

# MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

August 4, 2022  
11:30 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Randy Groves, Chair (City of Eugene); Sean VanGordon, Steve Moe (City of Springfield); Heather Buch (Lane County); John Marshall (City of Coburg); Don Nordin (Lane Transit District), Vidal Francis (Oregon Department of Transportation), members; Anne Heath (City of Coburg), *ex officio* member.

Brenda Wilson, Paul Thompson, Dan Callister, Ellen Currier, Kelly Clarke, Drew Pfefferle, Kate Wilson, Laura Campbell, Rachel Dorfman (Lane Council of Governments); Emma Newman (City of Springfield); Rob Inerfeld (City of Eugene); Sasha Vartanian, Cassidy Mills (Lane County); Megan Winner (City of Coburg); Tom Schwetz, Andrew Martin, Mark Johnson, Theresa Brand, Jeremy Carr (Lane Transit District); Mark Bernard (Oregon Department of Transportation); Brodie Hylton (Cascadia Mobility); Rob Zako (Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation), Neil Moyer (Metro Television); Sarah Mazze, Shane Rhodes.

## **WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. Groves convened the meeting of the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) and a quorum was established.

## **APPROVE June 2, 2022, MPC MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Moe, seconded by Mr. Nordin, moved to approve the June 2, 2022, meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

## **ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MPC MEMBERS**

Mr. Thompson noted that the agenda had been revised to include an additional item.

Mr. Bernard introduced Vidal Francis, the new Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Area 5 manager.

Mr. Francis said he was pleased to be part of the MPC and looked forward to working with local jurisdictions to keep projects moving forward.

Mr. Nordin announced that Lane Transit District (LTD) had selected a new general manager and hoped the individual would be on board by September.

Mr. VanGordon joined the meeting.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

**Rob Zako**, executive director of Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation (BEST), spoke to the increasing dangers of global warming, noting the region had experienced five summers in a row of severe

wildfires and smoke and days during which temperatures exceeded 100 degrees. The nation and the world were hotter and that was related to the burning of fossil fuels. He said two years ago BEST and its allies had urged the MPC not to make rules but to take actions to slow fossil fuel use and that had not happened significantly. Recently the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) had adopted rules for Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities. The rules did not technically direct the MPC to take action; it directed individual jurisdictions to act. He said in order for elected officials to do their jobs public support was necessary and BEST was committed to working with its partners to assist in that effort and provide more support.

## **METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) ISSUES**

### **Project Proposals & Recommended MPO Funding Package for 2023-2037**

Mr. Callister provided background information on the funding sources, project selection process consistent with the criteria approved by the MPC at its May 2022 meeting, and recommendations from the Transportation Planning Committee. He presented a brief summary of the following project applications:

- Coburg Loop Path, Phase 4 on N. Industrial Way (City of Coburg)
- Freight/Commuter Connector Feasibility Study (Coburg)
- N Coburg Industrial Way Pavement Preservation (Coburg)
- Bailey Hill Rd. and Bertelsen Rd. Roundabout (Eugene)
- Bertelsen Rd. bridge over Amazon Creek – Seismic Retrofit (Eugene)
- Coburg Road: Ferry St Bridge to Crescent Ave. Multimodal Plan (Eugene)
- Division Ave Roundabouts and Street Redesign (Eugene)
- Franklin Blvd Alder St to I-5 Construction (Eugene)
- Goodpasture Island Rd Bridge – Seismic Retrofit (Eugene)
- North Delta Rd Shared Use Path (Eugene)
- River Road-Santa Clara Pedestrian & Bicycle Bridge (Eugene)
- SmartTrips: New Movers & Mobility Options (Eugene)
- 30th Avenue Active Transportation Corridor Design
- Airport Road Pavement Preservation: MP 1.52 to 0.63
- Clear Lake Road Pavement Preservation: MP 0.0-2.75
- Wilkes Drive: River Road to River Loop 1
- Ticket Vending Machine Replacement
- Frequent Transit Network Safety and Amenity Improvements
- MovingAhead
- OR 225: OR126 – end of City jurisdiction (Springfield)
- Laura Street: MP 0.12 to 0.339, Urban Standards (Springfield)
- Mohawk Blvd: 19th St to N. of Hwy 126E (Springfield)
- Pedestrian Crossing Enhancements (Springfield)
- S. 32nd St./Jasper Rd. Preservation Project (Springfield)
- Sidewalk Rehabilitation (Springfield)
- Transportation System Planning (Springfield)
- Walking and Biking Network Improvements (Springfield)

Ms. Buch said she had received a number of inquiries about a sidewalk on the east side of Bertelsen Road to 18th Street. There were a number of homes on that side but residents did not feel comfortable walking because of the lack of a sidewalk. Mr. Inerfeld said a sidewalk was in the City of Eugene's Transportation System Plan and had been discussed for funding, but the tool that had been used to fund sidewalks was an

assessment of property owners. He said the City would review other options for funding that type of project.

