

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

April 6, 2023
11:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Steve Moe, Chair; Sean VanGordon (City of Springfield); Lucy Vinis, Randy Groves (City of Eugene); David Loveall. Pat Farr (Lane County); Nancy Bell (City of Coburg); Susan Cox, Kelly Sutherland (Lane Transit District); Vidal Francis (Oregon Department of Transportation), members.

Paul Thompson, Brenda Wilson, Dan Callister, Ellen Currier, Kelly Clarke (Lane Council of Governments); Rob Zako (Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation); John Marshall (City of Coburg)

WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

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

APPROVE February 2, 2023, MPC MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Bell, seconded by Mr. Van Gordon, moved to approve the March 2, 2023, meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously, 9:0.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MPC MEMBERS

Ms. Vinis announced the City of Eugene had launched its electric scooter (e-scooter) program on March 31. Initially 200 e-scooters were deployed, with 400 more to be added over the coming months. She also announced the City's Move EUG initiative was under way. It was a planning project to identify and prioritize walking, biking, and safety programs and infrastructure projects throughout Eugene. An open house as part of the public engagement would be held on April 20, 2023, at the Farmers' Market.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Rob Zako, Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation (BEST), invited MPC members to a Future of Transportation event, co-sponsored by BEST and ARP-Oregon, on April 10.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) ISSUES

Draft 2024-2027 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) and Air Quality Conformity Determination (AQCD)

Mr. Callister provided a brief overview of the MTIP, one of the basic documents required of MPOs, and described how it is part of implementing the goals and objectives of the Regional Transportation Plan over the next four fiscal years. It includes a list of projects for which federal funding had been secured, including projects that were prioritized and selected for use of the MPO's discretionary federal funds. The process for selecting projects was defined in the MTIP and linked RTP goals and objectives to funding decisions. He said approval of the MTIP did not require any funding decisions as those had been made in the fall of 2022 and were documented in the draft MTIP. The document also satisfied federal requirements for Lane Transit District's (LTD) projects.

Mr. Callister pointed out a proposed change in the approval process in the TIP Approval Matrix. Currently MPC must approve initial programming of any MPO discretionary funding. The updated matrix would allow TPC to approve initial programming of “off-cycle” funds to projects or scopes already in the TIP. Off-cycle refers to mostly unanticipated federal funds that come to the MPO either as federal redistribution or by other means. These reflect much smaller amounts than the annual allocations and will sometimes need to be programmed and obligated within a matter of weeks due to the nature of the funds.

Mr. Callister stated that the AQCD was a companion document to the MTIP. The Eugene-Springfield area was subject to conditions of a limited maintenance plan for air quality and the AQCD documented air quality conditions as related to specific pollutants and focused on particulates of 10 microns or less (PM10), which was essentially wood smoke and dust. Air quality data confirmed that PM10 levels in the area consistently remained below the national standard and transportation was not a significant producer of PM10 in the area.

Mr. Callister said the public comment period for both documents is open through April 16 and comments would be provided at the May MPC meeting. He asked for a public hearing on the MTIP and AQCD.

Mr. Moe opened the public hearing.

Rob Zako, BEST, remarked that the MTIP and AQCD were two of the documents required of the MPO by the federal government. He said BEST supported their approval, but questioned why a public hearing was being held as no decisions were to be made with respect to projects and funding. He asked where the key decision points were that would allow the public to engage in discussions around transportation priorities and funding.

There being no one else wishing to speak, Mr. Moe closed the public hearing.

Draft FY24/FY25 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Ms. Currier used a slide presentation to review the draft UPWP. She said the document is a two-year work plan for the MPO. The UPWP included ongoing and new projects and communicated to partner agencies where the MPO was in the planning process. Also included was a table of key planning documents, their current status and date of the next update.

Ms. Currier said the UPWP covered the period July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025 and was separated into long-range planning, programming and implementation, and public participation components. She identified the products in each section and their current status:

Long-range Planning: Regional Transportation Plan, Intelligent Transportation System, Congestion Management Plan, performance-based and safety planning

Programming and Implementation: Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program, E-TIP platform to track and report projects, Unified Planning Work Program

Public Participation: Public Participation Plan, Title VI Plan, Youth Advisory Council

Transportation System Modeling and Data Maintenance: maintain data for all modes as well as land use, census and employment data, Oregon Modeling Steering Committee, data portal

Transportation Options: implement congestion management, safety and environmental goals through a number of programs

Intergovernmental Coordination: MPO work and collaboration with other local and statewide committees

Ms. Currier concluded her presentation by noting the UPWP also included a funding table of other regionally significant projects from other agencies and MPO certification and findings.

Mr. Thompson remarked that the UPWP was not just for the MPC, it was also intended to inform the public about coordination of projects across the metropolitan region. He described the UPWP review process with federal agencies and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

Mr. VanGordon asked for additional information on efforts to target the Gateway area for trip reduction. He said from the public perspective those were dense, thick planning documents and hoped there was a simpler way to convey the information to the public. He asked how LCOG was letting other agencies know it was developing centralized data sets so they would not need to replicate those efforts and could access that transportation data.

Mr. Francis said he was interested in more information on the Youth Advisory Council and efforts to engage young minds in discussions of the transportation system and how it impacted their daily lives. He asked what grade levels were involved in the council. Ms. Currier said she would be happy to provide more information at a future meeting. The council was established in March 2023 and it was amazing to see how engaged and knowledgeable those young people were and their interest in policy. She hoped there could be future engagement of the council with the MPC.

Mr. Moe opened the public hearing.

Rob Zako, BEST, acknowledged that the UPWP provided a useful administrative function of keeping the public informed about MPO activities, but agreed with Mr. VanGordon that a more friendly "reader's digest" version would be more accessible to the public. He said one of the biggest decisions set forth in the UPWP was the RTP, which was last adopted in January 2022. Another adoption was scheduled in 2026. The adoption in January 2022 was an 11th hour action because of limited time and some concerns were not addressed in order to keep federal funds flowing. There was discussion of continuing the conversation among MPC members and the public but that had not happened. He hoped there would be adequate time for the public to address any policy concerns prior to the next adoption in 2026. Regarding questions about how to better engage the public, it was essential to define the role of the public and what was needed to enable the community to participate. BEST supported adoption of the UPWP.

There being no one else wishing to speak, Mr. Moe closed the public hearing.

Legislative Update

Mr. Thompson shared a list of bills considered by the Oregon MPO Consortium for legislative priority and reported on their current status:

HB 2101 - fund exchange legislation - OMPOC supported

HB 2677 - required ODOT to have a funding plan for maintenance when adding lane capacity - no OMPOC support

HB 2095 - local photo radar and flexibility for local jurisdictions to set speed limits - OMPOC supported

HB 3113 - Great Streets funding for local main streets - OMPOC supported

HB 2619 - modify membership of the Oregon Transportation Commission - no OMPOC support

Mr. Thompson said that senate bills related to collecting revenue from electric vehicles generally received OMPOC support. While not identifying a specific bill, OMPOC did support electric vehicles paying their share for use of the transportation system since they won't be paying through the fuel tax. OMPOC did not support SJR 2 that would expand the use of fuel tax and other revenue.

Mr. Thompson shared a draft of testimony in support of HB 3113. The bill would provide \$100 million for local main streets, particularly former ODOT highways that were transferred to local jurisdictions but were still part of the highway system. He asked if the MPC wanted to present that testimony on behalf of the Central Lane MPO.

Mr. VanGordon asked if the \$100 million was new funding that would not impact other ODOT commitments. Mr. Thompson said the legislation as currently written identified the funding as a transfer from the state's General Fund and would not impact ODOT's current funding.

Mr. VanGordon, seconded by Mr. Groves, moved to direct staff to submit testimony regarding HB 3113 in alignment with testimony from OMPOC. The motion passed unanimously, 9:0.

Mr. Thompson concluded with a report on the status of each of the following bills:

HB 2095 - photo radar - passed the House on April 5 and would likely pass the Senate
HB 3014 - reimbursement to schools for forms of transportation beyond school buses - recommendation out of committee for passage
HB 2101 - local fund exchange - no movement since January
HB 2619 - modify OTC - no action since January
SJRs related to expanding use of state highway revenue and requiring a public vote on tolling projects - not moving forward at this time

Mr. Farr asked if the MPO was coordinating legislative efforts with other jurisdictional legislative efforts. Mr. Thompson replied that the MPO typically acted at the direction of the MPC and the MPC members' responsibility was to bring their jurisdictions' positions forward to the MPC and provide direction to staff. MPO staff also had discussions with legislative liaisons from other jurisdictions.

Follow-up and Next Steps

- **ODOT Update**—Mr. Francis reported on public engagement activities related to the draft 2024-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). He announced that ODOT had hired Leah Horner as its new Operations Assistant Director and described her background and experience.
- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Changes**—There were no questions.
- **Next Meeting/Agenda Build**—Virtual Meeting, May 4 - Virtual meeting, June 1 - Virtual Meeting

Mr. Moe adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)