



FLAGSTAFF METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

CITY OF FLAGSTAFF ♦ COCONINO COUNTY ♦ ARIZONA DOT

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Approved Minutes **Executive Board**

8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, October 26, 2011

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

Chair Rogers called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.

Roll Call.

Present: Chair Hank Rogers, Arizona Department of Transportation; Carl Taylor, Supervisor Coconino County (designated alternate); Scott Overton, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Coral Evans, Councilmember City of Flagstaff; Art Babbott, Councilmember City of Flagstaff

Excused Absent:

Vice Chair Matt Ryan, Supervisor Coconino County; Mandy Metzger, Supervisor Coconino County

Others Present:

David Wessel, FMPO Manager; Meg Roederer, FMPO Administrative Specialist; Andy Bertelsen, Coconino County Public Works Director; Sally Stewart, ADOT Deputy Communication Director

I. PRELIMINARY GENERAL BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

C. APPROVAL of MINUTES.

Mr. Babbott made a motion to approve the Retreat Minutes of September 28, 2011 and Mr. Taylor seconded, which passed unanimously.

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

1. Legislative and Regulatory Update and Review

Mr. Wessel presented an update on the status of legislative and regulatory review to the Board. Mr. Wessel stated the House and Senate are working on the Reauthorization Bill. The House prefers a six year Bill with a funding reduction and the Senate prefers a two year Bill with current levels of funding and both are looking for funds. Mr. Wessel mentioned he researched websites for national organizations and found a consensus on a call for increased funding and raising or indexing the gas tax. He mentioned the organizations differ on how to spend the funding from keeping the highway and transit funds stronger to having greater flexibility or to focus on congestion in major metro areas to consolidating the 87 programs. Mr. Wessel stated on a local level for this community it relates to the money spent on improvements to trails, transit, bicycles and pedestrians with a 10% set-aside in the surface transportation planning (STP) funds to support the enhancement program,

and that set-aside would go away but the ability to spend money on the projects would not go away. Mr. Wessel stated it is necessary to stay informed with legislation and encourage flexibility that extends to the metro levels and have good access to the state in terms of discussing our needs if that were to occur. Mr. Wessel stated the organizational perspectives (ASHTO, US Chamber of Commerce, State Highway) on freight were universal on smooth truck flow and truck to rail conversion. Mr. Wessel stated this relates to our interest in Camp Navajo, location on I-40 and trans-continental railroad. Mr. Wessel commented on our safety record and mentioned that the area has a low serious injury/fatality record but has a high accident/crash record. Mr. Wessel stated from a congestion management perspective we may want to focus on safety. Mr. Wessel added that our area has a higher number of pedestrian/bicycle accidents and a safety focus on a national level will serve us well. Mr. Wessel stated we have a relatively strong correlation to the national perspectives. Chair Rogers commented on a near accident experience with a bicyclist riding on the wrong side of the road in Flagstaff and the need for police enforcement, road share and for bicyclist to provide funding for roads through licensing their bikes. Chair Rogers mentioned Tucson has stepped up their level of police involvement with bicycle enforcement and accidents have decreased. Mr. Wessel stated there is an education issue in Flagstaff and enforcement challenges with resources as well as pathways that are parallel to roads which may create conflict. Mr. Wessel mentioned there may be an opportunity for a safety enforcement program. Chair Rogers stated ADOT is working on a study involving cyclist and could forward the information. Mr. Wessel stated Martin Ince, FMPO multi-modal planner, is working on the safety program and bicycle issues with the need to institute broad training/education programs to build a solid foundation that will last. Chair Rogers stated the ADOT district engineer has it on a priority list. Mr. Wessel stated more information will be presented to the Board at a future meeting. Ms. Evans suggested checking with the Flagstaff police on downtown bicycle enforcement. Chair Rogers stated a bicycle citation could increase auto insurance rates.

Mr. Wessel explained the recommended action for a letter to be sent and signed by the Chair to the House, Senate and government liaison offices. Mr. Overton mentioned if it would be better to wait on the letter for legislation in order to be more effective and direct or if we should be more proactive for it to be incorporated. Mr. Wessel stated we should do both. Mr. Overton stated at RTAC there are discussions on raising the gas tax or indexing and it is "not on the table" and he is receiving conflicting messages based on today's discussion. Mr. Wessel stated it is on the radar of the national groups but not within the Bill. Mr. Overton stated the purpose of raising the issue is because he does not believe it will be seen in the Bill and if we are realistic in the request. Mr. Wessel stated Mr. Overton raises a good point in terms of the positions. Mr. Taylor suggested selecting three topics and having a position paper for each topic attached to the letter. Mr. Taylor recommended the MPO population threshold as a topic. Mr. Wessel agreed and also suggested safety and freight as topic.

Mr. Babbott made a motion to authorize the Chair to sign the reauthorization letter, attach a position paper on the top three topics (MPO Designation Population, Safety and Freight) and send to the Arizona delegation, national leaders, Senate and House that states the FMPO positions and Mr. Taylor seconded, which passed unanimously.

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

2. FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program Discussion

Mr. Wessel reviewed the FY 2013 Work Program. Mr. Wessel stated it is budget time and need to draft a Work Program that includes Board input as well as Management Committee input from the November meeting. Mr. Wessel mentioned the items thus far are routine items such as the work program, transportation improvement program, highway safety improvement program, transit program, enhancement program, count program, Title VI and development review. Mr. Wessel stated ADOT has increased the activity regarding the non-discrimination Title VI program, which affects FMPO activity. Mr. Wessel mentioned that on the development review item he does not foresee any new large projects and Juniper Point is on-going. Mr. Overton asked if Juniper Point is

complete regarding review. Mr. Wessel stated it is complete but there are discussions on the Lone Tree Traffic Interchange and secondary access crossing to I-40. Mr. Overton suggested allocating time to this area. Mr. Wessel agreed and will allocate time in the work program.

Mr. Wessel explained the programs/projects that will carry forward such as the five year transit plan and expects NAIPTA to do the majority. Mr. Wessel stated the FMPO applied and received an ADOT Para Grant on NAIPTA's behalf and has hired new transit planner, Erika Mazza.

Mr. Wessel explained adaptive control systems, which is a federal initiative of the Every Day Counts Program, to provide a signal the technology to do counts in real time and adapt its signal timing. Mr. Wessel added the federal government believes the technology is mature enough to encourage adoption and implementation. Mr. Wessel mentioned there are opportunities to pursue coordination efforts with state that will carry into FY13.

Mr. Wessel stated the Camp Navajo Tiger Grant fell through because the EUL (enhanced use lease) is under a GAO audit resulting in a gag order with the military and the prospective developer and was hopeful to have letters of support but are unable to identify the jobs and benefit cost relationship to the project. Mr. Babbott asked about timing. Mr. Wessel stated it is unknown but reported the GAO audit is almost complete and the branches of the military have responded to comments. Mr. Wessel stated GAO has the comments but the size and scale of the comments are unknown. Mr. Babbott commented on if the foundational work regarding benefit cost should be continued because the Tiger Grant cannot be pursued now but that we should prepare ourselves for the "sell" when the time comes. Mr. Wessel stated Mr. Babbott raises a good point whether it is a grant or low interest loan to a developer people will want to see the benefit cost and if we need to make a "sell" to a prospective developer that the intermodal yard is in their interest. Mr. Wessel stated it is valuable work and should continue to do it for the economic arguments for someone who is operating the economic growth. Mr. Taylor mentioned a military cemetery will also be located at Camp Navajo and if there are implications regarding traffic control and if there is opportunity beyond the EUL to "piggyback" onto. Mr. Wessel responded in the realm of the Tiger Grant there was opportunity to make arguments about the synergies with other public interests and the cemetery is a mature idea being pursued with concept plans and that we can enhance access, safety and security. Mr. Taylor stated there is more activity with training and troops, and if there is an infrastructure implication. Mr. Wessel stated a case could be made regarding military access needs and intermodal yard benefits. Mr. Wessel commented on laying the groundwork. Mr. Babbott stated there are issues that are relevant regardless of the final outcome. Mr. Overton stated the truck stop may have no bearing. Mr. Taylor commented on industrial grade land in the region and to mobilize a campaign. Mr. Wessel stated the history on this EUL has not been good. Mr. Wessel explained the EUL as a military base surplus land enters into the program through the army corp and it goes to a private lease for a master developer to develop the land and the military receives revenues or in-kind infrastructure. Mr. Wessel stated there are about 600 acres with the EUL at Camp Navajo. Mr. Taylor added that the intent is to make part of an existing base available for commercial activity, which is critical for us. Mr. Taylor suggested contacting NACOG and explaining it is critical from an economic development regional view. Mr. Wessel suggested there is value in going political and to have the right message. Mr. Taylor suggested forming a collective political advocacy group to support an intermodal yard. Mr. Overton commented if ECONA could put a group together. Mr. Taylor stated ECONA or County can form a group. Mr. Babbott added statements of support could be done. The Board agreed on the effectiveness of a collective effort. Mr. Taylor stated it could be formed quickly and could contact Joanne Keene and mentioned he does not want to be passive on the issue. Mr. Wessel mentioned there would be involvement from Ken Sweet (NACOG) and Rich Bowen (ECONA.) Mr. Taylor suggested sending a notice to stakeholders to discuss a political strategy and adding it to the CSA agenda. Chair Rogers recommended commenting on the topic during roundtable discussions at the NACOG/Transportation meeting scheduled on October 27.

Mr. Wessel informed the Board a group is being assembled to discuss a spring transportation summit. Mr. Wessel mentioned multimodal planning efforts will involve creating the inventory and documents that drive the capital program and community investments. Mr. Wessel stated the better basis the more successful we are in pursuing internal and external funding. Mr. Overton commented on multimodal planning frustration and the importance to fund construction to complete systems, intersections and short connectors. Mr. Wessel stated the work needs to be done, compiled and legal for a developer and cited ponderosa trails as an example to meet expectation in a positive manner. Mr. Overton stated he hoped we were past that. Mr. Taylor mentioned as a community there is a problem with actualization regarding the results of a plan because of implementation structures for example a winter recreation authority or port authority. Ms. Evans commented on funds to implement plans. Mr. Wessel stated there is the transportation tax for trails and a bond that supplies funds but a challenge is with acquisition. Chair Rogers asked if there is money for the projects. Mr. Taylor stated the money is available if prioritized. The Board discussed planning and how it relates to construction. Mr. Babbott stated the report does not include budget relevancy and budget history. Mr. Babbott commented that as a policy and fiscal agent we need to deal with the "new" reality and focus on capital projects that have a nexus with planning and feasibility of implementation. Mr. Babbott stated the need for a budgetary perspective to make an informed decision on relative priorities. Mr. Wessel addressed the Board's comments regarding funds, implementation and the "new" reality and that there are projects such as the Lone Tree Traffic Interchange and railroad overpass that are millions and the opportunity to fund such projects are not feasible despite being a high priority project; therefore, need to scale the priorities in tiers (bond or pay as you go) in order to achieve results. Mr. Wessel commented on the retreat and the discussion regarding vision and if this organization can bring groups together (ECONA, SEDI, County, City, etc.) to facilitate a better economic collective vision to drive project investment priorities on implementation and the economic component. Mr. Wessel stated there is not a document that clearly states that priority but it may be our role in the Regional Plan to have a strong economic vision as well as community vision to drive investment priorities for transportation enhancements. Mr. Taylor commented on the Regional Plan status and the delay. Mr. Overton expressed that the RTP planning resources for transportation are reasonable because it needs to align with the regional plan but historically multimodal resources have been allocated and are done already and if we can look at different things on the multimodal side.

Mr. Wessel inquired if there are other initiatives or coordination efforts to be aware of. Mr. Taylor mentioned the importance of communication between organizations in order to be strategic and cited bonding as an example with the school district, NAU, CCC, County and City. Chair Rogers stated this group can make strategic recommendation as well. Mr. Wessel stated an idea for the conversations to be more effective is for staff to conduct a benefit/cost report on the top ten efforts and hiring a consultant for benefit/cost details. Mr. Babbott suggested bringing the list to the Board before going to a consultant and selecting the top three or four from the FMPO perspective and lead by example presenting it to the agencies to get their feedback. Ms. Evans stated it is a good strategy to check the similarities and differences between agency priorities. Mr. Overton suggested adding snowplay to the work program because of traffic impacts. Mr. Taylor suggested an economic impact study regarding a cultural park on 180. There was discussion only.

3. US 180 Winter Traffic Study Update

Mr. Wessel provided an update to the Board including activity on the virtual town hall at www.us180wintertrafficstudy.com, voting deadline (10-28-11), the final public meeting (11-16-11) and the implementation options for this season. Mr. Wessel stated modeling suggests traffic signal timing plan focused on the intersections of Milton/W. Route 66/Butler could provide traffic improvements. Mr. Wessel stated when the special timing plan would be needed may be unpredictable because of snow. For example, if Snowbowl is open but Wing Mountain is closed it may not be necessary to run the plan and if it could be done remotely. Mr. Wessel recommended using TIP funds to contribute to the development of timing plans and purchase of equipment as well as receiving support from other public agencies and private sectors. Mr. Wessel stated the cost

should not exceed \$100,000 in terms of implementing communications. Mr. Wessel suggested a TIP amendment using the funds for adaptive control systems because that will not be done this year. Mr. Taylor asked if he had the ability to redefine the expenditure. Mr. Wessel stated with the Board's assistance and a dollar figure a TIP amendment could be done at the December meeting. Mr. Wessel explained traffic signing that would be beneficial and would look to private partners for involvement. Mr. Wessel mentioned "flip-down" signs at Snowbowl and Wing Mountain stating delays expected and recommended people depart the area at suggested times to avoid delays. Mr. Taylor suggested an AM Station be part of the plan. Mr. Wessel stated that may not be possible this season and there is a meeting on October 27 (Winter Taskforce) to discuss information campaigns. Mr. Babbott stated it is important to remember the number of days people are impacted is small and the manual test option is a reasonable short-term approach to do this season that will provide good qualitative data and not to spend resources on evaluation. Mr. Babbott stated he met with JR Murray (AZ Snowbowl) and that they are not interested in participation offsite until the trigger of snowmaking is realized and encouraged Mr. Wessel to continue to pursue their involvement. Mr. Babbott supported the manual test option and stated this season is suppose to be below average based on La Nina and historical patterns. Mr. Taylor suggested being included on Winter Taskforce meeting information and utilizing "Doodle" to achieve critical mass. Mr. Taylor expressed frustration on the issue because we do not have the ability to assign agency responsibility. Chair Rogers commented that the Apache County Board of Supervisors passed a Resolution for Forest Service to cut timber to protect Greer and Alpine because it is a safety issue and the sheriff department is involved with enforcement. Mr. Overton stated a Resolution may not be a popular option here in Flagstaff and may need to be more delicate on the issue. Mr. Taylor reiterated the Board comments are in support of the manual test option. Ms. Evans expressed frustration with the lack of participation by private partners and stressed private partners should help with signage. Ms. Evans stated frustration with the Forest Service and Wing Mountain. Mr. Taylor mentioned the Forest Service took the lead on snowplay discussions for years and has not ignored the problem. There was discussion only.

4. Current Topics of Interest

Chair Rogers commented on the I-15 project to replace failing bridges and to be aware of the increased truck traffic impacts to 89 and I-40 and it could last two to three years but funding is pending. Mr. Babbott commented on jurisdictional and political partners regarding Camp Navajo to keep it relevant. Mr. Rogers suggested bringing up the discussion at the NACOG meeting on October 27th. Mr. Taylor stated he will take the lead in with reinforcing the message and Mr. Babbott stated he will echo the message as a partner. There was discussion only.

5. FMPO Working Calendar

There was no discussion.

IV. CONCLUDING GENERAL BUSINESS

D. REPORTS

There was no discussion.

E. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rogers adjourned the meeting at 10:02 a.m.