



**MINUTES OF THE ABILENE METROPOLITAN  
PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD  
October 17, 2023**

The Abilene MPO Transportation Policy Board met at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 17, 2023, in the City Council Chambers, Abilene City Hall, 555 Walnut St., Abilene, Texas.

**Voting Members Present**

Mr. Glenn Allbritton, P.E., TxDOT Abilene District Engineer  
 Judge Phil Crowley, Taylor County  
 Mayor Weldon Hurt, City of Abilene  
 Councilmember Shane Price, City of Abilene (*Policy Board Chairman*)  
 Judge Dale Spurgin, Jones County (*Policy Board Vice-Chairman*)

**Voting Members Absent**

None.

**Staff of Member Agencies in Attendance:**

Ms. Leslie Andrews, City of Abilene, Director of Parks & Recreation  
 Mr. Scott Chandler, P.E., City of Abilene, City Engineer  
 Mr. Billy Dezern, TxDOT, Advanced Planning Manager/GIS Coordinator  
 Ms. Nellie Doneva, City of Abilene, Videographer  
 Mr. Jeff Duebner, City of Abilene, Assistant Public Works Director  
 Mr. Max Johnson, City of Abilene, Director of Public Works  
 Ms. Kelley Messer, City of Abilene, First Assistant City Attorney  
 Mr. Paul Norman P.E., TxDOT, Director of Maintenance  
 Mr. Will Ratliff, City of Abilene, Engineer-in-Training  
 Ms. Randee Shields, P.E., TxDOT, Director of Transportation Operations  
 Ms. Lauren Stevens, CityLink General Manager  
 Mr. Bryce Turentine, P.E., TxDOT Abilene Area Engineer

**MPO Staff in Attendance:**

Ms. Rita Ryan, Abilene MPO, Office Assistant III  
 Ms. E'Lisa Smetana, Abilene MPO, Executive Director

**Others in Attendance:**

Mr. James Condry  
 Mr. Ron Erdrich, Abilene Reporter News, Photojournalist  
 Ms. Diana Groom, Abilene Reporter News, Public Service Reporter  
 Mr. Bruce Neil, AISD, Transportation Operations Manager

**1. Call to Order.**

Chairman Price called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. He announced that public comments would be taken on any item on the agenda.

**2. Consideration and Take Action on the minutes of the August 15, 2023 meeting.**

Judge Crowley made a *motion to accept* the minutes of the August 15, 2023 meeting as presented, with a *second* by Judge Spurgin. *Motion Carried (5-0)*.

**3. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion, and Take Action on a Resolution for the 2023 Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan.**

Ms. Smetana provided a brief history of the Transit Asset Management Plan noting that the plan is established by CityLink. She stated that the Policy Board has previously adopted transit targets on: June 20, 2017, June 18, 2019 and an updated version dated September 29, 2020 covering 2021 through 2025 targets was acknowledged by the Policy Board with a Resolution on December 15, 2020. Ms. Smetana explained that CityLink has prepared an update to the TAM Plan as of August 9, 2023. The MPO has prepared a resolution of support for this plan. She identified and discussed the items updated and the contents of the resolution. Ms. Smetana stated the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended approval to move this forward to the Policy Board during their September 26, 2023 meeting.

Judge Spurgin made a *motion* to approve the Resolution for the 2023 Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan with a *second* by Judge Crowley. *Motion Carried (5-0)*.

**4. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion, and Take Action on the addendum to the Transit Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP).**

Ms. Smetana provided a brief history of the PTASP noting that public safety committee meetings are a requirement of the plan. She shared that the Policy Board acknowledged the plan at their June 15, 2021 meeting.

Ms. Smetana explained the Addendum is needed to show the required public safety meeting. The MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) made a recommendation to acknowledge the addendum to the Transit Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan and move it on to the Policy Board at their September 26, 2023 meeting. Ms. Smetana requested an acknowledgement from the Policy Board of this Addendum to the Transit Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan. She closed her presentation by stating she would be happy to answer any questions.

Chairman Price inquired if the inclusion of Mr. Sharpe on the Safety Committee listing was correct or if this required a correction. Ms. Smetana stated it was correct as Mr. Sharpe was present at the December 2022 Meeting.

Mayor Hurt made a *motion* to approve the acknowledgement of this Addendum to the Transit Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, with a *second* by Judge Crowley. *Motion carried (5-0)*.

**5. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on an amendment to the FYs 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).**

Ms. Smetana noted that an amendment to the TIP is required to: remove CSJ #0663-01-024 (FM 707) from 2025 and move it to 2028; adjust other projects funding and adjust projects let dates. She provided details on each of the changes and noted the reports was available in the packet. Ms. Smetana identified the items in red are changes and the items in orange are ones that occurred after the packets were distributed so they are not included in the packet. She said the project cost information had not been adjusted/updated prior to printing. Ms. Smetana noted the changes are necessary so we are aligned with the Unified Transportation Program (UTP) and with TxDOT Connect. She noted the map FYs 2023-2026 TIP Highway Projects has changed to remove the FM 707. She discussed Appendix B: History of the TIP and TIP Amendments and focused on this amendment. She noted that a public notice was published in the Abilene Reporter News and comments were requested. Ms. Smetana stated we are still waiting on any comments received during the public meeting today, if any comments are made they will be included in the documentation and if none are received, it will state no comments received. She said that changes have been made to the cover page, highway projects pages, highway project map, history of amendment page, and the performance measure pages.

Ms. Smetana noted the TAC at their September 26, 2023 meeting recommended approval to the Policy Board on the amendment to the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with

updates to the public participation page as needed. She ended her presentation and asked if there were any suggestions/changes or questions.

*Judge Crowley left the meeting at 1:43 p.m.*

Mr. Albritton inquired how the TACs progress on developing new projects is moving along. Ms. Smetana stated there have been a couple of meetings of the project selection committee. She stated that we will be meeting soon to discuss the projects suggested during the Policy Board and TAC Workshop. She noted we are getting ready for our long range plan which should start sometime in December 2023 and as part of that process, we have project solicitation and public involvement aspects tied to those projects.

No further questions were asked, Chairman Price then opened a Public Hearing for comments. No comments were received.

Chairman Price stated he would entertain a motion to approve the amendment to the FYs 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with the changes as presented.

Mr. Albritton made a *motion* to approve the amendment to the FYs 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with the changes as presented with a *second* by Judge Spurgin. *Motion carried (4-0).*

**6. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion, and Take Action on the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and any Potential Projects.**

Ms. Smetana provided a brief history of the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) including the current situation and the proposed draft amount of funding available for the Abilene MPO of \$5,491,250 for the ten years in the Unified Transportation Program (UTP). She noted States are required to develop a Carbon Reduction Strategy in consultation with any MPO designated within the State. Ms. Smetana stated most of the Carbon Reduction projects have an 80% - 20% match required. Ms. Smetana then turned the presentation over to Mr. Norman to discuss and provide details on the proposed sites. Mr. Norman began by stating TxDOT is proposing nine Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Cameras, two Dynamic Message Boards (DMS) with associated poles, mounting trusses, and electrical services. He noted TxDOT is working with the City of Abilene and Taylor County to provide each of them with access to the camera feed. Mr. Norman stated that maps of the proposed locations are included in the packet. He noted that the cameras and DMS boards are identified by color: red for live feed cameras and blue for the DMS boards. Mr. Norman did provide a rough estimate of the costs and he noted it may be possible to add additional locations if there is room within the allocated funding. Mr. Norman stated that we are unable to place a DMS Board on US 277 due to insufficient right-of-way (ROW). He provided four other locations for future consideration. Ms. Smetana thanked Mr. Norman. She noted the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended approval to the Policy Board on the Intelligent Transportation System projects for the first three years funding (FY 2022-2024) with the remaining seven years possibly dedicated to green buses, sidewalks and bicycle related projects. Ms. Smetana stated they would be happy to answer any questions.

