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

May 5, 2010

Present:

Lanham Lyne, City of Wichita Falls, Mayor, Chairperson	◆ Members
Charles Elmore, City of Wichita Falls, City Council Representative	◆
Dennis Wilde, NORTEX Regional Planning Commission, Executive Director	◆
Jeff Watts, City of Pleasant Valley	◆
Larry Tegtmeier, TxDOT, District Engineer	◆
Michael Smith, City Council Representative	◆
Davis Powell proxy for Russell Schreiber, CWF, Director of Public Works	◆
Steven Halloway, Lakeside City, Mayor	◆
Donnie Arbeau, WFMPO, Transportation Planner II	◆ Staff
James Kelley, TxDOT, Area Engineer	◆
Lin Barnett, WFMPO, Transportation Planning Director	◆
Tammy Marlow, TxDOT, Funding Administrator	◆
Danny Brown, TxDOT, TP&D Director	◆ Ex-officio
Jerrie Sowards, Rep. David Farabee's Office	◆
Nora Hodges, Stakeholder	◆ Guests
John Burrus, City of Wichita Falls, Director of AT&T	◆
Woodrow (Woody) Gossom, Wichita County Judge, Vice-Chairperson	◆ Absent

I. Welcome & Introduction

Mayor Lyne called the meeting to order at 8:28 a.m. and completed the roll call.

II. Public Comment on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items

Mayor Lyne asked for any comments from the public on any of the agenda and non-agenda items. There were no comments.

III. Review and Approval of the Transportation Policy Committee's (TPC's) January 27, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Mayor Lyne asked for comments and corrections to the January 27, 2010, TPC minutes. There were no comments. Mr. Watts motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Tegtmeier seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

IV. Review and Comment Regarding the Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC's) April 14, 2010 Meeting Minutes - No Action Required

Mayor Lyne asked for comments on the April 14, 2010, TAC minutes. Mr. Barnett informed the TPC that work on the mobility study was underway and he would provide a brief update later in the meeting. Mr. Barnett took a moment to express his appreciation and gratitude to Mayor Lyne and Council Elmore for their outstanding contributions and leadership with the WFMPO. Both TPC board members are leaving their elected positions with the City of Wichita Falls and, thus, their appointed positions with the MPO. The Policy Board seconded Mr. Barnett's comments and appreciation for both members as they attended their last MPO meeting. There were no other comments.

V. Progress on the West of Kemp Mobility Study

Mr. Barnett notified everyone that the meeting packet included Technical Memorandum #1 from LAN with information about the preliminary work completed on the study. He stated the option of using dual-roundabouts for the realignment of (Alternative A) the Callfield, Rhea, and Lawrence intersection, is no longer under consideration by the TAC committee. He noted that after review and discussion at the TAC meeting (April 14, 2010) (due to issues of unfamiliarity and the complexity of dual roundabouts) the TAC does not consider the option as viable for Wichita Falls city residents. Reaction from the TPC members demonstrated support for this exclusion. Mr. Barnett emphasized the study was in the early stages and research into viable routes for north-south connectivity was still developing. For example, a new option, Alternative E (Page 21), which utilizes the Beverly, Cedar, Kessler, and Lebanon corridor, is now on the list of potential connector options. Mr. Barnett concluded his remarks and asked for additional comments or questions. There was none.

VI. Public Hearing: Draft 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Barnett opened his comments with "there is some good news, bad news, and more good news" regarding the 2011-2014 TIP. He informed the Policy Board that because of Mr. Tegtmeyer and his staff's efforts, the Falls Flyover and the Kell West Main Lanes projects finished ahead of schedule. However, because the local TxDOT district "borrowed" against future funds to construct these projects there is zero funding in Categories 3 and 4 for 2011-2014. The decision will delay future added capacity/mobility projects until 2020. Mayor Lyne asked Mr. Tegtmeyer if this "was a trend around the state of Texas". Mr. Tegtmeyer stated the Texarkana MPO followed a similar path as the WFMPO and is now in the same predicament as Wichita Falls. He noted the original schedule to begin the Falls Flyover project was 2015 and the Kell West main lanes was 2017. The local District office had plans prepared and anticipated a future short fall in TxDOT funding, and simply took advantage of the opportunity to advance these projects when it presented itself. The reality of potential category 3 or 4 funding shortages and the decision to "move-up" the two projects was a measure supported by the TPC, and that continues to be the case. The Policy Board thanked Mr. Tegtmeyer for his leadership during that process.

