

**SANTA FE MPO TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD
THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 2024, 5:00 PM
737 AGUA FRIA STREET, MONICA ROYBAL CENTER
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO**

1. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Santa Fe MPO Transportation Policy Board was called to order by Commissioner Justin Greene, Chair, at 5:02 pm, on Thursday, March 28, 2024, and was held at the Monica Roybal Center, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Commissioner Justin Greene, Chair
Mayor Alan Webber
Commissioner Anna Hansen
Commissioner Hank Hughes
Councilor Alma Castro, via Zoom
Paul Brasher, NMDOT

MEMBERS ABSENT

Robert Friener, Pueblo of Tesuque
Councilor Pilar Faulkner, Excused
Alternate, Councilor Jamie Cassutt, Excused

OTHERS PRESENT

Erick Aune, MPO Officer
Leah Yngve, MPO
Hannah Burnham, MPO
Regina Wheeler, Director, Public Works
Esther Cooker
Rich L' Amie, Director, Marketing and Communications, NCRTD
Anna Brunson, Transit Analyst, NCRTD

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION A motion was made by Commissioner Hansen, seconded by Commissioner Hughes, to approve the agenda as presented.

VOTE The motion passed on a voice vote.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, FEBRUARY 22, 2024

MOTION A motion was made by Commissioner Hughes, seconded by Councilor Castro, to approve the minutes as presented.

VOTE The motion passed on a voice vote.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

A. DISCUSSION: INITIATING DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2025-2050 SANTA FE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Mr. Aune said every 5 years, the Federal regulations require us to update our Plan. This is our official formal notice that we are beginning the process. Our goal is to have the Plan updated by the August, 2025 meeting of this Board.

Mr. Aune explained the process and the City's intention to bring back the Transportation Advisory Board.

Ms. Wheeler asked Mr. Aune to speak to his efforts to become more interactive regarding project lists and updates.

Mr. Aune said our goal is to move to a more interactive interface with a button that takes you to a map showing the status of projects.

Chair Greene asked will that application solicit input.

Mr. Aune said we got an estimate that included all the bells and whistles, but with our constrained budget, we will have to pick and choose.

Councilor Castro said we had a robust conversation last night about bikes and transportation. Will there be any opportunities around that for MPO to get funding.

Mr. Aune said we are the go-to group on those issues. It is possible there could be more Federal funding.

Ms. Wheeler said we expect to bring in \$11 million in Federal funds this year for Transit for bus improvements, a transit center and transit planning.

Chair Greene said given the funding opportunities, if you are constrained in

funding, would you come to this group to “shake the tree” at the City or County .

Mr. Aune said that has not been a precedent for the City or County to go beyond the funding they have agreed to through the formula agreement. We do not intend to come to you at this point.

Mayor Webber arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Wheeler said MPO is now part of Public Works. We are very collaborative with them including sharing costs for data and research.

Mr. Aune said there are a couple of good examples of grants given to the City where the MPO has benefitted such as developing baseline data using artificial intelligence and video photography.

Chair Greene said there are opportunities for you to give a presentation to the BCC as well.

Chair Greene thanked Mayor Webber for joining the meeting.

B. DISCUSSION: NM 475 TRANSPORTATION CONCERNS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Mr. Aune said Ms. Cooker came to our meeting last month to express her concerns about NM 475. She is here today to present us with a petition and to discuss the issues.

Ms. Cooker presented the Board with a petition signed by 571 people. It is a collection of ideas from the community and from a survey she put out regarding traffic issues going up to the ski basin. The question is how to be as efficient as we can in moving people without tearing down trees. We are hoping some agency could coordinate car pooling to the ski area and also for commuting. The Blue Bus has launched a study about self-driving buses. Who is going to manage that and pay for it. That idea might work. We know the issue for the Blue Bus is a lack of drivers. We are interested in a traction law for drivers when there is snow. We are also interested in electronic signs.

Commissioner Hansen said she gets a lot of calls about the ski basin road. One of the issues is when it is being plowed, the road drivers do not have respect for the plow and they pass it causing accidents. That issue is part of this as well. She understands that there is a two hour wait for the Blue Bus. She supports everything Ms. Cooker said. Commissioner Hughes sits on the RTD Board. There is a shortage of drivers.

Ms. Cooker said the Blue Bus does a great job.

Commissioner Hughes said he rode the Blue Bus a couple of times this year. Sometimes he was the only one on the bus going up, but after noon the bus was full.

Mr. Brasher said we have put in an inordinate amount of effort into this road. When it snows, sometimes people go up there in a Prius and can't get through the snow so they park their car on the road and walk the rest of the way. Plows cannot get through. Now we pull the cars off the road. We put up signs that say "chains recommended". He thinks a traction law would be good. The Police cannot cite anyone right now. In Colorado they have a seasonal law that imposed fines. The problem we foresaw was when someone rents a car to go skiing for a day it may or may not come with chains. We opted for signs. Having a traction law is good if it is enforceable. The ski basin also has a parking issue. If they expand it would have to come before the Commission.

There was discussion about the issues and possible solutions.

Chair Greene said this road is in his District and partly in the District of Councilor Castro. DOT is doing a study. We should all have our entities at the table. We are all stakeholders. Do we want to form a task force to help DOT. There are a variety of issues.

Commissioner Hughes said in terms of RTD, he thinks if we increase RTD schedules on the weekends it would help.

Chair Greene said right now, DOT is dealing with the road.

Mr. Brasher said we are doing a study.

Mr. L'Amie gave an overview of how the RTD service operates and the history of the service over the years.

Mr. L'Amie thanked everyone for their thoughts and the conversation. It is not hard to expand service if we have drivers. Right now we have a shadow bus to ensure that we do not leave anyone stranded. We have a 16% vacancy rate in drivers, but are making progress. We see this as an opportunity to add service. We need to solve the labor issue.

Chair Greene said the ski basin is missing from this conversation. They need to be part of this discussion. They could incentivize taking the bus or car pooling. We all want to be at the table to have a comprehensive look at the problem and accessing grants. The time is now with the State planning it. He would like to be really engaged in this.

Mr. L'Amie said this is something we would be a part of. We would be glad to sit at a table to look at this and solutions. He will recommend that to his Executive Director.

Chair Greene said the ski basin could offer ski passes to your drivers to incentivize driving this route. He would love to take this on as an MPO project. Thank you Ms. Cooker for bringing this to us.

C. PRESENTATION: TRANSPORTATION DATA

Mr. Aune said there was a request to review and discuss transportation data at a previous meeting. The data trends have the potential of changing policy for the City, County and DOT. This information can enlighten all of us to advance multimodal transportation and as to how funds have been used over the last 10 years. Diversification of multimodal transportation is key.

Mr. Aune said we are over an hour into the meeting and we have this presentation and a presentation of the past 10 years of transportation funding. Does the Board want to stay long enough to hear both presentations or would you like us to move one or both of the presentations to another meeting.

It was decided that the Transportation Data presentation would be heard and the Transportation Funding presentation would be moved to the next meeting.

Ms. Burnham said she would quickly go through the slides. If you want more information on anything we can do so later.

Ms. Burnham gave a Power Point presentation.

There was discussion.

Mayor Webber said he loves this presentation. He thinks the bottom line is what problem are we trying to solve. That will drive the planning going forward. Is it building more roads or disincentivizing the use of automobiles, which will have a huge push back. How do you take a western City built on sprawl with little density and make it an urban city. It is a struggle to catch up for lost time. You have to decide what problem we are trying to solve, then work on a policy that is going to be unpopular either way. These are fundamentally different traffic choices. One is introducing an idea of a new policy to a community that is addicted to automobiles. He would like to see the data extrapolated. He loves this.

There was continued discussion.

D. PRESENTATION: THE PAST 10 YEARS OF TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FUNDING

This item was postponed to the next meeting.

7. MATTERS FROM MPO STAFF

None.

8. MATTERS FROM TPB MEMBERS

None.

9. ADJOURN-NEXT TPB MEETING: APRIL 25, 2024

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Justin Greene

Commissioner Justin Greene, Chair



Elizabeth Martin, Stenographer