

**Minutes
Farmington Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Committee Meeting
January 18, 2007**

The Policy Committee of the Farmington Metropolitan Planning Organization met on Thursday, January 18, 2007, at 5:00 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room, 800 Municipal Drive, Farmington, New Mexico.

Members Present: Chairman Dr. Henderson, San Juan County
Mayor William Standley, City of Farmington
Dan Darnell, City of Farmington
Sally Burbridge, City of Aztec

Members Absent: Sam Hinson, City of Bloomfield

Staff Present: Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Robert Messenger, MPO Associate Planner
Virginia Turney, Secretary

Staff Absent: Charity Fechter, MPO Officer

Also Present: Steve Christensen, Technical Committee
Ray Matthews, NMDOT
Rod Hunt, City of Farmington

1. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Henderson called the January 18, 2007, Policy Committee meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE November 9, 2006, POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Darnell motioned and Ms. Burbridge seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the November 9, 2006, meeting.

#3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject: Public Participation Plan Update
Prepared by: Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date: January 3, 2007

Background:

The Public Participation Plan (PPP), formally called the Public Involvement Plan (PIP), guides the public involvement activities conducted by the MPO. The PPP indicates how the MPO communicates with the public and how it distributes information to the public. The plan describes how long public comment periods must be held and procedures that the MPO must follow to comply with the Open Meetings Act. The PPP was adopted on January 15, 2004 and is required to be updated at least every five years.

In October and November, each MPO committee reviewed proposed changes to the PPP. The update has incorporated SAFETEA-LU requirements and has revised old language. The 45-day public comment period opened on November 15 and closed on January 3. The PPP is available to the public at the city/county hall buildings, the area libraries, the MPO office, and the MPO website.

The following table indicates the remaining PPP update schedule:

ACTION	TIMEFRAME
Develop draft PPP with TC & entity staff	October 2006 (Complete)
Present proposed revisions to PC	November 2006 (Complete)
Finalize revised PPP for public comment period based on changes from the entities/committees	November 2006 (Complete)
45-day public comment period	November 15 through January 3 (Complete)
Public Hearing & TC recommended adoption of PPP	December 2006 (Complete, no comments received)
PC adoption of PPP	January 2007

No public comments were received by the MPO regarding the PPP.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Policy Committee adopt the Public Participation Plan.

Discussion: Mr. Delmagori presented the staff report and said no public comment was received.

Action: Mr. Darnell made a motion and Ms. Burbridge seconded the motion to adopt the Public Participation Plan. The motion was approved unanimously.

#4 AZTEC VISION PROJECT

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Agenda Item

Subject: Aztec Vision Project
Prepared by: Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date: January 3, 2007

Background:

Aztec officials and its public have been meeting to examine transportation alternatives that will help create a transportation network plan for the Aztec community. These alternatives include the NM 516 and US 550 corridors and the proposed East Arterial route. A final report describing these proposals is expected to be distributed by the city of Aztec to the public, NMDOT, and the MPO.

Steve Christensen, Public Works Director for Aztec, will give a status report on recent activities related to the Aztec Vision project, including a summary on the proposed alignments of the east arterial.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive the status report on the Aztec Vision project.

Discussion: Mr. Christensen presented an update on the status of the Aztec Vision Plan. Mr. Christensen said Aztec has hired Souder, Miller and Associates to do the first phase of the relief route design. The project would begin south of the Aztec Well Services racetrack on US Highway 550 and terminate on Navajo Dam Road. The south end of the project would tie into CR 350 and then connect to Wildflower Mesa Parkway. A future alternate which is not being considered during initial phase would begin even further south of the three alternates presently being considered.

Mr. Christensen said that alternate 3 is the least favorable alternate because of the terrain and difficult rights-of-way acquisition. Alternates 1 and 2 are more favorable because they pass through private land which would facilitate development of the area. Mr. Christensen added Aztec would not have a problem with right-of-way acquisition as many of the land owners have said they are willing to work with Aztec. Mr. Christensen said Aztec has a \$1 million dollar appropriation through both Senators Bingaman and Domenici's offices earmarked for this project.

Mr. Darnell asked what are the downsides of the relief route. Mr. Christensen replied much of the opposition is coming from an individual in the Kokopelli subdivision because of the possible noise issues and increased traffic through the area. Mr. Darnell added that the relief route would give an opportunity to make improvements on Navajo Dam Road. Mr. Christensen replied that there would be a signalized intersection at the end of the relief route and Navajo Dam Road.

Mr. Delmagori asked if there were any initial results from the evaluation form that Bob Metzler of Souder-Miller prepared. Mr. Christensen said the results were not ready and another public meeting was planned.

Mr. Christensen then discussed the vision for Light Plant Road. The City of Aztec is expecting growth on the north end of Light Plant Road due to a number of planned subdivisions. The City is working on transportation corridors and other ways of making the developments have viable access to NM516 other than down Light Plant Road. Mr. Christensen said that the new subdivision are going to affect the county also. Aztec is trying to fit all four modes into the plans for the area.

Mr. Darnell asked if the City of Aztec has a transportation master plan. Mr. Christensen replied the City is in the process of creating a transportation master plan and that the MPO is helping on the project.

Mayor Standley said the bridge at Red Mesa being washed out and the bridge on the La Plata Highway also being washed out and if the City of Aztec has been affected by those bridges being out. Mr. Christensen said there has been some increased traffic due to the bridges being out and Light Plant Road is seeing the increased traffic. Mr. Christensen said that NM 574/Light Plant Road and the bridges are far down on the list of NMDOT priorities. Mayor Standley added that GRIP 1 was not fully funded. Mr. Matthew said GRIP 1 was funded by the Federal Government which is currently sending out rescissions and from vehicle taxes. GRIP 2 is funded by the oil an gas tax and is purely state funded. Mayor Standley said that his concern was that the GRIP 2 funding will not be used for rural roads and is concerned that neither Light Plant Road nor the bridges will be repaired.

Mr. Hunt suggested the NM574/Light Plant Road be put on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) list. Mr. Delmagori said it could be brought to the Technical Committee to be on the TIP.

Action: Report was received.

**#5 FHWA PROJECT AUTHORIZATIONS AND AGREEMENTS
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject: FHWA Project Authorizations and Agreements
Prepared by: Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date: January 3, 2007

Background:

A letter from NMDOT outlining changes to project authorization and agreements and a copy of the regulation is attached. The purpose of the letter is to inform local governments that federally funded projects that have no expenditures charged to that project within a twelve month timeframe are labeled as an “inactive obligation.” More details on these obligations are described in the attached FHWA Project Authorizations and Agreements document.

Any funds considered to be inactive for federally obligated projects will be taken back by the FHWA if the state does not comply with these requirements. As a result, NMDOT and its

Regional Design Centers have been contacting the local entities to assist them with these projects. NMDOT is changing its procedures requiring that federal funds will not be authorized until a project is ready to be contractually committed. This procedure will apply to TIP and STIP development. Lastly, NMDOT's Regional Design Managers will complete the federal form for a project or phase that is ready for contract to insure no obligate funds go to a project that is not ready to proceed.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive the report.

Discussion: Mr. Delmagori presented the staff report. FHWA has said if a project is not ready it will pull the funding.

Action: Report was received.

**#6 ROADWAY ACCESS STANDARDS MTP POLICY
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject: Roadway Access Standards MTP Policy
Prepared by: Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date: January 3, 2007

Background:

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan, adopted by the Farmington MPO in April 2005, indicates a need to develop and implement policies and standards for supporting multi-modal needs and achieving acceptable levels of service for our region.

The following prioritized list of MTP policies was approved by the Policy Committee on November 9:

- Roadway Access Standards - These standards would apply to roads classified as collector or above within the MPO boundary.
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan - There are no specific pedestrian networks outlined in the MTP. There have been members of the public who are interested in the creation of a bike committee to further develop the bike network in the Farmington area. A bike plan for Bloomfield will be incorporated into the Bicycle Plan. This policy will need to address equestrian issues as well.
- Red Apple Transit Expansion Plan - Line route analysis and potential transit center relocation for further implementation Option #2 as described in the MTP.

MPO staff has developed a draft scope of work for the roadway access standards policy. The scope of work outlining the components of the expected work product and a proposed work schedule for completing this policy are attached.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Policy Committee discuss, review and modify the draft scope of work and schedule for the Roadway Access Standards MTP policy.

Discussion: Mr. Delmagori presented the staff report and plan. Mr. Delmagori said first two MTP policies would be worked on simultaneously. The MPO will be working on standards for the entire MPO area, so that all entities have the same regulations.

Action: Report was received.

**#7 FY2008-2013 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject: FY2008-2013 Transportation Improvement Program
Prepared by: Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date: January 4, 2007

Background:

The Transportation Improvement Program is a short-term list of projects that are expected to be completed in the immediate future. The six-year TIP is a fiscally constrained document that includes projects that must meet reasonable expectations for funding. The projects in the first three years (FY2008-2010) are a prioritized list based on current funding sources. While the Public Involvement Plan states the TIP needs to be updated at least every two years, the MPO has begun the annual update process to the TIP. The following is an anticipated schedule for the TIP update:

MONTH	ACTION
December 14, 2006	Call for Projects & Project Identification Forms issued
January 23, 2007	Project ID Forms submitted to MPO
January 25, 2007	Entities review project list and establish priorities
January 26 - February 16, 2007	MPO staff will meet with the entities individually to develop TIP project list
February 18-March 22, 2007	30-day Public Comment period is advertised and opened
March 22, 2007	Technical Committee recommended adoption of TIP
April 12, 2007	Policy Committee adopts the FY2008-2013 TIP

The TIP is updated based on the procedures outlined in the Public Involvement Plan (PIP). A Project Identification Form and description list for TIP projects is attached. Other forms are acceptable as long as the required information is provided. A formal request for submitting projects to the MPO will be issued to the entities.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive the TIP Call for Projects and Project Identification Forms to be submitted to the MPO.

Discussion: Mr. Delmagori said the TIP projects for the next three to six years are fiscally controlled and the MPO has been updating the TIP on an annual basis. Mr. Delmagori said the TIP forms have been issued and they need to be submitted to either him or Mr. Messenger. The Technical Committee will review the projects in February and the MPO will work with individual entities.

Action: Report was received.

#8 RED APPLE TRANSIT PRESENTATION

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Agenda Item

Subject: Red Apple Transit Presentation
Prepared by: Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date: January 3, 2007

Background:

Rod Hunt, General Services Director for the City of Farmington, will provide an update on the Red Apple Transit System. This presentation includes ridership numbers and other progress on this system that serves Farmington, Aztec, Bloomfield, and part of unincorporated San Juan County.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive the presentation.

Discussion: Mr. Hunt gave a presentation on the progress of Red Apple Transit adding he was very proud of his association with Red Apple Transit over the last five years. Ridership has increased, most significantly since adding the routes to Kirtland, Aztec and Bloomfield.

Mr. Hunt said he has been complimented on the changes to the busses themselves, most notably the color change seems to make a difference. Mr. Hunt said a college student remarked they would ride the bus if it didn't look like a special bus, and that the new red buses help make the system look like a bus system and not a special needs system. Mr. Hunt said that many people thought the buses were only for the handicapped. Bus shelters are continuing to be put in and eventually all stops will have a shelter.

Mr. Hunt added that if a rider is either over 65, a student, or handicapped, it's only 50 cents to ride the bus.

Action: Report was received.

#9 NMDOT REPORT:

Discussion: Mr. Matthew of the NMDOT gave an update on the TIP process. He said that the TIP amendment proposal will go to the TAC committee in March. The Aztec TIP project letting would slide forward six months. Mr. Delmagori asked an amendment for this would be needed. Mr. Matthew replied no that approval would simply be made in March. Mr. Delmagori noted that because of the 30-day public comment period, approval in March would give the MPO a tight schedule. Mr. Matthew said that is the schedule the state wants and would find out any more information. Mr. Delmagori said the two TIP projects were the

pedestrian bridge across the Animas River in Aztec and the intersection of Browning Parkway and US 64.

Mr. Matthew said GRIP 2 is aimed primarily at local roads that can't receive Federal funds. In order to receive Federal funds, the road has to be collector or above. GRIP 2 will be going to the legislator in January and either Mr. Matthew or Dr. Widoie will update the MPO's on the progress of the bill. Mr. Matthew added that Governor Richardson is really behind this bill and pushing for its approval.

Mr. Matthew said the State Transportation Commission will be hosted in June in Zuni and Dr. Widoie is urging everyone to attend.

The NMDOT is working on a VISUM training and will try to have a simulation training in June for MPO's to attend.

Mr. Matthew said Dr. Widoie is still recovering and hopes to be able to travel within the next month and should be able to attend the next Policy Committee meeting.

Action: Report was received.

#10 INFORMATION ITEMS

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject: Information Items
Prepared by: Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date: January 3, 2007

Background:

- a. **MPO Quarterly Meeting.** Staff attended the MPO Quarterly meeting in Santa Fe on December 11.
- b. **Training:**
 - i. **Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Use and Maintenance.** NMDOT will provide training on using and maintaining an ITS architecture on January 30-31, 2007 in Albuquerque. (Joe Delmagori and Robert Messenger attending)
 - ii. **VISUM Training.** Robert Messenger is attending an introductory course on the traffic model program VISUM on February 6-7 in Salt Lake City, UT. The VISUM program is used to run various "what if" scenarios, such as adding new roads, extending roads, and adding travel lanes.
- c. **2007 NMDOT Transportation Commission Schedule.** The 2007 schedule is attached. Farmington will host the meeting in August.
- d. **Other.**

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Policy Committee receive the information.

Discussion: Mr. Delmagori presented the staff report. Mr. Delmagori said that a coordinated effort is needed to help ensure the Transportation Commission meeting in August will be on schedule. Dr. Henderson asked the MPO help coordinate the process to make sure the Transportation Commission is not bumped out of the area again.

Action: Report was received.

11. Business

- a. Chairman - none
- b. Members - none
- c. Staff - none

12. Business from the Floor

None

13. Adjournment

Mayor Standley motioned and Mr. Darnell seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business to come before the Farmington MPO Policy Committee, Dr. Henderson adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m

Chairman, Dr. Henderson

Secretary, Virginia Turney