Mr. Barnett stated the federal transit allocations remained steady, but that state funding was down slightly. He stated new local contribution, in the form of bus advertising revenue, helped make up for the losses and provided needed local match to draw down federal funds for the City of Wichita Falls and Falls Ride. Additionally, ARRA funding helped replace eight buses with new low-floor models from Gillig Bus Mfg. Mr. Barnett added that fleet replacement is on a 2-year cycle. The City of Wichita Falls replaces two buses every 2 years. Mr. Barnett stated that

funding is set aside for property acquisition, demolition, and project design for the new transit center.

Mr. Barnett covered grouped CSJ projects (the primary maintenance and rehabilitation work for the local District office). Essentially, grouped CSJ projects cover on-system statewide facilities managed by TxDOT. Grouped CSJ projects require presentation in the TIP document. That concluded Mr. Barnett's summation of the document update.

Mr. Tegtmeyer and Mr. Brown spoke about ARRA project under-runs. TxDOT applied savings from the Hike and Bike extension to the following: a 1 million dollar illumination project at the IH44/SP 325 interchange, the railroad frontage road project on Kell West near Fairway, and the restriping and reconfiguration of Kell Freeway heading east towards the Flyover. TxDOT staff anticipates an under-run for the illumination project. They will use those savings for restriping and replacement of raised pavement markings destroyed by the 2009 winter storm.

Councilor Elmore raised a question concerning US 287 along Old Iowa Park Road. Mr. Kelly agreed to follow-up with Councilor Elmore regarding the issue.

Mayor Lyne asked for further comment or questions. None were received. He asked for a motion to approve the 2011-2014 TIP as presented. Councilor Elmore made the motion to approve. Mr. Watts seconded his motion. The TIP was unanimously approved.

VII. Review and Approve the 2009/2010 Environmental Justice Analysis Report

Mr. Arbeau presented the 2009/2010 Environmental Justice Analysis Report to the TPC. He stated that, initially, he reviewed the EJ process and its requirements for inclusion in the MPO process. Mr. Arbeau stated care was taken to indicate all of the projects analyzed originated from the 2010-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan update (MTP) prioritized surface transportation project list. Projects from this list identified within EJ (low-income and minority population) areas were analyzed for adverse affects on disproportionately represented populations. Mr. Arbeau noted and thanked Mr. Davis Powell (City of Wichita Falls) and Mr. Tim Hertel (TxDOT) for there assistance with the review process.

Councilor Smith noted an error pertaining to the Wichita Falls municipal boundary, which staff will correct. There were no further comments. Mayor Lyne asked for a motion to approve the 2009/2010 Environmental Justice Analysis Report as presented. Councilor Elmore made the motion to approve. Mr. Tegtmeyer seconded his motion. The TPC unanimously approved the EJ Report.

VIII. Presentation on New Federal Initiatives for Sustainable and Livable Communities

Mr. Arbeau made a presentation on new federal guidelines dealing with Sustainability and Livability. He outlined issues facing many areas of American life that deal with transportation. Examples of communities that have adopted and incorporated some of these ideals (*i.e. New Urbanism*) were illustrated. Mr. Arbeau finished his presentation by sharing with the committee a new website (www.walkscale.com), which prepares a walkability analysis based on the entering of a property address.

TPC representatives were very appreciative of the presentation and the pertinent information it conveyed. Councilors Smith and Elmore suggested that Mr. Arbeau bring the presentation before City Council at a future meeting. There were no further comments.

IX. Other Business:

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

City Report: Mr. Powell presented the report on City projects currently in progress. He stated the Faith Village Drainage project Phase II and III was 60% complete. The Rhea Road Trail connector is now 25% complete. He noted the Upper Plum Creek drainage and 2010 drainage improvements involve street closures. The City is currently advertising the 2010 Alley Project and 2010 Street Project. These projects will be at various locations around the City.

TxDOT Report: Mr. Kelley reported about ongoing work to finish the “vegetation status” on the Kell West Main Lanes project. He stated that work on the Holiday Creek Hike and Bike trail was “moving quite well”. In addition, he reported a future project on US 287 near Patterson’s would involve drainage improvements and some repaving.

B. MPO Quarterly Financial Report (1st Quarter FY 2010 – October, November, December)

Mr. Barnett noted a correction in his breakdown and stated the total expenditure for the 1st quarter of FY 2010 was actually 31.75% of our \$364,182.91 total budget. He stated this was because of a letter he received from TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming (TP&P) in Austin informing him of actual available funding for FY 2010. Mr. Barnett stated actual funding was about 9.5% lower than anticipated. He stated he would present an amendment to the FY 2010 UPWP at the July TAC and TPC meetings to adjust the budget. He informed the Policy Board that the FY 2009 grant is now active. Funding from this grant will be used to acquire property, perform demolition work, and produce architectural design drawings on the new downtown Transit Center. Mayor Lyne asked for questions or comments on the first quarter report for FY 2010. There were no questions.

C. FY 2009 Transit Grant: Downtown Transit Hub Progress Report

The TPC asked for a timeline for utilizing the grant to develop the Transit Hub property. Mr. Barnett informed the Board he expects demolition and construction on the site to begin in the next 12-18 months. Mayor Lyne and Councilor Elmore inquired as to the status of property acquisition. Mr. Burrus indicated the City began the condemnation process a few months ago. In addition, he mentioned his desire to acquire \$40,000 in funding through the City of Wichita Falls to begin the space needs assessment and preliminary engineering.

D. TxDOT Traffic saturation Count: Upcoming Traffic Count Surveys

Mr. Barnett provided an overview of upcoming traffic count studies. On April 14, 2010, MPO staff attended a meeting with TP&P at the local TxDOT District office regarding the next Saturation Count Study (done every 5 years). MPO, City, and TxDOT staff will review count locations and forward data location files to TP&P prior to May 14, 2010. MPO staff will also coordinate with the City and TxDOT to notify public officials of dates and pertinent information related to the study as it progresses. Councilor Elmore inquired about an ongoing study involving (1500 to 2000) residents tracking daily trips using a journal, of

which he is a participant. Mr. Barnett indicated this was a household survey that the MPO provided information on at the October 2009 TAC and TPC meetings. He stated the two surveys are completely different in their scope, purpose, and expected results.

E. MESA Transit Route: Initiation of New Transit Service Route

Mr. Barnett stated that Falls Ride developed a new meals, entertainment, shopping, and activities route (M.E.S.A) for Wichita Falls. Mr. Watts asked, "Can grocery store stops be added to the route in the future". Mr. Burrus replied, "Yes, if the demand warrants it". Then, Mr. Watts asked if inter-city (*i.e. Wichita Falls to Burkburnett*) or inter-community service is in the works. Mr. Burrus stated his discussion with the FTA regional office in Ft. Worth indicated this "will be a slow process", but is definitely "an ideal service". Mr. Watts appreciated the effort of staff to extend non-profit services for more residents.

Mr. Powell asked for some insight into the situation with regional providers utilizing the Jolly Truck Stop and expressed his concern for the difficulties this presents for Wichita Falls residents. In response, Mr. Burrus stated that Greyhound made a critical mistake by removing their service center from inside the city limits. He stated that Jefferson Lines, which also operates a regional service, fully supports providing future service in Wichita Falls. Secondly, despite City Councils' request, FTA prohibits Wichita Falls from providing service to Jolly, TX, or anywhere outside the city limits utilizing Section 5307 transit funds. Mr. Burrus stated that establishing the new Transit Hub would provide an opportunity to re-establish Greyhound service. He indicated that Jefferson Lines is looking into establishing a temporary service hub in Wichita Falls.

Councilor Smith asked if any (Falls Ride) routes need additional buses. Mr. Burrus commented that in the near future the Sheppard Express could expand service to the downtown area, the skate park, and the water park. The addition of new buses increased ridership and will continue to present many more opportunities for moving forward. There were no other comments.

F. Other items

There were no comments under Other Items.

X. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 a.m.

Honorable Lanham Lyne
Mayor Wichita Falls