

**WICHITA FALLS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**  
**Technical Advisory Committee**  
Minutes

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

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***Voting Members Present:***

Lin Barnett – Wichita Falls MPO, MPO Director, TAC Chairperson  
Dave Clark – City of Wichita Falls, Dir. of Community Development  
David Rohmer – TxDOT, District Traffic Engineer (Proxy for Allan Moore)  
Davis Powell – City of Wichita Falls, City Engineer  
James Kelley – TxDOT, Area Engineer  
Karen Montgomery-Gagné – City of Wichita Falls, Comm. Development Planner III  
Mark Beauchamp – City of Wichita Falls, Traffic Superintendent  
Mike Beaver – TxDOT, Design/Bridge Engineer (Proxy for Danny Brown)  
Tim Hertel – TxDOT, Director of Operations

***MPO Staff:***

Donnie Arbeau – Wichita Falls MPO, Transportation Planner II  
Tammy Marlow – TxDOT, Funding Administrator

***Visitors:***

John Burrus – City of Wichita Falls, Dir. AT&T  
Lanham Lyne – Mayor, City of Wichita Falls  
Nora Hodges – Nortex Regional Planning Commission

***Absent:***

Allan Moore – TxDOT, Director of Construction  
Danny Brown – TxDOT, Director of Trans. Planning and Development

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**I. Welcome & Introduction**

Mr. Barnett called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Mr. Barnett advised the committee that Mr. David Rohmer was the acting proxy for Mr. Allan Moore and Mr. Michael Beaver was the acting proxy for Mr. Danny Brown. Mr. Barnett then addressed the first item on the agenda.

**II. Review and Approval of the October 8, 2008 Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC) Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Barnett asked for comments on the October 8, 2008 TAC minutes. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné indicated the spelling for "McNeil" was incorrect and that it should be "McNiel". She then asked if this issue had ever been resolved. Mr. Barnett stated that had no knowledge as to what was being done about this issue, but that the minutes would be corrected. Mr. Kelley motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Powell seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **III. Review and Comment Regarding the Transportation Policy Committee's (TPC's) October 22, 2008 Meeting Minutes - No Action Required**

Mr. Barnett asked for comments on the October 22, 2008 TPC minutes. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné asked Mr. Barnett to give an overview of the discussion during that meeting concerning Agenda Item V – Prioritization of the Environmental Justice Surface Transportation Project Nominations. Specifically, why project EJ-26 Lebanon Street was moved from a “LOW” priority to the higher rank of the “MEDIUM” classification. Mr. Barnett responded that the TPC reviewed each project on the list and decided the five projects listed in the minutes should be moved as indicated. He stated that he would have to go back and listen to the recording of that meeting to find the reasons why EJ-26 was moved up in the list, but that he would do so and report back at the next TAC meeting with those reasons. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné stated she was concerned with the priority of this project in comparison to the priority of the realignment of Rhea, Call Field and Lawrence roads for long-term transportation planning reasons. There were no other comments. The board moved on to the next item of business.

### **IV. Review and Recommendation of October 2008 Environmental Justice Analysis Final Report**

Mr. Barnett briefly reviewed with the committee the actions taken to produce the annual report. He discussed the public meeting held in September 2008 at the Wichita Falls Public Library and the public comment booth set up at Sikes Senter Mall during the same week. He stated that no new projects were submitted by TxDOT (most likely due to Federal rescissions throughout the year) the City of Wichita Falls, Lakeside City or Pleasant Valley. He also stated that no new projects were submitted by any citizens or stakeholders. He commented that although no one submitted any new thoroughfare projects at the public comment booth, he did receive a number of comment sheets concerning transit, which he then forwarded to the Transit Administrator.

Mr. Barnett stated that he had removed all of the projects that during calendar year 2008 had been released for bid or construction. The remaining forty-three (43) projects constituted the TPC approved prioritized list for calendar year 2009. Mr. Barnett pointed out that the project location map had been updated as well as the demographic maps in the appendices. The demographic maps were made easier for the casual reader to understand.

Mr. Barnett then asked for any comments or questions on the document. There were none. Mr. Clark motioned to forward the document to TPC for review and adoption. Mr. Beauchamp seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **V. Review and Discussion of MPO By-Laws Revisions**

Mr. Barnett reviewed the latest MPO By-Laws Revisions with the TAC committee. He stated the revisions were made directly from the comments and input he received during the October 2008 TAC and TPC meetings. Specifically, revisions were made to Article II, Section II-2 concerning the Order of Succession needed to establish quorum for any TPC meeting. Mr. Barnett also pointed out that Article III, Section III-2 had been revised to reflect continuity between Article II and Article III and that Section III-3 of Article III had been removed from the By-Laws.

Mr. Powell inquired about the letter sent to Sheppard Air Force Base inviting someone from the base commander's staff to become a member of the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee. He asked if now would be the time to include that position in Article IV – Subcommittees, Section

IV-4 of the By-Laws.

Mr. Barnett explained that with the help of TPC member Mayor Halloway they had put together a letter of invitation to the base commander and mailed it to the appropriate office at the base one week after the October 2008 TPC meeting. The letter did not reach its intended destination and a new one was sent out on January 14, 2009. Mayor Halloway was tracking its progress.

Mr. Davis commented that it would require another amendment to the By-Laws if they were to be approved in their existing form at the TPC meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Lyne recommended no action be taken until the MPO receives a definite response from the base commander. Mr. Davis also pointed out that Article IV, Section IV-4 states "Others as appointed by the TPC" may give enough latitude that it may not be necessary to amend the By-Laws until such time as it is necessary. Mr. Barnett stated a representative from Sheppard AFB would not be able to participate until the April meeting anyway, and that a special TPC meeting could be called prior to the April TAC meeting to make the amendment if needed. Mr. Barnett stated he would contact the Legal department to get an opinion from them.

Mr. Barnett stated that it had been recommended that Article III, Section III-3 be removed from the By-Laws and that a clarification to Section III-2 be added to provide continuity between that section and Article II, Section II-2 concerning Order of Succession.

Mr. Hertel asked if the clause in Article II, Section II-2 concerning voting membership increases should remain and what kind of bearing it would have if a representative from Sheppard AFB was added to the TAC committee. Mr. Clark commented that the clause was added because there was a concern at the time that as the TPC grew in membership that smaller communities would have as much authority as the City of Wichita Falls. He further stated that the clause should remain in the By-Laws to insure that the City of Wichita Falls continues to hold the position that it should hold within the MPO as the major entity in the region. Mayor Lyne stated that he supported leaving the clause in the By-Laws. Mr. Hertel agreed stating the clause was performing a good function and that he saw no problem in leaving it in the By-Laws.

There was no other discussion concerning the By-Laws. Mr. Barnett asked for a motion to put the revised By-Laws on the January 28<sup>th</sup> TPC agenda. Mr. Kelley made the motion. Mr. Clark seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **VI. Traffic Engineering Report on Traffic Signal Optimization Program**

Mr. Beauchamp briefly described the software and training obtained with City and MPO funding to be able to perform in-house traffic signal optimization of traffic corridors within the MPO boundaries. This software and training was obtained back in 2007 and had been used to optimize the Brook Street traffic corridor. Mr. Beauchamp stated that Traffic Engineering is starting to look at two traffic arterials per quarter. He stated that during the last quarter models had been developed for both the Broad and Holliday and the Downtown signal systems. He commented that both systems were already operating as coordinated systems, but the goal was to increase their efficiency.

The Broad and Holliday cycle lengths dropped from a 70 second cycle length down to a 50 second cycle length using the peak times. Delay times dropped accordingly. The level of service or LOS on several intersections also increased. In particular, the Kell West and Holliday intersection improved from a LOS of "C" all the way up to a LOS of "A". Galveston and Broad moved from a "C" to a "B" and once the final ramp on the Falls Flyover opens this intersection

should move from a “C” to an “A”. The entire network results for Broad and Holliday improved from 41 hours of delay down to 34, which equates to a tremendous fuel savings. The Performance Index dropped from 58.9 down to 51.9, which indicates an increase in efficiency.

Mr. Beauchamp stated the Downtown signal system dropped from a 60 second cycle length down to a 50 second cycle length, which improved the Performance Index slightly from 20.9 to 20.3. He stated the biggest improvement was noticed in the off-peak times of traffic.

Mr. Beauchamp then gave an analysis of the Rhea, Lawrence, and Call Field Road intersection and how the model illustrated that it could be improved if realigned. He stated the LOS at Kemp and Midwestern was currently at “D”; Call Field and Rhea was at level “C” and Lawrence and Call Field was at level “D”. Realignment at Lawrence and Call Field would increase the LOS from a “D” to a “B”; Kemp and Midwestern would increase from a “D” to a “C”. The cycle lengths at adjacent intersections would also reduce from 120 seconds down to 80 second cycle lengths. The benefits of realignment would be to move traffic quicker through this area of Wichita Falls. Mr. Beauchamp commented that an additional benefit would be the 80 second cycle length, which as an almost ideal cycle length would coordinate upstream and would help in the development of good progression plans. The Performance Index, using this scenario, should drop from 101.5 down to 57.7, which equates into almost a 50% improvement in intersection efficiency.

Mr. Kelley asked if the new signals on Southwest Parkway had been added to the model. Mr. Beauchamp stated they were in the process of adding them and that they would be optimized soon. TxDOT had received several calls about the new signals after they went online.

There was no other discussion.

## **VII. Discussion of Federal Economic Stimulus Package Funding of Qualifying MTP Projects**

Mr. Barnett informed the committee about recent events concerning the proposed Federal Economic Stimulus Package for early 2009. He discussed the criteria for project submission to the Federal government stating projects would need to have all Environmental, Right-of-Way, Design and Construction Cost issues ready to go before a project would be considered for funding. He stated that a deadline of January 16, 2009 had been set for all MPO's and COG's to turn in their project lists. Mr. Barnett then asked Mr. Beaver to discuss the projects that the Wichita Falls TxDOT District would be submitting for funding consideration.

Mr. Beaver stated that the Wichita Falls District had already submitted a list of projects to Austin for inclusion in the Economic Stimulus Package and that the list included projects in all nine counties of the district. The total number of projects on the list was 20 with 3 of them located inside the MPO's boundaries. Mr. Beaver stated the projects were selected on the basis that the plans were almost complete, there were no environmental, ROW and utility issues or the plans were simple enough to put together and there would be no environmental, ROW and utility issues to preclude funding. It was determined that the three projects included in the Grouped CSJ section of the 2008-2011 TIP would not require TPC review and approval because of TPC approval of the entire TIP at its last revision.

Mr. Clark asked if there was the possibility of receiving enhancement funds for the construction of bicycle and pedestrian trails. Mr. Beaver commented the information he had did not indicate there were any funds available for enhancement projects. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné asked if this could be explored further to see if this could be a part of the economic stimulus package. Mr.

Barnett stated he would contact his TP&P representative to see if any enhancement funding would be made available.

Mr. Barnett informed the board that he would contact Mr. Karnstadt for guidance on submission of the MPO projects by January 16, 2009. There was no other discussion on this issue.

## **VIII. Other Business:**

### **A. Discussion & Overview of Progress on Local Transportation Projects – City and TxDOT staff (Quarterly Review)**

TxDOT Report – Mr. Kelley reported that a change order had been released for shoring and bracing, or Phase 1, of the Falls Flyover west bound 287 ramp; the IH-44 concrete pavement project was complete; the Loop 11 ramp relocation project near IH-44 was nearing completion; the bridge over IH-44 at FM 890 was complete. The Kell West main lanes are slightly behind schedule, but the concrete plant will soon move in to begin pouring concrete on the main lanes. Several off-system bridges would have culverts replaced. A new traffic signal was installed at Barnett and Johnson roads; break-away light poles were installed on Midwestern from Loop 473 to US 281, on Kemp from Maplewood to Midwestern and on Taft from Midwestern to FM 369. The last four projects were summer seal coat projects on US 287, BU 287J, US 82 and US 281.

City of Wichita Falls Report – Mr. Powell reported the Maplewood Phase II project from Kemp to Lawrence was 76% complete and that it was on schedule to finish by March 30<sup>th</sup>; the Transfer Station Bridge was complete and trucks are using it to come out onto Lawrence road at the red light at Maplewood; the 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Harrison/Speedway intersection faux brick stamped concrete project was 50% complete; the left turn lanes at Kemp and Call Field for traffic flow improvements are complete; the Gregg Road and Langford Road reconstruction of existing streets project was 81% complete; the Colonial Park drainage improvement, installation of storm sewer system along Granada, Haiti, and Antigua, was 68% complete; the City's alley rehab project, at various locations across the city, had just begun; the Scott and Warren Street intersection reconstruction project to facilitate drainage was 20% complete and the Faith Village Drainage Phase II & III projects, McGrath Creek from Southwest Parkway to Maplewood Avenue, drainage improvements had received the final revisions from the consultant and was awaiting final review of the plans with letting/awarding scheduled in April.

### **B. MPO Quarterly Financial Report (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter FY 2008 – July, August, September)**

Mr. Barnett informed the committee that the MPO spent 82.96% of its total budgeted allocation of Transportation Planning Funds for FY 2008. However, he reminded them of the amendment made to the UPWP budget back in April 2008, which because of the on-going Federal rescissions, required all of the MPO's to relinquish any carry over funds from FY 2006 and FY 2007. Since that time, the FHWA through TxDOT had informed all of the MPO's that they will be receiving their full carry over amounts once the books on FY 2008 are closed out. Mr. Barnett stated that he estimated the Wichita Falls MPO would receive approximately \$179, 210 in carry over funds from Fiscal Years 2006, 2007 and 2008. He stated this money would need to be programmed into the FY 2009 UPWP and to expect an amendment to the UPWP at the April 2009 TAC and TPC meetings.

Mr. Barnett asked the committee to be thinking about planning projects that could be

accomplished with the anticipated funding. Mr. Clark commented that the Subtask 5.4 of the FY 2009 UPWP would be a good project for programming some of the funds. This project would be a study of the Beverly Drive, Avenue H and Kemp Street connection to establish a traffic corridor from Kemp to Seymour Highway via Avenue H and Beverly Drive. Mr. Barnett stated that with his staff involved in the MTP update and the downtown transit center location identification and funding coordination work this would make a good project to hire a consultant to perform.

### **C. "Falls Ride" Transit System Ridership and Revenue Report**

Mr. Barnett briefly went through the Transit Administrator's "Falls Ride" monthly trips and revenue comparisons for calendar year 2008. He drew their attention to the time period January through June prior to the transition on July 7, 2008. He then directed their attention to July through December and how ridership had increased on average by nearly 3,000 passenger trips per month after the July 7, 2008 implementation of the "Falls Ride" transit plan. He pointed out that average revenue per month had increased by nearly \$1,000. He stated, however, that average revenue should increase over time due to the fact that the first week of the new transit plan allowed everyone to ride for free. This was done to help promote the new transit plan. When asked why the December revenue and passenger trips were down compared to the previous months, Mr. Barnett stated the weather played a factor, but that the biggest reason was because of the number of military personnel from Sheppard AFB that went home for the holiday season during that month.

Mr. Barnett also informed the committee that the scheduled 6 month updates to the transit booklet had been incorporated into the booklet and that it would soon go to print in a Spanish format.

### **D. 2010 - 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update: Consultant Selection and Initial Kick-off Date**

Mr. Barnett informed everyone that the TAC selection and oversight subcommittee, after narrowing down the six proposals that came in to a short-list of three, interviewed BWR, Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. and Alliance Transportation for the 2010-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan update project. He stated that the selection subcommittee used a decision matrix to select Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. to perform the update. Mr. Barnett stated the contract with Kimley-Horn was nearly complete and that it would be ready for Mayor Lyne to sign after the January 28<sup>th</sup> TPC meeting.

Mr. Barnett then explained that the original budget of \$103,000 for Subtask 5.2 would need to be increased by \$7,000 to \$110,000 to cover the additional costs associated with the development of the Travel Demand Model or TDM. He explained that after sending Kimley-Horn all of the information on the model and after they had reviewed the data that it was determined the model would require more work than originally anticipated. This was the reason for the budget increase. Mr. Barnett stated the funds were available in Subtask 5.3, which had originally been programmed for MPO staff to internally make updates to the TDM. Mr. Barnett proposed to move the \$7,000 from Subtask 5.3 into Subtask 5.2 to cover the increase in budget.

Ms. Montgomery-Gagné made a motion to send the proposed UPWP amendment to the TPC for review and approval at the January 28, 2009 meeting. Mr. Powell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### **E. Report on Initial Meeting of the Wichita Falls Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizens Advisory Committee**

Mr. Barnett informed everyone that the initial meeting of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Citizens Advisory Committee was held on December 18, 2008. He commented that almost everyone invited attended the meeting. He stated this committee would have a key role during the development of the 2010-2035 MTP update, especially in the update to the Bicycle Master Plan. He commented that the BPCAC contains a good cross section of individuals within Wichita Falls that have a vested interest in bicycle and pedestrian trail issues. Mr. Barnett commented that he had included the minutes of that meeting in the TAC packets as an informational item for everyone.

Mr. Arbeau informed everyone that he was currently working on updating the bicycle trail map and making a list of the missing links in the network. The subject of missing links came up during the BPCAC meeting. He stated that a missing link was the transition from the bicycle/pedestrian trail to a sidewalk or other thoroughfare on the bicycle/pedestrian network or, how to improve that transition.

Mr. Barnett stated the purpose of the meeting was primarily to allow everyone to get to know each other and for him to give a brief presentation about the MPO and what it hoped to accomplish with the formation of this new committee.

#### **F. Other items**

Mr. Barnett stated he had no other business, but asked if there was something that needed to be brought before the board at their next meeting.

Mr. Burrus commented that some issues of right-of-way came up during the Mayor's town hall meeting the previous night and that he would contact members of TxDOT after the TAC meeting concluded.

#### **IX. Public Comment on Anything Not on the Agenda**

Mr. Barnett asked for any public comment on anything not on the agenda. There was none.

#### **X. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

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Irvan F. "Lin" Barnett Jr.  
MPO Transportation Planning Director  
Wichita Falls MPO