

East Multnomah County Transportation Committee

City of Fairview • City of Gresham • City of Troutdale • City of Wood Village • Multnomah County • Port of Portland

Meeting Minutes 8/11/14

Members

Diane McKeel
Tim Clark
Lisa Barton Mullins
Doug Daoust
Jerry Hinton
Susie Lahsene

Representing

Multnomah County
City of Wood Village
City of Fairview
City of Troutdale
City of Gresham
Port of Portland

EMCTC Staff

Craig Ward
Katherine Kelly
Sean Files
Joanna Valencia
Mark Gunter
Phil Healy
Grace Cho
Steve Kautz
Rich Watanabe

Representing

City of Troutdale
City of Gresham
Multnomah County
Multnomah County
City of Wood Village
Port of Portland
Metro
TriMet
ODOT

Guests

Shirley Craddick	Metro
Steve Entenman	
Chris Rall	Transportation for America
Terra Lingley	ODOT
April Bertelsen	City of Portland

Welcome and Chair's Comments

EMCTC Chair, Diane McKeel, called the meeting to order at 3:04 PM and started with introductions. A quorum was present. There were no additional Chair comments.

Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Review and Approval of July 7, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Minutes for the July 7th, 2014 meeting were emailed to the group prior to the meeting and also available at the meeting. Councilor Clark moved to approve the minutes. Mayor Daoust seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

JPACT Agenda

Councilor Craddick went over the agenda. The majority of the JPACT agenda will feature guest speaker Congressman Earl Blumenauer speaking on Transportation Funding Initiatives. There will be quick updates on the Transportation for America breakfast that was co-hosted by Metro. Councilor Craddick added that a JPACT finance subcommittee will be formed to have conversations regarding looking at funding strategies and possibly putting together a state package. Councilor Craddick encouraged folks to attend the Rail-Volution 2014 Conference. There will also be an update on the ODOT Region 1 ACT Taskforce work.

Regional Travel Options 2015-2017 Grant (RTO)

Joanna handed out information for the RTO grant opportunity. Applications are due December 19, 2014. An informational workshop will be held at Metro on September 12, 2014. The process for review will be similar to the last RTO cycle. The EMCTC allocation has been raised this year to \$100,000. The EMCTC prioritized list is due to Metro on February 13, 2015. Projects submitted to East County will be reviewed at EMCTC and a prioritized list will be developed for the \$100,000 allocation. There is a 10.27% match requirement, and money is available in a competitive pot as well. Two new subcategories have been developed for this round. One category is for small infrastructure projects and the other new category is developing a strategic plan for RTO and travel demand strategies. Staff will be conducting outreach to community partners and will also be brainstorming project ideas for the grant. Items being considered include the idea of applying for a grant to help fund an East County Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

Safe Routes to School Summer Event

Joanna handed out fliers for the August 20th Meet and Greet Event at the Hoppy Brewer in downtown Gresham. This will be an opportunity for folks to network in East County and she encouraged folks to attend. Mayor Daoust added that this may be an opportunity to show the Troutdale Elementary Safe Routes to School video. Joanna added that the county will be working with Sweetbriar and efforts are underway to better coordinate the east county program.

An Introduction to Transportation for America

Chris Rall gave an overview of Transportation for America. He mentioned that Gresham joined as part of the regional membership for Transportation for America along with other agencies. Transportation for America is an Alliance of government and non-government agencies from communities across the country united to ensure that states and federal government step up to invest in smart, homegrown, locally driven solutions. They are a non-profit and non-partisan group. Chris went over concepts that his group is exploring and their platform of 5 goals of investment, local control, innovation, options and access to jobs. Their focus includes sustainable funding of the highway trust fund. He went over some of the member benefits.

Councilor Hinton asked about funding and membership. Chris responded that they are funded by membership, their consultant work and also by funds from foundations. Commissioner McKeel asked about their membership structure. Chris responded that you are either a member or not. There are structures around population (government) or revenue (businesses) and membership fees being based on that. Susie asked about what he saw as some of the biggest roadblocks that should be anticipated in the next year. Chris responded that federal funding and the patches are a roadblock with lack of certainty in funding. He hasn't seen anything in terms of earmarks coming back as well. Councilor Craddick added that there are proposals being explored to be able to sustain transportation funding. He added that there is 1/3 less funding coming in right now. Councilor Clark asked about the voting structure. Chris indicated that they have a policy team and leadership guidance that formulates policies which are vetted to the membership. Councilor Clark asked about policies and options that are being developed. Chris responded that research policies are being developed as well as policies around ensuring that freight funding is available. Councilor Craddick asked about their lobbying strategy. Chris responded that they typically first start working with locals and getting them on board. This then evolves to local leaders lobbying and communicating the same message. To deliver the message folks usually send letters and make phone calls. Chris added that it usually depends on the situation as well.

Phil commented on the online-town hall held by Secretary Foxx and looking at the cost of government projects and streamlining the process and asked if Transportation for America has looked into this topic. Chris responded that they have not specifically looked at that, but he was aware of other groups that are looking into this. Susie commented that this is a big opportunity area, giving an example of projects that were found to be cheaper when it didn't go through the federal process. Grace asked about the patch and moving forward, and how the nation is bracing for the uncertainty in funding. Chris responded that states are delaying STIPs and states are starting to pass funding packages. Katherine added that transportation funding is starting to get more creative, especially in regards to interdepartmental funding and partnerships with health, equity and other departments. Commissioner McKeel thanked Chris for coming to EMCTC.

Project Updates

Joanna provided an update for the East Metro Connections Plan (EMCP) project. Staff is working on developing the EMCP website and other communication tools to continue to inform the public of the implementation work occurring as a result of the EMCP.

Councilor Craddick gave a quick update on the Powell-Division project. The project continues to gather public input on routes and land use aspects. Commissioner McKeel asked about the attendance at the events. Grace responded that it varies and they are finding that going to existing events are the more successful events versus having project specific open houses. April added that regardless of attendance there have been really good conversations both at well attended and sparsely attended events. Grace added that the next Steering Committee is scheduled for September 29th. The work leading up to this meeting includes conducting an initial screening of the alternatives. She went over some of the alternatives being explored. A round of open houses is scheduled for the month of September leading up to the Steering Committee meeting. Sean asked about the rapid streetcar mode and what the difference is with the Portland streetcar. April responded that the difference is whether or not the streetcar has its own dedicated lane or if it is running along with traffic. Joanna added that Brian will be coming to provide an update at the September EMCTC meeting. She also provided a link to an online survey that folks can take to provide feedback on the alternatives being explored. Councilor Craddick encouraged folks to forward the survey to their councils as well. Steve asked about what sort of comments they've been hearing. Staff responded that comments have varied ranging from being located on one street to transitioning between Powell and Division. Councilor Craddick added that she has also heard a lot about the need to strengthen north-south connections.

Other Business

Mayor Daoust asked about NE 238th and the funding uncertainties. Joanna responded that the county has been continuing to move forward and has been working with ODOT to identify the year the project will be programmed. She added that even though we continue to move forward there is a caveat that with the uncertainty in Federal funding there is still a risk of funding being delayed. He asked about the overlay work being done on NE 238th and the correlation to the NE 238th project. Joanna responded that it was determined that the road surface condition was in need of a new overlay so the County moved forward with the new overlay.

Commissioner Craddick asked if the delay in the STIP affects the NE 238th funding. Joanna responded that the delay is for future funding and doesn't apply to this past round of STIP since that has already been identified. Councilor Clark asked how the patch affects the STIP funding. Joanna responded that this hasn't been addressed by ODOT yet or implications have been addressed yet.

Councilor Craddick asked about Arata Road. Joanna provided an update noting that the design is at about 70% with the hopes of starting construction spring of 2015. She also noted that the county is working on the construction of the extension of Wood Village Blvd.

Rich went over staff changes in ODOT.

Councilor Craddick informed the group of a presentation on the streetcar evaluation methods report which looks at looking at impacts of the streetcar on economic development. The presentation will be at the upcoming MPAC meeting.

Katherine provided an update on the Sustainable Cities Initiative work that will be happening with University of Oregon students to conduct planning on taking a look at the north-south connection between the 40-mile loop and the Springwater Corridor.

The meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.