

MINUTES

Metropolitan Policy Committee Virtual Meeting via Zoom

October 5, 2023

11:30 a.m.

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

Paul Thompson, Kelly Clarke, Ellen Currier (Lane Council of Governments); Cassidy Mills, Kate Wilson (Lane County).

WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

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

APPROVE July 6, 2023, MPC MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Loveall, seconded by Ms. Vinis, moved to approve the July 6, 2023, meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously, 9:0.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MPC MEMBERS

Ms. Bell expressed the City of Coburg's thanks to Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff and Lane County Commissioner Heather Buch for visiting Coburg to discuss a variety of transportation issues and to Lane Transit District Board members Kelly Sutherland and Susan Cox for their prompt response to her inquiry into bus service for Coburg.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There was no one wishing to speak.

AMENDMENT TO THE METROPOLITAN POLICY COMMITTEE BYLAWS TO INCLUDE COBURG IN CFEC GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Mr. Thompson explained that at its June 2023 meeting, the MPC had voted to designate the MPC as the governance structure for the Scenario Planning Work Program the Oregon in accordance with the Land Conservation and Development Commission's Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) rules that required jurisdictions in the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area to implement the existing Central Lane Scenario Plan (CLSP) developed in 2015 by the Central Lane MPO. The MPC also directed staff to include Coburg in that governance structure through an amendment to the bylaws.

Mr. Thompson said the bylaws amendment was not an MPO issue; it was an MPC issue under its core functions and as such only Eugene, Springfield and Lane County members would vote on the item. The bylaws amendment would Coburg to act as a member when the MPC was engaged in metropolitan transportation issues that were not part of the MPO, specifically to serve as part of the governance structure to address CFEC work.

Ms. Vinis moved to approve the amendments to the bylaws. The motion passed unanimously, 6:0.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) ISSUES

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Comment Letter

Mr. Thompson stated that the letter would provide comment on pending appropriation legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives. The legislation would appropriate all of the federal transportation-related funding for FY24. Recent information indicated the bill would be voted on next week and letter was based on a template from the national MPO organization. The concern was that the House was proposing less funding than was authorized under the current transportation bill. He asked the MPC to approve the letter for signing. It was addressed to four members of the House; the Speaker was no longer in the chair so that would need to be changed. Members of the local congressional delegation would be copied on the letter.

Ms. Vinis asked if staff had spoken the members of the congressional delegation, particularly Representative Val Hoyle. Mr. Thompson said he had not spoken to the delegation; the process involved the House and Senate each developing their own version of the legislation. The Senate had already passed out of committee its version, which kept funding whole.

Mr. Groves, seconded by Ms. Vinis, moved to approve the comment letter with amendments as proposed by Mr. Thompson. The motion passed unanimously, 9:0.

Eugene Connecting Communities Grant Letter of Support Update

Mr. Thompson said the letter was provided as information. Chair Moe had signed the letter and it was submitted to U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg consistent with the MPC's earlier support for the City of Eugene's grant application for the River Road/Santa Clara Bicycle Bridge.

Ms. Vinis said former Representative Peter DeFazio was a strong supporter of the original application. This application was expanded to include planning for the Bethel area. She thanked the MPC for its support.

MPO Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Grant Program Letter of Support Update

Ms. Clarke used a slide presentation to provide an overview of the grant application for the Resilient Lane project. The project was a robust, data-driven joint planning effort to understand and address the multi-modal transportation network's vulnerability to hazards. She said regional coordination was the key to success.

Ms. Mills described the project management team, its expertise and scope of work. Three advisory and decision-making groups would be convened to assist with the work and specific project needs: Equity Advisory Group, Jurisdiction Workgroup, and Technical Resource Group. She said the scope of work included:

1. Conducting a vulnerability assessment of the surface transportation network
2. Planning for and designating Emergency Transportation Routes
3. Developing nature-based solutions strategies
4. Establishing a prioritized project list with priority projects at 30% design
5. Creating a Lane County specific resilience data visualizer tool
6. Developing a coordinated Resilience Improvement Plan covering both MPO and rural County areas

Ms. Mills said the project budget was \$5.3 million; project benefits would be substantial, including better positioning the region to respond to disasters, supporting the region's economic vitality, improving safety on roadways and promoting equity for decades to come.