Chairman Price asked Mr. Norman if one camera that panned back and forth is standard statewide verses two cameras each pointing in one direction? Mr. Norman said it is pretty standard; the cameras are 360 degree pannable with tilt and zoom ability.

Chairman Price then asked who controls the DMS boards? Mr. Norman said control would be through TxDOT with an open communication between the city and county. Chairman Price requested confirmation that the cameras would be monitored 24 hours a day in case of a wreck and that someone at TxDOT would be available to update the DMS boards or if the 911 center would be a better place to funnel that through. Mr. Norman stated that TxDOT would have that capability.

Chairman Price thanked Mr. Norman and asked if there were any other questions. Mr. Allbritton said no other question but a comment, he stated that TxDOT is researching ways to get this video back to the police and sheriff dispatch information center. Mr. Albritton requested that the TAC begin to look for future projects for this program. TxDOT needs to know in a timely manner so they can lay the ground work to meet timelines and requirements. He requested that TAC move forward on the remaining seven years of the Carbon Reduction Program and on other projects to ensure sufficient time is allotted to each stage. Judge Spurgin asked Mr. Albritton how many projects TxDOT wanted queued up, being developed or planned; he asked if there was a set number? Mr. Albritton stated Category 2 (MPO) has \$30 million in unprogrammed funding over the next 10 years, and he believes we should program \$30 million and the same thing with the Carbon Reduction Plan, we should program all the dollars. Judge Spurgin said many years ago there was not a lot of money available but we had shovel ready items on the shelf ready to go if funding became available. He asked if this was the same type of scenario today because with these cost increases the funding may be drying up quickly. Mr. Albritton concurred but stated TxDOT has to have the projects established before they can start working on it. He said it has to be in the UTP before TxDOT can even begin planning the development. Mr. Norman added that some of the projects like sidewalks have right-of-way involved so it can be a very long drawn-out process.

Chairman Price asked Ms. Smetana if this request was directly associated with the DMS board previously discussed. Ms. Smetana stated it was, TAC believed a DMS board placed on US 277 would have been helpful in the event of a wreck or fire. They felt it would provide an opportunity to give advance warning to allow commuters to re-route but unfortunately a DMS board can not be placed on US 277 as Mr. Norman stated due to insufficient right-of-way. Chairman Price wanted to know if TxDOT reached out to the city to see if there was any city owned land in the vicinity of US 277 for a DMS board. Mr. Norman stated they did not, although they may in the future. He noted even if the property had been deeded to the state it still has to follow a process and that would not have met the timeline for the first years of the Carbon Reduction Plan. Mr. Norman said we need to begin the plan work right now for these projects.

Chairman Price stated that when we look out at future projects for this funding, his preference is sidewalks over green buses because at this time City Council is currently working on looking at changes in the way transit operates. Chairman Price stated if there were no further comments or recommendation he would entertain a motion to approve the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and any Potential Projects as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee.

Judge Spurgin made a *motion* to approve the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) suggested projects of the CCTV Cameras and the DM Boards as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee, with a *second* by Mr. Albritton. *Motion carried (4-0)*.

**7. Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion, and Take Action on the Census 2020 Adjusted Urban Area.**

Ms. Smetana noted we received the Census 2020 Urban Area (UA) information and the 2020 Adjusted Urban Area information from TxDOT on September 7, 2023. The due date for changes or modification was scheduled for October 31, 2023. We had a meeting with Federal Highways on October 12, 2023 to discuss possible adjustments to the UA. Ms. Smetana identified and discussed the areas of concern displayed in red on the 2020 DRAFT Smoothed Census Urban Area map. She explained the areas highlighted in yellow were being considered as potentially outside the Smooth Urban Area but need to be incorporated and addressed with FHWA based on our Travel Demand Model. The TAC recommended approval to the Policy Board at their September 26, 2023 meeting on the Census 2020 Adjusted Urban Area Boundary. Some changes were made and submitted via email to the TAC. No adjustments were received. Ms. Smetana concluded her presentation. Chairman Price asked for any comments or stated he would entertain a motion on the item.

Mayor Hurt made a *motion* to *approve* the Census 2020 Adjusted Urban Area as presented, with a *second* by Mr. Albritton. *Motion carried (4-0)*.

**8. Discussion and review of transportation projects.  
(TxDOT Staff, City Staff, CityLink Staff)**

**TxDOT** – Mr. Turentine began with the Planned Projects 2024-2028 noting there are a few projects that were not listed on the previous version of the map. Project #1: New signal improvements S 14<sup>th</sup> Street from Sayles Blvd. to BU 83D; Project #2: US 83 - Construct a bridge .67 miles north of FM 3034 to .28 miles south of FM 3034; Project #3: FM 3034 - Widen Road /add shoulders from US 83 to near PR 343; Project #4: has MPO funds attached to it - FM 3034 - Rehabilitate existing roadway from Brick Rd. to FM 600, Project #5: IH 20 - Preventative Maintenance from Nolan County Line to near Wells Lane; Project #6: IH 20 - Preventative Maintenance from Nolan County Line to near Wells Lane new overlay; Project #7: SH 36 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements from BU 83D to FM 1750; Project #8: FM 18 - Overlay from SH 36 to Callahan County Line. Project #9: FM 2833 - Overlay from Jones County to SH 351; Project #10: FM 1082 - Widen road and add shoulders from CR 361 to FM 600; Project #11: IH 20 - Widen road add lanes and shoulders from Judge Ely Blvd. to SH 351; Project #12: FM 1082 - Overlay from FM 2833 to FM 3522; Project #13 SH 351 - Overlay from Abilene City Limits to Callahan County Line; Project #14: FM 1235 - Widen road and add shoulders from CR 306 to US 277; Project #15 IH 20 - Overlay from South Frontage Road near N Willis Street to near Catclaw Creek; Project #16: US 83 - Median Barrier –Concrete from 1300 feet north of Ambler Avenue to N 10<sup>th</sup> Street; Project #17: SL 322 - Median Barrier –Concrete from Lytle Creek to US 83; Project #18: FM 1750 - Intersection improvements with Turn Lanes from Industrial Blvd. to 1200’ south of Colony Hill Rd.; Project #19: US 277 - Rehabilitate Existing Roadway from South end of BNSF Bridge to 3.7 miles SW of FM 1235; Project #20: US 277 - Resurface roadway from US 83 to FM 3438; Project #21: US 277 - Overlay from FM 3438 to South end of BNSF Bridge; Project #22: FM 3438 - Install Illumination from IH 20 North Frontage Road to Near 5 Points Parkway; Project #23: FM 89 - Widen Road –add Lanes and Shoulders from 1.219 miles South of Elm Creek to Elm Creek; Project #24: SH 36 - Widen Road –add Lanes from CR 123 to Callahan County; Project # 25: IH 20 - Widen Road – add Lanes and Shoulders from SH 351 to Callahan County Line; and Project #26 FM 707 - Widen Road –add Lanes and Shoulders from FM 89 (Buffalo Gap Rd) to US 83.

Mr. Turentine then discussed the construction currently under-way: Site #1: BI 20-R - Safety Improvement Project from Leggett Drive to Ross Avenue; Site #2: FM 89 - Rehabilitation of Existing Road near Bettes Lane to Rebecca Lane in Abilene; Site #3 FM 89 - Widen Non-Freeway from Rebecca Lane to just North of US 83; Site #4: IH 20 - Overlay from West of Old Anson Road to Callahan County Line; Site #5: IH 20 - Overlay from .75 mi. East of Hayter Road to West of Old Anson Road; Site #6: IH 20 - Overlay from Near Wells Lane to .75 miles East of Hayter Road; Site #7: ES 7<sup>th</sup> Street - Bridge Replacement at Cedar Creek; Site #8: SL 322 - Safety Improvement Project from N 10<sup>th</sup> Street to Lytle Creek, Site #9: US 83 - Safety Improvement Project from Bus. 83 Interchange to 1300’ North of Amber Ave.; Site #10: US 83 - Safety Improvement Project from FM 707 to .25 miles North of FM 3034; Site #11: FM 1082 - New Location Non-Freeway from West of Cheyenne Creek Road to East of Dam; and Site #12 BI 20-R - Safety Improvement Projects (Railroad) from Pioneer Drive to T&P Lane.

Chairman Price asked which intersection will be first on the Railroad Safety Improvements (Site #12). Mr. Turentine did not have an answer and stated he would get that information but he suspected it would be T&P Lane. Chairman Price asked if this information or project was shared with the city. Mr. Turentine stated this project was not but TxDOT will try and get better at that.

*Judge Crowley rejoined the meeting at 1:59 p.m.*

**City of Abilene – Public Works** - Mr. Chandler began his presentation by stating in the packet is a table with a listing of projects under construction and projects currently in design. He began his presentation by discussing projects that have been completed: 3) N 6th St & Cypress St; 5) EN 10th Street Improvements (Judge Ely to 322 Loop); 6) Work Zone S9C Street Maintenance; 7) Work Zone



N2A & N2B Street Maintenance; 8) Work Zone S11B Street Maintenance and 9) Work Zone S9C Street Maintenance. Mr. Chandler stated these projects will be removed from the list in the future.

Projects under-construction: 1) Honey Bee, Re-alignment has been delayed due to water relocation, 8% complete; 2) Maple (Carriage Hills to Loop 322), 20% complete; 4) Five Points Roadway Improvements (Fulwiler Rd and Marigold St), 70% complete, all of Marigold is now concrete roadway, portions of Fulwiler Rd have been closed off until they reach a point where they can switch traffic; 10) Pine St. @ N 10th St. a concrete intersection and signal improvements, 80% complete; 11) S 27th Improvements are moving very quickly, traffic has been swapped, (S Danville to Barrow St), 35% complete; Projects #12, #13 and #14 are under the TASA Project are all bid and ready to start construction: 12) S 14th St Walkability Project (Sidewalks/Ped Bridges), 0% complete; 13) Work Zone S13 Street Maintenance, 0% complete; and 14) Wynrush Circle and Rio Mesa Alley Resurfacing, 0% complete.

Projects-in-design: 1) Work Zone S5, a repaving project, 90% designed; 2) Maple (Loop 322 to ES 11th), 90% designed (this is the next phase of Maple Street Project this will be split into 2 projects: (\*From S 27<sup>th</sup> Street To ES 11<sup>th</sup> Street and \*From S 27<sup>th</sup> Street To SL 322); he stated they have several concrete intersection projects: 3) S Willis St. @ S 7th St. Intersection Street Maintenance, 70% designed will bid at the end of the month; 4) N 18th St. @ Kirkwood St. Intersection Street Maintenance, has been coupled with a larger N 18<sup>th</sup> Street Project is 50% designed; 5) N 14th St. @ Westwood Dr Intersection Street Maintenance, 0% designed and 6) S 27th Signal Improvements (Treadaway to Catclaw) Street Maintenance, 0% designed.

Chairman Price asked for clarification on the Maple Street Project split, which portion of the split will be under construction first. Mr. Chandler stated that due to the large amount of work in progress on the southern portion of Maple Street, he believes the S 27th Street to ES 11th Street section will be released first. Chairman Price asked if the sidewalk will be built at the same time. Mr. Chandler stated yes, it would.

**CityLink** – Ms. Stevens announced that the two new 30 foot buses were delivered on September 28, 2023 and they should be in service shortly. She said the parts have been received for the maintenance shop ceiling fan project and the project has been completed.

## 9. Discussion and review of reports:

Ms. Smetana spoke on the following reports and noted that a complete copy is available in the packets.

- **Financial Status** – Ms. Smetana said that the MPO on October 4, 2023 received our FY 2022 carry over funding. The \$256,607.99 has been included in the FY 2023 Financial Status. Ms. Smetana noted that the July Billing was included in the packet and this brings our total authorization to \$564,810.50 with expenditures of \$182,812.54 and the remaining balance of \$381,997.96. No questions were asked.
- **Operation Report** - Ms. Smetana spoke briefly on some of the tasks completed by the MPO. She stated that the Operation Report has been broken into categories that include General MPO, Maps, Travel Demand Model, Reports, Performance Measures, Budget, Collaboration, and Projects to make it easier to read and easier for staff to complete.
- **Director's Report** - Ms. Smetana proceeded to update the Board on the following items:
  - **MPO Staffing** – We are still lacking the Transportation Planner since June 10, 2022. The position has been posted on the City, Texas MPOs, Association of MPOs, Texas Municipal League (TML), and Strategic Government Resources (SGR) websites. It was also posted on the Handshake platform and information was submitted to ACU, Hardin-Simmons, TSTC, McMurry, and Cisco College. Ms. Smetana noted Geographic Information Systems (GIS) positions are difficult to fill, the City has multiple GIS

vacancies that they are actively searching to fill. The MPO is currently researching other ways to obtain GIS services, such as a contractor.

- **Year-end Report – Annual Listing of Obligated Projects (ALOP)** – The Annual Performance & Expenditure Report (APER) and Annual Listing of Obligated Projects (ALOP) are due by December 31st to FHWA and FTA to ensure compliance. TxDOT requests that the reports be given to them by December 15th to allow time for their review. The information from TxDOT to complete the ALOP was sent out on April 18th with a due date of May 2nd. It is required to follow our public participation process and some issues with the data were identified and corrected. The reports was submitted on June 27, 2023, administratively amended on July 11 and September 5, 2023. It was accepted by FHWA and FTA on September 7, 2023.
- **Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)** – The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is due on December 17, 2024; covering the years 2025 to 2050. She noted we will be looking for project solicitation from the public very shortly. We are beginning to compile data and should be discussing a consultant in the near future.
- **Travel Demand Model (TDM)** – The Abilene MPO staff is currently working with TxDOT and others on the Travel Demand Model (TDM). This needs to be completed to enable inclusion in the MTP. We have submitted information on the 2050 employment data and residential projections for each of the 461 Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ). We have reviewed the data supplied by the UTSA Institute for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research and the consultants - Ardurra. We expect to have a running model by October 2023.
- **MPO Area Boundary Expansion (MAB)** – We are working with TxDOT and AECOM (TxDOTS' consultants). We have had multiple meetings and provided information to AECOM. We are hoping to complete the boundary expansion by February 2023.

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

No comments received.

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

Judge Crowley asked Ms. Smetana if Mr. Kris Southward's suggestion concerning SL 322 access road at the Policy Board and TAC Workshop, August 15, 2023 was being addressed. He asked if this has been or should be placed on the agenda for discussion thereby ensuring consideration. Ms. Smetana said it has not been placed on the agenda but it can be if he wanted to have a more in depth discussion or we can present it to the Technical Advisory Committee and allow them to look at projects before moving that on to TxDOT. She explained that would then come back before the Policy Board through the Transportation Improvement Program, the 10 Year Plan and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan where the Policy Board would take action on those projects. Judge Crowley stated he would like it presented to the Technical Advisory Committee for consideration. Judge Crowley asked if TxDOT would have public involvement as part of the process. Ms. Smetana stated yes, with TxDOT involvement it would go out to a lot of stakeholders encompassing the entire area as this is part of their public involvement process. Ms. Smetana asked Mr. Albritton to speak on the TxDOT involvement process. Mr. Albritton concurred and stated whatever is done TxDOT will get with the neighbors, have public meetings, and other types of public involvement. Mr. Albritton mentioned that not too long ago the MPO had a consultant, Kimley-Horn create a report containing recommendations on that area. Judge Crowley stated he did not have a position on this project but we should follow the steps to have it looked at. He said he believes if someone takes time out of their day to present something they find important to the Board then the Board should make time to discuss and research their suggestions or concerns.

**12. Adjournment.**

With no further business, Chairman Price adjourned the meeting at 2:25 p.m.