



FLAGSTAFF METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

CITY OF FLAGSTAFF ♦ COCONINO COUNTY ♦ ARIZONA DOT

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Approved Minutes **Executive Board**

8:00 a.m., Wednesday, April 27, 2011

Flagstaff City Hall Staff Conference Room,
211 W. Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Vice Chair Harper called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Roll Call.

Present: Vice Chair John Harper (designated alternate), Arizona Department of Transportation; Carl Taylor, Supervisor Coconino County; Mandy Metzger (designated alternate), Supervisor Coconino County; Coral Evans, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Art Babbott, Councilmember City of Flagstaff

Excused Absent:

Chair Scott Overton, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Vice Chair Hank Rogers, Arizona Department of Transportation; Matt Ryan, Supervisor Coconino County

Others Present:

David Wessel, FMPO Manager; Martin Ince, FMPO Multimodal Planner; Meg Roederer, FMPO Administrative Specialist; Kevin Adam, RTAC; Chris Fetzer, NACOG; Audra Merrick, ADOT

I. PRELIMINARY GENERAL BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Wessel requested an adjustment of the agenda to skip Old Business: Legislative and Regulatory Update and Review in order to wait for Mr. Adams to arrive and start with New Business Item 1: FMPO FY 2010-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Vice Chair Harper and the Board agreed.

C. APPROVAL of MINUTES.

Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the Minutes of March 23, 2011 and Vice Chair Harper abstained because he did not attend the March meeting. Ms. Evans seconded, which passed.

II. NEW BUSINESS (Continued, postponed, and tabled items.)

1. FMPO FY 2010-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment

Mr. Ince introduced the topic to the Board to amend the 2010-2014 TIP to include the County Guard Rail project on Townsend-Winona Road and drop the County rumble strip project on Townsend-Winona Road, and add five City projects and two County projects, and add the Milton ADA ramp project between the City and ADOT, which is a ramp to bypass the stairs. The amendment will also program the delivery of FY10 and 11 design projects.

Ms. Metzger commented on why to drop the rumble strips and add guard rails. Mr. Wessel stated the project is ready and cleared in time to obligate the funds. Mr. Wessel stated the rumble strip project is on Townsend-Winona Road and Leupp Road and will probably come back. Mr. Ince stated there is some tree trimming work on Townsend Winona Road as well. Mr. Taylor stated the list on the handout are new projects and requested clarification on the use it or lose it. Mr. Ince stated every year each small mpo and cog in the state receives \$600,000 through ADOT for safety projects and in any given fiscal year what is not obligated to projects goes back to ADOT but the \$600,000 allotment is renewed in the next fiscal year. Mr. Ince stated for example, if we spent \$350,000 then \$250,000 goes back to ADOT and then the next fiscal year we get a new allotment of \$600,000 the up spent money does not carry forward. Mr. Wessel explained per ADOT's direction the projects that have design need to have a commitment to build it. Mr. Taylor commented on the Cultural Center on Highway 180 and how it can get into the queue. Mr. Wessel stated discussions on the TIP and Work Program is an appropriate time for the Board to put a project into the hopper when looking at the sixth year to evaluate and consider a project. Mr. Taylor stated guard rails and trimming tree projects are worthwhile but they are small projects and do not add up to produce economic leverage such as roundabouts with a Cultural Center. Mr. Taylor suggested perhaps this be a retreat item. Ms. Evans stated she met with Mr. Wessel on how to get projects in the TIP and is interested in Fourth St. getting into the TIP queue. Mr. Wessel addressed the Board on the TIP projects and process. Mr. Harper clarified this TIP amendment is in regard to safety projects. Mr. Taylor stated new roundabouts in the area are necessary due to the new school and the confusing traffic area of Quintana Road and considers it both a safety and an economic issue. Mr. Wessel stated there are methodologies and ADOT did an assessment of accident history and found none. Mr. Babbott commented on bicycle use at the Milton ADA area because although it will be a handicap ramp but it may get used as a bike ramp. Mr. Ince stated people will be riding on it and although it was not planned that way - it may be used that way. Mr. Babbott asked what the width of the ramp will be. Mr. Harper stated it is an additional six feet. Mr. Taylor stated it will be a nice improvement.

Ms. Evans made a motion to approve the TIP Amendment and Ms. Metzger seconded, which passed unanimously.

III. OLD BUSINESS (Continued, postponed, and tabled items.)

1. Legislative and Regulatory Update and Review

Mr. Wessel gave a brief update on the topic and introduced Mr. Adam to provide an in-depth update. Mr. Wessel stated at the federal level there is not a lot of action on reauthorization and the big news is the FY11 budget was finished with cuts to rail and transit, which does not affect us too much in our immediate area. Mr. Wessel stated for FY12 the House is working hard at deficit reduction and to keep the highway trust fund solvent. Mr. Wessel mentioned they want to align expenditures with revenues and are at about \$43 billion today and annually it would go down to \$38 billion and then down to \$28 billion in the outer years; therefore, it is a significant reduction in federal highway dollars.

Mr. Adam stated the oversight committees in both the House and Senate are in the process of conducting hearings and both Chairs have indicated they would like to see draft bills from their committees by Memorial Day. Mr. Adam stated within a month perhaps we could see language but there is skepticism whether or not being able to pass something in the very near future. Mr. Adam continued and stated to date the reauthorization bill has not gone to the oversight committees that handle the revenue side of it and that could be problematic as Mr. Wessel indicated with the budget update with the decreasing amount that is spent every year, which is being driven by the need to balance the trust fund equation and then there is the major discrepancy with \$43 billion going out every year and \$34 billion going in unless new revenue is placed in the fund. Mr. Adam stated for the last three years there has been \$35 billion infused from the general fund into it and he does not anticipate that trend to continue and stated to "right the ship" they're going to have to decrease

spending by roughly a third. Mr. Adam mentioned at the same time there is a strong consensus current spending is not meeting needs. Mr. Adam stated the one alternative is if there is enough of a balance the current spending levels could continue for at least a year. Mr. Adam stated one possible direction rather than go for a full six year bill is to do a two year bill because with a two year bill spending at current levels could continue and then after two years there may be a different economic and political climate and then come up with new revenue options. Mr. Adam stated, which direction will prevail is to be determined. Mr. Adam stated on the non-revenue side the House, Senate and Administration have consensus on streamlining, simplify the process and expedite the process. Mr. Adam mentioned on a conference call with the National Association of Development Organizations or NADO a concept was indicated of having a two tier level planning organization with a threshold population of 1,000,000 and 200,000 as well as allow existing MPOs to be grandfathered as long as the governor signs-off on the renewal.

Mr. Taylor asked if it was true if we took the cap off gas taxes and indexed them if that would take care of the revenue problem. Mr. Adam stated it would need to be a significant increase and stated the number he is aware of is .40 to be where we are as far as purchasing power from the early seventies. Mr. Taylor commented on cuts with crumbling infrastructure and unwillingness to index the tax with reports of billions of dollars in profit for oil companies. Mr. Taylor does not know if there is an organization that is advocating for a reasonable level of tax and cited an example that in Europe you pay more and it only affects the people that use the product. Mr. Adam stated it is frustrating and the trucking association and ASTO have been supportive and the sentiment has been expressed to index but in the last six month the fervor has decreased with the focus on the national debt. Mr. Taylor stated with gas at \$4 a gallon the public tax is the same and it is all going to the oil companies and it is a broken system. Mr. Adam mentioned in the state's five year plan update there is only enough anticipated revenue to cover maintenance fees and no new projects in 2016. Mr. Adam assessed that \$125 million of state highway funding that will be raided and taken away from ADOT and the state highway program, which is consistent with the last two years. Mr. Adam stated at the State Board meeting last week the director indicated that the consistency of cuts will allow them to maintain the current levels of service delivery, which will bode well for snow removal and rest area operations. Mr. Adam stated the brunt of the additional cuts will be with local governments to fund DPS operations and MVD services. Mr. Adam stated the legislature is out and Bill 2318 will allow counties of all size take to the voters a half cent transportation sales tax for roads and/or transit and he is optimistic the governor will allow it to be enacted. Mr. Babbott commented on an impact fee bill that allows for a transportation opportunity for impact fee discussions to continue. Mr. Wessel mentioned sending a letter to the delegation, administration and committee chairs on a reauthorization position paper and indexing of a gas tax, which the Board supported.

IV. NEW BUSINESS (Continued, postponed, and tabled items.)

2. I-40 Design Concept Report Comment Submittal

Mr. Wessel reviewed the I-40 DCR with the Board.

Mr. Babbott commented on encouraging private development participation on all three interchanges (Butler, Lone Tree and Woody Mountain) and prioritization roles. Mr. Harper stated by working through this organization (FMPO) private development participation and prioritization roles can be encouraged. Mr. Wessel commented on the different stages there will be opportunity as well as through the five year plan. Ms. Metzger agreed with Mr. Babbott on private development participation. Mr. Harper inquired about FMPO and member agency comments and ADOTS response. Mr. Wessel stated the MPO size presents a challenge on a collective position. The positions are similar with City and FMPO response to the City is sufficient. Mr. Wessel suggested the FMPO represent the agencies on behalf of City Council and Board of Supervisors. Ms. Metzger stated there are some projects that are too important to the area such as 89 to "hand-off." Mr. Babbott stated there should be a "loop back" to council. Ms. Merrick stated the DCR team consists of members of the City, County and FMPO and we are receiving comments back from the City and

anticipate comments from the County and there is confusion because each member agency is giving comments back and a group that represents the agencies giving comments back to ADOT. Mr. Taylor stated the comment process is a good retreat topic. Mr. Babbott suggested letting this process move forward with the FMPO and develop guidelines to have a more formalized process. Mr. Taylor suggested presenting to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Wessel will contact Mr. Bertelsen.

Mr. Taylor made a motion to endorse and support the FMPO staff findings and comments of the I-40 DCR to ADOT and Ms. Evans seconded, which passed unanimously.

3. ADOT 5-Year Construction Program

Mr. Wessel stated the State Transportation Board will hold a public hearing on the 5-Year Construction Program at Flagstaff City Council Chambers on May 20, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. Mr. Wessel mentioned projects in the region include the JWP/89a intersection in 2013 and a pavement preservation of US 180. Mr. Harper stated they are trying to accelerate it because US 180 is coming apart significantly. Mr. Wessel stated there is possible action for the Board to consider recommending the Chair to send a letter commenting on the program. Mr. Wessel brought to the attention projects around the region mentioning there are a number of pavement preservation projects on I-40 and 89 as well as considerable improvements at Cameron and pavement preservation on I-17. Mr. Wessel stated in the years 2014, 2015 and 2016 they do not have pavement preservation jobs and there may be future jobs in the County and it is undetermined at this point. Ms. Metzger commented if Tonalea should be on the list. Ms. Merrick stated it is a district minor job and not on the list. Mr. Wessel stated the program is beneficial to the region and given the fiscal constraints we are doing fairly well. Mr. Harper stated that ADOT received significant dollars (\$150 million) to repair seven bridges in Mohave County on I-15 to keep the program going five-six years. There was discussion only.

4. Annual State Transportation Board Dinner

Mr. Wessel stated the State Board dinner is about 70 people and requested Board advice on the topic for this year's ten minute presentation during dinner. Mr. Wessel stated potential topics include: System Preservation; an I-40 Coalition; Economic Development; general celebration of regional, collaborative projects. Mr. Taylor suggested gas tax indexing and toll roads as topics of discussion because of the need for revenue generation. Mr. Wessel stated sources of information are the ADOT surveys with their permission. Mr. Wessel suggested the topics on the I-40 Coalition and Economic Development. Ms. Evans commented on quality of life issues and it does not focus only on economic development. Mr. Adam suggested the Long Range Plan, local district issues with concerns on maintenance, or a presentation geared toward new member, Hank Rogers. Ms. Metzger suggested combining the area to provide a visually interesting presentation. Mr. Wessel stated he may ask Mr. Fetzer to participate in the presentation. There was discussion only.

5. FMPO FY 2012 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Wessel briefly stated that the old projects are moving forward and the new projects are the Trip Diary Survey and the Transit Plan Update. There was no discussion.

6. FMPO FY 2012-16 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Wessel stated the Highway Safety Program is set and things have not really changed other than the legitimate question of \$1 million in year 2016 to support the Lone Tree Traffic Interchange. Mr. Wessel mentioned it is time to have a frank discussion as to how to move forward with the T-I. Mr. Wessel stated one opportunity is pursuing a Tiger Grant but admits it is not a particularly good fit but we can try and use with some local resources; thus creating an opportunity for such projects mentioned by Ms. Evans (Fourth Street) and Mr. Taylor (Hwy 180 Cultural Center.) Mr. Babbott suggested having City Community Development staff present an update on private development and the off-site discussions that have occurred and the opportunity to add value to potential interchange spatial data. Mr. Wessel agreed and spoke to his point about prioritization and coordination. Ms. Evans inquired about funding off-site impacts for example on Beaver and San

Francisco do an economic development study to see the ramifications of the interchange. Mr. Wessel clarified the interchange or overpass. Ms. Evans stated the overpass. Mr. Wessel stated the north end of the overpass will have a much larger impact. Ms. Evans stated is there a way to connect the two because in order for the interchange to work you need both pieces but maybe that is just a myth. Mr. Wessel stated the two pieces operate independently and serve fairly distinct purposes at the north and south end and together they provide service for longer trips. Mr. Wessel mentioned the north end piece provides a bypass and allows Beaver and San Francisco to operate as a destination location as opposed to through traffic, which similarly the traffic interchange provides access for CCC and NAU and together they provide a long distance corridor from I-17 and I-40 north of downtown. Ms. Evans stated it would be helpful for discussion to separate the two. There was discussion only.

7. FMPO Calendar

Mr. Wessel clarified with Mr. Babbott the meeting day/time. Mr. Babbott stated this meeting time works and there was just a conflict last month. Mr. Wessel stated the schedule may be discussed again to verify if it works for new Board member, Mr. Hank Rogers. Ms. Evans stated she will not be able to attend the May 16, 2011 meeting.

V. CONCLUDING GENERAL BUSINESS

D. REPORTS

There was no discussion.

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Wessel thanked Mr. Ince and the groups he works with and stated Flagstaff received recognition as a Walkable Community.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Harper adjourned the meeting 9:50 a.m.