

Bryan/College Station Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

July 11, 2023

Certification of Quorum

The following voting TAC Members participated: Paul Kaspar, Chair, City of Bryan; Jason Schubert, Vice Chair, City of College Station; Debbie Albert, Texas A&M Transportation Institute; Doug Marino, TxDOT-Bryan District; and Jo Marlow, Brazos Transit District. The following MPO staff participated: Dan Rudge, Bart Benthul, and Lisa Lyon who took the minutes. Additional meeting participants included Lauren Blackman, Madeline Dillard, Katie Mock, and Wendy Weedon.

Welcome and Open Meeting

Paul Kaspar called to order the MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) at 9:01 a.m. on July 11, 2023. The meeting was held in-person at the Brazos Transit District Marvin Tate Administration Building Conference Room, 2117 Nuches Lane, Bryan, Texas.

Approval of Minutes from the May 18, 2023 TAC Meeting

Minutes from the May 18, 2023, Technical Advisory Committee Meeting were considered for adoption. **A motion to approve the minutes was made by Jason Schubert. The motion was seconded by Jo Marlow. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.**

Amendment Five to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The revised fiscally constrained table was sent out to the TAC. Mr. Rudge thanked TxDOT Bryan District and the Texas Transportation Commission for finding a very large increase for the State Highway 6 project. Originally, it was thought these amendments were not necessary until later because of the let date; however, an email was received from TxDOT TP&P stating they needed to be completed before the UTP update, if possible. The changes to the table are highlighted in yellow with the biggest change being funding for State Highway 6. There was also funding added to a few other projects which also affects the fiscally constrained table. Amendments to the MTP require a 30-day public comment period.

Jason Schubert made the motion to recommend adoption of Amendment Five to the Policy Board and open the 30-day public comment period. The motion was seconded by Jo. Marlow. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

FY 2023–FY 2026 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment Two

Changes were made to Transportation Improvement Program Amendment Two after it was sent out to the TAC. The revised document was handed out at the meeting.

For the first time under the Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act, MPOs get a direct allocation of Carbon Reduction Program money which TxDOT lists as Category 10. When Mr. Rudge has discussed this with Mr. Marino in the past, the thought was that since there are bicycle and pedestrian projects involved in our all of the highway projects, if needed Category 10 funds could be added to those projects. Since that is a Policy Board decision, the TAC would need to make a recommendation to the Policy Board on how to handle Category 10 funds. Any project for which you can show a carbon reduction benefit are eligible for these funds. Additional use of these funds was discussed. The only additional changes currently shown are for 2025 and the Category 10 funds are on the project summary tables highlighted in yellow. Mr. Benthul thanked Ms. Blackman for putting the tables together.

Mr. Kaspar has a project for the City of Bryan that is awaiting funding which is the 29th shared use path that connects into Tarrow. Mr. Marino explained that those funds needed to be allocated quickly and programmed so they were put on Texas Avenue. Category two funds were pulled off and can be used elsewhere. Category seven which is estimated to be \$4.5 million can be used off-system, so there is the opportunity for those funds. Category 10 is an estimated \$700,000. It is possible to move funding around; however, it needs to be allocated by the end of 2025. Mr. Kaspar will work on getting a current estimate of costs for the project and it can be discussed at a later meeting.

There was discussion regarding the process and timeframe for adopting the Congestion Management Process and the new MTP. The intent of MPO staff is that they will be adopted at the same time. However, the Congestion Management Process is due one year from the date the MPO was named a Transportation Management Area (June 2023). The reasoning behind not adopting the CMP now is because it would require the TAC to go back and analyze all of the projects in the current MTP.

Debbie Albert made the motion to recommend adoption of Amendment Two to the Policy Board and open the 15-day public comment period. The motion was seconded by Jo. Marlow. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Agency Reports

TxDOT by Doug Marino – FM 158 work still continuing with a few outstanding utility relocations and a couple right-of-way items to work out. Current work is on the west zone from Texas Avenue to the park for another couple of weeks. Work will begin on some out of phase work north and south of the park prior to the milestone work on the medians on the west portion due to delays on electrical work.

FM 1179 raised medians work is being done on the right turn lane at Carter Creek Parkway. Work will begin on some other miscellaneous concrete areas. The plan is to start the milestone number one medians from South College to Wayside late July early August and it will take about six weeks.

