

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
November 14, 2013

Policy Members Present: Pat Lucero, City of Bloomfield
Dan Darnell, City of Farmington
Gayla McCulloch, City of Farmington
Scott Eckstein, San Juan County

Technical Members Absent: Sherri Sipe, City of Aztec

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

Staff Absent: None

Also Present: Brian Degani, NMDOT Planning Liaison
Phil Gallegos, NMDOT District 5
Jessica Cessieux, NMDOT Rail Bureau
Bill Craven, NMDOT Rail Bureau
Larry Hathaway, San Juan County

Citizens: Buddy Benally, NAPI
Richard Buffington
Peter Deswood, Navajo Nation, Div. of Economic
Development
Ray Hagerman, Four Corners Economic
Development CEO
Mary Holmes
Tony N. Larsen
Larry R. McKay
Bill & Nancy Peterson
Leonard Scott, NAPI
Daisy Swadesh
Will Tsosie, Navajo Nation Dept. of Business
Chris Whitney
Zang Wood

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 19, 2013 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Commissioner Eckstein moved to approve the minutes from the September 19, 2013 Policy Committee meeting. Councilor Lucero seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE DRAFT STATE RAIL PLAN

Subject:	State Rail Plan
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 6, 2013

BACKGROUND OR PREVIOUS WORK

- The NMDOT Rail Bureau held a public meeting in Farmington in March 2011 to discuss the need for a State Rail Plan.
- The Rail Bureau has recently issued its draft State Rail Plan for public review and comment.
- The State Rail Plan was presented at the Technical Committee meeting held on October 24, 2013.

CURRENT WORK

- Staff from the NMDOT Rail Bureau will give a presentation on the plan at the November 14 Policy Committee meeting.
- Rail Bureau staff will be giving a presentation during a public meeting on November 14 at 6pm.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- Review and provide comments on the Rail Plan to NMDOT.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a presentation on the draft State Rail Plan.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori introduced Mr. Bill Craven and Ms. Jessica Cessieux with NMDOT's Rail Bureau and welcomed the guests to the meeting. Mr. Delmagori said there would be another public meeting to present the draft State Rail Plan that evening at 6:00 p.m. in Rooms C and D of the Farmington Civic Center.

Mr. Craven gave a presentation on the draft State Rail Plan. He stated the Plan had been released about a month ago for public and stakeholder comments and presentations are being made statewide to MPOs, RTPOs, and the public.

Mr. Craven explained that the Purpose of the Rail Plan was to set forth state policy regarding passenger and freight rail transportation, to present priorities and strategies to enhance rail service that benefits the public, and serve as the basis for Federal and State rail investments.

Mr. Craven said the reasons for developing the Rail Plan were that it is a requirement in order to receive future funding from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for intercity passenger rail. He noted that any project must first be published in a state rail plan before funding is considered. Secondly, there has been renewed federal emphasis on railroad investments beginning around 2008 with the enactment of the Passenger Rail Investment Act (PRIIA) and the Rail Safety Improvement Act (RSIA). These Acts authorized a number of programs for passenger and freight rail, for safety, and included Amtrak subsidies for five fiscal years. He noted that these two Acts recently expired, but programs initiated under the Acts are still being considered for extensions or renewals. The third program that came along was the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program that was part of the stimulus bill of 2009. The TIGER program is a competitive program designed to help fund capital improvement projects at up to 50% of the total cost of a project considered to be of major regional significance. The funding can be used for any type of transportation project including rail, highway, or transit. Mr. Craven noted that the final reason for development of the Rail Plan was to refocus state rail planning efforts following the Rail Runner service that began in 2008 to Santa Fe.

Mr. Craven said that the Rail Plan process initially focused on speaking with the stakeholders – railroads, shippers, MPOs and RTPOs, transit agencies, transit and rail passenger advocates, other state government entities with rail or federal responsibilities, and with adjacent states. All these discussions were meant to initially determine the needs, issues, and priorities. The Rail Plan was then presented to the MPOs and RTPOs about three years ago and public input was also invited at that time. Following this, the draft Rail Plan was developed and completed, and then published in early October 2013.

Mr. Craven stated that the Rail Bureau is now conducting a second round of public review and comment. Along with presentations to the MPOs and RTPOs, there are five public meetings scheduled for Gallup, Farmington, Las Cruces, and one each in Santa Fe and Albuquerque that have already been held.

The public and stakeholder review and comment period is open until January 3, 2014. Once all the input has been received and the Draft Plan updated, it will be submitted to the FRA for final approval. Once approved by the FRA, it will become official state rail policy. Mr. Craven noted that the Plan will need to be updated every five years to keep current with FRA and remain eligible for funding.

Mr. Craven reviewed the vision statement for the plan then showed the New Mexico railroad map and reviewed and explained the railroad network in the state. The two major railroads in New Mexico are the BNSF and the Union Pacific Railroads. These are not only the two largest railroads in New Mexico, but also in the United States. Mr.

Craven also showed the NMDOT line that the Rail Runner and Amtrak operate on, as well as the Southwestern Railroad line which is a short-line operator with significant operations in the Carlsbad area as well as Hurley.

Mr. Craven stated that the Plan has four main goals:

1. Support economic growth and development
 - Increase private carriers' capacity of long-distance freight corridors
 - o BNSF is looking to double-track their main line that runs from Los Angeles to Chicago. Two sections in the Vaughn and Fort Sumner areas of New Mexico are still only single track;
 - o Union Pacific is looking to increase their rail capacity to Chicago by reducing distances between sites.
 - Develop and promote local freight connections
 - o There is a lot in interest in having freight connections for freight shipments.
 - o Two such projects for this region that are in the design phase are for Thoreau and another is in Gallup and is being called the Gallup Rail Industrial Park.
 - o Longer term plans could look at rail into Farmington
 - Promote rail-related tourism
 - o The Department of Tourism website provides links to Cumbres & Toltec Railroad, the Silver Spike in Deming, Narrow Gauge scenic byway, Amtrak, as well as the Rail Runner.
 - Link rail investments to strategies that support economic development.
2. Improve railroad safety and security
 - Positive train control

Mr. Craven noted that this is an expensive safety program mandated in the Rail Safety Improvement Act (RSIA). It was precipitated following a fatal crash in 2008 between a passenger train and a freight train. Positive train control is a system that would take over a train should an engineer ignore or miss a train signal and would actually stop the train in this instance. Additionally, the system will consider if a train is running above the posted speed, traveling through a work zone with workers present and fails to stop, or approaching switches that are misaligned and will take control of the train.

Mr. Craven said that implementation of these systems are estimated to cost \$13 billion and must be implemented on all Class I railroads as well as all passenger railroads. For NMDOT and Rio Metro (Rail Runner) this cost is anticipated to be at least \$30,000,000.

- Develop and implement other mandatory safety-related measures

Mr. Craven said that these safety measures include a bridge safety program and emergency notification system at all grade crossings should a vehicle get stuck

on the tracks. Safety measures are also included for crew hours, for train crew services, and for the protection of track workers.

- Improve highway-rail grade crossing safety

This is FHWA program that has been in effect since the 1970's. This provides for public safety at grade crossing by installing lights and gates where currently only stop signs exist and by improving those lights at gates where they are already installed. Mr. Craven stated that NMDOT administers this program statewide.

- Improve rail security

Mr. Craven stated that since 9/11, security has become a major concern, and the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) has become involved in rail safety issues to avoid acts of terrorism or vandalism.

3. Maintain railroad assets in a state of good repair

- Improve the conditions of the state's Class III rail lines

Mr. Craven reported that the Class III railroads (short line railroads) typically do not have extra money to invest in improving their rail lines. The standard rail car is now 286,000 pounds for shipping goods. Most of the short line railroads are not capable of carrying these loads. In another 10-20 years, areas such as Hobbs, Carlsbad, and Hurley could begin to miss out on business opportunities if these lines are not upgraded, bridge capacity improved, and stronger rails installed.

- Maintain/improve the conditions of the NMRX rail lines

Mr. Craven explained that the NMDOT lines are capable of handling the 286,000 pound rail cars, but as they deteriorate, major maintenance will be required to maintain that function.

4. Promote efficient passenger rail service.

- Improve passenger rail options in New Mexico as part of a multimodal transportation system

Mr. Craven said that currently a passenger can get on a bus in Socorro, ride to Belen, take the Rail Runner to Santa Fe or take another bus to Taos. There are some strong Rail Runner options for making a non-car trip to much of the state. Mr. Craven said that in looking for ways to expand rail options, other connections could be made to other stations served by Amtrak.

- Improve Rail Runner operations

Mr. Craven said Rail Runner currently has 13 stations with two additional stations now under construction. As each station has come on, the operation of Rail Runner has slowed and existing riders are now saying that travel times are too long. Ideally speeds need to be kept up and ways found to improve operations such as eliminating any bottlenecks, reducing switching times, and generally doing what is best for existing riders and still be able to serve the stations.

- Identify stable, long-term, and predictable funding for Rail Runner and NMRX rail lines

Mr. Craven stated that there is no dedicated statewide funding available for rail. The state does not support the Rail Runner operations. The four counties served by the Rail Runner have imposed a gross receipts tax of 1/8 of 1% and half of that goes to Rail Runner operations. Mr. Craven said that this provides approximately one-half of the Rail Runner operating budget. There is also Federal Transit Administration money that is going to Rio Metro for capital improvements and capital maintenance and there is also fare box revenue. Mr. Craven noted that these funds are sufficient to keep the train running but does not provide enough for the periodic capital maintenance required to keep the train running long term. Over the next five years, the Rail Bureau needs to identify funding to keep the Rail Runner moving into the future.

Mr. Darnell asked if it was correct that passenger rail typically lost money while freight rail made money. Mr. Craven said that was correct since freight rail is typically a private enterprise. Mr. Darnell asked if any consideration had been given to exploring the possibility of freight rail partially subsidizing a portion of the rail line for passenger activities. Mr. Craven said this had not been done in New Mexico in recent times. Historically, since this was the only means for passenger rail travel, the freight railroads did carry passengers, but they lost money on the passenger runs even back then.

Councilor McCulloch asked where the \$30,000,000 for the required positive train control system for the Rail Runner would come from. Mr. Craven replied that this funding source has not been identified yet, but some funds may come from FTA capital improvements funding. By doing this, however, other capital maintenance projects would have to be deferred. Councilor McCulloch asked when these measures had to be implemented. Mr. Craven said the legislation required that these measures be completed nationwide by December 31, 2015. Railroads across the nation are asking that this date be pushed back by at least ten years, but Congress has not acted on the request.

Mr. Craven explained the Factors that affect the prioritization of projects. These are:

- The need to maintain the State's existing railroad infrastructure in a state of good repair. The state owns 130 miles of track that have Rail Runner and Amtrak operating on it. It must be maintained so that the passenger trains can operate at optimum speeds. Also, bridges must be continually maintained so they are not closed which would make the railroad system unusable. Mr. Craven noted that the railroad the state already has is currently in good repair.
- The need to comply with Federal safety mandates such as the positive train control as well as all other mandates.
- Limited overall public funding from Federal, state, and local sources. There is no state funding source for rail. Any funding for rail purposes must first go to the legislature and receive specific approval. Mr. Craven stated that at the federal level, following the 2010 elections, all the programs that had been authorized in 2008 no longer had any money appropriated to them except for a few minor exceptions. The programs still show as authorized programs, but Congress has

refused to appropriate any money for them. Inter-city passenger rail programs have had no money since then and the technical grant programs have been defunded. Mr. Craven stated that federal funding has dried up. He re-emphasized that the four counties served by the Rail Runner have the GRT that is being used to support Rail Runner operations, but that funding is barely enough to meet the operational needs.

- The federal money that is available has restrictions on its use. Mr. Craven said the primary money received by NMDOT is for the grade crossing safety improvement program. This money can only be used for hazards at grade crossings and cannot be used to subsidize freight or passenger rail operations. The FTA money that Rio Metro administers also has limitations on it. It cannot be used to cover general operating expenses and is primarily for capital, but can be used for operating maintenance costs on track.
- The state's Anti-Donation Clause is a huge factor affecting investments in railroad. The state, counties, municipalities, or school districts are restricted from making any type of donation or loan guarantees to any private entities for any purposes at all and the prohibitions explicitly exclude railroads. Mr. Craven said there are a few local exceptions such as for economic development.

Mr. Craven recapped that the Statewide Priorities for rail are:

- Positive train control
- State of good repair projects
- Grade crossing safety
- Freight rail expansion.

Mr. Craven stated that in the next five years there are only four Possible System Expansions that are being looked at. The cities of El Paso and Las Cruces are considering installing a commuter rail line that would operate between the two cities. They are working on a feasibility study and gathering information from BNSF on whose line they might be operating on. There was some capital outlay money granted to them in the last legislative session to continue the study and get better numbers on costs and ridership. No construction is expected in the near time frame.

Mr. Craven said that for the Rail Runner, there are capacity improvements at two locations with extended links between sidings and some signal changes that would speed up the operation of Rail Runner

In the area of Private Investments, Mr. Craven stated that the item of most interest to this area is the Farmington Freight Rail Link. This is a proposed line that would run from approximately Thoreau at I-40 and come north paralleling NM 371 onto the mesa just south of Farmington. BNSF is coordinating with local businesses, the Navajo Nation, and Four Corners Economic Development (4CED) in a pre-feasibility study. Mr. Craven added that New Mexico Tech has begun a study to determine the actual cost vs. benefit of this line. If it is determined that this line is feasible, further studies would be conducted to look at obtaining rights-of-way and financing. If the project is determined to be viable, it would be at least ten years before any construction would occur.

Mr. Craven stated that if feasible, this project would be a private investment project and, at this time, there is no talk about any public ownership. He added that anti-donation clause issues do come into any type of public support for this, but added that the project would be eligible to seek TIGER funding.

Also under the section of private investments, Mr. Craven reiterated that BNSF and UP are looking to make capacity improvements to their lines.

The Rail Plan also refers to Regional Projects. Mr. Craven noted that the inland ports mentioned would be the industrial parks at Thoreau and Gallup. The regional projects section also includes the potential Farmington Freight Rail Link.

Mr. Craven said the Rail Plan could be downloaded from the NMDOT website at <http://dot.state.nm.us>. He reiterated that public comments would be accepted until January 3, 2014 and could be e-mailed to rail.plan@state.nm.us.

Councilor Darnell said he would open the meeting to the Policy Committee members for their questions and comments and then allow some time for public comment.

Councilor McCulloch said the rail issue was discouraging since there was no money available to work with. She asked if there was any proposed legislation that might dedicate funding to rail development. Mr. Craven responded that there has been periodic legislation over the years with the strongest push being to establish a statewide transit fund; however, the legislation never made it out of committee. The logic behind not moving forward was that there was already the Regional Transit District Act so counties or municipalities could choose to tax themselves to pay for desired transit service. This eliminated the possibility of one county in the southern part of the state having to pay for transit service in the northern part of the state. Mr. Craven said there are four Regional Transit Districts in the state and two have established taxes. An entity can establish their own Regional Transit District and fund programs for transit, bus, paratransit, or rail.

Councilor McCulloch asked if a Regional Transit District were established would the taxing authority be above the current GRT. Mr. Craven said yes. The Transit District board would propose the tax, identify what the money was to be spent on, and then the voters would decide whether or not to approve the tax.

Councilor McCulloch asked how, or if, the funding of the Rail Runner impacted funding for other transportation in the state and did funding for rail in the Rio Grande corridor take away transportation dollars from other parts of the state. Mr. Craven said there was debt service in paying off the Rail Runner bonds and that is being paid for out of the State Road Fund. The state has to pay the principle and interest for Rail Runner out of the State Road Fund which is the primary default funding source. Councilor McCulloch clarified that money was indeed being taken away from the available statewide transportation funds and Mr. Craven said yes.

Councilor Darnell asked how effective has the Rail Runner been. Mr. Craven stated that there are approximately 3,600 to 3,800 trips per weekday which is assumed to be 1,800 to 1,900 individual riders (assuming each rider makes two trips per day). He noted that this number would equate to about one-half lane of traffic on I-25. Mr. Craven said he has not seen any specific studies addressing changes in safety resulting from use of the Rail Runner although he thought that the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG)

has done some studies on the economic impact of the Rail Runner, but Mr. Craven did not have any data available from those studies.

Councilor Darnell mentioned that there were a lot of people who were very interested in the Farmington Freight Rail Link. He commented that the City of Farmington has a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) and noted that certain rules can be applied for that specific area where public and private partnerships can be more conducive and where certain economic tools are allowed. He asked if the use of statutory abilities has been explored to establish economic development tool “zones” where these types of partnerships might apply. Mr. Craven said he was not aware of any and added that the economic development focus would actually come from the state economic development department and not NMDOT or the Rail Bureau.

Councilor Darnell said that during a recent oil, gas, and energy meeting, rail was a predominant topic of interest for the group especially from an economic development viewpoint. Councilor Darnell suggested that Mr. Hagerman with 4CED could perhaps weigh in with comments later in the meeting.

Commissioner Eckstein asked how much the state subsidized the Rail Runner for each year in paying the bonds. Mr. Craven stated that paying the bonds was independent of operating the Rail Runner. If Rail Runner were to cease operations, the state would still have to pay off the bonds. He stated that the average over the 30-year life span is close to \$40,000,000 per year. The current year’s amount is \$28-\$30,000,000. Mr. Craven said that there are “cliffs” in 2024 and 2026 when \$100,000,000 in bonds will be due. During a third year, a \$50,000,000 payment will come due. Councilor Darnell said it would be interesting to see if a cost/benefit analysis had been done and what it showed.

Councilor Darnell opened the meeting for public comment. The following is a summary of the public comments and questions on the State Rail Plan from citizens who attended the Policy Committee meeting:

Mr. Zang Wood read a letter from Attorney Jack M. Morgan that Mr. Wood received in October 1996. The letter addressed some old attempts to bring rail into the Farmington area and the need for all parties to work together in order to make it happen. Mr. Wood said that he remembered plans to run a line off the Star Lake extension parallel to the old NM 666 from Gallup to the Farmington area. He said he was glad that representatives from the Navajo Nation were in attendance as he believed involvement by the tribe was imperative to the success of rail to the area because of their ownership of rights-of-way.

Ms. Daisy Swadesh said that in years past, the railroad system was taken for granted. She said there was a general understanding back then that railroads just worked, but believed that understanding has now gotten lost. She wondered if the Rail Plan noted the benefits of railroads in being fuel efficiency in hauling freight. Mr. Craven replied that some of the benefits are mentioned in the Rail Plan especially the efficiency of rail. He noted that the American Association of Railroads says that rail can transport one ton of freight for 447 miles on a gallon of fuel. That same freight transported via truck would only get ten miles down the road. Mr. Craven added that it was much more efficient to ship by rail and this is promoted in the Rail Plan.

Ms. Swadesh said she believed a big issue was in maintaining right-of-way for potential future needs. Once an area is built up, needed right-of-way is difficult and expensive to acquire, if it can be acquired at all. She commented on a regional airport that had at one time been proposed for Crouch Mesa. The plans were dropped and the area allowed to be developed. Ms. Swadesh re-stated that keeping rights-of-way for rail or other future needs is a central issue and she asked if that was being taken into consideration.

Mr. Craven responded that most of the railroads in New Mexico are projected to stay as railroads for some time. He noted there is one line west of Gallup that was in the process of being abandoned, and a line from Lamy, New Mexico to the Colorado line may also be abandoned if BNSF and Amtrak cannot reach an agreement for long-term use of the line. Mr. Craven said that if a line is to be abandoned, the railroad makes public notice and anyone can step in, pay the value of the salvage, and take over the line. If the line is not taken over and the line is abandoned, the underlying land reverts back to the previous property owner. Once a line is abandoned, it becomes very difficult to rebuild the line. He said there are some rail to trail initiatives that could work for a shorter rail segment in a more urban setting. Mr. Craven stated that the city of Santa Fe back in the 1990's looked at purchasing the rail line from Santa Fe Southern to preserve it for future use. They did end up purchasing a portion of the line which is now the Santa Fe Rail Yard to ensure the alignment remained.

Mr. Richard Buffington commented that the issue of bringing rail to the area had been discussed in the 1970's and 1980's and still nothing had happened.

Mr. Craven stated that the project Mr. Buffington referred to fell apart. However, within the last five years, there has been a revival of the plan. The old plan largely fell apart due to land acquisition issues and, specifically, the right to cross certain lands, as well as the fact that the line had not been funded. Mr. Craven said that now there are different people involved and the economic interests are pushing to have a rail line to Farmington. He noted that the route being discussed is not within the Navajo Nation and is actually east of the reservation roughly following NM 371. He added that the actual route has not been determined. Mr. Craven stated that this alignment is different from the routes discussed earlier.

Mr. Buffington asked if the route now being discussed was on federal land. Mr. Craven said the area is a checkerboard and the land owners involved would depend on the actual rail alignment.

Mr. Buffington asked if there was a timeframe for completion of the feasibility study. This question was subsequently addressed by Mr. Ray Hagerman, the CEO of Four Corners Economic Development (4CED).

Mr. Ray Hagerman said that one of the impediments to getting rail established here was demand, right-of-way issues notwithstanding. He stated that the railroads need 100 cars per day to make a line profitable. In the past, the coal mine sold all the coal to the power plants and the coal did not need to be transported out of the area. With the shutdown of the generating stations, the coal will now have to be sold and moved out of the area. Rail becomes very important when talking about selling and moving several million tons of coal every year. These conditions did not exist in the past.

Mr. Hagerman stated that in 4CED's research with local businesses and the potential upswing in the Mancos oil shale, there will be at least 20-40 cars per day coming into and leaving the area and this excludes NAPI shipments and Navajo coal. He noted that if NAPI and coal shipments are added in, there are now easily 200 cars per day and a rail project becomes feasible. Mr. Hagerman said that the ramped up interest in rail is economically driven. Exporting products is now the necessity it might not have been in the past.

Mr. Hagerman commented that the prioritization shown in the Rail Plan was based on information available two years ago. Mr. Hagerman said the focus for this area was in a line from Thoreau to Farmington and he hoped that the verbiage used in the Plan calling it a line from Gallup to Farmington would not penalize a potential project in obtaining TIGER or other possible funding. He asked that the line be clearly labeled in the Plan as Thoreau to Farmington.

Mr. Hagerman said that he and Councilor Darnell had attended the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department meeting held on November 13. Mr. Hagerman said there was discussion on energy and economic development and how they should be working together. Even with a state economic development department and a department of transportation and the number one goal being to support economic growth, the parties do not appear to be talking with each other. Mr. Hagerman referred to some tables in the draft Rail Plan that showed that of the 15 million tons of commodities that are shipped by rail to, from, and within the state, 11 million tons are coal and chemicals (oil and gas). According to EMNRD graphs, there are two coal mines in McKinley County and they have rail service. The other two coal mines listed are in San Juan County, yet there is no rail here. Mr. Hagerman said that when speaking about oil and gas, the two primary basins are the San Juan Basin and the Permian Basin. The Permian Basin has rail; the San Juan Basin does not.

Mr. Hagerman then referred to the prioritization done in the Rail Plan and where freight rail priorities fell in relation to commuter rail and the potential \$900,000,000 commuter rail project from Las Cruces to El Paso. He stated that when discussing economic development, it needs to be considered how much the San Juan County area contributes to the economic success of the state, yet there is still no rail service to the area. Mr. Hagerman said there is a noticeable gap in rail service in the northwest part of the state while this part of the state provides a great deal of oil, gas, and coal revenues for the state. Mr. Hagerman believed it was important to revisit the prioritization shown in the draft Rail Plan and to put freight service, even the new sections being considered, ahead of commuter service.

