

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2012

Policy Members Present: Sherri Sipe, City of Aztec
Pat Lucero, City of Bloomfield
Dan Darnell, City of Farmington

Policy Members Absent: Dr. Jim Henderson, San Juan County
Gayla McCulloch, City of Farmington

Staff Present: Mary L. Holton, MPO Officer
Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide

Staff Absent: None

Also Present: David Quintana, NMDOT District 5
Ray Matthew, Planning Liaison, NMDOT
Larry Hathaway, San Juan County
Larry Joe, Navajo DOT

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Pat Lucero called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 10, 2011 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Ms. Sipe made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 10, 2011 Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Darnell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. APPROVE THE UPDATE TO THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item

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|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Subject: | Public Participation Plan Update |
| Prepared by: | Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner |
| Date: | January 9, 2012 |

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- The Public Participation Plan (PPP) guides the public involvement activities conducted by the MPO.
- The PPP describes how the MPO and the public communicate with each other

and how information is distributed and provided.

- The PPP describes the procedures the MPO must follow with regards to public comment periods, adopting and amending documents, and complying with the Open Meetings Act.
- The PPP was adopted on January 17, 2007 and is required to be updated every five years.
- Each committee reviewed the document in November.
- The required 45-day public comment period was held from November 20 to January 6.

CURRENT WORK

- The PPP update includes more descriptions on the MTP, TIP, public participation requirements related to transit, Title VI, and Environmental Justice.
- No other significant changes have been made to the draft document since November.
- The PPP will be in effect for the next five years.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee approve the update to the Public Participation Plan.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori briefly reviewed the final version of the Public Participation Plan (PPP). This document describes how the MPO interacts with the public and how the various MPO documents and plans are communicated.

The PPP now highlights in detail the public participation requirements requested to be included by the FTA. Additional information was added to the Environmental Justice and Title VI sections as well. More descriptions were added to the MTP and TIP sections to explain what goes into these documents and what products are expected from them. The rest of the document was not changed and there have been no significant changes since the Policy Committee members reviewed the document in November 2011. The required 45-day public comment period was held from November 20, 2011 to January 6, 2012 and no comments were received.

Mr. Darnell noted there were no highlighted changes in the document and asked if that meant there had been no additional changes to the document since it was last reviewed. Mr. Delmagori said that was correct.

ACTION: Mr. Darnell moved to approve the update to the Public Participation Plan. Ms. Sipe seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

4. APPROVE AMENDMENT #1 TO THE FY2012-2017 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

**FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

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|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Subject: | FY2012-2017 TIP Amendment #1 |
| Prepared by: | Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner |
| Date: | January 9, 2012 |

BACKGROUND

- On December 7, 2011 the Farmington MPO advertised Amendment #1 to the FY2012-FY2017 Transportation Improvement Program.
- The amendment moves funding for two projects from FY2011 to FY2012 due to the funding not being obligated in FY2011.

CURRENT WORK

- The two projects moving from FY2011 to FY2012 are the TCSP funding for the Pinon Hills Extension project in Farmington and the earmark funding for CR 7500 in San Juan County.
- No changes are occurring to project details or funding amounts.
- The MPO held a 30-day public comment period from December 7, 2011 to January 6, 2012.
- No comments were received during a public hearing on Amendment #1 during the December 15, 2011 Technical Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee approve Amendment #1 to the FY2012-2017 TIP.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori explained that District 5 required an amendment to the FY2012-2017 TIP. The two projects impacted were:

| Project | New Fiscal Year & Amount | Notes |
|--|--|---|
| Pinon Hills East and Animas River Bridge Construction (CN F100100) | Move from FY2011 to FY2012 \$1,047,589.00 | This project is funded with Transportation, Community & System Preservation (TSCP) funding. |
| San Juan County Road 7500 (CN F100040) | Move from FY 2011 to FY 2012 \$294,000.00 | Earmark funding for this project was not obligated in FY2011 and San Juan County requested that these funds be programmed in FY2012 for obligation. |

These two projects are moving from FY2011 to FY2012 because they were not obligated in FY2011. No other changes to the projects are required. Mr. Delmagori explained that, normally, this type of change would only have required a modification to the TIP, but due to the STIP update that occurred between FY2011 and FY2012 and the resultant new

STIP, the more formal amendment process was required. The required 30-day public comment period was held from December 7, 2011 to January 6, 2012, and there were no comments or questions received at the public hearing held during the December 15, 2011 Technical Committee meeting.

Ms. Sipe asked where CR 7500 was located. Mr. Delmagori said it was south of Bloomfield off of US 550.

ACTION: Mr. Darnell moved to approve Amendment #1 to the FY2012-2017 TIP. Ms. Sipe seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

5. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE METHODOLOGY USED FOR ESTIMATING THE NUMBER OF UNIQUE RIDERS WHO USE RED APPLE TRANSIT

**FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

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|---------------------|--|
| Subject: | Red Apple Transit Unique Rider Methodology |
| Prepared by: | Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner |
| Date: | January 9, 2012 |

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- Transit data was collected during the summer and fall months to better understand ridership characteristics and trends.
- The information will be used to further justify the recommendations made in the Red Apple Transit Study report.
- This information was used to help estimate the number of unique riders that use the Red Apple system.

CURRENT WORK

- Unique riders are defined as the number of individuals who actually use the system.
- These individuals account for the approximately 148,000 annual trips on Red Apple.
- Using survey responses and ridership characteristics, staff developed a range of estimated unique riders.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a report on the methodology used for estimating the number of unique riders who use Red Apple Transit.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori recapped that transit data had been collected by MPO interns during the summer and fall months of 2011 to better understand ridership characteristics and trends. The interns took passenger counts, tracked where riders began and ended their trips, counted where passenger boarded and alighted at the various stops along the transit routes, and took transfer information at the transfer locations in town.

Mr. Delmagori stated that, in part, this information was gathered to see how the system was working and how riders traversed and moved around the city using the system. Additionally, the information was used to estimate the number of unique riders, or individuals, who use the system. Mr. Delmagori reported that the monthly ridership data provided by First Transit for the year November 2010 to October 2011 showed there were a total of 148,745 rides. With this information and the survey results that were received over the course of the summer and fall months, Staff was able to determine how frequently passengers used the system.

The question “How often do you use the Red Apple Transit” from the survey that was distributed by the MPO provided staff with a sample of annual ridership. There were 176 responses to this survey question. Staff took the number of people and multiplied that by their trip frequency. This equation was then calculated to establish the number of trips by these responders for the year.

The 176 sampled riders provide for 35,151 yearly individual trips which accounts for approximately 23% of the unique rider. Under the assumption that 77% of riders were not captured by the survey, there were 569 riders not accounted for. Adding the 569 to the 176 riders surveyed equaled a unique rider estimate of 745.

Mr. Delmagori continued to explain that using the unique rider estimate of 745 and dividing it into the 148,745 annual trips gives a total of 200 rides taken by the unique rider per year, which breaks down to 17 rides per month and 4 rides per week (see chart below).

| | |
|--|------------|
| November 2010-October 2011 Annual Ridership (from Monthly Ridership Reports) | 148,745 |
| Riders captured by Survey | 176 |
| Number of Trips by Riders who took Survey | 35,151 |
| Percent of Estimated Unique Riders captured through the Survey | 23.63% |
| Rides still not accounted for | 113,594 |
| Riders who were not accounted for | 569 |
| Estimated Number of System Unique Riders | 745 |
| | |
| Number of Rides taken by Unique Riders per year | 200 |
| Number of Rides per month | 17 |
| Number of Rides per week | 4 |

Using these numbers, MPO Staff determined that four was a reasonable number for the rides per week.

Mr. Delmagori reported that Staff also used a second more complex methodology to help validate the first set of numbers. Using the information in the top table above in comparison with another question on the survey, "Which routes do you use?" Staff merged these answers together to develop a percent of how frequently each route was used. Using this percentage, Staff calculated a slightly higher number of Unique Riders at 1,063.

Mr. Delmagori stated that the second methodology provided some flexibility in the calculation since riders typically do not use the system in the same way every week. Using the percent of frequency begins to account for the variations in rider schedules and trips. When dividing the estimated 1,063 unique riders by the 148,745 annual trips, it is estimated that these passengers take 140 rides per year, or 12 rides per month or 3 rides per week.

Mr. Delmagori explained that after all the calculations the decision was made to use a range of 700-1,100 as the number of Unique Riders who use the Red Apple Transit. These numbers provide a baseline of information from which to work from. To get an outside perspective, the Transit Bureau of the NMDOT reviewed the final summary and said the numbers were believable and reliable.

Mr. Darnell asked if there was a procedure in place to track ongoing ridership or will the entire process need to be duplicated again this summer to update the numbers. Mr. Delmagori responded that the most effective, but expensive, method is an electronic tracking system where riders use an electronic fare card. The fare card tracks where riders get on and off the system and how often they actually use transit. Mr. Delmagori said the MPO plans to again gather transit data during the summer and fall months using interns. With the approval by the Farmington City Council of the route change proposals, tracking the new routes and ridership will provide valuable information on how the changes are affecting ridership. It is hoped that the route changes, which will increase route frequency and the geographic area served, will increase overall transit ridership.

Ms. Sipe asked if these route changes would prevent a rider from having to ride an entire route to get back to their starting point. Mr. Delmagori said this was correct because the new routes will be a combination of line and loop routes. Two line routes will bisect Farmington in the four primary directions, along with two loop routes that will help feed riders back into the main system. There will also be more stops added between the cities, specifically at Wild Horse Valley and in the Spencerville area. Mr. Darnell asked if a stop at Good Sam's in Aztec had been added. Ms. Sipe said she had been told that in order to add a stop at Good Sam's another Aztec stop would have to be dropped. Mr. Delmagori commented that having to drop another Aztec stop was why Good Sam's was not added to the Aztec route. Ms. Sipe added that Good Sam's does have their own bus that residents use. She suggested gathering some numbers at Good Sam's to see what the interest would be in having a Red Apple stop there. Mr. Delmagori noted that there is a new stop planned for the intersection of NM 516 and Oliver.

Mr. Delmagori reported that the route changes will be implemented the first full week in February. Ms. Sipe suggested that someone contact Good Sam's to make them aware of the new stop on NM 516. Mr. Delmagori agreed that was a good idea for either a representative from the City of Aztec or, he would contact Bob Campbell to see if Mr. Campbell wanted to call Good Sam's.

Mr. Lucero asked how the Red Apple was doing financially. Mr. Delmagori said the federal funding is substantial to maintain the transit service.

ACTION: The report was received.

6. RECEIVE A REPORT FROM NMDOT

Mr. David Quintana reported that District 5 will be letting the NM 574/NM 516 intersection project on January 20. The executed contract should be completed in approximately two months, there should be a contractor on board in early April, and construction should be completed by October.

Following several delays, the US 64 project is now expected to be substantially complete in October.

Mr. Quintana stated that the final design of the next phase of US 64 was reviewed last week. The production date is anticipated to be July or August, but will be dependent on securing the needed rights-of-way. The executed contract would then be expected in November.

NMDOT is preparing the requests for proposal for consultant services for the next phase of US 64 which would be from milepost 58-60. A consultant for the final design should be on board this summer. This project is funded for fiscal years 2014-2015.

Mr. Quintana clarified that the US 64 project is working west towards Farmington from Bloomfield. The current phase of the project is from milepost 64 to 62. Phase III of the construction, which is in the final design phase, will be from milepost 60-62 and the project for FY2014-2015 is from milepost 58-60. NMDOT decided to begin the US 64 project with the intersection of US 550 and from there address the urban area of Bloomfield where expensive storm drains were required.

Mr. Quintana reported that Miguel Gabaldon was meeting with Senator Pinto and Representative Begay to discuss issues at the intersection of NM 371 and Navajo 36 created with the opening of the new casino. NMDOT plans more discussions to identify an intersection improvement project with geometrics and a possible traffic signal that would then be added to the TIP/STIP. Mr. Quintana and Mr. Phil Gallegos will be speaking further with the MPO to get a project identified. Senator Pinto and Representative Begay will be seeking funds from the legislature for these improvements. Mr. Darnell asked if a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) had been done on this intersection prior to the opening of the casino. Mr. Quintana said NMDOT, the Navajo Nation, and San Juan County failed to discuss getting a TIA completed prior to the casino opening. Mr. Quintana stated that there were some traffic counts completed just prior to the casino opening which did indicate that improvements were needed. He noted, however, that there are many needs and priorities District-wide, and that is why Senator Pinto and Representative Begay are seeking funding through the legislature. Mr. Darnell asked if the casino had offered any assistance. Mr. Quintana said he did not have any information on that today, but hoped to have an update for the Technical Committee

meeting next week. Mr. Lucero also added that he hoped the casino would be willing to help out with any identified intersection improvements.

Mr. Ray Matthew reported that the Planning Division continues to operate under the continuation bill. He restated that this is good because the current Federal funding level under the continuation bill is higher than any other proposed bill.

Mr. Matthew said the Acting Planning Division Director continues to be Mr. Frank Sharpless, who is also the Director of the Rail and Transit Division. The Planning Division is also seeking to hire a line manager to replace Tom Wilson.

Mr. Matthew stated he completed his review of the 50 functional class requests submitted to NMDOT by the MPO. The requests have been forwarded to FHWA. Mr. Delmagori added that there were a few classifications that the MPO wanted to remove altogether because they are classified as collectors but are now only access roads. Mr. Delmagori stated that several of the classification requests were for new roads identified through the long-range plan. Per discussion with Mr. Matthew, these requests will be on hold until actual road construction occurs. Mr. Delmagori said that it is hoped those roads classified in error can be corrected. Mr. Matthew commented that the overall package was well put together and assisted in his review.

Mr. Matthew added that Mr. David Fuqua, Bloomfield City Manager and Mr. Brad Ellsworth, Bloomfield's Technical Committee member visited with him in Santa Fe recently. They are considering revising their TIP project on Bergin Lane. They want to reduce the size of the Bergin Lane project and move some funding to a landscaping project on US 64. They discussed funding possibilities with Mr. Matthew and whether it would be better to modify the existing TIP or seek additional funding for the landscaping project. Mr. Delmagori said the project would be discussed with the Technical Committee next week. He added that when Bergin Lane was identified as a project a year ago and the STIP updated, \$1,000,000 was included to improve the pedestrian facilities along this street. Bloomfield is now considering using some of the \$1,000,000 towards landscaping and the median improvements along US 64. Mr. Delmagori stated the MPO needs to discuss this potential change and then bring the recommendation to NMDOT. Mr. Quintana said he understood that Bloomfield believed they could address pedestrian needs by installing sidewalks on only one side of the road which would provide savings that could then be applied to the landscaping on US 64.

Mr. Lucero asked if a dollar amount to be used on the Bergin Lane project had been discussed. Mr. Matthew said Mr. Fuqua and Mr. Ellsworth did not have any estimates. Mr. Matthew explained to them that they would need to define the parameters of the two projects to give the District an idea of what Bloomfield was proposing. He also said they would need the permission of the local governing body in order for NMDOT to further consider the request and before any changes to the TIP could be made. Mr. Lucero added that the Bergin Lane project had been included in the TIP to provide for pedestrian safety and that he has concern over taking funding away from a project involving the safety of children getting to school. Mr. Delmagori agreed that this is a valid point of safety versus aesthetics. He added that City of Bloomfield staff will need to determine if everything in terms of safety can be completed for Bergin Lane and still have funds remaining for the landscaping project. Mr. Delmagori said the TIP update process continues for another month or two, so this gives time to address any potential changes.

Mr. Lucero reported that at the last Bloomfield City Council meeting, an estimate of approximately \$10,000-\$15,000 was presented as the cost for the Bergin Lane sidewalks and it was recommended that the remainder of the \$1,000,000 go toward the US 64 landscaping project. Mr. Matthew said no numbers were presented to him during his meeting with the City of Bloomfield representatives. Mr. Quintana said that one mile of sidewalk would more realistically cost \$1,000,000. Mr. Delmagori commented that Bergin Lane is approximately one-half mile in total length and there is maybe one-quarter of a mile of sidewalk needed to reach the school. Mr. Quintana added that a quarter mile of sidewalk would cost about \$250,000. Mr. Lucero stated this was why he brought this up due to what he thought was a potential misunderstanding on the actual costs associated with constructing a sidewalk on Bergin Lane.

Mr. Quintana said the US 64 project currently in the design phase has some retaining walls planned. The MPO has the opportunity now to recommend a treatment or application of a pattern to the walls that could then be carried out throughout the remainder of the corridor. Mr. Quintana will send Mr. Delmagori drawings of the typical retaining walls used throughout the District. Until the final plan is completed, a treatment option could be selected by the MPO.

7. RECEIVE A REPORT OF THE FY2013-2017 TIP

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

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|---------------------|--|
| Subject: | FY2013-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) |
| Prepared by: | Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner |
| Date: | January 9, 2012 |

BACKGROUND

- The TIP is a short-term program of projects expected to be completed in the next six years.
- The MPO updates the TIP on an annual basis.
- The TIP update process includes revising existing project information, adding new projects, and developing TIP priority projects.
- A Call for Projects was issued in December.

CURRENT WORK

- Staff is meeting with the entities individually in January to review existing project information in the TIP.
- The TIP update will proceed based on the following schedule.

| TIP SCHEDULE | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| MONTH | ACTION |
| December 2011 | Call for Projects made & issue Project Identification Forms |
| January 2012 | Staff will meet individually with the entities, NMDOT, and Red Apple Transit to review project information; priorities are developed |
| February 2012 | Cooperative efforts to develop the draft TIP and priority lists |
| February – March 2012 | Entities finalize project information and priorities and an agreed-to list of projects for the first year of the TIP. |
| Early March – early April 2012 | 30-day Public Comment period is advertised and opened |
| March 22, 2012 | Technical Committee holds public hearing on and recommends adoption of TIP |
| April 19, 2012 | Policy Committee adopts the FY2013-2018 TIP |

| RECOMMENDATION |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a report on the FY2013-2018 Transportation Improvement Program schedule. |

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori said that each January is when the MPO begins the update process to the TIP which includes the call for projects already issued to the Technical Committee. This update provides the entities an opportunity to present any new projects they have identified and bring that information to the attention of MPO Staff. During the next several weeks, Mr. Delmagori will be meeting with the Technical Committee Members to review their projects on the existing TIP. The priority lists will also be reviewed at this time. Mr. Delmagori reported that when the STIP update occurred, several of the local projects from the MPO's priority list were chosen and incorporated into the new STIP. The priority list will need to be reviewed again because even though the STIP will not be updated for another year and funding amounts are probably set, there is always the opportunity for fiscal year closeout funds becoming available. Should additional funding become available, NMDOT will review each MPO's priority lists again and other MPO projects could be selected.

Mr. Delmagori said the FY2013-2018 draft TIP will be developed over the next month. Once there is a good understanding of the draft TIP, the required 30-day public comment period will be opened and run through the month of March. The adoption process will begin in March with the Technical Committee and then be wrapped up with the Policy Committee in April.

ACTION: The report was received.

8. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE 2011 TRAFFIC COUNT PROGRAM

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Agenda Item

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|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Subject: | 2011 Traffic Count Program |
| Prepared by: | Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner |
| Date: | January 10, 2012 |

BACKGROUND

- For the 2011 traffic count program, there were 87 locations where counts were taken in October.
- Speed and class data was collected at 27 of those locations.
- The data was processed and reviewed in November and December.

CURRENT WORK

- The majority of counts show a decline in average daily traffic when comparing 2011 counts to previous counts.
- Of the 87 locations, 82 were accepted.
- The other 5 locations were not accepted due to exceptionally low volumes.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a report on the 2011 Traffic Count Program.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that the 2011 traffic count information was received from the consultant and reviewed by MPO Staff. The information was then submitted to NMDOT's traffic bureau for review and processing. Of the 87 locations counted, 82 were approved. The five locations that were not accepted had exceptionally low volumes (30-50% lower than the previous count) and these will be re-taken next year.

Mr. Delmagori briefly reviewed the traffic count data for the Policy Committee and highlighted those counts whose volume percent change was significantly different than the previous count:

Foothills from Crestwood to Rinconada) – 41% drop

This drop is likely due to the paving of College Boulevard and Hood Mesa Trail. The paving provides another outlet for neighborhood traffic and could be a more attractive route to leave the Foothills area.

Mr. Darnell commented that diversifying the flow of traffic appears to be a good thing and asked that since there is currently a big push to widen this section of Foothills, would this traffic count information help decide whether there was a need to spend the dollars to widen Foothills. Mr. Delmagori said it could definitely be a factor in the decision especially if it can be shown that, over the course of the next year or two, the numbers are dropping as other outlets become available. This could delay the need for the

widening of Foothills or even prove the need for widening is no longer there. Mr. Darnell asked where the MPO would stand on pedestrian and/or bicycle lanes. Mr. Delmagori said if the addition of bicycle/pedestrian lanes were decided on, then the road section would need to be changed so that potential rights-of-way could be purchased in order to provide for bike lanes or sidewalks. A recommendation of this type could come from the MPO.

Hood Mesa Trail from Pinon Hills Blvd to Anasazi Trail – 75% drop

Mr. Delmagori explained that back in 2006, the first traffic count of this road section was taken and 550 vehicles were counted. During the past few years, counts have been re-taken and there have only been a few hundred vehicles at each count. Since the counts have been consistent over the past few years, MPO Staff believes the lower count is more reflective of the area. The Hood Mesa Trail classification is a carryover from ten or twelve years ago and it has been kept in the Consolidated Highway Database as a minor collector. In reality, it is a small local street that turns into dirt shortly after the traffic count location. Mr. Delmagori said this factors into why there are only a hundred or so vehicles being counted.

Navajo St. E. from Vine to Main St. - 69% increase

Mr. Delmagori stated the increase in traffic volume could be attributed to the new commercial development and coffee shop. This location will be flagged and re-counted next year to see if the numbers hold true.

Mr. Darnell asked where this count is taken. Mr. Delmagori said the count is taken on Navajo just north of Main. Mr. Darnell said he has had complaints from the residents who live in the townhomes on Navajo at the curve in the road nearing Vine St. They say drivers coming around the curve do not stay in their lane which creates a hazard for traffic attempting to turn into the townhomes. Mr. Darnell asked if there was a way to determine if the increase in traffic is due to the new retail businesses along Main St. or if traffic is actually going up Navajo to Vine and further north. Mr. Delmagori said Steve Krest can set counters at the entrance to the retail locations and another set of counters near the townhomes. These two counts can then be compared.

West Blanco (Frontier to Bergin) – 50% increase

Mr. Delmagori said this increase is likely due to the US 64 road construction.

AZ 187 – Zia St. (Ash to Mesa Verde) – 40% increase

Mr. Delmagori spoke with Mike Huber who said this stretch was recently paved and it provides the Aztec High School students access to the school.

Mr. Delmagori reported that the overall numbers are down possibly due to unemployment and economic conditions in the area. Perhaps following next year's traffic count numbers some observations can be drawn.

Ms. Sipe asked if there was a count taken at S. Rio Grande Ave and US 550. Mr. Delmagori said that although this location had not been counted this year, it is part of the three-year cycle and he can provide a fairly recent count for that area if needed.

ACTION: The report was received.

9. INFORMATION ITEMS

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Subject: | Information Items |
| Prepared by: | Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner |
| Date: | January 10, 2012 |

INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **MPO Associate Planner.** A status report on the hiring process will be provided at the meeting.
- b. **City of Farmington Major Thoroughfare Plan.** The City of Farmington is holding a series of public meeting in January and February to gather input on possible amendments to its MTP based on the new roads identified by the MPO during its Major T-Plan development.
- c. **MPO Quarterly.** Joe Delmagori attended the MPO Quarterly meeting in Las Cruces on January 18.
- d. **Other.**

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported there were approximately 20 applicants for the Associate Planner position. Of these, six or seven were actually qualified. Those applicants received an additional questionnaire to further gauge their interest and qualifications for the position. Phone interviews will take place next week followed with one or two in-person interviews in February. It is hoped to have the position filled by either March or April.

Mr. Delmagori spoke about the City of Farmington's Major Thoroughfare Plan. The City of Farmington is holding a series of public meetings in January and February to gather input from the residents of the Foothills area with regard to possible amendments to the MTP. These discussions followed the MPO's major thoroughfare plan and how potential new roads will interact with existing roads in the Foothills area. The City may possibly need to make amendments to their plan based on MPO work.

Ms. Mary Holton said the City of Farmington's meeting on January 18 was not well attended, but they are encouraging everyone interested to attend one of the scheduled meetings to add their input. She said the Planning Staff have a keyed map that shows each proposed change and also explains the difference between what was adopted by the City in 2008 and what is now being proposed. These potential changes are based on what the City Council approved for the MPO's major thoroughfare plan. Ms. Holton said there are two additional meetings planned for February 1 and 2 and all have been

advertised in The Daily Times. Additionally, over 1,100 postcards were mailed to Foothills residents to inform them of the meetings. There is also an online survey available for interested parties to use for comments and suggestions. Ms. Holton stated they hope to take the proposed changes before the Planning & Zoning Commission in March.

Mr. Delmagori attended the MPO Quarterly Meeting in Las Cruces on January 18. One item of interest was that the New Mexico Division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) wants to conduct a review of all the MPOs in terms of their transportation planning processes. FHWA will be sending out a letter in the next week or so to detail what the review will include. Mr. Delmagori said he expects the review to cover the MPO activities, plans and projects, and interaction with the public.

Mr. Delmagori reported that the Senate has passed a draft bill entitled MAP 21. In this proposed bill, an MPO tier system is addressed: it discusses the criteria to be met to become a Tier 1 or Tier 2 MPO and how the smaller MPOs would be required to prove their technical capacity to remain an MPO.

Mr. Darnell commented that since this area is a retail hub, it is common for weekend population to reach 250,000-300,000 people and we are required to deal with the issues of a community of that size. He noted that we have to prepare for the actual population we serve and be able to move traffic for all these people. Mr. Darnell asked if our being a retail center had been taken into consideration. Mr. Delmagori noted this was a good point and suggested that Las Cruces and Santa Fe might also have this same issue. The New Mexico MPOs plan to send AMPO another letter of concern about the tier system, validate their existence, and reiterate their position to have the smaller MPO grandfathered. Mr. Delmagori said AMPO also wants the MPOs to contact their representatives to reiterate their position regarding the proposed bill. Once drafted, Mr. Delmagori will forward the letter to the Policy Committee so they can review it and make additional comments or recommended action on behalf of FMPO.

9. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

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

10. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Mr. Larry Joe with the Navajo DOT commented on road conditions on NM 371. He commented that between mileposts 74 and 75 there is a huge dip that causes vehicles to go airborne and there is much concern about safety on this stretch. Mr. Quintana said he would look into this and have an answer for the next RPO meeting.

Mr. Joe also weighed in on the issues concerning the intersection of NM 371 and Navajo 36 with the opening of the new casino. He would also like to see some traffic studies conducted and offered his assistance.

There was no additional business from the floor.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Sipe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Darnell seconded the motion. Mr. Lucero adjourned the meeting at 2:41 p.m.

Mr. Pat Lucero, Vice Chairman

June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide