Following are the minutes from the Mesilla Valley MPO Policy Committee (PC) meeting on Wednesday, May 14, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. at the Dona Ana County Commission Chambers, 845 N. Motel Blvd., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT:  Commissioner Billy Garrett (DAC)
                    Trustee Sam Bernal (Town of Mesilla)
                    Commissioner Leticia Benavidez (DAC)
                    Trent Doolittle (NMDOT)
                    Trustee Linda Flores (Town of Mesilla)
                    Commissioner Wayne Hancock (DAC)
                    Councillor Olga Pedroza (CLC)
                    Councillor Gill Sorg (CLC)

MEMBERS ABSENT:  Mayor Nora Barraza
                  Councillor Nathan Small (CLC)

STAFF PRESENT:  Tom Murphy (MPO)
                 Andrew Wray (MPO)
                 Chowdhury Siddiqui (MPO)
                 Orlando Fierro (MPO)

OTHERS PRESENT:  Harold Love (NMDOT)
                  Jolene Herrera (NMDOT)
                  Homer Bernal (NMDOT)
                  Claude Morelli (NMDOT)

1. CALL TO ORDER
Commissioner Garrett called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST INQUIRY – No conflicts of interest

3. PUBLIC COMMENT – No public comment

4. CONSENT AGENDA*
Commissioner Wayne Hancock motioned to approve the consent agenda.
Commissioner Leticia Benavidez seconds the motion.
Motion passes, vote 8-0 (2 Committee members absent).

Garrett: Any discussion about the minutes?

Garrett: Very good.

Pedroza: Mr. Chair?

Garrett: Yes.

Pedroza: Over here. Thank you, at some point and maybe at the end of the meeting, I'd like to get a little bit of an update on some of the materials that I don't believe I received, but I had been.........in the minutes in themselves indicate that I was told yes, this will be sent to you.

Garrett: Okay.

Pedroza: Okay, thank you.

Garrett: Anything else? In that case, would you poll Committee?

Murphy: Councillor Pedroza

Pedroza: Yes

Murphy: Councillor Sorg

Sorg: Yes

Murphy: Commissioner Hancock

Hancock: Yes

Murphy: Commissioner Garrett

Garrett: Yes

Murphy: Commissioner Benavidez

Benavidez: Yes

Murphy: Trustee Flores

Flores: Yes
Murphy: Trustee Bernal

Bernal: Yes

Murphy: Mr. Doolittle

Doolittle: Yes

Motion passes, vote 8-0 (2 Committee members absent)

5. *APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5.1 *April 9, 2014 – minutes approved under the Consent Agenda vote.

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1 Resolution 14-07: A Resolution Approval of the Functional Classification of Road System within MPO area.

Murphy: Thank you Mr. Chairmen. Chowdhury Siddiqui from our staff will be presenting on the process that we did with updating the functional classification. This is in cooperation with the NMDOT statewide effort of updating the functional classification and we are going…..ask this Board for approval of the Resolution, so that we may send the work product up to Santa Fe.

Chowdhury Siddiqui gave a presentation.

Garrett: Do we have any questions from the Committee? I’ll start on my right, any questions?

Garrett: Trustee Flores?

Flores: I just have one comment. I think on the…..page 25, that it would just read better, if the very last sentence said; that the proposed functional classification of roads system within the MPO area attached here to, so just to add…..that’s it.

Garrett: Thank you.

Garrett: Anything else on the right, on my left?

Garrett: Councillor Sorg?
Sorg: So, do you have a list of the streets that were changed because of this change in classification?

Siddiqui: Mr. Chair, Councillor, yes, the collector you see in the supplement document, all of them were changed into the sub categories, so that....yes

Sorg: These are all the changes?

Siddiqui: No, only the collectors, I believe is the second column and if you look at the second and third column, it would say current and proposed and you’ll notice that only the collectors has a change.

Sorg: I see. Okay, so they were all collectors at one time, now their split into minor and major.

Siddiqui: Yes sir.

Sorg: Okay. Thank you very much.

Garrett: Any other questions on my left?

Garrett: Let me give others time to think about this. One question that I have is, is this supposed to be descriptive of the existing system? Or is this descriptive of the system that supports planning and in that sense the future that we would like to see?

Siddiqui: I think both. We looked into existing ones and also looked into (inaudible) changes that we want to upgrade or degrade any of the functional classes, but the list that we have prepared does not include any such changes.

Garrett: How often would this be updated?

Siddiqui: (inaudible) administration says like every 10 years is their guideline.

Garrett: Okay.

Murphy: FHWA requires that it’s updated at least every 10 years, a few years following the census, once we finish the process of adjusting the urbanized area, (inaudible) which Chowdhury referenced in his presentation. Additionally, each time that we do the Metropolitan Transportation Plan update we reevaluate this on our level. We do it at least every 5 years and, additionally to that, at any time any one of our member agencies desires a change in the functional classification of roadway, they may request to go through the MPO process before the TAC and this Committee so this could be changed at any time. At least
The reason I'm asking, is we're going to talk a little later about work load and work plan, and one of the things that's on there is a special project that has to do with coordination with Viva Dona Ana and the regional planning effort. I think as we get into the comprehensive plan for Viva Dona Ana. An important question is the degree to which this map is a given and the degree to which this is a guide, and I'll give you a very good example, is that Highway 28 and Highway 478 are both identified as principal arterials and in terms of the planning that is going on. We're certainly, at least discussing the idea of thinking of Highway 28 as a different kind of corridor than 478. If you have been on 478 recently, and you drive that and you think of that going through San Miguel and La Mesa, that would destroy those communities, if it was done at that same standard, right? And so it's...what I'm trying to understand here is, I think it needs to be very clear that we need to be working in harmony with what other kinds of futures we need to create, and in that sense, that may come back and cause a need for modification of the transportation system. As long as that's understood here and as we work with the rest of the folks in terms of the regional planning we're going to be ok. But if we're saying no, this is the way it's supposed to be, that's an entirely different message.

Mr. Chair. I hear what you're saying and I think that we're in agreement here. The designations...such Highway 28 and Highway 478 are.....we have them identified as principal arterials because they connect important places. One of the key factors in the transportation plan is that we need to.....whenever we are doing projects, we need to look at the context.....utilize context sensitive solutions. We need to analyze the context of which these roadways are happening. Just because we have it.....Highway 28 is listed as a principal arterial and Lohman Avenue is listed as an arterial, the MPO is no way endorsing that those roads look the same at all. In fact we worked with County staff on your County design standards and those principal arterials are, can be two lanes in some instances, also then encouraging.....looking at the contacts once it gets it within a community. So by designating these on our functional classification map, we are no way endorsing any particular road design, for any particular facility. It's just a kind of statement of the importance of the road to the community and to the region.

Okay. I'm going to suggest that the MPO and in particular MPO staff, have an important role to play in terms of working with the consultant as we get into the final work of the comp plan and that one of the things we should look for as a specific product would be any recommended changes to this designation that better fit the selected scenarios, and so that's, that's a very.....that's beginning to get down to specific products that
would be very helpful and also extensions in terms of time and staff time and so forth. Okay, having giving you a little extra time, are there any other questions.

Garrett: Councillor Pedroza?

Pedroza: Thank you Mr. Chair. Following up on that, is there procedure for utilizing these classifications or/and is there a procedure for changing the classification, if somebody deems it necessary?

Murphy: Mr. Chair, Councillor Pedroza, the procedure for utilizing them pretty much determines the federal aides system of roadways within the Mesilla Valley MPO area.

Pedroza: Is that money Tom?

Murphy: That is correct. That is money. These are the roads that are eligible for federal transportation funds. Doesn't mean that anything is going to get it and particularly those of you who have been paying attention to the highway trust fund debates and in and around congress, realize we're probably not going to get anything on those roadways anyway, but this defines their eligibility. As far as the changing of them, I think what we would want would be to have a communication from the engineering or the public works, or even planning aspects or sections of your government, and then we could take such requests and evaluate it through the committee process. We'd have to hold some public meetings and then get a recommendation from the TAC and then have this committee vote on any changes in functional classification.

Pedroza: Thank you. Just one more question. I can't remember exactly where I read, but I read about something we've been hearing a lot about, maybe I'm just behind the times, but that west highway from the industrial areas in the southern part of Dona Ana county going to I guess to I10, that's not a highway that exists, that's only proposed highway, is that correct?

Murphy: That's correct. Currently the department of transportation is in the final process of a Phase A study on that. I think you got...may have got an update on it in December on it, I have some vague recollection of that, but that is.

Pedroza: I just saw this a couple of days ago.

Murphy: It's currently still just a proposed road. This map is representative of roadways that are constructed on the ground.
Pedroza: Will we have any kind of say as to how that road is designed? How it's....where it's laid out? Etcetera or is that simply out of our purview, our control?

Murphy: I think that's ultimately going to depend upon its, its final.....or the alignment that's recommended. I think I do.....there's one potential alignment that would fall outside the MPO area, which would, if connected from the industrial park, I believe it's to the Corralitos interchange, or even the next interchange to the west which is outside the MPO area. If it were to eventually line up into either the Jackrabbit or the Airport Interchange, then certainly this committee would have some say so over what happens with that roadway.

Pedroza: Okay. Thank you.

Garrett: Any other comments on the left?

Garrett: Alight, Councillor Sorg?

Sorg: Thank you Mr. Chairmen. I just so happened to pick one street out. Of course I was looking at several in my district, but it happens to be Peachtree Hills, and I see you have it listed as both a major collector and a minor arterial, so I assume you've split that street or the road into two different types, but I don't see it matched up on the map. We're not to go by the maps much then I assume, as to try to understand which is which? Do you know where Peachtree is?

Sorg: I'll help you out. On the map it shows it's a minor arterial until it gets to the west where it looks gray, which perhaps maybe, according to your legend there it's a local.

Siddiqui: Mr. Chair, Councillor Sorg. I'm just thinking if the urbanized zone area boundary, which is yellow, is over lapping that street, then it could discolor it.

Sorg: No it's not the case. It's all within the urban.

Siddiqui: Okay.

Sorg: At least the part of the road that's planned so far. There is parts that aren't on the map that are I assume is going to be built someday, but anyway thing like that, how should we learn more about that, or get addressed. Can we talk privately or individually or should say maybe.

Murphy: Mr. Chair, Councillor Sorg. You are certainly welcome to contact MPO
staff at any time.

Sorg: Okay.

Murphy: Specifically Peachtree Hill, at least on the future thorough fair plan, it's going to be a minor arterial, because it extends long distance and we've.....plan for a possible future under pass of I-25, so it's going to be regionally important and in the future it'll be a minor arterial. Any discrepancies on this map, because I do believe that it continues the remains of this day discontinuous roadway. It starts, basically starts and stops, and there might be some error in our GIS coding.

Sorg: Okay.

Murphy: But its future is as a minor arterial.

Sorg: Okay, so that it's only a .14 mile length that's listed here as a major collector.

Murphy: That's probably something that as we refine the database

Sorg: Okay.

Murphy: we will get updated.

Sorg: Okay. That's fine. Thank you.

Siddiqui: And just to add since looking at the length of the segment. It might be too small to be, have the color show up in this scale size. That can be another possibility.

Sorg: I just don't understand. Well, I didn't get the definition that are changing on the two different types of collectors. This is the first time I've seen it, and so I don't understand it too well yet. But I'll ask you later. Thank you.

Murphy: Thanks.

Garrett: Commissioner Hancock?

Hancock: Thank you Mr. Chair. I can assume that the square box on the screen, the UNTY is missing a CO. It's just an overlap I assume and it's not some acronym that I'm not familiar with. Other than that, if I understand there should be a point up in the up right hand corner at US 70, where US 70 a portion of it becomes rural, much the way we have interstate 25 and interstate 10 on the rural map, is that correct?
Siddiqui: Um.

Hancock: Still within the boundary of the MPO, but

Siddiqui: Right.

Hancock: Just past the yellow.

Siddiqui: The way our urbanized zone boundary went. It went just through US 70 until Organ.

Hancock: Right.

Siddiqui: So, um.

Hancock: So actually Organ extends, is that area to the east there to the right of NASA Road and kind of off that edge right there. So the yellow boundary then comes kind of like sweeping 70 and including 70?

Siddiqui: Yes.

Hancock: Okay so it stays urban the whole distance.

Siddiqui: Yeah, until Organ.

Hancock: Okay.

Siddiqui: Yeah. So, I say from Brahman to NASA Road to Organ the boundary, yellow boundary’s just the US 70.

Hancock: Okay, so that little bitty piece there’s just, that just....Okay, very good. Just trying to be sure I understand the map. Thank you.

Siddiqui: Sure.

Garrett: And on my Right? Yes, Commissioner Benavidez.

Benavidez: Thank you. Can you explain, okay, they principal arterial versus a minor arterial. Is it traffic versus eligibility for funding that makes it make a difference?

Siddiqui: As far as funding eligibility, it does not, but for traffic it does. For the principal arterial usually contains a higher degree of traffic volume compared to minor arterial.
Benavidez: For example. Let me give an example, Solano for example, they have a lot of traffic, so they still wouldn’t qualify to become a principal arterial?

Siddqui: Traffic volume is one of the things, one of the factors that we, that we investigate but then there is also the land use pattern, residential versus commercial. There is also the spacing between neighboring two arterials and other planning factors. So, based on everything the decision that you see in this list, are defined as principal and minor is an outcome based all of these factors.

Benavidez: Okay.

Siddqui: So, just having a road with higher degree of ADD triggers a flag that it can be considered as principal arterial, but then also, you know we start looking into other factors.

Benavidez: Okay. Okay thank you no more questions.

Garrett: Any further on my right? Yes Mr. Doolittle?

Doolittle: Yes Chair. I do have one comment. On your map, your legend shows that red is interstate, but that section of US 70 is also showing red. US 70 is not an interstate. So, I don’t know if your legend is wrong or if the color on US 70 is wrong but those two don’t match.

Siddqui: Mr. Chair, Mr. Doolittle. You’re referring to the segment that is on the east of intersection 35. Is that right?

Doolittle: All of US 70 right now, right from I-25 all the way to NASA is showing red but your legend shows that red is interstate.

Siddqui: Oh okay. Okay Mr. Doolittle we’ll address that and correct it. Thank you.

Doolittle: Thank you.

Garrett: Any other questions on my right?

Garrett: Okay. Let me just sort of summarize two points. One is whether the map is correct or whether the print out is correct as a reference, I think that’s a.....in other words it’s an important kind of point, particularly since we are having to approve this and have it sent in. Do you take the distances and classifications off of the map in order to generate this information?

Siddqui: Yes Mr. Chair.
Garrett: So the.....Okay so part of the problem is that US highway 70 is simply incorrectly classified as an interstate.

Siddiqui: That is correct Mr. Chair that will go to other freeway category.

Garrett: Okay, and then it'll change color and it'll be in all in the right place.

Siddiqui: Yes Mr. Chair,

Garrett: Okay. No, I saw that I just wanted to make sure what the process was, so. I think the second thing is that I.....some of the questions that were raised about other street/roads, I think it's important that as the transportation planning moves forward, that's also in a sense responsive to the other planning efforts, and I mentioned Viva Dona Ana, but the City of Las Cruces is going through a comp plan update too, and I don't know whether they're, what that relationship is in terms of whether their existing plan is going to change. If it changes, whether that will dictate changes to this classification system. But I think that that's part of.....does that make sense? What I'm asking? And what degree then is MPO also working with the City of Las Cruces in terms of providing information and being responsive to the possibility of changes in our classification of road.

Murphy: We are working closely with the Cities long range planning on their comprehensive plan update. We do give them the information as they request it, same thing with the County. As they decide that their plans change we adapt our plans and we change with them. We kind of advise them along the way, but once they make their decisions, they're the ones that the decisions on those things.

Garrett: Then you'd be changing these if needed.

Murphy: We'd change them, yes.

Garrett: Okay, alright.

Murphy: We are required to utilize all of their plans that they develop and adopt when we adopt our transportation plans, so that our transportation plan really reflects what the region desires. If that answers the questions you're asking.

Garrett: That, that's fine, and so Peachtree Hills is a certain classification in terms of the comp plan for the City, then that would be reflected here, when that's......
Murphy: As it ultimately gets built. Yes.

Garrett: Okay. Let me just ask one question on the people from Mesilla. Do you have an updated Comprehensive Plan now? When was the last time that was dropped, you were I think working on getting it updated.

Flores: We have a consultant I believe, and Trustee Bernal can correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe we have a.....that they either were working on the PDF for the consultant and scope or they already (inaudible) I think it must just be that they're working on it.

Garrett: Okay. That's just another potential connection in terms of all the jurisdictions. Okay, any last things here? If not, I need a motion to approve Resolution number 14-07: A Resolution approving of functional classification of the road system within the MPO area.

Commissioner Wayne Hancock motioned to approve the Resolution.

Councillor Sorg seconds the motion.

Hancock: Mr. Chair, only with the modification that was made with adding the word “the” in front of MPO area.

Flores: Can you take that as a friendly amendment?

Garrett: Yes.

Garrett: Okay. Did you catch that friendly amendment?

Doolittle: Mr. Chair.

Garrett: Yes. Mr. Doolittle.

Doolittle: It's probably worth them going through and checking all of it, because I just happened......just scanning through on page 25. One, two, three, four, the fifth whereas, it says the same thing within MPO region, so it's the location that Trustee Flores pointed out. I don't think is the only location that that takes place. It's actually in the next whereas after that.

Garrett: And it's in the third whereas.

Doolittle: So, it's probably worth just making that suggestion all the way through the entire document.

Garrett: Okay.
Hancock: I withdraw mine.

Garrett: So we'll just insert the word "the". Correct, Trustee?

Garrett: Alright. Can we take that as a grammatical minor edit, okay and......but we'll make sure that that gets in there.

Murphy: We'll completely search the Resolution on that.

Garrett: Okay. Thank you, any further discussion, on my left?

Garrett: In that case, would you poll the Board. Those in favor say yes, those oppose say no.

Murphy: Councillor Pedroza:

Pedroza: Yes

Murphy: Councillor Sorg:

Sorg: Yes

Murphy: Commissioner Hancock

Hancock: Yes

Murphy: Commissioner Garrett

Garrett: Yes

Murphy: Commissioner Benavidez

Benavidez: Yes

Murphy: Trustee Flores

Flores: Yes

Murphy: Trustee Bernal

Bernal: Yes

Murphy: Mr. Doolittle
Doolittle: Yes.

Motion passes, vote 8-0 (2 Committee members absent).

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1 FY15-FY16 Unified Planning Work Program

Tom Murphy gave a presentation

Garrett: Any questions regarding the work program?

Garrett: On my right?

Garrett: On my left?

Garrett: Commissioner Hancock

Hancock: Thank you Mr. Chair. That last element that you mentioned. That's not listed here in the packet, or it is?

Murphy: The sustainability accelerator?

Hancock: Right.

Murphy: Yes, that's correct. I received the request post printing this out.

Hancock: Okay. Is South Central Regional Transportation District included in that group?

Murphy: Yes it is, South Central Regional Transit District. I cannot seem to find it either.

Hancock: Not a problem, if we can just be sure they get done......

Murphy: Right. No it's in the current one. It's supposed to be in there.

Hancock: I think that's a major element of that.

Murphy: Yes it is.

Hancock: Mr. Chair, it's not a conflict to ask about other boards that were on other commissions or other things.

Garrett: No, We're all part of an interlocking directorate.
Hancock: That sounds cosmic. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Garrett: Any other comments on my left?

Garrett: I have one that I think we need to.....I'm just going to put this up consideration, in terms of this particular document, but I think we also need to have a discussion, probably at our next meeting. Regarding the continued participation of the.....this MPO. In the work of the Consortium as it extends beyond the HUD grant period. This is identified as Viva Dona Ana, but our relationship is actually with the Consortium, and so the question really is whether we're going to continue, because there are discussions underway as a good numbers of us know. About how do we continue to work together after the grant is finished? And I think if we're going to be talking about regional planning. Have the MPO, this MPO involved in that is going to be very, very important to the success of that effort. So, I think we need to.....without knowing exactly what shape it would take, it might be good for us to get a sense of the board as a whole, in terms of those discussions, so that......because that has an implication on the work load. It would mean that we would be continuing to look for grants to continue to participate in planning activities, in terms of implementation and so-forth beyond the time that the HUD grants actually concludes, so you could have dotted x's or something that continue to the right.

Murphy: Mr. Chair, I think staff would need to know, is the board comfortable with the language referring to as Viva Dona Ana with that? Or would it be better of referring it to as the Consortium and kind of making Viva Dona Ana a sub task of the Consortium as a whole, just so that we have it for publication.

Garrett: I mean personally, I would prefer or recommend that we do a Consortium. That's our relationship and then we have a project that we're working on at this point. But what does the rest of the board think?

Flores: I'm just thinking that people will understand Viva Dona Ana and they'll be familiar with that. I don't know about Consortium, so as long as Viva Dona Ana is included in that and so that people.......oh okay.

Garrett: So, in other words, that maybe the heading is the Camino Royal Consortium and the project that we're working on is Viva Dona Ana, and that goes.....I think right now we're sort of hoping that that....we're going to get a couple months extension on that project, which will take us probably to June, something like that.
Garrett: Yes, Councillor Pedroza

Pedroza: Thank you Mr. Chair. It would be really helpful if all the different entities could explore what your particular entity, like Mesilla and County and the City. What would require...there’s a possibility of you know more MOA’s, or memorandum of MOU’s, memorandum of understanding. There’s also another option, which is you know just...group that’s going to continue further after the grant is over, be friends with a representative existing body already, but if you could start to explore those things and see what best suites in each entity, that would help a lot. Thank you.

Garrett: Certainly. Yes Trustee Flores.

Flores: Just have one. Looking at page 36 planning factors under federal law, I just really quickly.....increase the security of transportation, I can see safety above, but I just kind of wonder what we’re thinking about, when we consider increasing the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users?

Murphy: I think that that is a direct quote from the federal legislation. It’s really up to us to interpret what Congress meant by that.

Flores: Okay. So, you don’t have any ideas either?

Garrett: Anything else? So, with the...did you have something.....

Benavidez: I have one question.

Garrett: Alright, certainly.

Benavidez: On task number 5: Special Studies and Miscellaneous activities under University Avenue Corridor Study. I see that there’s no activity. Is this part of the transportation letter that you’re waiting for? From I don’t know where but....

Murphy: Yes, we are currently in negotiation for price and schedule with a consultant on developing those products. I hoped to, by the time I bring these back to you next month that I hope should be ironed out and I should be able to put x’s in those boxes.

Benavidez: Okay. Thank you. No more questions.

Garrett: So, are we okay with the shifting the title of 5.1 to Camino Real Consortium, and then the task has to with Viva Dona Ana, alright with
everybody?

Garrett: Okay, and with that exception, then this would be ready to go out or be posted or whatever it's already posted.....

Murphy: It's already posted. We'll be taking these and other recommended changes from the TAC and the general public. Melting them into a new document, taking them back to the TAC and then bring them back to here.

Garrett: Could you go to the schedule, just so that everybody's clear about the schedule on this, in terms of our actions and it was.....yeah it was in the...up towards the top. Yeah it's there, there you go.

Murphy: There's a calendar, you know we develop......basically in February, March, April staff works with Mrs. Herrera and other staff developing a draft, publish that draft, post it on the website, hold a meeting at the TAC, and then we start accepting public comment. Then from June 1st thru June 15th, MPO staff revises it based on comments received. Then we bring that to this board for approval. We enter June meeting and then we submit that to NMDOT. They review it, comment, maybe ask for some changes and then they submit it to FHWA.

Garrett: So basically, it's mid-June. That meeting is when we are going to be acting on this.....

Murphy: Right, which is.......?

Garrett: And it's going to be minor things that might need to be clarified after that.

Murphy: Yes.

Garrett: Just that everybody's aware of the time frame, because although this goes to October, that's it and then we won't see this for about two more years.

Murphy: Well, and we can amend it as the committee desires.

Garrett: Okay.

Murphy: But October is, this is this is UBWP is the document that basically is our staff funding, so our fiscal year begins on October 1st.

Garrett: Very good, anything else?

Murphy: Very good. Thank you very much. Good presentation.
7.2 COMMITTEE BRIEFING: STATEWIDE LONG-RANGE PLAN (SLRP)

Claude Morelli gave a presentation.

Garrett: Questions, comments on my right?

Garrett: My left?

Garrett: Alright, Councillor Pedroza.

Pedroza: Thank you. Mr. Morelli, thank you very much. Were you suggesting that you would give us a better idea of exactly what is meant by security?

Morelli: We're trying to figure that one out. Yeah so, I guess the way we approached this planning process generally is, it's sort of a blank slate. So, we go in, we have groups that we know are important, some are defined under federal law. And we say, you know what, what's important to you? And then we start thinking about those issues from the perspective of the people that we talked to. So when we talk to the security people, we're going to ask them pretty much, what's important to you in the transportation system?

Pedroza: Who are the security people? I don't think I have any idea.

Morelli: Yeah, I'm going to start with a group called the ATAC, which I forget what it's called it's like the Antiterrorism Advisory Committee I think. They meet monthly, there's a meeting here in Las Cruces and in Albuquerque. They have a remote link and there's people from...I went to one here last month, we couldn't get the connection to Albuquerque, (inaudible) the meeting, but it was Air force, Army, I think there was somebody from the FBI.....those kind of people. We are going to reach out to them and find out what their concerns are.

Pedroza: Is there any possibility that the public could attend those meetings?

Morelli: Not the initial one. We may not be able to get them into a room if we do that. Not that we wouldn't want to do that, it's just you know we're not sure what the issues really are, and it'll be similar to the working group meetings. We're trying to bring in subject matter experts. We haven't necessarily made those public meetings. I think people need to feel free to speak their minds at some of these meeting and I think they had a kind of a spotlight on them they may not. We can....we'll certainly take notes and those notes will be publicly available ultimately.

Pedroza: Alright. Thank you very much.
Morelli: You're welcome.

Garrett: Councillor Sorg:

Sorg: Mr. Chairman. Thank you. Remind me who are the members of the working group?

Morelli: Which one? We have sixteen.

Sorg: The one that, you'll plan to meet down here in July.

Morelli: Oh okay, that working group has grown to something quite large. I think we have, it'll be everybody who is at the meeting we had in Las Cruces. Every single person in there, as long as you wrote a legible email address will get you. If you didn't write a legible email address, we won't get you. Plus, we had some people on that list already and those are people from elsewhere in the state, they'll be invited, and the COG economic development folks have said they want to be involved. So, we many expand the list to include them. It will be a big list. We do need help with a meeting location, and

Sorg: Yes, I was going to come to that next.

Morelli: That'd be wonderful.

Sorg: We'll have to work that out. The last one was a little cramped. Yes, okay, we'll fix it.

Morelli: And there's a little twist to it. Speaking of meeting location, the freight group we want to meet together with the economic development group and kind of do the stuff that's common and then have the freight people go off and maybe a different room and continue their conversation.

Sorg: Brake out type of thing. Okay.

Garrett: How big are they, if I could just interject.

Morelli: The last, freight ones, it depends on where in the state. We're going to have a freight meeting similar to this in the Southeast part of the state, and we're going to get a bunch of oil and gas and potash and people like that. They're not going to come here, so it depends on where we are. We had a meeting here in I think it was November or December down in Mesilla, and we got maybe 25 people in the rooms, something like that. So, we may get more or fewer, I don't know.
Sorg: Alright. Thank you very much.

Sorg: Thank you Mr. Chairmen.

Morelli: Welcome.

Garrett: Anyone else?

Hancock: Thank you Mr. Chair. The one element that I......it's quite interesting, the University UAS folks. Are they involved in the planning because they seem to be left out of a lot of stuff? They have that new FAA corridor that covers their space that almost of Dona Ana County now, for the unmanned vehicle testing.

Morelli: We will certainly invite them to whatever appropriate venue we have to get their input. In fact if you could, or actually through Tom, probably get any contact information you have, we will engage them. If we need to identify issues at this point, this is why I said we are not out of Phase 1 yet. We are trying to figure out things. Any issues, we can still incorporate.....we're going to run out of time on that at some point but I would say by mid-June we're going to be like out of time, but get Tom some contact and I'll call them personally or email them.

Sorg: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Garrett: How specific do you see the end product being in terms of individual projects?

Morelli: Yeah, great question. So under federal law the MPO's have to have fiscally constrained Metropolitan Transportation Plans. What that means, is you have a budget and then you have to projects that fit into that budget over a 20 year time frame. We, the way we set the scope of work up, we are affectively doing the same thing, we're doing revenue projections, I can talk about how we're doing that if you'd like, having a budget for a 25 year time frame, because we're going to 2040. Near term, the budget and the program is basically the STIP. It's already...we got 6, 5, 4 years out, and from there it gets increasingly more ambiguous, but what we're thinking, is we'll kind of have buckets or categories of projects and we'll say okay, we probably want x number of dollars in maintenance for pavements and x number of dollars in bridges for instance. Or transit service, x number of dollars there, or other types of things. Some of the categories, we don't have a pot of money really for it, like visitor travel, scenic byways, Amtrak, we don't have money for those so we have to figure out if we're going to prioritize those. Where would that money come
from and we may have to identify other sources that we’re not even in play yet somehow. Or propose sources that don’t even exist yet.

Garrett: I’m asking that question for very practical reasons. As we have been working on Viva Dona Ana and looking at regional planning based on the County as the planning unit, we’re dealing with two MPO’s and area that are not covered by an MPO at all. A good example of a project that has slipped through the cracks is the interchange at Upham between the south road going to the Spaceport and I-25.

Morelli: Yeah.

Garrett: And my concern quite frankly has to do with the fact that as far as I’m concerned the state missed that. Okay. Dona Ana County missed that too, but somehow just in terms of thinking about the commitments of state government to that as a project and so-forth, somebody should have raised a flag and said you know what, you need more than just money for the south road, you’ve gotta get started on planning, and part of what we’re hearing is, well there’s no traffic there, so there’s no basis for planning an interchange. Well, that’s the thing that’s going to chase itself around and around and around and quite honestly becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If we look at just STIPs and those kinds of thing, then we’re behind even more, 4 years out just in terms of getting things going. So, some of this has to do with how, I mean we can go through the exercise of talking about values and all that kind of thing, and hope and pray that out of all this sort of...it kind of deductive process, we’re going to get eventually to recognition that this is a project that should be a high priority. As opposed to saying no, it needs to get on the list next year, and so part of what I’m trying to do is understand how this process and I mean that’s one of at least two that I think are important to the region. How do we, how do we deal with those kinds of issues?

Morelli: Well, if it’s reassuring or not. You’re not alone, we’ve heard similar comments from other regions who have projects and so I think the issue of the spaceport is a couple of things. 1. it’s a visitor travel issue very much. I mean the numbers I’ve seen are quarter of a million in visitor a year or something like that. Where are they coming? Are they coming from down here, are they coming from Albuquerque, are they staying in T or C, are they staying down here, are they flying in, are they taking rail runner down? That’s been proposed. Are they on...there’s a proposal to run like a train, like the American Orient Express kind of thing down from Santa Fe. All those things are maybe’s and what ifs. Probably what we can do through this process is get a little bit more realistic sense of what the volumes are of people who might be going to a place like Spaceport. And once we talk about volumes, then you can say, well maybe there’s some
justification that hasn’t been thought about yet or not. That exists
everywhere in the state. There are other projects elsewhere in the state
that other regions talk about that are along the same lines. We do want to
do some reality checking. Spaceport is a real thing, if it were.....I was just
a conference in Texas on, it was on energy development. There was a
guy from Midland, Odessa and they want to do a Spaceport there too.
They want to put it right next to Midland, Odessa in the middle of oil
country and all this traffic and this and that, and I’m thinking......what I was
thinking when I was hearing this presentation, was you want to do that,
you’re trying to get approval, but we already have a Spaceport. So, we’re
probably ahead of them. I don’t know if that’s a satisfying answer to your
question. I couldn’t be able to say yes, that interchange will be on the list,
I mean that’s going to be a conversation that we have, that will involve the
budget that we think is available and all of the other priorities in the state.
But I think for the first time that I’m aware of, we’re looking at the question
of how many people are likely to go to a pretty important thing like a
spaceport, and then think carefully about what’s the most appropriate
transportation investment to support that.

Garrett: And what I’m going to suggest is that this is a specific process, which is a
good process, and I’m a strong advocate of planning and I’ve been
involved with lots of planning in the course of my career. The problem that
I see is that there are unique conditions sometimes that apply to a
situation. There are only two counties that are paying for the Spaceport.
Dona Ana and Dona Ana is paying almost all of the Spaceport, and Sierra
County. Don’t tell me that Santa Fe wants to run a rail down here and
bring tourist, okay, especially when they won’t buy in and support the
thing.

Morelli: That’s not our proposal for that.

Garrett: I’m just saying. So, there’s a part here which doesn’t in a certain sense
that has to do with just a practical reality. We’re paying 6 million dollars a
year out of tax payer money, from this county into the bonds for that
project and it doesn’t matter what the projections are, we won’t be able to
get more then like 10 thousand if we don’t have an interchange that will
handle the volume. So part of it is it’s partly how we look at the thing and
justify it. I’m all for it, making justifications, but it’s also that this is simply a
missing piece that the roads not going to be built for huge volumes of
traffic, but we don’t want to build an interchange and then tear it up and
build another interchange as we get increased volume.

Morelli: Right.

Garrett: So, I’m asking you to think about those kinds of projects and how they
come into the process,

Morelli: Yeah.

Garrett: Because I don't see them filtering through the system very well.

Morelli: I have an idea for how we can get it more on the radar screen, so what you just said I don't think is on our radar screen yet. Maybe it was a point you made at the, or somebody made at the workshop we had and I was reviewing the notes in draft form, and I didn't see that. But if that information about how the funding is coming from Dona Ana County can get into our, or at least into our existing conditions report, that's the basis upon which we're going to base a lot of what we do next, and so it would be helpful to have Tom, maybe send information to Tom, then send it to me, about what's going on, so that we know more clearly how much of an investment you're making and then weigh that along with all the other things we are looking at.

Garrett: The other project that I'm really interested in having the evaluated and getting into the system, because we are losing money every year that we're behind is the 404 interchange. That's the one I talked about as a (inaudible) Santa Teresa.

Morelli: Right.

Garrett: So, these are projects that are sort of are beyond what's in existing condition, but they open up opportunities. And because all the information isn't quite in place, it makes it hard and I think it's going to be harder to kind of push some of these things thru if they don't at least get on the screen.

Morelli: Existing conditions is slightly a misnomer. We....we're also trying to identify existing issues. So, that'll be part of that conversation.

Garrett: Okay.

Sorg: Mr. Chairman?

Garrett: Yes. Councillor Sorg.

Sorg: If I could add to that Spaceport comments you're making. I've been told by Virgin Galactic that they may have 60-70 people commuting from Las Cruces to the Spaceport daily.

Morelli: Yeah.
Sorg: So, add that to your bucket list there. Thank you.

Hancock: Mr. Chair.

Garrett: Yes.

Hancock: Since we’re on Spaceport. I’m hearing that part of the problem with that exchange, is that that interchange, is that we’re losing all of the Space Ex business because 180 foot rockets can’t negotiate that area.

Garrett: Right, thru the interchange, geometry of the interchange.

Hancock: Interchange. Right, because those are very big trucks and they have to get on and get off and it’s……..we’re losing all of that business. So, it’s not only, it’s not the……it’s not just the tourism; it’s a lot more than that. I mean we’re putting in a huge amount of money into this; it’s just amazing that it was left off the radar. There must be a way to, to expedite that and, because I mean we’ve already done it. It’s there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Morelli: It’s funny. I don’t know how many…….I could check them off, the issues that come up at every meeting usually transit over weight/over sizes trucks, so that issue is a really critical one there and what would be helpful to have again, and I’ll read the minutes to this meeting, but again it would be helpful to have some dimensional date on what those rocket assemblies are. Are they bigger than wind turban blades? Are they, you know what kind of……what’s the scale. That would be helpful to document.

Garrett: Okay. But I would just…..I hear you about that. Part of this is, this is an evolving…..we’re in the sort of ramp up to possibilities there, and the smart money is not going to say, it’s all tourism. It’s going to be, it’s going to be tourism and whatever else we need to make that economically viable and to capitalize on those resources. That’s a piece of this, is that I think it’s a huge investment and we just need to, we need to figure out how to return capital you know get a return on the capital for the tax payers.

Morelli: Right.

Garrett: And, so……any other thoughts?

Garrett: Yes. Mr. Doolittle.

Doolittle: Mr. Chair. I just have……since we’re on Spaceport. I don’t want to focus a lot on Spaceport, because I know we’re talking about planning, but just to give the board a quick update. We talked about Space X, we did have a
project on (inaudible) on New Mexico 51, we actually modified our traffic control to allow Space X to bring in some of their infrastructure, to include my understanding, portions of the rocket. So granted they're not coming from the south portion of the roadway, but we have made accommodations our current construction project to bring them in from the north. I tend to agree that at least the implementation of Spaceport and how we're, well initially even how we built it, you know the northern access road is a temporary alignment. Portions of that roadway are actually in railroad right of way. So, I agree with you, I think the state or whomever didn't necessarily plan on long term what was going to happen at Spaceport, but right now we are, at least doing what we can to make accommodations from the north part of the, north access. I have been in contact with Chad Raybon with Spaceport to try to figure out and brain storm options on what we can do to try to fund Upham interchange. But like we discussed, if we're planning on including it in the districts STIP with projects like Missouri, that's a $13M project, just maintaining our current infrastructure on our interstate is, is eating my budget. But we are having those discussions with Spaceport and we'll continue to do so, but I think as a group, if we could continue to be vocal and try to find ways of getting this in the planning and find funding, I agree with you. I think it's a priority, I just don't know to get there from here.

Garrett: It sounds as though one of the things that's important it to be able to provide some level of technical description of how big the openings need to be and any other technical descriptions, and it may very well be that because of the work that you've done, in terms of access from the north, that you might have some ideas about what might be considered.

Doolittle: We don't.

Garrett: No.

Doolittle: Unfortunately, what happened with the last project, they gave us about a weeks' notice. Luckily the contractor was in a transition period between one side of the road and the other, so we shifted some stuff around. We didn't have any idea what they were bringing thru until about a week before. A lot of that stuff, I don't know if its classified or top secret or typically we don't know those types of dimensions until it's on its way here.

Murphy: It's funny Trent's comments, or Mr. Doolittle's comments about that sounds so much like oil and gas. The...when they're drilling, the drillers don't want to tell you beforehand where they're going to drill because they don't want to release that information, so the next thing you know our...you know our district 2 folks are out there trying to fix a road that's been damaged by these heavy, heavy trucks. By the way. I would say,
not just linear dimensions but also the weight of the vehicles or the rockets is probably an important piece of information to have.

Garrett: Let me ask. Mr. Murphy. Is that something that you could get information on in terms of.....find out what they do around Houston? You know it's like, I don't know go somewhere and get something. Florida, yeah, I mean let's just find out what, get something as a reference point.

Murphy: Yeah, it'd be very helpful.

Garrett: You know, bigger than a bread box.

Murphy: We don't need a tome, we need just the executive summary kind of information.

Garrett: Alright, and then like I said, I think the other one is been of some interest, has to do with 404 and the whole connection and there's congestion, there's freight issues, there's economic development and you know social equity issues, all that down there.

Murphy: We did here about that at our workshop.

Garrett: And there's an overlap with the MPO in El Paso that we're going to be talking about shortly. So there's plenty of opportunities for our continued involvement. We want to thank you for coming and (inaudible) presentation and we look forward to helping us move this along.

Morelli: Thank you so much for having us. Alright, thank you.

Garrett: We'll help you. Okay. Thank you.

7.3 EL PASO MPO DRAFT AGREEMENT

Tom Murphy gave a presentation

Garrett: On my right? Trustee Flores.

Flores: I was just......the very last on page 104, 5. It says El Paso MPO and the Mesilla Valley MPO agree to host a joint public meeting outlining current and future planning activities identified in the UPWP's and MTP's and TIPS or as deemed necessary. We could either change that to as necessary or put in a specific time, a minimal amount of time and I would prefer to put at least a minimal amount of time in, but I'm not for what that minimal time should be so......
Garrett: Any other....

Pedroza: Mr. Chair?

Garrett: Yes. Councillor Pedroza.

Pedroza: Thank you. This is a question for Trustee Flores. Are you saying a minimal about of time within which to host the meeting or?

Flores: Yeah. That that way we would automatically have....because otherwise you might never get together and you know have a meeting if it's as needed, so I suggest that there, that we think of what a minimal amount of time is, or you know that we ought to meet together, and I'm open to what that amount of time would be, but I think we ought to put down, instead of....we could either do two ways. One say as needed or and cut out that "or", or put in a minimal amount of time and then say "additionally as needed".

Pedroza: I think that's a good idea.

Garrett: Which one?

Pedroza: To set an amount of time within which that meeting should take place.

Garrett: Alright, and what would you recommend?

Pedroza: Within......within the next six months. And then if it has to be changed.

Garrett: So it could read that this is the last point is on 104. Correct?

Garrett: That El Paso MPO and Mesilla Valley MPO

Pedroza: Right.

Garrett: Agree to host a joint public meeting on a six month time table, or a deemed necessary.

Flores: Right.

Garrett: So it's basically bi-annually. Is that bi-annually, twice a year? Would that meet your intent Councillor?

Pedroza: Yes it would.

Garrett: Okay.
Flores: I think that’s a lot, but I just said I was open to it, so. I kind of wanted to ask the staff what they thought, if they had a suggestion?

Murphy: Staff suggestion was going to be once a year or more as needed. I think just from historically trying to organize meetings with the El Paso MPO, given the complexity of getting their 23 members to agree to come to a meeting. I think once a year would probably be the most we could ask, unless of course a pertinent issue was, did arise and then we could have second or even third meeting within a year.

Flores: Okay.

Garrett: So there’s an alternative then proposed.

Pedroza: And I can understand the complexity of trying to get all this together, so I would be happy to withdraw my suggestion and make it the same as what Tom has said.

Garrett: Okay. Mr. Doolittle?

Doolittle: Mr. Chair, I just have a couple of questions I guess for clarification. When you talk about joint public meeting are you talking about having the policy boards from Mesilla Valley and El Paso MPO getting together or are you talking about having public meetings, where both present to the public, the MTP's and the TIPS, and the STIP's and what is the intent of that statement, when you start talking co-ed meeting? And the reason I ask, is you mention, I agree with you. It’s going to be extremely difficult to have the policy boards to get together. I can guarantee you that the representatives from Texas are not going to participate in something dealing with Berino, so I don’t know if the intent is to bring the two MPO's together, maybe the executive committee's would be an option. I just don’t know what the intent of that statement is.

Murphy: I do want to reiterate that this was drafted by El Paso staff. That it is a joint meeting that both of us host. That could include any...from a joint open house up into a joint policy board meeting. I think...narrowly a meeting of the two policy board or committee's would satisfy this condition, but then so an open house that where both MPO staffs were there in attendance within the Berino area affected, would also satisfy this condition. I think either, either or anything in between could satisfy that.

Doolittle: Okay. Again the only reason I bring it up is for instance, lately we’ve been dealing with the Lincoln Center a lot in El Paso and they’ve been talking about the El Paso MPO policy board, if there was a separate joint meeting.
to discuss the Lincoln Center. I wouldn't go. And I think that's going to
kind of be the same position with a lot the El Paso MPO policy board, if
were there to talk about Berino. I don't know how much involvement we're
going to have from the policy board. You know I do hope that Mike
Medina and his staff are certainly open to attending, I think that's their
responsibility to attend; I just worry about the Policy Board. We only have
one representative from Dona Ana County; we have one from Anthony,
one from Sunland Park I just worry about the participation from El Paso
Policy Board.

Garrett: Can I interject something?

Murphy: By all means do.

Garrett: Berino is not the issue. It's nice that, that you know we were kind of
looking at, at where the edges are. But the issue is the entire southern
part of the county that's in New Mexico that is in El Paso MPO, and that's
a critical area in terms of transportation systems and transportation
systems and the way they're developed are going to dictate in many,
many ways what happens in terms of land use, growth......I mean all the
other kinds of things that are going to go on down there. So I think that
the bigger question here in a sense has to with other planning activities
and really the question is whether we should say, you know we'd like to
basically I think either create a sub, you know sort of a joint task force or
something that between the two with the staff can meet regularly, and I
mean probably monthly in some cases for a while. To make sure that
what's being planned in by the El Paso MPO is in concert with some of the
work that's going on in New Mexico and in particular in Dona Ana County.
That's really the big issue, to me at least. Does that make sense?

Pedroza: I think that's exactly what I was talking about, because it's very, very nice
to see that somebody's moved ahead and actually gotten some
agreement about when to....place Berino. But it's certainly is not the
whole concern and so I think you've expressed it very well and I think that
it would need much more of an executive regularly meeting group, rather
than public hearing in some distant future.

Garrett: Okay. Did you have something? Okay

Benavidez: Yes

Garrett: Commissioner Benavidez.

Benavidez: Thank you. Commissioner Garrett, with what you said. That the El Paso
MPO will be, I guess working with the Mesilla Valley MPO on the
(inaudible) of understanding on section B. It says the purpose of this agreement is provide the frame work for the responsibilities of the E MPO and MV MPO in regards to federal mandated planning, programing and funding for the portion for a portion of El Paso urbanized area within Dona Ana County New Mexico. On the first section, it says the governor. Are we talking about the New Mexico Governor or are we talking about the Texas Governor.

Garrett: This refers to the New Mexico Governor.

Benavidez: Okay, so do we have a memorandum of an understanding from the Texas Governor as well?

Benavidez: I mean, do we need to get something saying that the Texas Governor is also in agreement with this memorandum of understanding?

Garrett: I may need to differ to NMDOT staff, but I do believe that the El Paso MPO exists within both states, with agreement between both Governors'. The particular boundaries of the El Paso MPO within the state of New Mexico really are just a concern between the New Mexico Governor and the El Paso MPO and that the Texas Governor's really not involved in that. Mr. Doolittle if I have the wrong impression. Do you know any different?

Doolittle: Actually Mr. Chair, if you will allow, I think Jolene because she's been interacting with both MPO's; I think she's got some information that may be helpful.

Herrera: Thank you. Just so you all are aware, I'm the NMDOT liaison for both MPO's. I did work with Mike Medina on this, well I didn't work with him on the draft, but he originally approached me about doing this memorandum of understanding and we gave him the go ahead to do it and to bring it to this policy board. I think, yes Tom you're right. The Texas Governor doesn't need to be involved. They were involved originally when setting up the boundaries of the MPO's and how it went into a different state, so that general larger agreement has already been made, any adjustments that we do to planning within the state of New Mexico is just under the purview of our Governor. If we were looking at actually changing MPO or urbanized area boundaries, that's where we'd have to get the other Governor involved. But since we're not doing that, we don't need to go that route. If I could add some clarification on I think the last point number 5, on page 104, that we were previously talking about, the public meeting. The intent there was, I think if you would like it to involve policy boards, that's perfectly fine, but I think the intent there was really to present to the public, because the boundary is kind of... it's in an odd place and so we want to make sure that the public along that entire corridor... if they have
any questions they can ask the appropriate MPO. Depending on what side of the boundary they’re on. I think it’s more for things like functional classification because those roads do span both boundaries. Things like planning obviously don’t stop at the MPO boundary; we need to be coordinated with that so I think it’s really just a way to get both MPO staffs to provide information to the public if they need it. I don’t think the intent was to involve the policy boards and that’s actually already written into the bylaws of the MPO. That you would do a meeting with El Paso MPO and it’s in their bylaws as well, so I’m not sure that it’s appropriate to put that here as well. And then to address kind of a larger question about the fact that this talks specifically about Berino, and not about other planning activities within Dona Ana County, Commissioner Garrett, that was kind of your concern. I just want to say that El Paso MPO is not for the lack of a better term going rogue. They involve Dona Ana County in all of the planning that they do. They involve the City of Sunland Park, The City of Anthony as much as they can. DOT is involved, so I do feel like there is coordination there. I think that probably some of those things aren’t being brought back maybe to you all and you’re not getting the report back on the coordination that is going on. Maybe theirs is something that we can do there but I just want to make it clear that they are taking everything into consideration and they’re not planning in a bubble and they’re not just paying attention to the Texas side.

Garrett: I appreciate that and I’m not suggesting that they’ve gone rogue or that they are only looking at Texas interest. On the other hand, it would be hard for me given the makeup of that particular group and the preponderance of representation from Texas, to say that necessarily all of our interests are being adequately represented, in perspectives and so forth. I think that this, this is really a great idea, partly because it’s not about changing jurisdiction. So, actually if you look at section 1B and that it has to do with federally mandated planning program and funding instead of saying a portion and we said “the portion” of the El Paso urbanized area within Dona Ana County New Mexico, which is exactly the same language as under 2A. That actually is the area that we’re talking about, and if.....then were to say the geographic area responsibility will be referred to as South Central Dona Ana County. That’s actually clearer in terms of...that’s the area we want to be making sure that we have a more robust and finer grained discussion about...with information going to both policy committee’s and both state MPO’s and you know DOT’s. I think that if we did that and then if under other planning activities, well actually that by itself would probably be a good enough response going back to that just to say okay let’s be clear about this is the area we want to talk about, and if we can start talking about that area and figuring out how to have that conversation. Then we’ll figure out whether we need anything formalized in terms of that. But I would suggest that that’s a pretty significant
clarification. Is to say it’s, it’s the area within Dona Ana County that’s within their MPO boundary. Now does that cover Chaparral? Okay, and it goes all the way over to Santa Teresa right?

Herrera: Yes sir.

Garrett: Okay, so....I mean it’s that whole area that we’re really wanting to have conversations about, and make sure that we’re all in sync.

Herrera: Right and Mr. Chair. That makes perfect sense. I think the intent of this specific MOU was to address the planning boundary that’s within Mesilla Valley MPO that’s in the El Paso urbanized area specifically, so that was what their issue......not issue, but what the confusion really was. Is that part of their urbanized area is in Mesilla Valley MPO.

Garrett: Oh.

Herrera: And really, how that came to be is still a little bit fuzzy. I mean that was before my time and I believe speaking to Mike Medina it was a project or something like that, but the point being that El Paso MPO because that is part of their urbanized area, they need to be really sure that planning is happening.

Garrett: In Berino?

Herrera: For that area, in their urbanized area. That’s the responsibility of Mesilla Valley MPO. And that was the intent of this document. I think the points that you’re making are a much broader discussion and that’s okay. I’m just not sure if we need to amend this document or if we need to have kind of a different approach to that broader discussion.

Garrett: I would suggest that lets just have it together, because.......Berino’s in my district and so I understand what’s going on there. It’s not that there’s going to be huge issues with transportation.

Herrera: Yeah.

Garrett: Unless they’re going to get into private roads, but I think this is an opportunity to, to address the issue of Berino, but then.......and, and all other aspects. I mean that would the editing then that I would propose that you look at

Herrera: Okay.

Garrett: And to say that you know that just to clean it up so that we know now that
there's an overlap of jurisdiction and we want to sort that out but also, we
want to say yes, but we also want to share planning responsibilities and
discussion about the rest of what of what's in Dona Ana County that's in
the MPO.

Herrera: Okay. Yeah I'm.....

Garrett: Does that make sense to everybody?

Hancock: Mr. Chair. Well if we're going down that road, why not straighten out the
problem. I imagine that it was originally included because they needed
enough population to meet some criteria that was out there and there was
enough population that or, why would we cross state boundaries like that
just makes no sense.

Garrett: You mean why did the Governors sign off part of Southern New Mexico to
Texas?

Hancock: 1:52 Yeah

Herrera: It has to do with urbanized area, it's they're.....identified by the census
bureau. So it's I think written that you, it's not in the benefit of anyone to
try to split an urbanized area and since that southern part of county is truly
within the El Paso urbanized area, meaning there aren't any gaps in
between. It's one area. You can't split them like that, which is why we
have the situation we do. And this isn't the only place where it happens. I
mean it happens in other states as well, where you have one urbanized
area that starts the state line.

Murphy: Donate it to Texas.

Garrett: Okay. Yes Councillor Pedroza

Pedroza: Thank you. Thank you very much. I wonder, you said that you don't know
who it is who should be reporting to us. Would you be able to find out that
information, because I think that's really important and maybe it isn't but if
we knew who it is that's going and getting information or possibly, possibly
representing us and then not coming and giving us the report and
informing us. We need to correct that, so would you be able to do that?

Herrera: Sure, that information is on the El Paso MPO website. All of the members
of the Technical Advisory Committee and the Policy Committee are listed
there, to include the Dona Ana County representatives.

Pedroza: Alright, and you can send me the website information or is it just El Paso
MPO. Thank you very much,

Garrett: Any further discussion about this, so I guess direction... just in order to keep the discussion going and at least for the discussion. I think the idea of dealing with the Berino portion is just fine as far as I'm concerned. I think that the larger issue is we want to start having this figuring out how to have this other kind of discussion and actually joint planning involvement in that particular area. That's less about the overlap between two MPO's then it is between New Mexico and Dona Ana County and the El Paso MPO.

Herrera: Right.

Garrett: And that's really where the issue I think comes in.

Herrera: Okay.

Garrett: Okay.

Herrera: So, just for my benefit and for Mesilla Valley MPO staff benefit, you want to move forward with sort of this draft with just the Berino portion or no, you want to go ahead and try to amend this document to include the broader issues

Garrett: I would suggest that.....we're going to be talking about an MOU's, so let's go ahead and bring the....It might be that that's a larger question for them, we want to make sure that this other issue is also addressed.

Murphy: Mr. Chair, if I may. I hear what Jolene is saying about splitting in two issues. I do think that this is a larger question that would probably be worthy of having as an item at a joint meeting between the two boards, so that this particular interest....the portion, the urbanized area within Dona Ana County can be addressed because you know it is...I think that's a decision up at the policy member's level and both of the two boards probably need to get together in order to iron that out.

Garrett: I don't know a better way to make sure that they understand that we want to have the conversation then to have it in a draft that goes back to them. I mean I'm not saying how this is all going to play itself out. We've been talking about this since I came on the committee, this relationship and questions of jurisdiction and stuff like that and it just seems that we need to make sure that maybe this will help precipitate that meeting.

Murphy: Okay. So you would recommend that we send a counter proposal language rather than.....okay.
Garrett: See what the result, what the reaction is? I mean what we're saying is that there are these differing jurisdictions and planning and all that kind of stuff and it just makes sense.....I mean part of what we're dealing with is that we've got an urbanized area and then we got our area here with the MPO and all kinds of other indicators are, you don't want to silo things. It's partly why you don't want to split the urbanized area, but it's also speaking to the issue, well we don't want to also split southern Dona Ana County off from the rest of this area. I think that that's simple.

Garrett: And I don't know what would come out in terms of planning and discussions and project priorities, but that that is a concern.

Garrett: Yes Mr. Doolittle,

Doolittle: Mr. Chair, Jolene, I think one thing that would be helpful and you and I kind of talked about this is, what is the El Paso MPO doing for Dona Ana County? Can we get a list from Mike of what our funding does, what they utilize the funding that we provide them for, for Dona Ana County? I think that's one of the missing pieces of information that we have, is I don't think we're sure of what the El Paso MPO does with our money for New Mexico.

Herrera: Sure. Yeah we can do that. It's actually written into their UPWP and its specifically broken out the New Mexico portion and in New Mexico funding that is spent on doing that. I mean we do have that document but we can certainly make that accessible to the policy board.

Doolittle: The other reason I ask that, is in my opinion I think Jolene will agree with me. Based on the amount of money that we give the El Paso MPO, I think they go way above and beyond what we fund, and so even if there's items that aren't listed in the EPWP or things that they're doing, utilizing funding that's not New Mexico, I'd like to see that list on that list as well.

Herrera: Right. Well I can give you an example, just right now is the modeling, all of the modeling that goes into getting air quality conformity, because their, that area is non-attainment for air quality. They have to do modeling before any of the MTP's or TIP's or anything can be approved. So they do that for the New Mexico portion of their boundary as well. We pay them approximately 47,000 dollars a year. Those models are really expensive, so they're doing some of that with money that maybe isn't necessarily being paid out of New Mexico. That's a huge thing that they service that they provide.

Doolittle: But I think it would be.....that that's a good first step and then we could
start having the discussion with the El Paso MPO on what we can use
their services for to help out transitioning across the boundary I guess for
all of Dona Ana County. I agree with you completely Mr. Chair, that I think
it's important for us to know up front what they're doing for us first.

Herrera: Yeah we can certainly do that. I also wanted to make it clear that this draft
was sent as a draft, it's just a starting point. It was never meant to be like
here sign this. It was just something that they wanted to start the
conversation and at least have something....a starting point. So I think it
would be appropriate for Tom to go ahead and communicate all of your
comments back to Mike and come up with a new draft that's more suitting.

Garrett: Any other comments. Let me just add one last thing. Because I think Mr.
Doolittle brings up an important point. The money that goes to the El
Paso MPO for New Mexico is from the state. Correct? And so we might
very well find that as a policy board in conjunction with the county and
some other entities that we might want to petition the state to make sure
that there's additional funding that goes to the El Paso MPO if they're
going to continue planning and modeling and other kind of things, if we
need additional work there in order to deal with the unique problem in
southern Dona Ana County. It's not about beating up the El Paso MPO it
really is about our understanding, what's going on and figuring out what
we can do to work with them, what additional steps we can help to make
their work more informed and what additional things need to be done to
increase their capacity to deal with our issues. I mean I'm saying our in
the largest sense of the, of southern New Mexico.

Herrera: Right and those conversations do happen. I mean Mike contacts me
whenever there's anything that they're thinking about doing for the Texas
side that he thinks could be beneficial to the New Mexico side. And at this
point, a lot of it is trying to find funding. Here's just something, some more
food for thought, so the planning funding that NMDOT does give to El
Paso MPO, because of the work that they do for us and maybe the local
governments don't have the capacity to provide the local match. They're
not required to pay a local match for the planning funds for the work that
El Paso MPO does in the New Mexico portion. Whereas Mesilla Valley, I
mean you all paid a local match for planning that you do here within their
boundaries. I think there's something to be said for that. We understand
the importance of what they do for us and we made it so that nobody has
to pay that local match because it would be a burden on the local
governments there, and then also if I could clarify, because El Paso MPO
is a TMA (transportation management area) they do get funding directly
funneled to them from FHWA, so it does go through the DOT but they get
it from the TXDOT side and they get the funds from the New Mexico DOT
side, aside from the planning money. What we see with that is that none
of the local governments can match the funds, which is why there aren’t any projects in the southern Dona Ana region in the El Paso MPO TIP.

Garrett: Can that be matched by the County?

Herrera: Yes. It can be matched by whoever the lead agency is on a project. So if the county were to come to El Paso MPO with a project and the match it would be in the TIP.

Garrett: Okay. I mean the more that we learn about this the more we’re going to see that there are other possibilities. Okay

Murphy: Mr. Chair. Along those same lines, you know we’ve got the match that we did for Airport Road. Okay, well that’s within their district, could we have leverage that more by running it through the El Paso MPO? We only leveraged it 2:1, could we have leveraged it 3:1 or 4:1 by pushing it through the other direction?

Herrera: Right. So you’re talking about the state, the funding that was given by the legislature

Murphy: Yes.

Herrera: So that funding could have potentially been used as match funding.

Murphy: Right. So we could have leveraged it many times over?

Herrera: Right. And can I just say that with that project in particular, because it kind of is of regional significance it will have to be coordinated with the El Paso MPO at some point because it is within their boundary. And the county staff is actually coordinating on that already through the El Paso MPO. I just received an email from Jorge Castillo this week about project proposals.

Murphy: Okay that’s great. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Garrett: My guess is there’s a lot of coordination’s happening at the staff level. It’s at the policy level we don’t always get the connections

Herrera: Right. Yes.

Garrett: Okay. Alright thank you.
7.4 NMDOT UPDATES

Trent Doolittle presents NMDOT updates.

- I-10/Avenida De Mesilla project - Westbound off ramp expecting to open up the first week of June.
- North Main project - Working on the utilities, addressing business issues.
- US 70 paving project - Project is finished.
- US 70 barrier project - Rinconada from I-25 60 day ramp up time to acquire materials, state date is May 27th.
- Mesquite Interchange project - working on detour to demolish bridge.
- Santa Teresa Port of Entry - Drive pads into the inspection facility.
- Chip sealing all of 28 - Public meeting of delays.

Garrett: How far down does that go?

Doolittle: All the way to the state line.

Garrett: Right. Could I suggest that you consider having the other meeting in La Mesa?

Doolittle: Certainly.

Garrett: And the County does have a small community facility there.

Doolittle: And who would they coordinate with to...we'll have contacts. Bridget knows who to contact.

Garrett: Yeah. That's, that's going to be with facilities and parks.

Doolittle: Okay.

Hancock: Mr. Chair?

Doolittle: My expectation is it probably won't be finished, it's a 330 day calendar project and we started late last summer. You're probably looking at late summer, early fall before we get finished with that project.

Garrett: Very good. For those who couldn't quite here that, that has to do with the I-10 interchange and Avenida De Mesilla.

Doolittle: Correct.

Garrett: With the estimated or projected finish in late summer, early fall.
Doolittle: Yes
Garrett: Okay, other questions or comments?
Hancock: Mr. Chair.
Garrett: Yes, Commissioner Hancock.
Hancock: Mr. Doolittle, have the arrangements been made for the bus stops down 28, the 32 bus stops?
Doolittle: Yes.
Hancock: Okay. We have agreements in place and everything’s ready for that?
Doolittle: Yes. From my understanding we have the posts already installed, is that correct? And now we’re working on invoicing and sign are being made to be placed on the posts.
Hancock: Very good. Thank you, appreciate it.
Garrett: Anything else? Very good, thank you for that update.
Doolittle: Thank you.

7.5 ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATES

Murphy: One update, the technical advisory committee will be considering the draft plan. It was referenced in your packet that we be giving it separately, I think we forgot to being paper copies here today, we can email you it, this document I have here up on the……Oh we did it. Sometimes they don’t tell me what we do. Alright, so the TAC will be considering it next month and then we will be taking it here for adoption shortly after. Please review and if you have any questions don’t hesitate to contact anyone on staff.
Garrett: Thank you, any questions about that? Okay

8. COMMITTEE AND STAFF COMMENTS

Garrett: Just one that I would offer, that is that the more that we get into this, the more that we get into this, the more I realize how slow and difficult it is to make changes. I think it’s important that we’re looking for flexibility, but there’s a lot in terms of coordination with the state and with federal, with making sure that we’re doing all the due diligence that this is not only does the system itself get kind of fixed in the ground, but the process of actually
making adjustments becomes pretty tough and we seldom have real opportunities to sort of get ahead of the curve and I think that that’s part of the opportunity that we have with the state plan and that we need to be really looking at what we can do, because once that gets set, that’s going to be even harder to change some of these other things that we might want to see in terms of what the future would look like for our area. Staff comments?

Murphy: None.

Garrett: Any other public comments? Yes?

Sorg: I might like to concur with you on that, and to punctuate what you’re saying, is the North Main from Solano to Elks Drive Highway, that is in terrible shape and if the member from...DOT, Mr. Doolittle can make any comment on any future planning for that particular piece of road. This has been back in the background, like the interchange at Engler too. Is there any additional planning on that part of the Highway 70?

Doolittle: Honestly we were hoping the city would make the developers six lane it all. There isn’t, at this point we continue to have those discussions. It’s just as important for us. I mean we’re continuing to have to do grinding at Elks and 70 because the pavement is shoving and moving. It’s important for us, it is not in our 4 year planning STIP.

Garrett: And if I may add to that, it is in the long range plan. The six lane was part of the US 70 study that was done a while back. The broken up into six or seven, eight, nine phases, the portion that they’re doing now between Chestnut and Solano is Phase 8 of the nine and Phase 9 is the portion from Solano thru Elks, so even though it’s not in the former it does, it is in the long range plan and at some point we would hope that it will flow down.

Sorg: May I add to that? Another question, these interchange....intersections like Solano and Main for example and Elks and Main, can those intersections be done separately from the sections of road in between?

Doolittle: They could.

Sorg: Okay.

Doolittle: But ultimately because that continues to be a corridor. We would certainly want to look at if traffic volume requires a six lane facility, which in my opinion it does.
Sorg: Well I just looked at the numbers and it has the highest numbers on the whole list.

Doolittle: Right.

Sorg: Of the ones you’ve done so far.

Doolittle: But with that being said, if we’re going to do improvements for instance at Elks, we would want to make sure that we design it and build it for a six lane facility so that we don’t have to come back and tear into that intersection when we do the connections between Three Crosses and Elks.

Sorg: Okay. I just wondered if you could do them separately, but still have it all planned out the same you know together I should say.

Doolittle: One comment I will share with you is, typically at nothing comes of it, but every year at legislature they ask for unfunded urban projects. That is my number one priority projects submitted every single year.

Sorg: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Sorg: Thank you Mr. Chairmen that’s all I have to say.

Garrett: Very good.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Garrett: Anything from the public or others who are here? In that case I just want thank everybody for the hard work that they have put in on making this work.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

Chair