



# FLAGSTAFF METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

CITY OF FLAGSTAFF ♦ COCONINO COUNTY ♦ ARIZONA DOT

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## *Approved Minutes* **Executive Board Fall Retreat** **8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 24, 2012**

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City of Flagstaff Aquaplex  
1702 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street , Flagstaff, AZ 86004

Chair Ryan called the meeting to order at 8:09 a.m.

### **Roll Call**

#### **Present:**

Chair Matt Ryan, Supervisor Coconino County  
Hank Rogers, Arizona Department of Transportation  
Mark Woodson, Councilmember City of Flagstaff  
Mandy Metzger, Supervisor Coconino County  
Jeff Oravits, Councilmember City of Flagstaff  
Chuck Gillick, Arizona Department of Transportation (designated alternate)

#### **Others Present:**

David Wessel, FMPO Manager	Rick Barrett, City Engineer
Martin Ince, FMPO Multi-Modal Planner	Mackenzie Kirby, ADOT
Justine Otto, FMPO Admin Specialist Temp	Jeff Meilbeck, NAIPTA
Jim Cronk, City Planning Director	Julian Avila, ADOT
Erika Mazza, NAIPTA	Kate Morely, Coconino County
Bryce Berry, Greyhound	Barney Hemlick, Airport Director
Brent Crowther, Kimley-Horn	Brandon Chandler, Nestle Purina
Caleb Lanting, CAC/Peak Engineering	Barbara Goodrich, City Finance/Budget Manager
Dave Healey, Parsons Brinckerhoff	

### **I. PRELIMINARY GENERAL BUSINESS**

#### **A. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

#### **B. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Wessel stated that the agenda had been amended to include the Safety Program in the TIP Amendment.

#### **C. APPROVAL of MINUTES.**

Mr. Oravits made a motion to approve the Minutes of September 26, 2012 and Mr. Woodson seconded, motion passed unanimously.

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

### **1. Legislative and Regulatory Update and Review**

Mr. Wessel provided a legislative review and update to the Executive Board, explaining the history of state funds for the public attendees. There was discussion only.

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

### **1. Transportation Improvement Program Amendment – Transit & Safety Program**

Mr. Wessel called on Erika Mazza to address the Board. Ms. Mazza gave a brief comparison between hybrid and clean diesel technologies and handed out a memo with an overview of the facts. Mr. Wessel reviewed the Safety Program and stated the need to re-order the projects due to delays in the guardrail design portion of the current priority project. He stated that in the current version of the TIP the construction funds would be shifted to sign replacement. He confirmed for the Board that the funding came from the Federal government and was dispersed through the State. Mr. Woodson moved to approve the Transportation Improvement Program as presented, Ms. Metzger seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **2. Rural Transportation Advocacy Council Representation**

Chair Ryan introduced the topic and explained the function of the RTAC representative, stating that the position had previously been held by Mr. Overton. Mr. Woodson volunteered to be the representative to the Council. Mr. Oravits moved to approve Mr. Woodson's appointment, Ms. Metzger seconded. Mr. Oravits moved to amend the motion to state that Mr. Ryan would remain the alternate to Mr. Woodson, Ms. Metzger seconded, the amended motion passed unanimously.

### **3. FMPO Working Calendar**

Mr. Wessel stated that the November and December Executive Board meetings would be combined into a single meeting in mid-December based on the Board's availability. He added that the Management Committee meeting would also take place in early November pending quorum. There was discussion only.

## **IV. CONCLUDING GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **A. REPORTS**

There was no discussion.

### **B. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There was no discussion.

## **V. FMPO FALL RETREAT**

### **1. Retreat Purposes**

Mr. Wessel opened the retreat at 8:30. He overviewed the purpose of the retreat, outlined the exercises they would be participating in, and presented the hypothetical futures that different decisions could result in. He stated that the projected futures and hypothetical road projects supporting them were deliberately provocative to inspire big thinking during the discussions. The attendees introduced themselves.

## **2. The Region in Context and Policy**

Mr. Wessel stated the importance of transportation and a long-range transportation plan, both in regional use and in global context. He presented the in-progress Land Use Policy that the Citizen Advisory Committee was currently drafting and showed on the maps how Scenario D was the most compact plan that had emerged. The future assumptions made would be based on a population of 150,000 with employment to match in the Flagstaff region within the next 20 years, 25,000 of which is the projected student population. It was recommended that urban neighborhoods be created south of the University to accommodate the student population. The Circulation policy was discussed. Mr. Wessel stated that context sensitivity was important for their planning purposes and would give the different agencies direction as they made future plans. Some possibilities to keep in mind were increased and safer connectivity for bikes and pedestrians, and greater multi- and inter-modalism using railways. Mr. Wessel stated that it was generally agreed by both Staff and the CAC that, due to its positive impact on the economy, increased manufacturing should be encouraged through flexible land use policies. Mr. Oravits pointed out that while long-term plans called for building, in the short term there were many open spaces that were not being used to their capacity. He stated that projections were good for planning but they needed to match reality as well. There was discussion only.

## **3. So Many Paths Up the Mountain --Evaluating Circulation Strategies**

The dimensions of regional transportation were defined. Mr. Wessel stated that ideally, based on current density of ~2000 people per square mile, there should be a 4-lane arterial every mile to mile and one-half. For the urban-type development envisioned in the plan the spacing should be much closer. He added that interstates should not be factored in as arterials, instead being preserved for long trips. He made it clear that the current system did not come close to meeting those standards. A discussion identified topography, the railroad and interstate as major impediments to a complete system. Mr. Wessel pointed out that it not many cars would have to be shifted off of arterials to make a big difference in congestion and travel time. The impact and potential danger of encouraging bicyclists in the roads was briefly discussed, it was stated that education was needed to increase safety. Transportation and its relation to the economy was discussed with focus on revenue generated per acre, both downtown and at the mall. Mr. Woodson pointed out that thanks to the rent tax in the downtown area, there was another source of income generation that was not strictly retail. Mr. Wessel presented his map packets, and briefly overviewed the two main plans or "packages" of "Many" roads and "Wider" roads. He pointed out that there would be fewer connections with wider roads but a larger "backbone system" to rely on. Mr. Woodson stated that in his observation of the previous 25 years, by taking no major action they had limited their options by allowing growth where roads could be widened or added. There was discussion only.

## **4. Alternative Strategy Performance and Critique – a Series of Exercises**

The retreat reconvened at 9:37. Mr. Wessel explained the mapping exercise, stating that he and Mr. Crowther would lead two balanced groups in the exercises. He presented a table of mode share figures from Flagstaff and similar cities noting that there is room for improvement. He clarified that the build out population is 150,000 and depending on the growth rate they should aim for a time frame of 50-100 years in the future. The groups split up and opened two separate discussions, using the maps as a basis for planning. The notes made during the discussions are attached at the end of the document. Mr. Oravits left at 10:05, quorum was maintained. Mr. Rogers left at 11:33 and was replaced by Chuck Gillick, quorum was maintained. Ms. Metzger left at 11:34, quorum was maintained. There was discussion only.

## **5. On Our Way—Charting a direction using the day's ideas**

Mr. Wessel reviewed the comments made during the groups, inquiring if a consensus had been reached on a plan to choose, or if the plans needed to be combined. It was agreed that the plans should both be used and projects accepted or rejected on a case-by-case basis. It was noted that such factors as congestion and visitors vs. local traffic should be taken into account. It was stated that density was a large factor in Flagstaff and the comparison cities, though the road experience of those cities was questioned. It was determined that the group's favorite things in the maps were the Lone Tree railroad overpass, the activity centers south of the I-40 and on John Wesley Powell, and the extension from Babbitt Road to John Wesley Powell, the cost-benefit ratio of this latter project being questioned. It was stated that a connection between Florence and Walnut would be problematic and expensive. The possibility of narrowing 4<sup>th</sup> Street was discussed, and it was determined that the area would have to be urbanized into a grid network to prevent traffic congestion. Areas that lend themselves to urbanization include 4<sup>th</sup> Street, the Canyon Del Rio area, and the Woody Mountain and Flag Ranch areas. The West Route 66 area was perceived as being more difficult to urbanize. There was discussion only.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Ryan adjourned the meeting 12:04 p.m.

October 24, 2012

FMPO Retreat Group Breakout Meeting Notes

Group 1 – Brent Crowther, Kimley Horn & Associates

Existing, Committed and Developer Network Map Notes

East-west connections from Hospital to Fourth Street Corridor [For example, Forest Ave narrows from 2 lanes in each direction to 1 lane in each direction on Cedar and Locket. Improve this connection to 2 lanes in each direction.]

Many roads may better serve activity centers than wider roads [As the population increases, new activity centers will also emerge. Activity centers should be dispersed around the city and be closer to residents. Activity centers can't just be focused on the existing main corridors.]

Activity center will be more east, more activity centers closer to residents [The group suggested that new and emerging activity centers will be towards the eastern part of Flagstaff]

Most serious problems

1. Downtown to anywhere could reverse the trend of growth if we get too congested [The group stated that we need to address congestion. We can't just let it increase due to a lack of desire to widen roads or build new roads. If we do, economic development will be stifled].
2. South Side has more issues than the north side. [The group observed that the congestion/performance maps show that congestion is more prevalent south of the railroad than it is north of the railroad]
3. Will choke off downtown [The group observed that the performance maps illustrate that the downtown will suffer disproportionately]
4. Exterior areas will open up [The congestion in the downtown area will encourage new activity centers to be developed in areas away from downtown, thus dispersing the congestion]
5. Is NAU growth to 25,000 contributing to the issues?

Wider Roads and Transit Vision 1 Map Notes

Provide connections to J.W. Powell to encourage as an alternate. JWP makes sense to preserve now – access, etc. [The group commented that JWP provides some good opportunities now to preserve r/w, access, and plan intersections and connections. The group also commented that JWP can feel far away for residents who live

north of it, and they may not want to drive south to access JWP. This could be addressed if some strong roadway connections to JWP were developed to make access more direct]

Bottleneck at Milton/Butler – 2 lanes here with 3 lanes elsewhere [The map shows a segment of Milton as staying at 2 lanes. It may not make sense to widen Milton to 3 lanes elsewhere when there is a bottleneck. The group recognized the challenges associated with widening Milton to 3 lanes for its entire length, but that it doesn't make sense to have 3 lanes feeding into 2 lanes.]

Need a combination of wider roads and many roads to solve the issues [The group observed that neither of the approaches (wide roads vs. many roads) will solve all of the problems in the best way possible or desirable. It will take a hybrid approach, with a segment by segment focus. In some areas, wider roads are needed, whereas in other areas, new roadway connections may address the issue.

Milton won't be able to be widened – intersection improvements – what do we do with them at the terminus [The group observed that the Milton Road corridor is too developed. Widening Milton will be too impactful. Alternative solutions need to be identified, such as access management, intersection capacity improvements including roundabouts, traffic signal coordination, innovative intersection treatments, travel demand management/transportation system management. Bike/ped becomes an important solution.

Access management (two checks) 66 / Milton needs a median [see above]

Generally support many roads [The group generally was more supportive of the many roads concepts, but recognizes that widening may be needed in some areas. Connections such as the Lone Tree overpass was specifically identified and discussed as a new very important connection that will have a significant impact.]

When widening, make it bike/ped friendly [The group stated that when widening roads, they should have bike lanes and sidewalks. Wide roads must have every provision possible for bicycles and pedestrians. The major concern with wide roads is pedestrian crossings. Pedestrian crossing treatments should be identified and considered on all widening projects.]

Butler model works very well, repeat Butler model throughout the city [The group discussed how they really like the improvements that have been made to Butler over the past several years. It is a roadway that moves traffic very well, but also is a significant improvement for bicycles and pedestrians. The landscape improvements are very attractive. The roadway is changing the character of the Butler corridor from primarily an industrial corridor to a multi-use corridor]

Hybridization – considering feasibility, cost, character, etc. [The wide roads vs. many roads decision must also consider cost. Is there a way to show which is more cost effective? Lane miles may be a good proxy for cost at the modeling level. The group observed that it is important to consider the character of the area when making a decision. Roadway improvements have the potential to fundamentally change the character of an area or neighborhood. This is an important consideration].

Fourth Street – is this reasonable to narrow to 2 lanes from 5 lanes w/ 15k-20k traffic? [The group asked if the projected traffic on 4<sup>th</sup> Street can be accommodated with just 2 lanes. Are we proposing to narrow this when we need the capacity? What are the alternate routes to 4<sup>th</sup> Street?]

#### Wider Roads and Transit Vision 2 Map Notes

Need a healthy too level (?) for congestion [Congestion cannot be eliminated. Healthy cities have a tolerable level of congestion. However, if congestion becomes too much, it will stifle economic development, people will avoid downtown, etc.]

Want to know costs associated with each scenario / package? [Similar to previous comment, the group would like to see the relative costs between “wider roads” and “many roads”.]

Congestion: Milton/66 to Elden during peak hours [The group stated that this is the segment that suffers the most from congestion]

Next 30 years will go from tolerable to intolerable [The group observed that they have a very tolerable level of congestion today. When looking at the performance model outputs, about 5 minutes per capita delay, that is consistent with their observation. This is very tolerable. The group observed that even doubling this to perhaps 10 minutes per capita may be tolerable. However, the do-nothing alternative is not tolerable. The group observed that the performance summary shows that there are a number of ways to address congestion – both the many roads and wider roads, in combination with transit, improve conditions. Other factors, such as community character, etc. become very important to selecting the right technique in the right area.

What percent of congestion is local versus regional congestion [The group asked if it was possible to determine congestion caused by pass-through trips vs. that caused by local trips. Can alternates be developed to get those who don't want to be here away from the core areas? What would be the economic impacts?]

Will alternate activity centers draw traffic or spread it out such as Saw Mill or Mall

Downtown north of tracks versus south of tracks [Areas north of the railroad appear to have less congestion than areas south of the railroad.

Will other activity centers develop as population grows – equilibrium [as population increases, new activity centers will be developed around town that will disperse traffic. Everyone can't be headed to the same location].

Flagstaff is a destination [Flagstaff is no longer the town on the way to the Grand Canyon. Flagstaff is the hub of tourist activity in northern Arizona.]

Keep integrity of neighborhoods [Don't let the wider roads package negatively impact neighborhoods; similarly, new roadway connections should not have negative impacts on neighborhoods.

Make downtown attractive by getting cars that don't want to be there elsewhere

#### Many Roads Vision 1 and 2 – No notes from Group 1

##### Group 2 – David Wessel

By comparison to Phoenix or other metropolitan areas, congestion in Flagstaff is “okay.” Flagstaff has a peak of 15-minutes where Phoenix may have a 2-hour peak. Phoenix has congestion in many places; Flagstaff primarily suffers congestion only on Milton. Phoenix has a grid – alternate routes, even if not used, are known to exist which improves perceptions. In Flagstaff, alternatives are limited. The group noted that one expects more congestion in larger cities, so it is more acceptable or tolerable.

Existing, Committed and Developer Network Map Notes

JWP preservation of right-of-way for 2 lanes each direction is key

Fourth Street is under estimated in the model

The Lone Tree Traffic Interchange is not part of this package

W. 66 and the Woodlands Village area crash – they're “gnarly” and may be approaching Phoenix-like levels without the alternate routes.

Woody Mountain Road should be connected to Beulah – it would shift several thousand cars to Beulah worsening its congestion and possibly improving W. 66 from F and G to E and F

#### Many Roads & Transit Vision 1 Map Notes

Regarding the 89 Connector – retail hates a bypass, would also need work to avoid new development

Is an alternate to the connector an extension of Dodge to 89? Probably not due to neighborhood cut-through issues.

Linda Vista connection – could create issues with cut through traffic, without the connection is misdirects busses, with the connection provides better access to services for residents along Fourth Street, US 180, and Country Club.

Policy Issue: Traffic through neighborhoods caused by new connections or patterns of development needs to be discussed.

Fourth Street, Canyon del Rio, Downtown and Southside/Sawmill are areas that can handle urban development and transportation services. W. Route 66 may not be.

Goods and services at an activity center or centers south of I-40 could beneficially shift traffic patterns. A large neighborhood center at Canyon del Rio and a smaller one at Juniper Point seem appropriate. The Lone Tree Traffic Interchange and corridor is important to this area and the broader network.

The Babbitt connection under I-40 appears very expensive. However, without it problems are increased on Butler Avenue.

The Kittredge and Walnut-Florence connections seem the least feasible of all new connections due in large part to neighborhood issues.

The connection under I-40 at the University Heights FUTS connection needs a cost benefit analysis. It connects at McConnell and Woodlands Village – is this near warrants? A transit only connection could be beneficial.

The Kaibab to Clay connection may be essential for Scenario D, could be a very good connection for dedicated walk, bike and transit.

#### Wide Roads and Transit Vision 1 Map Notes

Flagstaff is not truck friendly

Mixing truck and bicycles on Major arterials can be dangerous

Preserve the ultimate right-of-way needed.

Widening Lockett. Be cautious of separating neighborhoods – layout of upper and lower Greenlaw neighborhoods may not result in too dramatic a split especially if the street is well-designed. It appears to aid E. Route 66.

Why switch a wide 4<sup>th</sup> Street for a wide Lockett? Fourth Street could be urbanized with a grid network to expand or better support the retail land base. Some of the through trips could be shifted to Lockett.

If we're at 150,000, what is the population of Winslow, Williams, etc? It was explained that the external trips were grown at about 1% per year over time to represent that growth.

#### Wide Road Transit Vision 2 and Many Roads Transit Vision 2 not discussed by Group 2