MESILLA VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY COMMITTEE

The following are minutes for the meeting of the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Committee which was held October 14, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers at City Hall, 700 N. Main Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT:  Commissioner Leticia Benavidez (DAC)
                        Trent Doolittle (NMDOT)
                        Trustee Linda Flores (Town of Mesilla)
                        Councillor Olga Pedroza (CLC)
                        Mayor Nora Barraza (Town of Mesilla)
                        Councillor Gill Sorg (CLC)
                        Councillor Nathan Small (CLC)
                        Trustee Sam Bernal (Town of Mesilla)

MEMBERS ABSENT:  Commissioner Wayne Hancock (DAC)
                        Commissioner Billy Garrett (DAC)

STAFF PRESENT:  Tom Murphy (MPO staff)
                        Andrew Wray (MPO staff)
                        Michael McAdams (MPO staff)

OTHERS PRESENT:  Hilary Beringer
                        Gabriel Rochelle
                        Gary Gail
                        Becky Baum, RC Creations, LLC, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER (1:04 p.m.)

Flores:  Okay. I'm going to call this meeting to order because it's a little bit after 1:00 on October 14th at 1:00 p.m. First let's have a roll call for a quorum.

Murphy:  Trustee Bernal.

Bernal:  Here.

Murphy:  Mayor Barraza.

Barraza:  Here.

Murphy:  District Engineer Doolittle.

Doolittle:  Here.

Murphy:  Councillor Pedroza.
Pedroza: Here.

Murphy: Commissioner Benavidez.

Benavidez: Here.

Murphy: Councilor Sorg.

Sorg: Here.

Murphy: And Trustee Flores.

Flores: Here. Okay.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST INQUIRY

Flores: Second let's move to Conflict of Interest Inquiry. Does anybody on the, does any Committee Member have any known or perceived conflict of interest with any item on the agenda? Okay. Seeing none I'll just say that I know Father Rochelle and that I have asked him to, I've asked him to apply for this position in the past but I don't see that as a conflict so if anybody has a problem with it I'll abstain from voting on that. Not seeing anybody with any problems. I will note that Councilor Small has just entered and okay.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Flores: So then we'll move along to Public Comment. Anybody from public? Okay.

4. CONSENT AGENDA *

Flores: Then let's move to the Consent Agenda. Can I get a motion to approve the minutes?

Sorg: Move to approve the consent agenda.

Flores: Okay. That was from Councilor Sorg.


Flores: And a second from Commissioner Benavidez. So all in favor?

MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY.
Flores: Anybody against? Seeing none.

5. * APPROVAL OF MINUTES -

5.1 *September 9, 2015

- THIS WAS VOTED ON VIA THE CONSENT AGENDA

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1 Appointment to BPAC

Flores: We'll move to Action Items: 6.1, Appointment to the BPAC. I'll turn it over to Mr. Murphy.

Murphy: Okay thank, thank you Madam Chair. We had a recent vacancy on the Bicycle and Pedestrians Facility Advisory Committee. We advertised for an appointment. We did receive two applicants; however one of them after your packets were sent out did withdraw from consideration. So remaining in this is Gabriel Rochelle as, as, and he's present in the audience. I believe the correct action would be to affirm his appointment, get a motion and a second and he's available if, if anybody would like to ask him any questions.

Flores: Okay. Is ...

Barraza: Madam Chair ...

Flores: Yeah. I was going to ask Father Rochelle if he wanted to come forward and say anything.

Rochelle: Thank you. Yes,

Flores: Do you have anything you wanted to add or, we, we've gotten a copy of your letter ...

Rochelle: I ...

Flores: In our packet.

Rochelle: I think it was fairly, I think what I said was fairly concise and pretty much covered the, the waterfront of what my history is in cycling.

Flores: Okay.
Rochelle: I'm currently involved particularly with Velo Cruces and, which has just been, we've been just getting that off the ground in the last year. We just began in January. And the other, the other project that I've been trying to work with is establishing some sort of an earn-a-bike program in the area. I had a long history of that where I came from. I came from a city that was about the same size as Las Cruces and it was a very successful program in dealing particularly with inner city kids and kids who were suffering abuse. So there's a number of players at the moment involved in that committee and I'm just trying to head that up and see if we can get somewhere with it so …

Flores: Okay.

Rochelle: That's sort of mostly on my agenda these days. That and riding.

Flores: All right and I've, I've seen you around town riding so thank you. Did anybody have any questions for Mr., for Father Rochelle?

Barraza: No. I don't have, Madam Chair.

Flores: Okay.

Barraza: I don't have any questions for Father Rochelle but I'm very happy to recommend him for this position. He does live right across the street from me and he is always on his bicycle and as we drove, as I was walking in I asked him, "You're just all over the place." And I asked him how many miles he rides a week and he said 200 miles. And to date he's close to 7,000 miles from the first of the year to present so I think if anyone is interested in bicycling, and I think he has a couple of bicycles in that garage of his and …

Rochelle: I think there are four at the moment. I sold one last week.

Barraza: Oh did you? And so I, I strongly recommend his appointment to this committee.

Flores: Thank you.

Rochelle: Thank you.

Flores: Councilor Pedroza did you have a comment?

Pedroza: I, I have a question.

Rochelle: Yes.
Pedroza: Are you the same Father Rochelle who writes an article in the Friday Sun News?

Rochelle: Yes.

Pedroza: Okay.

Rochelle: I am.

Pedroza: Then welcome.

Rochelle: I ...

Pedroza: I also would recommend.

Rochelle: I also, I also, the, the, I wrote a column on cycling for two years for the Bulletin and I've now shifted over to writing, writing for Desert Exposure which is owned by the Bulletin now. And recently I guess it's the Silver City Press asked if they could publish my columns too so there's a little bit of, there's no money in this, no money in this but you know but at least it's getting some word out and I hope it affects a few people. I'm really interested in improvement of quality of life for everybody in this community but particularly for cyclists because it, it, it can be a dangerous place. I was on the committee that reviewed the, the qualifications for the League of American Bicyclists' you know annual award and we made it to bronze again this year and in fact we got some, some fairly good kudos on, on improvement over the course of the last four years. So we can, we can only work and push forward to the next level. Thank you.

Sorg: Madam Chair.

Flores: Councilor Sorg.

Sorg: I'll move to approve Father Gabriel Rochelle, Rochelle.

Flores: Rochelle.

Rochelle: Yes.

Sorg: Appointment to the Bicycle and, and what do you call it? Bicycle and ...

Flores: BPAC.

Sorg: Pedestrian Facilities Advisory Committee.

Flores: Do I hear a second?
Pedroza: Second.

Flores: Okay. That was a second from Councilor Pedroza. Are we going to do it "all in favor" or should we do a roll call?

Murphy: Chair's pleasure.

Flores: Okay. Then let's do an "all in favor." All in favor?

MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY.

Flores: Okay. And anybody against? Okay. Hearing none, unanimous and thank you Father Rochelle for taking on this position. Okay.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1 University Avenue Study Corridor

Flores: So we'll move Discussion Items: 7.1, University Avenue Study Corridor.

Barraza: Madam Chair. I think we need to approve the agenda, the Consent Agenda.

Flores: Oh. Did we not do that? I'm sorry.

Barraza: We (inaudible) the, the public input also.

Sorg: Yeah. We did.

Flores: We did public comment. There wasn't anybody from the public.

Barraza: Okay.

Murphy: The, the minutes and the agenda were approved in the same motion.

Barraza: Oh. We did, did we have a ...

Flores: Yeah.

Barraza: I don't think we had a motion did we?

Flores: No, we, we, we ...

Murphy: We had a motion from Councilor Sorg seconded by, yeah.
Barraza: Oh, okay. I am so sorry.

