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SANTA FE MPO TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
August 24, 2009

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**MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE MPO
TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
MONDAY, August 24, 2009**

INTRODUCTIONS:

a. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Santa Fe MPO Technical Coordinating Committee was called to order by Chair, Jon Romero at approximately 1:39 p.m., on the above date in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 200 Lincoln Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

b. ROLL CALL

Roll Call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jon Romero, Chair – City of Santa Fe
Mary Helen Follingstad, Vice Chair – RPA Director
Johnny Baca – Santa Fe County
Jon Bulthuis – Santa Fe Trails [arriving later]
Phil Gallegos – NMDOT District 5 [arriving later]
Josette Lucero – NCRTD
Eric Martinez for Chris Ortega – City of Santa Fe

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Andrew Jandáček – Santa Fe County
Reed Liming – City of Santa Fe
Larry Samuel – Tesuque Pueblo
[Vacancy – Santa Fe Public Schools]

STAFF PRESENT

Mark Tibbetts – MPO Officer
Keith Wilson – Senior Planner

OTHERS PRESENT

Fred Pearson, Citizen
Christine Cordova, NE RPO
Claude Morelli, NMDOT
Tim Rogers, NMDOT
Suzanne LeBeau

c. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Follingstad moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Mr. Martínez seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

d. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM JULY 27, 2009.

Ms. Follingstad moved to approve the Minutes of July 27, 2009 as submitted. Mr. Baca seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

1. INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION

a. Update on Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Budget – MPO Staff

Mr. Wilson said the update as considered at the last meeting was passed by the TPB with a slightly changed format. He provided a handout of it and briefly reviewed it.

Ms. Lucero asked about the local match requirements.

Mr. Tibbetts said they were going through that process right now and they were identifying in-kind matching for some of the projects. He felt administrative support should also count. Some of it was very much tied to specific projects in the UPWP. He noted there was a carryover from the last seven years. That additional money was also going through the process. They were negotiating with City, State and Feds right now. Officially the MPO had not been approved to receive the money now. The request for approval was going to City Finance Committee and then to City Council at their next meeting and it was on the consent agenda.

Mr. Morelli said if they didn't have the local match, the State could not reimburse for it and could not give the MPO the letter until it went through the process.

The Committee discussed it further for clarification of the match status.

Mr. Bulthuis arrived at this time.

b. Update on Joint Powers Agreement and MPO Bylaws – MPO Staff

Mr. Tibbetts announced that both the JPA and the bylaws were passed. The JPA was just an agreement to work together on the plan.

He spoke briefly to the discussions about membership. Staff had recommended having a

representative from the Bike/Pedestrian Task Force but the TPB kept it at 12 without change. The County representatives were also discussed and what departments specifically would provide the representation.

Mr. Tibbetts said ideally they would have Land Use as well as Growth Management from County and the Transportation Director.

c. Progress report on Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update – MPO Staff

1) Future Road Network

Mr. Wilson recalled that several months ago the TCC talked about its anticipation for the MTP and since had been meeting with City and County folks on the future road network. It was part of the County's Growth Management Plan and was getting feedback from them. The City GPS Department has been down for three months so what they had was a big paper map. He planned to come back to the TCC in September with it to present all the future roads for the MTP. Then they would involve the public in October with 2-3 meetings. The corridor studies wouldn't be complete but they would try to incorporate that into the presentation and then have the final approval of the MTP.

2) Future Bicycle/Pedestrian Network

Mr. Tim Rogers was asked to assist us in the planning where major bicycle corridors and connections should be. He worked on it with the County and the City to develop an ultimate master plan on it. He gave the Committee a brief overview. He had a couple of draft maps printed out to get a jump start with the County. He focused on mapping bike facilities that would retrofit roads, and identify trails and corridors.

His starting point for the roads was to say most of the roadways with higher speeds should have bike facilities. There were lots of roads built in the past without those facilities and to address those would require retrofitting. Most city streets required bike lanes or shoulders and it was an expensive process.

So he came up with a system to prioritize for retrofits using some categories based on speed and volume but also destination and connectivity. They included West Alameda and Old Pecos Trail. New roads should be built to accommodate bikes. A trail along that road was not a suitable substitute. So that needed to be re-examined. It must be designed as a transportation facility, not just recreational.

The multiple use corridor in Rancho Viejo was already built. Most of them had a local focus but there was a possibility there. On the north were the Rabbit Road and the Rail Trail. It had difficult topography because it was an active rail line, and it would be a huge task. He had been focusing on the County and used the City bike map. It was a good starting point to identify existing facilities. He had a whole list of documents going back to the 1983 City MP on bike trails and SFCC.

