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SFMPO TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD ( TPB)

October 09, 2008

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**MINUTES OF THE**  
**SANTA FE MPO**  
**TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD**

Thursday, October 9, 2008

**CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Santa Fe MPO Transportation Policy Board was called to order by Vice Chairman Mike Anaya (in the absence of Chairman Chavez) at approximately 10:10 a.m. in the City Council Chambers, Santa Fe City Hall, 200 Lincoln Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

**A. Roll Call**

Roll call indicated that a quorum was present as follows:

**Members Present:**

Councilor Miguel Chavez, Chairman  
Commissioner Michael Anaya  
Mayor David Coss  
Governor Robert Mora, Pueblo of Tesuque  
Councilor Matthew Ortiz  
Commissioner Jack Sullivan

**Members Absent:**

Patricio Guerrerortiz, Deputy Secretary, NMDOT  
Commissioner Harry Montoya  
Commissioner Virginia Vigil

**Staff Present:**

Mark Tibbetts, MPO Officer

**Others Present:**

Terry Brown, Traffic Engineering Consultant  
Reed Liming, Division Director of Long Range Planning, City of Santa Fe  
Timothy Rood, Transit Oriented Development Consultant  
Karl Sommer, Attorney

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Sullivan asked why Action Item D 1 had been on the agenda and secondly why it would be an *action* item. He said the Board had looked at the Rail Runner station sites in considerable



detail and the Policy Board had passed the motion to study additional sites upon the receipt of operational information about the Rail Runner.

He said a Staff memo from the Technical Coordinator had recommended the study be done in conjunction with the I-25 study once operational information had become available and the Board's policy had been outlined and he asked why this would need to be re-hashed.

*Miguel Chavez entered the meeting at time.*

Mr. Tibbetts said the plan presented by Las Soleras a year ago was different than the plan presented to the TCC last month. He said it would be an action item in light of the fact their original site for a station had been a lot closer to Cerrillos, new information would be provided and the Board's statement in December should be reaffirmed.

Mr. Tibbetts said TCC had afforded that courtesy to Las Soleras but it would be up to the Policy Board to make that decision.

Commissioner Sullivan said he recommended if the Board desired to cover the information for a third time that it be done under *Information/Discussion Item*.

Chairman Chavez said it had been duly noted on the agenda as Item D under Action Item and agreed the Board had discussed a station location in that general vicinity. He said he would like to move forward with the agenda and the presentation regarding the two possible rail station locations and a decision and possibly direct a study in that direction.

Commissioner Sullivan stated he still had the floor.

**Commissioner Sullivan moved that the agenda be approved with a change of Item D1 moved under Item E, Discussion Items, to give the Board time to hear the presentations and discuss later with the public's input on the sites. Councilor Ortiz seconded the motion.**

Mayor Coss said he wanted to propose a motion and if it failed he said he would vote to approve the agenda as presented.

He said several years ago the Board had approved looking at both sides and they had been waiting for a corridor study to be completed. Secretary Harris came to him and said the State had been interested in a transit oriented development of a State office complex inside Las Soleras and asked if the MPO had been for or against it.

Mayor Coss said he wanted to move forward with a study to gather information since he thought they might wait forever for a corridor study.

Councilor Ortiz said out of four meetings with Las Soleras that had been the first time he heard the Board would consider a transit oriented development (TOD) at the Las Soleras site with a State office complex. He said if the State had only reached out to one member of the TPB to share their concern and not to all and they were presented information and asked the Board to decide that day he would be appalled.

Councilor Ortiz was amazed that the developers not just on this plan but on the entire planning parcel hadn't raised the suggestion to all of the members. He said having read the packet Staff had been looking for a timeline and a process to study it and if he were railroaded into a decision he wouldn't be making now.

Councilor Ortiz said it distressed him if this had been the wishes of the MPO. He said it would be wrong and inside politics if the information had not been made available to all of the MPO members.

He wanted to listen to the presentation and the new information and digest it, but would not be making a decision that day. He said he made the motion to approve that specific site and it had passed unanimously with the proviso that it would be studied when the rail came on line. He said now Mayor Coss told them the Secretary had an idea to place an office complex on a site that hadn't been through the Planning Commission yet. He said it was ridiculous and the presentation would be looked at carefully.

Councilor Ortiz withdrew his second to the motion and said he would not support a decision being made on the selection of a site that day. He confirmed five people would be needed for a quorum.

**Mayor Coss moved to approve the agenda. Councilor Ortiz seconded the motion and it passed by majority voice vote with Commissioner Sullivan voting against.**

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **1. Study for future Rail Runner station location between Richards Avenue and Cerrillos Road.**

Mr. Tibbetts said Las Solares would give their presentation followed by audience comments. He said the presentation would focus on the study of a future rail station in light of the changed development plan Las Soleras had presented in December.

He said the Policy Board would be looking at the information regarding the train station *site* though the presentation would talk about land use.

Councilor Ortiz asked who would present information for the Richards Avenue connection to I-25 site.

Mr. Tibbetts said there would be comments, as specified on the agenda, related to the two sites and not all would be presentations. He said this wouldn't be a formal presentation other than the comments

to counter issues brought up by the presentation in December as to why the Las Solares developers thought the site recommended by the TCC would not be adequate and any other related comments.

Councilor Ortiz asked if the Board would be asked to decide between two different sites with a presentation on only one of them.

Mr. Tibbetts said that it would primarily be a presentation from Las Solares because of the change from their initial proposal and then a rebuttal of that issue and to highlight the need for continued study of the issue.

Mr. Karl Sommer, PO Box 2476, Santa Fe, NM 87254, introduced himself and said he represented the owners of the Las Solares Project, 534 acres currently under annexation.

He introduced others who would participate in the presentation. They provided information on their background as follows:

Mr. Tim Rood introduced himself as an architect and planner and a partner in a California consulting firm who currently led a team looking at the potential for TOD's around Rail Runner stations. He added he had worked on projects in seven states.

Dr. Stephen Dick introduced himself as the Operations Manager with Wilson and Company out of Albuquerque, New Mexico and said he had been approached by Las Soleras to evaluate the site for the appropriateness for construction of the rail station.

Mr. Terry Brown said he had been a professional engineer in New Mexico since 1977 and had been performing transportation studies for the last thirty years and traffic impact studies for the last 25 years.

Mr. Sommer said they would go through an analysis of the sites previously identified by the Board as potentials for a train stop; the Richards Avenue site and the Las Soleras site. He said he had worked a variety of forums for many years and had anticipated proceeding with a rail stop and had been asked what the Board's preference would be with respect to that.

Mr. Sommer said he would point out why the Richards Avenue site wouldn't work for a train station either as a Park & Ride or a transit oriented development. He said he would walk through questions that would arise and show why the Las Soleras site met the needs for a TOD and a Rail Runner or the MPO's additional site. He said he would explain why Las Soleras didn't have the limitations the Richards Avenue site had and why it better met the needs of a broader community.

Mr. Sommer said he would cover some of the issues and then turn it over to Mr. Terry Brown who would go through the in-depth analysis from an engineering standpoint and present limitations for that site.

He said Mr. Rood would discuss why Las Soleras would be an excellent site choice and why the Richards Avenue site wouldn't function in the same manner.

He thanked the Board and said he appreciated the opportunity to present the information and would be glad to answer any questions at the end of the presentation.

Mr. Sommer said a booklet had been provided with a traffic impact report done by Mr. Brown and information on cost and design and land use. A PowerPoint presentation would walk them through each area.

Mr. Sommer pointed to a slide and identified the Las Soleras site in regard to the Richards Avenue site and said Las Soleras had 534 acres and had applied for annexation into the City and currently had no other developers.

He said the Board had been given a packet [*exhibit A*] put together by Mr. Jim Seibert's office and page 2 had general statistics related to the Las Soleras site' versus Richards Avenue site in terms of the distance to 599, Zia Road and the greater tract.

He started with why Richards Avenue wouldn't work or be safe under the current configuration and why it physically wouldn't meet the State's regulations required for safe intersections standards even with an interchange.

He referred to the schematic of the Richards Avenue site located between I-25 north and south bound lanes about one quarter mile from Richards Avenue with an intersection between the lanes at Richards Avenue and a parking lot. He said this had been intended as a Park & Ride for people going north downtown or south to Albuquerque on the train. But Richards Avenue was a two lane road with a speed limit of 40 miles an hour, and had no bike lanes or sidewalks and one third of a mile from the nearest home. He said traffic studies showed 50,000 future residents and the need for a four lane road by 2015, which he added had been under discussion for the 20 plus years he had worked in land use.

He said this location without an interchange wouldn't work and he would show why. He then turned the presentation over to Mr. Terry Brown.

Mr. Brown said his analysis demonstrated three major problem areas in the Richards Avenue location used as a Rail Runner site: capacity, physical constraints and policy constraints.

Pointing on the slide to a typical section of roadway that would need to fit under the 1-25 bridge, he said if he superimposed the roadway section over the bridge the existing bridge piers would be 53 feet apart just outside of the driving lanes and if the bike lanes were excluded it would necessitate a wall barrier to protect the cars from the concrete piers. He said the barriers would be right at the drive lane which would create unsafe conditions.

Mr. Brown said when looking at the future Richards Avenue plan superimposed with four lanes, it exacerbated the problem.

Mr. Sommer asked why the acceleration and deceleration lane were shown as part of the facility if there would be a Rail Runner stop.

Mr. Brown said the New Mexico State Access Management Manual criteria for a driveway turning into the Rail Runner facility required acceleration and deceleration lanes based on the parking capacity of 300 vehicles.

Mr. Sommer asked if the City manual had a required length for those lanes.

Mr. Brown said they did and he had included that in his letter to the Traffic Engineer. He said according to the State Access Management Manual the requirement of a left turn lane on a 40 MPH roadway would be 325 feet with a transition taper beyond that.

He said the widened section for the required acceleration lane would be about 500 feet and the I-25 Bridge was located approximately 275 feet north of the access leaving 275 feet between the bridge and the Rail Runner access and 400-500 feet of widened roadway.

Chairman Chavez said he saw two different scenarios- a train stop used for parking and the other a station location except for development. He asked if Mr. Brown had factored into his study what would drive the design.

Mr. Brown asked if he had been referring to the transit connection.

Chairman Chavez said it had been more the *difference* in how it would function if it were a transit oriented development or just a Park & Ride.

Mr. Sommer said the analysis shown demonstrated the design as a basic Park & Ride usage. He said additional use would add traffic and might necessitate a larger and more complex design. He asked if Chairman Chavez's question had been if that would be a basic design for Park & Ride and if a TOD would add to that or detract from that in terms of traffic.

Chairman Chavez said in terms of traffic *and* the distances and the existing conditions and how that might change in the future.

Mr. Brown said the distances were independent of the TOD and would be mandated by the speed limit and that would be fixed.

Councilor Ortiz asked what the threshold would be to tip Richards Avenue from two to four lanes.

Mr. Brown said it would be based on traffic volume. He said a two lane roadway would typically carry about 15,000 cars a day. The 2030 projections were about 26,000 cars for the Richards Avenue location.

Mr. Sommer asked what the 2015 threshold would be.

Mr. Brown said it would be the same but he projected they would need four lanes by 2015 because they would have exceeded the volume.

Mr. Ortiz asked what the current threshold was.

Mr. Brown replied he thought the volume would be around 11,000 the information hadn't been readily available.

Councilor Ortiz asked if that had been the figure Mr. Brown used for his assessment for the 2015 site and Mr. Brown said it was.

Mr. Tibbetts clarified that Richards Avenue had anywhere between 9,000 and up 11,000 but didn't think it quite that high right now. Regarding Mr. Brown's statement of projected build outs and traffic generated by the year 2015, he hadn't been aware the build outs were occurring that fast.

Mr. Brown said he had based that on current volumes on Richards and the 2030 projection and it had been an approximation.

Mr. Tibbetts said Mr. Brown's projection of the existing abutments and lanes of the interstate, that the 320 feet shown between the southbound lanes and the track would be enough to accommodate a roundabout. He said roundabouts didn't require deceleration and acceleration lanes as described because it slowed the traffic down and provided access to the west or east parking. He said Mr. Brown had presented a more conventional engineering and said roundabouts were very commonly used now to access train stations and another reason more study should be done.

Mr. Brown asked if that had been a question.

Mr. Tibbetts said the question had been wouldn't a roundabout accommodate the volumes of traffic Mr. Brown had talked about in lieu of adding additional lanes; it would be 300 parking spaces added to the existing volume.

Mr. Brown asked if he had been talking about a single lane roundabout.

Mr. Tibbetts said a single lane right now since it was a two lane facility and said he thought there would be enough room using Tashara as a model; a roundabout that functioned very well.

Mr. Brown said his concern with a roundabout had been the high volume on Richards Avenue and said a roundabout might not work.

Mr. Tibbetts said in reference to Mr. Brown's 2030 projection that there would be insufficient lanes; the existing bridges might have to be replaced before then.

Commissioner Sullivan asked Mr. Brown if in his analysis of Richards Avenue, he had reviewed or considered the Santa Fe Community College District plan.

Mr. Brown said it had been considered in the 2030 forecast.

Commissioner Sullivan didn't think he had considered it.

Mr. Brown replied he used the information from the MPO traffic volumes that had been forecast in the information he had analyzed.

Commissioner Sullivan said then he *hadn't* seen the plan, but said Mr. Brown thought he had included it as part of his analysis because he had used some of the traffic projections.

Mr. Brown agreed.

Commissioner Sullivan continued that there were a number of precepts of the Community College District Plan and a key precept had been that Richards Avenue would not be turned into a four or a six lane road; that it would be more bicycle and local transit oriented and that it would not be a primary access connector and had been the reason for a secondary access off Route 14 and the reason the northeast connector in progress would connect Richards Avenue to the interchange at St. Francis.

He said just looking physically at a build out scenario to accommodate every possible car that might be there made them lose sight of the fact that there had been a community plan for Richards Avenue. He said the record should reflect the Board wouldn't deal with accommodating guesses at numbers from the years 2015 and 2030 but would accommodate people oriented development not just a numerical oriented development.

Mr. Brown said the MPO forecast should have reflected that plan because the forecast clearly showed that 26,000 vehicles a day on Richards Avenue on two lanes would not work.

Commissioner Sullivan said there *wasn't* an MPO plan. He said the Highway Department with whom he had a great deal of interaction, had been in the process of undertaking part of a study to consider the northeast connector and the other relief routes to de-motorize Richards Avenue.

He said as Mayor Coss had mentioned, the study had continued to be pushed back and given new dates, but the study had been acknowledged and the department had engaged well known consultants to analyze that very question. He said 26,000 had not been a number approved by the MPO and was not valid in terms of traffic projections; he said until the study had been completed they wouldn't know the valid number.

Mr. Sommer asked the Chairman if they could move on with the presentation rather than have a debate.

Commissioner Sullivan said that it was a debate and that Mr. Sommer had been making a one-way presentation.

Mr. Sommer began addressing Commissioner Sullivan and the Commissioner raised his voice to say he had been speaking and that he represented the district.

Mr. Sommer tried to interject that it would be a common courtesy to let him continue the presentation and the discussion became indecipherable when both men continued talking at the same time.

Chairman Chavez asked both men to take a time out and to take a breath.

Addressing Commissioner Sullivan, Chairman Chavez said he had allowed for a few questions and hadn't wanted a debate.

Commissioner Sullivan said that it *was* an action item and that by Robert's Rules of Order it necessitated a debate. He continued saying he had been sorry if the Chairman disagreed with him and had wanted to ram the presentation through but he *would* ask questions of these experts who had been introduced into the record with no counter testimony.

Chairman Chavez said he would like to continue with the presentation; he said he was sorry he had allowed questions.

Commissioner Sullivan said that made it even worse, with no questions.

Chairman Chavez said it had been known that Commissioner Sullivan blocked the interchange and wanted to shift the interchange somewhere else and that would be easy to put it somewhere else.

Chairman Chavez asked the Board to get through the presentation and then they would deal with the discussion.

Mr. Brown said he had made a similar presentation to the TCC on December 22 and he concluded by saying a Rail Stop couldn't be made at the Richards Avenue location efficiently or safely with the current I-25 overpass and bridges unless they were reconstructed at a cost of millions of dollars.

