

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Central Lane Scenario Planning Update

Meeting Date: March 9, 2015
Department: Planning and Development
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: B
Staff Contact: Robin Hostick
Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-5507

ISSUE STATEMENT

The City Council will be provided with an update and opportunity to discuss the Central Lane Scenario Planning project. A preferred scenario has been proposed for selection.

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 local governments in 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 have been evaluated as part of the scenario alternatives analysis. A synopsis of the evaluation measures used to assess such impacts was included in the September 2014 update to Council.

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, LCOG, Lane Transit, and Oregon Department of Transportation) comprise the staff team. This work is funded by 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 were completed last year; an update on these steps was presented to the council in September 2014. As anticipated as part of Step 3, a preferred scenario has been crafted and is now being brought to each jurisdiction for review and selection.

During Step 2, three scenarios were developed and evaluated. Scenario A was referred to as the reference case, and was an estimate of the effect of continuing current planning assumptions for the region. The reference case results indicated that the region's current policy direction (excluding reductions from technology and fuel changes) will reduce GHG emissions by 3 percent (from 2005 levels). These policies alone will not achieve the 20 percent reduction target. Scenario B and Scenario C explored 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 met the state's 20 percent reduction target and provided benefits to economic vitality, public health and equity in the region. With the results of Scenarios A, B, and C in hand, the project team began preparing a preferred scenario in late 2014; as anticipated, the preferred scenario that emerged from these discussions combines elements of Scenarios A, B and C.

Given the fact that this project does not require implementation, the scenario planning process mainly serves as a tool to explore how specific land use and transportation choices potentially affect economic vitality, public health, equity and GHG emissions from light vehicles. 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.

Public Outreach

The public involvement process focused on a series of three public workshops. 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 third workshop involved refinement and evaluation of the preferred scenario. In addition, the team gathered input through a telephone survey and an online "future builder" tool prior to the development of the 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 A, and results from the online tool are included in Attachment B.

Preferred Scenario Recommendations

The scenario planning team has tested and evaluated many different policies and actions. Based on the preliminary recommendations, public input, and comments received from the respective decision making bodies of each jurisdiction, the staff team has developed a preferred scenario (Attachment C). The recommendation includes a balanced approach between several policy areas as follows:

Active Transportation

- Make it easier for residents to travel using active means such as walking and biking through programs and projects that improve safety, convenience, and opportunities.

Fleet and Fuels

- 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 independently of any action the region might take.

Transit

- Increase investment in accessible, frequent, and convenient transit in the region.

Pricing

- Gradually change the way residents pay for driving by charging a different combination of fees, taxes, and insurance premiums to influence travel choices and generate revenue for needed investments.

Parking Management

- Manage parking for commuters and other trips to make more efficient use of the limited parking supply.

Education and Marketing

- 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.

Roads

- 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.

The preferred scenario highlights a set of actions related to the policy areas outlined above. By selecting a preferred scenario, each jurisdiction is acknowledging a set of potential tools most suitable for the MPO region with the understanding that each jurisdiction could choose to emphasize or prioritize the tools differently.

Next Steps

To fulfil the region's scenario planning obligation to the state under the Jobs and Transportation Act, each jurisdiction must cooperatively select a preferred scenario, after which the project team must report back to the state before the close of the 2015 legislative session. After the project team has provided an update on the preferred scenario to each jurisdiction, each body will be asked to take action. Staff will return to the council this spring with a request to select a preferred scenario, tentatively in May.

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% 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% 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. Stakeholder and Public Involvement Plan memo
- B. Online Tool and Survey Results
- C. Draft Preferred Scenario

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Robin Hostick, Planning Director (AIC)
Telephone: 541-682-5507
Staff E-Mail: Robin.A.Hostick@ci.eugene.or.us