Mr. Tibbetts reported that they were working with Safe Routes to Schools and Transit for best places

to have bus stops and that would become a major part of the bikeways map. The specific pedestrian ways required a whole separate effort. They were tangential with crossings of major arterials. They put it in the UPWP and included ADA considerations. As far as MP part of the plan, Mr. Rogers was brought on specifically to do that.

Mr. Rogers explained that was why he referred to trails including pedestrian trails. There was a little bit of overlap and confusion on the trails.

Mr. Wilson asked for a listing of high pedestrian locations.

Mr. Martínez asked if Mr. Morelli could prepare an outline of the MTP addressing the pedestrian section and include a map showing crash locations, etc.

Mr. Tibbetts said they had a pedestrian safety workshop at SFCC and looked at various locations and did case studies in an effort to have an overall pedestrian safety plan with city and county jurisdictions together. A lot of work has already been done.

Mr. Morelli recommended a separate committee for pedestrian issues with disability advocates and transit riders because their needs were very different than bicyclists.

Mr. Tibbetts said that was already in the plan but he agreed to establish a separate task force. He explained that it could not be called a subcommittee because it would have members of the public on it so it could be called a task force or a study group.

Mr. Wilson said they were trying to map every sidewalk in the whole city.

Ms. Follingstad felt the inventory should be prioritized.

Mr. Tibbetts said they would keep moving forward and have the pedestrian effort. They couldn't do everything at once but they should work toward a comprehensive package.

Chair Romero felt a subcommittee would accomplish that and deal with the survey of sidewalk connections.

Ms. Follingstad thought it was also important to change the title to make it more important.

Mr. Wilson said they had to be careful when dealing with BTAC because Councilor Bushee had been trying to get them to do that for the last ten years. They could say they were dealing with City and the County as regional areas but not just every street. The City Public Works pushed the MPO back and said that it was their purview. He wanted to work together with the City and identify problems but in actually creating the plan, he was hesitant to say the MPO would do the City bikeway plan. Councilor Bushee had been trying to do that for ten years. The Committee could put it in the MTP but they needed to gather those bodies together and include the public as well. They needed to approach it by pulling advocates together

to see what could be done.

Ms. Follingstad thought that made sense. The MPO had the transportation planning responsibility and were to advise the City and County on what was needed. It shouldn't be the other way around. But they could say there was a need to address the pedestrian inventory.

Mr. Wilson said the reality was that there were two MPO staff so there was a limit to how much work they could get done. We have a lot on our plate right now. If there is crash data readily available then wholesale mapping could be pursued. He requested that staff determine how much staffing would be needed for that.

Ms. Follingstad asked if the data included crashes with pedestrians.

Mr. Wilson agreed. They wanted the priorities identified and the full master plan would be a recommendation.

Ms. Follingstad said it was a long range thing but there were short term things they could do to make it more visible.

Mr. Wilson said a separate pedestrian plan might be the answer.

Ms. Lucero suggested since the MPO had minimal staff to consider an amendment to Mr. Roger's contract to do some of that.

Mr. Wilson thought they could do the short term things but they couldn't accomplish it in the next six months.

Ms. Follingstad agreed the pedestrian issues were different from bicycle issues.

Chair Romero said this had been concentrated much on bicycles and the periphery around the city.

Mr. Tibbetts added that Mr. Bulthuis had also been concentrating on getting those pedestrians to the bus stops. The corridors all talked about pedestrian safety. He agreed that they should raise the profile of pedestrian issues so that they were addressed directly.

Mr. Wilson agreed to come back at the next meeting with a recommendation.

Ms. Follingstad requested that it be as an action item.

Mr. Tibbetts thought they could do it through Mr. Rogers or staff on their own.

Mr. Rogers agreed that he could work on it and there were some great models to use. Sidewalks had traditionally just been privately funded and that was part of the problem with BTAC. He thought Ann McLaughlin could help a lot with the gaps.

d. Update on Santa Fe Studies – NMDOT

1) I-25 Corridor Study

Mr. Morelli said Mr. Quintana was not able to attend and sent him an email. He quickly reviewed it with the Committee. There was a public information meeting last Thursday with 60 people in attendance who received it favorably. The consultant was gathering data and the next public meeting would be in six weeks

Ms. Suzanne LeBeau said she was at the meeting to represent her neighborhood association.

Mr. Pearson asked if the Phase A report was to be put on the web site.

Mr. Gallegos said it was and explained that it was under Projects on the NMDOT web site.

2) NM599 Interchange Priority Study

Mr. Morelli announced the next public meeting would be on September 30th at the Chávez Community Center.

3) St. Francis Drive Corridor Study

Mr. Morelli said the Phase A was finalized for St. Francis Drive and the next meeting would be on Sept 16th.

All three studies would be presented at the October TCC meeting.

Mr. Wilson said they needed to discuss each one. They would work with the project team to make sure.

e. Santa Fe Area Transit Service Plan Update – RPA Staff

Ms. Follingstad said the consultant hired to do the plan had a draft that would be ready in the first week in September and it would be presented on the 15th at the regular RPA meeting. She didn't know if they would make a decision on it at that meeting.

f. Enhanced Regional Transit and Rail Study Investigation – MPO Staff

Mr. Wilson said that a major recommendation of the corridor study was that transit needed to be one of

the solutions of the future. This major recommendation might be set to the side while they talked about capacity for transit and bicycles. They wanted to look at the transit and rail system to attract more people away from their cars. They needed to have a large scale study to see what the best way would be - whether changing frequency or destinations. They would include all the players to see what each entity saw as a need for the future. So they could deal with the long term. They had one meeting and would have another one tomorrow to brainstorm the study parameters. Hopefully it could be built on what the RPA had done already. They hoped to see what the optimum system would be and how to get there over time. That was how it was envisioned.

Ms. Lucero said there were many people working on it including the DOT, Park and Ride, NCRTD, and others.

Mr. Tibbetts thought if at some point they established local rail service and the system was now in place it would still be set up in a way that could work better. The goal was to find the best system.

Chair Romero said all the studies showed that transit was always the answer to solve all the problems. People looked to him to raise the transit use percentages with no plan in place.

Mr. Wilson agreed.

Ms. Follingstad noted that the St. Francis Drive study had all this transit enhancement information but yet all the alternatives in support of it were taken out of it. That was what started this conversation. Now they were putting in a recommendation or an idea for this kind of group to study a long term rethink of the study. She thought if they took out a lane, people might be more inclined to take public transit.

Mr. Pearson suggested that over several months, the TCC might be able to come up with kernels of ideas or concepts that could be incorporated into the MTP update and set the stage for future consideration.

Mr. Tibbetts said his goal was first to see where they were with the current operators and then put some money toward furthering that study with a consultant and see if they could get agreement on a direction.

Chair Romero noted that these transportation studies were not set up to address transit. There was a misconception that they didn't want to look at transit.

g. Rail Runner Service Update – MPO Staff

Mr. Tibbetts said there was not too much more to report except they were actively coordinating with Land Use and Public Works on the Rail Runner stations. They had been waiting for the developer to be part of the discussion for interim access to the Zia station. They expected to have approval by next month and wanted to move forward on it. There were lots of things to be reconciled and resolved yet. Staff were just organizing the meetings. The Councilors in that District were to direct staff to come up with a plan.

The developers were to start negotiations with the City very soon. It was to not be a park and ride station but a drop off stop.

Mr. Bulthuis asked if they would float a resolution for the Council.

Mr. Tibbetts agreed. According to Chris Blewett they were ready to work on it as soon as the City said to do so.

Mr. Wilson said they needed to meet with the Councilors on it.

3. MPO OFFICER REPORT

Mr. Tibbetts said at the last TPB meeting the staff were directed to make a more effective way for the public to be involved at the beginning of the meetings. There were some who wanted to address things on the agenda but others who wanted to speak about something not on the agenda. The suggestion was to have the public speak on non-agenda items and allow the public to speak to agenda items at the time of their consideration on the agenda.

Ms. Follingstad agreed that for action items they needed to have public comment.

Mr. Tibbetts said he was trying to create a structure so they would not have to sit through the whole meeting. Right now he felt they were not allowing the public to have much voice at the beginning.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM TCC MEMBERS

Mr. Bulthuis said there would be a meeting on Sept 1st at SFCC from 5-7 pm to talk about plan service directions because of City service reductions (second wave). That included extended furlough information.

Ms. Follingstad felt meeting here at the Federal Building was very daunting and asked if they could get a better location.

Mr. Wilson said that was their intention but Council chambers was not available today. He said they probably would sit in the chairs in front and use the PA system.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ms. Suzanne LeBeau asked what the best way was to give input about the inadequate bicycle paths around the railway.

Mr. Morelli said she should address them to Mr. Chris Blewett at MR COG.

Ms. LeBeau said she had not been getting emails about meetings either.

6. ADJOURN – Next TCC meeting: Monday, September 28, 2009

Ms. Follingstad moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Lucero seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Approved by:

John Romero, Chair

Submitted by:



Carl Boaz, Stenographer