

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
January 13, 2016

Technical Members Present: Bill Watson, City of Aztec
Cindy Lopez, City of Farmington
Nica Westerling, Alternate, City of Farmington
Andrew Montoya, Red Apple Transit
Dave Keck, San Juan County

Technical Members Absent: Teresa Brevik, City of Bloomfield
David Sypher, City of Farmington
NMDOT Representative

Staff Present: Mary Holton, MPO Officer
Fran Fillerup, MPO Associate Planner
June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide

Staff Absent: Duane Wakan, MPO Planner

Others Present: Brian Degani, Planning Liaison, NMDOT (via phone)
Larry Hathaway, San Juan County

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Keck called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 10, 2015 JOINT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE & NMDOT MEETING

Ms. Lopez moved to approve the minutes from the December 10, 2015 Joint Technical Committee and NMDOT meeting. Mr. Watson seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Subject:	Annual Election of Officers
Prepared by:	Fran Fillerup, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	January 6, 2016

BACKGROUND

- At the first meeting of the New Year, the Technical Committee selects the Chair and Vice-Chair from their membership who will serve until the next

annual election.

- The Chair presides over the meetings and is responsible for the other duties outlined in the Committee Bylaws and Operating Procedures document.
- The Vice-Chair presides over the meetings in the absence of the Chair.
- Current Chair (David Sypher), current Vice-Chair (Dave Keck).

ELECTION

- Elections will take place to select a Chair and Vice-Chair for the Technical Committee for 2016.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Technical Committee accept nominations and vote to elect the Chair and Vice-Chair for 2016.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Fillerup explained that the annual of election of officers is held at this first meeting of the New Year. He noted that Mr. Sypher has been Chair during 2015 and Mr. Keck was Vice-Chair.

Ms. Lopez nominated Dave Keck for Technical Committee Chair for 2016 and Ms. Westerling seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations for Chair. The vote to elect Mr. Keck as Chair was unanimous.

Ms. Lopez nominated David Sypher for Technical Committee Vice-Chair and Mr. Watson seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations for Vice Chair. The vote to elect Mr. Sypher as Chair was unanimous.

4. STATUS OF TIP PROJECTS

Subject:	Status of TIP Projects
Prepared by:	Fran Fillerup, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	January 5, 2016

BACKGROUND

- The STIP Protocols, finalized in early 2014, indicate that each MPO shall develop a process to monitor the progress and status of each project in the first two years of the TIP. These monthly reviews help correct inconsistencies in the TIP, STIP, the MPO's MTP, Agreement Request Forms (ARFs), etc.
- The next scheduled TIP Amendment cycle begins in January 2016.

TRACKING INFORMATION

- Local Agreement Status (ARF)
- ROW Certification
- Design Completion 30 - 60 - 90%

- Environmental Certification
- Utilities Certification
- Railroad Certification
- Archeology Certification
- ITS/Sys ENG Certification
- Public Involvement Certification

CURRENT WORK

- Staff will continue the monthly review of project status for projects in the TIP. This includes updates on NMDOT and local lead projects. Staff will work from the latest 2016-2021 TIP at the meeting.

INFORMATION ITEM

- This is an information item only. Committee members will have an opportunity to provide feedback regarding TIP project status and details.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Fillerup stated that this agenda item was to review the current projects in the TIP or those that have moved out of the TIP and are in the process of construction. This report provides a current status of project and benchmarks reached.

East Arterial Route - Phase II

Mr. Watson reported the City of Aztec is struggling with right-of-way that may cause the project to be delayed by six to eight months. When the project right-of-way was expanded, FHWA and BLM became involved and NMDOT again changed their rules and requirements. Mr. Watson also said that the lack of coordination and continuity within District 5 creates more difficulties.

Mr. Watson asked if a replacement for David Quintana had been named. Mr. Fillerup said the technical support engineer position has not been named yet. The new Acting District 5 Engineer, Paul Brasher, has not officially told the MPO who will be replacing David Quintana. He did indicate that he plans to attend FMPO committee meetings and will attend the Policy Committee meeting on January 28. Mr. Watson expressed his frustration on the lack of participation in committee meetings by District 5 representatives. This absence, along with the continuous rotating personnel at District 5 results in a loss of continuity and coordination in moving forward on local projects.

Ms. Westerling stated that the City of Farmington is having similar right-of-way issues with their Pinion Hills Boulevard project. A piece of the right-of-way being questioned by NMDOT was deeded to the city in 1971 from the railroad when they went defunct. She said the appraisals were conducted using NMDOT's format and an appraiser from their accepted list of appraisers back in 2001. NMODT still has not said whether the appraisals are adequate nor addressed the numerous additional documents the city provided as historical back-up. Ms. Westerling said this right-of-way problem has been ongoing for three years with no definitive answer from NMDOT on whether the documents submitted are acceptable. An affidavit submitted to NMDOT over four months ago, and which was to have been discussed at a meeting with FHWA, was never discussed with them as promised. Ms. Westerling said that even after attending

a meeting with Deputy Transportation Secretary Anthony Lujan, in which NMDOT representatives were instructed by him to "get it done", things still are not getting done. Ms. Westerling now copies Mr. Lujan on all correspondence and e-mails with NMDOT and there continues to be a lack of communication and urgency.

Mr. Keck added his annoyance with the right-of-way division at NMDOT. After being told that two years of work on one of their projects was not correct, San Juan County decided to spend an additional \$125,000 to hire a firm in Albuquerque that specializes in acquiring rights-of-way. Mr. Keck commented that a lot of time and federal funds were wasted up to this point.

The three entity representatives present at the meeting all expressed their frustration with the ongoing run-around and continuing lack of support and coordination from NMDOT. Mr. Watson stated that he spoke with Aztec's City Manager and asked for his support in trying to get projects moving forward. City Manager Josh Ray contacted Butch Mathews, this region's Transportation Commissioner to seek support and assistance from him.

Ms. Westerling said the City of Farmington has invested the staff time of three employees for a year to get a project grant of \$200,000 that has still not been finalized. The right-of-way division of NMDOT keeps asking for more and additional forms to be completed and submitted, all of which require going back in time six months or longer. Ms. Westerling reported that a completed sidewalk project took NMDOT over a year to look over and the city still has not been reimbursed for the project.

Mr. Keck added that an entire grant could be spent paying for the process of working with NMDOT - not actually purchasing land or constructing the project.

Ms. Westerling added that 100% plans for the Pinon Hills Boulevard projects have been completed for two years and have been with NMDOT for two years. The project remains stuck in NMDOT's right-of-way division over seven pieces purchased prior to 2001.

East Pinon Hills Boulevard - Phases I and II

Ms. Westerling said the right-of-way plat would be presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission this week and then to City Council on January 26.

Mr. Watson asked if NMDOT also has problems with their right-of-way division. Mr. Keck said he has spoken with representatives from District 3 who have many of the same issues. Ms. Lopez asked if NMDOT did not understand the issues with this division. The other Technical Committee members thought NMDOT should know about the issues since they deal with the same issues themselves even though their projects take priority over other entity's projects.

CR 350 & 390 Intersection

Mr. Keck said that construction is still planned for March.

Kirtland School Walk Path

The agreements were signed by San Juan County last week and sent on to NMDOT.

Red Apple Transit - Capital & Operating

No update.

Red Apple Transit - Bus Route Accessibility

Mr. Montoya said they are waiting on signatures to transfer this from FHWA funding and oversight to FTA.

Ms. Westerling asked about the intersection project at Scott Avenue and San Juan Boulevard. Mr. Fillerup said it had been moved off the TIP. Ms. Westerling said the bid came in over budget so the city has requested additional funds from NMDOT. This project will be added back onto the Project Status spreadsheet for future tracking.

ACTION: The projects were updated.

5. FFY2015-2016 UPWP AMENDMENT

Subject:	FFY2015-2016 UPWP Amendment
Prepared by:	Fran Fillerup, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	January 6, 2016

BACKGROUND

- The MPO maintains a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) document which sets forth the tasks the MPO will undertake in a fiscal year.
- In November, staff presented changes to tasks within the UPWP based on the 2040 MTP and direction from FHWA.
- In December, staff presented a summary of carry over requests and new total budget amounts for the FHWA PL grant and the FT 5303 grant.
- According to Appendix A of the document, the total MPO budget amount for FFY 2016 is \$369,168.97. The previous MPO budget amount for FFY2016 was \$302,458. Increases are due to new award letters and requested carryover in the FHWA PL and FTA 5303 grants.
- The total estimated expenses are \$367,000. Details are also provided in the second table of Appendix A.

CURRENT WORK

- MPO staff will present the Draft Amendment to the FFY2015-2016 UPWP.

ACTION

- The Draft Amendment to the FFY 2015-2016 UPWP is presented for recommendation by the Technical Committee. The document would then be presented to the Policy Committee for consideration and final action.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Fillerup explained that the Unified Planning Work Program document details the tasks that the MPO undertakes each year. This has been presented in two parts in November and December. The first presented the outlined changes to text within the document based on the MTP and performance measures. In December, the carryover amounts requested and the budget were reviewed.

Mr. Fillerup reviewed some of the budget details that reflected the carryover amounts with a \$369,000 new estimated MPO budget. Due to the sizeable FTA grant carryover, additional spending has been identified for a follow-up to the transit hub study for design concepts and other possible transit studies.

ACTION: Mr. Watson moved to recommend approval of the FFY2015-2016 UPWP Amendment. Ms. Westerling seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN AMENDMENT

Subject:	Public Participation Plan Amendment
Prepared by:	Fran Fillerup, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	January 4, 2016

BACKGROUND

- The current Public Participation Plan (PPP) was adopted on January 19, 2012.
- The PPP needs to be reviewed and amended at least every five years.
- An overview of amendments are as follows:
 - The public comment period is proposed to be 15 days instead of 30 days. (See page 14). NMDOT has recommended, and the other MPOs throughout the state have already adopted this change for most documents including TIP amendments. A new TIP adoption would continue to have a 30-day comment period.
 - At their November 19 meeting, the Policy Committee recommended the use of social media in MPO outreach efforts and this is reflected in this amendment. (See pages 8 and 9).
 - Representation by NMDOT on the Policy Committee, and by NMDOT and Red Apple Transit on the Technical Committee, are updated. (See page 2.)
 - Newsletters will be published at least three times per year (previously, four newsletters have been published). (See page 8.)
 - Planning factors of MAP-21 have been clarified and are included. (These may again be updated as similar federal guidance is provided as part of FAST Act, the new multi-year transportation bill.) (See page 2.)
 - A series of demographic maps will be produced to help comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights and issues of environmental justice. (See page 7.)
 - Amendments related to these and other minor changes are shown as track changes in the Draft Amendment of the PPP.

- In November, the Policy Committee also recommended developing a Citizens (Civic) Advisory Committee. Staff will present on this topic in February, and several documents may be amended in the future.
- The 45-day public noticing requirement for the Public Participation Plan began on November 29, 2015.

CURRENT WORK

- Staff will review the proposed amendments to the PPP.

ACTION ITEM

- Staff recommends that the Technical Committee recommend approval of amendments to the Public Participation Plan. This recommendation would be forwarded to the Policy Committee for consideration and final action.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Fillerup reported that the Public Participation Plan (PPP) is up for review and the 45-day public notice began on November 29, 2015. No public comments have been received to date. This document outlines how the MPO conducts business in an open manner and how we reach out to stakeholders and the general public.

Mr. Fillerup highlighted some of the proposed changes to the PPP:

- Update the RAT representative under the committee structure section;
- Text added to the reflect MAP-21 goals, but note that these will also eventually be updated with guidance from the FAST Act;
- For the new TIP development there will remain a 30-day comment period; however, for TIP amendments, the MPO is proposing changing to a 15-day comment period. This is recommended by NMDOT and what is also used by the other MPOs in the state. This change will allow amendments to happen in a shorter time frame and potentially reduce the need to hold special meetings to meet the noticing requirements;
- Changes to the environmental justice section to say “underserved areas/communities” rather than “environmental justice” areas;
- Create a social media presence. The Policy Committee recommended this be done to ensure good public outreach through this type of widely-used media.

ACTION: Ms. Lopez moved to recommend approval of the amendments to the Public Participation Plan. Ms. Westerling seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

7. GRANT WRITING BY MPOs

Subject:	Grant Writing by MPOs
Prepared by:	Fran Fillerup, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	January 6, 2016

BACKGROUND

- At the December 2015 Technical Committee meeting, Committee Members asked Staff to investigate the possibility of additional funding being acquired and being used for grant writing on behalf of local entities.
- Currently, FMPO staff presents on opportunities for federal and state grants to fund project design, project construction, planning studies, and other similar programs. FMPO staff also offers data, maps and other analysis in support of grant applications, and to review application content.
- Federal and State regulations with regards to 5303 & PL funds need to be considered when making decisions regarding planning activities in the UPWP.

CURRENT WORK

- Review of grant writing efforts at other MPO's in New Mexico:
- Mesilla Valley MPO, Santa Fe MPO, Mid-Region MPO and El Paso MPO each provide assistance to local entities similar to the help offered by the FMPO staff. They produce data made available generally, write letters of support, and review application content.
- Mid-Region Council of Governments and the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments offer grant writing to local governments, but indicated this is more of a function of their council of governments.
- A member of the Technical Committee gave the example of the Cowlitz Wahkiakum Council of Governments in Kelso, Washington for its grant writing. The transportation planner at that office indicated that they have done grant writing in the past, but have lost staff in the past three years and do not currently offer grant writing.

INFORMATION ITEM

- This is an information item only.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Fillerup reported that during the December Technical Committee meeting, the question was asked if the MPO was able to obtain more funding for additional staff, could they consider doing grant writing for the entities.

The MPO currently provides the entities with support material, tries to enhance any grant that the local governments are seeking, and tries to help align applications with the goals and scoring processes.

Mr. Fillerup stated that Staff queried the other MPOs in the state and this is the same approach they take. They do not try to take on grant writing or pursuing grants as MPO staff.

Mr. Fillerup said that Staff had been referred to a council of governments (COG) in Washington State that had provided grant writing in the past. They reported that in the past they had offered grant writing, but this was more a function of their COG rather than just the MPO. With the loss of staff over the years, they do not currently offer grant writing. The Northwest Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NWRTPO) reported that grant writing is a function of their COG and is offered where the local community does not have professional staff.

Staff asked Mr. Degani if grant writing and pursuing grants to the benefit of the local governments would be reimbursable for the MPO. Mr. Degani wants to first be able to review the new FAST Act legislation to see what it says about the policy of using PL funds for grant writing efforts.

Mr. Fillerup concluded that what Staff offers now is consistent with the other MPOs. Others doing grant writing do so as a function of a COG that they offer to the small communities.

ACTION: The report was received.

8. REPORTS FROM NMDOT

District 5 Update

No representative from District 5 was present at the meeting.

Planning Division Update - Brian Degani

Mr. Degani offered the following written update for the meeting and attended by phone with additional comments:

Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act Transportation Bill

Both the U.S. House and Senate passed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, which is five-year legislation for improving the Nation's surface transportation infrastructure, including roads, bridges, transit systems, and rail transportation network. The bill is intended to provide the following: reform and strengthen transportation programs, refocuses on national priorities, provide long-term certainty and more flexibility for states and local governments, streamline the project approval processes, and maintain a strong commitment to safety. The bill, once signed into law by President Obama, will be the first long-term transportation authorization legislation (1,300 pages) in the United States to be passed in a decade since SAFETEA-LU in 2005. More information on the FAST Act can be found on-line. It is anticipated that the roll-out of the proposed regulations would occur in early 2016.

MPO Workshop on Performance Measures occurred on 12/16/15 in Las Cruces. The Required Performance Measures (Final Rule May 23, 2016) on the **NHS Pavement**

Condition, NHS Bridge Condition and Safety were discussed. Overviews were provided by FHWA-NM and NMDOT on coordinated performance measures and data requirements. A framework for future discussions on coordination, data and modeling, plan consistency integration, project selection/evaluation criteria/methodology and on-going discussions and topics were presented. More information will be discussed by FMPO staff at the TC meeting.

T/LPA Project Updates

Please provide Tribal Local Planning (TLPA) project updates at each meeting on the status of your local projects to the FMPO staff so they can continually update the spreadsheet so local entities, NMDOT District 5, TLPA Coordinator, and the NMDOT Planner Liaison can work in a concerted effort towards keeping all of the projects on-track.

Upcoming Meetings/Trainings/Timelines

National Highway Institute Trainings

- **Federal-Aid Highways 101** – three two-day sessions scheduled week of 2/22/16 and 2/29/16 in Las Cruces, Albuquerque and Santa Fe. This class is mandatory for all MPO and RTPO Planners/Planning Program Managers.
- **Highway Program Financing** –Sessions are scheduled for 3/15/16-3/16/16 in Santa Fe, 3/29/16-3/30/16 in Albuquerque and 4/5/16-4/6/16 in Las Cruces. If you already registered, please contact Cecilia Romero, Continuing Education/Workforce Development Coordinator, Northern NM College, by email at cromero@nnmc.edu or phone at (575) 581-4117, to change or confirm your registration. This class is mandatory for all MPO and RTPO Planners/Planning Program Managers

Mr. Degani added that there is preliminary information available on the FAST Act, but the proposed regulations should be rolled out in April 2016. This will provide more information about the eligibility of activities and other requirements of the new legislation and answer the question of whether PL funds can be used for grant writing purposes.

The MPO workshop on performance measures occurred at the MPO Quarterly in December. The Final Rule will be made available on May 23, 2016 on the National Highway (NHS) Pavement Condition, NHS Bridge Condition, and Safety. Mr. Degani reported that some of this will impact US 64 through Farmington.

The T/LPA project updates provided at each meeting allows MPO Staff to continually update so all agencies can work in a concerted effort in keeping the projects on track.

The National Highway Institute has two upcoming trainings:

- Federal-Aid Highways 101: Three two-day session the week of 2/22 and 2/29/16 in Las Cruces, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe;
- Highway Program Financing: 3/15-16 in Santa Fe; 3/29-30 in Albuquerque, and; 4/5-6 in Las Cruces.

Mr. Degani asked to be kept in the loop on any issues with District 5 along with Mr. Brasher. Mr. Degani said he has heard that Mr. Steven Lopez is expected to be the acting technical support engineer from District 5, but that no final determination has been made. Mr. Degani said he would make Mr. Brasher and Mr. Lopez aware of the MPO concerns expressed today.

9. INFORMATION ITEMS

Subject:	Information Items
Prepared by:	Fran Fillerup, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	January 5, 2016

INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **Complete Streets Design Guidelines.** The Complete Streets draft edits are now available for review on the MPO website. We need to set a date for a review of these edits by the Technical Committee's Complete Streets Subcommittee.
- b. **TIP Call for Projects.** Staff will send out a Call for Projects for the FFY 2016-2021 TIP Amendment cycle. New projects to be added to the TIP are due to Staff by February 3.
- c. **Transportation Acronym List.** The MPO has an acronym list on its website under the heading of MPO Documents. (See www.farmingtonmpo.org.) Please note other terms which may need to be added.
- d. **MPO/NMDOT Meeting on Performance Measures.** On December 16, 2015, staff of FHWA, NMDOT and MPOs throughout the state met in Las Cruces to coordinate performance measurement in the state's NM Transportation Plan and MPO MTP's.
- e. **Transportation Research Board Annual Conference.** MPO staff will be attending the Transportation Research Board Annual Conference the week of January 10.
- f. **Other**

DISCUSSION: a. The Complete Streets Design Guidelines draft document has been sent out for review and is also available on the MPO website.

Mr. Watson said he had recommended a section or information on capacity be added. Mr. Keck said this had also been a recommendation from Mr. Sypher. Mr. Fillerup said he did not think that had been included.

Ms. Holton stated that the draft, as well as a later revision that addressed updates to only Page 27, were provided. MPO Staff would like to know how much time the Technical Committee members need to review the document before scheduling the special workshop to discuss the document. Ms. Westerling said Mr. Sypher asked for a month's time to review the document before holding the workshop. Ms. Holton said the MPO would send out a follow-up e-mail in a month to set a date for the workshop.

b. A call for projects will be issued by the MPO for the next quarterly TIP amendment cycle. February 3 will be the deadline to provide project information to the MPO.

Mr. Fillerup said this was just an amendment to the existing TIP and that Staff would provide the forms needed with the call for projects e-mail. Ms. Lopez asked about adding a project to the TIP. The City of Farmington is seeking funding for construction drawings for the complete streets design for downtown Farmington.

Ms. Westerling said that the February 3 deadline would be difficult to meeting since projects may need to be delayed. Mr. Watson also asked if the new projects would be seeking funding and put through the vetting process or would they be added to a wish list. Mr. Fillerup said the new projects would be scored and then reviewed by the Technical Committee. Mr. Keck added that he liked the process whereby MPO Staff would meet with each entity individually and review the potential projects. Mr. Fillerup said Staff could meet with the entities individually, but they would still ask them to use the same form as well.

Ms. Westerling asked if this was the only amendment cycle before July. Mr. Fillerup stated that there would be another amendment cycle in April.

c. The transportation acronym list has been updated and a copy provided to the Technical Committee members. If additional changes are required please let Staff know.

d. The discussion at the MPO Quarterly on performance measures related to mainly three topics: safety (related to injuries and fatalities); NHS pavement condition, and; NHS bridge condition.

Mr. Fillerup reported that in December, Mr. Sypher had asked for a draft of the performance measures. Mr. Fillerup said that there is not a draft yet available of what the performance measures will be. The discussion held at the MPO Quarterly was preliminary and more information will be forthcoming.

e. Duane Wakan is attending the Transportation Research Board (TRB) conference in Washington, DC.

f. The next TAP and RTP call for projects is expected this summer with applications due in August 2016. These two programs will be detailed in one guidebook, but remain as two separate funding accounts.

10. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

There was no additional business from the Floor.

11. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Mr. Hathaway reported that San Juan County had passed a new business registration ordinance. He said that with the county's volunteer fire department, many volunteers want to know what is in a business when responding to a fire call. For the safety and health of the volunteer firefighters, plus the public frequenting the businesses, the county believed this ruling was necessary.

Mr. Hathaway stated another reason for the ordinance was to ensure businesses were signed up with the state to operate their business. The county also believed this ruling was good from an economic development standpoint and that it might add some credibility to local businesses.

There was no additional business from the Floor.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Keck adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.



Dave Keck, Vice Chair



June Markle, Administrative Aide