

**Summary Minutes  
Rogue Valley MPO Public Advisory Council  
July 18, 2017**



The following attended:

Involvement Area	Appointee	Phone Number
Ashland	Mary Wooding	482-1066
Central Point	Larry Martin	664-3778
Jacksonville	Ron Holthusen	944-5040
Medford (East)	Brad Inman	734-5409
Medford (East)	Glen Anderson	770-6577
Medford (East)	Mark Earnest	899-8080
Medford (West)	Jim Herndon	840-0741
Talent	Thad Keys	774-8273
Special Interest	Appointee	Phone Number
Bicycle/Pedestrian	Edgar Hee	734-4872
Freight Industry	Mike Montero, <b>Chair</b>	779-0771
Mass Transit	Patrick McKechnie	621-2003
Public Health	Michael Polich	608-3802
Senior	Robin Lee	773-7185
Staff		
RVCOG	Karl Welzenbach	423-1360
RVCOG	Ryan MacLaren	423-1338
RVCOG	Nikki Hart-Brinkley	423-1378
RVCOG	Stephanie Thune	423-1368

Others Present		
Organization	Name	Phone Number
PAC Applicant   Phoenix	Diana Shiplet	261-5166
Alison Wiley	ODOT Transit	971-701-5049

### 1. Call to Order / Introductions/ Review Agenda

- Chair Montero called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
- Introductions were made; one PAC applicant was welcomed: Diana Shiplet (Phoenix).
- There were no changes to the agenda.

### 2. Review / Approve Minutes

The Chair asked if there were any additions or corrections to the previous meeting minutes.

**On a motion by Ron Holthusen, seconded by Mary Wooding, the minutes of the May 23, 2017 meeting were approved as presented.**

*The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.*

### 3. Public Comment

None voiced.

## *Action Items*

### 4. PAC New Member Application

Ryan MacLaren presented an application from Diana Shiplet, expressing her desire to represent Phoenix on the RVMPO PAC. In response to an inquiry by Edgar Hee, Shiplet stated that she understands why citizens are frustrated with the single bike lane in Phoenix, but also understood ODOT's desire to make the road safer. She is hopeful that all parties can be satisfied by making adjustments to the layout, rather than getting rid of the lane.

**On a motion by Mary Wooding, seconded by Ron Holthusen, the PAC moved to recommend approval to the RVMPO Policy Committee of Diana Shiplet being appointed to fill the Phoenix vacancy on the RVMPO PAC.**

*The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.*

## *Discussion Items*

### 5. CMAQ Redistribution

Karl Welzenbach shared the recommendation to the OTC stemming from six months of CMAQ PAC negotiations regarding the CMAQ fund distribution effective FY2019. The OTC will be considering the following funding reductions to the MPOs: RVMPO, 55%; MRMPO 42%; Portland-Metro 11%. The cuts were inevitable due to two new Oregon MPOs (Eugene and Salem)

being added to the distribution pool with no corresponding increase in available funds, but are nonetheless burdensome in their severity. Also of note:

- There has been talk of a possible bridge fund to ease the transition to such a steep fund reduction for the RVMPO.
- ODOT and the OTC are looking to restrict the use of CMAQ funds more than required by the federal government. The RVMPO should not be affected much, since the focus of the proposed restrictions lie outside of the RVMPO's typical CMAQ fund usage for transit, bike/ped and eligible TCMs.
- The OTC should be making its decision next week regarding the final funding arrangements.

Chair Montero inquired whether the RVMPO PAC would like to submit a letter addressing their concerns with the proposed funding cuts. He stated that Paula Brown, the RVMPO's local representative on the OTC, has asked for input and that a letter has already been sent by the Policy Committee on behalf of the RVMPO. A letter from the PAC would offer additional support and could include data/information from Jackson County's Public Health Department regarding the impact of the RVMPO's unique air shed complications on local vulnerable populations in order to highlight the potential public health hazards inherent in such a steep funding cut for the Rogue Valley.

Discussion led to consensus regarding the desire for a letter to be sent to the OTC by the PAC. Chair Montero will work with Karl Welzenbach to draft the letter, which should include data/information from Jackson Bauer (Jackson County's Environmental Health Director) as described above. Chair Montero will sign the letter on the PAC's behalf.

## ***Presentations***

### **6. "GIS at RVCOG"**

Nikki Hart-Brinkley shared explanations and applications of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) – referred to as "The Science of Where." Particular focus was placed on the way the data/mapping/spatial analysis software applications are utilized at RVCOG on behalf of the MPOs and member jurisdictions to address questions and solve problems unique to each region. Highlights included:

- Drafting tables with hand drawn contour lines on paper maps have been replaced with the building of interactive electronic maps/map applications from tabular and modular data, often in real, or close to real-time.
- Transportation model data is provided in tabular format by ODOT's Transportation Planning and Analysis Unit (TPAU) to inform questions such as: "What would the RVMPO's demand-to-capacity ratio be if none of the projects in the RTP were built?", "What would it look like if *all* the projects were built?", etc.
- About 75% of Hart-Brinkley's work consists of data collection/cleaning/building; the rest is designing the maps themselves from the data.
  - Upon receipt, the data is assessed to determine whether it is accurate and appropriate as presented, or, if not, whether it can be "cleaned" for use in analyzing the particular issue(s) under consideration.
  - Analysis of the final data sets vis-à-vis the issues themselves leads to the generation of online/interactive maps which provide visual representations for stakeholders and help to inform policy.

Comments/inquiries:

- While developers cannot be told they “must” develop a certain area, they can and do hire traffic engineering consulting firms to access and interpret modeling data showing anticipated transportation flows, which in turn point them towards the best areas for residential/commercial development.
- Modeling can be (and has been) used to determine which areas of each jurisdiction/region to designate for future development. Ideally, those sites which will accommodate compact, mixed-use development are chosen in order to minimize vehicular miles traveled (VMT).
  - It was noted that determining whether building/not building a certain project will affect VMT is something that modeling with GIS can accomplish. This is an especially important consideration given that all federal transportation funds run through the Clean Air Act, making the FHWA particularly keen on projects designed to reduce area congestion.
- Modeling can be done to forecast impacts of seismic damage to roadways, though ODOT has not yet embarked on that process. They have, however, developed a seismic triage model, with alternate route testing scheduled to take place first in the MRMPO, then the RVMPO.
  - In HB-2017 that was just passed and is awaiting signature by Governor Brown, \$35 million has been earmarked for the “MPO Medford Seismic Triage Pilot.” Additional money that may be available to the MPO beyond this project will be applied to the “South Stage Overcrossing/N. Phoenix Road/Foothill Road Alternative Freight and Seismic Resiliency Corridor.”
- GIS at RVCOG does not encounter security issues with the data they use; currently, only 2010 employment data is considered private and cannot be shared publicly.

Hart-Brinkley stated that she is currently working to make the data she creates publicly available, just as the data generated by census activities, Jackson County and the jurisdictions is available for public use. An open data site has just been launched that contains several different data sets regularly used among RVCOG staff. Requests for particular maps contained in RVMPO materials can be submitted to Welzenbach, who will ask Hart-Brinkley to work towards loading them on the site.

## 7. “What are MPOs?”

Welzenbach gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the history, impetus for and logic behind the establishment of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), which are a unique phenomenon in that they grew out of a local initiative later adopted by the federal government and made into law. The presentation traced the processes involved from initial impetus in 1919 to the establishment of the modern-day MPO and included definitions as well as information about operating principles and the three required MPO documents (RTP, TIP, and UPWP).

Comments/inquiries:

*Edgar Hee:* Who projects growth and how is it projected on the RTP’s 20-year timeline? *Welzenbach* explained that RVCOG staff ask for growth projections from local governments and the state which demonstrate what type of growth projects they are planning (e.g. single- and/or multi-family housing, hospitals, parks, industrial sites, etc.). Staff then obtains population data for each area (the state mandates population projections; in Oregon PSU is responsible for providing them – the figures predict a maximum population for an area over a given time span). The population data for each area in conjunction with the planned development is then run through a transportation model; typically, two scenarios are run:

- A) No Build | Look at committed TIP projects *only*; do not incorporate data projected beyond the TIP's four-year time span.
- B) 20-25 Year Projected Growth | This is added to the “no build” scenario to capture the roadway and transportation network required to support the projected growth and help identify where problems can be anticipated.

## ***Regular Updates***

### **8. MPO Planning Update**

Hard copies of the RTP are available for interested PAC members; see Ryan MacLaren after the meeting. Electronic versions of all the MPOs required documents (RTP, TIP, AQCD and UPWP) are available online at the RVMPO's website via these links:

**RTP:** <https://www.rvmopo.org/index.php/ct-menu-item-13/regional-transportation-plan-rtp>

**TIP:** <https://www.rvmopo.org/index.php/ct-menu-item-13/transportation-improvement-program-mtip>

**AQCD:** <https://www.rvmopo.org/index.php/ct-menu-item-13/air-quality-conformity-determination-aqcd>

**UPWP:** <https://www.rvmopo.org/index.php/ct-menu-item-13/unified-planning-work-program>

### **9. Other Business**

In response to an inquiry, Chair Montero explained that funds denoted in HB-2017 have been largely earmarked for particular uses within particular jurisdictions/MPOs. Portland received a lion's share of funding since their congestion issues affect the entire state. A more stable funding platform for statewide public transit operations was also established via the bill. In light of this boost for transit, the Chair suggested that “Incorporating Transit Operations in ODOT's New Activity-Based Transportation Model” be added to the next PAC agenda.

### **10. Public Comment**

None voiced.

### **11. Next meeting**

The next PAC meeting is scheduled for September 19, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the Jefferson Conference Room at RVCOG.

### **12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

### **Scheduled Meetings:**

RVMPO TAC | Wednesday, August 9 @ 1:30 p.m.

RVMPO Policy Committee | Tuesday, July 25 @ 2:00 pm

RVMPO PAC | Tuesday, September 19 @ 5:30 pm