



FLAGSTAFF METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

CITY OF FLAGSTAFF ♦ COCONINO COUNTY ♦ ARIZONA DOT

Office: 100 West Birch Avenue ♦ Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Mail: 211 West Aspen Avenue ♦ Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Phone: (928) 213-2651 ♦ Fax: (928) 779-7696

www.flagstaffmpo.org ♦ fmipo@flagstaffaz.gov

Approved Minutes **Executive Board - Retreat** **10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 28, 2011**

Flagstaff Aquaplex,
1702 N. Fourth Street, Flagstaff, AZ 86004

Chair Rogers called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

Roll Call.

Present: Chair Hank Rogers, State Transportation Boardmember Arizona Department of Transportation; Vice Chair Matt Ryan, Supervisor Coconino County; Scott Overton, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Carl Taylor, Supervisor Coconino County; Mandy Metzger, Supervisor Coconino County; Art Babbott, Councilmember City of Flagstaff

Excused Absent:

Coral Evans, Councilmember City of Flagstaff

Others Present:

David Wessel, FMPO Manager; Martin Ince, FMPO Multi-Modal Planner; Meg Roederer, FMPO Administrative Specialist; Barbara Goodrich, City of Flagstaff; Barney Helmick, City of Flagstaff; Celia Barotz, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Daryl Melvin, City of Flagstaff; Jim Cronk, City of Flagstaff; Kevin Burke, City of Flagstaff; Rick Barrett, City of Flagstaff; Joe Galli, Chamber of Commerce; Andy Bertelsen, Coconino County; Larry Dannenfeldt, Coconino County; John Davison, Congressman Paul Gosar Representative; Jeff Meilbeck, NAIPTA; Chris Fetzer, NACOG; Rich Bowen, NAU – ECONA; Wayne Fox, NAU – RPI; Brandon Chandler, Nestle Purina; Kevin Adam, RTAC; Carol Bousquet, SEDI; Trish Rensink, The Bellewether Group; Jeff Blalock, W.L. Gore

I. PRELIMINARY GENERAL BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Wessel requested adjusting the agenda to discuss Old Business Item 1: Legislative and Regulatory Update and Review later in the meeting for Mr. Adam to arrive from Phoenix to the retreat. Chair Rogers agreed.

C. APPROVAL of MINUTES.

Mr. Babbott made a motion to approve the Minutes of August 24, 2011 and Mr. Overton seconded, which passed unanimously.

II. OLD BUSINESS

1. US 180 Winter Traffic Study Update

Mr. Wessel reported on the progress to date including activity on the virtual town hall at

www.us180wintertrafficstudy.com, the September 13, 2011 open house and next steps. Mr. Wessel provided a status update on project outreach and the study process. Mr. Wessel provided the background information on the project. Mr. Wessel stated they are engaging the public with an online forum at www.us180wintertrafficstudy.com and there have been 2,000 visits to the site with 800 regular visitors spending an average of eight minutes per visit; therefore, it is a very positive and extensive outreach through this online forum. Mr. Wessel explained a traditional public meeting was held on September 13, 2011 and there were 110-120 people in attendance for a few hours with the majority from the corridor area. Mr. Wessel stated an interesting idea received was a high speed gondola into town and another new idea is a "Red Rock" pass program during the winter that Oregon is currently doing. Mr. Wessel stated issues people are feeling are being trapped in their homes along the corridor and for visitors it detracts from the experience. Mr. Wessel stated people expressed that the issue is more than just a winter issue and has become a year round challenge in terms of capacity, safe access and pedestrian issues. Mr. Wessel stated the MPO position that regardless of snowmaking there is a traffic issue that needs to be addressed and will move forward. Mr. Wessel explained the next steps are to revamp the website to consolidate the ideas, provide information on the ideas regarding the rough costs, impacts and resolution with people to be able to vote on them. Mr. Wessel stated the ideas will be modeled and there will be a final public meeting in November and will finish the report by the end of the calendar year. Mr. Wessel stated they are working with the task force to look at ideas this year such as broader public information for travelers to know what is open or closed as well as posting static travel time information. Mr. Wessel stated there are talks with Snowbowl for a longer term solution such as a morning pass program. Mr. Wessel mentioned the larger scale items such as intersection improvements, transit solutions and a bypass are beyond five years but are trying to apply costs and pull groups together to determine who would be responsible. Chair Rogers inquired if there is public transport to the Snowbowl. Mr. Wessel replied at this point, no, but it is one of the solutions being evaluated and have talked to a new small shuttle provider that is adding an additional van because business went well last season. Mr. Meilbeck stated NAIPTA has not fully evaluated it at this point. Mr. Wessel added there are many other pieces such as parking and pricing. Mr. Burke requested more information regarding the micro simulation-efforts and scope for traffic flow, land use and bypass. Mr. Wessel explained the micro-simulation has two models for the larger scale issues.

- 1) The 180 corridor and down Milton where the heart of the problem is located and to examine transit and how many trips would be taken off the system and there is potential for traffic signal timing. Mr. Wessel commented that the micro-simulation would test these scenarios.
- 2) The regional traffic model and will look at the impact of a bypass. Mr. Wessel stated at the public meeting people were supportive of a bypass on the corridor and many of the people were familiar with the history. Mr. Burke commented on the bypass and the land use issues associated with it.

Mr. Taylor stated he was impressed with the turnout at the meeting. Mr. Taylor commented on the importance of agency cooperation, the idea of a recreation authority with one staffer dedicated to the issue, and the economic component to disperse snowplay. Mr. Taylor added that the study will provide the transit and driving implications information and that we know what to do regarding information systems because we have spent five years on the issue. Mr. Taylor stressed the need of a structure that allows us to do it otherwise we will know a lot about the problem and not have an organizational structure to respond to it. Mr. Cronk commented on the Regional Plan elements of the circulation and transportation and that the timing is right for a good discussion on the bypass issue. Mr. Taylor inquired if the Forest Service is part of the process. Mr. Cronk responded that they are involved.

Mr. Babbott stated the study includes citizen input and inquired if the study included the sheriff's department, Flagstaff police department and forest service to help mitigate the problem such as staggered closing times at Wing Mountain and if the study included the entities input and participation. Mr. Wessel stated the task force is the best venue barring the output of a larger authority at some point. Mr. Babbott asked if there are specific mitigation strategies. Mr. Taylor stated an example to control the number of vehicles on 180 is to provide residents a vehicle pass (sticker) and an officer that monitors how many vehicles can go in and out of the area. Mr. Taylor stated it requires cooperation of the police department and neighborhood associations. Mr. Wessel stated the study will provide a more formal arrangement and based on priorities it will identify the effective solutions and which solutions

can be done sooner and the responsible party.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Update and Review

Mr. Adam from RTAC provided a legislative and regulatory status update to the group on state and federal activity, MPO population threshold, SAFETEA-LU extension, and reauthorization activity. Mr. Adam stated the federal level has many moving parts which can be complicated and difficult to follow. Mr. Adam explained that for many years the federal highway trust fund, which funds all the surface transportation programs, has been spending about one third more than what it has taken in. Mr. Adam stated over the past three-four years federal general funds have covered the shortfall and the current climate is to focus on deficit reduction and that there is lack of support to increase public revenues, so the use of the general fund will be a thing of the past. Mr. Adam explained that basically the spending will need to decrease by roughly one third and it is a question of when rather than if and at the moment it can sustain another twelve months and can continue to operate status quo for another year. Mr. Adam stated the reauthorization and appropriations issue will operate with short term extensions and deficit reduction will be a factor. Mr. Adam commented on the job proposal from the President and transportation spending. Mr. Adam stated the SAFETEA-LU extension passed and programs are authorized at the current levels for six months until March 31, 2012. Mr. Adam stated the longer term reauthorization is in "limbo" and the House and Senate were close to releasing draft bills but the release has been delayed. Mr. Adam mentioned there are general proposals available but nothing on the specifics because the two are so far apart and in all likelihood will not see any long term Bill this year or possibly next year and after the election. Mr. Adam stated the differences are centered on the revenues and Chairman Mica from the House wants to pass with the one third reduction and Senator Coats from the Senate believes a small amount of additional revenue (\$12 billion) over the year could maintain current spending levels and even increasing slightly to adjust for inflation. Mr. Adam stated basically the House is estimating \$38 billion in spending and the Senate \$54 billion and with this difference believes it will be put off indefinitely.

Mr. Adam commented on the status of MPOs and stated he has not seen any language other than what was reported about a year ago from the administration to increase the population threshold from 50,000 to 200,000. Mr. Adam stated on the issue of grandfathering that it would allow for it but it would be challenging because one would have to demonstrate you could handle the regulatory requirements including approval of the largest entity in the organization, the approval of the Governor and the approval of the US Secretary of Transportation, which could prove problematic because of the desire to decrease the number of MPOs. Mr. Adam stressed there has not been Bill language released but has had conversations with staff in DC that indicate the eventual Senate version will be similar to the administration document from a year ago. Mr. Adam stated the House will probably increase the population threshold to the 100,000 or 200,000 level and include the grandfathering, which will be easier than the Senate version. Mr. Wessel commented that a long-term Bill makes it easier to program with predictable funding and operating under continuing resolutions makes it more difficult to move projects forward for delivery. Mr. Wessel stated there are implications in terms of flexibility for the states. Mr. Wessel explained other areas including Flagstaff does have a demand and desire for buses and pathways and will need to continue to maintain a strong working relationship with ADOT to address flexibility. Mr. Adam commented on the increased debt ceiling, the federal fiscal deadline of September 31 and the development of a super committee tasked with developing spending cuts plan by December 23. Mr. Adam stated that state revenues are increasing and last year had 11% revenue growth and they were expecting only 5.8%. Mr. Adam stated it went up in *all* categories such as income and sales *except* in gas tax which stayed stagnant. Mr. Adam stated the numbers for gas tax are actually going down by about 1% and the reason the HURF fund is being affected is because people are not buying new cars which is impacting the vehicle license tax. Mr. Wessel stated the legislature created problems with the raids and Moodys downgraded the bond rating making it more expensive. Mr. Wessel inquired if action is being taken at the state level to correct and restore bonding capacity. Mr. Adam stated the focus will be on legislation to revise, reform or reinstate the bond capacity and suspects it will not include more revenue. Mr. Adam stated a priority will be in changing the formulas that secure the HURF bonds. Mr. Taylor commented on gas taxes and indexing. Mr. Adam

stated it is being discussed but believes the political will is not there.

3. Amendment to the Operating Procedures

Mr. Wessel explained the recommended changes and updates to the operating procedures to address organizational changes to the host agency, representation on the TAC and Management Committee function. Mr. Wessel briefly explained the TAC quorum change to 50% with each agency represented, and the role of the Management Committee has changed and the members may attend Executive Board meetings more often. Mr. Overton made a motion to adopt the changes to the operating procedures and Ms. Metzger seconded, which passed unanimously.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Rogers adjusted the agenda placing Freight Forum Planning and TIGER Grant Planning as New Business Items 1 and 2.

1. Freight Forum Planning

Mr. Wessel explained the Freight Forum Planning status and received feedback from the group on theme, vision and invitation list. Mr. Wessel stated there are the following opportunities that require large partnerships.

- Improvements to I-40 and how it relates to forming a corridor coalition similar to I-95
- I-17 and I-11 creating access new markets
- Cordes Cutoff for a truck bypass through Cordes Junction
- Transit Coalition: Advocate, plan and provide service

Mr. Burke commented on transportation from micro and macro perspectives. Mr. Meilbeck stressed the importance of prioritizing the transportation categories to create a vision for the event. Mr. Ryan commented on the micro levels of an intermodal facility, inventory levels, potential for private sector involvement, educating the region on thresholds and that it would then help on a macro level to have a better discussion to advocate for a corridor. Ms. Metzger commented on forest restoration and logging trucks. Mr. Babbott stated the vision needs to fit with the landscape of the transportation system such as fuel prices and lack of new capital. Mr. Taylor mentioned the idea of a port authority. Mr. Overton commented on SCA operation, the impact of freight on the local transportation system, the Freight study, and private sector involvement. Mr. Overton stated that we should strive to move economic partners through our region and find a vehicle to do so such as an authority or modal yard and use the input to define how we get there. Ms. Metzger commented on rail spurs located out east with the Hopi tribe looking for investment and a vision that goes beyond the mpo boundaries. Mr. Wessel referenced the RTAC saying as appropriate "connecting rural Arizona to the global economy." Mr. Helmick commented that the vision refers to increasing options. Mr. Meilbeck stated that we are large enough to be sophisticated but small enough to be agile and the transportation system is going to happen by design or by default and the goal is to design something the best way possible using all the means available. Mr. Cronk stressed that micro and macro views need balance to blend and should compliment not compete with one another and referenced BNSF as an example. Mr. Taylor commented on future trends and mentioned bullet trains as an example. The group suggested conducting an industry survey. The group expressed that the event should be a transportation summit incorporating a vision from a micro and macro perspective with an expanded invitation list to include utilities, carriers, and others for an event in Spring 2012. Mr. Meilbeck suggested a follow-up meeting to develop this framework further and to bring it back to the Board. Mr. Wessel reviewed the agenda packet PowerPoint slides and summarized the group's comments as indicated below.

Transportation Summit

- Trends
- Inventories
- Growth projections
- Federal regulations
- Technologies
- Micro – northern Arizona only
- Macro – 40 & BNSF

- Markets: Existing and new/potential
- Means: Inter-operations between the west markets and rest of the nation
- Vision First
 - Forest Health – log trucks
 - Increase options
- Evolving Logistics (Education)
 - Distribution
 - Short Haul
- Emerging Demands
 - Logging – Thinning Health
- Impacting trends (intermodal)
 - Fuel prices
 - Declining capital
- Diversification
- Glue-Lam wants rail - gets material from El Paso
- The “new” BNSF
 - Wants a route in local/regional E.D.
 - 2000-3000 cars/year = 10 trains

Organizational Opportunities

- Port Authority
- Private Partnerships
- Market – have to know the needs
 - Invite major shippers
 - Logistics/providers
 - (Nestle Purina competes with sister plants)
- Conduct Survey of shippers and haulers
- Utilities – who uses corridors
 - Telecom
 - Water

Post Item

- Economic Trends: Tourism & Efficiencies

Other

- Prep
 - Trends (provide advance materials)
 - Markets (survey, provide advance materials)
- Issue Papers
 - Modal
 - Sub-Regional
- Invite
 - Utilities: APS
 - Carriers: FedEx, UPS
 - Outlying Industry
 - Extraction (mining)
 - NAU (RPI)
 - Commerce Authority
- Education (bring in experts to discuss topics)
- Sponsors
- Spring (larger facility)

2. TIGER Grant Planning

Mr. Wessel presented the Tiger Grant topic and received input, direction and support from the group. Mr. Wessel reviewed the primary criteria, enhanced use lease (EUL) location and stated the application is due in October and will follow-up regarding the appropriate agency to submit the material (either City or County.) Mr. Wessel stated the Tiger grant average size as \$13 million with \$120 million

needing to go to a rural area and Camp Navajo is a rural area. Mr. Wessel stated the preapplication is due October 3 and final application due October 31. Mr. Wessel clarified the project schedule deadline as September 30 but they suggest by June 30, 2011 in order to have all the environmental clearances completed to obligate the funds. Mr. Wessel explained there are uncertainties regarding access to the camp. Mr. Wessel reviewed the agenda packet PowerPoint slides and summarized the group's comments as indicated below.

Economic Competitiveness

- Infrastructure in place
 - Rail, I-40, I-17, 89
- Growth Potential
- Good Distribution
 - Away from LA/Long Beach Ports
- Use yard as focus
- Sell the community
 - Need air service to market
- Access to markets (I-11)
- Avoid CA
- Flexibility (Resilience)
- Efficiencies

Livability

- Belmont ↔ Camp Navajo
 - Bikes
 - Park-n-Ride
- Affordable Housing
 - Private Sector
 - See City of Flagstaff Housing
 - Housing on Base
- Residentially Zoned
 - Property

Environmental Sustainability

- Igloos/Storage (partnership)
- Truck-Rail
- Existing Structures

Partners

- Agility/Size
- Training (CCC in Williams) – Leah Bornstein

Economic Component

- Green Park – Bio Mass Synergy for Tenants
- NACET Expansion
- Take advantage of existing infrastructure – Jump start jobs sooner
- Land and Space Supply
 - Agriculture component/cluster
- Regional Consensus on use
 - Regional Workforce
 - Private and public lands

Finance

- 4-Fri (product) – USFS
- Signing/Striping - Coconino County
- City – NACET
- ADOT
- ACA Community Authority
- Special District

3. Current Topics of Interest

Mr. Babbott suggested future agenda items on City/County Resolutions and Special Districts. There was discussion only.

4. FMPO Working Calendar

The Board discussed the meeting schedule and decided to keep meetings on the Fourth Wednesday of each month from 8a-10a. There was discussion only.

IV. CONCLUDING GENERAL BUSINESS

D. REPORTS

There was no discussion.

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rogers adjourned the meeting at 1:14 p.m.