He said with regard to passing constraints he would discuss the level of service at un-signalized and signalized intersections and said Mr. Tibbets had brought up the roundabout which he had not investigated. He said using current volumes and forecast volumes the level would be that of standard level of service E or F and the next thing would be to look at an alternative. He said they had looked at the possibility of signalization and had anticipated a signal at the interchange at Beckner Road and Richards Avenue to the north and Dinosaur Trail and Richards Avenue south to I-25. He said the intersection would need signalization at the ramps and would need to signalize access to the Rail Runner; there would be up to five signals and would be up to 2,865 feet from Beckner Road down to Trip Avenue. He said the NMDOT Access Manual for Principal Arterial Roadway required a minimum of 716 feet and this would violate the State Access Management Manual.

Mr. Brown said he also wanted to discuss the various routes to access Richards from north or south versus the Las Soleras plan that would have access to and from the site from Beckner Road from the east or west, Las Soleras Drive from Cerrillos, Rail Runner Road off of Richards Avenue and 2-3 times more options than the Richards facility.

He said the 2800 feet between Beckner Road and Dinosaur Trail would barely exceed the State Access Manual policy for the spacing of traffic signals and any signal between there would violate the policy.

Mr. Brown completed his presentation by saying those were the major obstacles to the Richards Avenue option.

Mr. Sommer said to conclude he would say that Richards Avenue was busy and had no bicycle lanes or sidewalks, the platform proposed was a quarter mile from Richards Avenue and people wouldn't walk there. He said Richards Avenue didn't compare favorably to the Soleras site and he thought that the Las Soleras site would be a much better site, it had funding and they were ready to build and he added that there were no funds to build the Richards Avenue site.

Mr. Tim Rood thanked the Board for the opportunity to comment and said he would keep his remarks brief.

He said he would provide background on the need for a TOD and said that nationally land was being consumed at three times the rate of the population growth and that vehicle mileage traveled (VMT) had also increased three times the rate of the population and twice as fast as vehicle registration. He said people drove more than before and the trend had been not just more cars on the road but more miles

traveled to reach further destinations which had created a system that hadn't been working. As gas prices escalated it would only get worse.

Mr. Rood said TOD would be a tool for changing the growth patterns. He said a station could spark neighborhood growth up to 500 acres and a 90 mile Rail Runner would be the backbone of future regional and local growth management efforts in New Mexico and a tremendous asset.

He said a definition of TOD (transit-oriented development) was a high density mixed-use development within walking distance of transit. He said they had been a non-profit performance based standard of boosting ridership and reducing traffic and should have a mix of choices, generate revenue for public and private sectors and provide value for residents as well as a sense of place.

Mr. Rood said logistical constraint made the station work as a transportation system but would also need to work as an anchor of places people would want to be. He showed slides of TOD's he had worked on in other cities.

Mr. Rood talked about location and access into the stations, and how office and commercial spaces and the building of public and private partnerships would keep big business in town. He said a successful TOD would be a mix of uses; something that people would walk to and from; something that would reduce the amount of traffic and increase ridership and the variety of uses would depend on what the market would support.

He said there had been a big and growing market for TOD housing and walk-able transit and statistics had shown empty nesters and young professionals increasingly looked for urban places to live and work and had made it a factor in choosing a place to live and that made these high quality, walk-able places more competitive.

Mr. Rood said statistics showed by 2030 there would be a large population of baby boomers trying to age in place and would make the concept of the ability to get around and to walk to stores important in choosing a place to live. He said that transit ridership had increased in areas of TOD's where the factors attracted people who placed value on transit proximity in an effort to reduce the expenses of having a car or a two car family and it had become increasingly more important to employers hoping to attract employees.

Mr. Rood showed the Regional Context map with station locations and the planned roadway with connection. He said the Las Soleras site had superior access and multiple ways of access compared to the Richards Avenue site.

He showed images of the Rail Runner site in Los Lunas as an example of how Las Soleras might provide a community facility with meeting rooms, office space and coffee shops.

He said that Las Soleras had proposed a landscaped walking area in the heart of the development that might incorporate mixed use office or housing above retail and employment areas.

Mr. Rood said generally the higher density housing such as townhouses, apartments and condos used land more efficiently and met growing market demands and contributed more ridership and it worked better in a TOD than a conventional housing site. He said affordable housing had become a big concern and when located near transit boosted ridership and helped the household budget, saving about \$7,000 dollars. He said most TOD's included a range of the types of homes and that would prevent dramatic changes in the market.

Mr. Rood said it would be very important to have safe pedestrian streets. He said concerns had been made that making Richards Avenue into a viable pedestrian street had been impossible now and would be difficult in the future.

He said that Las Soleras would include an integrated trail of open space network and would create a sense of place and there would be neighborhood parks and plazas and town squares for larger gatherings. He said the open space would include sidewalks for walking and room for landscaping without the sense that it was right on the street.

Mr. Rood gave the highlights of a new study released the previous day of the effects of TOD's around the country and how traffic and parking development needs had differed from the standard conventional engineering projections.

He said transit ridership had been highly influenced by the number of jobs that could be reached by transit so the best systems were the ones where jobs could be reached by mass transit. He said the most effective strategy had been increased density around transit.

Mr. Rood pointed out when looking at the Richards site the diagram showed a half mile radius of mostly open space, much of it un-walk able and the station had been 25 feet above street level and more a parking lot, making it difficult for the facility to be accessed.

He compared the Las Solares site with Richards Avenue using the program development that had been submitted with the application. He said an estimation of 1200 housing units and 5800 jobs would be located along the 10 minute walking distance network and the station could be designed to accommodate bus transport and passengers being dropped off and would allow patrons to disperse in multiple directions as opposed to Richards with only one option.

Mr. Rood said the benefits for Santa Fe would be improved connections to Tierra Contenta and the 6,000 affordable housing units and Las Soleras would produce less traffic than neighborhoods without transit.

He said a survey of 17 TOD's around the country showed they produced an average of 44 % fewer vehicle trips than indicated by the ITT manual. He said the manuals had been produced before any transit oriented projects existed and didn't include those statistics and he said building highly accessible, walk-able developments reduced the number of car trips, parking facilities and roads that might have been needed.

Mr. Rood said trip production with TOD's had been greatest during the peak periods with 49% more people not using the roadways in the morning and 48% in the evenings and statistics showed that people working in a TOD were typically 2-5 times more likely to use transit for both work and non-work trips, than other commuters in a region.

Mr. Rood provided a few more statistics:

- Those with no previous transit access moving into a TOD increased their transit use up to 50% and as the network of transit linked more jobs, educational and cultural facilities the ridership increased
- Households who lived in a TOD were about half as likely to own a car or about half the amount of cars, producing more savings and less impact on traffic.

Mr. Rood concluded:

- That Las Soleras had the potential for at least 250+ acres of quality mixed use, walkable, pedestrian and transit friendly, lower impact development and Richards had none.
- He said Las Soleras had great potential for feeder transit bus access and "kiss" and ride and Richards had none.
- He said major improvements would be needed at Richards for which funding hadn't been identified and Las Soleras had funding to not only build the station but the infrastructure to get people in and out of it.
- Bike access and walking access would be easy access for about 1200 homes and 5800 jobs at Las Soleras versus Richards 80 homes within walking distance and hazardous at Richards Avenue.
- He said the study found that TOD's had an average of 40-50% less parking and the station parking lot would be available on evenings and weekends for festivals on the plaza and other uses. He said Richards would be a single use facility for transit riders and wouldn't support any other use in off hours.
- He said a rough estimate of train riders would be about 1200 daily riders by having a TOD at Las Soleras and the ridership would be a huge boost to the system and would take up to 600 cars off the street daily.

Mr. Sommer said he wanted to take a moment to address some things that had been brought up by Mayor Coss and Commissioner Ortiz as to his intentions and why he was there. He said he had been brought there by the planning process. He said that in the process of working with the City Planners he had been asked where Las Soleras planning had been in relationship to the train station. He said the

indication from the planners had been whether they would want the TOD and whether it would be more appropriate than the Richards Avenue site.

He had been working with the Richardson Administration and portions of the legislative body at the State level. They had been looking at keeping State jobs in Santa Fe and had discussed building a campus around a transit oriented station. Las Soleras had been identified by the General Services Division Department and was being studied.

Mr. Sommer said the fact that there had been a party willing to build a train station and land that was planned and zoned and had infrastructure in place rather than trying to shoehorn a site into an existing neighborhood; and the idea of consolidating and keeping State jobs on a campus where the State took advantage of the use of the Rail Runner- had the Administration's attention and he had been working with them to get it done.

A lot of work was needed and the first step had been to come to the Board and say if they didn't plan it, it wouldn't get done. They could move forward without any voice from the Board but the opportunity might be lost because it hadn't been planned and then wouldn't be funded. He said if they waited for a Richards Avenue interchange to answer their questions it would be thirty years down the road judging by the experience at Richards Avenue.

Mr. Sommer said that had been why they were there and what they were asking for. He thought the information would never change; the State would have to build an interchange but that wouldn't serve the broader needs of the community with just a train stop. The properties of this community looked for a TOD and that was what he had been after.

Chairman Chavez said the Board would continue with comments that had been raised earlier.

Theresa Cardenas, 706 Los Prados de Guadalupe, Albuquerque, said she was a native of Santa Fe and a home builder in Albuquerque and she specialized in senior housing. She said she would be working to design a senior 55+ community and housing for large developments that would ensure the next generation housing used the right technology.

She said a study revealed to build assisted living buildings in the community wouldn't be feasible because of the basic health care workers and the problem with the cost of housing. She said the community had been aging and there was a large retirement community that ultimately would bring pressure for health care workers to be brought into the homes allowing people to age in their homes longer.

She suggested that the transit station would be a vehicle for bringing lower paid care givers into people's homes. She said without the transit piece it wouldn't work and that made it important to have the transit center. She thought further study would show a decrease in the higher level needs of service and that assisted living wouldn't be needed and it would allow people to age in their own homes.

Ken Joseph, 4001 Autumn Square Drive in Santa Fe, said he was there to represent Monte del Sol Charter School which Las Soleras had donated land to and was a school founded in a creative and sustainable community.

He found the report compelling primarily because Las Soleras had been working to create a sense of community and identity on the south side and the train stop appeared to be a critical element in giving more people a higher sense of identity and where the south side of Santa Fe could thrive with the rest of the town and be a great place to be and he encouraged it.

Richard Lange, Nava Adé Home Owner's Association said he represented the Ad Hoc Committee for the home owners on Las Soleras. He said eight years ago the home owners' association worked with the Las Soleras developers and the City from 2001 to the fall of 2002 to develop a plan for the south side of the community. He said that led to the land use plan and they had consulted and contacted various people and had gone over the general plan to be fully informed of how to help strengthen the community and make it viable.

