

**Summary Index of the
Santa Fe MPO
Transportation Policy Board
December 13, 2007**

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Roll Call	Quorum Present.....	1
Approval of Agenda	Approved as amended.....	1
Approval of Minutes		
October 16, 2007	Approved.	2
November 8, 2007	Postponed.	2
A. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS		
3. Presentation - Station Locations		
a. TCC Recommendations	Presentation.....	2-3
b. Public Input Summary	Discussion.	3-5
B. Public Hearing	Public comments.	5-7
C. ACTION ITEMS		
3. Station Selections	Locations Recommended.....	7-11
2. City of Santa Fe Resolution	Withdrawn.	11
1. EA Resolution	Withdrawn.	11-12
A. 2. Consultant-led Study	Presentation.....	12
1. 2008 Meeting Schedule	Adopted schedule.	12-13
Matters from the TPB	None.....	13
Matters from SFMPO Staff	None.....	13
Communications from DOT/FHWA	None	13
Communications from the Floor	None.....	13
Adjournment	13

MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE MPO
TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

Thursday, December 13, 2007

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Santa Fe MPO Transportation Policy Board was called to order by Chair Miguel Chávez at approximately 3:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, Santa Fe City Hall, 200 Lincoln Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

Members Present:

Councilor Miguel Chávez, Chairman
Commissioner Michael Anaya
Mayor David Coss
Councilor Matthew Ortiz
Commissioner Jack Sullivan
Commissioner Virginia Vigil

Members Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Mark Tibbetts, MPO Officer
Lucas Cruse, MPO Senior Planner

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor Ortiz, in light of time, proposed to move items B and C up to the front of the agenda, with A3 then B then C then A-1, A2. **He moved to approve the Agenda as thus amended. Mayor Coss seconded the motion.**

Commissioner Sullivan asked to move his resolution after the Railrunner. Councilor Ortiz and Mayor Coss agreed and the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 16th and November 8th 2007

October 16, 2007

Commissioner Anaya moved to approve the minutes of October 16, 2007 as submitted. Commissioner Sullivan seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

Commissioner Sullivan said he just got the November minutes.

November 8 2007

Commissioner Sullivan moved to postpone the November 8 minutes to the next meeting. Councilor Ortíz seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

A. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

3. Presentation of station location study

a. Overview of SFMPO process & TCC recommendations

Mr. Tibbetts reported, noting that they were instructed to hear more public comment. He said they had two open house meetings, one at the Southside Library on December 8th and one at the Genoveva Chávez Community Center on December 11th. He said they had 60 written comments and those were included in the packets.

He said the TCC recommended a total of 5 stations for full build out, the first two as proposed by the MR COG/DOT and three more. The three locations recommended were: 599 and Hwy 14, Zia at St. Francis, and Richards Avenue. He said they would all work together to meet the long-term regional needs and metro needs for Santa Fe. Each location had its own specific advantage and complementary feature to work together. He said 599 as park and ride, Richards with neighborhoods, and Zia for transit connections. He clarified that all three would have bike and transit connections.

He said each of them also had issues that needed to be addressed and could be mitigated with study as time went on.

Mr. Cruse said the open house meetings got over 50 people to sign in with written comments. He said there was general, strong support for those locations. They really did work together and probably not all five would be open on opening day. He said there was lots of support for the Zia location.

Other comments included the traffic concerns at Galisteo so the station should not be a park and ride but multi-modal. Richards showed the broadest support. Only one was opposed. Many said that was their number one priority. Many said an interchange was needed as well. There were concerns at 599 that it was the most expensive and development was already happening elsewhere.

Chair Chávez asked if the majority of time was focused on those three.

Mr. Cruse agreed and said they had displays around the back and asked for added input on them. He said they transcribed every written comment.

Commissioner Sullivan said he didn't see it in the packet but understood that a service area map with circles was developed to be accommodated by various stations. He noted that if they moved forward with the five stations, a station at Richards would require that those circles overlap.

Mr. Cruse said the marketing analysis showed Richards as a major draw. He said the marketing analysis was also in the packets and on display boards as well.

Commissioner Sullivan said he saw at least ten negative comments on Richards. He said he could not read the maps.

Chair Chávez asked that the maps be brought forward for Commissioner Sullivan.

Mr. Chris Blewett briefly explained it and said he would speak more about it later.

