

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

June 1, 2023
11:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Steve Moe, Chair; Sean VanGordon (City of Springfield); Randy Groves (City of Eugene); Pat Farr (Lane County); Nancy Bell (City of Coburg); Kelly Sutherland, Susan Cox (Lane Transit District); Vidal Francis (Oregon Department of Transportation), members; Tom Schwetz for Jameson Auten (Lane Transit District), Anne Heath (City of Coburg), *ex officio* member.

Paul Thompson, Dan Callister, Kelly Clarke, Delaney Thompson, Drew Pfefferle, Kate Wilson (Lane Council of Governments); Rob Inerfeld, Jenifer Willer (City of Eugene); Sandy Belson (City of Springfield); John Marshall (City of Coburg), Bill Johnston, Mark Barnard (Oregon Department of Transportation), Dan Hurley, Sasha Vartanian (Lane County); Andrew Martin, Jeramy Card (Lane Transit District); Neil Moyer (Metro TV), Rob Zako (Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation).

WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

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

APPROVE May 4, 2023, MPC MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Groves, seconded by Mr. Farr, moved to approve the May 4, 2023, meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously, 8:0.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MPC MEMBERS

There were no adjustments or announcements.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Rob Zako, Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation (BEST), spoke to the Public Participation Plan (PPP). He said the International Association of Public Participation had a graphic of public participation that identified the steps of inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower. He said the key was to right-size how the public was involved in various types of decisions. As elected representatives, MPC members did not want to empower the public to make decisions for them, but did want to inform the community. It was important to identify situations in which the MPC was the decision-maker and those in which it was ratifying decisions made by other bodies. At a minimum the MPO should be a clearinghouse of information for the public. BEST would be looking at the PPP to determine whether the public was being informed in a robust way about projects, including which body made decisions, the purpose of the project and cost, and the intended outcomes.

AMENDMENT TO THE METROPOLITAN POLICY COMMITTEE BYLAWS

Mr. Thompson provided an overview of the Climate-Friendly and Equitable Community (CFEC) rules that required the MPO to adopt a scenario plan and establish a governance structure. The MPC was determined to be an appropriate body for that purpose in its role to address metropolitan transportation issues. However, current bylaws did not include the City of Coburg in that function. At the May meeting the MPC had indicated that it supported being the CFEC governance structure and including Coburg in the

metropolitan transportation function of the MPC. A copy of the draft amended bylaws to accomplish those two things was included in the agenda materials and it would need to be published for a 30-day public comment period and provided to the governing bodies and chief administrative officers of all relevant jurisdictions. He asked approval to publish notice of the amendment, which would be formally approved at a future meeting.

Mr. Moe determined there was consensus to publish the proposed amendment and provide copies to governing bodies and administrative officers.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) ISSUES

Central Lane MPO Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Overview of Contents, Implementation, and Update Schedule

Mr. Thompson explained that an overview of the RTP was being provided because about half of the MPC were new members and it was an appropriate time to provide a refresher in the direction of the next update. He noted a link to the RTP was provided in the agenda materials.

Ms. Clarke said the RTP was both a federal requirement and provided regional benefit. The RTP assured that the MPO implement national planning goals at the regional level, met air quality conformity determination requirements and was a requisite for receiving federal funding. The plan was updated every four years. Regional benefits included a cooperative, continuous and comprehensive framework for making transportation investment decisions.

Ms. Clarks provided a brief description of the plan components:

Chapter 1 - Setting the stage: identified the MPO's role in the region, identified other plans that informed the RTP and project list, summarized the public engagement process for the update, and provided a base multi-modal inventory of the regional transportation network.

Chapter 2 - Goals, objectives and performance measures: those were not prioritized or weighted and instead considered to be equally important. Both federal and regional performance measures and targets were included. MPOs were required to have a performance-based planning and programming framework.

Chapter 3 - Regional assessment: population demographics, employment centers, key destinations, commute patterns, miles traveled, mode share and safety data.

Chapter 4 - Financial framework: identified all potential sources of funding from federal, state and local sources.

Chapter 5 - Regional projects, programs, plans and strategies.

Chapter 6 - Measuring plan outcomes: local performance measures establish a baseline to understand where the region currently is and where it wanted to be. The next update would include scenarios that would help determine which actions met intent and which did not.

Chapter 7 - Future of the region: evolving impacts and ongoing work.

Ms. Clarke said the upcoming RTP update was due January 2026 and staff was gearing up for preliminary

work, which would begin in January 2024.

In response to a question from Mr. Groves, Ms. Clarke said she would provide MPC members with a link to the MPO's data portal.

Ms. Bell asked what the expected impact of Goal 2 would be on Coburg. She said Coburg's main street was a heavy freight route. The city had expanded its urban growth boundary to include 120 acres of light industrial land and there would be limited trips per day when that area was fully developed. She requested the answer offline.

Mr. VanGordon observed that as the update process moved forward and became more complicated with more requirements, more detail and complexity would move the dial. He also said that data was lacking from a transportation system perspective, particularly with respect to safety data that tended to expire and be inconsistent. He felt ODOT should take responsibility for providing current and accurate data and remove the onus off local councils of government for providing that.

Mr. Thompson said staff could provide a presentation on the data portal in the fall, including limitations on safety data. He agreed with Mr. VanGordon's remarks on the timeliness and consistency on safety data and complexity of the RTP. He said in two weeks there would be the quadrennial certification review of the MPO with ODOT and the USDOT. That performance review would provide an opportunity to discuss with federal agencies what issues the MPC wanted to focus on during the update. Staff would have that discussion with the MPC at a future meeting.

Mr. Francis stated that he was willing to assist the MPO in obtaining the safety data it needed. He would also discuss offline the status of the Coburg bridge project with Ms. Bell. He said ODOT was still seeking funding for the project.

Mr. VanGordon welcomed the opportunity for further discussions with Mr. Francis regarding safety data. He said it was not necessarily a specific data set that was needed, but more broadly consistent access to safety data that was duplicatable across the communities; it was currently a very confusing to access information.

Mr. Groves echoed Mr. VanGordon's comments on the need for consistent, accurate data in order to determine trends by comparing current and historical information.

Public Participation Plan (PPP) Update

Mr. Callister presented an overview of the PPP, which was adopted in 2015 and needed to be updated. A link to the current document was included in the agenda materials. The plan was required by federal regulations in order to define a process for providing interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process. The current plan was composed of three sections: policy elements, providing input, and evaluation. He briefly reviewed each section and a table of public outreach and participation tools and the MPO work products for which they were required. There had been many changes in communication and information sharing since 2015 and the update process would assure the MPO was using the most appropriate tools and strategies. He requested direction from the MPC on the PPP update.

Mr. VanGordon was pleased the plan was being updated. He said current outreach included very technical information about a project or activity. He hoped to see information presented to the public in a way that helped the average citizen understand the big concepts.

Mr. Thompson agreed that a goal should be to simplify and make more accessible and understandable information about when and how the public could engage in decisions, not just at the MPO but at the point where decisions were actually being made at the local level or by ODOT. Often the MPO was simply ratifying those decisions that had already been made by other agencies or governing bodies.

Mr. Francis said that while technology provided greater public access via the internet, there were still people who did not have internet access. He asked if strategies to reach people beyond those typical venues were being considered. Mr. Thompson agreed that was an important issue to consider.

Mr. Farr said while everyone cared about transportation, most people did not attempt to participate in it because it was difficult. Many agencies made things too technical and it became difficult to participate. It was a challenge for agencies to engage the public and elected officials could be helpful through direct contact with constituents to determine what they wanted. He was interested in any ideas to expand outreach.

Follow-up and Next Steps

- **ODOT Update**—Mr. Francis said discussions on the 2027-30 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) were under way and the public involvement process had begun. ODOT would be reaching out to various advisory groups around the state, such as MPOs, to begin a discussion of what the next STIP, its policy direction and funding priorities. He had a presentation that he could present at a future MPC meeting.
- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Changes**—There were no questions.
- **Legislative Update**—Mr. Thompson said there was no report on legislation of interest as the legislature was currently at a standstill, although a work session of the Joint Ways and Means Committee was scheduled on June 2 with 30 bills on the agenda.
- **Next Meeting/Agenda Build**—July 6 Virtual meeting including Metropolitan Cable Commission meeting, August 3 Virtual meeting

Mr. Moe adjourned the meeting at 12:40 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)