

MINUTES OF JOINT
LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS/EUGENE CITY COUNCIL
JOINT WORK SESSION
Wednesday, September 28, 2015

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on September 24, 2015, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District and the Eugene City Council held a joint work session on Wednesday, September 28, 2015, at Harris Hall, 125 E. 8th Avenue, Eugene, at 5:30 p.m.

Lane Transit District Board Present:

Gary Wildish, President
Carl Yeh, Vice President
Ed Necker, Treasurer
Gary Gillespie
Angelynn Pierce
Don Nordin

Eugene City Council Present:

Mayor Kitty Piercy
Councilors:
Betty Taylor
Alan Zelenka
George Poling
Mike Clark
Greg Evans
Claire Syrett
Chris Pryor
Minutes Recorder: Chuck Crockett

Board Members Absent:

Julie Grossman, Secretary

Councilors Absent:

George Brown

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME: Eugene Mayor Piercy called the joint work session to order, and LTD Board President Wildish called the joint work session to order.

WORK SESSION:

MovingAhead: Corridor Screening – City of Eugene Transportation Planning Engineer Chris Henry, City of Eugene Senior Planner Terri Harding, and LTD Transit Development Planner Sasha Luftig showed a PowerPoint presentation on the MovingAhead screening process and results, corridors, public outreach, decision-making process, and next steps.

Ms. Harding introduced the MovingAhead team, gave a brief overview of the purpose of the MovingAhead program, the information that was being presented, and the decision that the MovingAhead team was going to ask the Eugene City Council (ECC) and Lane Transit District (LTD) Board to make.

Ms. Luftig noted that the corridors being looked at for Level 1 are Highway 99, River Road, Coburg Road, Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, 30th Avenue-LCC, and Valley River Center. She explained that Beltline was being looked at as an across town connector service that would not require a transfer; it was not being looked at as an individual corridor. She also explained that the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard corridor will no longer include Centennial Boulevard. She said that the City of Springfield has decided to keep its primary focus on the Main Street-McVay project. Ms. Luftig said that the types of transit improvements that are being considered range

from traditional fixed-route service to enhanced corridors to comprehensive EmX, with the consideration of what are appropriate investments to be made over the next five years. She went on to explain that the corridor concepts were developed through online feedback, input from the community workshops, and technical expertise that the team received throughout the summer. The concepts that are being presented are high-level views of the corridors; the ideas will be refined during the Level 2 stage of the program. Ms. Luftig showed a regional transit map and pointed out that the team also is looking forward to the bigger picture of how the MovingAhead corridors are going to integrate with the regular, already existing services that LTD offers; bearing in mind the short-term, mid-term, and long-term transit needs of the region. This includes the transit needs for the 2021 Track and Field Championships, potential future airport transit service needs, and future service frequency increases on other routes.

Mr. Henry gave an overview of the public outreach that was performed throughout the summer and the results of that outreach. He also reviewed the decision-making process, which includes community input, the sounding board, and the project management team. The MovingAhead Oversight Committee has recommended that River Road, Coburg Road, Highway 99, and the 30th-LCC be advanced for further EmX and enhanced corridor study. They also recommended that Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard be advanced for further study for enhanced corridor only. Mr. Henry said that the corridors that are not being considered now but will be considered in the future are Beltline, Valley River Center, and Centennial Boulevard. The ECC and the LTD Board will be asked to make a decision on this recommendation: the ECC on October 12, and the LTD Board of Directors on October 21. Mr. Henry went on to explain the steps that will be taken in the Level 2 stage of the process.

In response to a question from Mayor Piercy, Mr. Henry said that both EmX service and enhanced corridor service will be considered for four corridors, and enhanced corridor service only for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard corridor. Mayor Piercy asked if the team felt that they heard enough from the different parts of the community about the corridor ideas. Mr. Henry said that the survey results reflect that there is interest in each of the corridors, and the community workshops have been very well attended. Ms. Harding added that the team also has been reaching out to other groups that are interested in hearing about the project, including the chambers of commerce, the Bethel Lions Club, and a variety of other groups, which have also assisted the team in reaching more people. Mr. Henry added that the team has been to several neighborhood association meetings in addition to other community groups.

Councilor Clark thanked the MovingAhead team for the report and acknowledged the amount of work that was put into its development. He said that it is a very good plan and it is good that such an inclusive approach is being taken in asking the community for its input on a step-by-step basis. He asked if costs and constraints pertaining to the different corridors were communicated to the community during outreach. Ms. Luftig explained that during the workshops, the public was engaged in active brainstorming in regard to corridor needs; and they were able to actively see, from a hands on perspective, some of the relative constraints. Mr. Henry added that cost for the different corridor ideas was not communicated during outreach. Councilor Clark expressed concern over any potential reduction in usable lanes on Coburg Road by adding a dedicated EmX lane because the congestion is already so heavy. He added that he is strongly in favor of River Road and Highway 99 as potential EmX lines, as well as the 30th-LCC corridor.

Mr. Gillespie said that in the workshops he attended, there was strong community input in regard to fixing Coburg Road.

Councilor Poling thanked the MovingAhead team for all of their hard work. He asked if there was a way to distinguish residents and non-residents of the River Road area from the survey results. Mr. Henry replied that demographic questions of that nature were not asked. Councilor Poling expressed that he was in support of continuing to study the Coburg corridor, but he cautioned against spending time studying the same ideas that were studied in 2002, which were not effective. He emphasized the importance of maintaining a high level of communication with the community about corridor plans and direction and keeping them involved in the process to avoid citizens being surprised.

Councilor Zelenka expressed his support of the outreach that has been done thus far. He said that he is in support of moving forward with all four corridors and appreciates the method in which the project is being managed so that it is achieved in a timely manner. He added that he is in support of further study of Beltline at a later time in the MovingAhead process.

Councilor Pryor commended the level of work and detail that the MovingAhead team has performed so far in the process. He said that he agrees that something needs to be done with the Coburg corridor. He said that the goal of the City of Eugene and LTD is not to take cars away from people in the community but to provide additional and more feasible transportation options. He emphasized the importance of how this goal gets communicated to the community to avoid people adopting the perception that they are losing options. He said that he is in support of moving forward with the corridors because they are not functional in their current state.

Councilor Syrett asked how the team is tracking the number of people who have participated in the sounding board and other boards, groups, commissions, and neighborhood groups - aside from the survey results and open house attendees. Ms. Harding replied that the data can be provided and agrees that there are a large number of people they are reaching that are not being reflected in the data that has been provided. Ms. Luftig said that the data provided also does not reflect the people that were reached in the 20 events that the team attended over the summer. Councilor Syrett said that she would like to see that data provided as it would be beneficial for everyone to know the full level of community involvement, and it would help to give credibility to the MovingAhead program and team. She asked the team to explain the cost breakdown for the River Road corridor and the LCC corridor, as River Road has a much higher cost estimate than LCC. Ms. Luftig explained that the River Road corridor has a higher cost due to the dedicated EmX lane infrastructure that would run the length of River Road, and LCC does not; it would be operating primarily in mixed traffic. She added that the costs shown also include all of the extra amenities needed for the corridors, such as pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and landscaping.

Ms. Pierce commented that she would like to mention, on Ms. Grossmans behalf, the importance of including the Vision Zero concepts that the City is presently discussing into the MovingAhead plans and conversations now so that they can be better incorporated early on in the process instead of after the fact.

Mr. Wildish commented that he attended four of the five workshops that took place and agrees that it would be beneficial to calculate and provide the overall number of community participants in this process.

Councilor Clark emphasized the importance of considering how plans are discussed and how they are communicated to the public in order to avoid misperceptions and inciting fear and uncertainty in the community about what is going to happen.

Mr. Nordin commented that the cost expectancy for these projects is high and that it appears that additional funding is going to be needed to complete the corridor projects. He asked the team to elaborate on the plan for funding. Ms. Luftig replied that Small Starts grant funding is being explored for the portions of the project that qualify, and additional funding is being researched and looked for as well.

Mr. Necker emphasized the importance of communicating to the public the importance of EmX as a system not a route service.

Councilor Poling expressed support of Mayor Piercy's explanation of the system goal. He said that the goal is to improve the system in a way that encourages more people use it. He said that the purpose is not to take away peoples cars but to provide them with more transportation alternatives.

Councilor Pryor emphasized the importance of communicating to the public that they are not losing anything by moving forward with the corridor changes, rather they are gaining options. He said that improving this communication will help to avoid public perception that they will be losing something because of the change.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Piercy adjourned the joint work session at 6:30 p.m.; LTD Board President Wildish adjourned the joint work session at 6:30 p.m.

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT:

ATTEST:

Julie Grossman
Board Secretary

Jeanne Schapper
Clerk of the Board

Date Approved: _____