

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Central Lane Scenario Planning Update

Meeting Date: September 17, 2014
Department: Planning and Development
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: B
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ISSUE STATEMENT

The City Council will be provided with an update and opportunity to discuss the Central Lane Scenario Planning Project. Initial recommendations have been proposed for policies to be carried forward for inclusion in the preferred scenario.

BACKGROUND

In 2009, the Oregon Legislature passed the Jobs and Transportation Act which included a provision requiring the Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to undertake a scenario planning process for the region. Specifically, this bill requires the MPO to evaluate alternative transportation and land use scenarios to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from light vehicles. The State has established a greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target of 20 percent for the Eugene-Springfield region, though the region is not required to meet that target through the scenario planning process. While the MPO must cooperatively select a preferred scenario, the bill does not require implementation of this scenario. The MPO is required to report its findings to the legislature by the end of the 2015 legislative session.

In addition to meeting the State's requirement to evaluate GHG reductions, the MPO also agreed that it was important to assess how such transportation and land use choices affect other important goals such as economic vitality, public health, and equity considerations. These factors are being evaluated as part of the scenario alternatives analysis. Attachment A provides a synopsis of the evaluation measures that are being used to assess such impacts.

To assist in this effort, Kristin Hull with CH2M Hill is serving as the project manager. She and representatives of all the partner agencies (Eugene, Springfield, Lane County, Coburg, Lane Council of Governments (LCOG), Lane Transit, and Oregon Department of Transportation) comprise the staff team. This work is being funded by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).

The scenario planning project comprises three key steps:

1. **Understanding existing policies:** Collecting and evaluating existing data and policies
2. **Test and Learn:** Developing, evaluating and comparing alternative scenarios
3. **Refine and Select:** Refining scenarios for each jurisdiction and cooperatively selecting a preferred scenario

Steps one and two are complete and step three will be complete in the spring of 2015. A more detailed explanation of the process to date is included in Attachment B.

To date, three scenarios have been developed and evaluated. Scenario A is referred to as the reference case, and is an estimate of the effect of continuing current planning assumptions for the region. The reference case results indicate that the region's current policy direction will help reduce GHG emissions by three percent (from 2005 levels). These policies alone will not achieve the 20 percent reduction target. Scenario B and Scenario C explore policies and strategies that go beyond existing policy, either by investing additional resources in achieving current policies or introducing new policies or actions. Both Scenarios B and C meet the state's 20 percent reduction target. Specific information on the policies and outcomes of the three scenarios is included as Attachment C.

With the results of Scenarios A, B, and C in hand, the scenario planning partners will move toward preparing a preferred scenario in early 2015; this will likely be a hybrid scenario (or a combination of elements of Scenarios A, B and C). Given the fact that this project does not require implementation, the scenario planning process serves as a tool to explore how specific land use and transportation choices potentially affect GHG levels. Such information will help the State to better understand the practical and financial challenges facing local jurisdictions in reducing GHG emissions. Similarly, the results of the scenario planning effort may help inform local governments in future policy choices, including the recently adopted Climate Recovery Ordinance.

Preliminary Recommendations

At this point in the process, the scenario planning team has tested and evaluated many different policies and actions. As staff moves toward the preferred scenario described above, the staff team has developed preliminary recommendations for some policies that they suggest be carried forward in the preferred scenario. The recommendations are as follows:

Road system policies

- Continue to pursue existing policies (those in the reference scenario) to make more efficient use of roadways. Existing policies will result in the road system operating more efficiently than today.

Future vehicle fleet and fuel assumptions

- Use the State's assumptions which anticipate significant improvements in fuel economy and greater use of alternative fuel vehicles. Changes to the vehicle fleet and fuels are likely to occur independent of any action the region might take.

Pay as you drive insurance

- Assume that the State achieves near universal adoption of this insurance system that bases rates on how much individual's drive. The government partners cannot implement this

directly, but instead would support the State in its efforts to encourage adoption of pay as you drive insurance.

Education and marketing programs

- Increase support for and participation in education and marketing programs (like Smart Trips Springfield and Smart Trips Eugene). These programs are extremely cost-effective and have a meaningful impact on travel behavior.

Adoption of these recommendations moves the region toward meeting the State greenhouse gas reduction target as well as goals related to the economy, equity and public health.

The staff team recommends further discussion of how to address the following topics:

Cost of driving

- Gas tax or fee based on miles driven?
- Pursue other fees like a carbon tax?

Bicycle investment

- How much investment can be made? What mode shift is realistic in each city?

Transit investment

- How much investment can be made? What kind of investments should be made? What mode shift is realistic in each city?

Parking

- Is paid parking for work trips (parking associated with commuting to work) desirable and achievable in neighborhoods beyond the University of Oregon (UO), downtown Eugene and downtown Springfield?
- Is paid parking for non-work trips desirable beyond reference case levels?

The State greenhouse gas reduction target could be achieved through many combinations of actions related to the policy areas outlined above and these options will be further explored in the refinement of Scenarios B and C.

Public Outreach

The public involvement process centers on public workshops. The team has hosted two public workshops to date. The public reviewed the reference case and provided input on potential scenarios at the first workshop. At the second workshop, the public reviewed the results of the scenario evaluation and provided input on which policies and strategies were most important to explore going forward. The team plans to hold two more workshops, conduct a telephone survey, and launch an online tool to gather input prior to the development of a preferred scenario. All presentation materials are available at www.clscenarioplanning.org.

A more detailed description of the public involvement program and decision-making process is included in Attachment D.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

The Jobs and Transportation Act of 2009 (HB 2001) requires the Central Lane MPO to conduct this scenario planning work.

The Climate and Energy Action Plan (2010) includes a goal to “Reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions 10 percent below 1990 levels by 2020.”

Climate Recovery Ordinance (2014) sets a goal to reduce the total (not per capita) use of fossil fuels by 50 percent compared to 2010 usage.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

This matter is before the City Council as an update and discussion item. No action is required.

CITY MANAGER’S RECOMMENDATION

No recommendation is necessary as this is a discussion item.

SUGGESTED MOTION

None.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Evaluation Measures
- B. Scenario Planning Process memo
- C. Draft Scenario Policies and Outcomes
- D. Stakeholder and Public Involvement Plan memo

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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