

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
April 28, 2016

Policy Members Present: Sherri Sipe, City of Aztec
Nate Duckett, City of Farmington
Jimmy Voita, San Juan County
Paul Brasher, NMDOT, District 5

Policy Members Absent: Curtis Lynch, City of Bloomfield
Linda Rodgers, City of Farmington

Staff Present: Duane Wakan, MPO Planner
June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide

Staff Absent: Mary Holton, MPO Officer

Others Present: Larry Hathaway, San Juan County
Bil Homka, City of Aztec
Shana Reeves, City of Farmington
David Sypher, City of Farmington

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councilor Duckett called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 25, 2016 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Commissioner Sipe moved to approve the minutes from the February 25, 2016 Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Voita seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. FFY2016-2021 TIP AMENDMENT #2

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| Subject: | FFY2016-2021 TIP Amendment #2 |
| Prepared by: | Duane Wakan, MPO Planner |
| Date: | April 19, 2016 |

BACKGROUND

- On April 13, 2016 the Farmington MPO advertised Amendment #2 to the FFY2016-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- The amendment involves a few projects in the TIP
- The Technical Committee considered the amendment, held a public hearing, and recommended approval of Amendment #2 at their meeting on April 13.

AMENDED TIP PROJECTS

- F100091 East Arterial Route Phase II- Amends scope to include 3" asphalt lift to complete work of Phase 1A.
- The City of Farmington is requesting to add the Downtown Main Street Complete Streets Road Diet with intersection work from Miller Ave to Auburn Ave at a total estimated cost of \$12,000,000 over FFY2017, 2018 and 2019.
- No other projects from NMDOT or the other entities were received.

ACTION ITEM

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee approve Amendment #2 to the FFY2016-2021 TIP and the MPO Self-Certification for Amendment #2 to the FFY2016-2021 TIP.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Wakan reported that on April 13, 2016, the Technical Committee reviewed the projects in Amendment #2 to the FFY2016-2021. Following a public hearing where no comments were received, the Technical Committee recommended approval of Amendment #2.

Mr. Wakan explained the projects that were part of Amendment #2:

- Change of scope to the East Arterial Route; include a 3" asphalt lift to complete Phase IA. This Phase has been constructed and obligated, but a lack of funds in this Phase did not allow for the completion of this lift. The lift is needed to repair a height gap with the intersection of NM 173. This repair is being added into the scope of Phase II of the project;
- The City of Farmington requested the addition of the downtown Main Street complete streets road diet and intersection work between Miller and Auburn. The total estimated cost is \$12,000,000 over the three fiscal years of 2017, 2018, and 2019.

Mr. Wakan said that the City of Farmington complete streets project is a new project being added to the TIP. It will have to be ranked and scored among the other projects already in the TIP. The first scoring committee was comprised of Councilor Duckett, Bill Watson, and MPO Staff and they produced the initial TIP project ranking. Another meeting will be scheduled in the next month or two to rank this project.

Councilor Duckett asked if this required the re-ranking of all the projects. Mr. Wakan clarified that any new TIP project will be scored by a scoring committee and then, based on that numerical score, it will be ranked among the other existing projects.

Mr. Wakan said NMDOT has requested the changes to project #F100112 – Phase V of US 64 be added to the TIP. These changes will necessitate another amendment process in May.

ACTION: Commissioner Sipe moved to approve Amendment #2 to the FFY2016-2021 TIP and the MPO Self-Certification for Amendment #2 to the FFY2016-2021 TIP. Mr. Voita seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

4. 2016 SPRING TRAFFIC COUNT PROGRAM

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| Subject: | 2016 Spring Traffic Count Program |
| Prepared by: | Duane Wakan, MPO Planner |
| Date: | April 18, 2016 |

BACKGROUND

- The MPO maintains traffic counts for over 220 locations throughout the MPO area.
- Locations are counted according to a three-year cycle and change periodically.
- Staff split the administration of the annual traffic count calendar into spring and fall iterations which began 2013.
- NMDOT Traffic Count Division has asked the FMPO to count an additional 15 locations which have been spread out over the spring and fall schedule.
- The Technical Committee reviewed the list of spring traffic counts and recommended approval at their April 13, 2016 meeting.

CURRENT WORK

- The MPO scheduled 47 weekday volume counts (~21 Speed & Class) to take place on the week of April 25th.
- The consultant team is in the second-half of their one-year contract with the MPO.

ACTION ITEM

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee approve the 2016 Spring Weekday Traffic Count list.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Wakan reported that the consultant has actually begun the 2016 spring traffic counts. He referred to the list of locations on Pages 5 and 6 of the Agenda.

