

MINUTES
FARMINGTON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
April 27, 2017

Policy Members Present: Mayor Sally Burbridge (Alternate), City of Aztec
Dorothy Nobis (Alternate), City of Bloomfield
Nate Duckett, City of Farmington
Paul Brasher, NMDOT, District 5
Mark Duncan, San Juan County

Policy Members Absent: Sherri Sipe, City of Aztec
Curtis Lynch, City of Bloomfield

Staff Present: Mary Holton, MPO Officer
Derrick Garcia, MPO Associate Planner
June Markle, MPO Administrative Assistant

Staff Absent: None

Others Present: Rob Mayes, City Manager, City of Farmington
Julie Baird, Asst. City Manager, City of Farmington
Rosa Kozub, NMDOT, Gov't. to Gov't. Unit
Supervisor
Jeff Kiely, Northwest NMCOG (via phone)
Kent Musgrove, Citizen
Steven Saavedra, City of Aztec
Larry Hathaway, San Juan County

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councilor Duckett called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

Councilor Duckett noted that there were no action items on today's meeting agenda (they will be designated by gray shading).

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 23, 2017 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Mr. Duncan moved to approve the minutes from the February 23, 2017 Policy Committee meeting. Ms. Nobis seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 8, 2017 POLICY COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING

Mayor Burbridge moved to approve the minutes from the March 8, 2017 Special Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Duncan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. REPORT REGARDING THE MPO'S FISCAL AGENT

Subject:	Report Regarding the MPO's Fiscal Agent
Presented by:	Rob Mayes & Julie Baird, City of Farmington and Jeff Kiely, Executive Director, Northwest New Mexico Council of Government (NWNMCOG)
Date:	April 27, 2017

PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION: Mr. Rob Mayes, City Manager for the City of Farmington, Julie Baird, Assistant City Manager for the City of Farmington, and Mr. Jeff Kiely, Executive Director, Northwest New Mexico Council of Government (NWNMCOG) presented the following on the MPO's fiscal agent.

Mr. Mayes explained that his objective today was to invite possible dialog on satisfaction with the current organization of the MPO. He noted there were two issues that it was believed made this a good opportunity to consider structural changes for the MPO. Mr. Mayes stated that due to some structural changes requested by the state, it may be necessary to update the MPO's agreement with the state and with the current MPO Planner job opening it is a good time to analyze and review how the MPO is organized.

Mr. Mayes stated that the City of Farmington is willing to continue as the fiscal agent. He said that a review of the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) was timely even were the City of Farmington to continue in their current capacity to ensure the arrangement is reasonable and equitable. He said that, over time, the opportunity costs associated with the City of Farmington's responsibilities as the fiscal agent have increased. Mr. Mayes stated that the City's Community Development Department has lost two planners thus making it more of a challenge for Ms. Holton to cover for vacations, other planning department responsibilities, and now the MPO Planner duties.

Over the past ten years, this burden has not been overly draining, but it has at times become an issue. This issue directly correlates to having the right person in the MPO Planner position. Mr. Mayes said he understood that there have been some frustrations and ambiguity especially in the chain of command.

The City of Farmington has engaged in some initial conversations with NWNMCOG and Mr. Kiely to consider if it would be better to contract with NWNMCOG. Mr. Mayes said that originally when the MPO was formed, affiliation with NWNMCOG was strongly considered. At that time, the COG was not in a position to take on the MPO, and neither were any of the other local entities, so the City of Farmington took it on.

Mr. Mayes said the City of Farmington is open to continuing as the fiscal agent with a new, fresh look at the JPA, or supporting any of the other entities that might be interested in taking on those functions. From the initial conversations, Mr. Mayes thought serious consideration should be considered to contracting with NWNMCOG. They have competency with MPO issues and are experienced in working with NMDOT. Mr. Mayes said he wanted to begin the conversations and wanted the Policy Committee to be on board from the ground level with pursuing these discussions. Mr. Mayes stated that he had some preliminary discussions with Mr. Kiely and asked him to do begin some due diligence. Mr. Kiely has reached out to the state and is analyzing the proposal from their capacities and willingness, and believes this might be a good fit.

