

## MEETING MINUTES

### Technical Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 24, 2011

1:30 p.m.

Room 113, County/City Building

**Members Present:** Virendra Singh, Roger Figard, Public Works/Utilities/RTSD; Nicole Fleck-Tooze, David Cary, Planning; Don Thomas, Doug Pillard, County Engineering; Wynn Hjermstad, Urban Development; Terry Genrich, Parks & Recreation; Brian Praeuner, StarTran; Chris Schroeder, Health Department; Kaine McClelland, Tom Goodbarn, Nebraska Department of Roads.

**Others Present:** Rick Haden, Felsburg, Holt & Ullevig; Kyle Fisher, Chamber of Commerce; Susie Filipi, Public Works Engineering Services; Mike Brienzo, Sara Hartzell, Michele Abendroth, Planning.

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The meeting was called to order at 1:33 p.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

#### **1. Review and action on the draft minutes of the February 17, 2011 Technical Committee meetings**

Figard moved approval of the February 17, 2011 Technical Committee meeting minutes, seconded by Pillard. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **2. Briefing on the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**

Brienzo stated that the Long Range Transportation Plan is in the progress of being updated. He introduced Ray Moe of LSA Associates. Moe has been working with staff and the LPlan Advisory Committee on the transportation elements of the Plan. He stated that the Technical Committee will be asked to comment on concepts and details in the transportation plan.

Moe began a PowerPoint presentation by stating that we will discuss the transportation packages today. He began by identifying a needs based program, a capital emphasis program and a maintenance emphasis program. He noted that the capital emphasis program is generally the status quo as we have spent more on capital improvements than maintenance. There are several components of the funding categories in a balanced transportation plan that include roads, trails, bicycle/pedestrian and transit.

Roadway operations consist of sweeping, snow removal, crack sealing/pot holes, signs, striping, signals, storm watch, record keeping, (i.e. traffic counts, accident database), and engineering/safety studies. Total needs for roadway rehabilitation are \$10 million annually. Annual costs for the needs based plan are \$15 million, \$5.5 million for the capital emphasis plan and \$13 million for the maintenance emphasis plan.

Trails maintenance and rehabilitation will increase when new trails are added and as the trail network ages. Total annual costs for the needs based plan are \$425,000, \$175,000 for the capital emphasis plan and \$375,000 for the maintenance emphasis plan.

The City has 1,500 miles of sidewalks. A goal in the sidewalk repair program is to make sure that the sidewalks are safe and accessible for all users. Annual costs for the needs based package are \$2.5 million, \$500,000 for the capital emphasis package and \$1.75 million for the maintenance emphasis package.

Moe stated that in terms of capital outlay, roadway projects beyond 2040 include the previous 2030 plan as well as new roadways, widening of existing roads, interchange/intersection improvements, east and south beltway, and 2+1 (adding center left turn lane to 2 lane roads). The cost of these projects would be \$1 billion or \$35 million annually. Staff then looked at identifying selected projects based on the travel demand model. They identified projects in a needs based plan. This plan reduced coverage to the future service limits boundary; identified only those viable improvements that were needed to mitigate unacceptable 2040 congestion; and reduced some projects to interim improvements (i.e., 2 instead of 4 lanes). It includes intersection improvements, travel demand management, and intelligent transportation system improvements. The cost to fund this plan is \$565 million or \$21 million annually.

Moe continued by stating that when comparing congestion, there is not much difference between the beyond 2040 package and the needs based package.

In the capital emphasis plan, top projects are based on traffic modeling and project evaluation using plan goals and weights and includes intersection improvements, intelligent transportation system improvements, and travel demand management. Costs for this plan are \$532 million or \$19.5 million annually. There is not a significant difference in congestion between the needs based plan and the capital emphasis plan.

In the maintenance emphasis plan, reduced roadway capital would shift toward maintenance; top projects based on traffic modeling and project evaluation utilizing goals and weights; retains minimum of dedicated roadway funds; and it still includes intersection improvements, travel demand management, intelligent transportation system improvements. Total costs for this plan are \$287 million or \$10.5 million annually. When comparing the capital emphasis package and the maintenance emphasis package, you start to see congestion creeping up.

For the trails capital, the needs based plan was reduced to the future service limits boundary. Total annual cost for the needs based plan is \$1 million; the capital emphasis plan is \$700,000 and the maintenance emphasis plan is \$500,000.

For the bicycle and pedestrian capital, the needs based plan includes a bicycle/pedestrian coordinator, bike lanes and routes, wayfinding and parking; pedestrian gaps/barriers, improved intersection and mid-block street crossings and pedestrian amenities (i.e., bulbouts, countdown signal heads). Total annual cost for the needs based plan is \$700,000; the capital emphasis plan is \$0 and the maintenance emphasis plan is \$250,000.

For the transit capital, the needs based plan includes the following: an increase annual per capita service hours from 0.41 to 0.48; extended evening service; productivity based service ; multi-modal hubs/mixed use activity areas; increased frequency for high demand areas; express service; and “park & ride”. The cost for this plan is \$13 million annually. The capital emphasis and maintenance emphasis plans continue the 0.41 annual per capita revenue service hours; however increased costs would exceed increased revenues so that annual per capita revenue service hours would drop to 0.33 by 2040; and includes the same categories of improvements as the needs based plan, but are reduced. The total cost for each plan is \$11 million annually.

Moe stated that ultimately the long range transportation plan must be fiscally constrained, but we need to look at ways to shore up the funding shortfalls. It would take an additional \$17 million annually to fully fund the needs based plan. That would be about equal to a 1/2 cent sales tax or 50 cents per household per day.

Moe then asked the Committee to provide their comments on the information that was presented. Brienzo stated that the Technical Committee comments will be forwarded to the Officials Committee.

Figard stated that we need to take care of what we have, so we need to increase maintenance. But the emphasis of the community is economic growth. He believes that we need to go somewhere in the middle of the capital emphasis and the maintenance emphasis plans. In the past, there has been a compromise.

Moe stated that if we continue on the same path, maintenance will suffer. It is important for the public to understand the funding shortfall and to realize the decisions that must be made.

Brienzo stated that each agency is asked to provide their comments on what information they feel should be presented to the public.

Moe stated that he believes there should be a section in the plan that identifies what policies and strategies can be done to shore up the funding shortfall.

Hjermstad stated that the public needs to understand what projects cannot be done based on the plan that is selected or the combination of the plans. She suggested that perhaps there could be maps to reflect that.

Figard commented that he believes the Federal Highway Administration needs to be involved in this process. He would like this group to take a strong stand on their involvement.

Brienzo distributed a worksheet for each agency to complete and return to him in a week.

Hjermstad noted that the only comparison slide is between congestion, and she suggested that another measure be identified to show the public what it means if maintenance is not done. Perhaps pictures identifying a street in poor repair would be helpful.

Figard noted that he is not willing to accept the status of projects and information coming from the State as a given. The Technical Committee should be able to discuss this with the State.

Hjermstad commented that they did a good job of not pitting the built environment against the edge.

Figard noted that the very emphasis of a federal plan is to follow the 3-C process, but we have not seen FHWA representation during this process. He moved that a letter be drafted to FHWA noting their absence in this process, expressing concern and the need for them to be at meetings, and acknowledging that their lack of participation is disappointing at best. This motion is contingent upon the agreement of the Tri-Chairs. The motion was seconded by Singh. The motion carried unanimously.

### **3. Other topics for discussion**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

*\*\* Please note that these minutes will not be formally approved until the next meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Committee. \*\**

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