

MEETING MINUTES

Technical Committee Meeting

Thursday, April 10, 2014

1:30 p.m.

Room 113, County/City Building

Members Present: Miki Esposito, Roger Figard, Randy Hoskins, Public Works/Utilities/RTSD; Marvin Krout, David Cary, Planning; Doug Pillard, County Engineering; Wynn Hjermsstad, Urban Development; Lynn Johnson, Parks; Gary Bergstrom, Health; Michael Davis, StarTran; Mike Owen, Tom Goodbarn, Nebraska Department of Roads.

Others Present: Brad Zumwalt, Kaine McClelland, Jim Wilkinson, Kendall Tonjes, NDOR; Brian Praeuner, Scott Tharnish, StarTran; Mike Schafer, League of Human Dignity; Nancy Hicks, Journal Star; Mike Brienzo, Michele Abendroth, Planning.

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 6, 2014 Technical Committee meeting.

Figard moved to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2014 Technical Committee meeting, seconded by Hoskins. The motion carried unanimously (Goodbarn absent during vote).

2. Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) briefing on the Lincoln South Beltway Project and a request to define this as a priority project in the Lincoln MPO 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). This will move the Lincoln South Beltway Project from the “illustrative” list to the “funded” list of projects.

Brienzo stated that Mike Owen will give a briefing on the Lincoln South Beltway project. Owen stated that the Nebraska Department of Roads is requesting the Lincoln MPO define the South Beltway project as a priority project in the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). It is currently shown as an unfunded project and the State would like to see this project shown in the local transportation plan as fully funded since the Build Nebraska Act funds became available in 2013. The project team is currently working through the environmental phase with project design beginning in 2016 and right-of-way activities taking place in 2017 and 2018. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2020 and will take 5 to 7 years to complete.

Owen noted that they have updated their website, and there is a video explaining the project. He played the video for the Committee.

Brienzo stated that the Needs Based Plan in the LRTP identifies the construction phase of the South Beltway project as unfunded or illustrative. The Fiscally Constrained Plan does show the South Beltway as a study, but the plan needs to be updated to show this as a construction

project. This is not an action item at this time at this time, but a project briefing. The NDOR is asking the MPO to amend the Transportation Plan and we will place this on the April 24th Technical Committee agenda as an action item. The Committee's review and recommendation will then be forwarded to the Officials Committee for their review.

Luther stated that we need to look at revenue sources as to what is reasonable, especially when looking at new revenue sources. Krout stated that the local share of funds will be submitted in the CIP and TIP without having to provide another source of revenue. Luther stated that the revenue source needs to be reasonably available. Cary stated that the expectation of revenue is the Build Nebraska Act. Luther stated that we need to think about a project finance plan. Figard asked for more details about the finance plan. Luther stated that any project over \$100 million has to have a financial plan. Figard asked if the environmental plan is ready. Owen stated that they anticipate it will be ready in the fall of 2015.

3. Briefing by StarTran, as the designee, on the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program changes and the project selection process for reverse commute projects that are now eligible under the 5307 program. A job access reverse commute project is a "transportation project to finance planning, capital, and operating costs that support the development and maintenance of transportation services designed to transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to their employment, including transportation projects that facilitate the provision of public transportation services from urbanized areas and rural areas to suburban employment locations."

Brienzo stated that MAP-21 created changes to the JARC program. This program was a stand along but has been moved into the 5307 program. StarTran is the designated recipient for section 5307 funds and is therefore overseeing the redefined JARC program.

Praeuner stated that MAP-21 brought some changes to the program. It eliminated the JARC program but the projects are still eligible under the 5307 program. This program allows the selection of projects to follow a maintenance process whereby existing JARC projects would not adhere to a competitive selection process. StarTran will utilize this maintenance process to continue to funding the current JARC program of projects.

Praeuner identified the projects as follows: StarTran requested two bus routes that serve low income persons to access employment and job training opportunities; Center for People in Need requested a driver voucher program; and Lincoln Literacy Council requested transportation services for new Americans preparing for work entry. The total amount for the projects is \$101,000. Last year, the total was \$121,000.

Krout noted that this is a decrease in funding for this program. Brienzo stated that there were two or three years where there was an influx of funding, and this is not a significant drop. They have kept the distribution of percentages of the programs the same.

4. Briefing on the new Section 5310 - *Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program* that is intended to enhance mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities by providing funds for programs to serve the special needs of transit dependent populations.

Brienzo stated that the 5310 program has also been affected by MAP-21. It consolidated the New Freedom program with the 5310 program. This program provides assistance in meeting the transportation needs of elderly persons and persons with disabilities where public transportation is not available or insufficient. Eligible activities are similar to the previous programs, but now include capital and operating projects such as wheelchair-accessible vehicles, taxi vouchers, travel training on how to use fixed-route transit, volunteer driver programs and operations support. A new requirement is that at least 55% of the funds be spent on capital projects. This is expected to be a very competitive process this year. NDOR has been designated as the recipient for the program and the point of contact.

Krout asked if StarTran anticipates making a request on this program. Davis stated that they do not anticipate making a request.

Mike Schafer from the League of Human Dignity commented that when they effectively used New Freedom transportation funding for their clients and they knew the process was being revamped. They missed the use of these funds over the past year. They didn't want their program to die, so they kept it funded at their 50% match level with other funds. They tried to make it a priority in their funding because transportation is very important to their clients. They just received a small grant to get them through the process and they intend to apply for funds again. They believe it is an extremely efficient program. It is a good program and helps people become more independent. They have used the program for transportation for employment and have excluded transportation to medical appointments.

5. Other topics for discussion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:17 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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