Commissioner Sullivan said there seemed to be a thin area along Richards for the market. He felt those people could just go out to 599.

Chair Chávez commented that this part of the agenda was just a presentation on the public meetings.

b. Public input summary

Chair Chávez invited anyone to come and make public comments.

Councilor Ortiz asked that those who had a presentation present first.

Commissioner Sullivan asked for time limits for developer presentations.

Mr. Blewett explained that there were lots of different components to consider: platform, auto park, access, bus shuttle, pedestrian/bike confections, land. And all were

driven by station function.

He showed the 550 station and the parking there. A signal would be put in at the roadway and a bus station. That would run about \$4 million and serve as a regional park and ride.

He said the downtown Bernalillo station was in contrast with a tiny parking lot holding up to 20 cars. A station like that would run about \$2 million. Other examples were shown

New Mexico 599 - He said this location would function as a regional park and ride with parking, bus access, future expansion, connections to Northern New Mexico. It would need an over/underpass. The estimated cost was \$4.5 to \$5.5 million.

He showed the 599 markets that included Rancho Viejo. Without Zia or Richards, it would get even bigger.

Zia/St. Francis - He said the cost estimate depended on the design. Most research showed if you were going to spend half of your trip in the car, you wouldn't use the train.

He said the possibilities for Zia were as a neighborhood scale station/TOD, to discourage auto trips by limiting parking availability, improving Walk/Bike connections to the east side of St. Francis, and Bus Access. The estimated cost would be \$900,000 to \$2.5 million, depending on private participation. The higher costs would be for a larger parking at 200-250 spaces.

Mr. Blewett briefly summarized comments outside of the meetings. He said the concerns with Zia were about traffic but many supported it if done right.

He said the 599 location, in the entire history of the project, only got one adverse comment at last month's MPO meeting. He received 30 emails in support of 599 since the last meeting.

Councilor Ortiz thanked the State for their specific response.

Commissioner Anaya asked for clarification on the layout for the 599 concept on the northbound lane for those wanting to go on north on 599.

Mr. Blewett explained that this was just a concept. You would have to push that northbound onto the other ramp. There were two off ramps there and that was one of the challenges they would have to deal with.

Chair Chávez said it went beyond just 599 north but also he was concerned with safety there. He hoped that was factored in as well.

Mr. Blewett agreed.

B. Public Hearing – comments on station locations

John Mahoney made a presentation about locating at Las Soleras. He said they had heard him before.

He commented that the DOT and MR COG were trying to get the train here as soon as possible and asked how they were going to function with it and how it would serve the people. He said they were developing 710 acres, with mixed use, 2500 residences. A million sq ft of offices, and retail, 2000 jobs. He reiterated that they were also offering to the community a public/private partnership to build the station and some services around it. He said no one has had a chance to really look at how much that would cost.

He said he was told it would cost \$50 million if they had the train come out of the median.

He suggested the TPB might ask that over the next 4-6 weeks, they (Las Soleras) work with DOT and COG on costs there. Rather than eliminate it based on geography or grades, he proposed they take a couple of weeks and come up with some designs and costs and have the public participate. He added that they would have in the middle a parking structure they would design and turn over to the state.

He felt it could stop in the middle, just like 599 and they could get people to the station and the cost would be much less.

Mr. Alan Hoffman, founder of Oshara spoke in favor of the Richards Ave. Station. He said he had the opportunity to visit the coastal train south of San Diego and to take the train out of San Diego and was surprised to see hundreds of bicycles at each station.

The Richards Ave station, in his estimation, would be 1,800 feet from the Oshara Plaza. There would be a substantial employment base there and they were working to make it bike friendly.

He commented that this station would be there for decades. The cost of gasoline would go up, congestion was rising. The bus also went by Oshara presently. The idea was to eliminate the need for driving a car to get to the train. He felt the more they thought about bike and pedestrian connections, the better. It would make sense to put the station within reach by a bicycle rather than depending on a park and ride.

He said if they didn't build a station at Richards, they were saying park and ride. People from Rancho Viejo urged him to come to these meetings. He said the SFCC was specifically design to minimize the need for an auto and increase pedestrian and bike access.

He said Oshara would look at the possibility of providing connections from station to

Oshara Village and thought it could work well.

Ms. Anna Hansen, Director of Development for Oshara Village spoke next and said she supported all 3 locations and was speaking regarding Richards Ave.

