

MINUTES OF DIRECTORS MEETING

LANE TRANSIT DISTRICT

SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION

Monday, March 13, 2000

Pursuant to notice given to *The Register-Guard* for publication on March 10, 2000, and distributed to persons on the mailing list of the District, the Board of Directors of the Lane Transit District held a special meeting/work session on Monday, March 13, 2000, at 5:30 p.m. in the LTD Board Room at 3500 East 17th Avenue, Eugene.

Present: Hillary Wylie, President, presiding
Rob Bennett, Vice President
Gerry Gaydos
Patricia Hocken
Dave Kleger, Treasurer
Virginia Lauritsen
Mark Pangborn, Assistant General Manager
Jo Sullivan, Recording Secretary
Ken Hamm, LTD General Manager, effective March 27, 2000

Absent: Dean Kortge, Secretary

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Board President Hillary Wylie. Four members were present (Bennett, Kleger, Lauritsen, and Wylie), constituting a quorum. Ms. Hocken arrived at 5:40 p.m. and Mr. Gaydos arrived at 6:10 p.m.

WORK SESSION ON TRANSPLAN: Planning and Development Manager Stefano Viggiano said that this work session was a continuation of the Board's review of the draft TransPlan. In addition to the agenda packet, staff had distributed a copy of an e-mail message from Rob Zako and a TransPlan Adoption Process Work Session Tracking Summary, which was a matrix to show the progress of the work sessions by all jurisdictions.

This work session would cover Issue Area 3, Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Issue Area 5, Transportation System Improvements: Transit System.

Mr. Viggiano discussed the question of extending the public comment period deadline through June. Originally, the deadline was extended through March 31, 2000, in order to allow public comment during the time that the adopting agencies were holding work sessions leading up to the joint work session. Staff had anticipated that those individual work sessions would be completed by March 31. It was unclear how long the work sessions would take, but staff were recommending extending the public comment period until the end of June 2000.

Mr. Kleger asked if staff anticipated any problems as a result of extending the comment period. Mr. Viggiano said that Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) staff member Tom Schwetz had indicated that it would not be a problem to extend the comment period. At the end of the comment period, staff would need to respond to those comments, which was a task that would be done regardless of when the comment period ended.

Mr. Bennett asked if a precedence had been set for this process. He was accustomed to a process where public comment was received and recorded, and it was not necessarily one group or even the public in general commenting throughout an entire process. Typically, following the recording of the public comment, the elected and appointed officials made the decisions. Mr. Viggiano said the extension of the public comment period was atypical, but it was not illegal. Lee Shoemaker of LCOG added that during the Planning Commission review of the draft TransPlan, the Planning Commission had extended the public comment period twice.

Mr. Viggiano said that extending the public comment period was in agreement with the original intent of allowing public comment during the work session period. The Board would be asked to take formal action on extending the public comment period at its regular meeting on March 15, 2000.

Ms. Hocken asked if the delay of the work sessions would set back the timeline for adopting the draft TransPlan. Mr. Viggiano said that he expected it would.

Another issue that Mr. Viggiano wanted to address was in Issue Area 1, General Issues. At the last work session, staff did not spend much time on Issue Area 1, and this particular issue had arisen subsequent to that. It was in response to a request by the Convention and Visitors Association of Lane County (CVALCO) to include in TransPlan the need to provide transportation to visitors to the community. CVALCO suggested that a TransPlan goal be added to that effect. The options provided were that no changes be made to the existing draft TransPlan, that a goal be added as suggested, or that the language be incorporated under Goal number 2. There were only two goals in the draft TransPlan. Staff recommended the third option of adding the language addressing visitor transportation needs under Goal number 2. It would become Item J under Goal number 2. Mr. Viggiano added that the item also would be listed as Item J under Definitions and Intent in order to explain what it meant.

Mr. Kleger said that with the high level of support for the northwest rail corridor activities, he thought it was appropriate and consistent that a visitor transportation item be included in TransPlan. Ms. Lauritsen said that she supported adding it to the existing Goal 2. There was general agreement among Board members to add information about visitor transportation as Item J under Goal 2.

TransPlan Issue Area 3 – Transportation Demand Management

Transportation Demand Management (TDM). Mr. Shoemaker said that a substantial number of comments were received with regard to TDM Policy #1, which expanded the existing TDM programs and developed new ones. Most of the comments were with regard to incentives to expand transit service by offering reduced or free fares and expanding the group pass programs. Some suggested incentives were to change travel behavior by implementing and increasing parking fees, odometer fees, and/or tolls on the bridges. A few comments were received regarding voluntary versus mandatory TDM.

Staff had prepared three options for discussion, including making no change to the TDM policies; prohibiting mandatory TDM; and establishing TDM benchmarks, and, if those benchmarks were not achieved, establishing mandatory TDM programs. With regard to educating the public on

travel alternatives, staff had prepared two items for discussion, including maintaining current education programs or expanding education programs.

Staff were recommending no change in the TransPlan TDM Policy #1.

Mr. Bennett asked if there were any working examples of mandatory TDM within the United States. Mr. Shoemaker said that Portland, Oregon, had a mandatory TDM program in place in which employers with 50 or more employees were required to have a trip-reduction program in place. LTD Commuter Resources Coordinator Connie Bloom Williams said that most of the mandated TDM programs were related to mandated air quality areas. She was not aware of any that were in areas where air quality was not the main problem. Mr. Bennett asked if she knew of any areas that had arbitrary parking fee approaches. Ms. Bloom Williams said that parking management strategies varied greatly from community to community. The only common denominator was that there should be parking management strategies. Mr. Viggiano added that this community had a fairly extensive TDM program, but one of the issues was lack of communication about what was being done. Many people who spoke out in favor of more TDM strategies were not aware of how much TDM already was being done.

Ms. Hocken said that voluntary versus mandatory could become a major political issue. Given the different approaches of the Councils and the Lane County Commissioners, she was not sure that mandatory policies would be adopted at the TransPlan level, but she did not think there should be anything in TransPlan that would prohibit individual jurisdictions from moving ahead with a mandatory TDM policy. She thought that the current TDM Policy reflected that. She said that it should be made clearer that mandatory TDM policies were not prohibited and there were options available for individual jurisdictions. Mr. Viggiano said that the intent of the policy was to allow flexibility. He said that the concern at the Eugene City Council was that some strategies made more sense on a regional basis than others, such as mandated parking costs that would place one part of the community at a relative disadvantage to another part of the community.

Mr. Bennett said that he did not support mandatory TDM. He thought that an arbitrary approach, such as increased parking costs downtown, would create dislocation and hurt the efforts of TDM. The better approach to a more balanced transportation system was to become more competitive with the automobile for infrastructure and funding. He favored the approach that Portland had taken because it was a more educational approach.

Mr. Kleger said that he was deeply concerned about mandates that were not strongly supported by the public. He did not, however, favor TransPlan preventing a particular jurisdiction's endeavors to implement mandatory TDM strategies.

Ms. Wylie said that she did not favor a mandatory TDM policy at this time because many of the TDM strategies were not yet in place to enforce a mandatory policy, such as a downtown shuttle and high-frequency corridor service.

With regard to stipulating that benchmarks be set and met, Ms. Hocken said that it was an issue that could delay the adoption of TransPlan, because she believed it needed much more review before it could be considered.

Ms. Williams said that there was discussion at the Eugene City Council work session with regard to being more aggressive with expanding TDM educational programs. Currently,

educational programs included a curriculum program that was produced in 1995 called "Road Trips" that was targeted to children in grades 3 through 5. It was distributed to local-area schools. It was not required curriculum and with the higher requirements for meeting state assessment levels, it had been given a very low priority within the school districts, although some teachers had taken the personal responsibility of teaching transportation education, and there were people who believed that transportation education should be required curriculum.

Ms. Hocken said that given the environment of controversy surrounding the new statewide testing program, it would be difficult to raise the interest level among grade school teachers for a transportation curriculum, particularly when it had not yet been tested in any way. A transportation curriculum also could be very difficult to mandate with the multitude of other state mandates that teachers needed to implement. Ms. Hocken said that she was interested in generating a commuter plan for the schools that was similar to the employer-based group pass program. Mr. Viggiano said that a suggestion was made at the Eugene City Council meeting for a task team that would include representatives from the City, LTD, and the 4J School District to discuss TDM options. Ms. Hocken said that she was thinking more about a school-by-school-specific program. She thought that if a few schools were willing to try it as a strong environmental project with the full support of staff, teachers, and parents, and if it were successful, other schools might be more willing to try it. She did not favor a mandate being sent to the schools from the district offices.

