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

October 24, 2005

Present:

Woodrow (Woody) Gossom, County Judge, Vice-Chairperson	◆ Members
Charles Elmore, City Council Representative	◆
Dennis Wilde, NORTEX Regional Planning Commission	◆
Don Sheppard, Lakeside City	◆
Larry Tegtmeyer, TxDOT, District Engineer	◆
Scott Taylor, Director of Public Works	◆
Carolyn Askins, TxDOT, Transportation Planning Assistant	◆ Staff
Danny Brown, TxDOT TP&D Director	◆
Darron Leiker, City Manager, Interim MPO Director	◆
Donnie Arbeau, Transportation Planner I	◆
James Kelley, TxDOT, Area Engineer	◆
Lin Barnett, Transportation Planner III	◆
Mark Beauchamp, City Traffic Superintendent	◆
	◆ Ex-officio
	◆ HNC
Elizabeth Gerstner, Student Training (Burkburnett)	◆ Guests
John Bendele, TxDOT, Austin Field Representative (TPP)	◆
Michaela Bergin, Student Training (Burkburnett)	◆
Lanham Lyne, Mayor, Chairperson	◆ Absent
Jeff Watts, City of Pleasant Valley	◆
Linda Ammons, City Council Representative	◆

I. Welcome & Introduction

Judge Gossom called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. Introductions were made around the room.

II. Approval of the July 27th TPC Meeting Minutes

Mr. Taylor motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Wilde seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. No other comments were received.

III. Review and Comment Regarding TAC's October 13th Meeting Minutes - No Action Required

No comments were received.

IV. Review, Discussion and Approval of the MPO/City/TxDOT Transportation Project List for FY 2006 – Prioritized by TAC at the October 13, 2005 Meeting

Staff handed out the prioritized lists to everyone present. Mr. Barnett then reviewed the events leading up to the list of prioritized transportation projects. He discussed the compilation of the list from current TxDOT and City of Wichita Falls project work lists and, also, the addition of projects nominated at the June, 2005 Environmental Justice public meetings on area transportation projects within the MPO's boundaries. He also explained that in early August the list was mailed out to all MPO board members and stakeholders with a request for project nominations. All nominations were to be sent to the MPO's office for inclusion in the list by October 1, 2005.

Mr. Barnett explained how, at the October 13th TAC meeting, the TAC board members reviewed each individual project for changes and corrections, using maps supplied by both TxDOT and the City, then recessed for 15 minutes to allow all board members time to rank each project on the list. Each project was ranked as high, medium or low priority using a straight average that moved the higher priority projects to the top of the list and the lower priority projects to the bottom of the list.

Judge Gossom asked if any of the projects in the MPO's list were reflected or connected in some way to the recent list of projects put forth by the Cross Plains Rural Transportation Council (CPRTC). Mr. Brown responded, yes, some of the TxDOT projects were in both lists, but only those within the boundary of the MPO were on the list. Mr. Leiker commented that the first two projects on the list (WF-11 and WF-12, Callfield Reliever Phase 1 and 2) have already been included in the City's new Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District 2. The board members then discussed the effects these two projects would have on the neighborhoods and school (Barwise Jr. High) where construction would take place.

Mr. Brown commented that the Loop 11 project and the Kell West Main Lanes project definitely were a part of the CPRTC list. He stated both projects were high on the CPRTC list. Mr. Leiker asked if the letting date for the Kell West Main Lanes project had been moved up. Mr. Brown stated that funds were not ready yet, but that he hoped to accelerate the project in much the same way as was done with the Direct Connect – Falls Flyover project.

Because the list was not included in the meeting packets at mail out, Mr. Barnett suggested the board might want to take time to examine the list, make revisions and approve the list at a future TPC meeting. He stated that staff was ready to review each product, individually, if the board wished to do so. Judge Gossom stated that it would probably be best to wait until another meeting to approve the list due to the fact that some of the members were not present at today's meeting. Mr. Taylor asked that project EJ 7 – Sunset Lane and Duty Lane – be removed from the list because those streets had been designated for funding in the City's storm-water utility fund and was one of the top-ten projects for the City. Mr. Taylor stated this project will be funded in the very near future.

Mr. Taylor also questioned the need for the EJ 0 – Taft Boulevard Conversion – from Hampstead to the Kell Freeway. Mr. Barnett explained this was a project nomination from a citizen asking for this section of road to be expanded and a left turn lane added. The board agreed this would be a difficult project to accomplish. Mr. Taylor also pointed out that the realignment of WF-6 – Rhea Road to Lawrence Road intersection – and EJ 12 – the Wenonah Street extension would both be included in the TIF District 2.

Mr. Brown commented the list would prove to be a very useful tool for identifying projects, such as this one, that would be viewed as having a low priority. He stated the board had a duty to address project nominations, and once addressed, the decision concerning a specific project would have the backing of the prioritization list. The board then discussed conditions on Reilly Road and what could be done.

The board decided it would be best to send each member an unmarked voting list, with more detailed explanations of each project, in order to make revisions to the prioritized list. Once complete, the board would reconvene at a later date to tabulate the results and finalize the prioritization. The board also agreed that all the projects shown in the list should stay on the list, even if they were already funded. This would demonstrate to the public that projects were being funded and that progress was being made.

No action was taken. The item was tabled for discussion at a future meeting.

V. Review, Discussion and Approval of the November Transportation Improvement Program (2006-2008 TIP) Revisions

Ms. Askins discussed two revisions made to 2006-2008 TIP. The first revision was to FY 2008 by State Category and was done to move CSJ 0156-04-080, construction of the Kell West Main Lanes, into the FY 2008 funding year in order to move the project up in the letting process. The second revision was to the Federally Funded Transit Projects section of the 2006-2008 TIP. Funding for Section 5310 – Service for Elderly and Disabled – Transit was added at a total cost of \$502,373 over three years. Judge Gossom asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Sheppard motioned to approve the TIP, as presented, for forwarding to TxDOT in Austin. Mr. Tegtmeyer seconded the motion. Judge Gossom asked for any comments or changes to the revisions. There were none. The motion was unanimously approved.

VI. Review, Discussion and Approval of Revisions to the Public Involvement Policy (PIP) as Required by the 2005 Triennial Review Findings Report – Satisfies UPWP Annual Review Requirements

Mr. Barnett stated the reviewer for the Wichita Falls Transit System's (WFTS) Triennial Review had found a deficiency in the Procedural Notices and Processes portion of the MPO's Public Involvement Policy. Under the Transit Routes and Changes section the reviewer stated the PIP was deficient in the definition of a major service reduction. The reviewer informed WFTS that it needed to revise this paragraph and submit the policy revision to FTA. Mr. Barnett also stated the Speaking Engagement Opportunities, under the Environmental Justice Section, had been updated to accurately reflect the most recent efforts of the MPO to make contact with the public and present transportation issues. Once approved, the PIP must go out for a 45-day public comment period. If any comments are received during this time then the PIP must appear before the TPC again for re-approval.

Judge Gossom asked for a motion to approve the revisions to the PIP. Mr. Wilde motioned to approve the PIP as presented. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion. Judge Gossom asked for any other comments. There were none. The motion was unanimously approved. The PIP was made available for public comment on October 25, 2005 on the MPO's webpage and at the MPO's office.

VII. Review, Discussion and Approval of the Final Report on the June, 2005 Environmental Justice Public Meetings Concerning MPO Roadway Projects – Excludes Transit

Staff handed out copies of the Final Report on the June 2005 Environmental Justice Transportation Projects public meetings. Mr. Barnett briefly summarized the contents of the report and discussed the methodologies involved in doing the analysis for each of the 49 projects. He commented that because of the short amount of time between the October 13th TAC meeting and today's meeting there simply wasn't time enough to have the report ready for mail out with the meeting packets; thus the reason for presenting it to TPC today. Mr. Barnett suggested the board review the document, make revisions and approve it at a future TPC meeting. Mr. Tegtmeyer agreed stating he would like to have more time to review the document. All members were in agreement with this suggestion. This item will be reviewed and discussed at the next TPC meeting.

VIII. Other Business:¹

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

¹ At this point in the meeting, Judge Gossom proceeded to items e. and f. then excused himself in order to attend County Commissioner's Court. The board elected Councilor Elmore as Chairperson Pro Tem for the remainder of the meeting.

City Report: Mr. Taylor discussed the benefits to be gained from implementing the Callfield reliever projects with Councilor Elmore. He stated the dual traffic lights at Callfield, Rhea and Lawrence Roads were one of the reasons for the project. No other projects were discussed.

TxDOT Report: Mr. Kelley discussed three ITS projects; US 287 (Fisher Road to Clay County line) concrete overlay project with safety illumination; SH 240 overlay project from Burkburnett St. in Wichita Falls to Wichita St.; Loop 473 Novachip project was starting; Cyprus Ave. drainage project – bridge was completed; FM 171 at Plum Creek – problems getting pre-stressed beams; the Direct Connect Falls Flyer project pre-con meeting would start November 2nd and construction would begin shortly thereafter; over \$19,000,000 of overlay projects, within the district, will be let as of the December letting schedule.

b. MPO Quarterly Financial Report (3rd Quarter – April, May, June)

Mr. Barnett informed the board that expenses were slightly behind schedule, but that invoices from the Traffic Signal Optimization Study were beginning to come in and should help the MPO make its minimum expenditure requirements.

c. Progress Report on the Traffic Signal Optimization Study of the Kemp Boulevard and Southwest Parkway Traffic Corridors

Mr. Beauchamp reported that significant progress had been made with the timing plans out in the field since the October 13th TAC meeting. He commented that some re-analyzing of the issues at the Callfield/Rhea/Lawrence intersection had been done. He stated that due to these efforts, the progression in this area has improved. Mr. Beauchamp stated that the consultant was experimenting with more aggressive techniques to help improve the cross-street delays at problem intersections up and down the study corridors.

Mr. Tegtmeyer asked if the consultant would be able to quantify the type of improvement made system wide once the study was complete. Mr. Beauchamp stated there would be report produced as stipulated in the contract.

d. Update on Scheduled November Transit Public Meeting

Mr. Barnett informed everyone present there would be public meeting held in the Texas Room of the Piccadilly Cafeteria at Sikes Senter on November 3, 2005 from 3:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. The reason for this meeting was to allow people a chance to voice their opinions about the current state of the transit system and to fill out questionnaires. He stated information gathered at this meeting would be combined with the information from the June, 2005 meetings. A findings report would then be presented to TAC and TPC early next year.

e. Review and Approval of 2006 Meeting Calendar

Judge Gossom outlined the MPO meeting calendar for 2006 then asked for any changes that needed to be made to it. There were none. He then asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Sheppard made the motion to approve the meeting calendar as presented. Mr. Wilde seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

f. Appointment of New MPO Director

Mr. Leiker stated that he had been the interim MPO Director for almost two years, but now with his new position as City Manager, he would no longer be able to serve in that capacity. Mr. Leiker informed the committee that he wished to nominate Mr. Barnett as the new Director of the Wichita Falls MPO. Mr. Leiker discussed Mr. Barnett's qualifications and his dedication to his job stating that the MPO was in a much better position than it had been in recent years. Mr. Leiker stated he felt very confident in recommending Mr. Barnett to be the new MPO Director. Councilor Elmore motioned to approve the nomination of Mr. Barnett. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Judge Gossom then asked to be excused for his County Commissioner's Court meeting. Mr. Wilde motioned to elect Councilor Elmore as TPC Chairperson Pro Tem for the remainder of the meeting. Mr. Tegtmeier seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

g. Other

Mr. Brown commented that he was very pleased with the results from the Environmental Justice Report for the FY 2005 roadway project list. He stated the report would be very useful when addressing the effects that a project may have on a particular area. He also commented that, although he did not know what other MPO's were doing concerning environmental justice, he did feel the Wichita Falls MPO was demonstrating that it has a good grasp of EJ procedures.

IX. Public Comment on Anything Not on the Agenda

No comments were received.

X. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Mayor Lanham Lyne, TPC Chairperson