She said Richards would be another community station. Richards was the largest growth area in the County. At Oshara they planned to have employment districts and just built a successful roundabout on Richards and bicyclists were happy with it. She said Oshara was a local part of the community and they had events there regularly. All three locations were important.

Ms. Sandra Maez, Northern Pueblos Regional Transportation Planner, spoke next. She applauded the 599 station because it gave her hope that one day they would have a reliant and efficient station serving the northern areas.

Mr. Merritt Brown, property owner at Zia and St. Francis, spoke next. He noted they presented at TCC a couple of weeks ago. He said he understood the hesitation at Zia because of what went with it. But with the designation as a stop, his company could go in and do the development to help with it. It would be at the low end because a lot of it would be borne by him. He said they would put into the design what the public was looking for. They had the ridership and market right there today and when it opened up there would be a ton of people walking and biking there.

He agreed with the comments from Mr. Tibbetts and staff, it was just one element out of a network of stations needed for Santa Fe.

Mr. Leo Norish spoke next on behalf of Rancho Viejo in support of the Richards Station. As an active cyclist he biked today and if the Richards station were not there, he admittedly could drive his car to 599. But with Richards, he would not have to drive the car. It was a perfect input point for SFCC and Rancho Viejo. It was not an either/or in his mind. They were both serving different purposes.

Mr. Thomas Cogland, resident near Zia, said he had been a proponent of Zia from the beginning. It should be built without parking or with minimal handicapped parking. A paved trail would be built along the track there. It was accessible to transit. Additional transit would be required if it was there.

He said he also supported the bypass station. It was an easy way to get people from the north to Albuquerque. Much easier than the downtown station. He said he was neutral on Richards. He thought Merritt Brown would provide the Zia station at a relatively low cost.

Mr. Paul Keaton, Rancho Viejo, said he left a letter with the Board. The letter said the optimistic projection was only \$2 million revenue. He hoped the project would go through but felt guilty because residents of many other New Mexico towns would have

very little use of it. The best they could do was to expand the ridership as much as possible by providing as many stops as possible.

He thought the distribution recommended by the TCC was the best. Financing a mass transit system that wouldn't stop where riders were was like a restaurant not opening at meal times.

Ms. Twyla Thompson, who- worked for WR Brown, spoke next. She had a letter from the Superintendent of SFPS and 5 schools near Zia. She felt that was important for recruitment and training. She added that they had St. Vincent's Hospital and many neighbors. She asked the neighbors from nearby Zia to stand up. They did.

She noted there were over 3,000 businesses in the neighborhood and they had been overwhelmed with support for it.

Mr. David Rasch, City Historic Planner Supervisor, spoke next. He said he reviewed the plans for the depot structure. He noted that the railroad station and Gross-Kelly Building were both landmarks so he cautioned the TPB about the station design. He pointed out that it was a Spanish Baroque style and not in accord with the Railyard Master Plan. He added that the HDRB had to review it before going forward.

Chair Chávez closed the public hearing.

C. ACTION ITEMS

3. Selection of Rail Runner station locations

Councilor Ortíz thanked the developers who came forward and testified. He heard from many residents on Zia and a few on 599.

He asked in regard to Richards or Las Soleras, and, given the information they received, that those were very close together and wondered if it was feasible to have both.

Mr. Tibbetts said they looked at that a lot. Beside the grade issue, Mr. Mahoney mentioned a shift at that site. He said they had not seen that proposal yet.

Councilor Ortíz said that Las Soleras had provided a level of detail that was very clear in general concept as many of the others. He said he was asking about proximity.

Mr. Tibbetts said the Las Soleras site would be too close to 599 to warrant it. The east of Richards station would be better and capture the car traffic.

He noted the potential minimizing of traffic at Zia and said the whole purpose of the

train was to relieve traffic. Zia and Rodeo were almost exclusive to Santa Fe commuters. 599 was a great regional stop but ... it made sense for spacing as well as capture, as the man from Rancho Viejo said, you could walk or bike and without Richards, you would have to drive to Zia or 599.

He added that right now, the Richards location would not require an overpass or underpass. You could almost board from your car.

Councilor Ortíz said he would not get into the other parts at Las Soleras but it seemed like both of those sites were in that same neighborhood. Without being able to rank them, those two sites would be worthy of consideration because it didn't make sense that they could have both.

