

From: David Wilde <wildeveneta@aol.com>
To: Rob Zako <robzako@gmail.com>
Sent: Wed, Feb 10, 2010 3:07 pm
Subject: Re: Tonight's Meeting

Dear Rob:

On behalf of EmRail's stewardship council, I want to thank you for giving us an opportunity to submit in writing the importance of ACT looking at rail/ and or suggestions about who from the rail community to include in ACT and how.

Perhaps the best way to address this is to include comments that Lane County Administrator Jeff Spartz requested as he formalizes the county commissioners' endorsement letter.

Our findings for why the Board's support for this rail network and central city streetcar project would be sound public policy is because **"it promotes livability rather than hinders it."**

The decision is based on **"how much transit helps the environment, how much it improves development opportunities and how it makes our communities better places to live."**

The Obama administration is indeed proposing "dramatic change" that adds two more criteria for major transit projects to receive funding: economic development and benefits to the environment. The current transportation policy excludes rail and according to the U.S. Department of Transportation, "focuses primarily on how much a project shortens commute times in comparison to its cost."

Among the type of projects that might benefit from the change in policy would be projects such as streetcars -- ones that The New York Times reported Secretary LaHood as saying would make it possible to "...make the case for investing in popular streetcar projects and other transit systems the people want..."

—The Discovery Institute/Cascadia Prospectus

Lane County's regional transportation plan, The TransPlan, has lacked a rail policy since the beginning. It's now time for the MPC to reconsider it's prior decisions and create a rail policy so that we can truly begin to develop an integrated and comprehensive transportation system that reduces our need for foreign and fossil fuels, reduces carbon gas emissions, and shifts development patterns towards better land use.

As far as the rail community being represented on the commission, I, too, am open to suggestions and believe our presence, as a rail advocacy group, is needed. Currently,

I am not aware of anyone other than myself who has invested so much time and energy building a coalition within the Cascadia Corridor (south of Portland), who has followed rail issues that apply to sustainability as much as I have in the past 20 to 30 years.

Let me conclude by mentioning the Attachment, a "One Pager" submitted to the Board of Commissioners prior to my presentation on January 26th. I regret that due to the scheduling conflict this evening, I may only be able to attend the meeting for 10 minutes and want to make sure you have been provided with ample information to assist you and the commission with any decisions in regards to rail transit. I hope this helps.

Best Regards!

David Wilde, Executive Director
EmRail
PO Box 10565
Eugene, Oregon 97440
emrail2010@gmail.com