



MPO Greenhouse Gas Task Force
Meeting #1
 October 15, 2009

This meeting summary was prepared by Central Lane MPO staff, and is not to be considered the official minutes of the Task Force. For additional Task Force information, visit ODOT's Task Force website at: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP/HB2186.shtml>.

INTRODUCTIONS/OPENING COMMENTS

House Speaker Dave Hunt and Senate President Peter Courtney provided brief opening comments. Speaker Hunt emphasized the fact that even with the diverse entities represented at the table, that their shared interests far outweighed their differences, and that good things were already happening around the state in an effort to address the impacts of GhG emissions. Senate President Courtney encouraged the group to think both short- and long-term in considering possible outcomes for the Task Force. He suggested the Task Force consider aiming for two goals, the upcoming February Special Legislative Session as defined in HB 2186, but also the 2011 Regular Session.

Members of the Task Force present introduced themselves. Representative Terry Beyer has been added to the original Task Force membership list and was present.

OVERVIEW

The desired outcomes for Meeting #1 of the Task Force were 1) to develop a shared understanding of scenario planning, GhG emissions, and the associated models and planning tools; 2) to discuss the expectations for the Task Force and outcomes; and 3) to agree on the Task Force scope, operating procedures and work plan. The three presentations outlined below were provided to meet Outcome #1, developing shared understanding.

Alternative Land Use and Transportation Scenario Planning Case Studies in Oregon

Consultant John Fregonese provided an overview of five regional problem solving efforts that have occurred within Oregon MPO's over the past twenty years. The study reported on the Bear Creek RPS (Rogue Valley MPO), Region 2050 (Central Lane MPO), Salem Futures (SKATS) and the Land Use Transportation Air Quality (LUTRAQ) and Metro 2040 (Portland Metro).

State-of-the-Practice Alternative Land Use and Transportation Scenario Development

John Henneman of Cambridge Systematics Inc., presented findings from eight case studies that are examples of state-of-the-practice scenario planning efforts throughout the country. The research identified several common factors in these projects, including broad public outreach, a high level of stakeholder involvement and the use of sophisticated visualization techniques. The study also found that agencies employing this type of regional planning process could anticipate a 2-5 year schedule and significant costs.

The Status of Oregon Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Analysis

Brian Gregor, ODOT Senior Transportation Analyst, provided the Committee with an introduction to the science of identifying, analyzing, measuring and reducing transportation sector GhG emissions. Mr. Gregor identified several concerns relating to a one-size-fits-all approach, and provided the Committee with a number of parameters to be considered in selecting the appropriate tools or sets of tools for meeting GhG emission reduction targets.

DISCUSSION

Committee members were asked to describe their expectations for Task Force outcomes. Their discussion included the following:

- Integrating state GHG planning directives with pending federal directives;
- Developing proposals within the context of flexibility, reasonable time frames, and economic realities;
- Addressing variations in resources, constituencies, and transportation infrastructure development between the six Oregon MPO's;
- Meeting the environmental imperative to respond to the issue of GhG impacts and communicating the multiple benefits of VMT reduction;
- Identifying the tools and resources needed for each of the different communities to respond appropriate to their circumstances, and ensuring ongoing education and information to support the outcomes;
- Expanding the discussion beyond reducing VMT's, recognizing the need to provide a range of transportation choices, and showing link between a healthy transportation system and a healthy economic base;
- Addressing funding and governance barriers, and integrating new approaches with programs already underway;
- Bringing local governments and environmental interests together to remove political and funding barriers which are perceived as a lack of will to reduce GhG emissions;
- Meeting the Oregon planning legacy and serving a leadership role in developing the effective GhG reduction strategies and tools;
- Accomplishing the directives of HB 2186 and laying a foundation for bigger work as described in HB 2001 to further integrate land use and transportation planning;
- Using the Committee's time productively and finding some consensus on some long range goals, recognizing that results may not be realized for 10-20 years;
- Defining the context of the Task Force within the transportation sector and the relationship to VMT, and related issues such as mitigation and adaptation strategies;
- Identifying resources needed for local agencies to implement GhG reduction plans and providing a pragmatic approach to attain more aspirational goals;
- Creating a easily translatable vision to build public understanding and buy-in; and
- Making a real difference by focusing on tangible products—not meaningless platitudes.

NEXT MEETING

Presentations scheduled for Meeting #2 include an overview of MPO planning, a comparison of the six Oregon MPO's, and a discussion of GhG reduction efforts already underway in each of these metropolitan areas.