



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

February 15, 2022

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 15, 2022, in the Abilene Public Library South Branch Conference Room, 4310 Buffalo Gap Road, Abilene, Texas.

Members Present:

Mr. Glenn Allbritton, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Engineer
Judge Downing Bolls, Taylor County Judge (*arrived at 1:45 p.m.*)
Councilman Shane Price, City of Abilene (*Policy Board Chairman*)
Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County Judge (*Policy Board Vice-Chairman*)

Members Absent:

Mayor Anthony Williams, City of Abilene

Staff of Member Agencies in Attendance:

Mr. Scott Chandler, P.E., City of Abilene, City Engineer
Mr. Billy Dezern, TxDOT, Transportation Specialist
Mr. Michael Haithcock, P.E., TxDOT, Abilene TP&D
Mr. Max Johnson, City of Abilene, Interim Director of Public Works
Ms. Kelley Messer, City of Abilene, First Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Paul Norman, P.E., TxDOT, Abilene Engineer
Mr. Michael Rice, City of Abilene, Assistant City Manager
Mr. Bobby Sharpe, CityLink General Manager

MPO Staff in Attendance:

Ms. E'Lisa Smetana
Mr. Benjamin LaBorde
Ms. Emma Darby

Others in Attendance:

Mr. Marcus Wiley, 211 Texas, Director

1. Call to Order.

Chairman Price called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. He announced that public comment could be taken on any item appearing on the agenda during the discussion of that item.

2. Consideration and Take Action on the minutes of the December 14, 2021 meeting.

Judge Dale Spurgin made a **motion** to approve the December 14, 2021 minutes as presented, with a **second** from Mr. Glenn Allbritton. *Motion carried (3-0).*

3. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion, and Take Action on Entering into a Contract regarding the Request for Qualifications Comprehensive Transportation Corridor Study: Loop 322/SH 36 (Traffic Impact Analysis).

Ms. E'Lisa Smetana presented the item, informing the Board that a full copy of the contract with Kimley-Horn could be found in their packet. The Request for Qualifications was issued October 17, 2021, and the deadline for submissions was November 04, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. After the TAC subcommittee evaluated the eight responses and selected Kimley-Horn as their top choice, they sent

their decision to the TAC for approval. The TAC elected to move forward and send the proposal to the Policy Board. Ms. Smetana then gave an overview of the materials in the packet.

She first discussed the map displaying the proposed study area. As the name of the study indicates, the Study Area runs along SH 36 at Loop 322. Ms. Smetana then moved to Attachment A of the contract, which lists the services Kimley-Horn will provide. Starting with Task 1, Ms. Smetana told the Board that TxDOT agreed to help by providing turning movement counts (TMCs) at four intersections. This will include a fifth intersection if the City approves additional services. She then moved on to Task 2, in which Kimley-Horn agrees to update the Abilene MPO's Travel Demand Model (TDM) to include new developments, such as the Great Lakes Cheese Factory. Subtask 2.2 is the Compilation of the Development Data, and subtask 2.3 is the Operations Analysis. Under subtask 2.3, Ms. Smetana explained, Kimley-Horn agrees to evaluate a No-Build Scenario, Short-Term Improvements, and Long-Term Improvements for various study years. There is also Traffic Control Evaluation, listed as subtask 2.4. Task 3 is the Mitigations Analysis and Mitigations Exhibits, and Task 4 is the Construction Cost Estimation. Task 5, Deliverables, outlines each product Kimley-Horn agrees to create and deliver to the Abilene MPO at the conclusion of the study. These include two mitigations exhibits (short and long-term), three cost estimates (no-build, short, and long-term), a draft report, a final report, and four listed Supplemental Deliverables. Task 6 describes potential additional services, which will be addressed as needed. Kimley-Horn agrees to attend up to one in-person meeting and up to three virtual meetings.

Having covered each task, Ms. Smetana moved on to the Notes & Assumptions section, found on page 16 of the contract. She then told the Board to turn to page 18 of the contract and view the Task and Fee Summary Table, which breaks down the total cost of the study by each individual subtask. The total amount for the base service is \$48,700, but there is an option to include the intersection at SH 36 and FM 18 for an extra \$12,000. Using the onscreen graphic, she explained that the original cost of the base service was \$55,000, but TxDOT's data contribution is saving the MPO \$6,300. This draws Kimley-Horn's cost for Task 1.1 down to \$500—which covers their data analysis. TxDOT's help brings the overall amount down from \$55,000 to \$48,700. Ms. Smetana next reviewed the Certificate of Liability Insurance, located on the last page of the contract. She then opened the floor for questions.

Judge Spurgin asked Ms. Smetana to specify which entities are paying for the study, and how much. She explained that the MPO is paying the base \$48,700 for the study, and, if the City of Abilene wishes to include the additional intersection, the City will pay the extra \$12,000. TxDOT will not be funding the study, but their help with the traffic counts will save the MPO money. Chairman Price asked Mr. Max Johnson and Mr. Michael Rice if they knew whether the City plans to approve the additional \$12,000 or not. Mr. Michael Rice stated that he had not had a conversation about it yet. Chairman Price asked Ms. Smetana what approving the contract means in regards to the optional additional intersection. She replied that city manager, Mr. Robert Hanna, will sign the contract as currently presented and, if he selects to include the extra \$12,000, the contract will be brought to the March 10, 2022 City Council meeting. Chairman Price asked if an amendment to the contract would be created and need approval, to which Ms. Smetana answered no. If the additional service is included, both the City and Kimley-Horn will initial the associated section of the currently-presented contract. As it stands, the Policy Board can initiated the study as is, and add in the intersection later, if wanted by the City.

Mr. Glenn Allbritton made a **motion** to approve the Contract for the Comprehensive Transportation Corridor Study: Loop 322/SH 36 (Traffic Impact Analysis), with a **second** by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (3-0)*.

4. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion, and Take Action on the FY 2022 Safety Performance Measure (PM1).

Ms. Smetana opened the item, explaining the process and purpose of national, state-wide, and local safety goals. The MPO is required to adopt or set new targets 180 days after TxDOT. She then showed the Board the Resolution that states the MPO's adoption of TxDOT's Targets for Safety Performance

Measures (PM1) and pointed out the updated numbers for FY 2022. The targets in any given year are expressed as a 5-year average of past data and future projections. The 5-year average number of fatalities is 3,563, and the rate of fatalities is 1.27. The 5-year average number of serious injuries is 16,677, and the 5-year average serious injury rate is 5.76. The 5-year average number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries is 2,367. Ms. Smetana told the Board that the intention of the Safety Performance Measures (PM1) is to eventually have zero fatalities and injuries. She added that the numbers for these targets are found in TxDOT's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). In the SHSP, each target is discussed and explained in detail.

Noting that Chairman Price had previously asked about the number of collisions over the last few years, Ms. Smetana answered that there were more fatalities in 2020 than in 2019, despite the COVID-19 shutdown. In 2019, there were 3,623 fatalities, and in 2020 there were 3,895. Mr. Allbritton pointed out that, although fatalities increased, crashes decreased. This can happen due to high speeds and other safety issues. Using data from the Abilene TxDOT District, Ms. Smetana said that, as of January 18, 2022, there were 69 fatal crashes and 75 fatalities reported in 2021. In 2020, there were 64 fatal crashes and 76 fatalities. The Abilene MPO and TxDOT are working to reduce these stats overall. She then told the Board that the TAC recommended approval at their most recent meeting.

Judge Spurgin **motioned** to approve the FY 2022 Safety Performance Measure (PM1), with a **second** by Mr. Allbritton. *Motion carried (3-0).*

5. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion, and Take Action on the DRAFT FYs 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Ms. Smetana opened the item, then asked Mr. Ben LaBorde to give an overview of the document and changes. Beginning on the first page of the document, he pointed out that the pending approval date of February 15, 2022 was added to the cover page. The next change was located on page 9 of the document, where details about the new infrastructure bill will be added as more information is received. Once it is time to approve the final document, a paragraph describing the TIP public notice will be added to the Public Participation section. On page 11, the UTP Funding Categories graphic was updated, but no categories changed. Under the Funded Highway Projects section, several things were changed. The dam road relocation project was added for 2023. Additionally, the revision date and project history were updated for the rehab and widening project on FM 3034 and for the overpass at US 83. For 2025, the rehabilitation and widening project on FM 707 from FM 89 to US 83 was added. 2026 includes the first section of the I-20 six-lane expansion from Judge Ely to SH 351. The Highway Financial Summary and the Funded Highway Projects Map were updated to reflect all changes.

He then moved on to the Grouped Projects starting on page 19 of the document. A note describing the Transportation Alternatives (TA) sidewalk project was carried over from the previous TIP. Other than an updated graphic, the Grouped Projects section is the same as the previous amendment, and Mr. LaBorde informed the Board that Note 5 allows TA projects to be grouped. The next section (pages 24-27) provides details on all the transit-funded projects. Though the section is currently unchanged, it will be adjusted throughout the year. The Transit Financial Summary is located on page 28 of the document. Mr. LaBorde next discussed the Performance Measures section on page 32, which covers all the performance measures throughout the year and is adjusted as needed. Ms. Smetana added that every project in the TIP is required to have associated performance measures, as described in the TIP. Having finished the document overview, she then told the Board that the TAC recommended approval at their previous meeting.

Mr. Allbritton made a **motion** to approve the DRAFT FYs 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), with a **second** from Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (4-0).*

6. Discussion and review of transportation projects.
(By TxDOT Staff, City Staff, CityLink Staff)

TxDOT – Mr. Paul Norman briefed the Board on the following projects:

Current Construction: The pedestrian sidewalk and signal project on SH 351 and Ambler Ave. is behind schedule, but should be completed by July 2022. The frontage road construction at US 83 is complete, and the project is finishing up. The preventative maintenance on FM 3438 (for which the contractor is J. H. Strain & Sons, Inc.) is underway. It is early into the project, but expected completion is August 2022. The flashing beacon installation at Hill St and Treadaway has a little left; they are currently waiting on service and should be complete sometime in March. Projects 5 and 6 are both with A. L. Helmcamp, Inc. and take place on FM 89—one is rehabilitation and the other is a road widening/adding lanes project. This large project will be completed in phases, and construction is still in the early stage. The first phase was scheduled to begin that day (February 15, 2022), and all the work that was done before is considered to be “Phase 0.” More traffic will be impacted in late March 2022. The project is set to be completed by July 2024. Projects 7 and 8 are rehabilitation on FM 600; the structures are mostly complete and pavement rehabilitation has begun. They should be done by August 2022. Projects 9 and 10 are new roadway lane construction on FM 89 and FM 707. These paving projects have not started, and TxDOT will have a second pre-construction meeting because the contractor changed. Both projects are scheduled to complete in August 2022. The last project under current construction is a bridge replacement on North 18th St. THK Construction LLC is the contractor, and the project is moving well. The bridge will not be open to traffic until April 2022, and the project will be completed soon after that time.

Planned Projects: The fourth-listed planned project is preventative maintenance on IH-20 from Hayter Rd. to west of Old Anson Rd. Project 3 continues the preventative maintenance from Old Anson Rd. to the Taylor County line. These preventative maintenance projects are mill and fill and will let later this year (2022). Mr. Norman then highlighted the fifteenth-listed project, which is an illumination installation on South 1st St. from Leggett Dr. to Ross Ave., will let in August 2022 and should begin in December 2022. Chairman Price asked Mr. Norman to define “RTZ,” as it was a term used to describe the fifteenth-listed project. Mr. Norman explained that “RTZ” stands for “Road to Zero” and is a term used on safety projects. Mr. Allbritton added that Road to Zero projects use funding that the Transportation Commission has set aside for safety. The illumination project is in response to pedestrian issues in the area.

City of Abilene – Mr. Scott Chandler briefed the Board on the following projects:

Under Construction: The City is working to get all 2022 projects out for bid. The north and south Work Zones are currently going through the process and have both accepted bids. The north Work Zone was approved by City Council last week (February 10, 2022). The south Work Zones are north of South 14th St. in the Elmwood area, and the north Work Zone is off East Lake Rd. near Heritage Park. The project on South 27th St. from Sayles Blvd. to Barrow St. is 30-40% complete. The mix is laid on the south side, and they will swap traffic to the other side until done. Then they will do the underseal and surface course. The Maple St. project from Carriage Hills to FM 707 is estimated to have a final surface by Spring Break. They laid asphalt and are now swapping sides—the project has moved faster than expected.

Planned Projects: The City is still working with consultants on the widening and rehabilitation project on East North 10th St. They have surveyed the area for the project on Maple St. from Carriage Hills to East South 11th St. and will work back and forth with utility engineers to ensure that there are no conflicts. These projects generally have a five to six month design phase and are currently in the early stage of bidding. They will have some preliminary meetings soon. The two-way conversion on North 5th St. is also in the design phase. It has technically already been converted, so there are currently four-way stops at all signalized intersections, but they plan to step back and analyze potentially moving, upgrading, or eliminating some intersections. Some might be without a signal, and some may be upgraded with a pole and arm signalization. They will be relocating Marigold St. to Fulwiler Rd. They are currently going back and forth with the designers and are waiting for them to return with the next proposal in response to the City’s feedback.

Chairman Price asked if the temporary intersection on North 5th St. at Grape St. will eventually be replaced, or if they are waiting to decide. Mr. Chandler answered that they are trying to move quickly, but Grape St. will most likely stay. The others are functioning well, but they want to consider the potential impact of the upcoming hotel traffic. There is usually a delay on signal equipment. Judge Bolts asked Mr. Chandler if he had already noticed any impact on the traffic patterns at the intersections without lights or similar signalization. Mr. Chandler said that for now it is okay, but they do not want it to get bad in the future after the hotel has been built and pedestrian traffic has increased. They will look at all factors before deciding.

CityLink – Mr. Sharpe provided the Board with the following updates:

CityLink released the RFQ for architectural and engineering design services for its facilities, including a feasibility study for a new facility. They have received a couple of responses and will be reviewing to make a determination and recommendation for a contract award to present to City Council. CityLink is also working with their demand response scheduling software vendor to roll out the mobile trip scheduling software app. It will be useful for all services, but especially for the on-call micro-transit zone that primarily serves the south-east quarter of the city. This app will also be available for use in booking trips for their paratransit and evening services. They anticipate it being available to the public in the coming weeks. CityLink is reviewing options for assistance in preparing this year's application for the RAISE grant from FTA. Notice of funding regarding this was sent out in the last few weeks. This grant, if awarded, would be used to build the new multi-modal transit facility in Abilene. They were not awarded funds from last year's application, so they are going to look at their options and proceed accordingly.

7. Discussion and review of reports:

Ms. Smetana drew the Board's attention to the packet before discussing and reviewing the reports.

Financial Status – On October 01, 2021, the MPO received their first FY 2022 work order, which authorized \$57,440.28. They have so far submitted three billings: October 2021, November 2021, and December 2021. Ms. Smetana explained that, although the presentation has "TBD" where the billing submittal date should be, all three were sent to TxDOT the previous Friday (February 11, 2022). She added that they currently have a negative balance of \$460.16, but once the pending work order for \$159,904.00 is authorized their balance will return to positive. The total authorization will be \$217,344.28 and the total expenditure is \$57,900.44, which will leave a remaining balance of \$159,443.84. Ms. Smetana also mentioned that the presented graphic does not include the carryover funds from the previous fiscal year, which total at \$209,888.36.

Operation Report – Ms. Smetana began the report by stating that a lot happened in the MPO from December 4, 2021 to February 4, 2022. Mr. LaBorde created and updated several maps. The MPO also updated and amended the FYs 2020-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the 10-Year Plan, and the FYs 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). They additionally created the DRAFT FYs 2023-2026 TIP. Ms. Smetana then mentioned the MPO's work in evaluating the proposal and updating the contract for the Loop 322/SH 36 RFQ.

Director's Report – Ms. Smetana informed the Board about the following work tasks:

Boundary Expansion and Census Information: The MPO was waiting for the Census data to be released, but it is still unavailable. Therefore, TxDOT allowed an employee from the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) to visit with and advise the MPO on their new boundary. There was a meeting yesterday (February 14, 2022) to discuss options, and the designated TAC Subcommittee will be meeting at a later date to review ideas. The current plan is to expand at both the north and south ends of the current border. The MPO used 9-1-1 data to evaluate where people are traveling, where roads could improve on capacity due to growth, and similar factors based on population.

Annual Listing of Obligated Projects & Annual Performance and Expenditure Report for FY 2021: The ALOP and APER for FY 2021 were due on December 15, 2021. The MPO received the information for the ALOP from TxDOT on January 11, 2022. The APER was submitted to TxDOT on December 15, 2021 and the ALOP was submitted on January 24, 2022. Both are waiting on approval before they will be presented to the Board.

8. Opportunity for members of the Public to make comments on MPO issues.

No members of the Public came forward, but Ms. Smetana used the time to ask Mr. Marcus Wiley—who was in the audience—to briefly introduce himself. Mr. Wiley informed the Board that he was recently appointed as the new program director for 211 Texas, following Mary Cooksey’s retirement. Transportation relates to 211 in regards to barriers to access—whether that means getting to appointments, work, or other needs. He mentioned that he met with Ms. Smetana the other day, and he looks forward to working with everyone.

9. Opportunity for Board Members, Technical Advisory Committee Members, or MPO Staff to recommend topics for future discussion or action.

Chairman Price asked about the Policy Board’s 2022 meeting dates. Ms. Smetana informed the Board that April 19, 2022 is the date of the next meeting, during which they will put the remaining meeting dates as an item on the agenda. The Board agreed that the April meeting date would work, then moved on.

10. Adjournment.

With no further business, Chairman Price adjourned the meeting at 2:07 p.m.