

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee Virtual Meeting via Zoom

July 9, 2020
11:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Christine Lundberg, Chair; Joe Pishioneri (City of Springfield); Lucy Vinis (City of Eugene); Pete Sorenson, Joe Berney (Lane County); Ray Smith (City of Coburg); Frannie Brindle (Oregon Department of Transportation); Carl Yeh (Lane Transit District), members; Anne Heath (City of Coburg); Matt Rodrigues for Sarah Medary (City of Eugene); Sasha Vartanian for Steve Mokrohisky (Lane County), *ex officio* members.

Brenda Wilson, Paul Thompson, Kelly Clarke, Ellen Currier, Syd Shoaf, Drew Pfefferle, Rachel Dorfman, Dan Callister, (Lane Council of Governments); Rob Inerfeld, Jenifer Willer (City of Eugene); Emma Newman, Tom Boyatt (City of Springfield); Jeff Kernan, Megan Winner (City of Coburg); Tom Schwetz, Andrew Martin, Theresa Brand (Lane Transit District); Bill Johnston (Oregon Department of Transportation); David Reesor (University of Oregon); Rob Zako, Claire Roth (Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation); Dennis Mitchell (DKS).

WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Lundberg called the meeting of the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) to order and noted that a quorum was present.

APPROVE June 4, 2020, MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Pishioneri, seconded by Mr. Yeh, moved to approve the June 4, 2020, minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously, 7:0.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MPC MEMBERS

None.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Mr. Thompson stated that he had received a number of public comments via email and had forwarded those to MPC members.

Rob Zako, representing Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation (BEST), stated he was following up on a letter sent to MPC members from himself and other community members in reference to the Central Lane MPO's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation. He said the MPC had discussed the matter at length during its June 4 meeting and two points were noted: 1) there was insufficient funding for active transportation projects and more was needed, and 2) the MPC did not have land use authority. He said while those points were accurate, the MPC spent 25 minutes discussing what it could not do. It was long overdue to take action on climate change and Oregon was aware of the problem in 1988 and 30 years ago there was a plan to take integrated land use and transportation action seriously with a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent by the year 2005. He said the letter listed four areas for action:

compact urban development, parking policies, active transportation, and integrated planning and measuring. He urged the MPC members to take action separately and coordinate activities.

Claire Roth, BEST, shared her support for especially important and time-sensitive MPO projects on the proposed list: Safe Routes to School Coordinator, Hunsaker Lane improvements, Laura Street upgrade, Springfield Walking and Biking Network improvements, Q Street reconstruction and Mohawk Boulevard preservation. She said BEST support all projects on the list, but wanted to highlight a few that played a role in increasing the quality of transportation safety in the Eugene, Springfield, Lane County and beyond area. She said some of the projects were time-sensitive because if safety improvements were not made now more lives would be lost to unsafe conditions on streets and sidewalks.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) ISSUES

Central Lane MPO (CLMPO) Funding Applications

Mr. Callister said the applications for the FY 2022-2024 Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), Transportation Alternatives (TA) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) discretionary funding were presented at the June 4 MPC meeting. He reviewed a table comparing the recommended funding to the original proposal and changes to the recommendations presented in June. Because of those changes he requested that another public hearing be held, following by action on the resolution with amended recommendations.

Ms. Lundberg opened the public hearing.

Mr. Thompson noted that the comments provided to MPC members electronically, along with comments from Claire Roth, related to the funding recommendations and should be part of the public record.

Ms. Lundberg determined there was no one wishing to speak and closed the hearing.

Ms. Lundberg pointed out that Coburg Road was one of the main roads in Eugene that actually interfaced closely with Springfield and many residents depended on the corridor to travel to Eugene. She said originally the EmX corridor route that went to International Way and the employment center was planned to be on Coburg Road; Eugene tabled the plan before the route was finalized and EmX was looped back to downtown Springfield. She felt that was a glaring omission and was concerned with projects along Coburg Road that would create more congestion. She encouraged Eugene to think about its plans for Coburg Road because congestion was a serious issue and contrary to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Ms. Vinis agreed that Coburg Road was a critical corridor and timing and preparation were not far enough along for the project to be submitted during the application process while other projects could be fully funded in this round.

Mr. Pishioneri, seconded by Ms. Vinis, moved to approve Resolution 2020-05.
The motion passed unanimously, 7:0.

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Plan Overview

Mr. Thompson introduced consultant Dennis Mitchell, DKS, who had been working with local jurisdictions collecting baseline data and other information, to present details about the project.

Mr. Mitchell said the project included three different efforts: update to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), a Congestion Management Plan and the ITS Plan. He used a slide presentation to illustrate details of the ITS and plan development. He said the plan would be a living document that could be updated on a regular basis. He said the MPO was updating all three plans simultaneously and in coordination; that was a first in the state and would allow RTP goals and objectives to be part of the ITS plan and vice versa. Strategies from plans could influence each other. Staff from all jurisdictions were engaged in the effort and helping to establish the goals and objectives of the ITS plan in conjunction with goals and objectives of individual jurisdictions.

Mr. Berney shared his experience 30 years ago with integrating traffic signal controls and programmable controls into all of the training apprentice electricians received. He said he failed to see how an ITS was intelligent if it did not have the following components: carbon reduction objectives for the transportation system specifically and a discussion of how its investments would increase business opportunities and local job opportunities in its communities.

Mr. Smith agreed with Mr. Berney's comments regarding carbon reduction. He discussed the importance of traffic signal coordination and asked if there was a feedback process once assumptions had been programmed into traffic controls. He used the signals at Coburg Road and Game Farm Road, which were programmed with an assumption that Game Farm Road should have a priority. He said evaluating the effectiveness and practical impact of those assumptions should be part of an intelligent system.

Mr. Mitchell commented that communications allowed systems to better react, but did not determine how individual signals were programmed; that decision was up to the jurisdiction responsible for that signal. He agreed that from an efficiency standpoint most of the green time should go to the largest number of vehicles, but there were many factors to balance when making programming decisions. The ITS did not define how that was decided, it only caused other signals downstream to react. He said feedback would be through the agency managing that signal.

Mr. Rodriguez said the ITS also allowed for the placement of cameras to observe intersection performance and determine if changes were having a positive impact on traffic flow.

Mr. Smith said when incidents occurred on Interstate 5, Coburg's streets were gridlocked. He said cameras as part of the ITS infrastructure would help the city to monitor and respond to those situations.

Mr. Sorenson asked if carbon reduction and climate change were components of his project. Mr. Mitchell said those had an effect, but were not directly related. ITS was intended to make the current system more efficient, which would reduce carbon emissions, but that was a byproduct and not the target of an ITS.

Mr. Sorenson agreed with Mr. Berney and Mr. Smith that carbon reduction or climate change should be factored into the project, but it did not sound as though that was something that could be measured or known. He asked if there were ways to determine the carbon reduction impact of an ITS if that was a desired performance measure. Mr. Mitchell said current federal efforts were exploring tools and modeling in relation to ITS because there was no way at this time to evaluate climate impacts. He said ITS was an inexpensive way to help reduce congestion, reduce delay and reduce accidents. The byproduct should be lower emissions but there was no way to measure that.

Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Letter of Support

Ms. Newman said a draft letter of support for the Springfield Safe Routes to School application was included in the agenda packet, along with maps of the project. She provided an overview of the Springfield

SRTS initiative and said the application was for two crossway enhancements along Jasper Road near Douglas Gardens Elementary School and Mt. Vernon Elementary School, both of which were Title I schools. She explained the selection process to determine which SRTS projects to put forward for funding.

Mr. Pishioneri asked for additional information on the placement of the crosswalk near Douglas Gardens Elementary on the west side instead of the east side of Dondea Street. Ms. Newman said she would follow up with traffic engineers and provide Mr. Pishioneri with the explanation.

Ms. Vinis said that the City of Eugene was also submitting two applications for SRTS projects; one would be in the Eugene 4J School District and one would be in the Bethel School District. She said a letter of support had been requested from the LaneACT (Area Commission on Transportation).

Ms. Lundberg said both schools were located on roads that were considered rural and children trying to cross. She was pleased that the project would provide enhancements for children trying to reach their schools safely.

Mr. Berney also supported the projects as he drove Jasper Road frequently and the cross walks would be a major safety improvement for school children.

Mr. Berney, seconded by Mr. Pishioneri, moved that the Metropolitan Policy Committee write a support letter for the Springfield Safe Routes To School application. The motion passed unanimously, 7:0.

Follow-up and Next Steps

- **ODOT Update**—Ms. Brindle announced the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) would meet on July 15, 2020, to approve the FY 21-24 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and begin discussing development of the FY 24-27 STIP. That process would begin with allocation of available funding among categories and programs. She said the goal was to have funding allocations by program decided by December 2020. Packets of information would be developed to help MPOs and advisory committees provide input on those funding categories. She suggested reserving time on a future MPC agenda to receive a presentation on the process. The OTC was also planning another meeting with MPO and ACT chairs later in the year.

Mr. Thompson added that the packet for the July 15 OTC meeting included direction to staff to assume a 10 percent reduction in federal funding; if funding was received above that level additional direction would be provided on how those funds would be used. He said current funding categories were enhancement, safety, non-highway, local programs, fix it and other functions. If those categories were approved by the OTC, discussions about the allocations among categories would begin. He said the Oregon MPO Consortium had requested a letter be sent to the OTC asking that it not wait to decide how additional federal funds would be spent, but rather to include that as part of the current discussion.

- **MTIP Administrative Amendments**—There were no questions.
- **Next Meeting**—Ms. Lundberg noted the meeting was tentatively set for the Springfield Justice Center but would likely be a virtual meeting.

Mr. Sorenson asked if staff planned to send a response to members of the public who commented about their concern regarding the time spent by the MPC discussing restrictions on its ability to address climate change because it did not regulate land use. Mr. Thompson said the MPC should consider that those concerns would be taken into consideration as it moved forward. He said the letter responded to the MPC's discussion last month regarding the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) rule-making process. Staff would keep the MPC apprised of how that rule-making process was proceeding on the issue of mandating regional coordination and regional planning with respect to greenhouse gas reduction.

Ms. Vinis suggested that the MPC could designate the relevance of agenda items to climate change and greenhouse gas emissions to keep those issues in front of the committee and the public.

Mr. Berney agreed with Ms. Vinis's suggestion. He asked staff for additional information on areas where the state was considering mandates to regions and jurisdictions so those could be discussed at future MPC meetings to decide if responses or actions should be initiated before mandates were thrust upon members.

Ms. Lundberg said she had provided testimony on behalf of the MPC to LCDC advocating for flexibility and against mandates.

Ms. Lundberg adjourned the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

(Transcribed by Lynn Taylor)