

MINUTES

Region 2050 Advisory Policy Board
EWEB Training Center, 500 East 4th Avenue, Eugene

June 22, 2005
5:30 p.m.

- PRESENT:** Dwight Coon, Chair (Junction City); Faye Stewart, Vice Chair (Lane County), Mike Fleck (Cottage Grove), Mike Watson (Coburg), Marion Esty (Veneta), David Kelly (Eugene), Warren Weathers (Lowell), Glenn Fortune (Oakridge), Mike Eyster for Susan Ban (Lane Transit District), members; Carol Heinkel, George Kloeppe, Jamon Kent, Tom Schwetz, Scott Shine, Bill Clingman (Lane Council of Governments staff).
- ABSENT:** Judy Volta (Coburg), Matt Bjorn (Cottage Grove), Ron Hanson, Tim Demanett (Creswell), Kitty Piercy (Eugene), Barry Schweigert (Junction City); Peter Sorenson (Lane County), Ken Larson (Lowell), Sue Bond (Oakridge), Fred Miller (Veneta), Eric Andersson, Gabrielle Schiffer (Governor's Economic Revitalization Team).
- GUESTS:** Stephanie Schulz (Lane County Planning), Anita Yapp (Lane Transit District), Greg Mott (City of Springfield Planning), Janet Calvert (League of Women Voters), Deb Brewer (EWEB), Carlos Barrera (Goshen Area Neighborhood Association), Marguerite Nabeta (Department of Land Conservation and Development), Ross Penhallegon (Oregon State University Extension Service), Stephen Mealey (retired forester), Kevin Jones (Farm/Forest Committee member), Dave Reinhard (consultant), Mark Snead, Louis Fucilla, Lauren Calderera (University of Oregon).

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Coon convened the meeting. Those present introduced themselves.

2. April 27, 2005 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Fleck pointed out that his comment on page 10 of the minutes, regarding whether additional funding was required for public outreach, was intended to express concern about that possibility instead of simply inquiring about it.

Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Fleck, moved to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2005, meeting as corrected. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment

Kevin Jones, a member of the Region 2050 Farm and Forest Lands Task Force, commented that concern with education was a major factor during discussion of growth scenarios. He urged that the selection of a

preferred growth scenario remain a fluid process that transitioned among the three different scenarios and allowed resource lands to be populated in a reasonable fashion.

4. Draft Evaluation Results

Farm and Forest

Ms. Schultz distributed two maps: *Productivity of Forest-zoned Lands* and *Soil Classes on Agriculturally Zoned Lands*. She said the maps were created in 2001 as part of the Region 2050 background materials and used in the farm and forest evaluations. She noted that the Farm and Forest evaluation was somewhat different from the other evaluations as it did not have a specific goal or category; rather the objectives around farm and forest were within the other goals listed in the Region 2050 project matrix. She cited the examples listed in the June 14, 2050 draft *Region 2050 Alternative Growth Scenarios Evaluation: Farm and Forest Lands*. She explained the process used by the Farm and Forest Lands Task Force to evaluate the alternative growth scenarios and identify any lands that were part of the commercial farm and forest base in the preferred growth scenario. She said the task force was split into two groups, one to evaluate the forest impacts and one to evaluate the farm impacts. She used the maps with overlays of the satellite and rural scenarios to illustrate conclusions. She said that committee members would be presenting additional in-depth results of the forest group and the farm group.

Mr. Penhallegon described the work of the group evaluating farm impacts and said the most important concern was protection of farm land. He said that some of the best farm land in the world was in the River Road and Coburg areas. He noted the rapid rate at which farm land was disappearing and said that once it was gone, it was gone forever and people would have to rely on food produced by other countries, with no ability to control that production.

