



JOINT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE
January 25, 2016
Metro, room 370 A

JPACT MEMBERS PRESENT

Craig Dirksen, Chair
Neil McFarlane
Denny Doyle
Roy Rogers
Susie Lahsene
Paul Savas

AFFILIATION

Metro Council
TriMet
Cities of Washington County
Washington County
Port of Portland
Clackamas County

STAFF: Beth Cohen, Andy Cotugno, Elissa Gertler, Noah Siegel, Randy Tucker, Ramona Perrault

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Craig Dirksen called the meeting to order at 7:34 a.m.

UPDATES ON FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDING EFFORTS

Mr. Randy Tucker of Metro provided an update on the work of the Oregon Transportation Forum (OTF). He mentioned that the OTF would be meeting the following day to work through a possible package for the legislative session. Mr. Tucker noted that the questions being considered by the OTF, especially around fundraising are challenging. He also mentioned some of the concepts that the OTF is exploring including using performance standards to help govern how projects are selected for funding, but that the OTF is not currently wading into the clean fuels debate.

Mr. Andy Cotugno of Metro provided a brief update on the work of the Governor's Transportation Vision Panel and shared that the subcommittees of the panel organized by mode have been meeting. Mr. Cotugno also mentioned that the panel is planning to host regional hearings around the state on its preliminary findings and will also be presenting its findings at the county coordinating committees and the February JPACT meeting.

Representative John Davis provided an update on the transportation bill that he introduced in the short session. Representative Davis acknowledged that most of this work in 2016 is designed to set the stage for 2017 and shared the key themes governing his efforts to advance a state transportation package including:

- Need to build trust in government (citing the audit of the Oregon Department of Transportation as an example)
- Demonstrate to the public what the need is and the fact that we don't have enough money to address our transportation needs

- In light of the passage of the federal transportation reauthorization (FAST Act), Oregon needs to focus on opportunities to leverage federal funding. Matching grant funding that becomes available in 2016 (mega project grants), which requires state match.
- Need for Oregon to keep up with other states in the northwest—Washington, Idaho and Utah all passed transportation funding measures and will be competitive for federal funding.

Representative Davis also highlighted a provision in his bill about creating a specific gas tax allocation for the Portland metropolitan area (two cents extra on passenger vehicles in the metro area), protected for regional uses. Finally, Representative Davis described his approach to a state transportation package as piecemeal; planning to identify what can pass in the 2016 session and what should be reserved to be discussed in 2017.

The finance subcommittee raised the following questions and issues in response to Representative Davis' presentation:

- Comments and questions highlighted the need to invest in project development to create projects in the pipeline ready for funding. Staff provided additional context about how over the last 10-15 years, the region had shifted from funding project development to project construction in response to changing economic conditions. Committee members emphasized the importance of once again investing dollars up front for project development using resources like the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the Regional Flexible Fund Allocation (RFFA). Finally, members used the example of the Rose Quarter Project to get a better understanding of project development needs for a large regional priority project.
- The committee discussed in more detail the implication of the FAST Act and the role of state in leveraging federal funds. The conversation centered around how the state and region can be best positioned to compete for the increase in federal funds that will be awarded competitively. There was acknowledgment that there will be significant competition for this federal money around the country and the Portland metropolitan region could enhance its competitiveness for funds through projects that are multi-modal in nature. The committee also questioned whether the state is re-evaluating how to maximize the effectiveness of increased federal dollars from the FAST Act. Mr. Windsheimer shared that the Oregon Transportation Commission will be meeting on what they could do with increased federal dollars. The question of whether federal grant funds will be allocated up front or steadily over five years of the FAST Act was also raised.
- Committee members briefly discussed whether and how there could be regional consensus around what projects go in a potential project development pipeline. Members argued that the region and state need to be thinking about broad themes for a big transportation package in the next two years like jobs and transportation, which was the theme of the 2009 transportation package, or a focus on resiliency or safety. Some members advocated that "regional" means large system-wide projects, some members advocated a focus on addressing chokepoints for freight. There was general agreement around the table that the region should clarify its priorities for a future project development pipeline and expedite this work as much as possible.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS FOR FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

The group discussed potential next steps for the finance subcommittee, focusing on how the committee might move forward to develop a process for identifying regional priorities for a future project development pipeline. Committee members noted that this discussion could happen at multiple forums including the STIP (if additional funds are earmarked for project development), the

JPACT table and the ACT. The committee discussed the possibility of making a recommendation to JPACT and the region 1 ACT. Members noted that in the past, the region has developed a continuing pipeline of priority projects, which is what's needed now, as opposed to a one-time project list.

Committee members discussed how the state and the region can work together to identify project priorities and funding to support project development in the next year. Members agreed that a regional framework for a project pipeline is needed by 2017 in time for the legislature's consideration of a transportation package.

Councilor Dirksen concluded the conversation by saying that he'd work with staff to develop a proposal and work plan for the next steps for the subcommittee and share that at the next subcommittee meeting. He mentioned that the subcommittee could also discuss the TIGER and freight notice of federal funding to be released in February.

ADJOURN

Chair Dirksen adjourned the meeting at 8:58 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Beth Cohen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Beth Cohen, Council Policy Coordinator