
TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE (TPC) MEETING WICHITA FALLS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

October 22, 2008

Present:

Woodrow (Woody) Gossom, Wichita County Judge, Vice-Chairperson	◆ Members
Charles Elmore, City of Wichita Falls, City Council Representative	◆
Jeff Watts, City of Pleasant Valley	◆
Larry Tegtmeyer, TxDOT, District Engineer	◆
Michael Smith, City of Wichita Falls, City Council Representative	◆
Russell Schreiber, City of Wichita Falls, Director of Public Works	◆
Steven Halloway, Lakeside City	◆
Donnie Arbeau, WFMPO, Transportation Planner II	◆ Staff
Lin Barnett, WFMPO, Transportation Planning Director	◆
Tammy Marlow, TxDOT, Funding Administrator	◆
Danny Brown, TxDOT, TP&D Director	◆ Ex-officio
James Kelley, TxDOT, Area Engineer	◆
Jerrie Sowards, Rep. David Farabee's Office	◆
Nora Hodges, North Texas Regional Planning Commission	◆ Guests
Teresa Rose, City of Wichita Falls, Deputy Public Works Director	◆
Lanham Lyne, City of Wichita Falls, Mayor, Chairperson	◆ Absent
Dennis Wilde, NORTEX Regional Planning Commission, Director	◆

I. Welcome & Introduction

Judge Gossom called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. Introductions were made around the room.

II. Review and Approval of the Transportation Policy Committee's (TPC's) July 23, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Judge Gossom asked for comments or changes to the minutes. None were made. He then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Watts motioned to approve and Mr. Tegtmeyer seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Review and Comment on the Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC's) October 8, 2008 Meeting Minutes – *No Action Required*

Mr. Barnett briefly reviewed for the policy board the work done by the TAC committee during their meeting. He stated the majority of their time was spent reviewing the projects on the Surface Transportation Project list. Judge Gossom asked for any other comments. None were received.

IV. Review and Discussion of the Federally Funded Transit Projects Reporting Form in the 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – *For Informational Purposes Only*

Mr. Barnett informed the policy board that the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) Public Transportation Division (PTN) in Austin, Texas had issued a directive to all Texas MPO's and Councils of Government (COG's) responsible for the development and revision of their Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP's) to begin using a new reporting format for disseminating information to the public on Federally Funded Transit Projects in their respective areas or regions. Mr. Barnett commented that PTN was issuing this directive in order to establish continuity between all 25 MPO/COG in transit funding reporting requirements. PTN stated they were having problems reconciling all of the TIP revisions that go into the make up of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) because of the varied and different ways that MPO's and COG's were sending in their information. The new format developed by PTN would help to streamline and standardize the reporting process. It was also designed to handle Year-of-Expenditure requirements as called for by SAFETEA-LU legislation. Mr. Barnett stated that none of the projects were being removed and that no new ones were being added. Therefore, no approval by the policy board would be needed. He stated the agenda item was for informational purposes only.

Mr. Tegtmeyer asked why the funding numbers for fiscal years 2009, 2010 and 2011 were so much smaller than for FY 2008. Mr. Barnett explained that the numbers for 2009, 2010 and 2011 were estimates based on the estimated grant revenues for FY 2008 multiplied 5% incrementally out to the final year of the TIP. He stated that because the TIP was originally developed based on estimated income that when the true revenue levels were identified for FY 2008 it caused FY 2008 to far exceed what was predicted. Mr. Barnett gave the reasons for the larger than expected amount of funds to program. First, the transit system had been unable to program all of its FTA funding due to local match issues during the past three years. The result was that a build up of un-programmed federal funds in the amount of \$825,000 had been accumulating since FY 2005. Mr. Barnett stated that because of the efforts of City Council and of the 4A Board, the City of Wichita Falls was now able to provide enough local match to pull all of those remaining funds into the FY 2008 transit grant for programming. The bulk of which will be used for buying four new 30-foot, low-floor transit buses.

Mr. Barnett stated that the reporting previously used by the MPO to report on transit programming was very similar to the one proposed by PTN but with one major difference; that being the Year-of-Expenditure or YOE reporting requirement. He explained that almost all transit expenditures are encumbered the same year as when the grant is executed, but some capital expenditures – such as transit buses – would require YOE reporting.

Judge Gossom asked if there was any other comment or questions. There were none and the board moved on to the next agenda item.

V. Review and Discussion Concerning the Prioritization of the Environmental Justice Surface Transportation Project Nominations Obtained at the September 2008 Public Meetings

Mr. Barnett gave the policy committee a brief overview of events leading up to the production of the 2008/2009 Prioritized Surface Transportation Projects list. He informed the policy board of efforts to bring in new project nominations and comments on proposed projects by holding one public meeting at the Wichita Falls Public Library on September 16th and the public comment booth that was setup at Sikes Center Mall from 10:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. on September 19th. Mr. Barnett stated that although he did not receive any new project nominations for this year, he did receive six public comments concerning the Wichita Falls Transit System. Mr. Barnett forwarded these comments to the Transit Administrator for his review.

The Technical Advisory Committee reviewed all the projects at their meeting on October 8th and removed any that were deemed non-feasible or that had been cancelled. The remaining projects were then voted on by the TAC board members as being HIGH, MEDIUM or LOW in priority. After tabulating the votes, the new prioritized list of Surface Transportation Projects was produced. Mr. Barnett then asked the board to review the TAC committee's work to see if any of the projects needed to be moved up or down in the ranking.

After much discussion and review, the Policy Committee re-ranked five of the projects as follows:

WF-14 Holliday Creek – Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail: moved from MEDIUM to HIGH; and was ranked highest on the entire list.

TX-28 FM 369 – Enclose drainage near McNiel Street: moved to top of MEDIUM classification.

EJ-26 Lebanon Street – new 4-lane un-divided facility from Seymour Road to Seymour Hwy: moved from LOW to upper portion of MEDIUM classification.

TX-36 FM 369 – Enclose drainage near Kemp Street: moved from LOW to upper portion of MEDIUM classification.

TX-34 FM 369 – Enclose drainage near Hughes Street: moved from Low to upper portion of MEDIUM classification.

Mr. Barnett informed the Policy Board that he would take the revised project list and use it in the development of the 2008 Environmental Justice Project Analysis Report. The updated Surface Transportation Projects list and the project report will be presented to TAC and TPC during the January 2009 MPO meetings.

After the review and re-ranking of the project list, Judge Gossom moved on to the next item of business on the agenda.

VI. Review and Discussion of MPO By-Laws Updates

Mr. Barnett provided the Policy Board with a brief account of his activities concerning the updates to the MPO By-Laws. He outlined the discussions of the TAC committee in the past two TAC meetings and how those discussions had helped him revise the By-Laws into their current form. Mr. Barnett informed the Policy Committee that he and the TAC committee felt the By-Laws were now ready for TPC Review.

After reviewing all of the revisions, the Policy Committee recommended that Article II, Section II-2 be revised further to clarify the "Order of Succession" rules for whoever presides over future

TPC meetings should the Chair or Vice-Chair not be able to do so. The Policy Committee also recommended tying together this part of the By-Laws with Article III, Section III-3 concerning the assumption of duties by the Policy Board members present if the Chair and Vice-Chair were both absent. The Policy Board was in agreement that the rest of the proposed revisions were an improvement and that they needed no more additional work done to them.

Mr. Barnett stated he would do further research to improve Articles II-2 and III-3 and would bring them back before both TAC and TPC for review and approval at the January 2009 MPO meetings. Judge Gossom asked for any further discussion. There was none. The Policy Board then moved on to the next item of business.

VII. Discussion Concerning the Addition of a Representative from Sheppard Air Force Base to the Technical Advisory Committee to Discuss Transportation Issues Near and Around the Base

Mr. Barnett discussed the TAC committee's desire to add a representative from Sheppard Air Force Base to their committee to provide input on traffic and transportation related problems near and around the base. Mr. Kelley explained that he deals frequently with SAFB on traffic related issues and that he felt it would be a good idea to have someone from the base sit in on the TAC committee to represent and discuss their traffic and transportation issues. Mr. Barnett stated that it might even be possible to have someone from the base be an Ex-Officio member of the Policy Board, but that the number one goal was to get a SAFB representative coming to the TAC meetings.

The Policy Board discussed the potential benefits of this idea at length and all agreed that it would be a good thing to have. The board gave permission to the MPO Director and the TAC committee to pursue this goal and Mayor Halloway stated he would work with Mr. Barnett to help him make contact with the base on finding the right person. There no other discussion and Judge Gossom moved onto the next item of business.

VIII. Other Business:

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

TxDOT Report: Mr. Kelley reported on the progress on the Falls Flyover ramp construction; concrete pavement replacement on IH-44/US 287/ SP 325 interchange; ramp relocation near Loop 11 to the US 287 (SB) / IH-44 west merge; the IH-44 to US 287 new facility; bridge construction on IH-44 at FM 890; Kell West Main Lanes construction between FM 369 and McNeil; bridge work at Middle Fork of Pond Creek on BU 287J, at West Fork of Pond Creek on County Road 228, at Northside Canal on County Road 228, and at draw on County Road 339. He also reported on traffic signal upgrades at the intersection of SP 447 and BU 287J and at the intersection of Barnett Road and Johnson Road. He stated that breakaway light poles would be installed on Midwestern Parkway from LP 473 to US 281; on Kemp Street from Maplewood to Midwestern Parkway and on Taft from Midwestern Parkway to FM 369.

City of Wichita Falls Report: Mr. Schreiber reported on the progress on Maplewood Extension Phase II (38% complete); the Transfer Station Bridge (83% complete); the beginning of existing brick replacement with faux brick stamped concrete on 10th Street from Garfield to Tilden; the provision of left turn lanes on northbound Kemp at Callfield, at Maplewood and Elmwood and at Elmwood and Southwest Parkway. He also reported

on reconstruction of existing street on Gregg Road from Southwest Parkway to Langford and on Langford from Gregg Road to Barnett road (39% complete). The installation of storm sewer along Granada, Haiti and Antigua Streets in the Colonial Park Subdivision is in the early stages of completion. Scheduled projects included drainage improvements on McGrath Creek from Southwest Parkway to Maplewood Avenue (Faith Village Drainage Phase II and III) and the annual alley rehabilitation project at various locations across the City.

B. MPO Quarterly Financial Report (3rd Quarter FY 2008 – April, May, June)

Mr. Barnett went over the 3rd quarter financial summary with the Policy Board. He stated that as of the eleventh billing for FY 2008 the Wichita Falls MPO had spent 77% of its funding allocation, which meant the required 75% minimum spending requirement had been achieved for the fiscal year. Mr. Barnett predicted the final billing (Number 12) would push expenditures into the 80 to 85 percentile range for the year. He stated the remaining 15 to 20 percent of funding from FY 2008 would roll over into the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program budget and would be applied to the 2010-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan update.

There were no other comments or questions. The Policy Board moved onto the next item of business.

C. Wichita Falls Transit System D.B.A. “Falls Ride” – Plan Implementation Report

Mr. Barnett discussed the positive reaction to the new Connector route (Route 7), which circulates every half hour between Sikes Senter Mall and the temporary transfer station located at 4th Street and Burnett Street. He stated that the route was so heavily used that quite often it was standing room only. Because of this, the Transit Administrator was currently reviewing plans to either add a second bi-directional bus or to divert one of the other bus routes to help carry the load during peak times of the day.

Mr. Barnett also talked about the search in the downtown area for a good location for the downtown transit center. He discussed working with the City’s Property Manager to locate a ½ to ¾ size city block that would serve the needs of the proposed transit center. Mr. Barnett discussed the meetings with the Regional Transportation Committee and how the downtown transit center would help promote regional transit transportation by providing area transit providers such as Sharplines and Texoma Area Paratransit System (TAPS) a link or drop off point for their riders wanting to utilize the Falls Ride transit system. Mr. Barnett stated the timeline for the new transit center would probably be 2 to 3 years once a suitable location had been found. However, he did state that they hoped to have it partially up and running within the next 2 years.

Mr. Arbeau informed the board that since the inception of Falls Ride on July 7, 2008 that several revisions had come in that needed to be made to the route booklets. He stated these revisions were nearly complete and that the next order of transit booklets would include them. He also stated that a Spanish version of the booklet would come out shortly behind the English version.

Judge Gossom asked if ridership and revenues had increased over the past few months. Mr. Barnett stated that in conversations with the Transit Administrator that he knew they had gone way up during the first week when rides were free, but had then dropped off shortly afterwards. All except for the Connector Route; this has been busy since the first

day of operation. However, the other routes were beginning to show an increase in ridership. Mr. Barnett stated he would contact the Transit Administrator and forward whatever information he could get onto the Policy Board.

There were no other comments or questions. The Policy Board moved onto the next item of business.

D. 2010 - 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update: Consultant RFP

The 2010-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update will be due in January 2010. Mr. Barnett informed the Policy Board of the Request for Proposal that was sent out on October 17, 2008 to enlist the services of a qualified consultant in the update of the Travel Demand Model and the MTP update. A subcommittee of TAC members was assembled to handle the selection and oversight duties of the consultant that would perform the work. Mr. Barnett stated that he had set aside \$103,000 in Task 5 of the Special Projects section of the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program to accomplish this task. Mr. Barnett commented that it would take the better part of calendar year 2009 to complete the update and have it ready in time for approval by the Policy Board in January 2010. There were no other comments or questions. The Policy Board moved onto the next item of business.

E. Other items

Mr. Tegmeyer informed everyone about the annual Texas Transportation Forum that will take place the first week of January 5 -7, 2009. There were no other comments.

IX. Public Comment on Anything Not on the Agenda

There were no public comments on anything not on the agenda.

X. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

Honorable Lanham Lyne
Mayor Wichita Falls