

MEETING REPORT

DATE OF MEETING: October 8, 1998

GROUP/SUBJECT: Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT)

PERSONS ATTENDING: Members: Chair Ed Washington and Susan McLain, Metro Council; Fred Hansen, Tri-Met; Rob Drake, Cities of Washington County; Mary Legry (alt.), WSDOT; Sharron Kelley, Multnomah County; Dean Lookingbill (alt.), Southwest Washington RTC; Jim Kight, Cities of Multnomah County; Kay Van Sickel, ODOT; and Karl Rohde, Cities of Clackamas County

Guests: Tony McCauley, Citizen; Karen Schilling, Multnomah County; Dave Williams, ODOT; Susan Lee and Harold Lasley, Multnomah County; Steve Dotterrer, City of Portland; Rod Sandoz, Clackamas County; Kathy Lehtola, Washington County; Susie Lahsene, Port of Portland; Bob Stacey (JPACT alt.), Dick Feeney and G.B. Arrington, Tri-Met; Pat Collmeyer, Office of Neil Goldschmidt; and Ron Papsdorf, Cities of East Multnomah County

Staff: Andy Cotugno, Mike Hoglund, Chris Deffebach, and Lois Kaplan, Recording Secretary

SUMMARY:

The meeting was called to order and a quorum declared by Chair Ed Washington.

Chair Washington welcomed Fred Hansen back to Oregon and back on JPACT as the new General Manager of Tri-Met. Fred indicated he was happy to be back in Portland and to help define transportation's role with respect to its impact on the livability issues.

Also noted was the reversal of ODOT's membership on JPACT to Kay Van Sickel serving as member and Grace Crunican as alternate.

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Councilor Rohde moved, seconded by Commissioner Kelley, to approve the September 10, 1998 JPACT meeting report as submitted. The motion PASSED unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 98-2705 - AMENDING THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM TO INCLUDE THE TEA-21 HIGH-PRIORITY PROJECTS

This resolution, as approved, would formalize action to incorporate ten high-priority projects in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), identified on Exhibit A, as earmarked by Congress in TEA-21. TEA-21 authorized funds for these high-priority transportation projects in the Portland area.

Andy pointed out two discrepancies on Exhibit A pending further review. He indicated that the last entry on the exhibit (I-205/Sunnybrook interchange) should also identify "and related arterial." In addition, he noted that there may be a bus earmark in Wilsonville that was in earlier drafts. The bus funds are available in years 1999 and 2000. If it went through Congress, it needs to be incorporated through the MTIP. He noted that the dollars indicated will be paid out over a six-year schedule.

Committee members gave Andy the latitude to amend the exhibit to reflect the correct status of the earmarks.

In further discussion, Andy described the process by which TEA-21 funds are authorized. He reminded the committee of JPACT's role through adoption of the region's Position Paper, noting that 90 percent of its priorities were taken up in the TEA-21 bill. Congress did not make any recommendations beyond what was recommended by this region.

Andy described the process of funds being authorized over a six-year period, most of the funds being authorized in categories, and the inclusion of additional project-specific earmarks. He noted that the project list has grown over time. Projects are incorporated through committee after being submitted by its membership. The same process takes place on the House and Senate side before it gets to Conference Committee. The region determines its priorities for project earmarking and policy positions. Those requests are submitted by our delegation to the committee chairs. A lobbying trip is scheduled in February to outline priorities and there is a close working relationship with the state to ensure that this also reflects statewide priorities for other regions as well.

Action Taken: Commissioner Kelley moved, seconded by Councilor Rohde, to recommend approval of Resolution No. 98-2705, amending the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program to include the TEA-21 high-priority projects and to allow for the adjustments offered by Andy Cotugno. The motion PASSED unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 98-2707 - AMENDING THE 1995 INTERIM FEDERAL
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN TO REDESIGNATE THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY
SYSTEM LINK THROUGH FOREST GROVE FROM HIGHWAY 8 TO THE FOREST
GROVE BYPASS

Andy explained that this has been a project "in the works" for 18 years and is ready for construction. He noted that it represents a housekeeping action and that it has been acknowledged as a need in the *Regional Transportation Plan* and has been funded through the *Transportation Improvement Program*. All funding-related actions have been accomplished. Andy clarified for the committee that National Highway System (NHS) funds can only be spent on NHS routes, and this amendment would permit that to happen.

Action Taken: Councilor McLain moved, seconded by Mayor Drake, to recommend approval of Resolution No. 98-2707, amending the *1995 Interim Federal Regional Transportation Plan* to redesignate the National Highway System link through Forest Grove from Highway 8 to the Forest Grove Bypass.

In discussion on this project, Councilor McLain wanted the Staff Report to be clear that it recognizes that the dollars are in place and that the project is moving forward to construction. She indicated that the area is inside the Urban Growth Boundary and that all access issues have been discussed. The development pattern has limitations. She felt the "bypass" title was misleading, noting that the intent is to get a dangerous safety issue out of downtown Forest Grove.

Fred Hansen spoke of the wetlands along the bypass and cited the need for there to be little access. Andy noted that there is a creek on the north side of the bypass which forms the Urban Growth Boundary so access is effectively limited. There is no Urban Reserve out there and the area is not slated for future development. Fred Hansen wanted to be assured that there wouldn't be additional access points.