He said he was persuaded that 599 was needed and served a purpose that was different than the commuter stops. He was also convinced that if they made the Zia site more non-automotive, that was the policy they tried to embrace and here was the perfect opportunity. They had the chance now and the figures to do them.

He felt the discussion about how they dealt with SFCC and northbound routes of the region, was a discussion that needed to come after the Railrunner was up and running. But he said he was always thinking about southbound and didn't think about people driving to 599 to come into town.

He thought Zia and 599 were the two best locations. Then throw in Richards/Las Soleras as a later decision. He thought they could make a decision on those two stations immediately and needed further analysis of the Richards/Las Soleras station.

Mayor Coss thought they were getting somewhere now. After the last meeting he heard so much from the rural constituents and was prepared to say yes to 599. There was a neighborhood process. He said he was getting 50/50 at Zia and without a big parking lot, Zia made more sense.

He said he was prepared to support 599 and then Zia as a non park and ride. There was still neighborhood planning going on for Zia.

Commissioner Sullivan thought those suggestions had merit and they should move forward with those two. He felt they needed ridership and usage before any more stations were needed.

He said the County was very supportive of bicycle usage and had Arroyo Hondo trail from Richards to the Rail Trail and an additional trail just north of Santa Maria Church to Route 14. He said the County owned all the ROW and construction would begin shortly. He said they were required to have 50% open space there and it could be worked into a design with the 599 station so they could have bicycle trail access to the proposed 599 station.

Commissioner Vigil said she was hearing a consistent message here from the Board and the public. It correlated well with what staff were recommending. There was more prioritization. She wanted to make sure they had a full build out package from DOT at these sites based on the testimony they had heard.

She said she would like for the design experts to figure out what could be done and what design would be possible. She didn't want to exclude Las Soleras or Richards and heard they wanted a couple of weeks more.

She favored going with staff's recommendations. That would include 599, Zia and Richards and didn't think one was more favorable than another.

Commissioner Anaya agreed with the 599 stop. He said he sat on the NCRTD Board and they passed a resolution of support for 599. Also, the 599 rail stop was good for south 14 residents. He agreed with the Zia stop only if the public could help design that stop. As for Richards Avenue, he didn't want to throw it out. One day there would be an interchange there. SFCC, Oshara, Rancho Viejo. And some day the road would extend from Eldorado. He wanted to see that be included.

He said he would also like to see Las Soleras stop be considered. It was a big piece of property there.

Chair Chávez said that he and Commissioner Anaya were both on the NCRTD and this morning they had a committee meeting about transit from the north. They were considering how that interface would take place and ridership could be seamless from one part to the next. They had concerns how the Santa Fe Trails tied in also. They did know there was ridership coming from the north into the City now. The demand was such that the NCRTD would have to purchase one day trips for them.

He felt all three stops would tie in with all of that and move on to Albuquerque. And also the need to prioritize. They wanted to know what the components were for that service to work and where and when.

Commissioner Anaya said were they going to decide on one or two or three or four and then it would go to DOT and then they would come back with diagrams and money.

Chair Chávez believed they could have up to five without detracting from commute time.

Mr. Blewett agreed that five was the maximum.

Councilor Ortiz said that counted the end of the line as one of the five.

Mr. Tibbetts commented about the further study on Richards and Las Soleras that, unless they were considered, they would not be considered in the corridor studies.

There was still an issue with Richards or Las Soleras. It would need to be one or the other and they were addressing the immediate needs. He said there was no question that Las Soleras would be big but they would have access to Richards.

He said they needed to have a designation and initiate some preliminary designs and to incorporate them into the corridor studies which would begin in a couple of months.

Commissioner Anaya asked what exactly he wanted from the Board today.

Mr. Tibbetts said the other locations that had been brought up could be local stops in the future. The five were the two already established and three others. The study and costs were charged back to the DOT at this point. They would do the traffic impacts and mitigation. It required some designation from this Board.

Councilor Ortíz moved to design the following sites for the train station locations. That they endorse TCC recommendations that there be 5 stops, including 599, Zia, and one in between (Richards Avenue). And designating 599 and Zia be on-line before train operations begin and the one between Richards and Cerrillos Road to be studied further and come back to the MPO for further designation after operations were put together and that the Zia station be specifically and narrowly tailored that would minimize auto traffic.

Commissioner Anaya seconded the motion.

Commissioner Vigil asked what the rationale would be for coming back to the Board. She asked why not decide where the stop would be and let DOT go with the design process to identify the stop.

Councilor Ortíz said it needed more analysis because to give equal credence to the options that had been presented to the Board.

Chair Chávez agreed that the Las Soleras site had better merits, it brought a public/private partnership - a different scenario and added something to the discussion and could be an economic factor.

Commissioner Vigil asked DOT if the motion as made was doable.

Mr. Blewett said he took it to mean that 599 and Zia/St. Francis would require a different process because of the land holdings. The second part was to do what they would call an alternative analysis for another station location. He said their one concern was the money. The Board had picked two and a third that they would like developed further.

Mr. Blewett said he thought they could do that alternative analysis.

Commissioner Anaya asked Mr. Blewett if he were speaking for the DOT -

Mr. Blewett said he was.

Commissioner Anaya asked at what time they would want to bring this back to the Board.

Councilor Ortíz said if the motion were successful, he didn't need to see 599 come back here. The City station at Zia would have to go through the City process. The fifth was wholly dependent upon the analysis and maybe reality testing of the developers' proposals. That could take even after it became operational. If the Board wanted to hear it earlier, he was fine with that. The fifth station, they had more time to decide what it would look like.

Mr. Blewett thought something like this could take a while. He was trying to picture how the scope could be. Maybe 8-9 months to look at that whole stretch, work some concepts have a public process. He did not anticipate they would have money to build it.

He said they would work with the Board to find the resources to build it. That would be the challenge.

Commissioner Sullivan said he would support the motion. It was a two-tier direction to move forward with 599 and Zia stations and second tier as operational data became available and site analysis that an interim location be evaluated. It might be one or another or maybe none.

He thought that was a reasonable approach. They wanted to lock in the funds they had prior to the legislative session so they could give clear direction. There was work to be done on the fifth station. This allowed the flexibility to do it.

The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. City of Santa Fe Resolution: Rail Runner Service to Santa Fe- Councilor Ortíz

Councilor Ortíz noted they passed this a month ago and he did not ask for adoption by the MPO.

Chair Chávez said they put it on if he wanted to discuss it further. It had been postponed now.

1. SFMPO Resolution: Rail Runner Alignment EA - Commissioner Sullivan

Commissioner Sullivan said the guts of this was the EA statement. His concern was that the EA statement done had excluded the stations on I-25 and they were the biggest generator of environmental impacts. Those were not included in the Railrunner EA. He explained that this resolution asked that the I-25 locations be included in that EA statement.

He said the DOT agreed that once they made a decision, they would come back with the EA studies for those stations. He asked if the DOT was clear on that and ready to do it.

Mr. Blewett said they were.

Commissioner Sullivan said he would then withdraw it from the agenda.

Councilor Ortíz said okay.

Mr. Tibbetts asked that they have the consultant-led membership report given.

3. Selection of Rail Runner station locations

2. Consultant-led Membership and Structure Study draft report

Ms. Braswell reported and showed her email and phone number.

She brought meeting notes and a draft. She said she would like comments

ebraswell@wilbursmith.com 281-8814-6362.

She provided several comments on the report.

She cautioned about the differences in RPO funding and MPO funding.

Chair Chávez said the northern pueblos were working through RPO.

Ms. Braswell agreed. She said the new members would require new JPAs. She said some of them would be action items in the future. She said she would have an action plan at the Feb 14th meeting or a separate meeting.

Councilor Ortiz thanked Councilor Heldmeyer for bringing cookies.

A 1. SFMPO 2008 meeting schedule

Mr. Tibbetts briefly explained the schedule for 2008. He said the meeting schedule was to avoid this congestion. Every other month and to come a little earlier to finish by 4 p.m.

Commissioner Sullivan asked that they have an executive session on the next agenda.

Commissioner Anaya moved to approve the 2008 schedule. Councilor Ortíz seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

MATTERS FROM THE SFMPO TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

None.

MATTERS FROM THE SFMPO STAFF

None.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM NMDOT AND FHWA

None.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

ADJOURNMENT - Next scheduled meeting was 2 p.m. February 14th, 2008

Commissioner Vigil moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Sullivan seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:00 p.m.

Approved by:

Councilor Miguel Chávez, Chair

Submitted by:



Carl Boaz, Stenographer