Mr. Penhallegon illustrated on the maps those areas with major agricultural lands that should be preserved. He pointed out “finger areas” that represented urban/rural conflict between residential and agricultural uses. He described key factors in the review of the three growth scenarios:

- Protect major agricultural lands
- Minimize rural/urban conflict
- Development in a reasonable manner
- Create a buffer of combined use between farming and urban residential

Continuing, Mr. Penhallegon said the task force discussed how to produce food, have a rural/urban interface and allow residential use at the same time. He explained the concept of “quasi-exclusive small farm use” that could provide a buffer or transition area between exclusive residential and agricultural uses, contribute to the economy and produce food for Lane County. He distributed copies of the *2005 Lane County Food Directory* that contained many examples of successful small farms in Lane County. He said the quasi-exclusive small farm use concept included:

- Tax credit for rural location, with requirement of one person living on the farm full-time
- Produce a specific dollar amount annually
- Taxes imposed retroactively if the owner moved off the property or changed use

Mr. Weathers asked if the task force had determined what income level would be appropriate for the small farm concept. Mr. Penhallegon replied that a specific amount had not been discussed but the key was that exclusive farm use should show a benefit to community.

Mr. Weathers asked whether there was value to an individual earning a living at a 40-hours-a-week job while using the property for supplemental income. He encouraged retaining “hobby farms” as an option. Mr. Penhallegon replied that small farms were currently unregulated and the question was whether they should be. He said that from a horticultural perspective the determination should be based on the level of agricultural activities and whether the intent of the property owner was to be an agricultural producer or pay more taxes. He agreed that there was value to the concept of “hobby farms” but the dividing line would be whether the property was providing an income and resource back to the county.

Ms. Schultz emphasized that the task force discussed the concept in general terms but did not address policies at the community level.

Mr. Kelly commended the work of the task force and like the approach of identifying priorities for agricultural land use and placing value on local food production. He said the issue of local food production would also be affected by the cost and availability of oil and distant food production would become much less viable.

Mr. Stewart asked if the size of farms and homes in conjunction with farms were discussed by the task force. Mr. Penhallegon replied that it was discussed only briefly as it was difficult to draw a line at what size would produce an income. He noted that a one acre of land in greenhouse’s could produce \$15,000 of income. Ms. Schultz said that the task force did not specifically discuss the issue of homes on farmlands except to encourage that small farms not be discounted.

Mr. Weathers noted that the task force minutes indicated the area around Alvadore was not good farm land but it was shown as prime agricultural land on the maps. He asked if copies of the maps with the overlays could be provided to board members. Mr. Penhallegon replied that the land around Alvadore was already divided and there were many areas of urban/rural conflict. Ms. Schulz explained that the overlays identified urban growth boundary (UGB) expansion areas and rural non-resource lands [take out identified]. She said these maps could not be legibly produced on a smaller scale but scenario maps were available on the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) website.

Mr. Coon remarked that there were two types of agriculture in the Willamette Valley: large farms and extremely small farms. He said that farmers produced to meet market demands and farming methods evolved over time. He said that more discussion was needed on the issue of income levels and tax breaks.

Ms. Heinkel added that digital photos of the areas were also available on the LCOG website.

Mr. Mealey, from the forest group, provided an overview of the task force’s discussion of development on forest lands. He said the principle concern from a forestry standpoint was expanding and increasing the wild land/urban interface that has inherent conflicts due to expectations. He used the area in Central Oregon near the Metolius River area as an example of development on forest land that greatly increased the risk of uncharacteristic fires that would have ecological consequences. He said the concern [delete rural] with expansion of residential development into forest lands is about increased fire risk from [delete contact between] humans activities that can cause forest fires [delete end of this sentence].

Mr. Weathers asked how many acres of forest land had burned because of fire related to homeowners' activities. Mr. Mealey said that he did not have that data but fire risk increased with human presence in interface areas.

Mr. Stewart commented that owners who managed forest land well were not the problem; risk occurred with subdivisions and owners who were not aware of forest management practices. He said that not all homes on forest land presented a hazard; some were beneficial. Mr. Mealey replied that the task force's position was that increased human presence in interface areas had an inherently higher risk of fire, although the risk to both homes and forests could be mitigated through fire safety initiatives. Ms. Schultz said that education of homeowners could help them understand the implications of fire fighting priorities in forested areas and importance of fire prevention measures. Mr. Mealey added that a provision of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act was for partnerships between local governments and forest management agencies to identify at-risk wild land/urban interface areas and take actions to mitigate those risks.

Mr. Weathers stated that regulations required those who lived on F-2 forest land to enter into agreements with local fire agencies and take prevention measures to reduce fire risk. Mr. Mealey agreed that was correct but might not be helpful if weather and conditions placed property at high risk. He reiterated that the rural growth scenario presented greater risk, but that risk could be mitigated.

Mr. Weathers questioned whether the definition of prime forest land as 85 cubic feet per acre per year was too low and suggested the threshold should be raised to 120 cubic feet. He expressed concern that the current definition described land at a lower level of productivity. Ms. Schultz replied that the task force did not explore changing definitions and if that was a desire of the the policy board, they could make that decision.

Mr. Kelly remarked that the definition is established at the State level and said that any decision by the board should be informed by technical information and professional advice.

Mr. Coon expressed concern with the definition of prime farm land that was established 30 or 40 years ago.

Mr. Kelly pointed out that the Region 2050 goals and objectives used the term "productive" instead of the term "prime."

Ms. Heinkel reminded the board that it was still at the stage of assessing the three growth scenarios and that issues of protection would arise at the stage when a preferred scenario was selected. Mr. Clingman added that the common thread of the task force's concern related to the intrusion of other uses on forest lands that made the land more difficult to manage for a variety of reasons and not the site index of productivity.

Mr. Mealey observed that changes in climate and vegetation would also affect both productivity and fire risk.

Mr. Kelly said he understood concerns with the intrusion of other uses but was disappointed that the task force did not explore definitions of productivity. He hoped that the task force would meet against when the preferred scenario was developed to address that issue.

Transportation

Mr. Schwetz explained that included in the evaluation of the base transportation network were the existing system, improvements programmed and planned through 2025 and “illustrative” improvements, such as full bus rapid transit build out and additional lanes on Beltline, that were contained in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). He used a slide presentation to highlight the scope of the evaluation, which identified impacts of the three alternative growth scenarios on the base network and developed preliminary assessments of those impacts. He asked board members to submit questions at the end of the presentation and staff would provide written responses.

Mr. Schwetz stated that models used in the evaluation were the metropolitan model and small community models based on a platform developed by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). He said another ODOT model that created an intercity travel pictures was not fully developed so staff created their own model, although it was still being refined in order to produce more reliable results. He said that a supplemental memorandum with that information would be provided to the board in mid-July.

Continuing, Mr. Schwetz said that regardless of the growth scenario there would be significant impacts on the base network over 45 years. He demonstrated on a map model results that showed where on the system mobility standards would be approached or exceeded in 2025. He distributed and discussed a *2025 Congestion Summary for Key Corridors Replacement Table* and noted that serious congestion would be experienced in the heart of the network by 2025 and by 2050 there would be tremendous pressure on the system. He summarized the initial evaluation of all scenarios:

- Amount of growth in the region will add greatly to travel demand
- \$1.6 billion in projects planned for 2025 and beyond – but congestion will worsen. Total of \$3-5 billion might be needed by 2050
- Regardless of the scenario, transportation finance is a major, ongoing concern
- Increases were expected and needed in transit use, telecommuting, bike and walk trips, car pooling and ride sharing
- Greatly expanded use of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) and Systems Operations tools, including coordinated signal systems, ramp metering at key locations, instant current traveler information, incident management and crash prevention and safety

Mr. Reinhard reviewed the likely impacts of each of the three growth scenarios and preliminary impressions:

- Compact growth scenario impacts:
 - Largest growth in metro area, both in jobs and residents
 - Big increases in nearby areas: Alvadore, Goshen, Pleasant Hill
 - Biggest impacts in terms of increased trips on Interstate 5 south, 30th Avenue, Jasper Road and Jasper Road extension, Beltline, Clear Lake Road, and Highway 99 north
 - Concentration of residents and jobs could create opportunities for more transit use, more walking and bicycling trips, ability to live close to work and shopping
 - Capacity projects on Interstate 5, 105, 126 and Beltline could produce large “bang for the buck”
- Satellite communities growth scenario impacts:
 - Bigger growth south, west and north of the metro area

- Longer trips over larger area with mixed impact on key roadways: could impact metro roadways more than compact scenario, but could result in less congestion on metro routes, due to dispersed trips
- Could lead to shorter trips within smaller cities
- Could increase bike and walk trips within smaller cities
- Mixed results for transit: better service to outlying communities, more costly system to operate
- Rural growth scenario impacts:
 - More dispersed population – large growth in metro area but also more rural residents
 - Mixed results on roadways: more dispersed travel pattern, heavy reliance on auto, rural residents commute to metro area for jobs
 - Transit, bike and walk trips not as high as compact scenario
 - County roads could supply some needed capacity
 - Metro roadways would still absorb a big impact from commute trips
- Compact growth scenario impressions:
 - “Safest” choice for the future, in some respects – continues the trend
 - May produce the worst congestion on key metro roadways
 - Allows use of the widest range of tools to address congestion
- Rural growth scenario impressions:
 - May be the most challenging for transportation
 - Keeps concentration of jobs in metro area but spreads out population
 - Leads to greatest auto dependence
 - Hardest to address with current tools – transit, walking, bike trips, ITS strategies, etc.
- Satellite communities growth scenario impressions:
 - Intriguing alternative to compact and rural futures
 - Could provide “best of both worlds” – spread the load beyond metro roadways but avoid the dispersed travel of the rural pattern
 - Could also result in “worst of all worlds” – contain the sprawl but load key roadways with additional trips

Mr. Schwetz discussed the conclusion derived from the evaluation of growth scenarios:

- Overall amount of growth will have a big impact on congestion regardless of the scenario
- Scenarios do make a difference – need modeling to help evaluate
- Strategically, focus on maximizing use of largest number of tools
- To use, tools need to be economically feasible
- Key policy issues around the degree of congestion acceptable to the region

According to Mr. Schwetz, key policy issues could include accepting more congestion where other goals were being achieved, such as in a commercial district like Northwest 23rd Street in Portland, and focusing investments where congestion is least tolerable. He said that a recent study had examined institutional capabilities and the public sector’s ability to determine the pace and direction of change in the region’s transportation system to meet needs in 2050. He concluded that it might be necessary to reinvent the

process by which the transportation system was planned, developed, financed and managed and invited questions from board members.

Mr. Stewart asked if the data for Interstate 5 congestion/capacity had factored in vehicles that were passing through the region and freight traffic. He said it was difficult to believe that congestion on Interstate 5 would not be worse in 2025. Mr. Reinhard said those factors were included and the model assumed that capacity projects had been completed. Mr. Schwetz acknowledged that Interstate 5 congestion might have been underestimated.

Mr. Coon asked if the model determined the average distance traveled in a day. Mr. Schwetz said the average metro area round trip was seven or eight miles.

Mr. Kelly noted that figure of 85,000 new residents on one of the maps did not seem to match any of the three scenarios and requested an explanation of how that number was determined. He asked if freight travel by rail could be calculated or modeled. Mr. Schwetz replied that it was difficult for staff to model but the State model was more advanced and would be used to assess the impact of freight rail travel.

Referring to points regarding satellite communities in the June 15, 2005, staff memorandum, Mr. Kelly asked for more information on the potential that the satellite scenario could add greatly to travel demand in both directions between those communities and the metro area and the apparent conflict with greater opportunities for more people to live, work and shop within a single community. Mr. Reinhard replied that there were some paradoxes in the satellite community scenario that would require further analysis.

Mr. Kelly asked if there was data that demonstrated a correlation between the frequency of transit service and increased ridership. Mr. Schwetz said that data was available. He observed that Lane Transit District needed to strike a balance between providing coverage while focusing as much as possible on providing frequent service along high productivity routes. He said that data could be provided on the “break points” in terms of frequency of service that greatly enhanced the attractiveness of the service.

Mr. Weathers asked what infrastructure improvements would be necessary, and the costs of those improvements, to attract employers to rural areas and satellite communities. Mr. Schwetz responded that strategies to encourage decentralization of jobs and concentration of jobs in some areas was complicated by the fact that most households had two wage earners, as well as the fact that many people changed jobs and location over time but not necessarily where they lived.

Referring to the Portland example of acceptable congestion, Mr. Watson asked if it was possible to anticipate where those areas might be in the region and the impact on livability. Mr. Schwetz said that issue could be discussed but the concept was still being tested in the area through mixed use development strategies.

Mr. Kloeppel commented that the truck/rail tradeoff was an interstate issue because so much of the movement was interstate. He related that the West Coast Corridor Coalition was exploring that issue and determining costs and benefits.

Mr. Schwetz said that staff would provide board members with responses to questions and concerns that arose during the discussion or were submitted after the meeting.

5. Public Outreach Process Report

Ms. Esty reported on the June 9, 2005, Region 2050 community meeting in Veneta. She said that 75 people had registered and 72 participated in the event. She said that many of those present expressed concern about the future of education. She said there was good media coverage of the event and encouraged board members to be prepared to answer questions related to their own community event. She commented that many participants had preconceived ideas about their priorities but changed their minds as a result of the group discussions. She added that people had requested informal follow-up gatherings to discuss in more detail some of the issues that were raised during the meeting.

Mr. Watson asked if the event affected Ms. Esty's view of the process. Ms. Esty replied that the meeting gave her a wider range of ideas and options to consider.

Mr. Fleck asked if the meeting had attracted any special interest participants who focused on a specific land use issue. Ms. Esty said that she circulated among the discussion groups and there were a couple of individuals who were interested in starting low employee businesses that would require a lot of land and that was not what the community was interested in.

Mr. Stewart remarked that he had also attended the meeting and was very impressed by the community participation, the degree that people had prepared for the meeting and the wide range of interests and concerns that were represented.

Ms. Esty said the meeting was very constructive and she had received many positive comments about it from community leaders and citizens.

Ms. Heinkel described LCOG's outreach and media campaign and said that more than 300 survey responses had been received to date. She said that survey responses and comments would be summarized and a report provided to communities. She introduced University of Oregon students Louis Fucilla and Lauren Caldarera, who assisted in facilitating the Veneta community meeting.

Mr. Fucilla and Ms. Caldarera gave a presentation on the community meeting design process, participants and the three questions on which the small group discussions focused and the next steps in the process:

- How will we grow?
- What actions will we take to protect our quality of life as we grow?
- Where will we grow?
- Next steps:
 - Write report for each community
 - Each community uses report to help guide how community is portrayed in the preferred growth scenario and what actions to include in the Strategy
 - Regional Growth Strategy is compilation of each "Future Community" and "Actions"

Mr. Watson asked if people could participate in the meeting if they had not registered. Ms. Heinkel replied that drop-ins did not receive the information packet that was provided to those who had registered and were offered the option of participating or observing. She noted that some people who had registered but could not attend found substitutes to participate.

6. Work Program, Timelines, and Process

Ms. Heinkel reviewed the *Regional Growth Management Strategy Timeline and Regional Problem Solving Process* document that included proposed Region 2050 project timelines and asked the board to affirm the direction and process.

Mr. Kelly expressed concern that the November/December 2005 turnaround from community meetings to a draft scenario did not allow sufficient time to synthesize the community information. Ms. Heinkel said a draft scenario would not be completed until February 2006.

Mr. Coon determined that there were no objections to the process and timelines.

Mr. Stewart encouraged board members to participate in community meetings whenever possible.

7. Future Meeting Dates/Adjourn

Future meeting dates were:

Wednesday, September 28

Wednesday, October 26

Wednesday, November 16

Mr. Coon adjourned the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

(Recorded by Lynn Taylor)

L:\City County Planning\Region 2050\Policy Board\Oct 05\PolBoardminutes050622.doc