Mr. Groves also noted the unsafe conditions for pedestrians in that area.

Mr. Moe commented that the Eugene project Franklin Blvd to I-5 seemed misleading as it was quite a distance to I-5. He said Springfield's Laura Street improvements project was very important because of a large residential development in that area.

Mr. Callister presented the table of TPC funding recommendations for project selection and funding, a copy of which was included in the agenda materials. He explained the basis for each project's recommendation.

Mr. VanGordon observed that the allotment of funds to Springfield projects was somewhat lower than it had historically been and said the City would submit additional applications for any unused funds. Mr. Callister indicated that the funding sources prohibited allotments and required that the allocation of funds to projects had to be jurisdictionally blind.

Mr. Groves opened the public hearing.

**Rob Zako**, executive director of Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation (BEST), observed that the project information was very technical and there were several funding sources involved in the process. His staff had a difficult time understanding the materials and it would be very hard for the public to understand as well. He felt MPC staff had done a good job of reconciling needs with different types of funding and timelines. He was pleased that regional funding objectives were being used to assess applications and BEST supported the TPC recommendations and believed the projects would generally advance the region's goals. He said the MPC was a policy body and the question of how to spend different pots of money was more tactical in nature. The larger question was how to achieve the goals of the region and how the projects addressed those goals.

Mr. Thompson submitted email testimony from Eugene resident Steve Piercy that indicated he found the information clear and concise and commended the improved presentation.

Mr. Groves thanked staff for a clear presentation that connected projects to MPC policies and regional goals.

### **PeaceHealth Rides Bike Share**

Mr. Hylton stated that Cascadia Mobility had begun operating PeaceHealth Rides in the spring of 2022. He said PeaceHealth Rides was a 300 bicycle program with about 50 hubs. He used a slide presentation to give an overview of the system and technology, current and previous usage patterns and operations under a nonprofit model. He said one of the goals was to create a model consistent with ODOT's interest in expanding electric bike programs into other communities and act as an active transportation agency with a suite of services. He reviewed statistics on miles and trips and farebox revenue. He said an additional 50 bikes were put into service during the recent World Games and Nike had donated 120 bikes to the program. The donated bikes were in storage awaiting refurbishing so they could be put into service.

Mr. Hylton reviewed the annual program costs, noting that the City of Eugene provided \$75,000 by purchasing memberships for all employees, farebox revenue provided \$187,000 and PeaceHealth sponsorships provided \$330,000. That left a shortfall of \$250,000 that required a public subsidy of \$1.91

per trip. He said discussions were underway with the University of Oregon regarding memberships and single trip passes for students and employees. That agreement would reduce the need for public subsidy by 50 percent. He said an expansion into Springfield was being discussed and that would improve the program's reach and economy of scale.

In response to a question from Mr. Nordin, Mr. Hylton said that it might be possible to partner with LTD to integrate its farebox recovery system with PeaceHealth Rides using RFID technology.

Mr. Francis asked about the other types of services Cascadia Mobility was considering. Mr. Hylton said those could include bicycle valets, community rides, learn to ride classes, an e-scooter pilot and working with other community organizations to develop other active and shared transportation options.

Mr. Marshall asked if there was a PeaceHealth Rides at Lane Community College (LCC). Mr. Hylton said there was not a hub because of the distance involved and the difficulty of riding one of the bikes over the 30th Avenue hill. The PeaceHealth Rides bikes were too heavy and slow for that type of commute.

Mr. Groves commended the bike share program and looked forward to its expansion into other communities. He was somewhat concerned about e-scooters because of bad behaviors of the users. He asked if there had been any problems regarding theft or vandalism of bikes. Mr. Hylton said the bikes were equipped with GPS and only two or three had been lost in the past four years. Vandalism did occur, but it was minimal as the bikes were always in the public right-of-way and employees checked them frequently. The most common problem was theft of chains.

Mr. Francis commented that e-bike technology was constantly improving and that might make a hub at LCC possible. Mr. Hylton agreed that e-bikes would extend the program's range and ODOT had funding available to support e-bike share programs.

Mr. Nordin expressed his excitement about the PeaceHealth Rides program and hoped to see it expanded to other communities. He commended Mr. Hylton and his employees.

Mr. Hylton appreciated the opportunity to present information about the bike share program. He was seeking all opportunities to increase program revenue, but it would need some subsidies in the future.

Mr. Groves asked that the MPC receive periodic updates on the program, particularly as new components were added.

### **Title VI Plan Update and Survey**

Ms. Currier said a short survey would be distributed to MPC members as part of an annual update to the Title VI Plan and annual report. The survey determined the racial and ethnic composition of boards and commissions. She said the Title VI Plan addressed the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs that received federal funds. Additional legislation also prohibited discrimination on the basis of gender, disability and income status. The plan also covered environmental justice. The plan would be presented to the committee at a future meeting.

### **Request for Letter of Support for Use of ODOT CMAQ Funding**

Mr. Callister said a request had been received from Gary Compton Construction for a letter of support for a proposed project that would utilize federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds to replace two older diesel trucks with newer, lower emission vehicles. He noted that MPO funds are not

being requested; the request is for state discretionary federal funds. The application process required a letter of support from the local MPO and there would be no impact on MPO funds. He said the applicant was providing a 50 percent match and details of the application and a draft letter of support were included in the agenda packet. If funded, the project would be included in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). He said the letter of support was needed by August 15.

In response to a question from Ms. Buch, Mr. Callister described the CMAQ funding program, which helped communities comply with the Clean Air Act. Because the vehicles to be replaced were operated primarily in an area that at one time was not in attainment, the project was eligible because it would reduce CO and coarse particulates. Mr. Thompson added that the legislature had directed ODOT to dedicate some of its CMAQ funding to diesel retrofitting.

Mr. Marshall said he was not aware of the program and had determined that some other potential applicants were likewise not aware. He asked how the program was publicized to companies that might wish to access those funds. Mr. Thompson said it was an ODOT program and he was not aware of how the state conducted outreach to diesel operators.

Mr. Moe commented that the applicant had been proactive in seeking funding for diesel retrofit. The company was operating out of Oakridge and the project would contribute to better air quality.

Mr. Nordin said LTD had achieved some of its sustainability goals by changing the fuel it used.

Mr. Francis said he would research how ODOT conducted outreach for the funding program and report back to the MPC.

Ms. Buch said she would support the application for state CMAQ funds, particularly as it would benefit air quality in the Oakridge area. She asked for additional information about the program at a future meeting so MPC members could share that information with their constituents.

Mr. Thompson said that the Department of Environmental Quality had more information on the program. A letter of support was needed if the project would affect vehicles operated within the MPO and the project would need to be included in the MTIP.

Mr. VanGordon indicated he would support the project, but agreed that more information on the program would be helpful.

Mr. Groves echoed Mr. VanGordon's comments.

Ms. Buch, seconded by Mr. VanGordon, moved to provide a letter of support for Gary Compton Construction's application for ODOT CMAQ funding. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Follow-up and Next Steps**

- **ODOT Update**—Mr. Francis said he had enjoyed the meeting and hoped his contributions to the MPC would be positive for everyone.
- **MTIP Administrative Amendments**—There were no questions.

- **Next Meeting/Agenda Build**—September 1 Virtual Meeting, October 6 Virtual Meeting, November 3 Virtual Meeting

Mr. Moe reported that the Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC) had received a very informative presentation on LCDC's recent Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities rule-making. He hoped the MPC could obtain a copy of it.

Mr. Johnson said LTD was currently negotiating with a general manager candidate who had already been overwhelmingly approved by the community and the LTD Board. The candidate had initially withdrawn, but had now resumed discussions with LTD.

Mr. Thompson provided an update on Link Lane, which provided transportation between Eugene and Florence and Yachats and Florence. He said ridership had been increasing each month. He said LCOG was working with Lane County on electric vehicle strategic planning and funding for electric vehicle infrastructure deployment. LCOG and Lane County jointly submitted a grant application to Eugene Water & Electric Board for funding of electric vehicle infrastructure planning.

Mr. Nordin commented that while people using Link Lane could get to the coast, they could not access the beach without walking or hiring a taxi. He understood that some additional funding would extend the route to the beach.

Mr. Groves adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)