support of the RTOP funding request and highlighted the need for revised parking management (submitted December 8, 2010).

I am writing as a Eugene resident in support of additional funding for the RTOP. It is my hope that the results of this allocation will be a substantial step forward in identifying and implementing those strategies best able to reduce our dependence on the private auto. In particular, I am concerned that an issue the current Transportation Demand Policies neglect is parking.

Staff Response

Staff anticipates that the issue of parking will be addressed within the RTOP.

3. Mark Robinowitz provided testimony during the December 9, 2010 public hearing. In summary (adapted from the draft MPC December 9, 2010 meeting minutes), Mr. Robinowitz distributed and entered into the record a September 27, 2010 *Register Guard* article entitled *Eugene's Energy Plan Fails to Address Peak Oil's Realities*. He suggested that NEPA identified new circumstances such as peak oil and climate change which need to be considered for transportation projects. Choices need to be made on whether to widen I-5 and build BRT or provide services to the community. He also asserted today's public hearing had not been adequately noticed.

Staff Response

These comments do not directly represent support for or objection to the proposed RTOP funding request. The RTOP mission is to develop additional policies and strategies to use the existing transportation system more efficiently. Public notice was conducted in compliance with all requirements for public hearings as directed by the Central Lane MPO Public Participation Plan, including a posted notice in the

Register Guard newspaper, on the MPO website and to all interested parties on the MPO email distribution list.

4. Connie Speck of G Group, LLC submitted written comments (January 3, 2010), included in Attachment 2. Ms. Speck states that:

As members of this community, we support long range transportation planning which includes alternative modes of transportation; however, we believe that a long range plan with a focus on limiting single occupancy vehicles, would be detrimental to businesses in the community.

The comment further states that:

Because of the vastness of Lane County's rural population, we believe that a long range plan which focuses on reducing vehicular travel is not realistic and could potentially result in substantial economic losses.

We believe that funding would be better served for long range planning which incorporates necessary vehicular traffic in addition to alternative modes of transportation.

Staff Response

Staff agree with Ms. Speck's comments regarding the value of long range transportation planning for all modes. "*Long range planning which incorporates necessary vehicular traffic*" is a significant component of the Central Lane MPO Regional Transportation Plan. The RTOP is only one element of the RTP which strives to plan for the safe provision of single-occupant-vehicle, freight, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, rail and other modes of travel as the region grows and changes over the coming decades. As part of that planning, the regional Transportation Options program is designed to provide and promote a range of transportation options to those who choose to, or must, use them.

CAC Involvement

The MPO Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) reviewed the RTOP funding request at their December 16, 2010 meeting and voted, 11:1, to recommend approval.

TPC Involvement

The Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) reviewed this request at their December meeting and unanimously recommended approval pending the results of the public comment period and MPC review.

Recommendation

Approve Resolution 2011-01 amending MTIP & programming funding.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Resolution 2011-01 and Exhibit A
- B. Public Comments