Mr. Mayes stated the action he was seeking was a consensus by the Policy Committee to engage in real due diligence and bring back specifics to study and then consider possibly moving forward. Councilor Duckett said he was very interested in pursuing the conversations and thought it timely in light of Agenda Item #7 on the meeting agenda to discuss the JPA and MPO Bylaws.

Ms. Baird reported that some of the items and challenges that have come up internally with the MPO is the MPO Planner reporting as a City of Farmington employee. She noted the unique nature of the MPO Planner who reports to the Policy Committee but also falls under the personnel rules of the City of Farmington. The confusions over the reporting of MPO staff trickles down to how the priorities for the MPO are set. Ms. Baird noted that the Policy Committee should be setting these priorities, yet it may seem at times that the City of Farmington has an undue influence because of the nature of the position and who it reports to. Should the NWNMCOG be selected as the fiscal agent for the MPO, this could level the field and the City of Farmington would become another player at the table with no direct oversight over the MPO. Ms. Baird added that NMDOT wants the MPO Officer to have a stronger role in the MPO and with the current structure and budget constraints that is not something the City of Farmington would be able to do.

Mr. Kiely participated via telephone along with his Deputy Director, Evan Williams and said he appreciated the opportunity to speak to the Policy Committee. He and his staff have done some due diligence regarding the Farmington MPO. They have spoken with Ms. Jessica Griffin and Ms. Rosa Kozub with NMDOT and also had some internal conversations with staff and their Executive Committee of the COB. Mr. Kiely said the COG is very interested in the possibilities.

Mr. Kiely said that since the MPO was formed, the COG now has those years of experience with the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) and have developed a good relationship with NMDOT and understand the agreements and purpose. The COG would not be coming into this cold and Mr. Kiely said his staff is stronger now and believe them capable of achieving synergy with the MPO, RTPO, and other regional programs that include demographics, mapping, statistics, and other planning work.

Mr. Kiely said they are looking closely at the possibility but have not yet done a rigorous budget analysis to determine what it would take for the COG to take on the responsibilities the City of Farmington has been performing as the fiscal agent. Also required would be some good consultations with the other MPOs in the state to get a better understanding for the overall scheme and how they have been operating. Mr. Kiely asked what possible concerns the Policy Committee has had to date and what their

expectations might be if another agency served as the fiscal agent. Mr. Mayes noted that the COG is a well-established model and could provide many resources to call upon.

Mr. Duncan asked if, in their preliminary investigation, did the NWNMCOG believe they could run the MPO for the same money. Mr. Kiely responded that from a preliminary view, that was possible since it would have to be run within the budget and the work authorizations established by NMDOT and FTA.

Councilor Duckett said he had no major issues or concerns but asked if Mr. Kiely could break down how the MPO, run by the COG, would look and would the MPO Officer role be removed from the City of Farmington. Mr. Mayes responded that, yes, over time the current employees would become employees of the COG. The COG would employ the employees they needed to provide the required services, but he believed there would be creativity and flexibility in how those transitions are made. If the change in fiscal agent happens, then the MPO Planner vacancy would be filled by Mr. Kiely and his staff. Through the negotiations and the new rewritten JPA, the MPO roles would be established.

Mr. Duncan asked if the employees would continue to be PERA eligible. Mr. Kiely said employees of the COG are PERA eligible. He said there was no definitive answer on the employee side. The COG has a very capable management structure currently and how their program is run. Mr. Kiely reported that NMDOT has indicated that the best financial relationship would be a direct one with the COG which would have the City of Farmington as a peer at the table with no fiscal agent responsibilities. He added that NMDOT would like to have a more fully dedicated MPO Officer at the MPO. Mr. Kiely state that all this still needs to be reviewed and getting to know the existing MPO staff would be part of the equation. Mr. Mayes added that NWNMCOG would have a local office here and the number of staff would depend on the organizational structure.

Mr. Kiely said this was correct. The COG has had staff fully stationed in the Farmington area previously and this had worked well. He added that he is frequently in the San Juan Basin to work with the COG's various entities and having additional staff in the county could prove very compatible and workable. Mr. Mayes said that he had mentioned these preliminary discussions with NWNMCOG to the other city managers and they saw the possibility of a residual benefit with the COG establishing a strong, permanent presence here again particularly for the smaller communities.

Mayor Burbridge asked about NMDOT's recommendation that the MPO Officer is more of a full-time MPO employee and could the MPO Planner act in that capacity. Ms. Kozub reported that the Policy Committee ultimately makes all the decisions on the fiscal agent and on staffing. The City of Farmington approached NMDOT with this proposal, but NMDOT thinks there could be significant potential with this arrangement and worth further exploration. Ms. Kozub said it was important to evaluate if the COG can take on the functions of an MPO since the federal requirements are different than for an RTPO. She reiterated that the decision of who serves as the MPO Officer is up to the Policy Committee. She has seen the MPO Planner acting as the Officer in the smaller MPOs. Both the Mesilla Valley and Santa Fe MPO are structured similar to FMPO in that they are housed within the city's structure, but they have full-time MPO Officers housed at the MPO. Since all this direction and guidance is spelled out in the JPA, now is a good time to think through all the issues to develop what will work best for this area.

Councilor Duckett asked if the MPO Planner could act as the MPO Officer. Ms. Kozub said that, yes that could be done. She noted that an MPO planning staff with only two planners is light. She said NMDOT could look at the current annual budget received by the MPO to see if any adjustments could be made.

Mr. Kiely commented that there is a strong administrative component to running both an MPO and an RTP. A "pure" planner is not always able to manage the paperwork, budgeting, and reporting necessary to satisfy the MPO's federal requirements. The ideal individual should have expertise in planning along with administrative abilities. Mr. Kiely and Mr. Williams together would be there to support this individual and to build a team.

Mr. Mayes stated that with the discussions, feedback, and consensus from the state and the Policy Committee, the City of Farmington would continue the legwork to bring proposals and specifics forward on how this proposal might work. This information would be brought back to the Policy Committee to get direction and input on how to proceed. Councilor Duckett clarified that no action was needed from the committee today, just a direction on how to proceed. Mr. Mayes concurred and said the City of Farmington wanted to get a sense of the Policy Committee's openness on moving forward with a due diligence process which would become the framework for a new JPA.

Mayor Burbridge said that discussion of the JPA and Bylaws were items she had requested be included in the agenda, but wondered if this conversation should wait until further along in the process. Councilor Duckett thought the idea of the COG taking on the MPO should be investigated further before detailed discussions of the JPA took place. Mr. Duncan asked what the next steps would be. Mr. Mayes said that, with the concurrence of the Policy Committee, the City of Farmington would get back together with Mr. Kiely and NMDOT to develop some ideas on how this proposal could come together. Mr. Kiely agreed the need to put to paper the proposed concepts and how any issues that arise are resolved. He anticipated perhaps bringing back a series of proposals/plans for transition for Policy Committee consideration. The COG and City of Farmington are open to the conversations on what is best for all the entities and the MPO.

Mayor Burbridge asked if there items or areas in the current JPA that Policy Committee members thought should be addressed, how might this get done. Mr. Mayes suggested sending those concerns to Mr. Kiely, Ms. Baird and Ms. Holton to be sure they are addressed as the entire structure of the MPO is reviewed and proposals presented.

Councilor Duckett said he was in favor of going forward with the discussions, but asked if there were any questions or concerns about the COG taking over in place of the City of Farmington. Mr. Duncan commented that although the Mid-Region COG is a transportation planning agency, they seem to have gotten sidetracked into water and waste water issues and planning and he hoped this would not happen should NWNMCOG take over the MPO.

Mr. Mayes said the City of Farmington was open to interest by other entities that might want to be considered in these discussions as well as the COG. He said that in his earlier discussions with them, there did not seem to be any interest. The proposal to have the COG as the fiscal agent for the MPO puts all the local entities on the same foot and removes any confusion or ambiguity with the management structure.

Councilor Duckett asked that as these changes are being discussed, that the current MPO staff be given preference as any transition takes place to ensure they can remain employed. He said those employees have been valuable to serving the Policy Committee and its needs.

Mr. Duncan stated that he has not been a proponent of the COG but, in this case, he was in favor of moving forward with the discussions and possible change. Councilor Duckett asked if there was consensus for the City of Farmington and NWNMCOG to go forward with these discussions. There was consensus by the Policy Committee to move forward.

5. UPDATE ON MPO WORK PROJECTS

Subject:	Update on MPO Work Projects
Prepared by:	Mary Holton, AICP, MPO Officer
Date:	April 19, 2017

BACKGROUND

- Currently, the MPO Officer is covering the MPO Planner's responsibilities. This is expected to last for at least the next three (3) + months. Because MPO staff is also currently focused on successfully completing the NMDOT's Corrective Action Plan (CAP) and meeting all obligations contracted to the MPO by NMDOT, several projects which have been discussed with the committees have been placed "on hold."
- Among these are: a new website for the MPO; a new name and new logo for the MPO; the proposed Update to the 2008 MPO Bike/Ped Plan; and, the proposed Regional Safety Plan.
- Beyond the CAP, our primary focus will be on completing the TIPs, proposing amendments to the MTP, and proposing needed amendments to the UPWP.

INFORMATION ITEM

- This is an informational item only.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Holton reported that this update was presented to the Technical Committee on April 12. She reported that she is covering the MPO Planner position that will now likely continue until October 1 or possibly through a transitional period later into the year.

Ms. Holton stated that Because MPO staff is also currently focused on successfully completing the NMDOT's Corrective Action Plan (CAP) and meeting all obligations contracted to the MPO by NMDOT, several projects which have been discussed with the committees have been placed "on hold." Among those projects are: a new website for

the MPO; a new name and new logo for the MPO; the proposed update to the 2008 MPO Bike/Ped Plan, and; the proposed Regional Safety Plan.

Some of the upcoming projects and items that will be presented to the Policy Committee in the coming months are: the MPO City of Farmington budget, TIP Amendment #6, Amendment #1 to the 2040 MTP specifically regarding Chapter 4, the new FFY2018-2023 TIP, and an amendment to the UPWP. Ms. Holton stated that during the summer, the MPO will be bringing to the Policy Committee for consideration, proposed revisions to Chapters 5 and 9 of the 2040 MTP, proposal to update the MPO's Title VI Plan, and before October 1, 2017 a revised JPA and Bylaws. Ms. Holton said all these documents are being fully coordinated with NMDOT

Councilor Duckett said that with the current reduced staff at the MPO and the transitional period, taking the non-priority items off the table made sense.

6. REPORTS FROM NMDOT

District 5 – Paul Brasher

Mr. Brasher reported that several months ago, District 5 received a concern from a constituent regarding transverse cracks in the bike lane along NM 516 from North Oliver to US 550. District 5 has launched a project that will begin on May 15 to mill and inlay the bike lanes on each side of NM 516 from North Oliver heading west for 1.7 miles. Mr. Brasher commented that the cracks were beyond reasonable routine maintenance.

Planning Division – Rosa Kozub

Ms. Kozub reported on the awarded RTP and TAP projects. San Juan County received an RTP award for the Glade Run Recreational Trails project. The City of Farmington received two TAP awards: the sidewalks and ADA improvements along 20th Street and bike lane enhancements along Foothills Drive.

7. COMMITTEE MEMBER DISCUSSION ITEM(S)

Subject:	Committee Member Discussion Items
Date:	April 19, 2017
Presented By:	Mayor Sally Burbridge

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) – Sections 3, 4A-1-h, 4B-5, and 4E
- b. Bylaws & Operating Procedures – II. Membership: A. Voting Members, III. Meetings, IV. Staff - A. MPO Officer Designated, IV. Staff – B MPO Staff Responsibilities

PRESENTATION: Mayor Burbridge asked if these topics should be considered now or later in light of the earlier discussion on potential transition of the fiscal agency of the MPO.

Councilor Duckett thought it would be good if Mayor Burbridge would share her comments and thoughts on the JPA and Bylaws with the Policy Committee for them to consider and review. He asked if she would send those to Ms. Holton who could then distribute them to the Policy Committee members.

