

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Tuesday, January 9, 2007
Metro Council Chamber

Councilors Present: David Bragdon (Council President), Kathryn Harrington, Carl Hosticka, Rod Park, Robert Liberty, Rex Burkholder, Brian Newman

Councilors Absent:

Council President Bragdon convened the Metro Council Work Session Meeting at 2:02 p.m.

1. DISCUSSION OF AGENDA FOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING, JANUARY 11, 2007/ADMINISTRATIVE/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AND CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS

Council President Bragdon reviewed the January 11, 2007 Metro Council agenda.

2. 2035 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE: PROCESS UPDATE AND DRAFT RTP POLICY FRAMEWORK

Councilor Burkholder introduced the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) goals, which were to have a shared understanding of the policy framework, and to look at what was different from before. One main question was, how far could we go with the proposed changes? He referenced the draft RTP Process Expectations and Outcomes (a copy is included in the meeting record). Council needed to provide direction to the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT). It was important to make sure our plan was in sync with the State of Oregon's plans.

John Rehm, Metropolitan Group, said his goal was to achieve clarity for staff. He reviewed the expectations and outcomes with Council. Council President Bragdon wanted to add the word "informed" to "public opinion." Councilor Hosticka asked how public opinion would be engaged. Mr. Rehm responded that it would be surveys and focus groups. Kim Ellis, Principal Transportation Planner, added that some feedback had already been received. Councilor Liberty wanted to see a vote at some point. Councilor Newman said he'd like to have the conversation, if not necessarily a vote.

Regarding "We have a clear understanding of priorities that support the kind of urban area we want to achieve in 30 years," Councilor Liberty supported the concept of urban design; he was less clear on what that would look like. Councilor Park said we weren't going to reinvent 2040. Councilor Harrington asked if the phrase "kind of urban area" focused just on centers or also along corridors. Mr. Rehm suggested substituting "urban" with "community." Councilor Harrington proposed that the intent was to encompass the "metropolitan region," not just "urban."

Concerning the statement "We establish the understanding that this is an incremental process, while demonstrating sustained movement toward the shared vision of the region," Council President Bragdon wasn't sure there really was a shared vision. Councilor Burkholder thought things were moving in that direction. He felt this was critical, that we recognize it was a step process, over time, and that there would be other work yet to do in the future. Councilor Park suggested the phrase "shared values" instead. Councilor Harrington thought we did have some shared vision as well as values. Council President Bragdon recognized the difficulty of working through the RTP, which was a big part of 2040. But a lot of people would not be willing to spend

the money. Councilor Harrington asked why we did not indicate that 2040 would be the common starting point. Council President Bragdon agreed that the shared vision was the map, but the number of people who were really committed to it was smaller than he would like. Councilor Burkholder said we should ask if the draft complied with the expectations and outcomes. Councilor Liberty said we had already stated that we were committing to 2040, but people should understand the connection between investment in transportation and the look of the region. Scenario development could be helpful.

Mr. Rehm referred to the statement, "A clear majority of people involved in the process acknowledge that the final decision was a wise one, appropriate for the circumstances and reinforces the value of Metro's role." Councilor Park asked if we were trying to get people to recognize the value of Metro, or Metro's values? Metro as an agency, or as a region? Mr. Rehm said, it was the role of Metro as the convener of the process. Michael Jordan, Chief Operating Officer, said maybe it could be "the values of the 2040 growth concept and Metro's role." Councilor Harrington asked, as measured by what? Mr. Jordan said, by the people who bought into it. Councilor Liberty said the ultimate outcome was to get to 2040. Council President Bragdon added that we were spending money to support 2040.

Councilor Harrington said she would like to test the list from the perspective of a stakeholder who had been involved in the process for a long time, what would they think? Would they know that the RTP process and update were different from previous iterations? Council President Bragdon thought that a significant difference was the emphasis on fiscal reality. Councilor Burkholder thought 2040 and fiscal constraints made it a lot different. Councilor Harrington wanted something more recognizably different.

Staff turned to the memo on Chapter 1 (a copy is included in the meeting record). Ms. Ellis described some of the work that had been done and how that would be incorporated into the current draft. The work was related to the Metro Charter, and the RTP could address the ethics of sustainability. The transportation plan could really contribute to 2040. Councilor Hosticka suggested that the preface include language about threats to quality of life, not just the economics.

Tom Kloster, Transportation Planning Manager, talked about the vision, goals and objectives, and projects. The two main categories were 1) system design and management and 2) governance. He described the ways they had tried to "fix" Chapter 1. They wanted it to inspire people, to focus on important outcomes, and to be fact-based and grounded. He reviewed the regional street system concept. Important factors were the distance between arterials, number of lanes, and the need for a system that would eventually be built-out. Councilor Burkholder added that the intent was to get away from the mindset of tearing down people's houses to build more lanes, to have a stable situation. This was a big change. Mr. Kloster agreed, but he thought everyone would get to that point pretty soon. Adding lanes did not add that much capacity. Our goal was to have a dense network, not relying on just a few facilities. Councilor Newman thought it would be helpful to have a cross-section of what the facilities would look like.

Councilor Hosticka commented that the regional street system concept looked more like Northeast Portland than Bull Mountain. That grid pattern that was not present in his district. Mr. Kloster said the top goal was connectivity. There were not a lot of missing links in Multnomah County. In Washington County, it was about halfway there. The next step would be to apply this rigor and try to look at connections that were possible in Washington County to see how close they could get to the ideal.

Councilor Park asked about functionality. What tricks could be used to mimic the grid system—for example, in environmentally sensitive areas? Mr. Kloster said crossings were a big issue, both stream crossings and freeway crossings. The biggest gap right now was probably the freeways themselves. Mr. Jordan said many land use decisions today were predicated on local capacity of the transportation system; that was a tool for getting the development we wanted. That dynamic would change if we thought about the system as a network, and where the improvements in the gaps were. Mr. Kloster said the goal was to open up the picture. Regarding the freeways, we were largely done building them; they served the most developed areas pretty well. They were going to start treating interchanges as a scarce commodity.

Mr. Kloster turned to the regional multi-modal corridor capacity concept. Councilor Hosticka asked how broadly the corridors were defined. Mr. Kloster said, pretty broadly. Councilor Burkholder said there was an artificial battle between Washington County, which did not have the fully developed grid system, and Multnomah County. This would provide framework for talking about the proper investment. Roads might be the right investment for Washington County but not for Multnomah County. Councilor Liberty observed that you couldn't design around transit stops. Mr. Kloster agreed; conceptually, other high capacity transit systems might be coming. He then showed the local street system concept. This was firmly connected to the regional street system. Cul-de-sacs were still controversial; the real estate community preferred to sell houses on cul-de-sacs. Mr. Jordan emphasized the need to stay in touch with the local jurisdictions; they were the ones that would approve the street design.

Mr. Kloster finished with the regional transit system concept. We needed people to commit to the bus system and make sure it was stable. Councilor Park asked about the stability of the system, and unexpected events, such as a WalMart coming in. Mr. Kloster agreed that the capacity of the interchanges needed to be protected. Regarding outcomes for today's meeting, he was seeking feedback on whether the draft established the right direction, and what changes were needed.

Councilor Burkholder asked Mr. Kloster to talk about pedestrians and freight. Mr. Kloster gave the example of Farmington Road; this was in various states of being urbanized. One of our tasks was to take that grid and try to fit it to the system, and to look at right of way and modal development. Ms. Ellis added that we already had a regional pedestrian inventory and bike map that were periodically updated. Mr. Kloster said, regarding freight, one of those would show critical freight corridors.

Councilor Burkholder supported the program direction. He had no specific changes; he thought the general discussion had pointed out some issues.

Councilor Harrington said that design alone would not be sufficient; we needed breakthroughs in dealing with gaps. She was concerned about the green corridors topic. In general, it seemed like a really good direction. The presentation had helped.

Councilor Newman was encouraged; he liked the direction. His only outstanding concern was how the ideal meshed with reality on the ground in actually designing communities. We wanted to avoid filling in streams and gullies.

Council President Bragdon supported the direction. The changes he proposed were mostly stylistic. He'd like the case for change to be a little clearer. Some of the principles had come to life more plainly in the presentation than in the paper.

Councilor Park said it was the right direction. He was concerned about the level of service question; the first ones to develop got the capacity. Mr. Kloster talked about the need to demonstrate that our plan would meet state expectations and outcomes, without following the same formula.

Councilor Liberty said it was definitely the right direction. He suggested starting with the 2040 map and the concept maps as organizing principles. Pictures and illustrations were helpful. He was concerned that the goals were not nearly as clear as what we had talked about, the objectives did not reflect the goals, and the performance measures did not carry out the goals. Finally, in system management, the theme got lost and buried. It should be brought forward and made a part of the system. The more value for the buck concept appears to have been lost. Everything fell apart if the performance measures were not adequate.

Councilor Hosticka thought the direction was good. The explanations needed to be translated to address his constituents. On sustainability and environmental impact, could we incorporate carbon impact as a measure? Under governance, we should advocate isomorphism—whoever made the plan should manage the transit system.

Councilor Liberty wanted to make sure we used the investment scenarios as a way of proving that this was the right approach. He wanted to stay focused on the big picture and the system, not a list of projects. Councilor Park asked for modal splits on the scenarios. Ms. Ellis thought there was one in there; we needed to continue monitoring the performance. She shared how upcoming work would address some of the questions.

Council President Bragdon noted the importance of work taking place at the state level; our plans would be changing frameworks. Councilor Liberty observed that state transportation planners had very firm opinions about the current arrangements. All our decisions had to be made in the context of state planning. Councilor Park said it sometimes felt like we were in the way of the state's goal of moving things long distances. Councilor Newman wanted to focus on the economic argument, emphasizing that the redundant system worked pretty well.

3. BREAK

4. TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES POLICY DIRECTION FOR FINAL CUT OF CANDIDATE PROJECTS

Ted Leybold, Planning Department, had two handouts (a copy of each is included in the meeting record). He talked about the public listening post. Funding was going to be about the same as before. Regarding process, the first cut list was approved last fall, and the public comment document had been produced. The policy objectives had been identified, and some policy issues had come out of the process. Councilor Liberty asked Mr. Leybold to identify constraints, under the flexible federal funds. Mr. Leybold said there were a few, but generally speaking the urban STP funds could be spent on just about anything except construction and maintenance of local streets. He turned to the updated memo, with the six identified items.

1. Additional funding on current projects. He reviewed existing policy. Council debated some of the proposed criteria. There were a lot of factors unique to each project. We did not want to be seen as rewarding bad management. Councilor Burkholder said he would appreciate knowing whether the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) had made mostly unanimous recommendations or whether they had been very controversial. Mr. Leybold stated that it had

been a difficult process for them, knowing that their own projects might end up on the losing end. Councilor Liberty thought the current arrangement seemed good. Council supported no change, sustaining the TPAC recommendation. Councilor Newman said the key thing for him was "unanticipated" factors.

2. Recycled projects. In particular, there was one project that had been approved but not built. There had been an understanding that the funds would be found elsewhere, but they never were. They debated how to avoid such situations. Council generally agreed to direct **JPACT** that money was targeted for a particular project, not for a particular jurisdiction. Council preferred to have additional discussion before setting broader policy.

3. Funding of priority categories. The goal was to decide how to rank modal projects. Councilor Park suggested tabling this to the RTP update. Everyone agreed. We wanted to be able to provide funding for projects that didn't already have an identified funding source.

4. Freeway/highway capacity projects. Council discussed the use of flexible funds. Basically, they mostly felt that there were already funds for highway projects; flexible funds should all be used for projects that did not have other funding. This might be a category that would be eliminated down the road. Councilor Hosticka said it would help him if the projects were tied to some policy objectives. Council agreed to support TPAC's recommendation.

5. Urban growth boundary (UGB) expansion areas. Councilor Park thought new policy around this would be needed in the future, perhaps as part of the RTP process. Basically, Council felt that UGB status would be reflected in the other criteria—a project that demonstrated a lot of productivity would rank higher than one that had not done concept planning. Council supported TPAC's suggestion of no changes.

6. Diesel projects. Council supported TPAC's recommendation for changes.

5. COUNCIL BRIEFINGS/COMMUNICATIONS

Councilor Newman talked about the upcoming meeting with the Zoo Master Plan consultants. He shared a fact sheet (a copy is included in the meeting record).

There being no further business to come before the Metro Council, Council President Bragdon adjourned the meeting at 4:57 p.m.

Prepared by,,



Dove Hotz

Council Operations Assistant

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF
JANUARY 9, 2007**

Item	Topic	Doc. Date	Document Description	Doc. Number
1	Agenda	1/11/07	Agenda: Metro Council regular meeting, January 11, 2007	010907c-01
2	RTP	1/9/07	TO: Metro Council FROM: Rex Burkholder RE: RTP Process Expectations and Outcomes	010907c-02
2	RTP	1/5/07	TO: RTP Interested Parties FROM: Tom Kloster, Kim Ellis RE: Regional Transportation Plan Vision – Working Draft 1.0	010907c-03
4	Transportation Priorities	1/9/07	TO: JPACT, Metro Council and Interested Parties FROM: Ted Leybold RE: Transportation Priorities Final Cut Narrowing Policy Issues	010907c-04
4	Transportation Priorities	undated	TO: Metro Council FROM: Ted Leybold RE: Public Listening Post on Transportation Improvement Projects	010907c-05
5	Councilor Communications	undated	TO: Metro Council FROM: Brian Newman RE: Oregon Zoo Future Vision Committee Fact Sheet	010907c-06