There are 47 weekday volume counts. Of these, 21 counts will also count speeds of the vehicle crossing over the counter as well as the type of vehicle (class) traveling that section of roadway. All this information will be integrated into the travel demand model and will assist in Staff in identifying where the heaviest truck traffic is seen and in predicting future truck volumes in the region.

Mr. Wakan reported that NMDOT asked that an additional twenty-two locations be counted this spring and fall. Those locations have been added to count list. Locations are counted according to a three-year cycle and change periodically. The second half of the locations will be counted this fall.

Councilor Duckett reported that a counter located on Butler near Sunrise Parkways was dislodged. Mr. Wakan said he would alert the technician to the problem.

ACTION: The report was received.

5. COMMITTEE BYLAWS & OPERATING PROCEDURES-COMMITTEE MEMBER ATTENDANCE

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| Subject: | Committee Bylaws and Operating Procedures – Committee Member Attendance |
| Prepared by: | Mary Holton, MPO Officer |
| Date: | April 17, 2016 |

BACKGROUND

- The Committee Bylaws and Operating Procedures provide the guidance for the Policy and Technical Committees and were approved on May 28, 2015.
- Regular committee member attendance was considered important and both committees discussed this at length.
- Language from the Bylaws states:
 - *Attendance by members is required at all Policy Committee meetings. If a Policy Committee member fails to attend seventy-five (75) percent of the Policy Committee meetings in a twelve-month calendar period, (for Technical Committee members also: or fails to attend fifty (50) percent of the Technical Committee meetings in person in a twelve-month calendar period) his membership may be terminated.*
 - *The Chair shall speak with a Policy Committee member who is subject to removal through non-attendance to determine if that member will make a commitment to attend Policy Committee meetings. If the member cannot make the commitment, the Chair will send a recommendation to the corresponding City or County Manager that a new member from that entity be designated to serve on the Policy Committee.*
 - *The MPO Policy Committee may remove any Policy Committee member upon the grounds of malfeasance or nonfeasance of office through an affirmative vote of three (3) members.*
- The Technical Committee meeting day was changed from Thursday to Wednesday to accommodate NMDOT attendance.

CURRENT WORK

- NMDOT attendance, either in person or by phone, continues to be inconsistent.
- Present to Policy Committee for further discussion and possible action.

INFORMATION ITEM

- The proposal is submitted for the Policy Committee's review and input only.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Wakan stated that this agenda item was requested to be addressed by Ms. Holton and, in lieu of her unexpected absence at the meeting, he recommended this item be tabled until the May Policy Committee meeting.

ACTION: Commissioner Sipe moved to table Agenda Item #5 until the May 26, 2016 meeting. Mr. Voita seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

6. COMPLETE STREETS

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| Subject: | Complete Streets |
| Prepared by: | Duane Wakan, MPO Planner |
| Date: | April 19, 2016 |

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- Complete Streets are a means of designing a roadway so that it accommodates all modes of travel, including driving, walking, biking, and transit.
- Staff has worked with the Complete Streets Advisory Group (CSAG) on content, and design guidelines for the FMPO planning area.
- The Advisory Group held its last meeting on October 1, 2015 and reviewed the draft Complete Streets Design Guidelines document.
- Staff made editorial revisions based on input from CSAG members. Works cited and minor grammatical errors will be corrected or updated on an ongoing basis.
- Special Technical Committee Workshops were held on February 24, March 16, and April 26 to review and provide edits to the draft Design Guidelines document.

CURRENT WORK

- Complete a draft review of the Design Guidelines document on April 26.
- Seek recommended approval by the Technical Committee on May 11, 2016.

INFORMATION ITEM

- Receive a preliminary review of the draft Design Guidelines document.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Wakan reviewed some of the recent work on the Complete Streets Design Guidelines document by the Technical Committee on April 26, 2016. Some of those items are:

- In designing roadways, recognize that one size does not fit all;
- Emphasize and honor the regional assets/amenities: cultural, historical, and tribal;
- Focus on quality of life;
- Better coordination with other divisions within an entity;

Mr. Wakan and Mr. Sypher described the desired use of underground utilities and the expense this would entail. As an example, to consider complete streets concepts on the current 20th Street sidewalk project (from Clayton to Sullivan Avenue), \$3,000,000 would be the cost to underground the electric for this road segment. Mr. Hathaway added that a 69 KV electric line would cost approximately \$300,000 per mile vs. \$1,500,000 per mile.

Commissioner Duckett asked if cost savings might be recognized with underground electric which, in turn, would help offset the initial cost of the retrofit. Mr. Sypher said with the first project there is always a huge learning curve, but costs will drop as future projects come along. The 20th Street sidewalk is a demo project and a payback will likely not be seen. Mr. Wakan added that the payback is not always going to be seen in decreased utility costs, but in potential increased sales and the private sector redevelopment funds invested in the corridor. These can increase the overall gross receipts tax and improve the sense of place, and are the true payback or reinvestment measures.

Mr. Wakan explained how the grant funds are requested from the entities through the MPO. The MPO submits the requests to NMDOT and, following a state-wide ranking, funds are awarded.

- Break down silos – groups working independent and separately from others;
- Six core values identified: aesthetics, economic development, multi-modal, network connectivity, public health, and safety;
- Work with public health to help look at public health in all elements of transportation;
- Using available crash data can isolate hazard areas in the cities and focus in on those to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety;
 - o 56% of all fatalities occur in rural areas;
 - o San Juan County is rural;
 - o Identify amenities to improve rural roadways.
- Proposed road diet for Main Street in downtown Farmington and improve aesthetics of region;
- Focus on place-making;
- Network connectivity - conventional grid street pattern vs. cul-de-sac
 - o More planners using grid system; safer and more efficient for all modes of travel;
 - o Cul-de-sac pattern does not have amenities built into it and forces the use of a vehicle to exit the cul-de-sac onto a 4-6 lane facility;
 - o Pinon Hills Boulevard and the East Arterial Route are great new connectivity projects for San Juan County;
- Vehicle miles traveled peaked in 2007 nationally and in New Mexico; improvements are needed for the other modes of travel; encourage multi-modal designs for transit;
- Important to also design intersections for complete streets; consider simple changes (bulbouts to shorten distance for pedestrians to travel across large highway, signals, refuge islands, protected intersection, roundabouts);
- Ensure equity and equal access to complete streets designs and amenities;
- Coordinate land use and transportation; include schools;
- Coordinate the application of complete streets design guidelines in different combinations of land use context areas and road typologies;

- List of possible tools to consider for calming traffic.

Councilor Duckett asked if the school board had requested, received, or utilized any complete streets information before the new Tibbetts Junior High. Mr. Wakan said a presentation had been made to the school board and their reinvestment in Northeast Elementary and Hermosa Jr. High was commended. Complete streets concepts seemed to be well received and several photo morphs for Hutton Avenue (Animas Elementary) were presented and there appeared to be interest in seeing changes made. The problems with Tibbetts were only generally addressed.

Mr. Wakan stated he had recently presented to Leadership San Juan and there was a good discussion about Tibbetts and the group recognized the need for coordination from all governments including the school district. The MPO is eager to help bring groups together to formulate ideas and gather support from the different stakeholders.

Mr. Wakan said the draft of the design guidelines is hoped to be reviewed and finalized by the Technical Committee in May. If this occurs, the final design guidelines should be ready for the Policy Committee to review and consider for approval in May as well.

ACTION: The report was received.

7. NMDOT REPORTS

District 5 – Paul Brasher

Mr. Brasher reported on the following items:

- The Transportation Commission has changed their regular meeting date to once every two months instead of once a month;
- New Mexico legislature voted to allow local governments to approve the use of four-wheelers on state roads subject to prior approval of the Transportation Commission. Guidelines for approval have not been established yet. District 5 has already received their first application for consideration from the town of Red River. District 5 will look at: road conditions, signage, traffic counts, safety concerns, shoulders or not, connectivity, and speeds before granting approval;
- District 5 is discussing with Aztec designing the East Arterial Route as a four-lane facility and becoming a state bypass.

Mr. Wakan asked what the impact would be to the proposed detached multi-use trail being planned along the north side of the East Arterial if the roadway is widened to four lanes. Mr. Brasher said this question has come up and is not fully resolved. He thought it was likely that the additional lanes would be made on the south side and would not permanently affect the trail. The entire cross section of the roadway is being reviewed and thought out for future needs.

- There is a right-of-way issue with the Pinon Hills Boulevard project. There will be internal discussions within NMDOT and FHWA concerning right-of-way and the environmental considerations behind the selection of the center line. Plan to sit

down with Farmington in the next couple of weeks and talk out the details and take positive steps to keep the project moving forward;

- Construction of US 64 is continuing and will do so for the next six years. Mr. Brasher stated that this is a U.S. route that runs from North Carolina to just over the state line in Arizona and is an important east/west corridor for the country;
- Project on NM 173 is in design. NMDOT had planned to being construction this year, but design snags with water and gas transmission lines needed to be relocated, may require that this project be pushed out;
- Kirtland Walk Path is an asphalt walk path with curb and gutter that will run for 2.8 miles from CR 6446 (Kirtland Elementary) to US 64;

Mr. Voita asked why the turning lanes at the intersection of NM 516 and Country Club Drive in Farmington were not repaved when the roadway was done. Mr. Sypher said that he had spoken with NMDOT's engineer doing the project who stated that were trying to make the paving project go further and were stretching the dollars as far as they would go. To do this they narrowed the scope of the project. Mr. Brasher said that NMDOT may sometimes have to widen and shorten a project to make the funds go further and still balance safety, mobility, and economy.

