

***Bryan/College Station Metropolitan Planning Organization***  
***MPO Joint Technical Advisory Committee/Active Transportation***  
***Advisory Panel Meeting Minutes***

February 15, 2018

**Certification of Quorum:**

The following TAC Members were present: Paul Kaspar, Chair, City of Bryan; Peter Lange, TTI-TAMU; Jason Schubert, City of College Station; Prarthana Banerji, Brazos County; Doug Marino, TxDOT; Wendy Weedon, Brazos Transit District; Bart Benthul, BCSMPO; and Dan Rudge, BCSMPO. A list of persons who attended is attached.

**1. Welcome and open meeting**

Paul Kaspar called to order the regular meeting of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee at 8:36 a.m. on February 15, 2018, in the Brazos Transit District Conference Room, 1759 North Earl Rudder Freeway, Bryan, TX. Introductions were made all around.

**2. Minutes from January 18, 2018, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting**

Minutes from the January 18, 2018, Technical Advisory Committee Meeting were considered for adoption. Mr. Kaspar requested a correction to the minutes in the City of Bryan's agency report to change "hump" to "bump". A motion to approve the minutes with the correction requested by Mr. Kaspar was made by Jason Schubert. The motion was seconded by Prarthana Banerji. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

**3. FY 2017-2020 TIP Amendment III**

Brazos Transit District is programming money to purchase buses and it has to be reflected in the TIP so they are requesting an amendment. BTM has unspent funds from FY 15 they will move forward to purchase the heavy-duty buses. In future years, they plan to program money to purchase one or two buses per year so the buses are not all being retired at the same time. BTM is also applying for fleet replacement funds in the coordinated call but are not optimistic about receiving any of those funds. The changes to FY 2017 would include some adjustments to move funds into different categories based on better information received from BTM to more accurately allocate those funds. Projects apportioned in FY 2015 were moved to FY 2018 in addition to what was already in the FY 2018 TIP and the summary tables were updated. There were no changes for FY 2019 and FY 2020. There was not an increase to funds, they were reprogrammed from operation to capital with no strings attached.

The newly purchased buses will have a twelve-year life expectancy. BTM's current buses were eight-year buses, and they are approximately ten years old which is two years beyond their expected usefulness. These older buses require a high dollar amount of maintenance. It will take approximately 18 months before BTM receives the first bus. Jason Schubert recommended the approval of the TIP amendment and the opening of the 15-day public comment period. Prarthana Banerji seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

#### 4. Staff Report

Texas Innovation Alliance Data Challenge – Mr. Rudge, Mr. Benthul, and Mr. Rother attended the Texas Innovation Alliance Summit. Jackie Pacha with BVCIL was supposed to attend; however, at the last minute, the order of the speaking panels was rearranged so she did not have time to get there. As part of the summit, presenters were asked to give examples of case studies and there were entrepreneurs who judged and gave feedback as to whether or not an entrepreneur would want to work with them in coming up with a technological solution for their traffic or transit project. Since the order of the conference was rearranged at the last minute, the presenter who went first which was Mr. Rudge who did not have time to prepare his presentation. The two days were spent taking about where the alliance is going. On the first day, there was discussion about the proving grounds which was originally intended to be just for autonomous vehicles. TxDOT has requested that the proving grounds be expanded to include everything including long-term deployment, short-term deployment, freight and logistics, or anything else. It is hoped they are looking to fund some studies in the future so that will be monitored in case there is some kind of planning study we could participate in that helps with innovation and trying some new things in our area. The second day was about trying to come up with a slate of priority projects for the state. None of the Team B/CS projects made that slate; however, the team will still continue to work on them with the exception of make every day a game day. Because the problem statement was so defined and so well written, it was taken off the table and forwarded to the private sector technical bench that the alliance has put together to give comments and start working with Team B/CS on some of the technical issues raised in that particular problem statement. Team B/CS will continue to move forward with our Coordinated Human Service transportation efforts.

