

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 16, 2011

Policy Members Present: Pat Lucero, City of Bloomfield
Dan Darnell, City of Farmington
Dr. Jim Henderson, San Juan County

Policy Members Absent: Sherri Sipe, City of Aztec
Gayla McCulloch, City of Farmington

Technical Committee Members Present: None

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: Ray Matthew, Planning Liaison NMDOT
Larry Hathaway, San Juan County

Present Via Telephone: Phil Gallegos, Assistant District Engineer,
NMDOT

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Henderson called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm.

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 21, 2011 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Pat Lucero made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 21, 2011 Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Darnell seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. ADOPT PC RESOLUTION 2011-3, REQUESTING THAT NMDOT TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION CONCERNING NECESSARY REPAIRS TO STATE HIGHWAYS IN THE MPO

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item

Subject:	State Road Maintenance Resolution
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	June 8, 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, and San Juan County have passed resolutions requesting NMDOT to make necessary repairs to state highways within their jurisdictions.

CURRENT WORK

- At the May 26 Technical Committee meeting, Miguel Gabaldon and Dave Martinez with District 5 discussed maintenance issues with the members.
- Road maintenance projects have been identified for locations in the MPO.
- The members discussed developing a partnership with District 5 for maintenance needs.
- Staff has prepared a similar maintenance resolution to be passed by the MPO.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- Hold a joint Policy/Technical Committee meeting in July to discuss a maintenance partnership between District 5 and the entities.

ATTACHMENTS

- PC Resolution 2011-3.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee adopt PC Resolution 2011-3, requesting that NMDOT take immediate action concerning necessary repairs to state highways in the MPO.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reviewed the history of this issue which began when 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. The Policy Committee suggested that the entities seek to develop a JPA with the state in which the local governments would perform the maintenance and receive reimbursement from NMDOT. Although the entities agreed with developing a JPA, Aztec, Bloomfield, and San Juan County did subsequently pass resolutions requesting NMDOT to make necessary repairs to state highways within their jurisdictions.

At the May 26 Technical Committee meeting, Miguel Gabaldon and Dave Martinez with District 5 discussed the maintenance issue with the members, that they understood the entities' frustration and that the budget shortfalls were creating difficulties for everyone. Those present

discussed having a joint meeting in July with the MPO Policy and Technical Committees and District 5 staff to talk about strategies in maintaining the roadways, whether by sharing resources or developing partnerships.

Mr. Darnell asked if a meeting is planned to develop cooperative strategies between the MPO entities and District 5, why adopt a Resolution that requests NMDOT take immediate action concerning necessary repairs to state highways in the MPO. Mr. Delmagori said that Mr. Gabaldon had reported that the resolutions actually helped them when they spoke to transportation representatives in Washington. The resolutions reinforce critical local needs, underscore that the DOT is supportive and understanding of those needs, and encourage action at the Federal level. Mr. Darnell asked if a resolution from the MPO was necessary since each entity had submitted their own resolutions. Mr. Delmagori responded that the MPO resolution would be an umbrella to reinforce the entities' actions.

ACTION: Mr. Pat Lucero moved to adopt PC Resolution 2011-3, requesting that NMDOT take immediate action concerning necessary repairs to state highways in the MPO. Mr. Darnell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. DRAFT REAUTHORIZATION PROPOSAL

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject:	Draft Reauthorization
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	June 8, 2011

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- In May, AMPO informed the nation's MPOs about a 'preliminary' draft reauthorization that describes a MPO tier system.
- Tier 1 would consist of MPOs with a population of 1,000,000 or more.
- Tier 2 would consist of MPOs with a population between 200,000 and 1,000,000.
- Small MPOs under 200,000 would either have to demonstrate their technical capacity to remain an MPO or develop a plan to be dissolved.
- MPO planning requirements would then be assumed by the state DOT.
- AMPO has developed a list of Talking Points and is requesting Congress to keep all existing MPOs intact.
- Small MPOs are being encouraged to contact their US representatives and senators requesting that they do not support this proposal.

