

MINUTES
COMPLETE STREET ADVISORY GROUP MEETING
JUNE 5, 2013

MEMBERS/ATTENDEES

Linda Barbeau	City of Farmington Downtown Association & MRA Commission
Judy Castleberry	San Juan College Enterprise Center
Larry Hathaway	San Juan County & MPO Technical Committee Alternate
Virginia King	City of Farmington Public Works
Steve Krest	City of Farmington Traffic Engineering
Cynthia Lopez	City of Farmington & MPO Technical Committee
Gayla McCulloch	City of Farmington Councilor & MPO Policy Committee
Elizabeth McNally	Animas Environmental Services
Roshana Moojen	City of Aztec & Alternate on MPO Technical Committee Alternate
Christa Romme	Aztec Chamber of Commerce & Four Corners Economic Development
Anngela Wakan	Safe Routes to School Coordinator

MPO STAFF

Joe Delmagori	MPO Planner
Duane Wakan	MPO Associate Planner
June Markle	MPO Administrative Aide

WELCOME

Mr. Delmagori welcomed the members and thanked them for their attendance and participation.

Mr. Delmagori restated that at the May 6 meeting the Advisory Group worked in small groups and had developed goals to support the six Complete Streets values: Multi-Modal, Connectivity, Health, Safety, Economic Vitality, and Aesthetics. As a collective group, the members pointed out words and phrases that they believed related best to the values. The Advisory Group asked MPO Staff to combine their goals statements into the MPO Draft Goals based on common language and themes.

Mr. Delmagori asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 6, 2013 meeting. Ms. Lopez said that she had some minor changes to be made to the minutes. Mr. Krest moved to approve the minutes with the noted corrections. Ms. Lopez seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

COMPLETE STREETS GOALS

Staff handed out a side-by-side comparison table of the Advisory Group draft goals and the MPO draft goals. The MPO draft goals were reviewed and additional corrections were identified as follows:

Multi-Modal

Mr. Delmagori said that common language among the Advisory Group goals included: planning, designing, and constructing appropriate amenities and the separation of the modes.

Mr. Delmagori said there had been discussion of on-street versus off-street amenities and the pros and cons to both. Staff's draft goal #3 was written to help define on-street.

The MPO draft goal #4 relates to transit and ADA compliant concerns. This goal was included because there were no transit references in the Advisory Group goals. MPO draft goal #5 incorporated the Advisory Group's goal of ensuring buy-in from city departments and transportation agencies.

Mr. Krest asked if the Advisory Group goals were being combined with the MPO goals. Mr. Delmagori replied that the MPO Draft Goals were built upon those developed and identified by the Advisory Group. Ms. Lopez added that the MPO took the Advisory Group goals and condensed and combined them into a rewritten draft goal. Mr. Delmagori stated that Staff had tried to combine similar wording in the various Advisory Group goals and then tried to restate the goals. Ms. Lopez said the MPO draft goals were generally good, but believed there was still some word-smithing required. Mr. Delmagori asked everyone to add their suggestions and comments for rewriting the draft goals as each was reviewed.

Mr. Krest asked about the wording "high speed arterials" in MPO Draft Goal #3. Mr. Delmagori said this goal is attempting to relate on-street and off street bike facilities to speed rather than road classification. The goal recommends that a roadway with a speed of 45 mph might be a candidate for separate walking/biking paths.

Connectivity

Mr. Delmagori reviewed some of the common themes for Connectivity among the Advisory Group goals. In the MPO draft goal #1, Staff tried to consolidate and include all the different parts of the neighborhoods and communities that were mentioned in the various Advisory Group goals for Connectivity. Other common language included creating grid patterns, linkages, and the use of easements, alleyways, and cul-de-sacs.

Ms. Lopez stated that in a recent New Mexico League of Zoning Officials meeting, the gas company spoke to the group about cities using gas lines as easements. They stated that the lines are dangerous and potentially explosive and they strongly recommended that hardscapes not be constructed near them or on them and that citizens not be encouraged to use these areas for walking/biking. Ms. Lopez recommended speaking with local gas company officials in San Juan County before any further consideration is given to the idea of using gas lines as easements.

Ms. McNally asked about considering separate language related to Connectivity and also to Safety that would address constructing sidewalks along undeveloped lots especially near schools and where there is heavy pedestrian or bicycle traffic. She asked if there could be some mechanism where sidewalks could be installed in these instances. Ms. Lopez stated that the developers are responsible for installing sidewalks. The city does not have the funds available to retrofit sidewalks but could, perhaps, come up with a way the developer would be required to pay for the

sidewalks ahead of time. Ms. Lopez said the city's requirement is that when a parcel of land is developed, the developer is to provide the infrastructure. This is a cost to the developer and not to the taxpayer.

Ms. McNally said she understood the issue of who is ultimately financially responsible. She wondered, though, if areas which are almost totally developed, especially on key access corridors, if the city did not have the responsibility for providing some type of pedestrian amenities particularly in areas with schools. Ms. McNally commented on the lack of sidewalks on Victoria Way near Heights Jr. High and Mesa Verde Elementary schools and also on Butler where surrounding parcels are fully developed.

Ms. Moojen added that in Aztec, developers are often given a timeframe in which to construct the infrastructure. However, developers can also acquire variances to providing these amenities from the elected bodies. Ms. Moojen added that the developers complain that once they put in the streets and sidewalks, if a vacant parcel is developed later on, the heavy equipment needed for the development tears up the existing sidewalk.

Ms. Castleberry said she understood the issue in a new subdivision but thought the discussion was more focused on those areas already developed. She gave another example of the corner of Sunset and 30th Street where, in a very established neighborhood, there is a long-time vacant lot with no sidewalk in place.

Mr. Krest stated that the topic of who is responsible for constructing sidewalks comes up often. He said the financial responsibility for building the sidewalk actually falls to the homeowner when the home is built. An empty lot, therefore, does not get a sidewalk. Mr. Krest added that he believed developers should be required to build the sidewalks when the streets are constructed and be required to build the complete street. Mr. Krest reported that the city has received a number of federal grants to construct sidewalks in school zones and there are a number of projects in the works. He added that the city does not have funds set aside for sidewalks, but believed the city should consider adding a line item in the budget for constructing missing sidewalks.

Ms. Barbeau asked if the city could assess the property owner for constructing the sidewalk and then have it added into the property taxes. Mr. Krest said this was always an option. Ms. McNally said this seemed like common sense because the city should not have to absorb the cost, but sidewalks do need to be in place.

Mr. Wakan asked if cities have a planning mechanism to implement sidewalk design standards on undeveloped lots to allow for project uniformity when development does finally occur. Ms. Lopez said for an in-fill type project, the city will match what already exists on either side of it and that these construction standards are set through the Public Works Department. Mr. Wakan asked what can be constructed for long stretches of missing sidewalk. Mr. Krest replied that detached sidewalks can be built and standards are set.

Ms. Moojen said that some of the issues in Aztec for in-fill areas are that some of the platted parcels are so old that road use easements and/or rights-of-way were never acquired. Because of this, there is no legal mechanism for the city to require that a complete streets policy be followed on an in-fill lot. These lots would need to be

addressed on a case by case basis. This involves negotiating individually with each property owner to obtain the needed easement or right-of-way. Ms. Barbeau said this sounded like a stalemate: the city would pay the landowner for easement, but then the landowner has to pay for the sidewalk. Ms. Moojen said oftentimes the landowners recognize that the improvements actually benefit them as much as they benefit the city.

Ms. McCulloch asked if the sidewalks planned for Farmington Avenue could be buffered sidewalks. Ms. Lopez said the scope of the project would come down to the amount of right-of-way owned by the city. The Advisory Group discussed the benefits of this type of project and the impact it could have for the future of Complete Streets projects.

Ms. Barbeau believed that many of the vacant lots have not been developed because they are difficult to develop and they might never be developed. She believed there should be some mechanism for getting sidewalks constructed in these areas. Since most property owners would typically not be able to pay for this improvement out of pocket, it would be beneficial for the city to pay for it up front and then assess the property owner for the improvement.

A fourth Connectivity goal was agreed upon by the Advisory Group to be added to the MPO Draft Goals list to say, "Encourage municipalities to develop a mechanism for constructing sidewalks for in-fills and vacant lots".

Ms. Barbeau asked where the Advisory Group Goals #6 and #7 had been incorporated in the MPO Draft Goals. Mr. Delmagori said most of #6 (trails and parks) was included in MPO Draft Goal #1. Advisory Group Goal #7 - Respect landscape (form/function) was included under MPO Draft Goal #3 under Aesthetics. Ms. Barbeau said she was referring to more of the natural landscape. She cited the Crestwood Estates development that bulldozed through the arroyos and ravines of the area. The developer was not required to design the streets around the natural landscape of the arroyos nor did they respect the natural topography. Ms. Barbeau also commented on Red Rock Drive in the Country Club area which was named after a large red rock formation. Instead of preserving this natural formation when the area was developed, it was blasted and destroyed. Everyone agreed that the area's natural features and formations needed to be respected and any improvements or new developments should complement and incorporate the existing surroundings.

Mr. Delmagori said Staff would work on the wording to add "respect the landscape" to the Connectivity value.

Health

Mr. Delmagori stated that common language among the Advisory Group goals included: all socio-economic and age groups - the diversity of groups; marketing an experience and the health benefits; develop partnerships to educate and promote complete streets.

There were no additional comments or recommendations for the Health value.

Safety

Mr. Delmagori said the common theme of mentioning safety measures was included in the MPO Draft Goal #1. Also part of the MPO Draft Goals was the separation of modes

by providing separate facilities. MPO Draft Goal #3 related to Advisory Group Goal #4 and stated to provide context appropriate safety measures by transect zone. Mr. Delmagori said this goal will relate to the road classifications and the specific characteristics of each, as well as to the different types of Complete Streets elements.

Mr. Krest asked what was meant by transect zones. Mr. Delmagori explained that this would be traveling from an urban to a rural area; in other words transitioning from rural density to suburban and then into urban. Ms. Lopez recommended not using concepts or expressions that the general public is unfamiliar with such as "transect zone". Mr. Delmagori said the words "transect zone" could be deleted and the goal could read, "...measures in urban to rural settings and for paved and impervious surfaces". The Advisory Group agreed that this clarified the goal.

Economic Vitality

Mr. Wakan reiterated some of the common language noted in the Advisory Group Goals. This included: calming measures, wider sidewalks, and buildings kept to the front of property lines. Mr. Wakan said that planners cannot dictate building placement. Ms. Lopez stated that zoning guidelines can encourage this placement. Mr. Wakan added that the street design could act as a guide to encourage building placement development.

Ms. Lopez said that the MPO Draft Goal #1 should be more specific so as to not lose its context. It was noted that MPO Draft Goal #2 includes many of the details not noted in Goal #1. Mr. Wakan said a reference back to the Safety goals could be added to MPO Draft Goal #1 in this section. The first MPO Draft Goal under Safety does define potential safety and traffic calming measures. Ms. Barbeau said the document might need a definitions page.

Mr. Wakan explained MPO Draft Goal #3 incorporated the ideas in the Advisory Group Goal #7. He asked if everyone was familiar with a parklet. Mr. Delmagori said he would provide an article from the ITE Journal that explained parklets and provided a number of examples. Mr. Delmagori said that a parklet is basically the creation of a public space out of a parking space. A business might create an outside dining space or just a space to sit and relax. Some businesses set up tables right outside of their storefront. The Advisory Group offered other comments on the use of parklets: that they are often sponsored and maintained by the business they are in front of; some businesses have creating parklets by building platforms and adding flooring so the street underneath is not altered; they are typically temporary facilities; some provide a specific themed parklet that could move to various locations throughout the city.

Ms. Barbeau recommended clarifying MPO Draft Goal #2 to note that encouraging the placement of building to the front of property lines referred to commercial buildings and not to housing. The Advisory Group members discussed properties that might include residential property on top of a commercial store front. If the building was located in a commercial area or on a commercial street, it would be considered a commercial property.

Aesthetics

Mr. Wakan said that the Advisory Group Goal #1 was taken almost word for word and incorporated as MPO Draft Goal #1.