Milestone two will be Wayside to Kent and that's expected to begin in September and take about two months.

For the Wellborn Road project in Wellborn, they have some sketches ready and today is their monthly meeting, so they will have those sketches for consideration and discussion on different options available in the Wellborn community. The goal is for TxDOT and the City of College Station to be on the same page regarding design before heading back out to talk to the locals in that Wellborn area. They are trying to continue with the remainder of the project to finalize any details and right-of-way surveying to move forward with right-of-way acquisition.

For the FM 1179 expansion project, there will be a public meeting on July 27th from 4:30-6:30 at the Brazos Center. TxDOT is notifying the entire corridor; however, leading up to the public meeting they have been meeting individually with property owners that have significant impacts so there are no surprises for them during the public meeting. They have also offered to meet individually with property owners that do not have quite as significant an impact if they choose. There has been some pushback, especially from some property owners across from Allen Academy, but they have been told that there are things that can be done to adjust design if needed.

The Highway 6 project is moving forward. TxDOT has received 100% plans this week so they are beginning to review those. Since this is such a large project that is scheduled to let in July 2024, it is possible that the project could be moved around a little to better manage lettings in a given month since statewide lettings are usually more robust at the end of the fiscal year. It may move to Fall of 2024 which would move it into the next fiscal year. They have been working on utilities for some time and have struggled with some that could affect the order of construction phasing. They will try to build as much flexibility into construction phasing as possible to make things more efficient.

TxDOT has also been working with Brazos County on the bond projects; Inner-loop work at Leonard Road, State Highway 30/Harvey Road East, State Highway 47, and State Highway 21 near RELLIS. They have received fourteen proposals to the RFQ for design work on these projects.

Texas A&M/TTI by Debbie Albert – On July 4th there were approximately 4,600 vehicles on RELLIS campus. There continued to be quite a few people parking out on the highway roadside. Additional law enforcement was utilized to try and keep people moving. There was a report of an ice cream truck trying to serve people along State Highway 21. The first football game is on September 2nd. There are a lot of changes related to FM 2818. They are working on those with the City of College Station and trying to make sure people are moved off campus as safely as possible following the games. Texas A&M's first day of class is August 21st. Move-in date is the weekend before beginning on Thursday.

Brazos Transit District by Jo Marlow – BTD was awarded \$9.65 million in FY 23 for the buses and bus facilities Low or No Emissions Grant. They partnered with Texas A&M for the grant and will order a total of 21 new vehicles (six for A&M and 15 for BTD). They will also purchase five charging facilities for those buses. There is no formal agreement yet, but the award was announced.

City of College Station by Jason Schubert – No new updates.

City of Bryan by Paul Kaspar – South College continues to be blocked while major culvert crossing work is being completed. There are also a few unexpected things that have come up that they are working through.

Staff Report/Upcoming Events

The next Policy Board meeting will be Wednesday, August 16th. The meeting was moved to later in the month in order to finish the 30-day public comment period for the MTP amendment. Debbie Albert will give an update on game day operations.

In the Safe Streets and Roads for all grant program description, the word “not” was left out so Mr. Rudge has received several calls and emails over the past week. The correct wording should be “the Federal Highway Administration’s Office of Federal Projects has stated that the Texas A&M Transportation institute does *not* meet the parameters of a sole source and the MPO should proceed with an RFQ. The RFQ will go out this week on July 14th.

The result of the mock certification review was the MPO received 13 recommendations and 30 commendations. Recommendations including things such as using new tools that FHWA has come up with for the next MTP update to look at equity and climate change issues. There were no corrective actions given and Mr. Rudge felt very good about the result. The next step is the official review on November 15th and 16th. Although the regulations say there has to be a public hearing, Mr. Rudge was told they may do something like a focus group instead. Mr. Rudge thanked Ms. Weedon, Ms. Marlow and BTD for hosting the meeting.

Mr. Rudge asked for volunteers from the TAC to review the submissions received from the RFQ that is being posted for the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.



Technical Advisory Committee Chair/Vice-Chair
Bryan-College Station
Metropolitan Planning Organization

ATTEST:



Dan Rudge - BCSMPO



Date