

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Joint Public Hearing: West Eugene EmX

February 8, 2011

ISSUE STATEMENT

This is a joint public hearing before the Eugene City Council, Lane Transit District Board of Directors, and the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) acting as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Board. These three bodies will ultimately choose a locally preferred alternative (LPA) for the extension of the EmX bus rapid transit system into west Eugene. This is the only scheduled opportunity for oral testimony before all three decision-making bodies together.

No decision is requested at this meeting. This meeting is established for public testimony and, time permitting, to allow the decision-makers an opportunity to identify information that will be needed before a decision is rendered. Separate work sessions and meetings for decisions are scheduled for each decision-making body at a later date (see schedule below).

BACKGROUND

The Eugene City Council voted on October 9, 2006, to identify West 11th Avenue as the City's priority for the next EmX corridor study. The LTD Board of Directors endorsed the Eugene City Council action. Based on this direction, a plan for the West Eugene EmX Extension was developed. The initial plan identified 58 alternative routes and design options. Preliminary environmental analysis and further public review led to elimination of all but 12 routing options. During the public review period, LTD developed plans that incorporated measures to mitigate many of the impacts to adjacent properties, primarily by finding segments where the EmX vehicles could travel in mixed traffic, thereby eliminating the need for widening the street in those segments.

A Joint Locally Preferred Alternative Committee was established to make a recommendation to the three deciding bodies. The members of the Joint LPA Committee are Mayor Kitty Piercy and Councilors Andrea Ortiz and Chris Pryor from the Eugene City Council; Mike Eyster, Greg Evans, and Gary Gillespie from the LTD Board of Directors; and Lane County Commissioner Sid Leiken and Sonny Chickering, Oregon Department of Transportation, both representing the MPO. The Joint Locally Preferred Alternative Committee has been further reducing the number of acceptable alternatives.

Joint LPA Committee Preliminary Recommendation

The Joint LPA Committee's preliminary recommendation as of January 31 is the subject of two public open houses. The open houses will be held on February 1 and 8, the latter being immediately before this public hearing. The Joint LPA Committee's preliminary recommendation is to forward the 13th/11th Alternative with Mitigation (3-MC) into the public review process along with the No-Build option.

SCHEDULE

The West Eugene EmX Extension project development process includes two decision points. The first is the current decision on selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative based on the October 2010 Alternatives Analysis and subsequent analysis. With that decision, LTD will proceed with the development of the federal environmental review process, which will prompt a second decision focused on selection of either a build or no-build option. LTD also will begin the preparation of a Small Starts grant application. In order to remain on schedule for the remainder of this process, LTD is seeking approvals of the locally preferred alternative from all three decision-making bodies in March 2011. The current review and approval schedule is:

Joint LPA Committee Preliminary Recommendation	January 31, 2011
Open House	February 1, 2011
Open House	February 8, 2011
Joint Public Hearing	February 8, 2011
MPO Work Session	February 10, 2011
Joint LPA Committee Final Recommendation	February 14, 2011
Lane Transit District Work Session	February 16, 2011
Eugene City Council Work Session	February 23, 2011
Eugene City Council Action (if not on previous date)	March 9, 2011
MPO Action at MPC	March 10, 2011
Lane Transit District Action	March 16, 2011

RELATED CITY POLICIES

From Eugene-Springfield Transportation System Plan (TransPlan):

Transportation System Improvements Transit Policy #2: Bus Rapid Transit

Establish a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system composed of frequent, fast transit service along major corridors and neighborhood feeder service that connects with the corridor service and with activity centers, if the system is shown to increase transit mode split along BRT corridors, if local governments demonstrate support, and if financing for the system is feasible.

From Adopted Growth Management Policies:

Growth Management Policy #11

Increase the use of alternative modes of transportation by improving the capacity, design, safety, and convenience of the transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation systems.

RECOMMENDATION

None. This item is for public hearing only.

SUGGESTED MOTION

None.

ATTACHMENTS

None. Materials from the Joint LPA Committee and open houses will be distributed at the hearing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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