Planning Division

There were no Planning Division representatives present at the meeting or updates provided.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

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| Subject: | Information Items |
| Prepared by: | Duane Wakan, MPO Planner |
| Date: | April 4, 2016 |

INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. Population Decline Article.** The MPO worked with David Sypher and Shana Reeves with the COF to articulate a response to NMDOT regarding the need for the Pinon Hills Bridge Project over the Animas River and Oxbow.
- b. NMDOT Special Planning & Research Funds.** The FMPO would like to submit a request to the research division at NMDOT to consider in the cloud technology that has the potential to vastly improve project management and tracking.
- c. MPO Quarterly.** Staff attended the MPO Quarterly in Albuquerque, New Mexico on March 22 and 23. The FMPO will host the next Quarterly on June 13 and 14. Walking Tour on US 64 in Bloomfield.
- d. National Bike to Work Activities.** The National Bike to Work week starts on May 16 running through May 20. National Bike to Work Day is May 20, 2016.

- e. **Transportation & Public Health Meeting.** The Farmington MPO participated in an inaugural meeting with New Mexico MPO Transportation Planners and Officials in Public Health from across the state on Wednesday March 23 at the Mid-Region Council of Governments.
- f. **Trainings.** Staff attended an NHI Course on Highway Program Financing in Albuquerque on March 29 and 30.

MRCOG is co-sponsoring one of six ICIP Training Workshops on May 5 in Albuquerque to assist communities in developing their FY2018-2022 ICIP. Additional information can be found at:

http://www.mrcog-nm.gov/latest-news/1361-mrcog-to-host-icip-training-workshop?utm_source=April+2016+issue+of+Travel+Times&utm_campaign=March+2016+Travel+Times&utm_medium=email

- g. **Associate Planner.** Three final candidates for the Associate Planner position were interviewed in person in April.
- h. **Special Technical Committee Meeting.** Another Special Technical Committee meeting was held on April 26 to finalize the revisions and edits to the Complete Streets Design Guidelines.
- i. **Other.**

DISCUSSION: a. Mr. Wakan reported on a letter received from NMDOT's Planning Division regarding an article that stated that Farmington was the fastest shrinking city in the country. The City of Farmington articulated a response to NMDOT to correct the inaccurate information presented in the article.

b. A presentation was made to the Technical Committee on NMDOT's Special Planning & Research funds. These funds are to be used for technology transfer projects. Staff would like to encourage NMDOT to consider "in the cloud" software with Citrix (GoTo Meetings) that could enhance communication between NMDOT and the entities. All the communications would be transparent, efficient, and all parties would be accountable. Staff will be presenting this information to the other MPOs to get their input and support.

c. FMPO will be hosting the MPO Quarterly in June. Staff plans a tour along US 64 in Bloomfield to see how this facility could be made more accommodating for pedestrians. This is the design element that has been missing with this project and it is important to ask the questions, get the dialog started, and encourage community involvement by the stakeholders impacted by this project.

d. May 16-20 is national bike to work week with May 20th designated as bike to work day. Mr. Wakan asked if there was advertising or public announcements that could be made to encourage biking to work on May 20th. Councilor Duckett thought this was a good idea and something that should be promoted. He thought this would provide an opportunity to highlight some areas where it is safe to bike and there might be some good feedback provided from the community. Mr. Wakan will contact the local entities and encourage their participation in promoting bike to work day.

e. On March 23, FMPO participated with the other MPOs and public health officials from across the state in discussing the professional convergence of public health and transportation. This was the first time this type of dialog between the groups had been held. The public health sector is supportive of transportation and complete street. They recognize that in order to abate health care costs, the two groups must work together and coordinate their efforts. These two groups plan to meet quarterly to continuing assessing how best to work together.

f. Mr. Wakan attended a National Highway Institute (NHI) training addressing transportation legislation, how funds are obligation, and a historical look at the evolution of transportation bills.

g. MRCOG is co-sponsoring some training for local entity staff to assist communities in developing their FY2018-2022 ICIP.

h. Three candidates were interviewed in person for the Associate Planner position during April. The finalist has been selected and Mr. Wakan is working with Human Resources to complete the necessary hiring paperwork. There were nine overall candidates with Master degrees in transportation or regional planning who applied for the position.

i. A Special Technical Committee meeting was held on April 26 to review the current revisions and edits to the Complete Streets design guidelines document.

9. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

There was no additional business from the floor.

10. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no business from the floor.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Duckett adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m.


Councilor Duckett, Chair


June Markle,
MPO Administrative Aide