

# APPENDIX A PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is a key component of any community based plan. For development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Farmington MPO engaged the public throughout the process to identify and understand aspects of the system directly from the users. Many types of public participation techniques were used, including formal public meetings, surveys, having an information table at public events, and giving presentations to various local agencies.

## **November 12, 2008 - Farmington Downtown Center**

Staff held a kick-off public meeting to introduce the MTP process. It outlined the various components of the MTP and how the public could be involved in the decision making process.

## **February 18, 2009 - Farmington Library**

## **February 19, 2009 - Aztec City Hall**

## **February 23, 2009 - Bloomfield Cultural Center**

Early in the process, three public meetings were held and the public was asked to identify needed improvements for all types of modes. Staff took into consideration many of these suggestions and studied them for further analysis. The following list highlights many of the comments received:



**Roadway Improvements**

- The Pinon Hills Extension should use CR 3900 and also head east to connect to CR 3720.
- Morningstar Dr. from Browning into the County is a heavily traveled road. There is a blind intersection at Morningstar and CR 3950.
- Improvements need to be made to the bottleneck at Butler/Broadway intersection.
- Look to see if Browning can be extended north and west to Hutton.
- Two roads need to be extended – Beckland Hills north to Pinon Hills Blvd and Sandalwood east to Foothills.
- There is heavy traffic during the morning and evening on the two-lane stretch of 30<sup>th</sup> between Municipal and Sunset.
- Piñon Hills Blvd and 30<sup>th</sup> Street is a bad intersection.
- Can a new facility be developed soon that is parallel to CR 390 and CR 3720?
- Can there be a connection from US 64 to CR 5500 west of Bloomfield that crosses the river and provides a new route for trucks?
- Members of the public would like to see the PHB extension and the Highline Road built as soon as possible to give Crouch Mesa residents new outlets.
- The Aztec East Arterial is a great proposal.
- The Post Office in Bloomfield needs a back access point from Oak St. to keep people from having to go onto US 64 to reach the Post Office.
- Traffic is extremely dangerous for those trying to enter and leave the Post Office. Traffic needs to be slowed down as no one pays attention to the 40 mph speed limit.
- Conditions will only get worse as construction on US 64 begins.

**Transit Improvements**

- Need better transit service for seniors trying to get to doctor offices.
- Pick-up and drop off times are inconvenient for travel to/from Farmington.
- Need more regional bus runs during the morning and afternoon – there should be at least 5-6 per day.
- Members of public stated a need for transit service between Aztec and Bloomfield.
- Need more bus stops closer together to support seniors at Farmington and Aztec.
- Loop routes are too long and waste too much time.
- Routes to/from Farmington tend to take up half a day for a round trip.
- Have bus stops at Dino's at CR 350/CR 390 and at the Bloomfield Pool.

- The Bronco Route should have a stop at the westside Wal-Mart and someplace in downtown Farmington.
- Need a route to serve the south end of Bloomfield along US 550.
- Light rail should be a transit option for the future.
- Consider bus connections from the Farmington area to Durango.
- Consider passenger rail service from the Farmington area to Albuquerque, possibly a spur route from the RailRunner.

### **March-April 2009 - MTP Public Participation Survey**

Two on-line surveys were available for the public as a way to understand their transportation concerns. One survey focused on general transportation and the other looked at transit. The following observations summarize the survey:

- 87% of respondents drive alone.
- Typical school or work trips are less than 10 miles, which presents opportunities for walking/biking options.
- 7am-8am is the most common depart from home time; after 4pm is the typical return to home time.
- To reduce congestion, respondents suggested improving signal timing, implementing access management, having better road connectivity, and expanding transit.
- Very few people who took survey ride the bus (approximately 10%).
- To increase bike riding, the need for more on-road and more off-road facilities was virtually tied (35-36%).
- 65% of respondents not in favor of toll roads.
- Most comments received pertained to engineering improvements, bike safety, rail service, signal timing, and transit improvements.

**March 11, 2009 - Farmington Senior Center**

Staff provided information on the MTP to members of the Farmington Senior Center. They were also asked to complete the MTP Public Participation survey.

**Transit Improvements**

- The bus kiosks should have the bus map and schedule posted.
- Have a bus stop on Arrington near Airport to serve the local residences and the Safeway on Main St.
- The circular routes in Farmington result in really long commutes.
- The following residential neighborhoods were noted as not having transit in close proximity:
  - Municipal Dr between 20<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>
  - Butler/Carlton/30<sup>th</sup>
- The Red and Green routes need to serve the big box and shopping destinations on East Main St.
- There were requests for bus stops on East Main at Villa View and at Mickey.

**March 27, 2009 - Navajo DOT**

Staff met with Navajo DOT to discuss possible transportation connections between tribal lands and the MPO region.

- New bus stops along the Bronco route could be located at the Four Seasons residential neighborhood, at CR 6200/US 64, and at San Juan College West.
- Continue the Bronco route to loop through Kirtland (see map); have stops at CR 6675/CR 6100, at Kirtland High School, and at CR 6400/CR 6100.

## Potential New Bus Stop Locations in Kirtland



- Consider a new bus route that serves the Ojo Amarillo area, including the neighborhoods, the elementary school, and the planned high school.
- Have a new bus route that serves housing from NM 371 east on top of the mesa down to the paved road to CR 5500, and then further onto the Fairgrounds and points beyond.
- There are dirt road connections that extend from CR 6480 in Kirtland that could be paved to create a new route to Shiprock.

**May 5, 2009 - San Juan Center for Independence**

A presentation on the MTP was given to staff at the San Juan Center for Independence. Input was provided mostly on how to improve and expand the transit system.

**Transit Improvements**

- Consider a bus stop at the dialysis center at Broadway/Lake in Farmington.
- Add a bus stop at the 30<sup>th</sup>/Farmington medical area.

- Service should be added to northeast Aztec along US 550 to serve retail and business destinations such as Construction Supply.
- Overcrowding on buses prevents passengers from taking the bus. Example was given at Apple Ridge where a passenger was told they had to wait for the next bus because this one was too full.
- Bus stops along CR 5500 are important for serving the residential neighborhoods and connecting them to Farmington and Bloomfield.
- Have a stop at the Bloomfield courthouse.
- The loop routes can add hours to travel time.
- Many bus stops are too far away to access from residential neighborhoods.
- Can headways be reduced to 15 minutes?

**August 11, 2009 - Farmer's Market at Animas Park in Farmington**

**August 12, 2009 - Connie Mack World Series in Farmington**

**August 14, 2009 - San Juan County Fair**

**August 26, 2009 - San Juan College**

During the summer, staff set up information tables at public events. Based on the list of identified improvements, the public was asked which projects they would fund over the course of 25 years given fiscal constraints. The majority of participants focused on funding roads but some indicated their preferred bicycle/pedestrian trail improvements.

Based on responses, the most preferred road projects were:

- The extension of Piñon Hills/CR 3900
- The East Arterial in Aztec
- The Northern Route from Farmington to Aztec
- The Highline Road from CR 350 to US 550 in Crouch Mesa

### **October 19, 2009 San Juan Center for Independence**

Staff met again with the San Juan Center for Independence to see where they would like to see future transit service.

#### **Transit Improvements**

- A new housing development is being built at Piñon /Lake and will need a bus stop.
- Serve the PATH organization on Piñon with a stop.
- Add a bus stop at the 30<sup>th</sup>/Farmington medical area.
- Service should be added to northeast Aztec along US 550 to serve business destinations and low income housing.
- SICI will be building a new office on San Juan Blvd across from Sonic. A bus stop should be located there once the office is operational.
- Can the stop at Apple Ridge be located at the north end for easier accessibility (current driveway at the south is too sloped).
- Have a stop at the Bloomfield courthouse.
- Have bus service to all of the apartment complexes along Blanco Blvd (east and west).
- A bus shelter should be built at the Kirtland stop.
- A mid-block crosswalk should be painted from the Civic Center to the south parking lot.

**January 25, 2010 - San Juan College**

**January 25, 2010 - Bloomfield Cultural Center**

**January 26, 2010 - Aztec Library**

**January 27, 2010 - Farmington Library**

With a draft document in place, staff held a series of public meetings to give the public an opportunity to review project analysis, identified improvements, policies, and strategies. The following comments were received:

#### **Roadway Improvements**

- Improve Hood Mesa Trail for better circulation.
- Make sure that drainage is considered when putting in new infrastructure.
- There needs to be better connectivity throughout Aztec.
- The Piñon Hills Blvd connection to Crouch Mesa needs to be built.
- There needs to be zoning in the County
- We need to good plans for guiding the development of the future road network.
- Build the East Arterial to get trucks out of downtown.
- US 64 needs improvement.
- Build the Northern Route as another connection from Farmington to Aztec.

#### **Transit Improvements**

- Build a passenger train connection to Albuquerque and to Santa Fe.
- More transit options are needed to serve the growing population.
- Red Apple Transit needs more lines and frequency of services.
- There is a need for the external bus routes to run more often.

#### **Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements**

- Aztec should look into the 'rails to trails' program. Any opportunity to save the remaining railroad ROW should be acted on for trail development.
- Build an off-road bike/pedestrian trail along the river north of NM 516 in Aztec.
- Need more recreational paths in Bloomfield and a trail connection from Bloomfield to Aztec.

## Other Comments Received

During the MTP update process, citizens provided several comments to the MPO for consideration:

- I would like to see riverside bicycle path east to west bypassing all traffic lights. Maybe something in the same sense around 20th and 30th street. Denver's got a great commute to get around by bicycle paths without being directly in traffic. High traffic areas would probably lead to the hospital, Walmart, schools, the mall, and to work. Nonstop traffic by bicycle to work would be ideal for me.
- Butler Ave. drastically needs to be expanded. You can hardly make a left turn onto it in the morning or afternoon any more. Traffic backs up from Apache St. to nearly Navajo street due to the bottleneck and timing of lights at Apache and Butler, and likewise Butler and 20<sup>th</sup> St. and 30<sup>th</sup> and Butler. This road should have been widened to 5 lanes 15 years ago, but the city took no action when they could have been purchasing property for rights of way when property was cheap. Now it is all way overpriced and will take eminent domain declarations to acquire the needed property for right of ways, which the city will have no choice but to do because it is getting worse by the day. You can hardly make a left hand turn on to Butler now between the hours of 6:30am and 9:00pm. Also find a route for a new major North/South arterial and make it wide enough.
- There are too many roads that merge from 4 or 5 lanes to 2 lanes such as Butler and also 30<sup>th</sup> St. The section of 30<sup>th</sup> St. between Hutton Ave. and College Blvd is ridiculous and was a big waste of money when redone a couple of years ago. That section will also have to employ eminent domain declarations in order to improve and is only getting worse by the day also. This is another road that should have been widened 15 year ago also when property was relatively cheap. Get rid of the bike lanes on roads for motor vehicles. It is a lot of wasted space and bicyclists pay no user fees to use that space like motor vehicle users do through fuel taxes.
- When the city resurfaces roads, realign the manholes before you repave. The system used now of paving and then realigning the manholes only destroys the new pavement and they are never level with the new road, and the asphalt used is of poor quality which results in those sections creating potholes the first time it snows or rains. For that matter get rid of some of the hundreds of manholes that now exist if possible. Also please spend our tax money on roads and sewers and infrastructure needed for the common good which is government's purpose, and not on providing entertainment for citizens such as parks, ball fields, performance centers and the like. Priorities need to be set straight.
- How about a pedestrian walkway/bridge at the mall to walk from Walmart/Sams Club to the mall without having to drive back and forth several times a day. I notice this a lot on the weekends (I live in the area) that the same people drive back and forth to drop off family members for the movies while some of them go shopping at Walmart at the same time.
- I have noticed that bicycle travel is very dangerous here compared to where I came from. After being forced into the curb by a family on their way to or from church, I got rid of my road bike. I always thought that if the city could work with the ditch

companies to cover the ditches and put a bike path on top of them it would have many benefits. The ditches would be covered so they would pose less of a drowning potential for the kids. It would move the bike paths away from the roads and highways which would make it safer and more peaceful for the riders. The ditch companies would benefit with less maintenance and controlling unauthorized use of the ditch water.

- Consider a Monorail in the median of the highways in the tri-city area and even extending it out to Shiprock. I notice that most of the airports and any highly complex facilities use them. I don't know if the easement problems of using space above the medians and the mixture of road traffic and monorail traffic would be an overwhelming problem. It is my personal opinion that in this highly rural area just making roads more accessible to bicycles is going to make more people convert from vehicle traffic to some other form of transportation. But high tech, fast moving, comfortable transportation could be the answer. I think there are a growing number of people who would drive a short distance, park and ride mass transportation if available, even in an area like ours.