He said the home owner's thought the decision for a transit site had been premature and the presentation had been prompted by and paid for by the developer. He said they hadn't heard from the Highway Department so only one side had been represented.

Mr. Lange said a lot had been said about TOD and again the home owner's thought the idea had been premature and hadn't been considered and should not bias the decision about a train site.

Mr. Lange said the third point would be that the TOD presentation had been the first time the association had heard about it. He said the train site had been mentioned but the dramatic changes in plans had never been discussed.

Mr. Lange read a paragraph from the current General Land Use Plan based on increases in the commercial land usage. He said the amended plan contained a total of 215 acres for commercial use within Las Soleras and because the amount of residential units within the current amended plan were nearly identical this tended to create a commercial destination in and of itself, which had been a concern.

He said 68 acres of scenic highway corridor would be eliminated by the amended plan leaving a 200 foot span of trail along the highway, which would be the future Beckner Road. He said the shift would not only be from the City of Santa Fe but would rob the community of the 40 acre park and the remaining open space for trails and recreational activities.

Mr. Lange said the train station transit site would serve as a destination stop with a significant ramification being increased commercial traffic from both the City and County residents north and south of Santa Fe who wanted to shop and drop. He said the association's concern would be what it did to the community which had been conceived and approved by City, Staff, and the community.

Mike Gomez, 1892 Quemado Street, a member of the Candlelight Neighborhood Association Steering Committee said he was there as a concerned citizen. He said the Candlelight Neighborhood Association was adjacent to a railroad station and the TOD had been a scourge causing the neighbors a lot of pain. He said the developer had tried to shoehorn the development into an existing neighborhood without taking into account the traffic-some of the worst problems in the area- neighborhood land uses, zoning codes, parking, and public input. He said the neighborhood hadn't known of the approval until after the fact.

He said the reason he was there had been to make sure the same thing wouldn't happen again on the other side of town.

Mr. Gomez said the proposed station in the middle of I-25 would be the worst location for traffic and for views. He asked who would want to drive down I-25 and see a huge parking lot. He said in Las Soleras it would be a big vacant parcel and neighbors could be buffered and they could choose if they wanted to live there or not. He said a TOD at Las Soleras would be a "no-brainer."

Mr. Sommer asked to make a comment to Mr. Lange's statement that it had been "the first time the home owner's had heard about the TOD." He said Mr. Lange left out that the property had been approved for a master plan in the EZA which included the location of the train site on the plan, which Mr. Lange and his association had participated in, was aware of and had not opposed when the train site had been moved within this same development. He said this wasn't the first time the TOD had shown up on maps and there had been no objection at the EZA.

Mr. Sommer said when the 2003 General Plan had been discussed this train station was just a dream. He said it was now here and offered a major change and opportunity.

Mr. Sommer in conclusion apologized to everyone for his earlier outbursts, particularly to Commissioner Sullivan and he said he hadn't meant any disrespect.

Councilor Ortiz said he would be leaving in ten minutes, but his original point stood. It had been a lot of information to digest-not just Richards Avenue and Las Soleras but whether a third train site would be necessary. He said there were two selected sites and the train wasn't there yet. The sites should be decided after the trains were actually there.

Councilor Ortiz said he had specific questions on the traffic presentation and the TOD. He said Mr. Rood had suggested adjacent property would benefit from the train station at Las Soleras. He had a radius that included the South side of I-25 and asked if it had been proposed that the developer would pay for the access coming from the south as well as the north and if a bridge would be built on both sides.

Mr. Rood said the county had proposed a road over-crossing and the purpose had been to show that if the county proceeded with funding there would be even greater access to the community college district. He said if not there would still be opportunity for a pedestrian bridge and a connection to Dinosaur Trail, but that hadn't been germane to the issue. He said the low density development would not fall under

anyone's definition of a TOD so the potential at Los Soleras would be a TOD with a vast majority of uses west of I-25.

Councilor Ortiz said under existing conditions, the potential for jobs for people within that radius, assuming there would be no connection to the south side, had been no jobs or housing units at this time.

Mr. Rood said that was incorrect. He said the 5800 jobs and 1200 housing units would all be located within Las Soleras to the west of I-25.

Councilor Ortiz said that presumed those entitlements would be approved. He said the question came back to whether a third train stop would be needed given the existing situation and he thought Staff had recommended that there would be a need to study it further. He said that had been supported by the presentation given and would be an issue for the Board to decide.

He said he understood the limitations on the Richards Avenue interchange; they had been clearly demonstrated. He said he saw the potential for Las Soleras but the potential had been completely dependent upon the direction of the rail operation and if the tax failed the State and the Board would be in a bind because promises had been made regarding the expenditure of the funds the Board had been asked to make assumptions on.

Councilor Ortiz said if the assumptions had been picked apart throughout the presentation the Board could say it had been speculative and had been asked to make a decision based on contingencies that might not come into effect.

He said the Board had been asked to make a decision on a proposal that had been rife with different contingencies. He addressed Mr. Sommer and asked if he knew the proposal access map he used in the presentation had been wrong. He said when the south annexation had been approved the roads had a different alignment and the connections used weren't as shown.

He asked Mr. Sommer also if he knew the traffic assumptions were incorrect that he made (on page 8) regarding the alignment of Beckner Road. He said he had specifically asked that a realignment of Beckner Road be considered to T off and form an intersection with the Homewise Development and he thought it had been made a condition of the approval.

