

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 28, 2012

Technical Members Present: Roshana Moojen, City of Aztec, Alternate
Cynthia Lopez, City of Farmington
Chico Quintana, City of Farmington, Alternate
Larry Hathaway, San Juan County, Alternate

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

Technical Members Absent: Mike Huber, City of Aztec
Brad Ellsworth, City of Bloomfield
Nica Westerling, City of Farmington
Dave Keck, San Juan County

Staff Absent: Mary Holton, MPO Officer

Also Present: David Quintana, NMDOT District 5
Maggie Ryan, NMDOT Planning Division
Donica Sharpe, City of Bloomfield

With the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair, Ms. Lopez filled in as Acting Chair.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Lopez called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 24, 2012 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Quintana made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 24, 2012 Technical Committee meeting. Ms. Moojen seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

3. RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE WALKABLE COMMUNITIES WORKSHOP

Subject:	Walkable Communities Workshop
Prepared by:	Duane Wakan, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	June 20, 2012

BACKGROUND

- The MPO coordinated with Dan Burden and the Walkable and Livable Communities (WALC) Institute and hosted a Walkable Communities Workshop for the MPO on May 30-31.
- Day one was a formal full day workshop and day two held walking audits and site tours in each city.
- The workshop and audits were well attended.

CURRENT WORK

- Staff has compiled in CD format a recap of the workshop and walk audits, photographs of each audit, and design recommendations from Dan Burden in voice recording
- The material has been distributed to each Policy and Tech committee member and others who participated in the workshop.
- Staff will work to encourage and facilitate ongoing activities.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Technical Committee receive a presentation on the Walkable Communities Workshop held on May 30-31.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori provided a brief recap of the Walkable Communities Workshop held on May 30-31, 2012 with Mr. Dan Burden and the Walkable and Livable Communities (WALC) Institute.

Mr. Delmagori summarized that day one of the workshop began with a discussion on how to develop the strategies to design and construct a walkable community. There was a walking audit in downtown Farmington on the first morning to help translate the workshop concepts into a real life experience. During the afternoon session, issues and barriers were discussed. These barriers are the physical challenges as well as overcoming the mental mindset to accept and consider new ideas. Also discussed were potential funding options from federal dollars and grant opportunities. The afternoon wrapped up with a more technical training where Mr. Burden showed before and after slides, addressed connectivity issues, and discussed how to get changes implemented into policies and codes at the city and county levels.

Mr. Delmagori reported that day two was devoted to the walking audits which were held along Farmington Avenue and Hutton Avenue in Farmington, Main Avenue and the North Main extension in Aztec, and South First Street in Bloomfield.

Mr. Wakan summarized many elements of Mr. Burden's presentation and highlighted key points:

- Change from car-centric thinking to a focus on the pedestrian.
- Add/maintain sidewalks for pedestrian access.
- Create vision for main streets.
- Use of simple changes (such as adding trees).
- Create bones/skeleton on streets and further changes will follow.

- Inviting main street area increases economic activity.
- Use of angled back-in parking on main street saves 30% of open space.
- Parking capacity can increase by 60-70% with on-street angled parking.
- Road diets - transforming roadways from four-lanes to two-lanes with lower speeds to create sense of place.
- Tree-lined streets increase economic activity by 7-12%.
- Lower speeds improve safety:
 - o vehicle traveling at 20 mph = a 5% chance of pedestrian death
 - o vehicle traveling at 40 mph = an 80% chance of pedestrian death
- Typically, \$16,000,000 is spent on new road mile but only \$250,000 of that is spent on pedestrian infrastructure that is ADA compliant.
- Create connectivity between neighborhoods/communities.
- Grid networks disperse traffic, prevent one or two roads from handling the bulk of traffic volumes, and provide access throughout area
- Use of longitudinal crosswalk markings provide best visibility for motorist.
- Consider use of roundabouts vs. a signal:
 - o Savings in electricity
 - o Traffic capacity remains consistent
 - o Provides narrower streets to easier pedestrian access
 - o Reduction in delay and congestion at the intersection

From the workshop, Mr. Burden provided ideas such as how to disperse traffic over a number of roadways, to make the streets “complete” or accessible to all types of users, and creating a sense of place.

The walking audits provided the opportunity to see the issues and potential improvements first hand. Mr. Delmagori recapped the walking audits in each community and highlighted some of the pros and cons that were observed:

Farmington

- Good wide sidewalks in many areas
- Good crosswalks/intersections with pedestrian signals
- Good use of trees in downtown area creates inviting space
- Windows on store fronts creates sense of security
- Pavement leaching is obscuring crosswalk markings
- Many driveway widths in the city are too wide at 20-30 feet
- Bike lanes - milling and overlay issues create bike hazards and bicyclists will ride closer to traffic lane
- Many sidewalks have conflicts/hazards/landscape issues

Aztec

- Public art - draws people to downtown and increases economic activity
- Bulb-outs on Main Avenue help slow traffic and creates pedestrian atmosphere
- Many driveway cuts were appropriate widths and helped slow traffic
- Good pedestrian crosswalks - contrasting color use
- Zone alignments on sidewalks were good, but not always in a straight alignment; some sign placements were too low which created pedestrian conflict
- Intersection of US 550 and NM 516 geared toward vehicle traffic; multiple lanes, turning lanes, and wide turning radii, heavy truck traffic

Bloomfield

- A lot of potential at Cultural Center/Senior Center complex
 - o Established residential neighborhood
 - o Avenue to connect to river walk area
 - o Public facilities are available
- South First Street is too wide; increase width of sidewalks and add bike lanes
- Public buildings were facing away from the street
- Improve corners of Cultural Center to include more attractive neighborhood parks

Mr. Delmagori added that all these ideas carry a price tag, but they also create a new way to look at growth and how to potentially better utilize available resources. These new ideas can help improve efficiency, vitality, and economic activity of our neighborhoods. Mr. Delmagori encouraged everyone to think all-encompassing and multi-modal so that our designs and construction will apply to all members of the community and will help to create people-centric communities. Mr. Delmagori emphasized working to utilize Mr. Burden's recommendations and suggestions wherever possible and economically feasible to do so.

ACTION: The report was received.

4. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT (JPA)

Subject:	Renewal of the Joint Powers Agreement
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	June 20, 2012

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- The cities of Aztec, Bloomfield, and Farmington, and San Juan County participate in the Metropolitan Planning Organization through the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA).
- The JPA is set to expire on September 30, 2012.
- The JPA explains the responsibilities of the City of Farmington as the fiscal agent and the functions and organizational structure of the Policy and Technical Committees.
- It describes the roles and work products required of the MPO.
- Each Committee has performed an initial review of the JPA.

CURRENT WORK

- The language of the Joint Powers Agreement is being reviewed for possible changes.
- The JPA will go into effect from October 2012 to September 2015.
- Identified changes to the JPA include updating population figures based on

- 2010 Census data and the inclusion of the six livability principles.
- The entities have the opportunity to recommend other changes to the JPA.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Technical Committee review the renewal of the Joint Powers Agreement.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) is what brings together the three cities and the county to the MPO. The JPA also outlines the responsibilities of Staff and the Committees.

Mr. Delmagori reviewed the recommended updates/changes to the JPA document:

Page 1 - update the urbanized area information using the new 2010 Census data. Additionally should any updates be available to the 2002 Federal Register, as referenced in this paragraph, these sections will be updated as well;

Section Two - Term of the Agreement. Mr. Delmagori reported that the Farmington City Clerk had stated the current wording for the term of the agreement is misleading. Mr. Delmagori stated the intent of the document is to have a three-year term running from October 2012 to September 2015 and, that in the intervening years, it is automatically renewed until the three-year term has been completed.

Page 2 - Section Three - Fiscal Agent. Anticipate that the City of Farmington will continue to act in this capacity.

Section Four - Organizational Structure - A1. Anticipate this remaining consistent.

Pages 3 and 4 - Section Four - membership, functions and duties of Policy and Technical Committee members will remain the same.

Page 5 - Section Four - D - #1. The federal planning process will remain the same, but the livability principles (I - N) have been added. If Congress should pass a new transportation bill and planning factors are changed, this section would then be updated accordingly.

Page 6 - Section Four - Primary functions of the MPO should remain the same subject to any revisions from Congress.

Page 7 - Section Five - Budgeting and Cost Allocation. The population numbers in this section will be updated to reflect the 2010 Census figures and consideration given to how the new numbers factor into the funding share. Mr. Delmagori said that any changes to the percentages of local funding share would be up to the entities.

Page 8 - E - If the PL funding that is reimbursable to the MPO should be exhausted, the local entities would assume 100% of those expenses according to the cost allocation specified in Section Five of the document.

Mr. Delmagori said the remaining pages of the document contain boilerplate and legal information which has been maintained throughout each previous update to the JPA. No recommended changes were noted.

Mr. Delmagori stated that the current JPA expires in September. With a special Policy Committee Meeting being planned for August, the Technical Committee could recommend approval of the JPA at their July meeting with subsequent approval by the Policy Committee in August. Mr. Delmagori reported that he has not been informed of any additional recommended changes to the document.

ACTION: The report was received.

5. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE UPDATE TO THE COMMITTEE BYLAWS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject:	Committee Bylaws and Operating Procedures
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	June 20, 2012

BACKGROUND

- The Committee Bylaws and Operating Procedures provide the guidance for the Policy and Technical committees.
- Descriptions of the Chair and Vice-Chair for each committee, removal and replacement process, and voting procedures are contained within this document.
- The Bylaws are formally updated in conjunction with the Joint Powers Agreement every three years.

CURRENT WORK

- The language in the Committee Bylaws is being reviewed for possible changes.
- Identified changes to the Bylaws include better clarification on the designation of committee alternates and moving the annual election of Policy Committee officers from April to September.
- The entities have the opportunity to recommend other changes to the Bylaws.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Technical Committee review the update to the Committee Bylaws and Operating Procedures.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that in conjunction with the JPA, the Committee Bylaws and Operating Procedures are also formally updated every three years. This document outlines the voting procedures, the assignment and removal procedures of Committee members, as well as the roles and responsibilities of Staff.

Mr. Delmagori reviewed the Committee Bylaws and Operating Procedures document:

Page 1 - Voting Members. New paragraph added to clarify the assignment of alternates and Committee members. Designation of members and alternates is made by the City Manager or County CEO by letter to the MPO. Member and/or alternate designation would remain in effect until they can no longer serve in the capacity.

Page 2 - Officers. Staff has recommended that the Policy Committee hold the Annual Election of Officers at their September rather than the April meeting. With local municipal elections held in March, this would allow entities more time to designate their representative and give that newly appointed member time to learn about the MPO, their responsibilities as a Committee member, and to potentially serve as Chair or Vice Chair.

Page 2 - Removal Procedure. This process will remain the same. The attendance requirement does not apply to the alternates.

Page 9 - Small change indicating that attendance requirements do not apply to Technical Committee alternates.

Mr. Delmagori noted that the remaining document language is good. If no additional changes are brought up, Staff will seek recommended approval by the Technical Committee at their August meeting.

ACTION: The report was received.

6. RECEIVE A REPORT FROM NMDOT

Mr. David Quintana reported that the project on US 64 and Troy King Road was turned in this month and an authorization for funding is expected in August. The contract will let later this fall and construction should begin early next year. The project was budgeted for \$1,100,000, but the engineering estimate is slightly higher. He clarified that this project will be mainly along US 64 at the intersection of Troy King Road. Mr. Delmagori added this repaving is from the top of Harper Hill heading east for approximately one mile.

Mr. Quintana stated that the Light Plant Road intersection should be authorized for funding in September and will also be let later this fall. With numerous projects being turned in at the end of the fiscal year, this letting should happen within the first four months of the new fiscal year. The project estimate is \$1,500,000 which is expected to actually be under budget.

The next section of the US 64 project from mile marker 60 to 62 will be let this fall at a programmed amount of approximately \$16,700,000.

Mr. Quintana reported that the City of Farmington had requested to revise an agreement for the Pinon Hills Bridge project to include right-of-way acquisition costs. District 5 has agreed with the request and the change is being processed.

The project for Phase IB of the East Arterial in Aztec was sent to the City of Aztec on June 6 and execution of the contract is pending.

Mr. Chico Quintana said Cutler Paving is doing some work for the City of Farmington and they mentioned they were next going to be working on a roadway section between Browning Parkway and the casino on US 64. Mr. Chico Quintana asked if there were other projects scheduled for San Juan County. Mr. David Quintana said all these projects are done based on previously established price agreement and Cutler is tasked all over the area. He did not have specific information on potential work being done in San Juan County.

Mr. Delmagori reported that the City of Farmington has requested a TIP amendment for the Pinon Hills sidewalk project. They want to use a portion of this TPE funding to add sidewalks along Farmington Avenue between 20th and 30th Streets. The 30-day public notice will run throughout the month of July, the Technical Committee will hold the hearing and recommend approval at their July 26 meeting, with approval sought by the Policy Committee at a special meeting to be called in August.

Ms. Maggie Ryan introduced herself as the new Planning Liaison for the MPO and also the Scenic Byways Coordinator for the state. She is currently working on the state's long-range plan and anticipates seeking some assistance from the MPO in the next few months as the Planning Division begins developing their plan.

Mr. Hathaway asked if Ms. Ryan was looking at signage or rights-of-way encroachment on the byways as Scenic byways Coordinator. Ms. Ryan said she is managing all the grants and programs statewide of which there are currently approximately 20 active grants around the state for various types of programs. As the program director, Ms. Ryan is assisting the local communities with the NMDOT process and in getting their projects implemented. In August there will be a call for projects for anyone interested in applying for a new project. Mr. Hathaway asked if she was familiar with this area's Trail of the Ancients. She said she was familiar with it. Ms. Moojen commented that the push is for federal recognition but the Trail is disjointed with poor connectivity partly due to the number of tribal roads that are a part of the Trail. Ms. Ryan mentioned the Billy the Kid Trail in the Ruidoso area which is nationally recognized. It is a well-established organization with a strong physical infrastructure including a designated coordinator and visitors' center. Ms. Ryan offered her assistance should there be interest in getting a new project started.

7. RECEIVE A PRESENTATION THAT SUMMARIZES THE STATUS OF TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION

Subject:	Transportation Reauthorization
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	June 21, 2012

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- SAFETEA-LU has been extended through Continuing Resolutions for the past couple of years.
- SAFETEA-LU is currently set to expire on June 30, 2012.
- The MAP-21 bill passed the Senate but not in the House.
- H.R. 7 is the House version of reauthorization but has yet to pass in the full House.

CURRENT WORK

- AMPO has provided the MPOs with a presentation that summarizes the history of the reauthorization process.
- The presentation outlines many of the potential new changes that are being proposed by MAP-21 and H.R. 7.
- Staff will share the presentation with the Technical Committee on June 28.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Technical Committee receive a presentation on the status of transportation reauthorization.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori gave a presentation issued by the Association of MPOs (AMPO) that discussed the status of each of the proposed transportation reauthorization bills from the House and the Senate.

Mr. Delmagori reported that SAFETEA-LU expires on June 30 and another continuing resolution is expected in the next day or two extending SAFETEA-LU to the end of the federal fiscal year or providing for another six months of funding. The chart below compares the Senate and House proposals over the past year:

Senate Proposal - MAP-21	House Proposal - H.R. 7
Two-year bill that provides \$109 billion through FY2013	Five-year bill that provides \$264.5 billion through FY2016
Passed by the Senate, not the House	Has yet to pass the House
New MPO threshold set at 200,000; Tier system for existing MPOs; must meet designation requirements	New MPO threshold set at 100,000 but all existing MPOs would be grandfathered in

The two proposals offer differing views on how MPOs will function and how they will be established. The House bill proposes to raise the threshold from 50,000 to 100,000, but any existing MPO would be grandfathered into the process. With the Senate bill, MAP-21, the threshold was raised to 200,000 in population which includes a tier system for identifying MPOs. Mr. Delmagori commented that it appears the focus is to be on the major, large urban areas with many congestion and transportation issues. This bill does contain good language that speaks about the capacity to function as an MPO. Mr. Delmagori said the current language is interpreted to mean that an MPO must have a functioning staff, the ability to do analysis, ability to do traffic models, and have a means for data collection. Mr. Delmagori said FMPO can meet all these requirements and has been doing so for nine years.

One of the slides from AMPO showed that the Surface Transportation Program would now become the Transportation Mobility Program. Mr. Delmagori explained that the funding distribution which works its way down from the federal government to the individual states would now have a different percentage breakdown. Currently the percentage is 62.5% which goes to the state based on population and the remaining 37.5% can be obligated anywhere throughout the state for rural areas. The proposals from both the House and Senate make this an even 50-50% split. Mr. Delmagori said it is uncertain what type of funding impact this would have on New Mexico at this time.

Mr. Delmagori said there continues to be talk about performance measures/targets and establishing guidance for the various modes of traffic. This would focus the MPO's efforts where they need to be, but could create additional documentation requirements and workload especially to the smaller MPOs.

The Senate proposal would also include a provision that would require the local public transit provider to be represented on the board. Mr. Delmagori said that prior to his retirement Mr. Rod Hunt served as transit manager and was a member of the Technical Committee.

Mr. Delmagori will pass along additional information on the reauthorization bills as it becomes available.

ACTION: The report was received.

8. RECEIVE A REPORT ON RED APPLE TRANSIT DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES

Subject:	Red Apple Transit Data Collection
Prepared by:	Duane Wakan, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	June 20, 2012

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- The MPO collected Red Apple ridership data in 2011.
- Interns were hired to track passenger travel and ridership by route.

- Staff used the data to estimate the number of unique riders on the Red Apple.
- Route changes were implemented in February 2012.

CURRENT WORK

- The MPO has again hired two interns to administer surveys, track boarding/alignment, and take passenger counts at various bus stop locations.
- The interns will ride on the bus to collect origin/destination data of passengers.
- Staff has revised the survey questionnaire that will again be administered to Red Apple passengers to help determine:
 - The frequency of usage
 - How the route changes made in February 2012 are being received
 - The ongoing need of the transit system.
- The interns are collecting transit data from June through September.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Technical Committee receive a report on Red Apple Transit data collection activities.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Wakan reported that the MPO has hired two interns for the summer months to track passenger travel and ridership by route, and to distribute a revised transit survey to analyze how the new routes, stops, and transfer locations are performing. As data is gathered, Staff will provide updates for the Policy and Technical Committee members.

ACTION: The report was received.

9. RECEIVE A REPORT ON RED APPLE RIDERSHIP

Subject:	Red Apple Transit Monthly Update
Prepared by:	Duane Wakan MPO Associate Planner
Date:	June 21, 2012

RED APPLE REPORT

- The new routes with additional stops and new timetables all went into effect on February 6, 2012.
- Ridership in 2012 through the first four months was 42,628; in 2011 ridership was 48,576 during the same period, which is a 12% decrease.
- Ridership for the Farmington routes between January and April did drop by approximately 3,797.

- The regional routes ridership (Aztec, Bloomfield & Kirtland) numbers saw a leveling effect from March-April.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Technical Committee receive a report on the Red Apple Transit monthly ridership.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Wakan reported that Staff had received monthly ridership data from First Transit. This information showed that ridership during the first four months of 2012 was 42,628 and during the same time period in 2011, ridership was 48,576 riders. This is a decrease of 12%.

Mr. Wakan stated it appears ridership on the Farmington routes has dropped by approximately 3,800 riders between January and April 2012. The regional routes appear to be smoothing out as riders adjust to the new timetables and bus stops.

A public meeting on the Red Apple Transit is scheduled for July 12 at 2:00 p.m. at the Civic Center to receive public comment and to present potential route and time changes.

ACTION: The report was received.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS

Subject:	Information Items
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	June 20, 2012

INFORMATION ITEMS

- City of Farmington Major Thoroughfare Plan.** Farmington City Council has taken recent action that has amended the Farmington Major Thoroughfare Plan. The MPO will be seeking action to amend its regional Major T-Plan to maintain consistency between the two plans.
- Farmington MPO ITS Architecture.** An update on the architecture will be provided to the members at their June 28 meeting.
- Update to the Regional Traffic Model.** MPO staff is preparing to update the regional traffic model, last completed in 2008-2009 as part of the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Staff will initially be collecting updated

population and employment data based on the 2010 Census. The process will conclude with calibration and validation of the new regional model.

d. **Other.**

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that the Farmington City Council has approved the final piece of the City's Major Thoroughfare Plan. The other major road proposals for the northeast section of Farmington were approved in May and this last section was for the Hood Mesa Trail extension. With the City's process complete, the MPO now needs to modify their document. Mr. Delmagori said Staff would present this at the July Technical Committee meeting with follow-up by the Policy Committee at their special August meeting.

Mr. Delmagori explained there is an upcoming statewide webinar on July 9 to provide an update on the status of the statewide architecture. Mr. Quintana said District 5 will be assuming responsibility for their own ITS program and will have an office manned during working hours on Mondays through Fridays. This will eventually connect to the other regional ITS infrastructures throughout the District.

Mr. Delmagori stated Staff will be reviewing the new population and employment data from the 2010 Census to begin updating the regional traffic model. Staff will be meeting with city planners to review any potential changes before work actually begins to prepare the traffic model for a full calibration and validation of the model itself. Mr. Delmagori explained that work on updating the population and employment data will be completed in-house while the calibration and validation will be contracted out.

13. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Ms. Moojen reported on a traffic accident on June 26 at the intersection of Chuska and Main Avenue in Aztec that resulted in the death of a child. The City of Aztec will be pushing hard to move forward to acquire funding for the Phase 1B Arterial project. Ms. Moojen noted that this is the second fatality experienced during this spring/summer season and with increasing pedestrian traffic crossing Main Avenue it is becoming an unsafe road. The City of Aztec still needs \$1,500,000 for Phase 1B of this project and another \$12,000,000 for Phase 2. Ms. Moojen stated that the City of Aztec will be seeking MPO support for these projects.

Mr. Delmagori introduced Ms. Donica Sharpe the GIS/Planning & Zoning Director for the City of Bloomfield.

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

14. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no additional business from the floor.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Moojen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Quintana seconded the motion. Ms. Lopez adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

Cynthia Lopez, Acting Chair

June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide