



## MINUTES OF THE ABILENE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

January 20, 2015

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 20, 2015, in the Abilene City Hall, City Council Chambers, 555 Walnut Street, Abilene, Texas.

### **Members Present:**

Mayor Norm Archibald, City of Abilene Mayor and Policy Board Chairman  
Judge Downing Bolls, Taylor County  
Councilman Joe Spano, City of Abilene  
Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County, and Policy Board Vice-Chairman  
Mr. Stan Swiatek, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Engineer

### **Others Present:**

Mr. David Caffey, TxDOT  
Mr. Joe Clark, TxDOT TPP  
Mr. James Condry, City of Abilene Traffic & Transportation Administrator  
Mr. Brian Crawford, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Director of Operations  
Ms. Amanda Garcia, CityLink Transit Asst. General Manager  
Mr. Michael Haithcock, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District  
Mr. Jon James, City of Abilene Director of Development Services  
Ms. Theresa James, City of Abilene Legal Department  
Mr. Paul Norman, P.E., TxDOT  
Ms. Megan Santee, City of Abilene Public Works Director  
Ms. Mary Belle Turner, TxDOT Public Information Officer  
Mr. Rob Woods, City of Abilene Asst. Public Works Director/City Engineer

### **MPO Staff in Attendance:**

Ms. E'Lisa Smetana, Abilene MPO Executive Director  
Mr. Dean Carter, Abilene MPO Transportation GIS Technician

#### **1. Call to Order.**

Chairman Archibald called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. He remarked that the primary purpose of the meeting would be to approve the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for FY 2015-2040. He also made note that Ms. Theresa James would be fulfilling the role of legal counsel in place of Mr. Stanley Smith for the duration of the day's meeting.

#### **2. Consideration of Approval of the Minutes of the November 18, 2014 and December 4, 2014 Meetings.**

Chairman Archibald asked the board if any modifications or revisions were needed to the previous two meetings' minutes as they were presented. Hearing no call for changes the motion was made by Judge Bolls and seconded by Councilman Spano to approve the minutes of these meetings.

*Motion carried.*

**3. Discussion and Consideration of Approval of the FINAL FY 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).**

Ms. Smetana called the board's attention to the current status of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for fiscal years 2015-2040, noting that the comprehensive document had moved through various draft stages leading to its finalization and necessary approval by the board. Revisions and additions that were made between the original draft and final document submission were pointed out. Aside from some grammatical errors that were resolved by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Ms. Smetana noted that requirements for the completion of the MTP had been met and were comprised within the documentation, including: public involvement process, survey gathering results, project nomination forms and budgetary approximations/anticipated expenditures.

In line with the financial materials and budgetary estimations, Ms. Smetana covered two transit and transportation project classifications that various sources of expected funding would be allocated toward. Regarding the transit portion, an overview was given of funding projections from three applicable sources over the span of the next 25 years in 5 year intervals, in which Federal Section 5307 funding would cover about 34.1 million, local state funding roughly 16.4 million, and local non-state 10 million for a total of around 60.5 million. Concerning transportation (highway) subsidies and aid, it was discussed that a variety of funding measures would be expected by a methodology considering both baseline and enhanced funding across federal, state and local provisions. Historical trends of funding by TxDOT for transportation purposes were observed in the form of routine preventive maintenance for baseline measures, as well as enhanced measures with Proposition 1 legislation grants plus vehicle registration fees; it is also anticipated that a supplemental 5 million in aid may be available for special funding. At the local level, City of Abilene (COA) baseline aid would be available through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and General Fund Street Maintenance plan, while enhanced funds are projected to come through bond package elections. In synopsis, a general overview was given of the expected costs of projects for the 20 year horizon, viewed in comparison to the expected short and long-term range funding revenues, so that the difference between revenues and costs could be observed.

Slight changes that had been carried out in re-naming a project on the project plan list were also indicated to the board by Ms. Smetana, due to a motion made in the November Policy Board Meeting to alter the beginning point of the US 83 Access Roads project from IH-20 to Old Anson Road. Concerning the public involvement elements of the MTP, Ms. Smetana indicated that public meetings were held regarding the MTP for the purpose of presenting it to various organizations during the public review period. These included the Abilene City Council, Jones County Commissioners Court, Tye City Council, Taylor County Commissioners Court and a final open public meeting held at the Abilene Public Library. Additionally, an appearance was made on a radio show, and a few other forms of solicitation and public engagement undertaken for generating public awareness and interest in the MTP.

Chairman Archibald reiterated to the board the importance of this finalized draft of the MTP, in its role of planning for the future. Asking for any further questions by the board regarding the MTP as presented, Ms. Smetana remarked on the possibility of the document reappearing before them during amendment processes in the future.

Chairman Archibald made a motion to approve the Final FY 2015-2040 MTP. A second was given by Judge Spurgin.

*Motion carried.*

**4. Discussion and Consideration of Approval of a Listing of Projects for the Proposition 1 Funding and any other Potential Funding.**

Ms. Smetana reminded the board of the four primary goals outlined by TxDOT for usage of Proposition 1 funding, including safety, maintenance, congestion and connectivity. Other items of consideration at this time that factor into the administering of funds by the State are energy needs, construction of bridges, overseeing progress on strategic corridors, and partnership opportunities for funding. Requirements for Proposition 1 apportioning specify that usage of funding must be toward state highway system facilities, while expedition of funds is conditional on the planning of projects and programming toward implementation by the end of 2015.

Ms. Smetana gave an overview of the request by TxDOT and approval on behalf of the Legislative Budget Board for the Proposition 1 distribution of 1.74 billion in funding to the State. According to a distribution formula, the 25 state-wide districts each received an allotment, and by Category 2 requirements for partial distribution of that allotment, Abilene MPO will receive \$3.984 million.

Upon discussion/review of the proposed Proposition Funding Distribution chart, Chairman Archibald had a question regarding the comparative allocations within the 15% energy sector category between Abilene and Odessa's districts. It was answered that the energy demands of the Odessa district contributed to their greater funding allocation in that particular sector.

The board's attention was next directed to the projects listed in their packets, where Ms. Smetana first referenced project nominations the Policy Board submitted in 2008 for further developments. With the assistance of Mr. Condry an exhaustive list of all individual projects included in the MTP were also given. On the back of the exhaustive list was lastly provided a list of the top 10 projects recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee. Ms. Smetana commented that the only project of the ten which the Committee had given exclusive priority ranking to was the SH 351 project, while they requested Board guidance on whether or not a ranking or priority ordering was needed for the remaining nine. Ms. Smetana stated that possible additional funding sources enhance the viability of the entire list of ten projects, with SH 351 eligible for Proposition 1 funding.

Chairman Archibald restated the request by the Technical Advisory Committee and clarified the proposal sought for 3.9 million Proposition 1 spending and additional required TxDOT funding with SH 351 access management as a project priority. Mr. Michael Haithcock was introduced to the board as the new TxDOT Abilene Director of Planning/Development, and offered further details on the SH 351 project. Following discussion it was determined that estimated project completion time was 18 months to 2 years, and that this was the only project on the list that was shovel ready at present. Judge Spurgin asked for a reminder about where alternative sources of funding for the project outside of the 3.9 million Proposition 1 MPO dollars would come from, Mr. Caffey answered that the remaining funds would come from the Category 1 maintenance sector allocation for the Abilene district.

After discussion and a brief thanks given by Mr. Swiatek to the City of Abilene for continual cooperation, Chairman Archibald called for a motion approving Proposition 1 funding for the listed SH 351 project and requesting a revised list by the Technical Advisory Committee be put in prioritized order. Councilman Spano so motioned and Mr. Swiatek seconded.

*Motion carried.*

**5. Discussion and Review of Transportation Projects.  
(By TxDOT Staff, City Staff, CityLink Staff)**

In the absence of Mr. Hufstutler, Mr. Paul Norman, P.E., with TxDOT updated the Policy Board. He described the status and progress being made on the following projects:

*Contract Paving: Loop 322 one-way frontage road (Lytle Creek to Maple)* is slightly behind schedule. They're working on turn-arounds and ramps/safety-lighting, the completion of which will finish the project. Pending weather conditions contributing to delays, the priming base and seal coat should be completed by May 15, 2015.

*J. H. Strain: IH 20 one way frontage roads* are completed. Work concluded for this project in October 2014, punch-list items finished up.

*J. H. Strain: one-way frontage roads by Abilene Regional Hospital – US 83 between Canyon Rock Road and south of Iberis Road* is completed. Final acceptance of the project is still pending.

*FM 2404* (part is in Taylor County and part is in Jones County) is complete with the exception of the overlay, which started this week.

*Traffic Signal: FM 707/1750; 1750 level up and overlay* is an upcoming project. It is scheduled to be let in the spring.

*Access Management on SH 351 and New Signalization on Hwy 351 and FM 2833* are upcoming projects scheduled to be let in the spring.

*Replacement Bridge over UPRR on US 84* is an upcoming project. It is scheduled to be let in the spring.

Mr. Rob Woods, City of Abilene Asst. Public Works Director/City Engineer, described the status and progress being made on the following projects:

Hardison Lane, under construction, is substantially completed and only in need of a few minor attentions and adjustments. Weather conditions and circumstances have suspended work on subdivision developments toward the end of last year, but with the new year and better conditions work is beginning to kick back off on those particular projects. Due to multiple public works projects currently in the design phase, the top 3 projects on that list are likely to be taken to bid this coming spring; while the Pedestrian Bridge project planned at Elm Creek/Clack St. is in the process of securing contract approval for advertising purposes by February.

Mr. James Oliver, General Manager of CityLink Transit, was not present at the meeting and no updates were given on the status or progress of any such related projects.

**6. Discussion and Review of Reports:**

• **Financial Status**

Ms. Smetana explained that included within the financial status report is the FY 2014 closeout total as well as the start of the FY 2015 new total report. The FY 2014 closeout covers up to the September billing, for which the authorized amount was \$447,270.33. To date (as of the September 2014 billing) we have spent 265,793.01, leaving a balance of \$181,477.32. For the 2015 totals thus far, Work Order authorizations have been received

in the totals of \$52,536.00 from the FTA 5303 and \$127,464.00 from the FHWA PL 112 for a total sum of \$180,000.00. The remaining balance of \$181,477.32 from last FY is not reported as carrying over to this FY's report. Billings for October and November 2014 are pending submittal but should be submitted by the conclusion of the week.

- **Operation Report**

The full report is in the packet, but a few highlights include the completion of the final draft document of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan—which involved the updating and preparation of various maps to show within the plan. Collaboration was undertaken with the COA as well to advocate on behalf of the Bicycle Plan, for which meetings were held and drafting began, while other work included preparing agendas and minutes for TAC and PB meetings and attending to various other requests.

- **Director's Report**

- **Electronic Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (ESTIP)**

This program will be attended by staff for training purposes, as TxDOT is implementing a new process for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that will be conducted online henceforward. Credentials will be given to staff at the training for use in data entry into the portal during future TIPs.

- **National Federation of the Blind's Plaque**

The MPO Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Board were presented with the Partners in Possibilities Award by the National Federation of the Blind on October 3, 2014. This recognizes both groups of individuals for their hard work and efforts through the roles they fulfill in their daily work, and thanks them for the signalization improvements made during the South 1<sup>st</sup> Street project that will aide people with disabilities.

- **Year-End Reports**

Draft Annual Performance and Expenditure and the Annual Listing of Projects Reports have been completed and submitted on Dec. 18, 2014 for FHWA/FTA review.

**7. Opportunity for Members of the Public to Make Comments on MPO Issues.**

No comments or suggestions were received.

**8. Opportunity for Board Members or MPO Staff to Recommend Topics for Future Discussion or Action.**

Ms. Smetana remarked about the change taking effect in the meetings schedule for both the TAC and PB, where a 3 week separation will now occur between each respective meeting.

Mr. Swiatek reminded the board of a TxDOT feasibility study planned to be conducted for the Iberis Rd. to US 83/84 split area which would include evaluating any safety and access management issues. He mentioned the possible need for the Technical Advisory Committee to review the plan in the future.

**9. Adjournment.**

The meeting of the MPO Policy Board was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.