Councilor Darnell said he thought the prioritization issues were strong points that need to be considered further. He said that it seemed the Plan was pushing the movement of people ahead of freight and the potential economic benefits of freight rail.

Mr. Hagerman added that the coal, oil, and gas sold from this area definitely helps the local communities, but it also contributes to the overall success and long-term sustainability of the state as a whole. He believed a better job needed to be done with the transportation infrastructure.

Councilor Darnell asked if there was a process that would allow the prioritizations shown in the Rail Plan to be revisited as a result of the public comment periods. Mr. Craven

said that he had made a note that it had been requested to revisit the prioritization of the Farmington Freight Rail Link. He said that one of the factors in the current prioritization was funding (20% of the overall prioritization rating) and that there has been no public funding identified for this project yet and private entity investments cannot be dictated. Mr. Craven noted that the state's economic development department could work more closely to find potential funding sources to help this rail line. He stated that the economic development department did participate in the Rail Plan while the energy department did not.

Mr. Craven added that there was certainly room for better coordination between the departments. The meetings with BNSF on this rail line have brought together different departments and they are now beginning to talk with each other specifically for this project.

Mr. Bill Peterson

Mr. Peterson said he had served on the San Juan County Transportation District Board for several years and that they had developed several studies that addressed the different variables and costs involved in bringing rail to the region. He believed that the cities, county, and Navajo Nation need to get together and push to get a rail line to this area built. Mr. Peterson said he thought that if the route for the line was identified, the rights-of-way and environmental clearances could be received and the project could be made shovel-ready. Once the project was shovel-ready, private industry could take over construction of the project. He stated that this is what the Transportation District Board had hoped to do before they were dissolved.

Mr. Peterson stated that he believed the anti-donation clause needed to be looked at more closely so that the locally interested parties know what can and cannot be done.

Councilor Darnell said that statutes can be created to help allow for public/private partnerships in certain areas. He stated that the Metropolitan Redevelopment statute allows a municipal government to identify an area that they want to redevelop. Changes within that area are then much easier and can allow for public/private partnerships that get around the anti-donation clause. Councilor Darnell said what can be done statutorily needs to be reviewed.

Ms. Swadesh commented that there were numerous complicated issues to consider. She said that she believed freight was what would establish the rail line, but asked if passenger service could then run on it. Mr. Craven said that generally freight does come before passenger rail. When the Rail Plan was presented and the public surveyed several years ago, freight rail was determined to be a higher priority than passenger service. Mr. Craven stated that if the railroad is built for freight, you can run passenger rail on it, but not effectively. The real issue is that it does not matter if freight travels at 15-20 mph or at 60 mph. For the best passenger service, the train needs to run at close to 79 mph. He stated that the additional construction costs to build for passenger rail is significant.

An unidentified citizen asked about the feasibility of selling the coal outside the area and if any studies had been done on whom the buyers might be. He also commented that there are large distribution pipelines in the Farmington area for gas and oil and he wondered how those might be affected if rail was brought in. He also wondered if the oil,

gas, and coal industries could really benefit by adding rail or was the discussion just hypothetical.

Mr. Hagerman said that studies done by BHP in the past showed that selling the low BTU coal was not feasible. Now, however, there are many countries interested in coal in all shapes and sizes and the lower BTU coal is economical to export to countries such as China, Russia, and India. Mr. Hagerman said the idea to export the coal is not hypothetical and there are actual markets interested in the product.

Mr. Hagerman stated that the pipelines are very efficient, but the capacity of the pipelines might not be sufficient if the Mancos oil shale booms. He said that the most efficient way to move oil and gas is through the pipelines, but coal is the primary driver for the railroad.

Councilor Darnell also commented on how manufacturing in the area is affected by having no freight rail system. He stated that he believed there would be many benefits if this freight rail line could be developed.

Mr. Peter Deswood stated that he believed that BNSF has committed to building out the Thoreau property and to installing a switching yard. He also stated that the Navajo Nation is committed to this project as well. The project is in the design phase now with completion expected in June 2015. If the Mancos oil shale boom happens, the project would be expanded to include a rail spur to Farmington.

Mr. Deswood said the Navajo Nation owns the facility in Thoreau and is seeking investors to join with NAPI, Pacer, and another company that Mr. Deswood preferred not to name in the venture. He said that Pacer is currently shipping oil and is looking for drivers and is increasing their crude oil shipments every day. The other partner is looking at a complete rail loop comprised of 100 cars. Mr. Deswood said the facility is located in an ideal spot with NM 371 on one side and BNSF rail on the other.

Mr. Deswood also spoke about interest in the old Fort Wingate Army Depot which already has a rail spur. There had been disputes over the land and possible joint use with the Zuni tribe, however the issues have been now resolved and this could also be a feasible site for rail.

Mr. Deswood stated that the Navajo Nation's primary interest was in an inland port. He noted that much of the west coast has issues with large trucks in the city so products are offloaded directly to rail where deliveries can go straight on to Texas or Illinois.

The Thoreau project will primarily serve agriculture and the energy industry. There are eight confirmed customers for the industrial park at Thoreau with another 20 possible. Mr. Deswood said the loops and spurs will be expandable to accommodate additional cars as they are needed.

Mr. Deswood said that 44% of Navajo Nation revenues came from coal revenues and this has been affected by the closure of three of the five units. He stated that oil production has helped to minimize the impact of the shortfall of coal revenues. The Navajo Nation is looking in earnest at the continual utilization of coal since there is a reserve and there is an opportunity to export the coal produced. Rail, however, is needed to make this feasible.

Mr. Deswood stated that the Navajo Nation agrees that a rail route along NM 371 appears to be the most feasible. Additionally, this would provide ease of access into the industrial park and rail head at Thoreau. Studies of the potential route are being done with consideration of a 4% grade along approximately one mile of the route. Mr. Craven noted that a 4% grade is fairly extreme for freight rail, but Mr. Deswood restated that this grade occurred for only a one-mile section.

A meeting participant asked if a project at Desert Rock was revisited, would that affect the export of coal. Mr. Deswood said the Navajo Nation is looking to export as much coal as possible. The purchase agreement has been signed and the Navajo Nation can now do other things with the coal which has given rise to the railroad.

Mr. Will Tsosie commented on the positive impact a rail spur to this area could have especially with the “world wonder” of Chaco Canyon National Park. He said there are tourists from all over the world who come to visit the park and a rail connection could help boost the tourist trade.

Mr. Buddy Benally commented that NAPI is loading containers of their products, but that a greater demand was needed in order to justify building a container loading and off-loading facility.

Mr. Leonard Scott said that NAPI is in the food/agriculture business and they strive to ensure certain foods are on the table locally and globally. To get this done, the products need to be moved and they began working with the Navajo Nation in support of the industrial park in Thoreau. This location will provide the hub for the distribution of their products globally. Mr. Scott spoke about the numbers of trucks travelling back and forth to NAPI annually and how those costs impact NAPI's bottom line. He said NAPI is very interesting in a potential railroad and in partnering with other local industry.

Mr. Deswood said that BNSF does have a plan for the Four Corners area and all the studies indicate there is a need for a rail spur. Mr. Craven said he was not aware that this study was publically available but he would see what he could find out. Mr. Deswood added that it was important to bring groups to a common objective and to access funding resources so that a collaborative effort to finance the rail spur can be made.

Mr. Scott asked everyone present to buy local. He said that NAPI grows some great products such as pinto beans, potatoes, wheat, and flour.

Councilor Darnell closed the public comment period on the draft State Rail Plan. He stated that the Policy Committee had other topics on their agenda and welcomed those who were interested to stay and listen to the rest of the meeting.

ACTION: The presentation and comments were received.

4. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AMENEMENT #3 TO THE FFY2014-2019 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AND THE SELF-CERTIFICATION DOCUMENT FOR AMENDMENT #3

Subject:	FFY2014-2019 TIP Amendment #3
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 6, 2013

BACKGROUND

- On October 10, 2013 the Farmington MPO advertised Amendment #3 to the FFY2014-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- The amendment adds six projects and removes one project from the TIP as described in the attached notice.
- A public hearing on Amendment #3 was held on October 24, 2013 during the Technical Committee meeting.
- The Technical Committee recommended approval of Amendment #3 to the FFY2014-2019 TIP.

CURRENT WORK

- The Animas River Trail project in Aztec is receiving local and federal funds for design and construction.
- The Bergin Lane project in Bloomfield is being moved from the TIP to the Unfunded List because with the new MAP-21 transportation bill, TPE funds are no longer available after FFY2013.
- Five new projects are being added to the TIP and will all be programmed using Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds:
 - 20th Street Phase 1 from Clayton to Fairview
 - 20th Street Phase 2 from Fairview to Sullivan
 - Vereda Del Rio San Juan River Trail Phase 2
 - Vereda Del Rio San Juan River Trail Phase 3
 - Southside River Road River Trail

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee approve Amendment #3 to the FFY2014-2019 TIP and the Self-Certification document for Amendment #3.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that the projects in Amendment #3 were listed on Pages 4 and 5 of the Agenda and explained the projects:

Added Project

- **Animas River Trail** – the City of Aztec will design and construct another phase of this project from Hampton Arroyo to 320' north of the US 550/NM 516 intersection. This

phase will construct a pedestrian trail and transit stop. This phase will use \$227,905 in local funding in FFY2014 for design and \$319,900 in FTA Transit in Parks funding in FFY2014 for construction. Total project cost is \$547,805.

Mr. Delmagori stated that this project was another phase of the river trail that the City of Aztec is developing to complement the pedestrian bridge that will be crossing the Animas River.

Mr. Delmagori explained that over the past several months, funding under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) was approved and five projects were selected. The old Transportation Enhancement Program (TPE) funding is no longer available and projects that had been funded under TPE had to be reconsidered under the TAP guidelines. The City of Bloomfield chose not to submit the Bergin Lane project for consideration under TAP, so this project which had been programmed for FFY2015 was removed from the TIP and placed in the MPO's Unfunded Project List.

Mr. Delmagori reported that the award letters for the five TAP projects have been provided by NMDOT to the entities. These projects included: two phases of sidewalks for 20th Street in Farmington; two phases of river trail development in Bloomfield; and a river trail project in Farmington. Amendment #3 is to add these five projects, remove the Bergin Lane project, and add the Animas River Trail project.

ACTION: Councilor Lucero moved to approve Amendment #3 to the FFY2014-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Councilor McCulloch seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

5. CONSIDER ADOPTING PC RESOLUTION 2013-3

Subject:	2014 Annual Meeting Resolution
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 6, 2013

BACKGROUND

- Each year the Policy Committee approves a resolution ensuring compliance with the open meetings act and establishes its meeting schedule for the coming year.

CURRENT WORK

- It is suggested that the Policy Committee hold seven regular meetings during 2014.
- Meetings are recommended for January, March, April, June, August, September, and November.
- Meetings can continue to be held on the third Thursday at 1:30pm on a rotating basis among the entities or held at more appropriate days and times.

- The Thanksgiving holiday will likely move the November Policy meeting to the second week of the month.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee adopt PC Resolution 2013-3, establishing the procedures to be followed and notice to be given pursuant to the provisions of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act, providing for the annual determination of reasonable notice of meetings, and establishing the meeting times, dates, and locations for the FMPO Policy Committee during calendar year 2014.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori referred the Policy Committee members to the Resolution shown on Pages 9-11 of the Agenda and to the meeting calendar for 2014 shown on Page 12. He stated that the Resolution is the standard language from previous years and established the procedures to be followed, notice to be given, and the meeting times, dates, and locations.

Mr. Delmagori said Staff had not had heard back from any of the Policy Committee members on alternative preferred meeting dates so the calendar shown is the one presented to the Committee at the September meeting. He stated that changes to the calendar could be made should the need arise. Mr. Delmagori said the schedule showed the Policy Committee would meet seven times during the year on every third Thursday at 1:30 p.m. The exception to the schedule is for the November meeting when, due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the meeting is moved to the second Thursday. Meetings would continue to rotate among the entities.

Councilor Darnell asked if the calendar worked for the members. Except for one possible scheduling conflict, the members said the calendar was acceptable.

ACTION: Commissioner Eckstein moved to adopt PC Resolution 2013-3, establishing the procedures to be followed and notice to be given pursuant to the provisions of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act, providing for the annual determination of reasonable notice of meetings, and establishing the meeting times, dates, and locations for the FMPO Policy Committee during calendar year 2014. Councilor Lucero seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

6. RECEIVE A REPORT FROM NMDOT

Mr. Phil Gallegos with District 5 said he did not have a completion date for the US 64 project in Bloomfield. He said it was still progressing, but did not know when it would be finished. Mr. Gallegos said the next phase of the project has been awarded to Mountain States. He said construction might begin soon if the winter was mild, but additional details would be available later.

The ADA improvements on NM 516 are on schedule to being next spring.

Councilor McCulloch asked about the proposed traffic signal at the intersection of NM 371 and N36. Mr. Gallegos said the roadway safety audit had been completed, but he did not have any additional information available. He said he would get more information and provide an update to MPO Staff. Mr. Gallegos said District 5 had been working to secure funding for all the recommendations made by roadway safety audits. Councilor McCulloch said she had heard from several residents who live out that way who were unhappy about the long wait they have every morning at that intersection.

Councilor Darnell said there had been some recent flooding in the area just south of US 64 near the intersection with Browning Parkway. He noted that the roadway sits above the land and Echo Ditch filled in natural runoff so when there is significant rainfall the 25-30 homes in that area are flooded. Councilor Darnell says the water comes down the highway and creates a retention pond that backs the water up into the homes because the drain that crosses the highway is higher than the properties. He asked Mr. Gallegos what could be done to get the drain lowered or to add additional drainage. Mr. Gallegos said District 5 could assist with remediation if the roadway itself was affected. Councilor Darnell asked if there was a way for District 5 and the City of Farmington to work together to find a solution. Mr. Gallegos said that could be done. He recommended that the City of Farmington write a letter to Mr. Miguel Gabaldon requesting that site be looked at in regard to drainage issues.

Councilor Lucero asked if the contractor working on the US 64 project in Bloomfield was fined for the many delays in completion of the work. Mr. Gallegos said he could not comment since the contract is still active. He did say there were contract provisions to address these types of issues. Councilor Lucero asked if any money was awarded back to the state for the contract delays, would the state allocate the money back to the City of Bloomfield or any other local entity. Mr. Gallegos said if any monies were received, they would go back into the General Road Fund and none would be returned to District 5.

Mr. Zang Wood asked if some type of barrier could be constructed in the median along Browning Parkway to make that road safer for motorists. He noted that there were sections along I-25 from Albuquerque to Santa Fe that had steel cable barrier fences installed and asked if this could be considered for Browning. Mr. Gallegos said he would have the traffic section look at the road and see if there were any treatments that could be considered for the narrow median. He commented that the steel cables flex out quite a bit when hit and would not prevent a vehicle from encroaching upon oncoming traffic and causing a crash.

Mr. Degani spoke on the freight working group meeting scheduled for November 18 in Las Cruces. The meeting is part of the long range plan process and is open to MPOs, RTPOs, NMDOT staff, as well as any other interested stakeholder. Mr. Paul Sittig, the freight planner with the NMDOT Planning Division is the contact for this meeting.

The initial kick-off meeting on the new functional classification system was held on November 5. NMDOT's consultant reviewed the federal functional classification guidelines, GIS map, web viewers, and demonstrated the new product. The web viewer presentation used sample functional classification files from FMPO in the demonstration. The comprehensive plan will determine federal eligibility for transportation funding. FHWA adjusted the classification system from twelve categories down to seven categories: interstates, principal arterials/freeways, principal arterials/other, minor

arterials, major collectors, minor collectors, and local roads. These categories will be for both urban and rural areas. Mr. Degani mentioned that March 2, 2014 would be the last date to submit new recommendations for functional classifications.

Mr. Degani reported on the planning and procedures manual that the Planning Division worked on with the MPOs. A copy of this manual was sent out to the Policy Committee members about two weeks ago. The Planning Division then made some minor revisions to the document and the revised document was re-sent to Policy Committee members yesterday.

Mr. Degani said there was nothing new to report on the long range plan. NMDOT is still negotiating with the consultant, but hopes there will be a decision in the next several weeks.

The TAP award letters were sent out and should have been received by the entities. The cooperative project agreements and processes still need to be worked out.

Mr. Degani reported that the Planning Division will be developing something similar to the traffic flow maps currently put out by the MPOs. These will be for the statewide traffic demand model. The average daily traffic will be displayed with a base year of 2006, the 2010 network that NMDOT upgraded to, and then three networks for future forecasting of 2020, 2030, and 2040. The traffic demand model will integrate all the MPO models statewide.

7. RECEIVE A REPORT ON COMPLETE STREETS

Subject:	Complete Streets
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 6, 2013

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- Complete Streets is a means of designing a roadway so that it accommodates all modes of travel, such as walking, biking, and transit.
- On August 7, the Policy Committee approved a vision statement, values, and goals for Complete Streets which create the framework for the program.
- Staff has introduced the concept of land use context areas and road types overlays to the Advisory Group and to the Technical and Policy Committees.
- The Advisory Group held its latest meeting on October 16.

CURRENT WORK

- The Advisory Group has worked on exercises to identify titles and definitions for land use context areas and road types for the MPO Complete Streets program.
- Land use context areas are areas that comprise of a unique combination of building types, densities, and development form.

- Road types better represent how a street functions within a neighborhood.
- These overlays better represent the built environment and relate to the Complete Streets elements that would be expected to be found in that area.
- Land use context areas and road types for this region will be used for Complete Streets design guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a report on Complete Streets.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that the Complete Streets Advisory Group has been meeting almost every month and doing some great work on developing land use context areas and road types for the region. These are overlays to the traditional land use categories as well as the traditional functional classifications that Mr. Degani just spoke about. These overlays present a better understanding of the environments and what can be expected while traveling down a road section in terms of walking and biking amenities, transit options, and the road characteristics in general.

Mr. Delmagori directed the Policy Committee to Pages 14 and 15 of the Agenda which showed the working lists of land use context areas and road types that have been produced by the Advisory Group and he reviewed the different categories, titles, and descriptions:

DEVELOPMENT OF LAND USE CONTEXT AREAS
FMPO (draft 10-29-13)

Based on further discussion and refinement by the Advisory Group on October 16, 2013

Title	Descriptions	Examples
Rural and Agricultural	Predominately low density residential on large lots. Farmland and pastures are common. Large land areas for industrial parks, mineral extraction, and regional recreational/ open space. Small commercial and retail are also found.	Kirtland <u>Crouch Mesa</u> Glade Area
<u>Heavy Industrial</u>	<u>Primarily industrial parks and other places served by trucks such as coal mines, refineries, and mineral extraction sites.</u>	<u>CR 350</u> <u>State highways</u> <u>outside the cities</u>
<u>Light Industrial</u>	<u>Smaller industrial sites such as warehouses and garages that have storage yards.</u>	<u>Farmington south</u> <u>of downtown area</u>
Regional Commercial and <u>Light Industrial</u>	Commercial and retail that serves the region. Large sites for malls, big box stores, chain restaurants, auto dealers, and strip malls. <u>Light industrial sites, such as warehouses and garages with storage yards, might be present.</u> Large parking lots surround sites.	East Main St. US 64 near CR 6500 in Kirtland Farmington South of downtown
City Commercial	Smaller-scaled buildings with smaller parking	20 th Street

	lots that serve surrounding communities. Connected to residential collectors streets. Grocery stores, pharmacies, offices, and civic facilities are common.	San Juan Blvd
Suburban Neighborhood	Subdivisions with low density and larger lots. Minimal commercial and retail sites. Includes schools, churches, and parks.	Neighborhoods in the Foothills area and northeast Farmington
Traditional Neighborhood	Subdivisions with moderate density and smaller lots. Often use street grid networks. Commercial and retail sites, including schools, banks, parks, gas stations, and grocery stores, are either in close proximity or along perimeter of neighborhoods. Accessibility for all modes.	East side of Aztec, west side of Bloomfield, central Farmington
<u>Local Neighborhood Commercial</u>	More localized commercial and retail buildings that <u>are integrated into neighborhoods and feature a mixed use of housing, office, and retail that are accessible by all modes.</u> Features small public spaces for recreation.	Area currently does not have
Central Business District/ Downtown	Higher density and mixed use of residential, commercial, and retail. Highly accessible by all modes. Uniform building aesthetics and setbacks. On street parking and wide sidewalks.	Downtown Farmington Downtown Aztec

As noted, the Advisory Group has identified 7-9 land use categories. The underlined sections are still being developed and discussed by the Advisory Group. The “industrial” land used category is also still being considered by the Advisory Group and how it might relate to Complete Streets.

Mr. Delmagori explained that the land use definitions and descriptions would then be tied to the road types shown below. The land use context areas and the road types will be linked together to create Complete Streets guidelines. The land use context areas and road types still need to be fully developed before the Advisory Group begins work on the Complete Streets guidelines.

DEVELOPMENT OF ROAD TYPES

Advisory Group (draft 10-16-13)

Title	Descriptions	Examples
Principal Arterial	Highway bypass and a truck route; Higher speed with wider lanes and fewer access points; Multiple lanes with higher traffic volumes; Medians are present	Murray & Bloomfield Hwy Browning Pkwy Pinon Hills Blvd
Minor Arterial	Heavier truck volumes with multiple lanes and medium speeds; Connected with Collectors and fed by Service Ways; Serve commercial activities; Medians are present	20 th Street Main St 30 th Street
Service Way	Serves industrial sites and industrial parks;	

	Access to either Minor or Principal arterials; Two lane roads with slower speeds; Designed for heavy-weighted traffic	
Collector or Boulevard	Connects to local streets and serves commercial activities; Two lanes and 35-40 mph (medium speeds); Medians and road landscaping	
Neighborhood Local	Serve residential areas; Two lane or narrow lanes with street parking; Medians and road landscaping	
Rural Local	Serve residential areas; Two lane or narrow lanes with street parking; Medians and road landscaping	
Trail Way	Bicycle and pedestrian in rural and inter-city settings; Connected or not connected to roadways; Could follow natural features	
Major Regional Arterial		
Minor Community Arterial		
Community Commercial Collector		
Local	2 travel lanes; No medians; No parking and no shoulders; Lowest recommended speed; Sidewalks	
Slow/ Neighborhood Streets		
Pathway	Non-motorized, paved or unpaved; Connecting neighborhoods, schools, parks, and commercial nodes	Riverwalks SJ College walking paths

Mr. Delmagori said the Advisory Group is attempting to keep the list of land use context areas and road types to manageable numbers to eliminate large variables.

Councilor Darnell asked if the plan was to have all the entities sign off on the final Complete Streets document. Mr. Delmagori stated that once finalized, the Complete Streets policy statement and guidelines would be turned over to the entities for their approval and implementation. Councilor Darnell asked what the Policy Committee would ultimately be voting on. Mr. Delmagori said that at the MPO level, voting would be on the guidelines and the policy.

Ms. Holton clarified that until the Policy Committee had acted on the Complete Streets policy, it would not be appropriate for the MPO to take it forward to the entities. Once the Policy Committee gives its final approval, Complete Streets would then be presented to the different entities. From there it would be up to each entity to actually adopt and implement the policies. Ms. Holton said that it would be up to each entity's individual staff to present it to their governing body and to act on Complete Streets guidelines if approved. Councilor Darnell was not sure that his question had been fully answered here but said that was okay since the issue would be addressed by the Policy

Committee in the months to come. He noted that he and Councilor McCulloch had been trying to ensure that some of the local City of Farmington projects adhered to some of the upcoming Complete Streets guidelines. Councilor Darnell added that the sooner these Complete Streets guidelines were developed and approved, the better for future planning needs.

ACTION: The report was received

8. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE UPDATE TO THE JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT (JPA)

Subject:	Joint Powers Agreement Update
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 5, 2013

BACKGROUND

- The FHWA MPO Review indicated that the MPO needs to update the current Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) to meet the new provisions of MAP-21.
- This update would also include a conflict resolution clause to address disagreements.
- As recommended by FHWA, the revised JPA would reflect current transportation federal law in effect since October 1, 2012 and capture the requirements of MAP-21.

CURRENT WORK

- Sections of the current JPA will need to be amended to meet new requirements and provisions.
- The national planning goals under MAP-21 will be added to the JPA under Section 4.
- Section 4 will also provide a general overview of the MPO's role in establishing a performance-based approach to transportation planning.
- Section 7 will be expanded to address conditions that would indicate when the JPA needs to be updated.
- Referencing the oversight agreement between FHWA and NMDOT, staff is developing a similar conflict resolution clause for Section 10 of the JPA.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a report on an update to the Joint Powers Agreement.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that following the FHWA MPO Review last year, they recommended that the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) be amended to include some of the MAP-21 provisions and to add a section that addressed conflict resolution.

Mr. Delmagori presented a working draft of the revised JPA. This JPA will be amended and discussed over the next couple of months with the Technical Committee and then brought to the Policy Committee in January for final approval.

Section 4 of the JPA outlines the roles and responsibilities in terms of the planning documents the MPO develops. This will be expanded upon to say that MPA-21 requires performance measures and targets.

Mr. Delmagori said that Section 7 will be expanded upon to describe the incidents that would require an update to the JPA. There are several additional elements that can be incorporated that might trigger an amendment or update to the JPA.

Section 10 will include the new conflict resolution process. Mr. Delmagori referred to Page 18 of the Agenda which showed an example of the conflict resolution process used by FHWA and NMDOT. He expects this example to serve as a template for the MPO's conflict resolution process.

ACTION: The report was received.

9. RED APPLE TRANSIT

Subject:	Transit Data Analysis – Monthly Ridership
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 7, 2013

BACKGROUND

- The MPO hired two interns to conduct transit data collection activities from June to early August 2013.
- The interns collected hourly boarding and alightment data, passenger origins and destinations, and distributed a survey.
- The data collection allows Red Apple Transit to assess the operations of the transit system.
- Ridership in 2013 through October was 110,896; in 2012 ridership for this same time period was 103,956, which is a 6.7% increase.

CURRENT WORK

- In a typical week, the interns collected data for two routes.
- In June and July, all routes were counted each time.
- Staff compiled ridership summaries of each route for both June and July.
- The summaries include hourly ridership, the most common origin-destination connections, and weekly boardings and alightments by stop.
- Using the data, staff listed observations of trends for the individual routes and made recommendations for potential changes.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ In August and October the Farmington routes had ridership surpass 10,000 riders. |
|--|

RECOMMENDATION

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a report on the analysis of Red Apple transit data collected in the summer and receive a report on Red Apple monthly ridership. |
|---|

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori explained the monthly ridership report table and graph on Page 20 of the Agenda. He noted that Farmington ridership has been fairly steady. Ridership on the Bloomfield and Kirtland Regional routes was fairly steady while Aztec ridership is about twice what it was last year.

Mr. Delmagori presented a PowerPoint presentation that demonstrated the number of boardings and departures collected by the MPO interns this summer. The presentation provides a good visual of how each of the routes is doing.

Mr. Delmagori highlighted some of the observations and noted that Staff had put together a summary document of all the routes and provided that to Mr. Bob Campbell and First Transit.

Yellow Route

Ridership at the transfer points of Orchard Plaza and Smith's are doing the best. Mr. Delmagori said this was a trend seen with every route. He noted that on the west end of the route, the Northgate Apartments stop had 103 boards and 78 departures. The WalMart West stop is also seeing good ridership.

One of the observations made was that even though this route goes to Westland Park there is minimal ridership at this stop and this stop could perhaps be made an "on demand" stop. This would prevent those Northgate riders from having to head out to Westland Park before making the trip east.

Councilor Darnell asked if an on demand stop would degrade the overall scheduling of the route. Mr. Delmagori said most, if not all, of the routes have flex time built into the schedules to account for traffic, wheel chair boardings, or an on demand stop. Though scheduled as an hour route, this route actually only takes 45-50 minutes to complete.

If Westland Park were to become an on demand stop, the stop at the Northgate Apartments would become the end of the route which could then possibly allow for the addition of other stops elsewhere along the route.

Green Route

Mr. Delmagori reported that the transfer point of the Civic Center is doing very well. Additionally, the Totah Health stop on the Bisti Highway is doing well. The branch line going to Wildflower has seen good ridership numbers for the stop at Desert Rose and Yarrow.

Blue Route

This is the most used route primarily due to its diagonal direction across the city and its direct connection to all of the other routes. Service between the Civic Center and

Orchard Plaza is heavily used and these are the two busiest stops. Mr. Delmagori stated that almost all the stops on the Blue Route are doing well. Ridership at Olive Garden and Lowe's is limited with most of the riders being employees of these two retail locations. Mr. Delmagori said this stretch of the Blue Route could also be considered an "on demand" section which might allow this route to extend further into the downtown area or even to the west side.

Purple Route

Mr. Delmagori reported that this route is from the Civic Center to San Juan College. The best stops are the transfer points of the Civic Center, Smith's, and San Juan College. The intermediate stops are seeing few passengers. Mr. Delmagori said this route is used for transfers and for getting riders from the downtown area to San Juan College.

Red Route

The Red Route has the lowest ridership of all the Farmington routes and is heavily dependent on when classes are in session at the college. Mr. Delmagori said that the interns took counts in June and July so the numbers are lower than they normally might be if counts had been taken in September or October.

The busiest stops are Orchard Plaza, San Juan College and Berg Park.

Mr. Delmagori stated that this route currently has service to Piedra Vista and the BLM office. With few riders boarding or departing at these stops, this section could also be considered "on demand" which would allow the route to make a figure eight and serve Orchard Plaza in both directions.

Mr. Delmagori also presented a combination map that showed how all the routes interact together. The map visually demonstrated ridership data and showed that Orchard Plaza, Civic Center, and Smith's as the transfer points are the most used. Mr. Delmagori said the west side of the city is also doing quite well along with some pockets on the south side. Staff has not yet compiled maps for the regional routes, but will do so in the next month.

Councilor McCulloch asked if Staff would e-mail the ridership report to her. She also said that bus schedules needed to be available on the buses. Many of the drivers cannot tell riders how best to get to their destination so the buses need to have schedules available for riders. Mr. Delmagori said he would make Mr. Campbell aware of the issue.

ACTION: The report was received.

Councilor Darnell had to leave the meeting; Councilor Lucero took over the meeting as Acting Chair.

10. RECEIVE AN OVERVIEW PRESENTATION ON THE 2040 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP)

Subject:	2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 7, 2013

BACKGROUND OR PREVIOUS WORK

- The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is the long range planning document that addresses transportation needs for the next twenty years.
- The 2035 MTP was adopted in 2010.
- The 2040 MTP will be developed over the next 18 months with anticipated adoption in April 2015.
- Staff presented an overview of the MTP process to the Technical Committee on October 24.

CURRENT WORK

- The MTP identifies project priorities, policies and strategies, and other MPO actions for all modes of travel.
- The document includes existing and future population/employment data and a financial plan.
- There will be extensive public involvement opportunities throughout the update process.
- MAP-21 requires performance measures and targets to be incorporated into the 2040 MTP.
- Staff will present an overview of the MTP process to the Policy Committee on November 14.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive an overview of the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori explained that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a 20-25 year long-range plan that identifies transportation projects to address potential long-term problems. The MTP is one of the main requirements of an MPO and with the region being in attainment for air quality, the MTP needs only to be updated every five years. Mr. Delmagori said the MTP process is a collective effort that involves the general public, the entities, and all other identified stakeholders.