Andy commented that access management is a difficult task. He described vested rights for providing access on existing routes but that this is a case where new right-of-way is being purchased and that access will not be permitted.

Kay Van Sickel felt this project might be delayed until spring. Councilor McLain requested follow-up information on the project schedule.

In calling for the question, the motion PASSED unanimously.

CORRIDORS AND BORDERS PROGRAM

A draft letter for submittal to FHWA was introduced expressing concerns relating to the National Corridor Planning and Development Program and the Coordinated Border Infrastructure Program established by TEA-21. The letter acknowledged the importance of both trade corridors and border crossings and the need for separate funding for each program.

Andy Cotugno explained that the region's interest is in corridors. This letter is in response to FHWA's solicitation for comments to earmark funds into both categories.

Mary Legry reported that WSDOT is working on the same issue and that a similar communication is being prepared. Their letter is silent on the issue of the split in funds. WSDOT is also planning a joint application with ODOT on the I-5 corridor.

It was noted that there is \$140 million per year available over the life of the bill. There is some concern that California and Texas will be utilizing such funds to resolve immigration issues. A lot of applications have surfaced following discovery of this source of funds. There are 43-47 corridors that TEA-21 defines as eligible to compete for the funds.

Action Taken: Mayor Drake moved, seconded by Councilor Kight, to approve the letter as submitted on the National Corridor Planning and Development Program and the Coordinated Border Infrastructure Program for forwarding to FHWA. The motion PASSED unanimously.

RECAP OF FREIGHT TOUR

Chris Deffebach reported that the information packet provided JPACT was put together by Metro and the Port. The tour followed the raw product through the manufacturing, production and distribution process as well as a tour of Terminal 6. It was evident that there are differences among industries relating to the distribution process. Chris placed emphasis on the links between the transportation system and how business is conducted.

Chris indicated that industry comments touched upon adjusting their operations to deal with congestion issues but that their emphasis is on being customer-oriented. They develop their delivery schedule to meet customer's needs.

Significant traffic increases are projected in our region. Chris spoke of the relationship between congestion and costs to the businesses. She noted that Albertson's indicated their drivers are paid by the mile and, therefore, not fully realizing the

costs of delay. The possibility of a gas tax increase was brought up in terms of raising their costs but the businesses did not view the increase in terms of addressing a transportation problem that was causing them delay. Chris felt it was a valuable exercise for JPACT to spend the time to talk to people on their day-to-day operations and to observe goods movement at this level.

Councilor Rohde commented that it was encouraging to note the number of people using light rail near the Resers facility. Based on the freight tour, he commented that it was clear that there was a disconnect amongst the companies as to whether there was a congestion problem or whether it affected their costs.

Responding to a question about whether there is any connection or difficulty between attracting employees and transportation, it was noted that the companies hire a lot of low-end employees in those instances.

Susie Lahsene highlighted the document entitled *Oregon's Trading Partners*, which was distributed on the freight tour. She spoke of our region's population relative to other U.S. cities. Delivery time today for freight movement averages two to three days. AASHTO predicts that, by the year 2000, 50 percent of all products will move to just-in-time delivery. Susie cited the important role the road system plays in moving goods from point of origin to remote places. It is expected that commodities today will double by the year 2030. Barge and rail will help keep the rates down. Susie noted that we are the 10th largest exporter in the United States, that the economy is dependent on trade activity, and that transportation will have a big impact on its future.

Also discussed was the fact that truck trips are expected to increase dramatically. A discussion followed on what happens outside the region and its impact.

Comments centered on the need to educate our legislators and business community on the importance of goods movement and the disconnect between businesses. The business community is mostly concerned about earnings and meeting the customers' demands for timely shipments.

Councilor Rohde spoke of the cost of productivity in terms of the condition of the road.

Andy Cotugno commented that the just-in-time issue is an essential part of Albertson's operation. Turnover of their warehouse

occurs over three days. He noted that Resers operates on a 10-day timeframe with frozen goods.

A discussion followed on the weight/mile tax. While it is considered a part of industry's operation, the business community realizes that transportation is only about 10 percent of their cost. Andy felt that the weight/mile tax probably only represents a fraction of that 10 percent. The business community does not think of a project that might help them 5-10 years in the future; they look extremely short-term.

Trucks have been using Columbia Boulevard as an alternate route to Terminal 6 rather than getting on the Banfield. The role of Columbia Boulevard is significant and serves as a bypass for I-84.

Chair Washington felt that the purpose of arranging the freight tour was for JPACT to better understand the connection between freight and transportation. He expressed his appreciation to Chris Deffebach and Susie Lahsene for the work and energy devoted in setting up the tour.

BI-STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dean Lookingbill noted that, at the last Southwest Washington RTC board meeting, there was discussion about reinstating the Bi-State Advisory Committee. He asked that the subject be placed on the November JPACT meeting agenda. Chair Washington was hopeful JPACT would be supportive of the proposal.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

REPORT WRITTEN BY: Lois Kaplan

COPIES TO: Mike Burton
JPACT Members