

***Bryan/College Station Metropolitan Planning Organization  
MPO Policy Board Meeting Minutes***

February 26, 2020

**Certification of Quorum:**

Voting members present were Commissioner Nancy Berry, Chair, Brazos County; Mayor Karl Mooney, Vice Chair, City of College Station; Councilmember Brent Hairston, Member, City of Bryan; Dr. Bill Stockton, Member, Texas A&M Transportation Institute; and Mr. Lance Simmons, Member, TxDOT Bryan District. A list of persons who attended is attached.

**1. Welcome and Call to Order**

Commissioner Berry called to order the regular meeting of the MPO Policy Board at 10:00 a.m. on February 26, 2020, at the Brazos County Commissioner's Courtroom, 200 South Texas Avenue, Bryan, TX. The meeting opened with the invocation given by Mr. Dan Rudge followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags.

**2. Public Comments regarding items not on the Agenda**

No public comments were received.

**3. Review and approval of December 4, 2019, Policy Board Minutes**

Minutes from the December 4, 2019, Policy Board Meeting were considered for adoption. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Simmons. The motion was seconded by Mayor Mooney. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

**4. Staff Report by Dan Rudge**

*Brazos County Regional Mobility Authority (RMA)* – The Brazos County RMA had its first meeting on January 30<sup>th</sup> with a lengthy agenda of organizational items. All of the entities approached contributed \$15,000 in start-up funds for operating assistance for the first three years of the RMA. A special thank you was given to Commissioner Berry who worked to obtain an additional \$25,000 from the Twin Cities Endowment Fund. The RMA will meet in March to continue with organizational activities, elect a Vice Chair, and begin work on the Strategic Plan.

*Brazos County Vision Plan* – All entities have signed the Vision Plan with the exception of the City of College Station who has not had the opportunity, nor been approached, to sign at this time. At the current time, the committee is working out a plan for funding the study and developing a draft scope for comment.

*Freeport to Fort Worth Freight Study* – The Port of Freeport has already received their dredging permits and will become the deepest deep-water port in the State of Texas. There

is potential for an intermodal rail facility at the Brazos Yard in Mumford and there is a large Burlington Northern Santa Fe intermodal yard (Alliance Yard) in Fort Worth. Trying to provide a direct connection between Freeport to the Alliance Yard would mean using State Highway 6 as a major freight corridor. The Bryan College Station MPO will take the lead on a freight study along the entire corridor in conjunction with Houston MPO, Waco MPO, and the Dallas/Fort Worth MPO. The intent is to figure out how much freight will be moving along that corridor and how it impacts State Highway 6 as well as I-35 West as it moves through Waco and Fort Worth. All approvals have been received from the Federal Highway Administration and the TxDOT Transportation and Planning and Programming and funding has been approved. The scope of work has been agreed upon between the MPO and Texas A&M Transportation Institute.

*2020 Census Complete Count Committee* – The committee is working diligently to engage the students; however, Texas A&M has given some resistance regarding meeting directly with the students. The current plan is to set up a table in the student commons to try and reach as many students as possible to make sure they understand how to fill out the form.

Mr. Rudge officially welcomed Bryan City Council member Brent Hairston to the MPO Policy Board. He will replace the seat previously held by Councilmember Greg Owens.

## **5. Annual MPO Safety Target Setting**

Under the FAST Act, the state DOTs set up safety targets for the state and then the MPOs are required to either adopt/support the state targets or set their own targets. Last year, the TAC decided to support the state targets. This year, the TAC discussed changing the targets; however, there is a document that contains information that some of the federal agencies are looking at how they might apply penalties for regions that do not meet their safety targets. With that information, the TAC unanimously voted to support the state safety targets so we do not risk being in violation. Mayor Mooney made the motion to adopt the State's Safety Targets as our own. Mr. Simmons seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

## **6. Amendment One to Destinations 2045**

In the agenda packet, there was a handout included with changes to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Destinations 2045) marked in yellow. No changes negatively impacted the fiscally constrained project list. The changes mostly included modifying some of the project limits, inserting the correct TxDOT project number, making some tweaks to the project description, and then in some cases there were changes in the construction estimates. Typically, these types of changes are considered to be administrative and it would not have needed to come before the Policy Board; however, one of the Texas Avenue projects goes further than the distance allowed in the change of project description. This project will go to Old Hearne Road instead of State Highway 21 which is a little over the quarter mile that is allowed with an administrative change. Mr. Simmons made the motion

that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan be amended as presented. Mayor Mooney seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

## **7. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment VII**

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a document that specifies how the MPO intends to spend all federal and state dollars from FY 2019 to FY 2022. Whenever there is a change in project funding, limits, etc., an amendment is required. As in the previous document, Destinations 2045, there were changes to project numbers, limits, and descriptions. In addition, Brazos Transit District has requested to move some funding into other categories. Brazos Transit District typically has categories of funds for operating assistance, debt service, and a variety of other things. Since they receive a flat allocation, sometimes they move funding around based on their needs. All of the changes are shown in a shaded color. The changes will bring the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program into accordance, which is necessary for federal funds to be applied and the projects to be entered into the State Transportation Improvement Program. Mayor Mooney made the motion to amend the Transportation Improvement Program as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Simmons. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

## **8. The Annual Listing of Projects (ALOP) 2019**

Under federal law, the MPO is required to list every project using federal funds that was let during the fiscal year. The project may or may not have started construction yet, but was let sometime between October 1, 2018, and September 30, 2019. Typically, the ALOP is due in December and it is prepared by Mr. Benthul; however, TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming in Austin put together the ALOP for all of the MPOs this year and it was received at the end of January and due by the end of February. Commissioner Berry made the motion to approve the Annual Listing of Projects. The motion was seconded by Mayor Mooney. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

## **9. Transportation Planning for Crossing Union Pacific Railroad in College Station**

Mr. Jason Schubert, Transportation Planning Coordinator for the City of College Station, gave an informational presentation to show what planning and capital improvement efforts are going on along Union Pacific Railroad in the City of College Station. Since the railroad obviously defines the community in a lot of ways, there have been different efforts over the decades to do something different with it. There have been a lot of investments over the years to put grade separations, etc., and the presentation provided an overview of crossings in College Station, what is planned, what projects you will see underway, and what long-term planning is being done to minimize the impact of the railroad through the middle of the community.

Mr. Schubert showed an exhibit they created as part of the existing conditions report in 2018. He went through each of the crossings and explained what was planned:

- F&B Road – On Texas A&M property. Planned to remain at grade. The travel lanes for Wellborn Road were recently reconfigured. No known plans for improvements at this time.
- University Drive (FM 60) – Nothing is known at this point regarding changes here. It is on the edge of the University Drive study and the Campus Master Plan discusses providing a better connection underneath the existing overpass for University Drive itself, but that's not affecting the railroad crossing, there's already grade separation there.
- Old Main Drive – Located on Texas A&M property and not on the thoroughfare plan. Existing at grade crossing with grade separation constructed in 2013.
- John Kimbrough Boulevard – Located on Texas A&M property and not on thoroughfare plan. Existing at-grade crossing with bicycle and pedestrian grade separation (Pickard Pass).
- George Bush Drive (FM 2347) – Existing at-grade crossing planned for future grade separation. TxDOT has completed a preliminary design concept. If/when full project funding is obtained, construction anticipated to after widening of FM 2818 is complete.
- Holleman Drive West – To remain as an at-grade crossing. Improvements to crossing currently in design by City, largely TxDOT railroad safety funds will construct. Wellborn Road will be elevated to increase crossing safety and capacity. Will increase the number of approach lanes on Holleman from two to three to provide dedicated turn lanes.
- Harvey Mitchell Parkway South (FM 2818) – Existing grade separation at railroad constructed in 2012. TxDOT in design to widen as a six-lane superstreet from FM 2154 to FM 60, includes grade separation at Jones Butler Road.
- Cain Road to Deacon Drive West – Upcoming project for later this year to relocate existing at-grade crossing at Cain Road to Deacon Drive West. City design complete and an agreement with Union Pacific is being drafted. Wellborn Road elevated up toward railroad. Traffic signal will be installed. To include eastbound dual left turn lanes at new crossing.
- Rock Prairie Road West – Existing at-grade crossing remaining with future grade separation added with MPO 2050 Thoroughfare Concept. City design is complete and agreement with Union Pacific is being drafted. Existing two eastbound lanes

over crossing will be expanded to four lanes to have dedicated left and right turn lanes.

- Future Major Arterial – Future four-lane arterial added with the MPO 2050 Major Thoroughfare Concept. Connects William D. Fitch Parkway to Rock Prairie Road West and includes a grade separation at railroad. City recently awarded a consultant contract to assess the feasibility of a grade separation in this location. The project will also create a schematic design for the widening of Wellborn Road to the south.
- Capstone Drive to Barron Road – Relocate existing at-grade crossing at Capstone Drive to Barron Road. City design is complete and awaiting permit approval from Union Pacific. Traffic signal will be installed at new intersection. Single eastbound lane out of crossing will expand to four lanes.
- Butte Drive – No plans currently for another street connection. Not on thoroughfare plan. Only public street outlet for 18 single-family homes in Shiloh subdivision.
- South Dowling Road to future Royder Road – Realignment and extension of Royder Road designated as a future Minor Arterial on the Major Thoroughfare Plan. Existing at-grade crossing at South Dowling Road to be relocated to future Royder Road extension. City in discussion with Union Pacific regarding concept to relocating the crossing.
- Greens Prairie Road – Designated as a Minor Arterial on the Major Thoroughfare Plan. To remain as an at-grade crossing. Crossing was constructed as part of Union Pacific’s closing of the Straub Road and Wade Road crossings further south.

#### Grade Separated Crossings

- The five major arterial or freeway crossings have existing or planned grade separations:
  - Existing: University Drive, Harvey Mitchell Parkway South
  - Upcoming: George Bush Drive
  - Future: Rock Prairie and Future Major Arterial
- Other grade separations exist on the Texas A&M University Campus at Old Main Drive and John Kimbrough Boulevard.

#### At-Grade Crossings

- The four minor arterials and two major collectors crossings are planned to remain at-grade: F&B Road, Holleman Drive West, Deacon Drive West, Barron Road/Capstone Drive, realigned Royder Road, and Greens Prairie Road
- Three at-grade crossings are planned to be relocated with traffic signals added: Cain Road to Deacon drive West, Capstone Drive to Barron Road, South Dowling Road to realigned Royder Road

Elements such as the addition of CSISD's River Bend Elementary, is all a part of the consideration when making changes. The addition of River Bend actually decreased vehicular trips to cross the railroad. There are also plans to better facilitate traffic on the west side of the track. As part of the FM 2818 project, a grade separation is being created at the Jones Butler roadway and the city will connect that grade separation into the Holleman South corridor which helps provide another corridor parallel to Wellborn on the west side of the tracks. There is the Jones Butler, Holleman, I&GN that connects community on the west side of the tracks all the way to the west campus. Long term, there is a plan to connect Highway 47 to Hopes Creek Road and further south as the western side of the county builds out and that roadway network is connected.

## **10. Announcements/Adjourn**

Congratulations to Lisa Lyon. Ms. Lyon was selected by the Regional Mobility Authority as their administrative assistant to serve as their secretary/treasurer. As a result, the MPO will share Ms. Lyon with the RMA, and beginning April 4<sup>th</sup> she will be in the office full time.

The Texas Association of Landscape Architects selected the University Drive Concept project as it's award winning project for the year. The award ceremony is in San Antonio in March. If Mr. Rudge is unable to attend, the consultants on this project, Halff Associates, will be in attendance to accept the award.

There will not be a March Policy Board meeting as it was moved to today. Because the Technical Advisory Committee will not have any action items on their upcoming agenda, the TAC will be working on some regional projects such as regional access management standards. Because of this, there will most likely not be an April Policy Board meeting.

The Policy Board meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.



*Tracy Berry*

MPO Policy Board Chair or Vice-Chair  
Bryan-College Station  
Metropolitan Planning Organization

04/22/2020

Date

ATTEST:

*Dan Rudge*

Dan Rudge - BCSMPO