

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
November 10, 2010

Policy Members Present:

Gene Current, City of Aztec
Dr. Henderson, San Juan County
Dan Darnell, City of Farmington
Gayla McCulloch, City of Farmington

Policy Members Absent:

Pat Lucero, City of Bloomfield

Technical Committee Members Present:

Mike Huber, City of Aztec

Staff Present:

Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Martin Lucero, MPO Associate Planner
Kathy Bonnell, MPO Admin Aide

Staff Absent:

Bob Campbell, MPO Officer

Also Present:

Mayor Sally Burbridge, City of Aztec
David Krutsinger, LSC Consultants
Larry Hathaway, SJC Community Development Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Henderson called the November 10, 2010 Policy Committee meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 9, 2010 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Darnell made a motion to approve the minutes from the Policy Committee meeting. Ms. McCulloch seconded that motion. Motion was passed unanimously.

3. FY2011-2016 TIP Amendment #2

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item

Subject:	FY2011-2016 TIP Amendment #2
Prepared by:	Martin Lucero, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	October 28, 2010

BACKGROUND

- On October 3, 2010 the Farmington MPO advertised Amendment #2 to the FY2011-FY2016 Transportation Improvement Program.
- The amendment modifies funding to the Wildflower Parkway Widening project.
- The MPO held a 30-day public comment period from October 3, 2010 to November 3, 2010 and no comments were received.
- A public hearing was held on FY2011-2016 TIP Amendment #2 during the October 28, 2010 Technical Committee meeting.

CURRENT WORK

- The original ARRA amount obligated to the project was \$1,000,000.00.
- An additional \$347,265.70 has now been authorized for a total of \$1,347,265.70.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- Amendment to the FY2010-2013 STIP.

ATTACHMENTS

- Public Notice describing the funding change in Amendment #2.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee approve Amendment #2 to the FY2011-2016 TIP.

Discussion: Mr. Lucero stated that TIP Amendment #2 provides additional funds for the Farmington ARRA project along Wildflower Pkwy. The NMDOT had additional funds available from the total ARRA stimulus funds allocated to NM due to bids throughout the state coming in lower than the projected costs to complete the various projects.

Mr. Lucero stated District 5 allocated these additional funds to the Farmington project as it was one of the few projects that had come in higher than originally estimated. He stated the original allocated amount for the project was \$1,000,000.00 and an additional \$347,265.70 has now been authorized for a total of \$1,347,265.70 to go towards the Wildflower Parkway widening project. The MPO held a public comment period on the TIP Amendment #2 through November 3, 2010 and a public hearing at the MPO Technical Committee meeting on October 28, 2010.

Mr. Lucero elaborated that no public comments were received.

Action: Mr. Darnell motioned to approve TIP Amendment #2 to the FY2011-2016 TIP. Ms. McCulloch seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of the Annual Meeting Resolution

**FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject:	Annual Meeting Resolution
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 3, 2010

BACKGROUND

- The attached PC Resolution 2010-5 establishes the procedures to be followed and notice to be given pursuant to the provisions of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act, provides for the annual determination of reasonable notice of meetings, and establishes the meeting times, dates and locations for the Farmington Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee meetings during calendar year 2011.

CURRENT WORK

- The Policy Committee will hold six regular meetings during 2011.
- Meetings will be held in January, March, April, June, September, and November.
- The attached PC Resolution 2010-5 will implement the following meeting schedule: meetings occur on the third Thursday at 1:30pm, except in November when it will occur on the second Thursday.
- Policy Committee meetings will rotate among the entities.
- The members have the opportunity to modify the meeting schedule as necessary prior to adopting the resolution.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee adopt PC Resolution 2010-5.

Discussion: Mr. Lucero reviewed the days and months that the Policy Committee would meet. He then elaborated that the meetings would rotate from entity to entity on the same rotation schedule as the prior year.

Mr. Darnell indicated that the November 10, 2011 date conflicted with the Safe Communities Monthly Coordination meeting that both he and Dr. Henderson attend. Mr. Darnell indicated that he had no changes to the meeting schedule but he would have to see if they may be able to avoid the future schedule conflict.

Action: Mr. Darnell made the motion to approve the PC Resolution 2010-5 and the meeting schedule. Ms. McCulloch seconded the motion. Motion carried and PC Resolution 2010-5 was approved.

5. **REVIEW AND ADOPT THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

**FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject:	Memorandum of Agreement
Prepared by:	Martin Lucero, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	November 3, 2010

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- It is the purpose of the Memorandum of Agreement to serve as a planning contract between the MPO and NMDOT.
- It makes provisions that determine the responsibilities for carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process.
- These responsibilities are identified in the MOA and are between the MPO, NMDOT, and the fiscal agent serving the metropolitan planning area.
- NMDOT and the MPO also enter into a contractual agreement to establish the terms and conditions for performance and payment.
- The current MOA is set to expire at the end of December 2010.

CURRENT WORK

- NMDOT is currently developing a Final MOA that covers a five year period (through June 30, 2015).
- MPO staff, the City of Farmington, and the Technical Committee have reviewed the MOA.
- Staff will present the Final MOA to the Policy Committee at their November meeting.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- The City of Farmington, acting as the fiscal agent, will execute the contract with NMDOT.

ATTACHMENTS

- Final draft MOA between the Farmington MPO and NMDOT.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee approve the MOA between the FMPO and NMDOT.

Discussion: Mr. Delmagori stated the Memorandum of Agreement with the MPO and the NMDOT is set to expire at the end of December and the new MOA will need to be

approved prior to the end of the year. He informed the Committee the new MOA will cover a five year period.

Mr. Delmagori further elaborated that the MOA document explains the roles and responsibilities of the MPO, the City of Farmington as the fiscal agent, and NMDOT. The language concerning the roles and responsibilities are very much like the language found in the JPA and Bylaws. Mr. Delmagori brought to their attention some of the changes from the prior MOA: in Section Six, language about the districts providing funding targets to the MPO was added and the submittals of Project Identification Forms are now shown as the responsibility of the local entity. In the signature section of the document, the Finance Director signature line was removed at the request of the City of Farmington's Legal Department. The only signature now will be that of the MPO Policy Board Chairman, the Mayor of Farmington, the Director of the City of Farmington's Legal Department, and NMDOT.

Mr. Darnell asked if the language found throughout the document was standard. Mr. Delmagori confirmed that the legal language in the document was boiler plate. He also added once the MOA has been approved by the Policy Board it would be taken to the City of Farmington City Council for adoption as the fiscal agent.

Action: Mr. Darnell made the motion to approve the MOA between the FMPO and NMDOT. Mr. Current seconded the motion. Motion carried and the MOA between the FMPO and NMDOT was approved.

6. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE RED APPLE TRANSIT STUDY

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject:	Red Apple Transit Study
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 3, 2010

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- The MPO and Red Apple Transit are working with LSC Consultants to determine future transit needs and make recommendations for expansion options.
- LSC Consultants has developed two Technical Memorandums that determine transit need and identify several options for modifying and expanding the system.
- A series of public and stakeholder meetings on the transit study have been held in June, July, and October.
- The Technical Committee received a presentation on the Transit Study on October 7, 2010.

CURRENT WORK

- LSC outlined overall system concepts and possible options to revising the existing transit system.
- LSC developed Technical Memorandum #2, which identified scenarios that reallocate existing resources for system improvements and expansion options

- based on additional resources.
- The public and various stakeholder groups have assisted in determining a preferred option that recommends changes to the Red Apple system.
- LSC is currently preparing the final draft report, which is analyzing the preferred option in order to identify future bus stops, estimate ridership and costs, and develop an implementation schedule.

- | ANTICIPATED WORK |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Hold the fourth series of stakeholder and public meetings from November 9-11.▪ Review and provide feedback on the final draft report.▪ Make final recommendations on the Transit Study to the City of Farmington. |

- | RECOMMENDATION |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a presentation from LSC on the Red Apple Transit Study. |

Discussion: Mr. Delmagori informed the Committee that the MPO is currently working with LSC Consultants to identify potential new options for the Red Apple Transit. Mr. Delmagori discussed the Red Apple Transit Study and the progress LSC Consultants has made. He stated LSC is conducting a comprehensive study of the Red Apple Transit to identify potential modifications or expansions for current and future years. LSC has issued a draft report that assesses the current Red Apple Transit system, identifies new route options based on current and future demographics, and outlines an implementation schedule for modifying the system.

Mr. Delmagori stated Mr. Krutsinger was in town this week to review the draft final report. Mr. Delmagori stated Mr. Krutsinger made a presentation on November 9 to the Farmington City Council and also during a public meeting on November 10. Mr. Delmagori added LSC has presented the preferred alternatives and estimated costs, the potential ridership based on proposed changes, and an implementation schedule.

Mr. Delmagori then introduced Mr. Krutsinger. Mr. Krutsinger gave a history of the study and a synopsis of the information gathered. He reviewed the preferred option for both the Farmington and Regional routes. Mr. Krutsinger then described the proposed route structure and made comparisons to the current Red Apple system.

Mr. Current asked Mr. Krutsinger what the difference is between an all day service and limited service. Mr. Krutsinger explained the difference is the frequency at which a bus serves a particular stop. He elaborated on the current regional service and the recommended improvements for the current system through the addition of stops that may help fill in the current need.

Mr. Krutsinger continued by explaining how the new system would be phased in. Within Farmington, routes would change from a loop system to more linear system. He then explained the benefits of the new routes. Bus trips will be shorter due to less out-of-directional travel. The airport stop would be at the beginning and end of a route which would prevent adding additional time to passenger travel.

The phasing could begin by first adding additional stops to fill in gaps along the existing routes then creating bi-directional routes. This would be followed by creating a route

from McGee Park to the airport and then the conversion of the existing Red and Green routes to the line route system. During the three year phasing in period, the operating budget of the Red Apple would increase by \$100,000 after which the budget would return to relatively normal budgetary amounts. Mr. Krutsinger referred the committee to the table outlining the proposed budget. He added that the option still exists for not phasing in the proposed improvements which could be done with zero to slight budget increase. The final option would be to add in bus shelters at appropriate locations for an estimated \$15,000 each.

Mr. Darnell commented that to add one more trip per day on the regional routes seemed to be very minimal. He then asked what was included in his figures and the price for one more trip. Mr. Krutsinger confirmed the cost included both labor and maintenance of the vehicles. The reason the cost would be so minimal is because no additional capital cost would be needed for additional trips. He then indicated as more trips are added to any one route the cost would eventual increase to the cost outlined in his early table for a new all day route.

Mr. Darnell commented that if you add more trips it should create the necessity of adding more drivers and increase the total projected cost. Mr. Krutsinger explained that the initial time demand would be minimal and would not warrant any additional personnel but as the number of trips grew the demand would grow until it warranted an additional driver for an all day service.

Mr. Krutsinger finished his presentation by correlating a 1.3% increase in operating budget to a 33% gain in ridership through the use of a linear route system.

Dr. Henderson asked if all of Mr. Darnell's comments had been considered from prior public meetings. Mr. Krutsinger answered affirmatively. Mr. Current then commented that Aztec is looking for information on boarding and alignments along the Tiger route. Mr. Lucero acknowledged the request from Mr. Current and informed him that he believed that Presbyterian Medical Services had directed their bus drivers servicing that route to begin collecting that information. Mr. Current indicated that he felt that all the current stops may not be needed and that he would like to relocate the nonproductive stops to other locations. Mr. Krutsinger suggested the pull cord concept that may be introduced to the regional routes and expressed the concerns from the individuals living in Spencerville that they would like a stop placed on the Tiger route.

Mr. Darnell then explained that he felt that the current cost per rider was too high and that he felt there might be a more cost effective way of helping the transit dependent. He suggested possibly having a brainstorming session to evaluate the other possibilities out there. Mr. Darnell then proposed using some of the current operating funds towards an expanded dial-a-ride service. Mr. Darnell indicated that he understands that federal funds may not be available to use towards these other activities but they may still be more cost effective. The number one concern he keeps hearing is that the transit system is not effective and not convenient. The hours of operation don't match the hours of need. He feels just because this is the current system does not mean that we need to keep it. In conclusion, Mr. Krutsinger informed the committee that the current average cost per rider for the entire system is close to \$7.21.

Ms. McCulloch added in that the cost is even higher if you only consider unique riders. Dr. Henderson indicated that a call service may be cheaper but not as effective. He continued that he felt that the issue lies with educating the community and helping them understand the benefits of using public transit. With increased education then the

number of riders would naturally increase. Mr. Current agreed and indicated that the communities here in San Juan County are not aware of public transit like on the East Coast. Mr. Delmagori indicated that the MPO may be able to facilitate a discussion on alternate ways of educating the public on transit use or consider other modes of helping the transit dependent community.

Action: The report was received.

7. RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE NMDOT

Discussion: No report from NMDOT

8. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE NEW MEXICO STATE RAIL PLAN

**FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject:	New Mexico State Rail Plan
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 3, 2010

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- The Transit and Rail Division of the NMDOT is developing the New Mexico State Rail Plan to address current and future rail needs throughout the state.
- The new rail plan will replace the 1996 Rail Plan Update developed by the Intermodal Management Bureau of the New Mexico Highway and Transportation Department.
- This plan is being developed in cooperation with various stakeholders such as rail carriers, transit providers, tribal and local governments.

CURRENT WORK

- Bill Craven, from the Transit and Rail Division of NMDOT, gave an overview presentation of the upcoming New Mexico State Rail Plan to the Technical Committee on October 28.
- Staff will recap the presentation and summarize comments made at that meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

- Summary notes of the presentation.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a summary of the NMDOT Rail Plan presentation.

Discussion: Mr. Delmagori briefly explained the presentation given by Bill Craven with the NMDOT at the October 28, 2010 Technical Committee meeting. He continued to explain that the state is looking at how they can improve rail service within the state. This study will help dictate where rail will be emphasized throughout the state. The plan currently is in the information gathering stages and developing a vision statement. The plan will be developed throughout 2011, with anticipated completion in early 2012.

Dr. Henderson discussed the importance of having rail serve San Juan County. He mentioned how vital it would be to the local economies because right now the cost of trucking items in and out of the county is much higher than if there was a dedicated rail line. He stated the high cost of rail would prohibit passenger travel but it should be pursued as a viable option. He also stated that there should be a greater focus than past years on rail. He feels that local stakeholders must get involved with the development of the rail plan so that they can play a critical role in formulating rail strategies for the county.

Action: The report was received.

9. **RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE RED APPLE TRANSIT**

**FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject:	Red Apple Transit Update
Prepared by:	Martin Lucero, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	October 28, 2010

RED APPLE UPDATE

- Overall ridership peaked in March 2010 reaching a high of 12,835 passengers.
- The combined Farmington Routes have seen an average annual growth of 2%
- Bloomfield's highest ridership occurred in August of 2008 with 617 passengers.
- Bloomfield's peaks occur during late summer and early fall.
- Bloomfield's rise in ridership outpaces the lulls creating a positive seasonal trend.
- Kirtland's seasonal cycle is much shorter than that of the other regional routes with six month highs and lows.
- Kirtland's overall ridership trend is positive with a steady annual growth of 4%.
- Aztec's highest ridership occurred in July of 2007 with 289 riders.
- Aztec has had various peaks and valleys over the lifespan of the route, but has had an average annual growth rate of 4%.
- The ridership report is attached.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a report on Red Apple Transit.

Discussion: Mr. Lucero stated the overall ridership peaked in March of 2010 reaching a high of 12,835 passengers. Mr. Lucero reviewed all of the individual regional routes. He explained that the Aztec Tiger route has fallen in ridership but is slowly picking up. The Kirtland Bronco route is starting to increase as well. Bloomfield Bobcat has had a big jump in ridership and continues to grow. He stated the regional routes are doing better than in the past.

Mr. Lucero stated with the proposed improvements from the Red Apple Study these regional routes can become more productive. The Tiger route might stand to benefit the most. Based on comments at public meetings, there is a need in the area for the Tiger route to offer more service.

Action: The report was received.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject:	Information Items
Prepared by:	Martin Lucero, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	November 3, 2010

INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **Hood Mesa/Northern Route Connection Alternatives.** Staff is currently working with the City of Farmington and community stakeholders to develop an alternative to the Hood Mesa Trail– Northern Route Connection. Staff will bring the preferred alternative to the Technical Committee for review in November and to the Policy Committee in January.
- b. **Other.**

Discussion: Mr. Martin Lucero stated there have been several meetings with community stakeholders and City of Farmington in regards to the alternative connection to the Hood Mesa/Northern Route intersection. Staff has had a meeting with the residents, BLM, and other groups such as the off road truckers and bike groups. Staff is currently working on two different alternatives which will be proposed to the Policy Committee next year after final review by the Technical Committee.

Action: Report was received.

11. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Discussion: Dr. Henderson questioned Mr. Delmagori if there were any type of monies available for a study to be done on freight movement and its connection to future rail in San Juan County. Mr. Delmagori asked if he was requesting an additional study besides the State-led study. Dr. Henderson stated he wanted to again reiterate how important it is for the State to understand the need for rail in San Juan County. Mr. Delmagori mentioned that the state through Mr. Craven is collecting information from locals throughout various parts of the state on the critical needs for rail, but the MPO could facilitate additional efforts if necessary.

Dr. Henderson asked where the funds for the State study will be coming from. Mr. Delmagori stated the study is being funded through Statewide Planning and Research funds. Dr. Henderson asked how long will this study be. Mr. Delmagori stated the study will be complete in early 2012.

Ms. McCulloch stated the rail study needs to focus on the communities out in the more rural areas. The northern portion of the State is often forgotten and it needs to be looked at much more closely.

Mr. Current stated the rail plan will be supported if given the opportunity. He stated it is a great idea and he is excited that they are looking into possibly extending rail to our community. He continued stating that the cost of construction in this area is so costly and without a rail system the freight costs are so much higher than in other cities with rail.

Mr. Delmagori mentioned Kathy Bonnell will be resigning and acknowledged her time with the MPO and thanked her for her help and assistance.

12. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Discussion: There was no business from the floor.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Discussion: Mr. Current made a motion to adjourn and Ms. McCulloch seconded the motion. Dr. Henderson adjourned the meeting at 4:33 pm.

Dr. James C. Henderson - Chair

Joe Delmagori - MPO Planner