Mr. Bennett said that he liked Ms. Hocken's idea and also favored what Ms. Wylie had said about making sure that the tools were in place to carry out the strategies before mandating the strategies. He thought that if the teachers were reluctant to add transportation to the curriculum, then perhaps an educational program could be brought to their classrooms with guest speakers from LTD. Not only would the students learn about TDM, but also how to ride the bus, where the bus traveled, etc. Ms. Bloom Williams said LTD currently offered free field trips to area teachers, and staff recently had met to discuss broadening the field trip program to include more TDM education.

Ms. Lauritsen said she thought LTD staff already were working on expanding education programs to local schools, so she favored maintaining the current education programs, which she hoped would include the suggestions that the Board had discussed.

Mr. Kleger said that he presumed that there was nothing on the horizon that would cause a reduction in the present educational efforts. There was nothing in TransPlan, as presently drafted, that would interfere with further expansion of educational programs. He did not want LTD to get into a position where it was committed to something it could not pay for. He favored maintaining the current education programs.

Assistant General Manager Mark Pangborn said that one advantage of expanding education programs was that it would be consistent with the Board's first position on non-mandatory TDM. In addition, agreement at the local level to expand education programs would send a message to the State of Oregon, which was the TDM funding source, that expanding those programs had broad-based support in the community. Ms. Bloom Williams added that the TDM Policy regarding education was not limited to schools, but applied to the general public.

Ms. Hocken asked if the 4J School District still offered its community schools and other programs for adults. She said this also could be a good way to reach more people.

Mr. Gaydos said that the UO was attempting to get out of the parking business, which seemed like a perfect opportunity to be supportive and to share educational information. Mr. Gaydos also noted that all the area high schools had large parking lots, and it appeared that nothing was being done at the high school level to discourage automobile use. He thought the high schools would need to consider the issue in the near future, and it was another opportunity where LTD could provide support and education.

TDM Policy #2: Parking Management: Mr. Shoemaker said that TDM policy #2 was written to increase the use of parking management strategies in selected areas throughout the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area. Staff were recommending no change to TDM Policy #2. The Board indicated agreement with the staff position.

TDM Policy #3: Congestion Management: Mr. Shoemaker said that staff were recommending no change to this policy, which implemented TDM strategies to manage demand at congested locations. Currently, there was funding in the TDM budget to develop a TDM program in the Gateway area. LCOG and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff were very interested in this development. In addition, LCOG had performed a study that projected the effects of TDM strategies on the five most congested areas in the community. It was a program that could be expanded in the future. The Board indicated agreement with the staff recommendation.

TDM Finance and Implementation: Mr. Shoemaker said that ODOT was the primary funding source for TDM programs, and LTD also contributed. Additional funding sources would need to be identified. Local jurisdictions also had the option to develop TDM programs.

Ms. Hocken asked if increased parking prices downtown could be used to help fund alternative transportation. Ms. Bloom Williams said that parking fees could be used in that manner. Mr. Pangborn said that at one time, the City had considered using funds from the parking fees to pay for its Group Pass program. Mr. Viggiano added that a logical use for that money could be to pay for the downtown shuttle, which could connect some outlying parking lots.

Mr. Pangborn said that the TDM program would continue to apply for and use the current and projected funding from ODOT, but anything additional would become part of the annual budget process for LTD or another jurisdiction.

TransPlan Issue Area 5 – Transportation System Improvements: Transit

Mr. Viggiano said that TransPlan Issue Area 4 – Transportation System Improvements: Road System, would be discussed at a later date. There were four transit policies within Issue Area 5.

TSI Transit Policy #1: Transit Improvements: Mr. Viggiano said that there was very little public testimony related to this policy, which improved transit service and facilities to increase the system's accessibility, attractiveness, and convenience for all users, including the transportation disadvantaged. The testimony that was received related to free service and neighborhood shuttle service. The free service issue was one that the LTD Board previously had considered. Staff believed the neighborhood shuttle service would be addressed with the implementation of bus rapid transit (BRT). Staff were recommending no change to the policy.

Mr. Kleger asked if LTD had an effective way of funding a significant increase in neighborhood shuttle or circulator-type service regardless of the efficiencies that were envisioned

for BRT. Mr. Viggiano said that currently, the only way to do that would be to reduce service somewhere else. Mr. Kleger said that he was concerned that if the efficiencies of the BRT system were not realized, there would be no way to pay for an improved neighborhood circulator capacity.

Mr. Gaydos noted that there was nothing in the policy relating to economic feasibility that would suggest free fares. Mr. Pangborn added that the entire TransPlan was financially constrained, which meant that money had to be available to implement any and all of the goals.

The Board indicated agreement with the staff recommendation on TSI Transit Policy #1.

TSI Transit Policy #2: Bus Rapid Transit: Mr. Viggiano said that staff were recommending replacing the term "transit market share" with "transit mode split." There were many comments received about BRT. Most comments supported the concept, but there also were concerns about costs, impacts of design, and effectiveness of BRT. Mr. Viggiano said that, in general, the policy was written in such a way that BRT implementation would be contingent upon local support, financing, and meeting the market share requirements. The requirement for local support meant that issues, such as impacts on traffic, could be very carefully considered before any agreements were made with regard to implementing BRT. The issue about whether it was effective in increasing ridership was covered by the requirement in the policy to increase transit market share. The financing issue also was covered in the policy. Staff believed that the policy, as written, would address most of the concerns expressed during the public testimony.

Mr. Viggiano explained that staff had thought that the term "market share" would be more understandable than "transit mode split." Instead, staff had found that it was generating more questions and misunderstandings.

Mr. Bennett agreed with the staff recommendation. He said that he used the term "market share" often. He thought it suggested that LTD was dealing with the important initiative on a business-like basis, and that LTD was willing to be objectively accountable. It also indicated that this capital improvement would result in an infrastructure position to get more business. However, the term "market share" also tended to offend some people. Ms. Wylie said that to some people, "market share" sounded like LTD was trying to make a profit. When she had asked people how they would react to the term, "shown to increase ridership along transit corridors," people tended to be much more favorable about the policy. Mr. Bennett said that part of what BRT was attempting to accomplish was to attract a new kind of bus rider, which was a share of a new market.

Ms. Wylie added that people were being asked to understand transportation jargon, and it was important to ensure that issues were explained very thoroughly and that understanding was achieved. Mr. Hamm said that Mr. Bennett's comments were very valuable because modal split suggested a percentage of rider shift from one mode to another. The representation, in terms of the societal structure, was attracting a whole new type of guests aboard the transit vehicles, and when a new product was created, such as BRT, a new market opportunity was created as well, which could attract a different client base. There were two different perspectives to consider: one was increasing the percentage, and the other was attracting a different type of bus rider.

Other Board members agreed with the staff recommendation. Mr. Viggiano added that changing the terminology did not change the meaning of the policy.

TSI Transit Policy #3: Transit/High-Occupancy Vehicle Priority: Mr. Viggiano said that very little public testimony was received about this policy, which was to implement traffic management strategies and other actions, where appropriate and practical, that gave priority to transit and other HOVs. Staff were recommending no change to this policy.

Ms. Hocken said that Jarrett Walker of Nelson Nygaard had made a presentation to the Metropolitan Policy Committee in which he provided an overview of what the LTD Comprehensive Service Redesign (CSR) issues were in terms of productivity versus coverage. He displayed a schematic that showed the BRT corridors, other major transit corridors, and neighborhood collectors. Mr. Walker had said that there were other types of protection than exclusive lanes, such as queue jumpers and signal priority. Ms. Hocken said that this policy was needed for other parts of the transit system.

The Board indicated agreement with the staff recommendation on TSI Transit Policy #3.

TSI Transit Policy #4: Park-and-Ride Facilities: Transit Policy #4 called for expanding the park-and-ride system within the metropolitan area and nearby communities. Mr. Viggiano said that very little comment had been received on this policy, and staff were recommending no change to the policy. The Friends of Eugene had expressed a concern that large park-and-ride lots would have an impact neighborhoods, landscape, and social patterns. Mr. Viggiano said that LTD's approach had been to build a greater number of smaller park-and-ride areas rather than a few large ones, which made the system more convenient, since bus riders would be more likely to have one that served them better. Staff believed that direction would address the concerns of the Friends of Eugene.

Mr. Bennett asked what the typical Park-and-Ride lot size was. Mr. Viggiano said there was a Park-and-Ride plan that addressed lot sizes and LTD's philosophy of Park-and-Rides. The Land Use Code, currently being updated by the City of Eugene, also addressed Park-and-Rides. The draft Land Use Code plan stated that Park-and-Rides were not allowed in residential areas unless they fronted on a major corridor and were accessed from the corridor.

The Board indicated agreement with the staff recommendation on TSI Transit Policy #4.

Suggested New Planning and Program Actions: Mr. Viggiano said that the Planning and Program Actions were suggested ways in which the policies were implemented. These Actions would not be formally adopted. Staff provided a list of Actions that could be added to the Plan, including exploring free or reduced transit fares; protecting bus speeds along major arterials; providing transit priority as part of all new river crossings; creating a stronger and earlier LTD role in development review; requiring that certain new development be located in nodes along major transit corridors; revising parking codes to support alternative mode use; requiring alternative modes strategies for school and other youth activities; requiring that all major community events provide for transit service and other alternative transportation modes; considering allocation of a percentage of state motor vehicle revenues for transit projects; requiring local agencies' legislative agendas to include, encourage, facilitate, and fund alternative modes; and committing to alternatively-fueled buses.

Mr. Bennett said that LTD already had explored free or reduced transit fares, and a decision had been made. The discussion also included why it was not in LTD's best interest to address reduced or free fares on a wholesale basis. Mr. Bennett was concerned about LTD continuing to

fairly aggressively explore free or reduced fares system-wide or in a broader sense than what already was done. Mr. Viggiano explained the reasons for recommending the action statement. Since the Board previously had taken action on reducing youth fares, staff could track the fare change carefully to see what impact it had on ridership and if found to be very successful, the Board might want to consider other fare changes. Another reason was that other fare subsidies might be explored. This action suggested that LTD would continue to explore free or reduced fares, but would not commit LTD to providing free or reduced fares.

Mr. Bennett suggested that the action item be changed to read "continue to explore free or reduced transit fares." Other Board members agreed with the suggestion. Ms. Wylie said that LTD responded very quickly to the public testimony for exploring free or reduced fares. Mr. Gaydos suggested "Continue to explore transit fare alternatives that encouraged ridership."

Mr. Gaydos asked if there were other places besides major arterials that bus speeds ought to be protected. He was concerned about limiting that action item to the major arterials. He also thought that providing transit priority as part of all new river crossings was a limiting statement. He thought that in addition to new river crossings, a reference should be made to all congested areas.

Ms. Wylie suggested that the Board sign a letter to the federal General Services Administration (GSA) suggesting that the siting of the new courthouse be along a BRT or other major transit corridor. She had noticed that some of the sites being considered were well away from existing transit. Mr. Bennett said that wherever the courthouse was located could be part of a commercial neighborhood as opposed to locating it right along an arterial and could be served by a shuttle, such as a neighborhood connector. Ms. Wylie said that her goal would be to inform the GSA about LTD's current planning and to suggest that they consider it in their decision making. Mr. Viggiano thought that the Board should suggest that the courthouse be located in downtown Eugene or downtown Springfield. Upon the Board's agreement, Ms. Wylie would pursue drafting a letter.

Mr. Gaydos asked if there was a way to soften the statement about committing to alternatively-fueled buses. He also commented that he did not know what the future held, and the use of the term "alternatively-fueled" might be too restrictive. Mr. Pangborn said that staff had changed the term in the Strategic Plan to "alternatively powered" buses.

Mr. Kleger said he was concerned about the allocation of a percentage of the state motor vehicle revenues for transit projects. He thought LTD also should include a statement about its willingness to lobby for change in constitutional restrictions. He thought that the constitutional restriction stated that any taxes that were allocated for motor vehicles had to be spent on streets, roads, highways, and highway rest areas. Mr. Pangborn said that Tri-Met already was working on this allocation. Mr. Viggiano said staff could work on wording a suggested program action that addressed Mr. Kleger's concern.

Mr. Viggiano said that staff would revise the proposed Planning and Program Actions according to the Board discussion and present the revised list at the Board's next TransPlan work session.

Break: The Board took a brief recess at 7 p.m. and reconvened at 7:10 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO ORS 192.660(1)(h) and ORS 192.660(1)(d):

MOTION

Mr. Kleger moved that the Board meet in Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660(1)(h), to discuss current litigation or litigation likely to be filed, and pursuant to ORS 192.660(1)(d), to conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labor negotiations. Ms. Hocken seconded the motion, which then carried by unanimous vote, 6:0, with Bennett, Gaydos, Hocken, Kleger, Lauritsen, and Wylie voting in favor and none opposed. The Board entered executive session at 7:11 p.m. Board Counsel Roger Saydack was present for the discussion on litigation. LTD's Human Resources Manager Dave Dickman and Transit Operations Manager Mark Johnson were present for the discussion on labor negotiations.

VOTE

VOTE

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION: Following a motion by Ms. Hocken, the Board unanimously returned to open session at 8:23 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: There was no further discussion, and Board President Hillary Wylie adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.



Board Secretary