

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING/WORK SESSION

Wednesday, January 16, 2019

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on January 9, 2019, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District held a Special board meeting on Wednesday, January 16, 2019, beginning at 4:00 p.m., at the LTD Board Room, 3500 E. 17th Avenue, Eugene, Oregon.

Present: Carl Yeh, President
Kate Reid, Vice President
Josh Skov, Secretary (via teleconference)
Don Nordin, Treasurer
Emily Secord
Caitlin Vargas
Steven Yett
Aurora Jackson, General Manager
Camille Gandolfi, Clerk of the Board
Lynn Taylor, Minutes Recorder

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL — Mr. Yeh convened the meeting and called the roll. He noted that Ms. Secord would arrive later in the meeting.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS BY BOARD PRESIDENT — There were none.

COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER — There were none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA — There were no announcements or additions.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AT THIS MEETING

MovingAhead Update — Development Planner Andrew Martin and City of Eugene Transportation Planning Engineer Chris Henry showed a video explaining the MovingAhead project.

Mr. Henry explained that MovingAhead studied five key transportation corridors in Eugene within the context of the City and LTD's plans and ordinances, as well as community values. He said that scalable options for making investment choices for people walking, biking, using mobility devices, and riding the bus. Those options included no build, enhanced corridor, and EmX (bus rapid transit).

Mr. Martin reviewed the toolbox of options for enhanced and EmX corridors. He said the MovingAhead project began in 2015 and following an in depth analyses of corridors in the fall of 2018, an alternatives analysis was published. Executive summaries of the analysis were provided to Board members in the meeting materials. He said many of the 17 environmental factors required to be considered in the federal analysis process did not indicate significant differences among alternatives or corridors and those that did had benefits and impacts that scaled

proportionately with the level of investment. He said there was no clear technical answer to which options and corridors were best; that was a values-based decision.

Mr. Yett asked how the project defined the return on investment. Mr. Martin replied that the project did not lend itself well to the traditional definition. Staff considered that there were many returns on investment because it took a multi-modal approach rather than just considering transit. For example, significant safety improvements for people walking, biking, and using mobility devices would have less of an impact on transit ridership increases, making it difficult to quantify return on investment into a singular number. A technical member accompanying the investment packages examined issues such as the cost per added ride, the amount of travel time riders would experience, and investments in safety.

Mr. Martin said there were a number of MovingAhead reports and documents available and staff could help the Board obtain those. He described the public engagement process following the release of the alternatives analysis. He said that people were asked to rate the alternatives and to identify, among all of the evaluation criteria, which were most important. He said the top five criteria were:

- bike and pedestrian improvements (safety and access)
- ridership increase
- travel time savings
- changes in operating costs
- number of people and jobs served

Mr. Martin said people also rated options for each corridor. The no build option was not selected for any corridor, EmX was supported for the River Road corridor and the enhanced option was favored for all other corridors.

Mr. Yeh asked if information was collected on the reasons why a particular option was supported. Mr. Martin replied that comments from respondents could be made available, but there did not appear to be any single reason for preferences.

Mr. Yett asked how many responses were received. Mr. Henry said 400 responses were received online, through open houses, and listening sessions. He said that respondents were asked about option preferences on a specific corridor, rather than making choices among corridors. He said that would occur during the next phase of the project.

Mr. Yett expressed concern with drawing conclusions and making decisions based on a small, self-selecting sample of the community. Mr. Henry said that he agreed that was a reasonable concern, but the response rate was typical for the community. He said that because there was no numerical solution to determining the best options and prioritizing corridors, policy makers would make their decisions based on community input.

Ms. Reid said it appeared that a large amount of information was distributed during the public communication efforts, with letters sent to over 7,000 property owners and residents, a 30 percent open rate on emails, and considerable website activity. She said that she agreed that respondents were self-selecting and asked what strategies could be used to get more people to engage with the process. Mr. Martin said that more than 40,000 postcards were sent to every person within a half mile of a corridor, but it was a challenge to get people involved. He said that staff were exploring more ways to reach out and make contact, particularly property owners who would be most impacted by a corridor project.

Ms. Vargas asked if the proposed Santa Clara Transit Center project would impact a River Road corridor project. Mr. Martin said MovingAhead and the Transit Center were independent projects, but MovingAhead would use the Santa Clara Transit Center as the terminus of that corridor. He said the Transit Center project was necessary to meet LTD's needs regardless of whether there was a MovingAhead project on the corridor.

Mr. Henry said the project was at the beginning stages of decision-making and there would be many more opportunities for people to offer their opinions. He said that as choices and who would be affected by them became clearer, people would become more engaged, which was typical of long-range transportation and land use planning activities. He reviewed the proposed investment packages that would be released following the joint meeting of the LTD Board and Eugene City Council on February 19. He said a 30-day comment period would collect community feedback on the packages and include a wide range of outreach strategies. He said that he expected that during the summer of 2019 the Board and City Council would be provided with community feedback, and work sessions could be held in the fall. Decisions regarding corridor options and funding strategies could be made later in the fall or winter.

Ms. Reid said some concerns had been expressed about investments based on the lack of funds available immediately. She said that she hoped that the next project phase could provide more specific information about funding timeframes to the public. Mr. Henry said MovingAhead had been clear that it would result in a 10-year plan and it was expected that investments would be made through that time period. He said it was important to establish a vision, even if the funding strategies were not in place. He also said it was prudent to determine what the community needed and wanted, and then find the resources to make that a reality.

Mr. Nordin asked if the Main Street/McVay Highway project in Springfield was being considered. Mr. Martin replied that MovingAhead was a joint Eugene/LTD project focused on corridors within the city. He explained that Springfield was focused on its Main Street/McVay project and did not participate in MovingAhead, although LTD was working closely with Springfield on its project. He said MovingAhead included assumptions that there would be capital improvements on Main Street.

Mr. Skov asked to at some point to have information on how those packages emerged. He said that he agreed with Mr. Yett's remarks about the small quantity of respondents to date and said that he hoped to see more robust samples in the next round of public engagement. He added that he did not feel the 17 environmental factors required in the analysis provided a large enough perspective; impacts on ridership and the broader transit system, as well as impacts on real estate development in the corridors should also be considered. He said there was a bigger transportation system transformation affecting all modes that scaled with the investment levels. He also said that he hoped the connection between MovingAhead and Transit Tomorrow could be made clearer.

Mr. Martin said Transit Tomorrow was a 3-year look at the entire region, while MovingAhead was a 10-year plan for capital improvements in Eugene. He said Transit Tomorrow decisions would be made before MovingAhead decisions.

Ms. Jackson explained that Transit Tomorrow was a locally funded analysis, which LTD had full control of in terms of marketing, outreach, and presentation. The analysis had to be independent of other activities in the community and not connected to any other ongoing projects.

Mr. Martin said staff was looking at ways to improve MovingAhead messaging, such as how the no build option had no effect from an environmental analysis perspective, but would in terms of the community such as congestion and increased operating costs, less access and higher capital

costs when improvements were eventually made as part of the Transportation System Plan and other city plans and policies.

Mr. Skov said his concern was that there were some intersects between Transit Tomorrow and MovingAhead, such as the desire to increase transit ridership, particularly in some areas, and that he wanted to see how decisions on one project could be related to decisions on the other to assure they were not working at cross purposes.

Ms. Reid suggested working with Better Eugene-Springfield Transportation (BEST) because the organization had been successful in reaching out to the community.

Grant Applications to Fund Out-of-District Services-5311 and 5311(f) Funds — Accessible Services Specialist John Ahlen discussed programs related to American with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit and rural services. He said that LTD's goal was to maintain paratransit and rural services programs. He said that federal 5311 and 5311(f) funds support the Rhody Express services within Florence and the Diamond Express services Oakridge. The grant funds were awarded biennially.

Mr. Ahlen said the Diamond Express connected Oakridge residents with the metro area and gave them access to transportation options, such as Amtrak, the airport, or local bus system. The fare was \$2.50 one-way and a \$5.00 round trip could be converted into a day pass for the LTD metro system. There were three trips per day and more than 12,000 rides were provided annually. He explained that LTD contracts with Pacific Crest Bus lines to provide the service. The service was supported with 5311(f) funds, a direct financial contribution from the City of Oakridge, farebox revenue, and state STF funds provided the required match. He reviewed the program budget and said the proposed award would maintain the core level of service and appear on the Board's Consent Calendar for approval. He said federal 5311(f) funds had to be applied for competitively at the state level. The state was seeking transit network programs that connected communities to other transit options. He said LTD was well positioned to compete for funding and had done well in the past.

Ms. Secord arrived at 4:50 p.m.

Mr. Ahlen said the Rhody Express service operated two loops within the Florence city limits, with an extra loop that connected with the casino, making it essentially a fixed route service. Eight hourly trips each day are provided to meet the service requirement of at least once per hour. He indicated that over 10,000 fixed route rides were provided annually, along with over 1,000 complementary ADA paratransit trips. He reviewed the biennium budget and said federal 5311 formula funds provided the program's core funding, based on population and ridership data. The budget also included farebox revenue and a financial contribution from the City of Florence. STF funds helped meet the match requirement.

Mr. Ahlen said applications for the competitive 5311(f) funds were due February 1 and applications for 5311 formula funds were due February 8.

In response to a question from Ms. Reid, Mr. Ahlen said match rates were split as a percentage of federal and local funds. The match requirements were met using STF funds, contributions from the cities of Oakridge and Florence, and farebox revenues.

Mr. Nordin asked if any of the funds described in the presentation could be used for the Florence to Yachats connection. Mr. Ahlen replied that his presentation only related to Oakridge and Florence services. The Florence-Yachats service would be the subject of a separate presentation and funding strategies.

State 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Older Adults and People with Disabilities and Special Transportation Fund (STF) Program Overview — Mr. Ahlen distributed information on the core ADA and paratransit services provided with 5310 and STF funds and a spreadsheet of the FY 2020/2021 program applications. He said services were funded through grant and local funds and the LTD Board would be presented with information about the cost to maintain services, and the funding sources that would be used. He said the applications for 5310 and STF funds had a slightly later deadline than applications for 5311 and 5311(f) funds, and he would provide the Board with a formal presentation of recommendations from the STF Committee at its February meeting.

Mr. Ahlen said 5310 funds required a local match 10.27 percent and typically STF funds were used for that purpose. He said that the 5310 and STF for formula funds were allocated through the Oregon Department of Transportation to eligible transportation agencies throughout the state. He said STF funds were the most flexible in their use and ideal for matching federal funds. He briefly reviewed the list of program applications, requested level of funding, and proposed funding sources.

Mr. Ahlen agreed to continue his presentation at the regular Board meeting due to lack of time.


ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Yeh adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT:

ATTEST:


Josh Skov
Board Secretary


Camille Gandolfi
Clerk of the Board

Date Approved: 2/20/19