CURRENT WORK

- MPO staff has listened in on AMPO conference calls that have discussed this issue.
- Staff has developed a letter to the state's U.S. legislators highlighting the detrimental effects this proposed bill would have to the Farmington MPO.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- Submit the letter to Representative Lujan, Senators Udall and Bingaman, Governor Martinez, and Transportation Commissioner Butch Mathews.

ATTACHMENTS

- Excerpt from proposed authorization that describes the MPO tier system.
- FMPO Letter to U.S. and State officials.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee:
 - Receive a report on a proposed tier system and its impact to small MPOs.
 - Review and approve a letter to submit to US and state officials that highlights the importance of retaining all MPOs in the new authorization.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that since the expiration of SAFETEA LU in 2009 it has been under continuing resolutions. Recent discussion has indicated that Congress is ready to introduce a new authorization and is targeting completion for the end of this current federal fiscal year. The Association of MPOs (AMPO) learned about a draft legislation that proposes a new tier system for MPOs. Tier 1 would consist of MPOs with a population of 1,000,000 or more. Tier 2 would consist of MPOs with a population between 200,000 and 1,000,000. The draft legislation then recommends that any population area under 200,000 would either have to demonstrate their technical capacity to remain an MPO or develop a plan to be dissolved. If dissolved, the metropolitan planning requirements currently carried out by an MPO would have to be picked up by the corresponding state DOT.

Mr. Delmagori stated this proposed legislation would have a major impact on the FMPO and would also affect the Santa Fe and Las Cruces MPOs. AMPO reported there would be approximately 200 small MPOs nationwide that would be affected by this legislation. AMPO has written a letter to members of Congress and asked small MPOs to sign on to voice their concerns and opposition to the proposal. FMPO did sign on to this letter. Mr. Delmagori said that Staff has drafted a letter to send to U.S. and State officials that highlights the importance of retaining all MPOs in the new authorization and voices our own concerns about the current proposed legislation.

Mr. Darnell asked who was proposing this legislation and what the reason behind the proposal was. Mr. Delmagori stated that it is not known who put forward this proposal. The reason for the proposal is believed to be due to the current financial situation and the need to focus available resources on large metropolitan areas where the benefits are believed can be better measured. Mr. Darnell asked if the legislation had been introduced. Mr. Delmagori said it had not yet been introduced, but AMPO was staying current with the information as it became available and then passing that information on to the MPOs nationwide. Mr. Darnell asked Mr. Gallegos if NMDOT would be willing to take on the MPO's responsibilities should this legislation be passed. Mr. Gallegos stated that NMDOT's policy was unknown at this time. Should NMDOT be responsible for funding the smaller MPOs, this funding would have to come from State funds and those funds are not available. Mr. Gallegos reported that these ideas are being discussed as a new

transportation bill is developed. He added that because of these discussions in Washington, the small MPOs are concerned about losing Federal funding as well as their ranking/status and are sending these resolutions to influence the final legislation.

Mr. Matthew described the current funding process for MPOs as well as the State Planning and Research (SPR) funds that the State receives. He added that if SPR funds had to be used to fund MPOs, NMDOT would be hard pressed to provide the current level of service and not have program cuts in other areas. Additionally, with three small MPOs in the state, coordination of services would be difficult. Mr. Delmagori stated that to address the technical capacity issue mentioned in the legislation, this MPO can acknowledge that in the last seven years it has developed two long range plans, a bicycle/pedestrian plan, and an Access Management Plan. He added that FMPO's work was most likely indicative of what other small MPOs had accomplished and questioned if the small MPOs were eliminated, who would take on their responsibilities as the regional transportation planning coordinators.

ACTION: Mr. Darnell moved to approve the letter that highlights the importance of retaining all MPOs in the new authorization and submit it to U.S. and state officials. Mr. Pat Lucero seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. APPROVE THE 2011 TRAFFIC COUNT LOCATION LIST

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject:	2011 Traffic Count Program
Prepared by:	Martin Lucero, MPO Associate Planner
Date:	June 8, 2011

BACKGROUND

- MPO maintains traffic counts for 221 locations throughout the MPO boundaries.
- Locations are taken according to a three year cycle and periodically change due to the deletion or addition of various locations.
- The 2011 Traffic counts are the second year of the three year cycle.
- Counts that were not approved last year or were affected by road construction will be counted in 2011.
- The MPO expects to take 87 volume counts in 2011.
- The MPO anticipates that speed and class count information will be provided for 27 of the 87 count locations.
- The Technical Committee members reviewed the 2011 Traffic Count Location list and identified locations that might conflict with known road construction schedules.
- The Technical Committee members recommended approval at their May 26th committee meeting.

CURRENT WORK

- The proposed location list is attached for review.
- Staff will ask member entities to review the list in August for any unforeseen conflicts with construction or other events.
- The MPO anticipates taking the counts in September and October.

RECOMMENDATION

- Staff recommends that the Policy Committee approve the 2011 Traffic Count Location list.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Martin Lucero reported that MPO maintains traffic counts for 221 locations throughout the MPO boundary and that one-third of these are completed annually to meet FHWA requirements as well as for MPO modeling purposes. The MPO expects to take 87 volume counts this year and of those 87 count locations, 27 will be speed and vehicle classification counts. Mr. Martin Lucero explained that a speed count is different from a volume count in that a second set of tubes is set down and this second set of tubes provides the type and speed of each car travelling along the roadway.

Last year the consultant had a good turnaround time and provided excellent data with just a few that failed or were missed due to construction issues in the area. Mr. Lucero stated that Staff expects to have 95% of this year's counts completed. The proposed list of traffic count locations was reviewed by the Technical Committee members at their May 26th meeting. All areas are expected to be free of construction or maintenance during the later part of September and early October when the counts are anticipated to be taken. Mr. Martin Lucero added that the location list would be confirmed with the Technical Committee members in August to verify that no changes were necessary. Mr. Lucero stated that since we want to get a good understanding of what is happening along the area's main corridors, the focus of this year's counts will be on US 64, US 550, and NM 516.

Dr. Henderson asked how the counts were taken. Mr. Martin Lucero stated that once the tubes are installed the counts are taken by machine. Mr. Pat Lucero asked what the cost was for these counts. Mr. Martin Lucero stated that a volume count is \$99 per count and the cost for a speed/class count depends on the width of the roadway. For a two-lane facility, the cost is \$100 per count while for a facility such as NM516, the cost would be \$175 per count. Staff expects to spend all \$12,500 of the traffic count budget this year.

ACTION: Mr. Darnell moved to approve the 2011 Traffic Count Location list. Mr. Pat Lucero seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. RECEIVE A REPORT FROM NMDOT

Mr. Gallegos reported that NMDOT has prepared a letter for a TIP amendment for several projects that will be added for the MPO area to the FY2012-2015 STIP. NMDOT is also developing plans for a potential US 64 maintenance project at the Troy King intersection should Federal closeout funds become available. Mr. Delmagori stated that the MPO has a TIP letter prepared to send to NMDOT which addresses the new projects NMDOT had discussed at the last Technical Meeting as well as the Safe Routes to School Phase 2 funding.

Mr. Ray Matthew reported on the MPO Quarterly Meeting to be held in Farmington next week and one of the discussion items will be the STIP protocols. The protocol process is being updated and part of the changes will include a January call for project status. This project status is being done in the Albuquerque area now, but NMDOT would like to expand that to all MPOs. Mr. Matthew said that one of the reasons for updating the protocol process is to better line up the State's fiscal year end with the Federal fiscal year end to ensure all funds have been spent. In the past few years, changes were automatically made by NMDOT without advance notice to the MPOs. NMDOT wants to now update this process by involving the local implementing agencies early on to avoid any surprises.

7. REVIEW THE CHANGES MADE TO THE CENSUS TAZ-TAD STRUCTURE FOR SAN JUAN COUNTY

**FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject:	2010 Census and TAZ/TAD Delineation
Prepared by:	Martin Lucero, Associate MPO Planner
Date:	June 8, 2011

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- U.S. DOT and the U.S. Census Bureau will obtain Census 2010 block equivalencies for Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) from MPOs and State DOTs in 2011.
- The 2010 TAZ geography will be added to the Census Bureau's TIGER file and these equivalency files will be used by the ACS for the CTPP 5-year tabulation (2006 through 2010 ACS records).
- A TAZ is a basic spatial unit of analysis facilitating the ability of transportation planners to forecast changes in commuting patterns, trip volumes, and modes of travel, and to develop plans to meet the changing demands for transportation facilities and capacities.
- Each TAZ represents an area containing similar kinds of land use and travel characteristics.
- The Farmington MPO developed new base TAZs.
- Staff also developed Census Traffic Analysis Districts (TADs). These are aggregates of the base TAZs and must have an estimated population lower limit of 20,000 residents.

CURRENT WORK

- Staff has reviewed and has made adjustments to the base TAZ groups.
- Staff met with the entities to review and verify the TAZ adjustments.
- The TAZs were developed to represent homogenous residential groupings while working within the Census requirements.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- Staff will submit both the TAZs and TADs to the Census Bureau by mid-June.

ATTACHMENTS

- Maps depicting newly created TAZs and TADs will be provided at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee review the changes made to the Census TAZ-TAD structure for San Juan County.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Martin Lucero reported that as part of the US Census, all MPOs and State DOTs for those areas outside of an MPO were asked to review census tracts, blocks and populations to form new Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) to better correlate with the new American Census Survey information. Staff reviewed the available information for all of San Juan County.

Staff worked with each entity’s planning department to break blocks into manageable pieces and allow population numbers to be easily accessed. For the City of Bloomfield, the original three TAZs were changed into six to break out populations based on housing type, economic situations, and demographics. In Aztec, newer residential neighborhoods on the east side were separated from the older, established neighborhoods near downtown. For San Juan County, Kirtland was split up into several lower and upper districts as well as a corridor for US 64. Also, the Census did not use highways as divisions, so each entity had TAZs that crossed over a major roadway. For many areas in San Juan County, the roadway actually defines two separate areas that are totally different. For the City of Farmington, many of the larger TAZs were broken up (i.e.: Country Club, North Foothills, Crestwood Estates, McCormick School District, Sycamore Center area) to better associate similar neighborhoods.

Mr. Martin Lucero stated that from these TAZs, the Census Bureau wants the MPO to create the larger Traffic Analysis Districts (TADs) which uses a population of 20,000 or greater. Since San Juan County has a population of 135,000, Staff created six districts: four districts within the MPO and two districts outside the MPO. This information will be sent to the Census Bureau and then, beginning next year, ACS data will be available based off of these new boundaries.

ACTION: The report was received.

8. RECEIVE A REPORT ON ALTERNATIVES FOR THE MPO MAJOR THOROUGHFARE PLAN RELATING TO THE NORTHEAST FARMINGTON AREA AND PROPOSED REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

**FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject: MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan Alternatives

Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	June 8, 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 have identified two additional alternatives.

CURRENT WORK

- Staff will review the four alternatives with the Policy Committee:
 - Alternative #1 - Run the Northern Route over the top of Foothills and connect it to College Blvd
 - Alternative #2 - Keep the connection described above but also continue the Northern Route to intersect with Glade Road.
 - Alternative #3 – Run the Northern Route over the top of Foothills to connect to College but do not extend Foothills north to the Northern Route
 - Alternative #4 – Expand upon Alternative #3 by extending the Northern Route to Glade Road.
- The MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan will be amended at the regional level once approved by the local governments.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- Seek approval of the MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan and an alternative for Northeast Farmington by Farmington City Council in June.

ATTACHMENTS

- Maps of the alternatives are available on the MPO website and will be provided at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Policy Committee receive a status report on the MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan and alternatives for the Northeast Farmington area.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori briefly summarized that two alternatives were identified for the Northeast Farmington area and its connections to proposed regional routes. After receiving comments from the series of public meetings in March and April, two additional alternatives were identified. Once the Farmington City Council takes action on selecting the alternative, Staff will seek regional approval from the Policy Committee on the MPO Major Thoroughfare Plan and an alternative for the Northeast Farmington area. Mr. Darnell asked if the alternatives were listed in preferential order. Mr. Delmagori stated that the Alternatives are shown in the order in which they had been identified. Mr. Darnell asked if any of the alternatives received more

attention or focus. Mr. Delmagori stated that Alternative #2 received attention because people appreciated the dispersion of traffic around the Foothills area while others were favorable with expanding out to the Glade area and connecting with Glade Road down to Pinon Hills. Mr. Martin Lucero added that Alternative #3 was basically the same as Alternative #1 but instead Foothills would not extend up to the Northern Route. He added that this was also a popular option as people wanted to keep the Glade separate and not have the Foothills connection cut through current bike trails. Mr. Darnell expressed his concern that anytime a road is built in an area, the area then opens up to development, and he felt very strongly about this in regard to the Glade area.

ACTION: The report was received.

9. INFORMATION ITEMS

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject:	Information Items
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	June 8, 2011

INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **Safe Routes to School Program Activities.** Student arrival counts have been taken at the participating schools during April. The Farmington Walk and Roll program has been awarded Phase II funding. The award includes non-infrastructure funds in the amount of \$25,000 and infrastructure funds in the amount of \$250,000.
- b. **MPO Quarterly.** The Farmington MPO will host the statewide MPO Quarterly meeting on June 22nd.
- c. **MPO Summit.** Las Cruces is proposing that the members of the Policy and Technical Committees from the state MPOs meet to share planning ideas and discuss regional transportation issues.
- d. **Other.**

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori stated that Phase 2 funding was received for Farmington's Safe Routes to School Program activities. The non-infrastructure funds of \$25,000 will be used for the local Champion/Coordinator to complete her work in coordination with the schools. The infrastructure funds to date include a sidewalk on Apache from Auburn down to Apache Elementary. Conversations continue with NMDOT on how best to spend the remaining portion of the \$250,000.

Mr. Delmagori said the MPO would be hosting the statewide MPO Quarterly meeting on June 22nd. Staff from all the MPOs as well as NMDOT are planning to attend.

Mr. Delmagori commented that he had been contacted by the Las Cruces MPO regarding potential interest in an MPO Summit. This would be a meeting of all MPO Policy and Technical Committee members from around the state coming together on an annual basis to discuss regional issues. The plan would be to try and get one or two members from each MPO committee together in either Albuquerque or Santa Fe. Mr. Delmagori asked if Policy Committee members thought there would be interest with our MPO Committees. Mr. Darnell stated it sounded like a good idea and would provide a forum to discuss common issues. Mr. Delmagori said he would let Las Cruces know of the MPO's interest.

Mr. Matthew asked when the Joint Policy and Technical Committee meeting might be held. As discussed earlier, the purpose of this meeting would be to talk about identified maintenance projects in San Juan County and to develop maintenance strategies and partnerships between the local entities and NMDOT. Mr. Delmagori said Staff would look at sometime during the third week in July to schedule this meeting.

10. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

DISCUSSION: There was no additional business from the Chairman, Members or Staff.

11. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

DISCUSSION: There was no other business from the floor.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Dan Darnell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Pat Lucero seconded the motion. Dr. Henderson adjourned the meeting at 2:12 p.m.

Dr. James C. Henderson, Chair

June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide