

Sounding Board Meeting # 6 Summary

Meeting Date: 03.19.2018

Meeting Time: 5-7pm

Meeting Location: Next Stop Center, 1099 Olive Street, Eugene

Attendance:

Sounding Board Members:

- Gerry Gaydos, Strategic Planning Committee
- John Jaworski, Planning Commission
- Sue Wolling, Sustainability Commission
- Andrew Thomson, Human Rights Commission
- Bob Beals, ATC
- Mike DeLuise, ATC
- Sarah Puls, Lane County Public Health
- Tim Shearer, LTD Accessible Transportation Committee
- Steve Baker, UO

Staff:

- Chris Henry, City of Eugene
- Zach Galloway, City of Eugene
- Sasha Luftig, LTD
- Therese Lang, LTD
- Hart Migdal, LTD
- Andrew Martin, LTD
- Larisa Varela, City of Eugene
- Jeanne Lawson (Facilitator), JLA Public Involvement
- Shareen Springer, JLA Public Involvement

1. Welcome & Introductions - Sasha Luftig (LTD), Chris Henry (City of Eugene) & Jeanne Lawson (JLA Public Involvement)

Chris and Sasha welcomed the group and thanked everyone for their time and expertise.

Sasha introduced Jeanne Lawson, and highlighted JLA's role in the public involvement and outreach phases of the project. Jeanne described JLA's role, both with the Sounding Board and in the development and implementation of the public involvement plan.

Jeanne reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting:

- Provide an update on the MovingAhead Alternatives Analysis
- Discuss community values to guide investment package decisions
- Discuss the public involvement program for the MovingAhead Alternatives Analysis phase

Jeanne asked members to introduce themselves and the agencies or interests they represent as Sounding Board Members.

Jeanne reminded the group of the processes and protocols previously established for the Sounding Board.

2. Project Update - Sasha Luftig (LTD), Chris Henry (City of Eugene), Zach Galloway (City of Eugene)

Sasha, Chris and Zach provided an update on the project. They explained the project team has been involved in an intense technical analysis that consumed much of 2017. The project is now transitioning from that technical work into a robust public engagement effort to seek feedback on key findings emerging from the analysis.

Zach provided an overview of the 5 key corridors being considered, as well the timeline for engagement and involvement since the last phase of the project.

Zach described the general approach to the project. He highlighted the coordination of the City and LTD surrounding land use planning, development and transit improvements and investments. He explained that the project has shifted slightly in two primary places:

- 1) *Spectrum of Transit Improvements*: MovingAhead is shifting from an emphasis on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) for each corridor. The project instead has asked the community what role transit plays in the vision for that corridor, and then is looking to technical analysis to establish a range of transit choices based on that community vision. This range of transit choices can be anywhere from 'no build' to the establishment of a comprehensive EmX system. The project has shifted language and approach to focus on transportation options for everyone – going beyond transit to also consider neighborhood livability and community identity.
- 2) *Corridor Development & Funding*: Looking at multiple corridors at one time to provide better integration of transportation, land use, environmental impacts, and to fund enhancements incrementally based on the priorities of the community.

Public Involvement:

Chris described the previous public involvement effort and explained the focus was on what success looked like for each corridor. The community feedback gathered during this series of conversations and workshops was used to inform the technical analysis and development of alternatives currently being considered. It is important for the community to clearly see the feedback loop of how their input is incorporated into the project. Chris explained that this next phase of public outreach and engagement would use many of the same tools used in the previous phases and would build on the successes and engagement.

He emphasized the role of the sounding board – highlighting the process for decision making and how the Sounding Board fits into the decision-making structure.

Decision-Making Process:

Sasha reviewed the objectives of Phase 1 – outlining the selection of a preferred investment package as the core desired outcome. She reviewed the two core elements of input used in this phase: 1) Technical Analysis, and 2) Public Involvement.

Sasha explained that these two main sources of input will establish the Preferred Investment Package. Sasha noted the current way of thinking about the project is a shift from how the project (and funding specifically) had been rolled out to the community previously.

Sasha provided examples of what an investment package could look like, sharing several illustrative examples with the group. She explained that these packages would be shared with the community for input and feedback.

Sasha shared the project timeline with the group – highlighting the community engagement and feedback opportunities.

She explained that it was the goal of the project team to reach a decision on a preferred investment package by the end of this year.

Chris provided additional context for the technical analysis process – highlighting the role community values play in the development and selection of preferred investments and ensuring that those recommendations and values from the community are also corridor specific.

Jeanne highlighted the decision-making process and the role of the Sounding Board and the community in establishing a preferred investment packages.

At the end of the presentation, Jeanne asked the Sounding Board for comments and questions and the Project Managers responded.

- Question: Has weighting been used to compare the corridors against each other?
Response: The project team plans to present the alternatives to the community and to allow the feedback received and the community values to guide and inform the final selection.
- Question: How do you bring in resources or expected financial resources to fund these improvements?
Response: Alternatives and a preferred investment package will be based on an understanding of existing funding sources, and what we might be able to expect to receive in the future. Sasha explained some of the funding history, including the federal Small Starts grant, and the availability of funding at the state and federal level. She emphasized that the project needed to remain flexible – understanding that the project doesn't have any certainty of funding.

3. Review Draft Public Involvement Plan - Jeanne Lawson & Shareen Springer

Shareen provided an overview of the public involvement plan, including engagement tools and stakeholder groups. Jeanne then asked for input from the group on the public involvement plan.

Suggestions and comments from the Sounding Board Members included:

- Consider students (college) in summer outreach – expand access to online open house
- Build awareness (of MovingAhead & LTD service in general) with bus drivers and community leaders
- Communicate lessons learned from current construction efforts
- Ensure outreach tools bring representation from the community that expands beyond the core group that always engage in planning and public involvement activities
- Work with the 3 school districts to engage high school students and their families, including expanded awareness about open enrollment and transit options
- Engage media in advance of open houses and community meetings (feature story, etc.)

4. Key Community Values - Jeanne Lawson

Jeanne explained the community opinion poll being conducted as part of this project. She described the purpose of opinion poll itself, as well background on how the value statements were established and their context in the public involvement efforts.

Core values and value statements presented to the Sounding Board from the opinion poll included:

- Livable Communities
- Safety & Health
- Economic Development & Economic Benefit
- Transportation Systems/Facilities
- Environmental Stewardship/Sustainability
- Community-based Decision Making

Jeanne asked Sounding Board members to participate in a ranking and discussion activity. She encouraged members to consider the groups they represented, and to provide insight into how they would rank the core value statements provided.

Themes that emerged from the ranking activity are highlighted below:

Livable Communities:

- Ranked #1 by 6 Sounding Board Members
- Ranked #2 by 1 Sounding Board Member
- Highest Ranked Value Statement: Neighborhoods that support the ability to meet travel needs without the use of a car
- Discussion & key take-aways:
 - One member felt that the statement “Neighborhoods that support the ability to meet travel needs without the use of a car” represented or encompassed the other two value statements
 - Another member expressed a concern that a focus on walkable neighborhoods may exacerbate economic inequality for low-income people who may need the efficiency of driving.

Safety & Health:

- Ranked #1 by 1 Sounding Board Member
- Ranked #2 by 4 Sounding Board Members
- Highest Ranked Value Statement: Eliminate transportation related fatalities and injuries
- Discussion & key take-aways:
 - A member felt that the statement “Neighborhoods that support the ability to meet needs without the use of a car” represented or encompassed to the other two value statements
 - A member expressed a concern that the value statement above misses some of the economic disparity and income realities of community members

Economic Development/Economic Benefit:

- Ranked #1 by 0 Sounding Board Members
- Ranked #2 by 2 Sounding Board Members

- Highest Ranked Value Statement: Transportation that supports redevelopment opportunities along key corridors and commercial areas.
- Discussion & key take-aways:
 - Successful redevelopment of corridors is key to making alternatives to driving, and to making density attractive.
 - Members shared that they ranked the values statement high because:
 - It provided information about the purpose of the project
 - It remained flexible to the needs of the community
 - And, it aligned with the City's larger planning goals
 - A member emphasized that a healthy workforce was the key to a thriving community and economy – and that the most effective and sustainable transit system should remain flexible to meet growing and shifting economic demands.

Transportation Systems/Facilitates:

- Ranked #1 by 0 Sounding Board Members
- Ranked #2 by 1 Sounding Board Member
- Highest Ranked Value Statement: Efficient connections between travel methods (car, bus, biking, walking, etc.)
- Discussion & key take-aways:
 - Members emphasized that personal safety should be considered in the design of systems and facilities
 - Members emphasized reliability over connections between methods of transportation
 - Members shared that this value was ranked lower because there was a core assumption that busses are going where they need to go
 - One member shared the example of Seattle's One Bus Away app, which provides real time communication on routes

Environmental Stewardship/Sustainability:

- Ranked #1 by 1 Sounding Board Member
- Ranked #2 by 0 Sounding Board Members
- Highest Ranked Value Statement: Reduce greenhouse gases/climate change
- Discussion & key take-aways:
 - Focus on operations as the source of the greatest long-term environmental impacts
 - One member requested a definition of sustainability be included to help provide context and understanding
 - Another member said these value statements didn't relate to transit or to the project

Community-Based Decision Making:

- Ranked #1 by 1 Sounding Board Member
- Ranked #2 by 1 Sounding Board Member
- Highest Ranked Value Statement: The community is engaged in transportation decision making
- Discussion & key take-aways:
 - Members discussed how engagement is dependent upon access to information

- Discrepancy between informing the public and actively engaging the public in decision making

Jeanne asked Sounding Board members to consider key community values that were not represented. Responses included: Cost (affordability and funding); Convenience of driving; Reducing Congestion.

Jeanne presented the preliminary findings from the community values opinion poll and noted the same general rankings and responses were heard from the community as the Sounding Board.

5. Key Messages - Jeanne Lawson

Jeanne asked Sounding Board members to review the key messages, and asked if anything was missing from these statements. Members pointed out some areas where there was redundancy in messaging, and highlighted messages that focused on safety and accessibility.

6. Next Steps - Jeanne Lawson

Jeanne explained that the project team would take what they heard from the Sounding Board and incorporate their input on community values and key messages into the public involvement plan.

Sasha talked about when and how the Sounding Board would be involved moving forward. She shared how the Sounding Board would review the feedback heard during the open houses and outreach events, and provide input back to the technical team.

The Project team asked the group take the outreach timeline and other information they'd learned back to their constituents, and encouraged members to invite MovingAhead staff to present to their agencies or neighborhood groups.

7. Closing:

In closing, Jeanne asked group members to share their key take-aways before adjourning the meeting. Members shared their excitement about the project, and expressed a strong desire to be engaged as the project continued to move towards outreach.