Councilor Ortiz said Mr. Sommer had taken proposals that were old and consistent with what his development wanted to pursue and not necessarily with what the City process had been for those developments.

He said the Board had been told to make assumptions based on the connectivity of the road network presented and they had not been accurate or what had been approved. He said Beckner Road hadn't been approved at that alignment and Mr. Sommer's assumptions had been predicated on the projection of Richards Avenue based on incorrect or unapproved assumptions. He asked why the Board should be expected to make a decision on that.

Mr. Sommer said the crucial fact had not been the alignment but that the access there existed, whether re-aligned or not. He said the purpose of the drawing had not been to show the exact points of access; it had been the Rail Runner site would have five or six points of access, where the Richards Avenue site had one.

Mr. Sommer said no one had talked about eliminating those accesses anywhere on any plan.

Councilor Ortiz asked if Mr. Sommer would agree it fair to conclude the reason the Board should make a decision that day would be that it benefited Las Soleras' development application process with the City.

Mr. Sommer said in part that had been fair but he added that if this didn't get planned now a plan would be approved by the City without it. He said they had been told the plan in the City process contained a rail station and without that the plan hadn't been justified so the rail station would be planned differently and the campus would get planned somewhere else.

Councilor Ortiz said again, this had been the first time he heard of a potential State complex at the rail station and he asked if the MPO would be presented with the information in advance of making the decision or if it would just come from the presentation and Mayor Coss.

Mr. Sommer said he had presented what he knew at that point and what he had been working on. He said presentations had been made to the legislature and their building and planning commission who planned all state campuses. He said they needed one more and their idea had been to locate the site in Santa Fe if the components were available.

Mr. Sommer said the commission had looked at the site and he had met with the legislature on their needs and had been moving forward to make a presentation to their planning commission. He said it hadn't been made public knowledge because the commission had been in the process of identifying their needs and funding and whether it had been compatible with the design plan.

Councilor Ortiz asked if that information wouldn't support the recommendation that Staff made for additional time to look at the information. He asked if the Board had been clear this would happen wouldn't that benefit the development of the TOD. He said it was easier to make a decision with more facts available; and for something that big it would seem Staff's recommendation should be taken.

Mr. Sommer said his plan hadn't been dependent on the State campus moving here. He said if they didn't get a train stop the TOD uses discussed wouldn't get planned in the City and the State would go elsewhere. He said the priority for the State had centered on the TOD. Another site the State had identified was the South Capital District that would add 600,000 feet of offices at Cordova and St. Francis but hadn't been feasible traffic wise.

Councilor Ortiz said, again the Board had been asked to decide in the best interest of Santa Fe City and County and that kind of information made it easier. He said typically after the approvals, the residents get built first and the commercial follow later. He said this had been an example of commercial development driving the phases of the project development and not the residents. He said that type of information would only be borne out over time and not something that could be decided now. He asked what if the Board approved this and the State decided not to take another turn.

Mr. Sommer said they would have planned it and put someone in their place and it would be a similar use. He said normally the community college district housing developed but in the last six months they had seen the housing market wouldn't recover for three to ten years; the demand for housing had fallen off and recovery would be a long time in coming. He said it hadn't been the same in respect to a city to generate and plan for producing jobs.

Councilor Ortiz said the question of whether to study this or not had been considered when they approved this. He said he understood the rush to judgment but didn't think it led to a better planning process at the City. He said if the Board had been making assumptions and making recommendations based on conversations with the Secretary of Transportation or other officials he said for the record he would be very skeptical in what the DOT said in light of past representations and the tax referendums.

He said if a decision were made to push that office space burden on the south side residents in order to save those residents who might be affected in the South Capital District, that discussion should be by the City Council and presumptions shouldn't be made now. He hadn't been privy to those conversations but didn't think this would be the proper way to get that ball in motion.

Councilor Ortiz said this proposal did need more study and said he thought with more time the proposal might gain his support but as it had been configured now he couldn't support it.

Mayor Coss said to clarify before Councilor Ortiz left, the Cabinet Secretary he had talked with had not been DOT but Kathryn Harris with DFA.

He said he thought it had been a really good discussion of the south side versus the South Capital Complex that the State may or may not involve the Board. He asked Councilor Ortiz since the body met quarterly and not wanting to hold up the planning process, if he would be interested in a second meeting in less than three months given the time to digest the information.

He said as far as the Rail Runner there were two stations; both downtown and south side didn't have a station or funding in place for one yet.

Councilor Ortiz said they had no stations *anywhere* yet and that had been the point. He said they had been continuing on the assumption that the Rail Runner would be coming in and that the tax would pass. He said they as a Board and a governing body as a compromise listened to the county colleagues that the 599 station had been needed. He said if 599 was now not a reality that information should be brought forward and studied as well.

Mayor Coss said he didn't think that had been on the table; the train would be there in December and there would be nothing on the South Side. He said the longer the delay between Richards and Las Soleras there would still be nothing.

Councilor Ortiz said for the record he thought the planning process of Las Soleras and the City should continue at whatever the pace to get through it. He thought further study would be needed before they would be able to say a third station would be needed. He said if there were traffic and parking issues and travel time had become too burdensome, they wouldn't know until the train had been up and running.

Councilor Ortiz said he would be willing to meet more than quarterly but would require more information from the State on their position and more information from Staff for potential rebuttal on what had been a one-sided presentation.

Mayor Coss asked that there be another meeting.

Chairman Chavez said it hadn't been the first time that had been discussed and suggested a follow up meeting on the two items. He said that Staff had narrowed it down and most of the station locations had been identified whether the rail coming into the City had been accepted or not.

The discussion centered on the number of stops to be centrally located between Richards Avenue and I-25 and there had been a lot of resistance with Richards Avenue. He said the Board should identify a meeting time to bring closure to the location between Richards and Cerrillos Road.

Mayor Coss said he would request a time in the near future when Mr. Guerrerortiz could be there. He said as far as the presentation the State hadn't said yes or no and he asked had the general plan come first or had they agreed with the TOD and did the City agree with the TOD going forward.

Mr. Liming thought it would be good to get a decision from the TPB on the fifth station location first and because of Las Soleras' application for general plan amendment showed the station location, they had pursued that process.

He said there had also been a different tack that Las Soleras would present their general plan to the City and the City Council would then determine the land use plan based on a station location of Las Soleras' proposal review and make a decision; understanding a final decision on a fifth station location had not been made.

He said the first process had been to review the decision made by the TPB last December on a specific station location, but he didn't think that precluded the City in absence of that, from hearing a general plan amendment with the understanding that a final decision hadn't been made. He said the City Council had been voting on a general plan amendment showing a proposed potential future transit station and said that Staff had been wrestling with the issue also.

Mayor Coss said since the entire assembled host had been present he would make a few comments. He said Las Soleras had been before them since 2002-03 and he didn't want that to be stopped again. He said in 2002 they didn't know if there would be a train and they did now. He said they knew they liked TOD's and he thought Las Soleras might be their best chance. He said there were high hopes for Zia but the neighbors didn't feel the same.

Mayor Coss said he didn't want to miss the opportunity and had never heard anyone say they wanted a TOD or a train stop at Richards. He said the idea of a Park & Ride in the middle of the interstate at Richards versus a TOD at Las Soleras didn't seem that hard and it would just be a way of how they looked at it.

He said there would be the opportunity for public/private partnership where the private sector wanted to invest in it and compared to the State moving their office out of the county, having them in town appealed to him.

He said he personally liked the Richards Avenue station and wouldn't accept that Las Soleras thought it a bad idea. He said he would like to hear the technical staff answer some of the questions.

Mayor Coss said he thought they should proceed with the general plan amendment even while awaiting the MPO in order to feel comfortable with the decision.

Chairman Chavez said this had been time well spent and he apologized for being late. He said if they used the time to express their opinions it might send a message to Staff and he agreed with much of what Mayor Coss said and that the Board should focus on the next meeting.

Commissioner Anaya said that the proposal made sense to him. He saw a train stop that would potentially have office space, mixed usage, low density and even worked for Nava Adé better than Richards Avenue would have. He said there was a place for studies but common sense made it clear and it was a shame the quorum was lost because he was ready to move forward with this.

Governor Mora said it had been a courtesy that he was with the MPO. He thought the Las Soleras station concept had been very appealing and thought the one thing going for them had been their willingness to fund the project, though he thought they had been premature in presenting the TOD concept.

He supported the concept of the train station and reiterated that the one thing that had been going for them had been their willingness to fund the project. He said they would need to keep in mind that the project would need 100% funding and Las Soleras shouldn't request subsidy from the County, State or City for anything down the road because he would lay the responsibility on their shoulders.

Chairman Chavez said he observed a resistance to improvements at Richards, I-25 interchange or otherwise and he agreed if the Board waited for the study, the Rail Runner would be upon them and they had to be ready.

He said the connections to Tierra Contenta, and the fact that this tied in with the settlement agreement had been the best way to address the issue of sprawl in an urban area and the components seemed to fit. He said if a study would be needed it would be narrowed to one of the potential stops in the general area between Richards and Cerrillos Road. He thought the project would be able to adjust the proposed site to accommodate the service with the rail line coming in. He said if they got caught in the details they might lose an opportunity they wouldn't see again in a lifetime.

Chairman Chavez said they needed to set a date before moving on and suggested combining agenda item *F, Matters from the SFMPO TPB* and *G, Matters from the SFMPO Staff*.

#### **MATTERS FROM SFMPO TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD/ MATTERS FROM STAFF**

Mr. Tibbetts said the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of November would be the regularly scheduled meeting.

Mayor Coss said he would be out of town November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Tibbetts said the second week of November would be a regular meeting and normally they would meet in December so suggested meeting Thursday, November 13, at the same time and place.

Chairman Chavez said it wouldn't have to be announced or noticed as special meeting because it would just be a regular meeting.

Mr. Tibbetts suggested calling it a special meeting because the Board had been meeting every other month and this would be the following month but at the same time as long as space would be available.

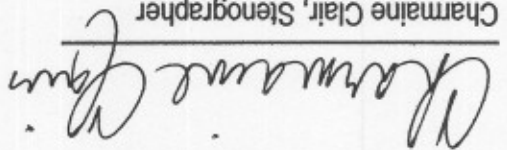
Chairman Chavez asked if the comments portion should be closed or should they allow for additional comments and information.

Mayor Coss said it should stay open for additional comments as he would like to hear from the State.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

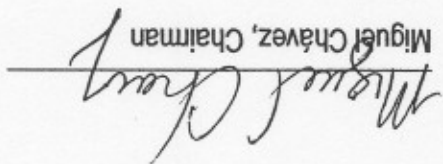
Chairman Chavez asked if there was anything else anyone would like on the agenda and seeing there wasn't he adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:27 pm.

Charmaine Clair, Stenographer



Submitted by:

Approved by:



Miguel Chavez, Chairman