Results of January 19 Human Service Agency Transportation Committee – Some of the takeaways from the meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> was there probably should be a much better job collecting information on all the paratransit services that are out there. There was a lot of confusion from the participants about who provide services, exactly what kind of services BTD provides and what the BTD requirements are. Travis Halm, formerly of the Brazos Valley Council of Governments, did a great job of putting together all of the information in the Coordinated Human Service Agency plan that was adopted in March of 2017 and all of that information seems to be out of date in just a year. Ms. Weedon and Mr. Parks agreed that the information changes very rapidly. Ms. Weedon reported that she now has two persons on staff including herself which will be out in the community giving presentations or help one on one. Ms. Weedon said that BVCIL has been very helpful when they have sent people to them. BVCIL has a vehicle in a central location that can be checked out to run human service transportation trip by anyone who has an agreement with them. Paratransit is a big statewide issue and there were a couple of suggestions that came out of the meeting. First, we probably need to look at a model of having one agency in the state that certifies people for eligibility in paratransit services. Whenever someone already preapproved comes to Bryan/College Station and they want service, they've already gotten their card and you don't have to go through that process. The second suggestion was to go to a standard platform for unified fare media. The biggest conflict with this suggestion is that each agency has already contracted with different fare box providers who only accept certain media. This may be something that could be tweaked where they are given a deadline of so many months after the standard comes out where somebody that is eligible for paratransit and wants to ride a fixed route can use their fare media card from wherever they are and it wouldn't apply to all the riders, just the paratransit riders. There was discussion about several possible issues with unified fare media which included current problems with the fare

boxes, elderly or disadvantaged who may not have a cell phone or credit card, the rural population, etc.

TAZ Population and Employment Reassignment – Mr. Rudge again made the offer for him and Mr. Benthul to assist in any way. Mr. Kaspar explained that they scheduled a time once they realized how daunting the task seemed to be. Mr. Rudge explained that if we do our very best with this, the model will be better and help better predict travel patterns.

## 5. Agency Reports

**TTI/TAMU** – Dockless bike share is coming to Texas A&M. Mr. Lange reported that Texas A&M had signed an agreement with ofo about ten days ago and they will have a couple of hundred bikes on campus in a few weeks to do a pilot so they can learn a little bit about the system and the tendencies of their riders. They met with representatives from both cities as recently as yesterday to talk about dockless bike share and what Texas A&M is doing. The plan is to bring between 2,000-3,000 yellow ofo bikes to campus over the summer to be ready for the fall. There has been news out of Dallas recently where they've got five different bike share pilots going on and the bikes are everywhere and it's an unsightly mess. Texas A&M doesn't want this and think that on campus they have the rules, capacity, and bike racks to be able to do it correctly. They plan on being very systematic and strategic about how to go beyond campus, and need willing partners to do that. Dockless bike share is a one-way trip when you're on campus, so wherever you go, you can just leave the bike there and the app shows where the bikes are, so it can expand beyond the borders of Texas A&M. Once you sign up, through the app and the ofo community, they do some point stuff inside the app to encourage users to actually redistribute bikes. Ofo will have staff here in town as well to help redistribute bikes because there is potential that there may be campus class change redistribution need. You can sign up on the spot and ride a bike and are not required to be part of a network. Through the app or through the management console, through GPS technology, you can see where the bikes are. Mr. Kaspar suggested that since the ATAP is the appropriate committee, maybe they could take this up as a topic to talk about regionally and how we reach out to the two cities and county to work towards an ILA.

**TxDOT** – Doug Marino is now the official TAC member for TxDOT replacing Chad Bohne. Allison Kurwitz will still serve as the alternate for TxDOT. Since Mr. Marino is getting back into our planning side, he wanted to go over the project list to make sure there was a good plan going forward on how to tackle them. The City of College Station is working on FM 2818, and TxDOT is actively involved in that. The City of Bryan is working on the FM 158 project, and Mr. Kaspar will talk about the public meeting that was held recently. Mr. Marino wanted to make sure we don't get behind on any of the projects even though they are in FY 2024 and FY 2025 and to make sure there is a plan for moving forward. Mr. Kaspar was advocating for that yesterday because they have funds programmed in FY 2020 to design, and wants to start a year early in FY 2019 because since it is Texas Avenue he is expecting opposition to putting a median in front of someone's business. Mr. Marino reminded everyone that the way TxDOT is looking at the funds now, it is a ten-year program, and there could be a little latitude to move things around, but they've locked in dates for the most part. Things could change every year when they get new planning targets and they are trying to balance projects/funds statewide, but there are going to be opportunities to accelerate projects. Any agency that wants to get a bicycle/pedestrian project together, especially since it's not going to be the full \$10-\$12 million that we have programmed, should be relatively easy to get those let whenever those designs are done. Mr. Kaspar said the project on 29<sup>th</sup> is getting consultant selection

right now but it's programmed for 2026. That project may be perfect for this in six or eight months. The City of Bryan 29<sup>th</sup> Street project has already been pulled out, identified, and specifically listed. Mr. Rudge explained that it is listed as a specific project in the MTP and programmed in the statewide TIP as a separate project. Mr. Marino suggested that the sooner we can get a specific letting date, the funds can be pulled out of FY 2026 and put into the appropriate year. When TxDOT looks at the statewide fund balance, they will know there is a particular project we'll have ready for a specific year. On the pedestrian projects, it's probably about 50/50 for projects on state system versus off state system. The MPO will most likely receive a memo at some point from the TPP division that will highly recommend or say that either all or the majority of the projects that uses Category Two funds should be on the state system, but Mr. Marino thinks it will allow leeway, especially for pedestrian projects. He thinks we will be able to work around it, but didn't want the MPO to be surprised when the memo is received. This mandate is not going to affect the road projects. The road projects selected are all on state system. Leanna Shephard is no longer our TxDOT liaison; Ray Sanchez took her place as the temporary liaison for our area. During DDI construction, there have been a few traffic accidents where the construction is occurring. TxDOT has actively looked at making adjustments by trying to look at the dynamic in that area and make it safer. After meeting with Tim Lomax and some of the people from his office that is adjacent to the property, they are going to make some changes, such as a ramp closure. They are going to target the week of Spring break to make the adjustments. Along with the City of College Station, they are also going to enact a 50 mph construction speed zone through that area.

**College Station** – The Holleman Drive South project, which will widen the roadway to a four-lane minor arterial, was awarded by council and the preconstruction meeting is this week. The project should begin in early March. There are several permits that are under railroad review right now for city projects along the Wellborn Road corridor. Francis Drive between Munson and Glenhaven is actually starting, and then Phase II between Munson and Walton by College Hills Elementary. The next street will be Lincoln Avenue, but Mr. Schubert is not sure of the design time frame.

**Brazos County** – There is a public meeting on February 27<sup>th</sup> for Arrington Road and Ms. Banerji is hoping for a good turnout. Brazos County has already heard from a several people that are asking questions, so they are currently going through their comments and trying to respond before the meeting.

**Brazos Transit District** – BTD received \$1.2 million in coordinated call funds about a year and a half ago and which they are finally spending to rehab their facilities. It should be finished in about two more months. The current coordinated call grant request with TxDOT is due tomorrow. BTD is asking for several big items such as fleet replacement, the funds to build a new building in the back, rehab for the Livingston maintenance facilities, and transit studies. BTD is almost ready to publish the RFP for the heavy-duty buses, and expect it to be about an 18-month process before they receive the first bus. BTD ordered five Type Three buses that don't require a CDL. They are going to order a lot more of those because CDL drivers are so difficult to recruit. They are trying to branch out and replace non-CDL drivers for DNR and paratransit services. The only problem is that non-CDL drivers are not professional drivers so they require more training. They currently have several non-CDL drivers that have worked for them for the past few months and it is working out so far.

**Bryan** – In a workshop session this week, the council gave unanimous direction to proceed forward with the quiet zone. It will be brought back as a formal resolution in March. The Groesbeck and 15<sup>th</sup> Street intersections will remain open. Union Pacific was only willing to offer \$500,000 to close

Groesbeck and \$100,000 to close 15<sup>th</sup> Street which wasn't enough with all that would be required to do those closings and distribution of traffic elsewhere when it's the second busiest crossing in the downtown area. As soon as the resolution is signed, they will be able to issue their public authority application to FRA and which summarizes that the city is doing and seeking their approval. Once the application is approved, that's when construction of the improvements can begin. Funding is currently programmed for FY 2022; however, they are trying to do it as quickly as they can so are trying to borrow from other funds to make that happen. The current cost estimate is \$5.7 million which is higher than the budgeted amount. Until they get closer to the start, they won't know a final number. For the FM 158 project, they held an open house last week and had approximately 85 people attend. They had two large roll plots of the corridor aerials and participants wrote on them to make their comments or suggestions. There were a lot of concerns and a lot of good ideas, but participants felt involved and engaged and that their voice was being heard. The next design charrette will be on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) Program construction is continuing. They have finished all fourteen speed bumps and they are temporarily marked with reflective tabs while waiting for the subcontractor to permanently strip them. The choker islands along Broadmoor are three-quarters of the way finished and they are starting on the last two between Trophy and Nash. They are currently holding off on the mini roundabout at Janice Trail and Broadmoor due to some public concern. They have another segment to do, and then moving to Esther Street where there are three mini roundabouts planned. Those should be starting in the next few weeks. The city is taking applications for the 2018 LATM until April 1<sup>st</sup>. To date they have received fifteen requests. They are hoping to start the overlaying of Finfeather this week but the weather may still be a problem. Mr. Schubert reported that he met with Marshall Wallace and they are going to do a little bit of patching for about 40 feet South of the city limit sign. They are looking at least to extend the overly through there to get a nice clean break. Plans are at about 60% for the Woodville Road project which began as a utility replacement project. The project is from the bridge going over SH 6 through the Old Hearne Road intersection and has two full sized roundabouts. The construction on South College and Old Hearne Road has slowed down due to rain. It is the same contractor that they've had this issue with for a long time where the contractor has about five capital projects in Bryan, so it's a shell game of their resources being moved around.

## **6. Future Activities**

Mr. Rudge requested a speaker for the March 7<sup>th</sup> Policy Board meeting. Suggestions were given for later dates of the William J Bryan Project and Dockless Bike Share Program. Suggestions for current speakers/topics were the Federal Legislative Action Plan and renovations and changes to Easterwood Airport and Coulter Field. Mr. Kaspar asked if there would be a meeting regarding Highway 6 as Allison had mentioned. Mr. Marino said there wouldn't be a meeting at this point, but they would share the scope and take comments because it is really a scope and feasibility study. Once the information starts coming back from the feasibility study, that's where they will need input. As a group, the decision will have to be made to either build the ultimate section for a short distance or just add capacity for the longest distance possible. Mr. Schatz relayed a concern from a citizen about there not being a bike routes to RELLIS. Mr. Rudge said the ATAP is putting together a regional bicycle and pedestrian plan and RELLIS is one of the things they looked at. This plan will be coming to the TAC soon.

## **7. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:39 a.m.



BRYAN / COLLEGE STATION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Bryan-College Station Metropolitan Planning Organization

3833 S. Texas Ave, Suite 290 Bryan, Texas 77802

Phone: 979.260.5298 Fax: 979.260.5225 Website: www.bcsmpo.org

Meeting: Technical Advisory Committee

Date: 2/15/2018

Name	Agency
Paul Kopper	CoB
Doug Macino	Tx Dot
GARY SCHATZ	COB
Sarah Santoy	BTD
Wendy Weedon	BTD
Peter O'Lange	TAMU
JASON SCHUBERT	CoCS
Prarthana Banaji	Brazos County
Mike Parks	BUCOG
Nancy Berry	Brazos County

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

3/15/18  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**ATTEST:**  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan Rudge - BCSMPO