Mr. VanGordon asked if Resilient Lane would become a new governmental function or a short period of time in which more resilience work would be done. He noted there were many existing plans and questioned how this new project would push towards outcomes. Ms. Clarke said the intent was to build on work done to date, remove silos to facilitate better coordination and build community support. She said the unique aspect of the project was its focus on the surface transportation network, which had been a gap in the County's planning work. It would identify vulnerabilities in the network, how they could be addressed and bring some of the higher need projects to 30 percent design, with a goal to obtain funding for them.

Regarding the visualization tool, Mr. VanGordon urged that it be consistent in data facts and message, with common definitions for data.

Mr. Groves cautioned about putting proscribed emergency evaluation routes in place as those were vary situational and based on many variables; flexibility was critical. Ms. Clarke said that coordination with emergency management respondents was an important part of the work.

Link Lane Transit Development Plan

Ms. Clarke used a slide presentation to present an overview of Link Lane, a rural transit service managed by LCOG. Link Lane was a county-wide transit service and an important component of how resident moved around. The service filled a gap identified by residents and based on a feasibility study, LCOG began service in 2018. Currently there were two routes, with a third to begin soon:

Eugene to Florence via Highway - currently operating
Florence to Yachats via Highway 101 - currently operating
South Lane County - service to transfer from the City of Cottage Grove to an LTD/LCOG partnership that could expand services

Ms. Clarke also provided information on stops along routes, fares and usage.

Ms. Wilson stated that next steps would be development of a long-term transit development for Link Lane. The planning process would include an analysis of existing conditions, summary of needs and what services could be provided given current constraints. An advisory committee had been convened and outreach efforts begun. Potential options for improvements would be identified and an alternatives package developed, with adoption of a plan scheduled for the end of 2023.

Ms. Clarke described current and future outreach events. She said a vision and goals would help provide guidance for an equitable, safe, convenient and connected transit network throughout Lane County. Those goals were:

- prioritize equity, health and safety
- increase mobility and connectivity
- promote funding stability
- foster environmental sustainability
- improve coordination and communication

Ms. Clarke displayed a map of Lane County transit providers and a summary of needs that had been identified:

- connectivity and frequency
- underserved areas and populations
- improved technology, fare payment and rider comfort

Ms. Clarke said the draft plan would be released for public review and comment, revised as needed, and presented to the LCOG Board for adoption in December 2023.

Ms. Vinis observed that it would be interesting to see an overlay of the maps from the Resilient Lane and Link Lane projects identifying underserved areas and populations.

Transportation Options (TO) Program Updates

Ms. Currier said TO programs implemented the Regional Transportation Plan, Public Involvement Plan and Congestion Management Plan. Activities included:

Get There Challenge - a statewide two-week challenge sponsored by ODOT that incentivized people to take different types of trips besides driving alone

Walktober - encouraging people to walk in the community during the fall

Coffee Shop Hop - walk to participating coffee shops, collect a passport and enter a raffle

Be Safe/Be Seen - distribution of lights and reflective items

In response to a question from Ms. Bell, Ms. Currier invited any Coburg area coffee house to contact her about participating in the Coffee Shop Hop.

Follow-up and Next Steps

- **ODOT Update**—Mr. Johnston reported that ODOT was in the process of recruiting for a Region 2 manager. Development of the 2027-2030 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) had begun and there would be a presentation on that process would be made to the LaneACT (Area Commission on Transportation) and the MPC in November and December.
- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Changes**—There were no questions.
- **Next Meeting/Agenda Build**

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

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)