

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
September 22, 2016

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

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

Staff Present: Mary Holton, MPO Officer
Duane Wakan, MPO Planner
Derrick Garcia, MPO Associate Planner
June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide

Staff Absent: None

Others Present: Robin Elkin, NMDOT Planning Liaison (via
telephone)
Cheri Floyd, Blue Cross Blue Shield
Hannah Grover, The Daily Times
Larry Hathaway, San Juan County
Christina Morris, NM Department of Health
David Sypher, City of Farmington
Pam Valencia, San Juan County Partnership

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councilor Duckett called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

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

Ms. Nobis moved to approve the minutes from the August 25, 2016 Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Voita seconded the motion. Commissioner Sipe noted the misspelling of her name on the first page of the minutes. The correction to the minutes will be made. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. REVIEW AND CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE FINAL COMPLETE STREETS DESIGN GUIDELINES

Mr. Wakan stated that the final Complete Streets Design Guidelines document was being presented today to seek final approval of the document by the Policy Committee. He presented some of the comments from the last Policy and Technical Committee meetings.

- Change the heading above the picture on the front cover to read:
Context Sensitive Street Design Guidelines:
A Complete Streets Approach
...and move "Farmington Metropolitan Planning Organization" to below the Picture;
- The works cited information was moved to the end of each section;
- Clearer graphics to depict the 25 mph road sections on Page 5;
- Additional rural imagery (wide shoulders, multi-use trail, sharrow markings) on Page 13;
- State Road Fund Revenue and Purchasing Power graphic on Page 13 added to show how revenues may have increased, the actual purchasing power behind those dollars has decreased;
- Some design changes to Pages 22 – 28, Road Typology, Land Use Context Areas, and the street layout pages showing the minimum standards in Rural, Industrial, Neighborhood, Commercial, and Downtown/Urban settings;
- Acknowledgement Page added to the end of the document.

Mr. Wakan stated that the Technical Committee had recommended approval of the Design Guidelines at their August 24, 2016 special meeting.

Councilor Duckett asked if Mr. David Sypher or Ms. Mary Holton had any comments to add before the Policy Committee considered the Design Guidelines.

Mr. Sypher commented that a lot of work had been done to make this document a good, flexible guideline for all entities. It will provide a unity to all jurisdictions about where the starting point is realizing that money and grants will direct the future outcomes. The design guidelines will help the development community know what the standard expectations are from one entity to another.

Ms. Holton stated that once the Policy Committee adopts the document, she will share it with the City of Farmington's development community and urged the other communities to do the same. She added that it will up to each entity to decide whether they want to codify any of the information in the document. Councilor Duckett asked if the City of Farmington had already adopted the Complete Streets document. Ms. Holton said they had not as it first needed to proceed through the MPO process before it was presented to the entities for their consideration and reference.

Ms. Christina Morris, New Mexico Department of Health & Health Promotion and a member of the Complete Streets Advisory Group. She commented on the difference between equity and equality and the last statement on the Equity in Complete Streets page of the Design Guidelines: "Of course true equity must include user proportionality in project selection". She recommended that some changes be made to this statement.

Mr. Sypher said he had understood Ms. Morris to raise a concern about "equity" versus "equality". He thought the word "equity" in the closing sentence could be changed to "equality". Mr. Sypher said he had looked at this statement in terms of equality and believed it was incumbent on him to represent proportionally the users involved (i.e.: a 1% group of users versus a different group of 99%) and how that could affect spending.

Ms. Holton said that equity was a valid concept and was similar to environmental justice and she thought it was appropriately used in the sentence. Councilor Duckett asked if there was discussion on the issue between equity and equality. Ms. Holton stated that equity is considered in the planning world and thought it had been discussed by the Technical Committee and the Complete Streets Advisory Group. Councilor Duckett asked what the stance of the Technical Committee was in regard to this statement. Mr. Wakan said that this sentence had been added in at the end of a very long Technical Committee special meeting on the design guidelines and there was limited dialog. He noted that the "demand" is the difference between equity and equality. For instance, if the demand for transit services in an underserved neighborhood is not heard, then the statement regarding "user proportionality" could be what decision-makers follow and the services will go unaddressed. Mr. Wakan said he personally saw no difference between the words equity and equality.

Councilor Duckett agreed that he saw no difference between the words equity and equality and asked for input from others present. Commissioner Sipe agreed that the two words seemed interchangeable and did not think the section needed to be rewritten especially since equity is used in planning. Mr. Garcia commented that the difference between equity and equality is the purpose of the last paragraph. He referenced a point made by another Policy Committee member at an earlier meeting that certain areas within the MPO that have a lot fewer amenities than other areas. When weight is put behind projects and services that is the opposite of equity. Mr. Garcia was trying to clarify the concerns raised by Ms. Morris which had nothing to do with using the word equity or equality in this last sentence. When speaking about scaling projects based on demand, those with less of a voice, which is often in the poorer or underserved neighborhoods, are left out.

The Policy Committee members discussed now having a better understanding of equity as referenced in the last paragraph on this page, changing the word "equity" to "equality", or taking the entire sentence out of the paragraph. Councilor Duckett asked how, or if, the intent of the paragraph might be altered if the last sentence was removed. Mr. Wakan added that this section references geospatial inequality that exists in cities and regions and that federal law has mandated that environmental justice must be considered if you receive federal funds for transportation projects. Councilor Duckett said that the environmental justice component may not always be what the entire community wants as evidenced by the project to extend Pinon Hills Boulevard to the south. Mr. Wakan explained that the policy makers need to consider the guidelines and understand where the underserved areas in the community are when deciding what projects to pursue.

Commissioner Sipe said she thought the section did address equity, underserved areas, and accommodating all modes and users and that removing the fourth paragraph would not affect the integrity of the document or this particular section. The other Policy Committee members agreed.

Mr. Sypher said he had been the author of this last sentence. He thought the section well represented the fact that each diverse group needs representation, but thought the very real issue of limited dollars had been ignored. Mr. Sypher tried to give balance to the entire page by bringing up proportionality, the reality of very limited funding, and the need to justify the project choices that are made. Mr. Sypher said the concern raised

over this last statement had not been brought to the attention of the Technical Committee and their recommended approval included this sentence.

Councilor Duckett said the Policy Committee should take into account the document as it was presented to, and approved by, the Technical Committee. Mr. Wakan said the CSAG was provided two weeks in which to provide comments and this concern had not been brought up during that time and had not been brought up with the Technical Committee. Councilor Duckett thought the issue of funding did need to be taken into consideration from a realistic view and said it was certainly a component in the decision making process.

The Policy Committee and Staff discussed the use of the word "balancing" as a way to rephrase the sentence and to accommodate both sides of the argument. Mr. Wakan noted that the Policy Committee could recommend and make changes to any MPO document and total agreement with the Technical Committee was not necessary. Making a change today would not necessitate taking it back to the Technical Committee for another review.

Councilor Duckett recommended incorporating the sentence into the third paragraph where a more equitable distribution of funds is referenced. This helps to weigh the reality of limited funding with the desire to better address the needs of the underserved areas. All agreed to changing the third paragraph to read: "*...accommodated by the existing transportation system. To ensure a more equitable distribution of funds Federal or State agencies expect localities to strongly consider environmental justice in the decision making process. A balanced approach should include user proportionality in project selection.*"

ACTION: Councilor Duckett moved to adopt the Design Guidelines document with the recommended change to the third paragraph of the Equity in Complete Streets page. Mr. Voita seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. SAFETY PLAN

Mr. Wakan reported on the final federal ruling on the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). He noted that a project that receives HSIP funding, it is paid 100% by the state with typically no local match required.

Mr. Wakan gave a PowerPoint presentation on this final ruling and the impacts to the MPO safety plan. Below is a summary of that presentation:

- Process for State DOT's and MPOs to establish safety targets and to report on progress for their safety targets. FMPO is waiting on further guidance on this from FHWA and NMDOT before setting their targets;
- State DOTs and MPOs are expected to use the information and data generated as a result of this new regulation to better inform their transportation planning and programming decision-making, and specifically to use their resources in ways that will result in the greatest possible reduction in fatalities and serious injuries;
- Improve data by providing for greater consistency in the reporting of serious injuries;

- Improve transparency by requiring reporting on serious injuries and fatalities through a public reporting system;
- Enable targets and progress to be aggregated at the national level;
- Require State DOTs to meet or make significant progress toward meeting their targets; if not meeting targets, FHWA can require that all funding be moved to programming safety projects;
- Establish requirements for State DOTs that have not met or made significant progress toward meeting their targets;
- MPOs can set own targets and do not necessarily have to be the same as NMDOT;
- Targets (4 of 5 must be met):
 - Number of Fatalities
 - Fatality Rate
 - Number of Serious Injuries
 - Serious Injury Rate
 - Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries

Mr. Wakan explained that cities can now use HISP funds to improve non-motorized modes of transportation and address critical corridors where pedestrian and bicycle safety has not been addressed.

Mr. Wakan reported that the MPO will work with a steering committee and the public to collectively reach the targets the MPO wants to work toward in the region. Specific corridors or roadways may not be identified, but the safety plan will look at the region and develop counter-measures that will lead to safety improvements. Councilor Duckett commented that it is good that the localities will be able to set their goals and develop a plan of action based on their own needs and not the statewide goals of NMDOT.

Staff is developing a scope of services for the safety plan consultant. Mr. Wakan said that the MPO budget for the consultant's work is between \$50,000 and \$70,000. Staff discovered that other MPOs have spent as much as \$115,000 for their consultant's analytical work. Much of FMPO's analytical work (crash data, mapping, and analyses) has already been produced in-house. Staff is confident in the data generated and will recommend the use of this data in order to save on consultant costs. Mr. Wakan said the consultant will be tasked with facilitating the public meetings and developing the counter-measures.

Councilor Duckett asked if the Technical Committee had any thoughts about this. Mr. Sypher said the Technical Committee had not discussed the safety plan and this presentation at this level. He thought they would like to look over the scope of work and review the level of detail requested before making a decision.

ACTION: The report was received.

5. FALL TRAFFIC COUNTS

Mr. Garcia reported that the fall traffic counts began the week of August 29, 2016 and most of the 50 locations were collected on a 48-hour window. There were several incidents with street sweepers and trucks painting lane markings where the counters were disrupted. When areas of construction, maintenance or repair are identified beforehand, those count locations are moved and rescheduled for a later count cycle. Mr. Garcia will

coordinate directly with each entity before the next counts are scheduled in the spring of 2017 to hopefully prevent these types of issues.

ACTION: The report was received

6. PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Garcia reported that the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Recreational Trails Program (RTP) are part of the new federal funding legislation, the FAST Act. In conjunction with the Surface Transportation Program (STP) applications can be submitted for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and activities along with other active transportation projects. Applications are solicited every two years and the next round of applications is due to the MPO by November 1, 2016. The applications received by the MPO to date include:

- Two Safe Routes to School coordinator positions: Central Consolidated School District and San Juan Safe Communities Initiative;
 - Will fund each of these positions for two years
- 20th Street Sidewalk – Phase III – City of Farmington;
 - North side of 20th Street from Sullivan to Dustin
- Foothills Drive – Phase II – City of Farmington;
 - Continue reconstructing and enhancing street with detached multi-use paths and bike lanes
 - Project is shelf-ready
- Anesi Park Trail Development and Connections – City of Farmington;
- Downtown Farmington Main Street project.
 - \$2,000,000 project; local match of \$291,000

Mr. Garcia noted that the local required match for these projects is 14.56% match.

Mr. Voita asked if the County had submitted an application. Mr. Garcia replied that the County has submitted an RTP application for a Glade Run trail improvements in partnership with BLM.

The City of Aztec has not submitted any applications as of this date.

Mr. Wakan reported that the County's Kirtland Walk Path multi-use trail project has run into some cost issues and they may have to phase this project into two separate projects.

ACTION: The report was received.

7. UPDATE ON THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

Mr. Wakan asked if the Policy Committee members had any people interested in participating on the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). There is an invitation letter that can be sent out to anyone who is interested. The invitation was sent to the Complete Streets Advisory Group members and Staff has received two or three replies of interest.

Names of interested parties can be e-mailed to June Markle and she will send out an invitation to those individuals.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

Mr. Garcia reported on two upcoming trainings for MPO staff:

- Mr. Wakan will be attending the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) in Seattle from September 25-30, 2016, and;
- Mr. Garcia will be attending the APA-NM conference in Albuquerque on September 29 & 30, 2016.

Staff assisted Mrs. Anngela Wakan and the San Juan Safe Communities Initiative in seeking a \$10,000 People for Bikes Community Grant. The grant will fund bike paths, lanes, trails, bridges or any type of bicycle facilities or advocacy for bikes. Mrs. Wakan thought this might be a good approach to the 30th Street pedestrian boulevard. A letter of interest was written and an invitation to apply was received. The grant requires that local elected officials provide a letter a support. Mr. Garcia wanted to let the Policy Committee members know that they might be approached in the next several weeks seeking this letter. Senator Udall's office has responded to say the state's congressional delegation will be writing a letter of support for this grant along with several business leaders.

Councilor Duckett commented that a road diet would be much more expensive than \$10,000 and he thought the entity responsible for maintaining the roadway and enforcing the laws on it would also need to approve of the plan. Mr. Garcia clarified that the grant was not for any construction. The grant would be used for outreach and possibly a cyclovia or street fair that would create a temporary road diet. The police and public works would be approached to get their input and allow residents and local neighbors to see what a road diet might look like. The street would not be closed, but narrowed asking vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians to share the road. Mr. Garcia said this would provide a well-balanced approach to see how this might work in Farmington. Councilor Duckett asked if the grant was received, but the City of Farmington did not buy into the concept, what would happen to the funds. Mr. Garcia replied that the grant funds would be returned.

Mr. Sypher commented that this proposal had been previously presented to the City Manager and he referred it back to the public works department who is in the process of vetting the plan now. He said if the City of Farmington had to sponsor the grant, the request was premature since the project as yet to be vetted. Mr. Garcia clarified that he was not seeking approval for any project and had used the 30th Street project as an example only. Mr. Garcia added that the grant application is for community outreach and a simple letter of support from an elected official to accompany the grant application was all that was being requested at this time.

9. REPORTS FROM NMDOT

District 5 – Paul Brasher

Mr. Brasher reported that NMDOT is winding up another two mile stretch along US 64. The next two-mile stretch is in design with construction anticipated in 2017. Along the current section, Mr. Brasher commented that there were some issues with drainage and right-of-way. Also, the slopes along the shoulders on this current section are being reseeded. He noted that there are always challenges to provide road and business

access along the new roadway. Mr. Brasher stated that the current project is slightly ahead of schedule and added that there had been good cooperation with the businesses and the public.

Councilor Duckett commented that his father-in-law owns a business along US 64 and he was very complimentary about the speed and quality of the work and the access provided to his business during the construction.

Commissioner Sipe asked if Mr. Brasher had any new updates on the East Arterial project in Aztec. Mr. Brasher said District 5 had spoken with the City of Aztec last Wednesday and they are waiting for the City of Aztec to secure the needed right-of-way from BLM and complete the final disposition on the landfill. These things will need to happen before NMDOT can wrap up the design and go to construction in 2017.

Commissioner Sipe said that this project had never been designed to be four lanes yet now the City of Aztec has to secure additional right-of-way to enable the expansion to four lanes. She said it was very frustrating to have the two ends of the project done, but not be able to complete the middle portion. Mr. Brasher said that the roadway cross-section is not currently being designed for four lanes, but the additional right-of-way will allow it to accommodate four lanes in the future. The land is rough so additional right-of-way is required even for the two lanes. The consultant has verified that in the future should widening be desired, it can be accomplished within the right-of-way with the land transfer from BLM.

NMDOT Planning – Robin Elkin

Mr. Elkin had left the call.

9. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Commissioner Sipe thanked Mr. Brasher and District 5 staff for the weeding and some lane striping that has taken place in the Aztec area.

There was no additional business from the Chairman, Members and Staff.

10. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Mr. Hathaway commented on the completion of the Complete Streets Design Guidelines. He had participated on the Advisory Group and observed the Technical Committee meetings held to review and edit the document and wanted to thank MPO Staff for their hard work and efforts in getting this document to adoption.

Ms. Morris said she would like to comment on the recent decision by the Bloomfield City Council to cut funding for the Red Apple Transit. She thought this was a significant decision that will impact families, children, and the community as they look for transportation to San Juan College, jobs, the hospital and shopping facilities. She asked the Policy Committee members to encourage the City of Bloomfield to review this decision.

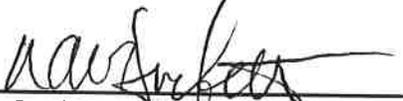
Mr. Wakan reviewed the most recent boarding and alightment activity in one year's time along the Bloomfield route. Ms. Nobis stated that the City of Bloomfield had received many phone calls from residents unhappy with the decision to cut Red Apple Transit services. Councilor Duckett said he thought this had not been an easy decision for the Bloomfield Council to make.

Mr. Wakan also updated the committee on recent food desert analysis performed by Staff that indicates that poverty levels are higher the closer people live to mini-marts versus a lower poverty level if people live a quarter mile to a regular grocery store.

There was no additional business from the Floor.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Duckett adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.



Nate Duckett, Chair



June Markle, Administrative Aide