The current MTP was adopted in April 2010. It was amended a year later to include the transit recommendations following the completion of the Red Apple Transit study.

Mr. Delmagori stated that the MTP update will be in conjunction with the state's long range plan that Mr. Degani spoke about earlier. Development of the plan is anticipated to take 18 months with final adoption of the 2040 MTP targeted for April 2015.

Mr. Delmagori explained that the MTP process will be guided by a variety of factors that come from different federal agencies. The Planning Factors are from the old SAFETEA-LU transportation bill; the Livability Principles are from a partnership with HUD, the EPA and the US DOT; the National Planning Goals are from the new transportation bill, MAP-21. Mr. Delmagori noted that there are common principles and factors found among the three areas and these will interact with each other.

The elements of the MTP will include:

- Vision and Goals/Objectives
- Current & Future Population/Employment data
- Identify, review and prioritize project alternatives for road, transit, bicycle/pedestrian
- Freight and other modes
- Safety and Security
- Environmental mitigation activities
- Operations & Management strategies
- Financial Plan
- Public participation and involvement

Mr. Delmagori stated that most of these are already part of the current 2035 MTP document, but that Staff would be reviewing all of these elements again during the update process.

Mr. Delmagori noted that the items listed below are part of the current MTP, but they may need more detail or coverage in the 2040 MTP. The update process will provide an opportunity to review these items and see what the MPO can do to further promote them.

- Safety
- Freight, Air, Rail
- Coordination with NAPI/Navajo Nation and regional impacts
- Transportation and Land Use
- Environmental Justice
- Economic Vitality
- System Preservation (state of good repair)

Public participation will be very important during the update process for project identification and prioritization. Interaction will include open houses, regular public meetings, distributing surveys, and meeting with and presenting the material to the different organizations, clubs, and stakeholders to get useful feedback from them.

Mr. Delmagori also explained that the performance measures from MAP-21 will need to be incorporated into the MTP update process. No official performance measures have been made available yet. These measures from FHWA are due in the next few months and then the state DOTs have a defined time frame in which to develop their measures. Since none of these measures has been established or published, Mr. Delmagori said

FMPO will take a proactive approach and begin identifying targets and measures that can apply to the update process.

Mr. Delmagori showed an example of what the Mid-Regional Council of Government (MRCOG) is doing to identify their performance targets and measures and how they would currently rate themselves in achievement of the targets.

Mr. Delmagori said Staff will work more with the Policy and Technical Committees over the coming months to address the questions below and begin a brainstorm session to see what is liked about the current MTP and where changes or additional focus are needed.

- What do we like about the 2035 MTP?
- What should be changed or improved upon?
- How can we better engage the public in this process?
- What areas of the 2035 MTP need more focus?
- What planning elements are not part of the current MTP but should be part of the update?
- What data do we need for performance measures and what are they trying to improve?

Mr. Delmagori asked the Policy Committee members to begin considering these questions as work on updating the MTP gets underway.

ACTION: The overview was received.

11. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE NMDOT STATEWIDE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION REVIEW

Subject:	State Functional Classification Review
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 6, 2013

BACKGROUND OR PREVIOUS WORK

- The NMDOT Planning Bureau held a meeting in Albuquerque on November 5 to discuss the statewide review of the functional classification system.
- All of the MPOs and RTPOs will assist NMDOT by making recommendations for classification changes to their regional roads.
- NMDOT and its consultant have developed a map website that allows users to view current and proposed classifications and provide comments.
- NMDOT and its consultant team are targeting February 2015 for completion of the review and update.

CURRENT WORK

- The MPO identified many classification changes in 2011.
- These potential changes will serve as the basis for recommended changes for this region.
- Staff will present an overview of the functional classification process at the November 14 meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a presentation on the statewide functional classification review process.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that NMDOT held a statewide functional classification meeting on November 5 that was attended by many of the MPOs and RTPOs. Working with a consultant team, the state is reviewing the functional classification system.

Mr. Delmagori shared the PowerPoint presentation given by NMDOT at the meeting and highlighted some of the information presented. Essentially this process is being done to classify the state's road based on the function they serve whether for access, for mobility, or for safety concerns.

The state will be reviewing roads across the state while the MPO will focus on roads in the MPO area. This will provide an opportunity to evaluate the existing road system in the MPO and develop recommendations that will eventually be submitted to NMDOT. NMDOT is targeting February 2015 for completion of the statewide review.

Mr. Delmagori explained that the Functional Classification categories have been reduced from 12 to 7. These seven classifications are:

- Interstate
- Principal Arterial – Other Freeways and Expressways
- Principal Arterial – Other
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local

Mr. Delmagori noted that the Interstate category will not apply to this area but some stretches of state highways could fall into the Principal Arterial-Other Freeways and Expressways category. A Principal Arterial-Other would correlate to Pinon Hills and East Main; a Minor Arterial would look like 20th Street. Mr. Delmagori said there are two categories now for a Collector and specific criteria will apply to each category.

The NMDOT presentation defined each of the functional classifications, provided a road hierarchy of the classifications, and detailed criteria to consider when determining functional classifications.

Mr. Delmagori offered to e-mail the presentation to any Policy Committee member interested in reviewing the presentation in more detail.

ACTION: The presentation was received.

12. INFORMATION ITEMS

Subject:	Information Items
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 6, 2013

INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **Technical Committee Concerns.** On October 24, the Technical Committee tabled discussion in which they were to summarize their meetings with their managers regarding the regional and community concerns. The Technical Committee will discuss these summaries at their next meeting on November 21.
- b. **2013 Traffic Count Program.** Traffic Research and Analysis (TRA) took the annual traffic counts throughout the region the weekend of October 18-20 and during the week on October 22-24. The data should be provided to the MPO in the next few weeks.
- c. **Regional Traffic Model.** An update on the calibration/validation process will be provided at the meeting.
- d. **AMPO Annual Conference.** Duane Wakan attended the annual AMPO Conference in Portland, OR on October 22-25.
- e. **Other**

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that the Technical Committee had a number of concerns they wanted to bring to the attention of District 5. These concerns were discussed with the Policy Committee in September. At the September Technical Committee meeting, the members decided to each speak with their respective city/county managers to get them up to speed on the concerns and get their feedback. This was done throughout the month of October and it was the Technical Committee members' intention to summarize those meetings at their October 24 meeting. Since not all the Technical Committee members could attend the October 24 meeting, this item was tabled until the meeting on November 21. Mr. Delmagori said he hoped that following the November meeting there would be a better idea of when the workshop might be scheduled.

Mr. Delmagori reported that traffic count data had just been provided to the MPO this week. Staff will begin compiling and reviewing the information soon and will eventually submit the recommendations to NMDOT for approval.

A more extensive update on the regional traffic model will be forthcoming. Staff is working with a consultant on the calibration/validation process for this model.

Mr. Wakan attended the national AMPO Conference in Portland in October.

Ms. Holton stated that she and MPO Staff have been discussing the possibility of bringing Mr. Dan Burden back to the area sometime in the spring. Presentation of this workshop would be focused on the entities and their commissions and councils, but would also be open to the public. Councilor McCulloch asked if Mr. Burden's visit would coincide with when the Complete Streets Advisory Group would be asking for approval of the Complete Streets guidelines and policy. Ms. Holton said the thought was to have a walkability presentation that could precede the Advisory Group's discussions of the actual Complete Streets policy. A presentation by Mr. Burden could provide ideas on how Complete Streets concepts could be applied here and perhaps help pave the way for Complete Streets guidelines and policy statement. Mr. Delmagori said a walkability workshop in the spring could fit in with the Advisory Group's discussion of the Complete Streets guidelines.

13. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

There was no business from the Chairman, Members or Staff.

14. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no business from the floor.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Eckstein moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor McCulloch seconded. Councilor Lucero adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Pat Lucero, Acting Chair

June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide