

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
JOINT POLICY & TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 27, 2011

Policy Members Present: Sherri Sipe, City of Aztec
Dan Darnell, City of Farmington
Gayla McCulloch, City of Farmington
Dr. Jim Henderson, San Juan County

Policy Members Absent: Pat Lucero, City of Bloomfield

Technical Members Present: Mike Huber, City of Aztec
Brad Ellsworth, City of Bloomfield
Cindy Lopez, City of Farmington
Nica J. Westerling, City of Farmington
Dave Keck, San Juan County

Staff Present: Mary L. Holton, MPO Officer
Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Martin Lucero, MPO Associate Planner
June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide

Staff Absent: None

Also Present: Miguel Gabaldon, District 5 Engineer
David Martinez, Assistant District Engineer
Ray Matthew, Planning Liaison, NMDOT
David Fuqua, City of Bloomfield
Adrian Garcia, City of Bloomfield
Larry Hathaway, San Juan County

1. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Henderson called the meeting to order at 10:07 am.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made by everyone in attendance.

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 16, 2011 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Ms. Sherri Sipe made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 16, 2011 Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Darnell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 23, 2011 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Mike Huber made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 23, 2011 Technical Committee meeting. Ms. Westerling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. DISCUSS STRATEGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR MAINTENANCE OF STATE HIGHWAYS BETWEEN NMDOT DISTRICT 5 AND THE LOCAL ENTITIES

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject:	State Road Maintenance Partnership
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	July 19, 2011

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- MPO staff, the City of Aztec, and San Juan County met in February to discuss improvements to NM 173.
- Aztec and San Juan County suggested that the local governments pass resolutions to illustrate the poor conditions of state-owned facilities.
- A suggestion from the Policy Committee has been that the entities seek to develop a JPA with the state in which the local governments perform the maintenance and receive reimbursement from NMDOT.
- Aztec, Bloomfield, San Juan County, and the MPO have passed resolutions requesting NMDOT make necessary repairs to state highways within their jurisdictions.
- At the May 26 Technical Committee meeting, District Engineer Miguel Gabaldon and Assistant District Engineer Dave Martinez discussed maintenance issues with the members.
- Road maintenance projects have been identified for locations in the MPO.

CURRENT WORK

- A Joint Policy/Technical Committee meeting will be held on July 27 to discuss a maintenance partnership between District 5 and member entities.
- Another objective of the meeting is to determine maintenance strategies between District 5 and the entities.
- MPO staff has made administrative adjustments to the TIP for maintenance projects on US 64, NM 516, and US 550 that had been identified by NMDOT.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy and Technical Committee discuss strategies and partnerships for maintenance of state highways between NMDOT District 5 and the local entities.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori stated that the primary reason for the Joint Meeting was to discuss road maintenance strategies and partnerships with NMDOT District 5. Mr. Delmagori

reviewed the history of this issue which began with initial discussions on the maintenance of state highways throughout the MPO Region. The discussion was initiated by the City of Aztec and San Juan County with regards to NM 173. The discussion then evolved to include all of the state highways in the area and the need for maintenance to and repair of many of them. Both the Policy and Technical Committees agreed that this was a concern that needed to be addressed. Individual entities passed resolutions that were submitted to NMDOT requesting that necessary repairs be made to state highways within their jurisdiction. The Farmington MPO also passed a resolution and subsequently received a response from NMDOT.

Mr. Delmagori stated that at the May 26 Technical Committee meeting, Miguel Gabaldon and Dave Martinez with District 5 were present and discussed the maintenance issue with the members. Mr. Gabaldon stated District 5 understood the entities' frustration and that budget shortfalls were creating difficulties for everyone. Mr. Gabaldon spoke of potential strategies and partnerships. Today's Joint Committee Meeting is the opportunity to further discuss these issues and to develop ideas and strategies. Mr. Delmagori reported that since the meeting in May, District 5 will be seeking fiscal year-end closeout money for several road maintenance projects in this area: US64 in and around the Troy King intersection; NM516 from Aztec and heading west for several miles toward Farmington; and another potential project on US 550 from mile markers 159-161 (northeast Aztec area).

Mr. Gabaldon began the discussion by saying that NMDOT has added four projects for San Juan County to the STIP for the federal year-end closeout. Each District within the State will be receiving approximately \$10,000,000 for pavement preservation or pavement rehabilitation projects. The projects identified for San Juan County for 2011 are:

- NM 516 from mile marker 7 to 12 (just West of Oliver Street) to begin in October;
- US 64 at Harper Hill to pave from Troy King to NM 170 (due to increase in project cost, the concreting of this intersection may not happen this year, but would be completed at a later date).
- Two other projects proposed for FY2012 are NM 516 and US 550 in Aztec from Oliver to NM 173.
- US 64 through Hogback.

Dr. Henderson asked which roads had been identified in the resolution sent to NMDOT. Mr. Delmagori stated the resolution was more general in nature and, although particular highways were identified, specific sections of those roads needing maintenance were not spelled out. Dr. Henderson asked if the NMDOT was proposing to do any work on NM 173. The road is narrow with no shoulders, heavily travelled, and unsafe in its current condition. Dr. Henderson encouraged NMDOT to give thought to apportioning funds to repair and maintain this roadway as it is used heavily by tourists, oil and gas, and business travel. Dr. Henderson also commented on the oil and gas revenues generated in San Juan County and the failure of the State to appropriately allocate resources back into this area. Ms. McCulloch added that at the State Transportation Commission meeting it was discussed that NMDOT does not receive any oil and gas revenues as part of their funding. She asked Mr. Gabaldon where pressure needed to be exerted to get funding back into this area. Mr. Gabaldon stated that all oil and gas revenues go into the State's general fund and NMDOT receives only road funds and does not receive any money from the general fund. He recommended contacting the State legislators prior to their special session in October. NMDOT is hopeful that the State Legislature will devote a severance tax for the maintenance of State highways. Mr. Gabaldon stated that with the significant revenues generated by the oil and gas industry within this region, it is easy to

understand the condition of the roadways. He added that NMDOT is scheduled to do patch work on NM 173 and NM 511 with chip sealing scheduled for late August. The chip sealing and pothole repair will be in-house projects, while the four projects mentioned earlier will be the large projects. Ms. Westerling offered the City of Farmington's assistance with these projects, but Mr. Gabaldon expects that District 5 will complete them as noted. He added that going forward and in identifying future projects, District 5 will be looking to work hand-in-hand with each of the local entities.

Mr. Gabaldon said that potential entity agreements in the past had become bogged down with NMDOT's legal division. One of those agreements was to use San Juan County's striping crew as NMDOT does not have their own crew and has to contract out this work. He hopes that agreements with the entities can be negotiated, but he needs to be sure NMDOT can support any agreement before it is made. Mr. Huber asked how the entities can work to break this attorney log jam. Mr. Gabaldon said these legal issues must first be resolved in-house and then NMDOT needs to ensure they have the funding available before they go forward with any entity agreement. He would like to get something in place with the entities by October so we can be ready for next spring. Ms. Sipe asked if there was anything the cities could do to help get the agreements in place. Mr. Gabaldon said to continue to communicate with NMDOT. They, in turn, will work with their general counsel to get the legal issues worked out.

Mr. Gabaldon stated he would like to have something in place to present at the next MPO Policy or Technical Committee meeting. Mr. Darnell asked if having the District 5 commissioner involved would assist Mr. Gabaldon in getting the agreements worked out. Mr. Gabaldon believes that the process already has a good start with the pending San Juan County agreement. He would like to sit down with each entity to develop separate plans and identify that entity's available resources. Mr. Adrian Garcia asked what the NMDOT employees would be working on if local crews take over the local road repair and maintenance. Mr. Gabaldon reported that the State crews would then take over work in the more rural areas. Mr. Gabaldon added that NMDOT has a materials inventory, but their challenge has been with people since the patrol yards are experiencing a 40% crew reduction in Bloomfield and a 60% crew vacancy in Farmington. Mr. Martinez said NMDOT is now combining crews to address immediate issues. NMDOT is looking to bring in crews from other areas that would address a specific issue such as mowing. This crew would do the mowing in all areas and they believe this could be an effective way to address maintenance issues. Dr. Henderson commented that San Juan County uses prisoners to clean up roadways in the County. Mr. Keck added that they have four prisoner crews working every day on either State or County roadways. NMDOT and San Juan County have discussed the possibility of capital replacement for items such as trailers or pickups that are being used for this cleanup. This is one of the potential agreements awaiting action.

Ms. Sipe commented that with unemployment rates being so high she was surprised that NMDOT would have so many vacancies. Mr. Gabaldon stated this was because of a hiring freeze and vacancies that occurred over the past 12-18 months. He also commented on NMDOT's employment requirements, lower wages resulting in retention issues, and an extensive hiring process which can take up to 3-4 months to complete. Ms. McCulloch asked if there was an expiration date with the NMDOT's contract with the City that might impede getting necessary work completed. Ms. Westerling commented that it is ongoing with no expiration date and that supply needs are reviewed as necessary. Mr. Gabaldon clarified that it was not a contract but a maintenance agreement with an informal review process. Dr. Henderson stated that the entities here appreciate their working relationship with District 5. He believes that NMDOT, the entities, and the MPO cooperate well, understanding each other's issues, and are working together to maximize resources.

Mr. Delmagori stated the maintenance projects for this year's fiscal closeout and potentially into 2012 have been discussed. He asked if the MPO could assist in project selection in compiling another maintenance priority list for the current STIP. He asked if this list should be discussed during the normal TIP priority update or at some other time during the year. Mr. Gabaldon reported that there are still major challenges with the Federal highway funding reauthorization and the House has a bill that could severely affect the STIP. He would like to set up a workshop for the entities to present a 10-15 year history of road maintenance for each entity's roadways and also provide a look at what will need to be completed in the next five years. NMDOT is concerned with the outcome of the House transportation bill which could shake up all future plans.

Dr. Henderson commented that our road issues are complicated by the fact that both State and Federal governments are involved. He wondered how we can strengthen our voice and make it more effective and encourage FHWA representatives to coordinate with local representatives when making decisions. Mr. Gabaldon said his experience is at the State level only and being a small state our voice is often not heard.

Mr. Delmagori recapped the maintenance discussion. NMDOT hopes the special legislative session will dedicate some money to road maintenance that could be used for the upcoming fiscal years; agreements are in place with San Juan County and the City of Farmington and any future projects would be addressed on a project by project basis; there is a willingness from all parties to share resources, manpower, and equipment; Mr. Gabaldon will set up a workshop to review the road maintenance status over the past 5-10 years and then from that a potential maintenance priority list will be developed through the MPO process.

Mr. Gabaldon asked to have District 5 added to the agenda for the September Technical Committee meeting. He will compile the data and meet with the entities between now and then and provide a status update for the Technical Committee in September.

ACTION: NMDOT and the entities discussed maintenance issues, strategies, and partnerships. NMDOT will schedule a workshop for the entities and then provide an update to the Technical Committee at their September meeting.

6. MPO MAJOR THOROUGHFARE PLAN

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject:	MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan
Prepared by:	Martin Lucero, Associate MPO Planner
Date:	July 19, 2011

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- The Farmington City Council directed staff to hold a series of public meetings to

review alternatives for the Northeast Farmington area and its connection to proposed regional routes.

- Staff held three meetings in March and April.
- The original connections and two alternatives were discussed with the public.
- Comments from the public meetings identified two additional alternatives.
- Staff presented the four alternatives to the Farmington City Council during two subsequent City Council Meetings.
- The City of Farmington approved Alternative #3 to the MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan.

CURRENT WORK

- During the presentations at the Farmington City Council meetings, the following questions were posed:
 - Does the MPO envision Glade Road being paved in the future?
 - What type of facility does the “proposed” designation signify?
- Staff evaluated the MPO Major T-Plan based on these two questions.
- The MPO needs to determine if there is a regional significance to Glade Rd.
- Staff has developed an amended Alternative #3 based on the function of the proposed collectors in the Glade Run Recreational Area and the anticipated facility type and construction.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- Staff will seek approval of the MPO Major T-Plan from the member entities.

BACKUP MATERIAL

- Maps of Alternative #3 and the proposed amended Alternative #3.
- Reasons for the proposed amended Alternative #3.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee and the Technical Committee
 - a. Discuss Alternative #3 as presented for northeast Farmington as part of the MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan.
 - b. Review the proposed amended alternative.
 - c. Receive recommended approval of Alternative #3 as presented or the amended alternative for the MPO Major T-Plan from the Technical Committee.
 - d. Receive approval of Alternative #3 as presented or the amended alternative for the MPO Major T-Plan from the Policy Committee.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori stated that development of a MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan had been identified as part of the long-range plan in April 2010 and then throughout the summer and fall work commenced to develop the plan and gather data. The MPO Major T-Plan provides a regional planning tool to be used for future planning purposes for all individual entities as well as the DOT.

The overall MPO Major T-Plan was approved by the Policy Committee in September 2010. The MPO was directed to focus in on the northeast Farmington area and how existing roads connect to proposed future regional corridors, especially the northern route that would become a secondary route to NM 516 to help handle future traffic and not channel all traffic to NM 516. Alternative #1 was approved by the Policy Committee in January 2011. This Alternative

proposed that the northern route go over the top of the Foothills area and connect to College Blvd so that traffic with no reason to get to Main Street would have an alternate route. Alternative #2 was the same as #1 except it provided a potential connection to Glade Road. Glade Road would be upgraded to a paved facility to help disperse traffic.

After regional approval, the alternatives were presented to Farmington City Council. The City Council asked the MPO to take more time with the issue and to hold a series of public meetings. From these meetings, two more alternatives were developed. Alternative #3 was the same as Alternative #1 with the exception of the extension of Foothills which would not occur due to the bike trails in the area. Alternative #4 is the same as Alternative #2 except that it proposed to pave Glade Road further north and reduced the classification on Hood Mesa Trail extension into and out of Foothills.

Farmington City Council approved Alternative #3. Mr. Delmagori stated that now Alternative #3 is approved on the local side and Alternative #1 is approved on the regional side. One option is for the Policy Committee to adopt Alternative #3 wholesale which would replace the Policy Committee's action on Alternative #1 so that Alternative #3 is approved throughout. But Mr. Delmagori noted that another issue has been identified regarding what the MPO saw as the future of how Glade Road may function. Mr. Delmagori stated that because Alternative #3 was approved by Farmington City Council, there may be no reason from the MPO perspective to have Glade Road on the MPO map. It has no connection other than to Pinon Hills, there is very little development out there, and the consensus was that the Glade Area was a unique recreational area and it should be preserved as is. With this information, if the MPO pulls Glade Rd from the Major T-Plan, then there are no obligations at the regional level to upgrade Glade Road.

Ms. Westerling asked that if the road is removed from the Plan it cannot then receive any Federal or State money to potentially pave it in the future. Mr. Delmagori said that this was correct. Ms. Westerling believed this was a major consideration for the future of this road. Mr. Darnell added that most of this is BLM owned and maintained and they will make the final decision about this road. Mr. Delmagori replied that the MPO has to work with the State on classifying roads and they do not want to have unpaved roads in their system. If Glade Road is identified as a collector, it would make it eligible for Federal funding; however if it is kept unpaved and shown on the map as a regular, local road the regional significance is removed. Mr. Lucero added that the amended plan also removes east-west connections in the Glade area such as Lions Trail and Dustin.

Mr. Darnell asked about the road shown on the map that starts in Flora Vista and goes north to the Glade and if it was an intersection with Glade Road. Mr. Delmagori said this road could create a connection from the MPO area to LaPlata Highway and the road connects with Glade and crosses the river to NM 170. These roads currently exist and are county or oilfield maintained. They are shown on the map because they are currently being used. Mr. Delmagori stated that another reason for having these roads on the map is to preserve the right-of-way.

The MPO staff is seeking approval of one version of Alternative #3 from both the Technical and Policy Committee members. If Alternative #3 is taken wholesale, the only change is to the extension of Hood Mesa Trail. It is currently a minor arterial, but after conversations with City Council and further MPO consideration, Staff is recommending it be reduced to a proposed collector to show a transition from the existing neighborhood into new development. The other option is to take the amended Alternative #3 which would keep everything in the Northeast Farmington area including the collector status for Hood Mesa Trail extension and Glade Rd and

all of the collectors in the Glade area would be removed as shown on the City's thoroughfare plan.

Mr. Darnell stated that the amended Alternative #3 made sense as a way to move traffic through the community but off of NM 516. It would help create a growth network for 15-20 years from now and yet preserve other areas for future generations. Ms. Lopez stated that she does not want to see the proposed extension of Dustin and the others collectors taken off the map. Even if they don't tie to the Glade area, we need to be able to provide extensions to future development. Mr. Darnell added that we need to be careful to preserve the Glade area. Having a potential connection to the Glade threatens this unique area. Ms. Westerling commented that she believes that both can be done – that we can preserve the Glade and utilize it by providing safe access which she believes is currently missing. Ms. Lopez anticipates that BLM's plan for the area will have some improvements and that the Glade extension could be removed for now until we know what BLM plans for the area, but retain the Dustin extension. Ms. McCulloch agreed that the Glade needs to be preserved, and was agreeable to leaving the north Dustin section on the map, but removing the Glade section. Ms. Westerling added that should Glade Road ever be paved, the road would not be located where it is now because of engineering issues with the blind curves as well as drainage problems. Mr. Keck stated that BLM can grant an easement to the County for this lesser maintained road.

Mr. Darnell reiterated the need to be cautious and ensure the Glade stays as a recreational area. With political pressure, land swaps, and new faces, unplanned changes can happen overnight.

ACTION: Mr. Keck made a motion to approve the amended Alternative #3, which also removes Glade and the small tip of the Dustin from the MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan map and keeps the "L" shaped portion of Dustin and Lions Trail. Ms. Westerling seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Darnell moved that the Policy Committee adopt the plan as passed by the Technical Committee. Ms. McCulloch seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Delmagori said this information would be given to the City's Planning staff to get the City's thoroughfare plan revised accordingly. Ms. Lopez said they hope to present this at the next City Council meeting in August.

7. INFORMATION ITEMS

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject:	Information Items
Prepared by:	Martin Lucero, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	July 19, 2011

INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **Transit Data Collection Activities.** The MPO has hired two summer interns to gather transit data from the Red Apple Transit. Staff has gathered boarding and alightment information for all the internal routes and data from the regional routes is anticipated to be gathered in the coming weeks. Surveys have been administered to collect additional transit information. Further data will be obtained through the September.
- b. **Transportation Reauthorization.** An update on recent news relating to transportation reauthorization will be provided to the committee members at the meeting.
- c. **Other.**

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori handed out a summary from AMPO on what the Senate has proposed for the transportation reauthorization bill.

Mr. Delmagori reported that there is another round of TIGER III funding. Pre-applications are due August 22nd and final applications are due October 31st. Mr. Lucero added that the Pinon Hills project might qualify for some funding through this process because it is programmed to receive \$3,000,000 in the STIP. Ms. Westerling stated the City is planning to make application for this funding.

10. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

DISCUSSION: Ms. McCulloch asked about the Red Apple Transit surveying work being done this summer and would Staff be able to provide unique rider information. Mr. Delmagori said that along with gathering boarding and alightment information, the MPO summer interns are handing out rider surveys. From several questions on the survey, Staff hopes to derive the unique rider information. Mr. Lucero commented that with the amount of data being collected, Staff will hopefully be able to identify patterns and identify ridership with more accuracy. Ms. Westerling asked if the purpose was to identify the unique rider or repeat rider. Ms. McCulloch is interested in knowing how many individual people are using the system. She added that substantial funds are being spent for perhaps a small number of riders and could there potentially be a better transit option. Mr. Darnell asked when some of the recommended changes might be implemented. Mr. Delmagori reported that Mr. Bob Campbell had said he was willing to take another look at recommended options and some changes could take place during this fiscal year. Mr. Lucero said the interns' activities are also revealing the stops that are infrequently used stops which could be adjusted. Their work is helping to obtain the needed data to support the study's recommendations.

Dr. Henderson spoke on the need for all to be involved in promoting San Juan County and to work to provide a positive impression for those who may potentially be looking to move to this area. With approximately 5,000 lost jobs, it is more urgent than ever to be involved in the economic development of our community.

11. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

DISCUSSION: Mr. Ray Matthew reported that the best case scenario for the continuation of Federal road funding is for the current bill to continue at the current levels. He is hopeful that this will be the case even though federal gas tax receipts are coming in lower due to the recession and because of heightened fuel prices and fuel-economic cars. The Planning Division believes funding will fall somewhere between the House and the Senate bills. Mr. Matthew recommended that local governments implement any federally funded projects in a timely manner or the money could go away.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Henderson adjourned the meeting at 11:53 a.m.

Dr. James C. Henderson, Policy Committee Chair

Cynthia Lopez, Technical Committee Chair

June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide