

Bryan/College Station Metropolitan Planning Organization

MPO Policy Board Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2017

Certification of Quorum:

Voting members present were Commissioner Nancy Berry, Councilman Greg Owens, and Dr. Bill Stockton, Texas A&M Transportation Institute. Mayor Mooney arrived during the public comments. A list of persons who attended is attached.

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Since there was no Chair or Vice Chair present, Greg Owens nominated Nancy Berry to preside over the meeting. The nomination was seconded by Dr. Stockton. Nancy Berry was selected to preside over the meeting by a unanimous vote. Commissioner Berry called to order the regular meeting of the MPO Policy Board at 9:08 a.m. on February 1, 2017, at the Brazos County Commissioner's Courtroom, 200 South Texas Avenue, Bryan, TX. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags. An invocation was given by Dan Rudge.

2. Election of Officers

Councilman Owens nominated Commissioner Berry to serve as Chair of the Policy Committee. The nomination was seconded by Dr. Stockton. No other nominations for Chair were heard and Commissioner Berry was elected as the Policy Board Chair by a unanimous vote. Commissioner Berry nominated Greg Owens as the Policy Board Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Dr. Stockton. No other nominations for Vice Chair were heard and Councilman Owens was elected by a unanimous vote as Policy Board Vice Chair.

3. Public Comments regarding items not on the Agenda

Lynn Lawler, of 2014 Spring Creek, College Station, TX., presented the Policy Board with a petition from the Emerald Forest subdivision with 731 signatures against any expansion or extension of Emerald Parkway. Ms. Lawler stated her objection to the expansion/extension of Emerald Parkway through Emerald Forest Subdivision and then beyond to connect to Highway 30. Ms. Lawler reported that she personally counted residences and businesses that would be affected by the expansion/extension and there were 62 residences plus five businesses that would be impacted. Ms. Lawler further reported that a neighbor told her that part of the proposed Emerald Parkway extension would have to go through wetlands and a wildlife refuge which would require special construction and much red tape. She

summarized by saying that this extension was worse than she originally thought and asked about who is paying for the construction. She asked that the Policy Board carefully peruse the petition, and carefully consider the cost to benefit ratio as well as the risk to benefit ratio. She asked that the Emerald Parkway expansion/extension be removed.

Dan Wood, of 8708 Appomattox Drive, College Station, TX., explained that the petition Ms. Lawler delivered starts out with a statement of their position. Mr. Wood explained that their subdivision is unique. He and his wife have lived in the subdivision for 23 years. One of the main reasons they chose Emerald Forest was because there was no traffic. He described the neighborhood as something out of "Leave it to Beaver" and explained it was a quiet place that is nestled off by itself where people go out and walk their dogs, push their little strollers, etc. It is really quiet and Mr. Wood explained that is what most people say attracted them to the neighborhood. Mr. Wood stated that if you take Highway 2818 and extend it across the bypass through the middle of their neighborhood, you would take away the primary reason that those who have been in that neighborhood for 20+ years moved there. For most residents, this is their "forever" home and they are not planning on moving somewhere else. Mr. Wood explained there were other alternatives which they presented in the petition that would not harm anyone's homes or neighborhoods.

Jerry Ebanks, of 2102 Spring Creek, College Station, TX., reiterated that Emerald Forest is a pretty unique subdivision. None of the streets in there go anywhere except eventually to connect to Emerald Parkway or Appomattox which runs North South through the development. There is a park north of Emerald Parkway that has a swimming pool, a clubhouse, a couple of tennis courts, small basketball court, and picnic facilities. If 2818 is converted to a major 4-6 lane major highway, it will cut Emerald Forest right in half and essentially the people that live south of that will not be able to get to the park with the ease that they can now. Mr. Ebanks further stated that the proposed major highway would probably require 150 feet of right of way and currently there is only 90 feet which would require condemning several homes. He pointed out that the road is a winding and hilly road which would require much work for expansion. Lastly, Mr. Ebanks explained that this expansion would drop real estate assessments in Emerald Forest. He feels that a simpler and cheaper way to achieve the major loop along the south part of town would be to come down 2818, modify the interchange with Wellborn Road 2154, funnel the traffic south on Wellborn Road, merge it onto Highway 40 (Fitch Parkway) and on across Highway 6 to an existing roadway that is already there.

John Woods, of 8704 Chippendale Street, College Station, TX., and the President of the Emerald Forest HOA, reported that just by virtue of including this option on the 2050 Thoroughfare plan the property values and dynamics associated with the real estate market has negatively affected the Emerald Forest subdivision. He was advised by several of their homeowner residents that the brokers who would like to sell their homes have not been able to do it because those brokers and agents are obligated to inform potential buyers of

the inclusion of this option on that 2050 plan. If the current expansion/extension of Emerald Parkway remains on that plan, he anticipates that the subdivision essentially is dead as far as real estate. He is asking that it be eliminated from the plan through whatever processes is available as soon as possible. He concluded by saying that he did not believe that the 443 households in Emerald Forest were going to rest until that option is excluded from the 2050 Thoroughfare Plan.

Mike McCullough, of 2100 Bent Oak, College Station, TX., moved to College Station in 2014 when his wife was recruited by Texas A&M. Dr. Carolyn Cannon was recruited to A&M because of her ground breaking research in Cystic Fibrosis. They lived in Coppell, Texas, which is a fairly affluent neighborhood in the northwest part of Dallas County. They were able to afford just about anywhere in College Station but chose Emerald Forest largely for the reasons that Mr. Wood pointed out. Emerald Forest attracted them because of the quietness of the neighborhood and the well-established trees. They moved into a smaller older home that what they had before and paid above market value to get into that neighborhood. He is concerned of course about the plan to extend 2818 down Emerald Parkway because it would, as pointed out by the HOA president, cut them and those that live south of Emerald Forest, off from the amenities they now enjoy. Because of refinancing their home, they had an appraisal done on the home two weeks ago and the official appraisal is about \$15,000 lower than what we expected already because of the appraisers concerns that the proposed road plan would have on this neighborhood. Mr. McCullough asked that this plan be reviewed with common sense and to think about what this plan would do to their neighborhood.

Cheryl Wenck, of 8703 Chippendale Street, College Station, TX., stated she currently bikes and walks to the clubhouse, pool, and tennis courts. Her daughter bikes there with a friend who lives in the newer part of Emerald Forest and they meet at the park. There is another friend of her daughters that she will be on the tennis team with and they are going to have a schedule where they will meet at the courts and play tennis together. Her daughter's safety will be compromised having to traverse an extremely busy planned road and an expansion. So in addition to their 250 plus comments, they have compiled the petition of 731 signatures against this plan. She is one of the homeowners that will not rest until the planned expansion/extension is removed. She asked the board to consider other alternatives which are included in the petition and to remove this from the map so their property values and our neighborhood can be restored.

4. Review and approval of December 7, 2016, Policy Board Minutes

Minutes from the December 7, 2016, Policy Committee Meeting were considered for adoption. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Dr. Stockton and seconded by Councilman Owens. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

5. Staff Report

Website Update – The design has been finalized and the consultant is currently developing the back end data and partitions so the website functions properly. It is a big step up from the existing website in that it is similar to using Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft Word to make changes to the website as opposed to having to write in programming language which is what the current website requires. It will be much easier to update. The anticipated date for launching the new website will be June or July.

FM 60/University Drive (Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety and Access Concepts) – There was a slight delay with the TxDOT TPP Office in Austin in getting the approval of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Access and Safety Concepts contract. The contract was not approved until last week. A consultant is now under contract and stake holder meetings will begin at the end of February. The consultant has asked to do some field observation work with TAC members to make sure there is an understanding of the concerns that are being raised by all of the localities. The project is still on track to finish sometime in August which was the original time specified.

Public Engagement Plan – Dan thanked Dr. Lomax and his staff for all of their work on the draft public engagement plan. The draft was be circulated to the TAC for their comments. The draft public engagement program will be on the TAC agenda for the February meeting. It will possibly be brought to the Policy Board on the March agenda for approval.

FM 2818 Corridor Study – Discussion will begin on some of the specific concepts and treatments that will be necessary in certain locations along the corridor. The consultant will be here the week after the TAC meeting for a workshop with members of the 2818 study committee which is basically the TAC and anybody else that wants to come.

Brazos Transit District Demographics and Operations Study – The study is 99.9% complete. The big change is that we'll be moving away from a flag stop system to actual bus stops at specific locations. Texas Avenue will be the main spine in the main routing system. The routes will extend as far south as Tower Point in South College Station which is an expansion. Two new buses are being added. BTD will be moving away from their one-way loop system to a complete loop system that reduces travel times on average about 30 minutes each trip a person takes.

Major Thoroughfare Concept Meetings – There was much public comment today and a letter from Mayor Mooney was included in the agenda packet. Mayor Mooney stated that the residents of Emerald Forest have already seen the letter through the Next Door website. His letter recommended the elimination of 2818 extension through Emerald Forest and suggested an alternative route where 2154 and 2818 would merge as one until Fitch. Mayor Mooney reviewed the plans for Fitch as proposed by TxDOT, and that seems to

merge just the way we would need it to at a lesser cost and still achieves that same objective of getting out to Highway 30.

Mr. Rudge wanted the Policy Board to be aware that the TAC has not taken any action nor made any modification to the concept at this point. When the public meetings are concluded, modifications will be made. There is a public meeting on February 27th and they plan to meet after the Policy Board Meeting on March 1st to revise the plan. The final changes will be revealed at the March 6th public meeting at the Brazos Center. That is the current schedule.

6. Category Two Funding Formula Recommended by the Texas Association of MPO's.

Under the old formula, our region received about \$132.7 million over a ten year period for Category Two funding. In the last Metropolitan Plan Update, which was completed in 2015, there was almost no revenue planned from this source so this is a big increase in funding for the MPO. TEMPO has been talking about changing the existing funding formula since Dan came to the MPO in April of 2016. They have gone through approximately 20 iterations and different ways to look at how the funding would work.

At their meeting on January 6th, TEMPO voted to adopt a new formula that would change our allocation from \$132.7 million over the ten year period to \$108.6 million over the ten year period. As part of TEMPO's agreement with the Texas Transportation Commission, if any of the MPO's object to the changes that are being recommended by TEMPO, they are allowed to file a minority report. At the TAC meeting in January, the different funding levels were discussed as well as what was happening with the funding formula. The TAC has recommended that the Policy Board file a minority report that is prepared by staff and members of the TAC at their February meeting for your consideration at the March meeting. The MPO is asking the Policy Board whether or not they would like a minority report to be developed and filed.

Commissioner Berry felt as though this was a significant loss and she would like the report to be filed. Mayor Mooney agreed and felt as if TEMPO was not adequately addressing the size of communities such as ours. It is the same problem they've run into anytime we are trying to attract new businesses into town. They use the census data which does not include those students who live here. There is such a discrepancy in the distribution of funds that it doesn't enable localities to address the challenges that are being faced not just with growth but with maintaining the roads that we already have. Mr. Rudge explained that one of the factors of the funding formula that is worth 5% of the overall formula is for persons living below the federal poverty level. Although it doesn't seem that significant, when you look at the transportation and mobility of persons under the poverty level, it closely mirrors how many of the students in our area act in their travel habits. That factor has been completely eliminated from the funding allocation and Mr. Rudge feels that is one

of the arguments to be made in the minority report and that it should be put back in. Mayor Mooney said he was pleased to see that they were looking at increasing the fatal and incapacitating crashes to 20%. He pointed out that we had a great number of drivers in our community who are under the age of 25, and the incidence of crashes is higher for that group of individuals. This was one reason why College Station instituted, under former Mayor Berry's watch, the hands free cell phone ordinance which is being considered by the 85th Legislature.

Dr. Stockton made the motion to file a Minority Report that would be drafted through the TAC and submitted to the Policy Board for final approval. Mayor Mooney seconded the motion. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

7. Smart State Symposium Report

Dan Rudge, the MPO's Executive Director presented to the Board a new initiative that is being developed in the State of Texas. The MPO, members of the TAC, and others from the community have been working on what was originally titled the Smart State Symposium. Because of the emphasis on Smart Cities at the federal level, they decided to change the name to the Texas Innovation Alliance.

The motivation is that the traditional approach to transportation improvement is really unable to keep up with all the changes that are going on in Texas. In our area, the population is projected to double between now and 2050. There is a vast array of new technologies that are available, including autonomous vehicles that we are beginning to see. There is a desire to keep Texas competitive with the rest of the country, and there are quite a few community needs that can be addressed by being innovative when it comes to transportation. There are a lot of partners and there are several cities that are participating in the alliance. Bryan/College Station was the only community that had a population below 500,000 that was invited to the initial symposium so it was an honor that we were asked to participate. The Alliance is trying to leverage regional resources so that we there isn't a lot of duplication of efforts.

The Symposium brought in industry leaders, researchers, and people from all the different communities so that we could create a network across the entire state of Texas. If someone comes in and wants to develop something new and innovative in transportation, they can come to the State of Texas knowing that they have research partners that will help them with their ideas. Texas has places that will serve as test beds for the new technology, and Texas has the ability to accommodate them in terms of producing their final innovation.

In 2013, the TxDOT Technology Task Force was established by the legislature. In December 2015, USDOT challenged several cities to become a Smart City. Austin filed an application to be recognized as a smart city and was selected as one of the finalists. Austin did not

make the final cut, so in October discussion began about the formation of group of partners that wanted to be innovative leaders in transportation. A telephone conference call meeting was conducted. On December 1st and 2nd of 2016 the Texas Mobility Summit was held and new ideas were developed.

As an outgrowth of the Smart City Challenge that Austin learned (and by extension the rest of those that participated in the partnership learned), that if there is strong collaboration and good vision, 21st century solutions can be developed that will work across the State of Texas. It was important to look at the three P's, public private partnerships, so that the risk is shared across both industry and the local governments. Obviously technology is going to be a tool for innovation. The process would be to pilot a program, learn from it, and then scale it up so it works for deployment across any of the communities in Texas that may have an interest.

During the Summit on the 1st and 2nd, there were ten total teams representing 32 different transportation agencies across the State of Texas. They began by determining they wanted to create an alliance, encourage public/private dialogue, and ensure that key leadership understood they were interested in developing innovative solutions to address the state's mobility challenges. Private sector partners were particularly interested in helping with any of the projects the alliance was working on. Some of the innovate pilot projects that came up were: 1) the next generation vehicles with services including things like automated shuttle services and shared mobility; 2) data initiatives which addresses a concern about data, how much data is out there, what is the right data to use, and the development of some sort of system where all agencies are using the same data; 3) sensor-based infrastructure in roadways and real time traffic information for the travelers so that they can efficiently utilize the system that is available; and 4) research and development to provide access to a knowledge base of best practices and connection of subject matter experts. There are three great institutions in Texas that are internationally known for their transportation research and their development, particularly in our community, the Texas A&M Transportation Institute. There is a very good knowledge base for those who want to innovate to draw on and find experts that can help them with their process.

At the Summit, there was leadership at all levels. There were several mayors that attended and were part of the teams. For lack of a better word, it was discovered that there were several silos across Texas where people kind of feel like this is my territory don't mess with me. It became clear at the Summit that groups were willing to collaborate across those silos and take steps to get rid of some of them so people are working better together.

Of the industry partners that attended, Mr. Rudge received approximately 75 business cards from people who volunteered to help with projects. Peer to peer, the groups sat down and looked at challenges, solutions, and best practices, and then came up with a series of shared goals and collaborative action items.

Team Bryan/College Station was made up of Mr. Rudge, Dr. Tim Lomax of TTI, Allison Kurwitz of TxDOT, Troy Rother from the City of College Station, Dr. Katie Turnbull of TTI, Michael Parks from BVCOG, Bart Benthul from BCSMPO, and Gary Schatz from the City of Bryan. The team received a lot of compliments for their innovative ideas and the camaraderie that was developed at the meeting. Three projects were proposed by Team Bryan/College Station: Make Every Day a Game Day, Share the Ride Share the Cost, and The Transportation Future is Shaped Now. All three projects were selected by the Texas Innovation Alliance for implementation.

Make Every Day a Game Day – It surprises a lot of folks, but if you count the students, faculty, and staff at Texas A&M, it is the fourth largest downtown (bigger than San Antonio and smaller than Austin) Monday through Friday, not just on game day. The roadway network is smaller than any of the top 10 downtowns in Texas, so our area is way behind the curve. There is a game day traffic operations program that continues to be fine-tuned every year for football games and for other sporting events on the Texas A&M Campus. It is believed that it can be expanded to all College Station and Bryan to use all of the strategies that are used for game day traffic such as technology, class and work schedule options, expanded transit and ride sharing, and adding capacity where possible given the limited funds available.

Share the Ride Share the Cost – The Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living received a grant to purchase trip matching software. All human service agencies in the Brazos Valley area are allowed to install the software for free. The software identifies multiple agencies picking up in the same area and allows them to consolidate those into one trip. The alliance would provide assistance to install the software and training.

Transportation Future is Shaped Now – We really can't build our way out of congestion and we can't really be more efficient or use technology to get us to the kind of future we want either. There is a need to find what the balancing point is between new roads, new technology, funding, and what level of congestion is acceptable to the traveling public. It is desirable to hear from citizens and businesses on how they want us to spend our limited transportation funds. A regional mobility symposium was proposed to address these questions and start making plans for our future. The target date is May 2017 and the Chamber of Commerce would be the host.

The alliance agreed that we needed to look at some organizing principles to anticipate community needs through the rapid change that is going on in Texas. The alliance will develop a culture of innovation so that people understand we have made more advances in transportation in the last five years than in the last 50 years. Technology is coming fast and furious. Who would have thought three years ago there would be talk of autonomous vehicles and the entire technology that is developing around this innovation. Texas is falling

behind other states in its ability to attract and grow businesses. By being the leader in transportation innovation, Texas can be more economically competitive. Lastly, it is important that as Texas moves forward with technology, the communities and citizens we serve are comfortable with the kind of solutions chosen and that best practices are used across Texas to help us address some of the issues that we are going to be facing as a community.

The Texas Innovation Alliance created a mission and vision statement. The vision is to: "Create a platform for innovation that enables Partners to leverage resources, co-create solutions, and share results for improving the delivery of government services to Texas communities." The mission is: "To improve the lives, safety, and economic prospects of Texans through innovative improvement of policies, standards, and regulations; industry and stakeholder engagement; partnership development; and knowledge and technology transfer."

The alliance will be looking at policy standards and regulations, stakeholder engagement, partnership development, and technology transfer. The first group project is procurement reform. The group will try to streamline the process in which public/private partnerships can get into contracts faster and share the risks. For example, in the Texas area, they have a state buy list that anybody can use in their area to purchase things for procurement purposes rather than having to go out to bid on all the things that are out there. The group will try to create a state buy list as part of that process.

There is a lot of data available. The group will look at the data that is out there and come up with some kind of standards for what data will be used when looking at different projects. The alliance will also stay up to date on specialized topics through the various research institutions and are planning a Texas Mobility Summit sometime in 2017. The group is also looking at strategic and financial planning across the state by creating a clearinghouse of the available funding that is out there. The group will look at developing strategic consulting services and facilitating industry and research partnerships with anyone who has transportation innovation ideas. There is a very strong knowledge base in Texas to develop a library of best practices making sure to identify the subject matter expert network for anybody that comes in. The group is also developing a series of white papers to show that Texas is a leader in transportation innovation.

Another project is making Research as a Service. Again, making sure that research consulting services are available to people that have innovative ideas and they can reach out to the TTI's of the state and work together to develop a stronger product.

The three short term goals that came out of the Summit was really to develop a statewide collaboration for mobility. Thanks to Mayor Mooney and Mayor Nelson, letters of support for the Texas automated vehicle proving grounds partnership were sent. Eighty

communities applied, and only ten were selected. The Texas A/V Proving Grounds was one of the ten selected. Additionally, the development of a guiding document which are the principles for the Alliance and a template for a resolution of support. The group will also work with localities to ensure that they can seek out innovative ideas to apply to transportation issues in their community.

So, to date, we have achieved all of our short term goals. We've created this collaboration. We were awarded the Texas AV Proving Grounds partnership, so thank you to the two mayors that made a difference in our selection. The guiding principles document is included in our agenda packet, and so our next steps are to work on the resolution of support and the interagency agreements. On February 8th, we will be having a work session based on procurement as well as looking at stakeholder engagement and data needs We will be doing that data innovation challenge in June. And then sometime in October is probably when that next mobility summit will happen.

That's just a quick overview of things that have happened with the MPO and a lot of the members of the TAC just since December 1st of last year. We've been pretty busy on this Texas Innovation Alliance and we think we are making great strides and we think it's a good thing not just for Bryan/College Station, but for all of the State of Texas.

8. Adjourn

The Policy Board Meeting was adjourned at 10:02 a.m.



Policy Board Chair or Vice-Chair
B/CS Metropolitan Planning Organization

ATTEST:


Dan Rudge - BCSMPO

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Date



BRYAN / COLLEGE STATION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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Meeting: Policy Board

Date: 2/01/2017

Name	Agency	Phone	Email
Tracy Parks			
Tracy Glass			
Margaret Glueck	Emerald Forest		
Jerry Ebanks	Emerald Forest		
PHIL CALLAHAN	" "		
Chris Boglino	TXDOT		
John Woods	Emerald Forest HOA		
JASON SCHUBERT	Co CS		
Prarthana Banerji	Prakas Co R&B		
BRENT Maxwell	EF		
Merrilee Prochaska	EF		
Irene Jett	Budget Office		
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Name	Agency	Phone	Email
Tim Lomax	Texas A&M Transp Inst.		
ALAN MONGER	BRAZOS COUNTY		
PAUL KASPAR	City of Bryan		
GARY SCHATZ	CITY OF BRYAN		
Lynn Lawler	Emerald Forest		
DAN WOOD	EMERALD FOREST		
Howard Gueda	EMERALD FOREST		
THOMAS L SIMS	EMERALD FOREST		
MICHAEL K MCCULLOUGH	EMERALD FOREST		
Cheryl Wendt	Emerald Forest		
Troy Rother	COCS		
BRANDON BOATCALLE	BBI		
Aubrey Birchfield	Emerald forest		