

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 17, 2011

Technical Members Present: Mike Huber, City of Aztec
Brad Ellsworth, City of Bloomfield
Fran Fillerup, City of Farmington, Alternate
Chico Quintana, City of Farmington, Alternate
Dave Keck, San Juan County

Staff Present: Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide

Technical Members Absent: Cindy Lopez, City of Farmington
Nica Westerling, City of Farmington

Staff Absent: Mary Holton, MPO Officer

Also Present: David Quintana, NMDOT District 5, via telephone
Larry Hathaway, San Juan County, Alternate

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Mr. Huber called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 27, 2011 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Keck made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 27, 2011 Technical Committee meeting. Mr. Huber seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

3. RED APPLE TRANSIT

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item

Subject:	Red Apple Transit Data Collection
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 10, 2011

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- Transit data has been collected during the summer and fall months to better understand ridership characteristics and trends.
- The information will be used to further justify the recommendations made in the Red Apple Transit Study report.
- Two interns were hired to collect transit passenger data.
- All of the routes (Farmington and regional routes) were tracked at least twice during both the summer and fall.
- The City of Farmington has held several public meetings to gather input on proposed route change options.

CURRENT WORK

- Staff summarized data collected during the summer and fall to determine primary origins and destinations.
- Orchard Plaza, the Civic Center, and Smiths were counted several times to track passenger counts and transfer rates.
- Staff is analyzing transfers rates, ridership numbers and ridership trends to develop a unique rider percentage for the overall system and individual routes.
- Route changes are being proposed as a way to improve headway times, serve the new San Juan Center for Independence building, and possibly implement line routes.

ATTACHMENTS

- On November 17, Staff will present origin-destination tables for each route and transfer rates at the transfer locations.
- Staff will also present the maps of the proposed route changes for the Farmington routes.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- Finalize the analysis of the transit survey.
- Finalize the methodology for the estimation of the number of unique riders on the Red Apple system.
- Give presentations to councils and commissions.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Technical Committee receive a report on Red Apple Transit data collection activities and review the proposed route changes for the Farmington routes.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that transit data by routes had been collected during the summer and fall months to better understand ridership characteristics and trends. A significant amount of data has been collected due to the work by the MPO interns. Mr. Delmagori presented some of the information and showed comparison data from the summer months to the fall months when San Juan College was in session:

Aztec Route

- Has lowest ridership of all routes; recent numbers hold true from past counts;
- Numbers for summer and fall are similar;

- Trips start and end at Orchard Plaza;
- Not used for internal circulation within Aztec;
- All stops doing fairly well except for Westside Plaza;
- Westside Plaza stop could be eliminated and a new stop located elsewhere in town.

Bloomfield Route

- Trips start and end at Orchard Plaza;
- Not used for internal circulation within Bloomfield;
- Cultural Center is the busiest stop;
- San Juan County Detention Center has almost no use;
- San Juan County Detention Center stop could be relocated; Wild Horse Valley Community has requested a stop in their neighborhood.

Kirtland Route

- All stops are doing well; good ridership both summer and fall months;
- Central Center and Conoco stops are the most popular;
- Consider serving the Troy King stop both coming into and going out of Kirtland. Route currently only picks up people coming into Farmington;
- Flexible headtime on this route would allow for additional stops.

Mr. Fillerup asked if citizens in Aztec, Bloomfield, and Kirtland are using the transit system to commute to Farmington and are not using it within their own town, are they walking to where they need to get to. Mr. Delmagori replied that destinations within their own town are close enough to walk or bike or they are able to find a ride.

Farmington - Green Route

- This is the busiest of all the routes;
- Ridership numbers fairly consistent between summer and fall months;
- The busiest stops are the transfer locations: Civic Center, Orchard Plaza, and Smith's;
- Also with healthy ridership are the stops at the library, the apartment complexes, and Wal-Mart;
- The least used stops are at Four Corners Airport, City Hall, and Ricketts Park.

Farmington - Red Route

- Ridership numbers saw a substantial boost from the summer to the fall months when San Juan College was in session (440 riders in summer to 600 riders during fall count);
- No one stop stands out as the busiest, although during the fall count, San Juan College is very busy (85 riders in summer compared to over 200 in the fall);
- Riders go from San Juan College to transfer points of Smith's and the Civic Center to transfer to Green Route to get home;
- Rocinante High School is the least used stop.

Farmington - Express Route

- Route held steady throughout each of the months it was counted;
- Similar ridership pattern to Regional Routes in that riders are taking it to and from Orchard Plaza;
- Busiest stops are Animas Valley Mall and Wal-Mart;
- Farmington Museum stop has no interaction with any of the other stops; has only a few riders that come directly from Orchard Plaza.

Mr. Delmagori will be presenting this information to Farmington City Council on December 13. Between now and then Staff will be finishing a methodology to calculate the unique rider number. Using the monthly ridership counts and the transfer rates, Staff can determine a typical weekday ridership for each route.

Mr. Delmagori presented the proposed Farmington route changes:

Option 1 makes revisions to the existing loop routes. This proposal hopes to potentially reduce headway times or make the loops function more efficiently within the one hour time frame. With this proposal, the Red Route would run in a clockwise direction to accommodate the new stop on San Juan Boulevard for the San Juan Center for Independence. Changing directions on the Red Route may also help shorten transfer times and it will also serve the medical facility on 30th Street. The Green Route would continue to serve the Airport, but it would become an “on demand” stop and could save five minutes on the overall travel time.

Option 2 begins to implement some of the recommendations from the transit study of a year ago. This proposal breaks the loop routes into a line route that goes in both directions from San Juan College to Downtown Farmington and also a bi-directional Green Route that travels from the west side of the City on Apache Street to Orchard Plaza by way of Municipal Drive and 20th Street. This allows the bus to complete the route in one direction in approximately 20 minutes which would increase the frequency and efficiency of the run. Also proposed is that the use of two modified loop routes to channel riders to the transfer points that are more centralized within the City. The Express Route would not stop at Orchard Plaza but continue down Main Street and connect to the other routes that are at the Civic Center. This Option would provide more connectivity, efficiency, and transfer points.

Mr. Delmagori reported on the series of public meetings held in the last month to present these options to the public. In general, most are in favor of the proposed changes. These options will be presented to Farmington City Council in December and it is hoped that approval will be given to go forward with Option 2 so Red Apple Transit can begin addressing the details and implementing the changes.

Mr. Fillerup asked how many buses would be on each route at one time. Mr. Delmagori stated it is possible that the line routes would have two - one going north and one travelling south. The loop bus lines would each run one bus to bring riders into the central transfer area, and the Express Route would have one bus. Mr. Fillerup asked if model trips had been designed and tested to see if the proposed changes would actually shorten trips for riders since a shorter trip is actually the improvement being sought. Mr. Delmagori said the specific route timetables would have to be developed and, although the target ride time for most riders will be a 20-minute trip, the outer areas of service may still require a 30-minute ride.

ACTION: The report was received.

4. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE DRAFT REAUTHORIZATION BILL MOVING AHEAD FOR PROGRESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY (MAP-21)

**FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject:	Transportation Reauthorization
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 10, 2011

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- SAFETEA-LU has been extended through Continuing Resolutions for the past couple of years.
- SAFETEA-LU is currently set to expire on March 31, 2012.
- A full, multi-year reauthorization bill still needs to be passed by Congress.

CURRENT WORK

- The draft bill MAP-21 was issued on November 3, 2011.
- It is a two-year bill that provides \$109 billion for highway and transit projects.
- The proposed bill would consolidate federal programs from about 90 to less than 30.
- Core highway programs are reduced from seven to five.
- The bill will place emphasis on freight and safety improvements.
- Revising programs could possibly give states more flexibility to apply funds to the most needed projects.
- State DOTs and MPOs will need to incorporate performance-based measures and targets into the planning process.
- It is still uncertain if a tier system for MPOs will be part of the bill.

ATTACHMENTS

- Summary of the MAP-21 bill provided by AMPO.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- Monitor the features of the proposed reauthorizations on federally funded projects, the planning process, and impacts to MPOs and state DOTs.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that the Technical Committee receive a status report on draft reauthorization bill MAP-21.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that early in November a draft bill entitled MAP-21 was issued. He provided the Committee Members with a summary of the 600-page draft bill produced by the Association of MPOs (AMPO). MAP-21 is a two-year bill that provides \$109 billion for highway and transit projects. The proposed bill would consolidate federal programs from about 90 to less than 30, eliminate earmarks, and place emphasis on freight and safety improvements. The core highway programs would be reduced from seven to five. Mr. Delmagori stated that the bill speaks to flexibility of funding and that all funding would not

have to be dedicated to road or bridge projects, but could be used for the most critical project. Another portion of the bill addresses mobility with a new program devoted to freight and improving regional and national freight corridors. The Transportation Enhancements Program would now come under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program rather than under the Surface Transportation Program. Mr. Delmagori said that since pedestrian and bicycle facilities can eliminate vehicles on the roadway that can improve air quality issues.

The Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program applies to projects of considerable size. Mr. Delmagori said that for the near future, this program would not apply to the FMPO.

The section entitled Projects of National and Regional Significance Program could apply to the FMPO because there are U.S. highways in the area.

Mr. Delmagori reviewed the Performance Management section of the AMPO summary which states that performance measures and/or targets will be applied to State DOTs and MPOs. What this will require is unclear, but the impact to a small MPO could be significant especially if all aspects of a project had to be tracked.

Mr. Delmagori stated that the AMPO summary did not discuss the MPO tier structure. The MAP-21 bill, however, does mention the tier thresholds, with minimum requirements for a second tier MPO being that the MPO must develop a long-range transportation plan, have the staff to handle the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), and have the ability to do traffic modeling. These requirements are all currently being met by Staff. Mr. Fillerup asked what this proposed bill could mean for MPO project funding. Mr. Delmagori replied that the MPO needs to ensure projects are ready to go and on schedule so when funds become available they can be utilized immediately. Mr. Delmagori added the MPO priorities could change as the program titles are changed and as programs are consolidated.

Mr. Fillerup asked if the MPO needed to review the project priority list to consider freight issues and how transportation costs impact the local economy. Mr. Delmagori said that although economic development was not specifically spelled out in the MAP-21, it does appear to be an underlying theme. MPOs should consider what the additional benefits to the economy or land uses could be with the use of transportation dollars. Mr. Delmagori stated that targeted performance measures could also include the impact to economic development or road maintenance. More information is needed to understand the potential changes the MPO may have to make in the future.

Mr. Huber commented that NMDOT would likely restructure the STIP to address any new changes and that would drive how funds would be applied for. Mr. Delmagori agreed that the entire TIP/STIP process could be affected. Mr. Keck asked if earmarks were in fact going to be eliminated. Mr. Delmagori said this is what the AMPO summary stated. Mr. Keck said the earmark system in itself can be a problem, but it has been a channel through which an entity could request preliminary funds to begin a project. He questioned how eligible the MPO is for many of these programs. Mr. Keck suggested a Federal funding program similar to the State MAP program where entities can receive some money each year. Although the amount of funds varies annually, it is almost certain that some money is forthcoming and this offers a springboard from which to request additional funds from the local entity.

ACTION: The report was received.

5. RECEIVE A REPORT FROM NMDOT

Mr. David Quintana reported, via telephone, that maintenance work on NM 516 and US 64 will be let in January with work commencing later in the spring. This is expected to be a three-month project.

Final design work on the current US 64 project should be ready by March 2012 with letting in the summer. NMDOT is attempting to balance their letting schedule so this project could be let later in 2012.

The next phase of work on US 64 has been funded for FY2014-2015. Although the bids to date on this project have been favorable and under engineering estimates, additional funding could be necessary for this next phase.

6. RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE 2011 TRAFFIC COUNT PROGRAM

**FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Agenda Item**

Subject:	2011 Traffic Count Program
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 10, 2011

BACKGROUND or PREVIOUS WORK

- The MPO identified 87 locations to be counted in 2011.
- TRA took the traffic counts for three weeks in October.

CURRENT WORK

- Initial data has been provided for about 60 locations.
- Staff is making preliminary assessments of the data prior to submittal to NMDOT.

ATTACHMENTS

- Summary of traffic count data showing current and previous volumes for the counts.

ANTICIPATED WORK

- Receive all of the data from TRA.
- Submit all of the traffic count data files to NMDOT.
- Approve the counts after NMDOT and MPO review.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Post the data on the TCDS website. |
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RECOMMENDATION

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It is recommended that the Technical Committee receive a report on the 2011 Traffic Count Program. |
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DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori reported that traffic counts had been taken for three weeks during October. The traffic count information provided to the Technical Committee Members highlighted the 2011 traffic count data compared to the previous count which was typically from 2008. Most of the counts are on a three-year cycle except for river crossings, or on a roadway where conditions were changing and Staff wanted to monitor the section, or when there had been road construction that disrupted the count schedule.

Mr. Delmagori highlighted those locations where the volume change percentages were greater than 20%:

- FM_23 Apache (Auburn to Dustin) - West bound information not provided to MPO; once this information is received, Mr. Delmagori expects this count to be acceptable;
- FM_71 Hood Mesa Trail (Pinon Hills to Anasazi) - this count showed a 75% drop from 2006 when there were 540 vehicles counted; however each subsequent count has been at 100-200 vehicles and Staff believes this is the accurate count.
- FM_102 Navajo (from Vine to Main) - 69% increase; unsure why there was such a big jump in vehicles.
- SJ_110 NM 371 (CR 7100 to Old Fruitland Hwy.) - this count appears to be extremely low and failure of the counter is possible.
- FM_170 US 64/Broadway (Scott to Murray) - this count is a river crossing and will be rejected because a 59% decrease in volume is highly unlikely.
- AZ_187 Zia St. (Ash to Mesa Verde) - 40% increase; Mr. Huber said the road has been repaired and many are using this to get to Aztec High School.
- FM_210 Foothills (Crestwood to Rinconada) - 41% decrease; the paving of Hood Mesa Trail and College Blvd. could explain the drop in traffic.
- BL_222 West Blanco (Frontier to Bergin) - 50% increase; being used as alternate route to avoid US 64 construction.

Mr. Delmagori said the MPO had received data on 60 locations and was expecting to receive data for the remaining 25 locations soon.

ACTION: The report was received.

7. INFORMATION ITEMS

FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Agenda Item

Subject:	Information Items
Prepared by:	Joe Delmagori, MPO Planner
Date:	November 10, 2011

INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **Final Draft of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) Update.** The draft PPP was reviewed by the Technical Committee on October 27 and by the Policy Committee on November 10. Staff will give a report on the PPP on November 17.
- b. **2012 Technical Committee Meeting Schedule.** Staff will discuss the upcoming meeting schedule with the members on November 17. A resolution approving the meeting schedule will be presented at the December 15 Technical Committee meeting.
- c. **Safety Applications for HSIP.** The Policy Committee is expected to approve the MPO list of prioritized safety projects. Applications to NMDOT are due on January 6, 2012
- d. **Other.**

DISCUSSION: Mr. Delmagori commented that no major changes to the draft PPP were made by either the Technical Committee members at their October 27th meeting or by the Policy Committee on November 10th. The 45-day public comment period will be opened next week and will run until early January 2012.

Mr. Delmagori asked if the current meeting schedule was convenient for the members and everyone agreed that the current schedule worked. Mr. Delmagori said the annual Resolution for the 2012 Technical Committee Meeting Schedule would be presented at the December meeting for approval.

Mr. Delmagori reported that the Policy Committee approved the list of safety projects as recommended by the Technical Committee. The applications are due January 6 and Mr. Delmagori asked members to submit their projects by Christmas so Staff can put everything together and submit the entire package to NMDOT's Safety Bureau.

Mr. Delmagori told the members that Martin Lucero had resigned and accepted a Senior Transportation Planner position with Pinal County in Mesa, Arizona. The vacant Associate Planner position has been advertised nationally and Mr. Delmagori will be reviewing applications throughout the month. He and the Technical Committee wished Mr. Lucero the best in his new endeavors.

8. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

There was no additional business from the Chairman, Members, or Staff.

9. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

There was no additional business from the floor.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Keck made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Fillerup seconded the motion. Mr. Huber adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Mike Huber, Vice Chair

June Markle, MPO Administrative Aide