Advisory Group Goal #4 referenced gateways/entryways/signage and Staff incorporated those ideas into MPO Draft Goal #3. Ms. Lopez recommended clarifying that San Juan County governments did not mean only San Juan County, but also the governments of Aztec, Bloomfield, and Farmington. The Advisory Group agreed that this goal should be rewritten to say, "Encourage the local municipalities and San Juan County to..."

There was no additional discussion on the Aesthetics value.

Following the discussion on Aesthetics, Ms. Barbeau came back to Economic Vitality and stated that Advisory Group Goal #6 had not been included in the MPO Draft Goals. The Advisory Group recommended this goal, as written by the Advisory Group, be included as MPO Draft Goal #5.

Mr. Delmagori said that Staff would make the recommended changes to the MPO Draft Goals and the final draft goals would be reviewed and approval sought at the next Advisory Group meeting. Once the Advisory Group has approved the Complete Streets goals, they will be brought to the MPO's Policy and Technical Committees for their review and approval as well. Mr. Delmagori said the next meeting of the Advisory Group will conclude the goals and vision statement process of developing Complete Streets guidelines. The next steps will be to consider land use contexts and road types. From this the Advisory Group will develop the Complete Streets guidelines. Mr. Delmagori said that he believed the Advisory Group could take formal action at the next meeting to recommend the values and goals and possibly a vision statement.

VISION STATEMENT

Mr. Delmagori stated that the values and goals will be used to develop the vision statement. The vision statement explains what this area wants to be achieved through Complete Streets.

Mr. Wakan gave a presentation on examples of vision statements developed in other communities.

Charlotte Vision

"To be an urban community of choice for living, working and leisure".

Mr. Wakan said that two of the bullet points that explained their vision statement were similar to goals stated by the Advisory Group:

- Viable and healthy economy;
- Infrastructure needed to support development.

Roanoke Strategic Initiative

The Roanoke, Virginia Strategic Initiative included the following verbiage:

"...streetscapes should be welcoming and attractive multi-modal linkages that carry vehicle traffic, pedestrians, and bicycles safely and efficiently to and from their destinations..."

Mr. Wakan stated this vision statement also focused on the building facades and overall aesthetics.

National Complete Streets Coalition

Mr. Wakan noted that this vision statement was unique in that it focused on what they did not like about current street design and what they did not want to see for the future. However, the common language in this vision statement to some of the Advisory Group goals was:

"The streets of our cities and towns ought to be for everyone, whether young or old, motorist or bicyclist, walker or wheelchair user, bus rider or shopkeeper..."

Genesee City, Michigan Vision

Mr. Wakan showed the Genesee County vision statement which said they wanted transportation improvements that are "planned, designed, and constructed to encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use while promoting safety for all users".

Wasatch Choices (Salt Lake Valley, Utah) Vision

Mr. Wakan stated that their Complete Streets vision statement focused on connectivity with the vision to improve the transportation "network through a variety of connected transportation choices designed to meet the needs of all users."

Compass (MPO in southern Idaho) Vision

Mr. Wakan said that this vision statement defines their vision as wanting to "provide an appropriate balance for all users..." Mr. Wakan commented that this concept is seen over and over throughout all the vision statements researched by Staff.

Houston, Texas

Mr. Wakan noted their vision statement begins with the words, "We call upon all local elected officials..." Additionally, the statement says they hope to build and maintain their infrastructure so that "all appropriate projects incorporate the principles of Complete Streets for all users".

The vision statement also includes the words "balance the needs" which Mr. Wakan believed was important language and was appearing in almost every example of a Complete Streets vision statement. Additionally, this vision statement addresses that for road improvement projects, "they should be replaced with wide sidewalks, ADA compliant intersections, and safe and clear bike lanes, as well as adequate, safe travel lanes for automobiles, transit, and freight operators". Ms. Barbeau said she thought this was a well-written statement.

Mr. Wakan provided a supportive complete streets vision statement from the City of Houston's public works planning engineer as an example of buy-in from a municipal department.

Mr. Delmagori said these examples could be used as references by the Advisory Group to help them in developing their own vision statement. The Advisory Group discussed the wording they liked and the important concepts they wanted to incorporate into their vision statement. Several ideas were drafted by Advisory Group members:

Draft Advisory Group Complete Streets Vision Statements

1. *To develop transportation networks that are planned, designed, and constructed to provide multi-modal connectivity for all users with guidelines that are context-sensitive and that integrate community values for economic development, aesthetics, safety and health.*
2. *To develop a connected transportation network, planned, designed, and constructed for all users to promote health, safety, and economic vitality in an attractive way.*
3. *Plan, design, and construct a context-sensitive transportation network that considers the needs of all users and promotes health, safety, and economic vitality in an aesthetically pleasing way.*
4. *To develop context appropriate transportation networks that are planned, designed, and constructed based on the values of safety, healthy living, aesthetics, economic vitality, multi-modalism, and connectivity.*

Final Draft Vision Statement

After reviewing and discussing the common verbiage and the important concepts, the following final draft vision statement was agreed upon by the Advisory Group:

- Plan, design, and construct connected, multi-modal, and context-sensitive (appropriate) transportation networks that consider the needs of all users and (which) integrate community values of health, safety, and economic vitality in an aesthetically pleasing way.

Mr. Delmagori said this final draft vision statement and the final draft goals would be sent out next week to the Advisory Group members for their review. He stated that these would become the framework for the Complete Streets guidelines.

LAND USE CONTEXT AREAS & ROAD TYPES

Mr. Delmagori gave a short presentation that explained the land use context and roadway types that comprise the organizing framework for the selection of appropriate roadway design guidelines. A context area is a land area comprising of a unique combination of different land uses, architectural types, urban form, building density, roadways, and topography and other natural features.

Mr. Delmagori showed Roanoke's Complete Streets plan. Their template defines their eight land use context areas and includes a picture of each to help better explain the particular context. Pennsylvania DOT (PennDOT) uses a similar approach with their

seven land use context areas. They give a written definition of the context area and then provide a picture to visually portray the area.

Ms. Lopez asked if a diagram or cross-section was provided as well. Mr. Delmagori said the Roanoke example shows a cross-section while PennDOT uses only a tabular format.

For the road types, Mr. Delmagori said that Roanoke has only three road types (arterial, collector, and local). PennDOT has five road types (regional arterial, community arterial, community collector, neighborhood collector, and local).

Mr. Delmagori said that discussion of the land use contexts and road types would be the focus of the upcoming Advisory Group meetings. He said the group will be asked to consider the characteristics of land use context areas in San Juan County. The members will think about how the land use context areas transition from one to another and what are some of the names and definitions that might be used for the land use context areas in San Juan County. Mr. Delmagori also said to consider this with regard to road classifications and to take note of how the road corridors transition as people pass from one neighborhood to the next.

Ms. Lopez asked if Staff would please e-mail the land use context area and road type PowerPoint to the Advisory Group members for them to use. She also recommended sending out a list with an explanation of each road classification (principal arterial, minor arterial, collector) since many members are not familiar with the terminology.

Mr. Wakan reported that Complete Streets will be an important component of the performance measures the MPO will be using to rank and prioritize projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This Advisory Group policy decision will assist in helping ensure complete streets guidelines are designed and integrated into future projects. Mr. Wakan will e-mail a document to Advisory Group members showing twelve different performance measures being used across the country by municipalities and MPOs to rank the effectiveness of their Complete Streets programs. He stated that after the Advisory Group has developed the goals, vision statement, guidelines, and policy, this could provide a method of promoting or measuring their Complete Streets efforts. Mr. Wakan recommended this performance measurement program be considered for inclusion in the Complete Streets guidelines.

Mr. Delmagori provided an article from the ITE Journal on being an advocate for Complete Streets.

MEETING WRAP-UP

Mr. Delmagori stated that the Advisory Group will now be ready to take formal action on the goals, values, and vision statement and to recommend them to the MPO Technical Committee in July and to the MPO Policy Committee in August. Mr. Delmagori invited any interested Advisory Group member to attend either or both of these upcoming Committee meetings.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, July 9, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. at the MPO Office.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.