

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee
Coburg Fire Station Training Room—91232 North Coburg Road
Coburg, Oregon

July 14, 2011
11:30 a.m.

PRESENT: John Fox (City of Coburg), Kitty Piercy, Alan Zelenka (City of Eugene), Christine Lundberg (City of Springfield), Judy Volta (City of Coburg), Jay Bozievich, Sid Leiken (Lane County), Sonny Chickering, Savannah Crawford (Oregon Department of Transportation), Mike Eyster, (Lane Transit District), members; Gino Grimaldi (City of Springfield), Tom Schwetz, (Lane Transit District), Jon Ruiz (City of Eugene), *ex officio* members.

Byron Vanderpool, Andrea Riner, Ann Mortenson, Paul Thompson (Lane Council of Governments); Rob Inerfeld (City of Eugene), Tom Boyatt (City of Springfield), Theresa Brand, Claire Otwell, Lisa Van Winkle, (Lane Transit District), Celia Barry (Lane County), David Sonnichsen, Sarah Strand, Edward Winter (Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen Advisory Committee); Bob Keefer, (Willamalane Park and Recreation District).

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS/WELCOME FROM CITY OF COBURG

Mr. Leiken welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Coburg Mayor Judy Volta. He thanked her and Councilor John Fox for hosting the MPC meeting.

Ms. Volta welcomed everyone to Coburg and explained the meeting site was the Coburg Rural Fire District meeting room which the District made available for community use. She noted the Coburg Charter School, which had been heavily supported by the community, would start this fall. Almost \$70,000 had been raised in community support. This weekend Coburg would celebrate Golden Years, a period from 1895-1910. The Quilt Show and Car Show were scheduled for August, and the Antique Fair was scheduled in September. She thanked John Fox for serving on the MPC.

Jon Ruiz arrived at 11:41 a.m.

Mr. Leiken noted there was not a quorum present.

Those present introduced themselves.

3. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MPC MEMBERS

Mr. Leiken reviewed adjustments to the agenda.

Mike Eyster arrived at 11:43 a.m.

4. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

David Sonnichsen stated he was the Government Relations subcommittee chair for the Citizen Planning Committee (CPC) for the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park. He thanked Eugene City Councilor Alan Zelenka and City Manager Jon Ruiz for recently walking with the CPC to look at refinements for the North Bank path project for which the MPC would consider funding today.

2. APPROVE June 9, 2011 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Leiken noted a quorum was present.

Mr. Eyster, seconded by Mr. Fox, moved that the minutes for June 9, 2011 be approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

5. METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) ISSUES

a. Report from the MPO Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

Sarah Strand and Edward Winter, representing the MPO CAC, joined the MPC. Mr. Winter reported the CAC discussed the Title VI Plan, the supplemental Surface Transportation Program (STP-U) funding requests, and the public outreach strategy for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update at its June 16, 2011 meeting. The CAC discussed outreach activities to the Latino community related to the Title VI Plan. The CAC unanimously supported all of the recommended projects on the supplemental STP-U funding request, and had a significant discussion about concerns that had been raised about the protection of Whilamut Natural Area and the value of the trail project for improving bike travel.

b. Supplemental FY11 Surface Transportation Program—Urban Funding

Mr. Thompson offered the staff report. This agenda item would complete the supplemental FFY2011 STP-U funding process initially described to the MPC at the May 2011 meeting. He reviewed the process, noting the packet contained public comments received prior to preparation of the packet, and none had been received after the packet was prepared. Both the CAC and Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) recommend programming the supplemental FY11 STP-U funds as shown in Exhibit A to Resolution 2011-06. He reviewed the projects included in the recommendation.

Mr. Zelenka stated Mr. Ruiz and the citizen's group had an agreement on changes to the North Bank path project. Additionally, although the Hilyard project was not funded in this funding cycle, the \$375,000 resurfacing project for the section from Broadway to 13th Avenue was a high priority for the City of Eugene.

Mr. Ruiz thought there were opportunities to modify the North Bank path project design and the City's Engineering Department would continue to work on the project.

Mr. Zelenka added the lighting and resurfacing along the path from the DeFazio Bridge to Leisure Lane were great elements.

Mr. Chickering said the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) was very supportive of the City of Springfield's application for the Franklin corridor project, noting it would be an excellent multi-modal improvement of the area. ODOT would work with the City to address the issues around roundabouts.

Mr. Eyster, seconded by Ms. Piercy, moved that the MPC approve Resolution 2011-06 amending FY10-13 MTIP to program STP-U funds as shown in Exhibit A to the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Amendment to FY10-13 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement (MTIP) Issues

Mr. Thompson said the purpose of the agenda item was to request that the MPC reprogram STP-U federal MPO funding for the Willamalane Middle Fork Willamette River path project in the amount of \$320,000. He distributed public comments from Nancy Ellen Locke and Herbert Everett, both of which were in support of the funding request, that were received after the agenda packet was prepared. He asked that the MPC close the public comment period today after the public hearing and take action on the proposed amendment.

Mr. Leiken opened the public hearing at 11:58 a.m.

Bob Keefer, Willamalane Park and Recreation District, 250 South 32nd Street, Springfield, appreciated the MPO's support of the Middle Fork Willamette River path project. The first phase which opened in April 2011 had received great reviews. The District was fortunate to receive a transportation enhancement grant from ODOT and the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) in May 2011. The OTC saw the vision and support of the work in Eugene and Springfield on the Rivers to Ridges trail systems. Fortunately, the District did not need to use the \$320,000 STP-U allocation for phase 1 of the project but it was needed to enable the District to move ahead with phase 2 and develop the trail from the Quarry Creek Bridge to Dorris Ranch. This would leave one remaining section to complete in the future. ODOT was excited about the project and was willing to move it ahead with other available funding to enable the District to bid the project this fall for spring/summer 2012 construction.

Mr. Leiken closed the public hearing at 12:01 p.m.

Ms. Piercy said Eugene and Springfield could take pride in what they were able to build together, and was very supportive of the proposal.

Ms. Lundberg thanked Willamalane for taking the lead on the project and everyone for working together to make it happen and work towards finishing the trail system.

Mr. Zelenka stated that he also supported the project.

In response to a question from Mr. Zelenka, Mr. Keefer explained phase 1 was paving to the Quarry Creek Bridge, phase 2 would pave around Quarry Butte to Dorris Ranch to the existing trail system. Gravel would be added to make that section of the existing trail system accessible for bikes. This final leg, on the existing trail, was not the preferred route through the orchard because of farming practices and other issues. The preferred route, and the final future phase of the project, would be outside the orchard so that the trail remained open all of the time.

Mr. Leiken stated he had supported the project for a long time. He thanked ODOT and other partner agencies for their support.

Ms. Lundberg, seconded by Ms. Piercy, moved that the MPC approve Resolution 2011-07 amending MTIP and programming funding. The motion passed unanimously.

d. Draft FY12-15 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

Ms. Crawford stated the purpose of the public hearing was to receive input and for the public to provide feedback to ODOT staff. She reported ODOT held an open house on July 13, 2011 which was attended by most Lane ACT members. One comment at the open house indicated the maps needed to be updated to include all of the projects that were included in the agenda packet for today's MPC meeting. Staff would update the maps and provide the updated information to MPC members. Noting ODOT did not have modernization funds, Ms. Crawford said ODOT was not asking for a prioritization of projects but it was seeking specific feedback on any of the projects.

Mr. Zelenka said the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) work for Beltline work, key 16223, was very important and urgently needed. The proposed funding would cover some of that work.

Ms. Crawford said ODOT staff estimated that \$5 to \$7 million was needed to complete the NEPA process, for which \$2.5 million would be provided through the FY12-15 STIP.

Mr. Chickering suggested exploring phasing the NEPA process. He acknowledged phasing could present a risk because the NEPA analysis was only valid for a limited period of time, and would require serious consideration before proceeding.

Mr. Leiken opened the public hearing at 12:09 p.m.

Sarah Strand, a Eugene resident, stated she was speaking as a private citizen. She had been involved in trying to improve the safety of the Beltline and Delta interchanges. She had been a member of the stakeholders advisory committee representing the MPO CAC. She opined the sooner the work was completed the better.

Mr. Leiken closed the public hearing at 12:12 p.m.

Mr. Fox concurred with the previous statements. He asked if the money would remain secured or if it would be taken away if additional funding was not found.

Ms. Crawford said the money could go away but as the planning efforts and additional NEPA funds were pursued, it should be okay. She said there was a segmentation concept related to NEPA that would be reviewed.

Mr. Chickering added that any proposal to remove the NEPA funds from the STIP would be a major discussion and MPC and other bodies would be asked to provide input before any action was taken.

Ms. Piercy said the area would have the Beltline for a long time and people would continue to use it, even in times of reduced resources. This was a top priority for the City of Eugene.

Mr. Zelenka agreed with Ms. Piercy and favored phasing the project. He stated many of the projects outside of the metropolitan area were bridge projects. He understood some of the segments of the temporary bridge at I-5 were meant to be reused.

Mr. Chickering said many of the beams used for the detour bridge would be reused by ODOT or local agencies. ODOT had been working with both the City of Eugene and the City of Springfield to construct a viaduct in conjunction with the Willamette Bridge project so the south bank bicycle/pedestrian path which currently went under Franklin Boulevard would continue along the river bank.

Mr. Bozievich said a citizen testified at the July 13, 2011 Lane ACT about peak oil. Mr. Bozievich said the Beltline project was one of his highest priorities as it impacted people outside of the MPO area, and was the main connection to I-5 for all of west Lane County. There were additional safety issues that needed to be addressed in the River Road/Beltline area. It was important to keep traffic and commerce moving between west Lane County and the rest of the State.

Mr. Leiken observed that the Columbia River crossing had sucked up another \$130 million without putting a shovel in the ground. He appreciated the comments on the Beltline segment from River Road to Coburg project, noting it was a health and safety issue for the community as it lead to Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend.

In response to a question from Mr. Zelenka, Mr. Chickering said ODOT recently repaved Highway 99 from the north to Washington/Jefferson Avenues. The segment between Roosevelt Boulevard and Jefferson Avenue was supposed to be part of the project but the concrete panels under the asphalt pavement were in such bad condition that an overlay was no longer feasible. ODOT was tearing out and reconstructing the paving through that section. The bridge work, which was part of the first project, included widening it a bit and adding walking areas on each. The second project did not include any pedestrian or bicycle facilities because there were not sufficient funds available. ODOT intended to watch for funding opportunities to pay for those facilities.

e. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Mr. Thompson stated this was a status update on the development of the draft RTP. He distributed a handout which listed RTP Goals and RTP Objectives.

Ms. Riner reviewed the handout, responded to questions and recorded MPC members' comments.

Mr. Bozievich didn't like the language of Goal 1 and wanted it revised to call out vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

In response to a question from Mr. Leiken, Ms. Riner said social equity was ensuring that the transportation system was equitable to all, that human beings were considered in the equation and that they were treated equitably by providing services equitably.

Mr. Thompson added it was also intended to demonstrate the RTP had a commitment to meeting Title VI requirements.

Mr. Zelenka said the language in Goal 1 was changed to reduced reliance of the automobile and not VMTs because the conversation around VMTs and the strategy related to specific percentage reductions had become problematic. The point of saying automobile was because of the impacts related to use of gasoline from single occupancy vehicles as well as congestion and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Ms. Piercy said the language should not be construed as anti-automobile, but it reflected the current State policy which was to encourage the use of all forms of transportation and reduce reliance on the automobile as the only form of transportation, which would have a good effect on air quality, road capacity and other issues.

Mr. Schwetz thought that we had decided to change the language to reduce reliance on any one mode which would indicate multiple modes would offer a more robust transportation system.

Mr. Bozievich supported Mr. Schwetz's amendment of reducing reliance on any one mode.

In a question from Mr. Zelenka, Ms. Riner stated that the current copy of the Goals and Objectives was a status report only, and was provided to show how staff had interpreted MPC comments to date.

Mr. Zelenka said problems associated with greenhouse gases and congestion were around the automobile and adopting Mr. Schwetz's language skirted the issue and muddied the water.

Mr. Thompson said the draft RTP would be released on September 2, 2011 for review followed by adoption in November 2011.

Ms. Lundberg wanted the document presented to the public to reflect positive statements promoting all modes of transportation.

Mr. Chickering thought that for the public review the broader statement may be a better place to start.

Mr. Schwetz suggested that additional language be added to provide more specificity about the intent of each goal or objective.

Ms. Riner stated a positive message may be to describe our need for mode independence.

Ms. Piercy agreed that we should provide a more positive statement that described what we were trying to accomplish.

Mr. Bozievich commented that he was disappointed to receive the document at the meeting and asked about next steps.

Mr. Thompson said the agenda packet, which would include the full draft RTP, would be delivered to MPC members on September 2, 2011 for the September 8, 2011 meeting. The public comment period would remain open for two months until November. Staff could bring another iteration of the draft goals and objectives to the August 2011 meeting.

Mr. Thompson reviewed the timeline and public process for the RTP. Staff had begun public outreach including a speakers' bureau. The financial constraint analysis had not affected the mix of projects on the constrained versus illustrative lists, but no new projects had been added and several were completed and thus removed from the list. Changes could occur in the future based on what happened at the federal level with transportation legislation and funding.

Mr. Leiken introduced Coburg Fire Chief Chad Minter and thanked him for the use of the Coburg Rural Fire District's facility for today's MPC meeting.

f. MPO Interaction with Lane Area Commission on Transportation (Lane ACT)

Ms. Riner explained the purpose of the agenda item was to continue discussion of protocols used for coordinating with the Lane ACT. At the June 2011 meeting, MPC members requested additional information, including examples of coordination protocols used by other regions. Ms. Crawford was preparing that information for a future presentation to the MPC. The Lane ACT Steering Committee included: Bob Hooker, Kitty Piercy, Hillary Wylie, Jay Bozievich and Dave Jacobson. The MPO's representative to the Lane ACT would also join this group for purposes of developing recommended Lane ACT/Central Lane MPO coordination protocols.

Mr. Bozievich thought working together to develop recommendations to the OTC was great, but thought there may be some issues on which the group would need to agree to disagree because the bodies had different objectives.

Ms. Piercy thought the steering committee was a good cross over from both groups. She thought the group may agree to disagree when the priorities for the ACT differed from those of the individual jurisdictions.

In response to a question from Mr. Zelenka, Ms. Riner said the ACT and the MPO would need to coordinate on such activities as the STIP, Connect Oregon, other funding programs, and certain State plan and policy changes.

Mr. Leiken said it would be critical for the MPC, ACT and jurisdictions to be on the same page and present a unified front.

g. point2point Solutions Annual Report

Ms. Brand provided the staff report and a PowerPoint presentation entitled *Point2point Solutions—2010 Key Accomplishments*, copies of which were distributed to MPC members.

Mr. Bozievich asked for a breakdown of the figures for student and employer group passes for the University of Oregon (UO) and Lane Community College (LCC).

Mr. Fox asked for information related to the use of the Van Pool and Park and Ride programs.

Ms. Piercy commended LTD for the success of the Business Commute Challenge.

h. Lane Transit District Student Transit Pass Program

Ms. Van Winkle explained the loss of funding for the Student Transit Pass Program, how LTD aimed to serve students during the coming year, and laid the ground work for a future funding discussion.

She reviewed the history of program, noting the growth in student ridership increased more than 40 percent from 2004 to 2011. In 2010, the Oregon State Legislature established a funding termination date of July 1, 2012. However, legislators determined that while they understood the benefits of the transportation programs, Oregon could no longer afford to fund such services through the Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC) Program. In June 2011, LTD was notified that as part of the changes to the State of Oregon's BETC Program, LTD would no longer receive state funding for the Student Transit Pass Program. LTD had decided to offer September 2011 for free to students in grades six through twelve as a way to encourage students to give LTD a try and help families with the transition.

A group pass program would be offered to students attending alternative schools. The Eugene 4J School District had expressed an interest in knowing what stakeholders would be willing to work on finding a way to fund the program.

Ms. Lundberg was hopeful the program could be reinstated for all Springfield School District 19 students. She liked that all students had access to it rather than it being tied to the free and reduced lunch program.

Ms. Van Winkle said many students at the high school level did not participate in the program that provided free and reduced lunches and their LTD bus pass because they did not want to be stigmatized.

Mr. Leiken thought the program could become more necessary if school boundaries were relaxed. He was very supportive of the program.

Ms. Piercy opined some people still thought bus passes were a frill and there was still work that needed to be done. This issue was about social equity and providing access, and was a fundamental issue for the communities and the kids.

In response to a question from Mr. Bozievich, Ms. Van Winkle said a student bus pass cost \$24 per month, but she did not know what the income levels were for a family of four for free and reduced lunches. She said the school districts received 70 percent reimbursement for the programs. The Eugene School District expected the loss of the program would cost the District \$40,000 to \$50,000.

Mr. Bozievich stated \$24 a month was a fairly minor cost when compared to the cost of cigarettes and lattes. He added the Eugene School District chose not to provide yellow bus service to its high school students. When he hosted high school exchange students, he purchased bus passes while they were here, and he appreciated how important bus service could be to them. It was a question of whether this was a Eugene School District or LTD problem.

Ms. Van Winkle noted even where yellow school bus service was provided it did not address transportation needs for after school activities. It would take a broad consortium to look for other funding sources, and she feared there was fatigue in addressing funding issues. There were niche areas that relied on the program, in particular homeless youth and youth who did not have families.

Ms. Brand said affordability may not be an issue for many people, but there was a segment of the population that could not afford \$24 per month, especially if they had more than one kid. She was

shocked to learn that 47 percent of the students in the Eugene School District and over 60 percent of the students in the Bethel School District qualified for the free and reduced lunch program.

Mr. Zelenka said this was a social equity issue. It was not uncommon in this community for families to spend 70 to 80 percent of their income on housing and food, and they would not have \$24 per month for three kids for bus passes. He asked if Lane Transit District (LTD) had a plan to study the impacts of ending the Student Transit Pass Program to present the information at the next State legislative session.

Mr. Schwetz said LTD had been discussing researching the issue with the UO.

Mr. Eyster asserted it was the creativity and ingenuity of LTD staff that started the program and that same creativity and ingenuity would work on a solution. A number of people in the community criticized the EmX program, and turned the situation around and blamed LTD for the elimination of the bus pass program, which did not help solve the problem. He appreciated MPC's understanding of the issue. It would be important for everyone to advocate for a solution.

Mr. Zelenka and Mr. Schwetz left at 1:37 p.m.

i. MPO Planning Calendar

In the interest of time, Mr. Leiken asked Ms. Riner to send the information to MPC members.

j. Follow-up and Next Steps

- **ODOT Update**—Mr. Chickering said ODOT regional solutions centers would be located in Portland and Eugene. He had been appointed chair of the Eugene team and would have an office at the Eugene center. Mr. Leiken asked ODOT to provide an invitation to Commissioner Frohnmayr for MPC meetings.
- **Rail**—no update.
- **Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Update**—no update.
- **MTIP Administrative Amendments**—no update.
- **Next Steps/Agenda Build**—no update.

6. METROPOLITAN CABLE TELEVISION COMMISSION

Mr. Mecham reported that Comcast collected money yearly from subscribers and provided it to LCOG for the purpose of making capital investments in the public, educational and government cable channels. The MPC had established a process and set criteria for awards of the funds. Applications had been received from: the City of Eugene to replace the government channel sound system; Eugene Fire and EMS for safety training for Eugene Fire and EMS, Springfield Fire and Life Safety, and Lane Rural Fire and Rescue; and, public access television for studio equipment upgrades. Mr. Mecham stated there was sufficient money available to fund the three proposals and staff recommended approval of all of the applications.

Ms. Piercy, seconded by Ms. Lundberg, moved that the three applications for PEG capital funds received in the June 2011 solicitation be awarded funds in the amount requested. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:41 p.m.

(Recorded by Linda Henry)