Mr. Duncan asked for the Town of Kirtland to be considered as the JPA is reviewed and to include them in any discussion. Ms. Holton added that the possible inclusion of Kirtland into the JPA had already been broached in discussions with NMDOT.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

Subject:	Information Items
Prepared by:	Derrick Garcia, MPO Associate Planner & Mary L Holton, AICP, MPO Officer
Date:	April 19, 2017

INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. **New FFY2018-FFY2023 TIP.** A call for new projects was made to the entities in February, March, and April. The deadline for the submittals was April 21, and the projects are now scheduled for scoring by the Project Review Subcommittee (Policy Chair Nate Duckett; Tech Committee Member Bill Watson; and, Tech Committee Member David Sypher) soon. Additionally, MPO Staff presented on developing projects for the new FFY2018-2023 TIP to the Technical Committee on April 12.
- b. **FHWA & NHTSA's State Safety Target Setting Coordination Workshop.** Ms. Holton and Mr. Garcia attended this workshop covering FHWA's and NHTSA's safety performance management measures required for carrying out the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and the Highway Safety Plan (HSP).
- c. **2017 MPO Traffic Counts.** MPO Staff have received a list of 90 locations to count during the calendar year 2017. Locations and count schedule is being coordinated with local entities, members of Technical Committee.
- d. **Update on the Corrective Action Plan (CAP).** The responses to the CAP are attached.
- e. **NMDOT Quality Assurance Review.** This review was held with Ms. Rosa Kozub of NMDOT Planning Division on April 11, 2017.
- f. **MPO Quarterly & Transit Conference.** Ms. Holton and Mr. Garcia attend the MPO Quarterly meeting in Albuquerque on April 5 and 6. Mr. Garcia attended the NM Transit Association Conference March 27-28.
- g. **Reminder: June 14, 2017 Special Policy Committee Meeting**

DISCUSSION: a. Mr. Garcia reported that development of the new FFY2018-2023 TIP began in February. More information will be presented to the Policy Committee in May. The five new projects: three from the City of Farmington, one from the City of Bloomfield, and one from San Juan County will be scored and ranked by the scoring sub-committee on Monday, May 1.

b. A two-day workshop in April was attended by Ms. Holton and Mr. Garcia. The first day was a FHWA and NHTSA state safety target setting coordination workshop followed on day two by the MPO Quarterly.

c. There are 95 locations that have been scheduled for traffic counts beginning the week of August 21. Mr. Garcia stated that the MPO had typically done the traffic counts twice a year. This twice a year count was done to see if a difference in traffic patterns would be detected. With Staff being short-handed and traffic counts are typically viewed on an annual trend and long term, so the counts this year will happen only once. An Excel list of the locations will be available shortly for review. There is already a map of the locations on the MPO website. Mr. Duncan asked if the August counts happened with the schools in session. Mr. Garcia said all the three school districts in the region will actually begin the 2017-2018 school year two weeks prior to August 21.

d. Ms. Holton reported that the approved responses to the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) are attached to the agenda. Many of NMDOT's recommendations have already been implemented with others to be completed soon. The invoice for FFY2017 Quarter 1 was re-submitted along with the current invoice for Quarter 2.

e. Ms. Kozub conducted the MPO's Quality Assurance Review (QAR) on April 11. This evaluation went well with no areas of concern.

f. Mr. Garcia attended the NM Transit Association Conference March 27-28 along with Andrew Montoya. Mr. Montoya has completed a product that will be part of the transit asset management presentation in May.

g. Ms. Holton reminded the Policy Committee members of the June 14, 2017 special meeting. This meeting is being called to consider approval of the UPWP amendment as well as the FFY2018-2023 TIP. Ms. Holton provided the Policy Committee with a copy of a handout regarding a presentation made to the Technical Committee on April 12. More training will be forthcoming throughout the year.

9. BUSINESS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS AND STAFF

There was no business from the Chairman, Members and Staff.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ISSUES NOT ON THE AGENDA

Mr. Kent Musgrove, an interested citizen spoke on several items of interest and concern:

- NM 170 needs repaired;
- Allocation of resources is a problem but everyone is facing difficult times; need to work together as a team;
- Recognizes the issues of short staffing;

- Put cost/benefit analysis of COG in writing; helps with problem solving and address critical issues.

There was no additional public comment on any issues not on the agenda.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Duckett adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.



Councilor Duckett, Chair



June Markle, Administrative Assistant