



## **Approved Minutes**

### **Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization Fall Retreat – 9/24/2008**

Thornager's on Kiltie Lane, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001  
8AM – Noon

#### **Attendees**

Board Members: C. Evans, D. Hill, B. Montoya, S. Overton, S. Presler, M. Ryan

Attendees: A. Bertelsen, K. Burke, J. Cronk, L. Dannenfeldt, B. Goodrich, J. Harper, M. Ince, MJ Jenkins, J. Meilbeck, B. Towler, D. Wegner, D. Wessel, J. Zumpf, L. Royal, D. Wessel

**Session Facilitator**: Laura Royal

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#### **Meeting Overview and Summary**

The fall retreat is an opportunity for board members and key partners of the FMPO to gather and discuss the progress of the organization. The objective of this year's retreat was to reevaluate the strategic direction of the FMPO and identify actions for the FMPO that will support regional transportation issues over the next five years.

The meeting began with a review of the agenda, restating meeting objectives and a review of FMPO's history and recent accomplishments.

During the first half of the morning participants were asked to evaluate the mission of the FMPO. To date, the majority FMPO's activities have been focused on technical accomplishments. Should this more technical focus continue or should, on balance, the work shift to include more strategic activities?

During the second half of the morning, the discussion focused on how to match the vision with resources. Several scenarios were discussed. Ideas ranged from (1) expanding the size of the FMPO, (2) keeping the size the same and realigning tasks, to (3) reducing the size of the FMPO.

#### **Recommendations**

- The FMPO should pursue more strategic activities with the executive board taking the lead for accomplishing strategic activities.
- The size of the FMPO should remain the same while tasks and responsibilities can be redistributed to other committee members.

#### **Action Items**

The Executive Committee will -

- Identify strategic activities that are coordinated with the regional transportation plan.

- Lead an effort to complete a SWOT analysis of staff.
- Based upon the SWOT analysis identify gaps and develop a course of action to fill gaps.
- Communicate the results of these actions to the FMPO members and key partners.

## **Strategic activities to include over the next five years**

Suggestions and discussion points

Issues identified (opportunities):

- The FMPO has not done much outreach or provide ways to engage the public.
- More information to board members and big stakeholders.
- Big stakeholders do not understand FMPO.
- FMPO has not engaged the big stakeholders.
- Large stakeholders are unhappy with the regional transportation plan.
- An obstacle to communicating with the public is that the public are accustomed to traditional means of interacting with the municipalities. FMPO is not a traditional organization (crosses organizational lines) and thus the public is confused about with whom to talk.
- FMPO gets input from limited sources; a good cross section of the public does not participate in transportation discussions.
- FMPO has not articulated its mission. What is our mission?
- The structure, roles, and operational processes are unclear.
- The MPO message is diffuse/unclear.
- Public perception: regional planning and city planning are not talking to each other. Doesn't appear to be a coordinated effort.
- Name of FMPO doesn't say what we do. No mention of transportation.

Possible actions (solutions):

- FMPO has an effective website. Count hits on the website as an indication of community interest/knowledge.
- Get voters involved. Some of our activities/plans should be on the ballot as a way to get the public's attention and get them involved.
- Communicate with our own boards in a more coordinated way.
- Develop a communication strategy as a regional entity.
- Explain (publish) our mission/purpose to big stakeholders and community at large.
- Engage the big stakeholders in our planning.
- Board members need to meet with large stakeholders.
- Do a better job of including/coordinating the collective efforts of all members and committees members.
- We need to build alliances.
- Tell our story to the boards and public sector to get attention. Get attention by using the technical expertise we have. For example, talk about the 10 most dangerous intersections.

Other related comments:

- What strategic planning/initiative has driven the current projects? Answer: It grew organically out of what needed to be done.

- We won't get funding from the state if we wait until there is a meeting about funding. We need to meet with state officials now so they know what our issues are.
- ADOT comment: Tell us what you want to do and we will try and support you.

### **Aligning Vision with Resources**

#### ***What should the FMPO look like? Larger, smaller or the same.***

There was general discomfort around supporting an expansion of FMPO during such uncertain economic times. The group decided the size of the FMPO should remain the same but that tasks and responsibilities can be shifted among committee members to ensure the FMPO takes action on becoming more strategic.

#### **Suggestions:**

The expansion of the FMPO can be revisited at a later time. The consensus was the expansion option is premature. If this group asks for more money they must be able to say "this is what we will do with it."

#### **Executive board should**

- take a more strategic role.
- indentify and coordinate the processes between the committees.
- do a SWOT analysis of FMPO.
- have all group and committees list the priorities and generate a to-do list and send to the executive committee.
- communicate each committee's/group's priorities to all.

#### **Possible action items for committees**

**Note:** Roles for committees were established in the charter document dated 12/05/2007.

#### **Executive committee**

- Identify current priorities and how these fit with what has already been done.
- Do strategic assessment first (take a blank slate approach) and then decide priorities.
- Where do different projects intersect? Identify and communicate.
- The most strategic document used is the regional transportation plan. This is a good place for the board to start on a strategic outlook. Figure out what fits and what doesn't fit.

#### **Technical**

- Review the aspects of studies and how they relate to all groups.

#### **Staff:**

- Continue with the technical viewpoint this is valued.
- Assess the positions of the staff. Identify current strengths and what skills are missing. This will help build a case for more funding.

#### **Management Committee**

- Act in advisory role. When the technical aspects get stuck in execution this committee will act to resolve obstacles or provide advice on how to proceed.