



July 5, 2011

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Paul Thompson
Subject: 5.c: STP-U Funding Recommendation for Willamalane Middle Fork Willamette River Path Project.

Action Recommended: Hold public hearing. Approve Resolution 2011-07 amending FY10-13 MTIP to program funds for Willamalane Middle Fork Willamette River path project.

Issue

The purpose of this agenda item is to request that the MPC re-program Surface Transportation Planning-Urban (STP-U) federal MPO funding for the Willamalane Middle Fork Willamette River path project in the amount of \$320,000.

Background

This project will construct a regional Multi-Use Path along the north bank of the Middle Fork Willamette River from Dorris Ranch to Clearwater Park. The map in Attachment 1 shows the project location and extent. This is an important component of a planned project for a loop path along the Middle Fork Willamette River and Springfield Mill Race with a bridge across the river to Lane County's Howard Buford Recreation Area (Mt Pisgah). Construction of the planned 4-mile Middle Fork Willamette River Path will establish the Springfield backbone of a regional alternative transportation network.

The Middle Fork Path will ultimately connect the Eugene and west Springfield riverbank path system with southeast Springfield neighborhoods, with only minor portions of on-street bike lanes. This large bike system is developing as funds are secured.

The project received an appropriation of \$3 million from SAFETEA-LU in 2005, allowing the District to proceed with the design, engineering, permitting, and acquisition of necessary property for the entire length of the multi-use path. This funding also allowed Willamalane to construct Phase 1 (Clearwater Park to Quarry Creek) in 2010. In September 2009 the MPC approved \$250,000 in FY2010 STP-U funds to construct the bridge across Quarry Creek as a part of Phase 1. In February 2010 the MPC approved an additional \$70,000 in FY2010 STP-U funds to support preliminary engineering work to bring plans for the Dorris Ranch-Quarry Creek segment (Phase 2) to point where this segment is ready to go to bid (complete to PS&E).

The Middle Fork Willamette River Path project is included in the Regional Transportation Plan, the Willamalane Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, and Eugene-Springfield Transportation System Plan. It is also included on the regional priorities list that was submitted to the area's federal delegation by the local governments in 2009.

The current request to amend the MTIP concerns Phase 2a of the project, which will address the Dorris Ranch to Quarry Creek Bridge segment of the path. Completing Phase 2a will finish the linkage between downtown and southeast Springfield.

Willamalane Parks and Recreation has applied for and been granted \$1.6 million in Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds to construct Phase 2a of the project (see application for TE funds in Attachment 2). These TE funds need to be programmed in the MPO's MTIP.

Willamalane Parks and Recreation has also been able to take advantage of cost savings in Phase 1 enabling the District to now request that the previously allocated MPO STP-U funds in the total amount of \$320,000 be rolled over to this new Phase of the project.

This proposal would reprogram the unused STP-U funds (\$250,000 in construction and \$70,000 in preliminary funds) from the Middle Fork Willamette River path project, Unit 1. The \$320,000 in total STP-U funds would be used for construction activities programmed for FY2011.

This part of the MTIP programming request constitutes a non-administrative action as it moves STP-U funds approved by MPC from one project phase to another.

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.

The public hearing for the proposal is scheduled to occur at the July 14th meeting. The public comment period for the proposal is scheduled to begin on July 8th and tentatively end on August 8, 2011.

Due to the limited nature of the proposed amendment, and the need to program these funds in a timely manner, the Willamalane Parks and Recreation District has requested that the MPC consider taking action on the proposed amendment at the July 14th meeting. If the MPC does choose to take action on July 14th, the public comment period would be closed at that time.

After reviewing this request, staff is recommending that the MPC take action at the July 14th meeting.

Over the course of the project development, Willamalane Parks and Recreation has conducted numerous public outreach and information events, including:

1. An on-line questionnaire ODOT implemented for the TE application process, which received 261 responses, with a significant majority supporting the proposal (see a summary of the survey responses in Attachment 3).
2. Periodic updates on the Willamalane web site.
3. Periodic articles in the Willamalane Program Guide (distributed to all residents in the District).
4. Article in the Eugene Register-Guard on June 22, 2007.
5. Middle Fork Path Questionnaire mailed to approx 735 path neighbors on June 11, 2008, with approximately 100 responses.
6. Public Open House on June 27, 2009, with approximately 50 attendees.
7. Six updates to the Willamalane Board of Directors between June 2006 and Dec 2009
8. Two updates to the Springfield City Council, in July 2007 and December 2009.

Willamalane's Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan also included input from over 750 local residents who identified the provision of off-street bicycle paths as the most desired outdoor facility the District could provide.

The STP-U funding would continue to support completion of the Middle Fork Willamette River path project and the amount of STP-U funding is not proposed to be changed. The proposed amendment has been reviewed for its impact on air quality conformity. It is an exempt project under OAR-340-252-0270 and has thus been found to not trigger the requirement for a new regional conformity determination. Fiscal constraint of the MTIP has not been affected.

It is not anticipated that an open house or newspaper display ad will be needed for this amendment request.

TPC Involvement

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

Recommendation

Hold Public Hearing. Approve Resolution 2011-07 amending MTIP and programming funding.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Middle Fork Willamette River path project map
2. Transportation Enhancement Application Materials
3. ODOT survey results
4. Resolution 2011-07 and Exhibit A