Murphy: Commissioner Benavidez.

Flores: Yeah.

Barraza: Sorry. Okay. Boy I, I slept through that minute or two. I'm sorry.

Flores: Well I think Councilor Small was coming in so maybe that kind of threw. See what trouble you start? All right. So we'll move on to 7.1: University Avenue Study Corridor.

Murphy: Okay Madam Chair, Members of the Committee. As you're aware MPO has enlisted the services of Bohannan Huston to conduct a, a study corridor in the University Boulevard area west of, west of I-10, east of NM-28. We have a public meeting set in the Town of Mesilla tomorrow. The, the consultant was unable to make it to this afternoon's meeting so I'm going to be giving their presentation for your informational purposes.

Okay so, so what is a, what is a corridor study? We, we set out a, the specific study area and we develop a purpose and need for what, for any transportation purpose, any transportation improvements in the corridor. We collect data, we connect, we conduct outreach both stakeholder groups and, and citizens in the area. We develop alternatives and then we, we'll go through the next steps at the end of the presentation.

The University Boulevard Corridor that, which we're studying is, begins on the, is bounded on the east by NM-478, continues past Zia Middle School and the terminae is at highway 28 in the Town of Mesilla. And then this, the corridor is located both within the City of Las Cruces city limits on the east side and then the Town limits on the west part of the corridor. We are using Planning funds to develop this study so we are limited in what traditionally you see in, in study corridor reports, we don't do, we don't do much, we don't do any preliminary engineering and very little, very little activities of that nature. It's mainly a planning and public input process which is limited, you know based on the limitation of the funds that we are using. We are following the NMDOT Location Study Procedures. We're going to come, out of this report we hope to have a, a preferred recommendation which this Committee will, will approve and then, and then we'll begin, and, and then if, if we're given the go-ahead to proceed, we would seek funding to do environmental design and construction.

Okay. The purpose and need, basically the need came down to safety and physical deficiencies due to the presence of the middle, of the middle school there and the, and University as a, as a gateway to Mesilla has, is the highlighted purposes that are, that we're expecting to come out of the
report. Factors also that it could lead to added economic development as developing it as a gateway for Mesilla.

So the corridor issues that we ran into, we're a Metropolitan Planning Organization. We by definition operate in urban areas. However this particular part of our urban area does self-identify itself, itself as a rural area. It has, it has a rural, rural feel to it, safety of course a prime issue. There's been a desire to improve bicycle facilities. A bicycle facility along this corridor could potentially complete a, a loop around the city of non-motorized facilities. Our recent in, or well our continued involvement in Safe Routes to Schools has led us to you know really concentrate on the circulation pattern at Zia Middle School, seeing most of the conflict that comes through there. We are, we are faced with some real constraints. Chief among those is the limited right-of-way in the, in the area. A Elephant Butte Irrigation District facility runs along, parallel to the, to the facility and then I, I don't know why, why they put parking on this, there's, there's not any on-street parking on this facility although I guess the adjacent neighborhoods and the school could probably develop park, parking issues.

So we gathered data on traffic volumes and crashes in, in the vicinity. And the different colors just refer to the different, different years. So it's a, it's not a too heavily traveled corridor and, and just a, a few, a few crashes on it. The outreach activities that we conducted, we had a project team meeting in April and then followed that up with a public meeting in, in June. We've taken it to the BPAC and to the TAC to get their feedback on there. We've, they were presented up to I think there was seven potential cross-sections and, and the consultant received feedback on those and then we'll have our, our last public meeting tomorrow evening as I mentioned before. We gathered, you know gathered comments from the public and the committees. I'm not going to try and read that.

At this point we expect to recommend, recommended, two recommended alternatives to come forward. This recommended alternative is most likely to fit in most parts of the corridor due, you know considering the right-of-way although it, there would, could be, possibly be some places where right-of-way takes would be needed. There is, I guess it's not shown and if the Committee's interested there, the second typical, the second typical, recommended typical would be a, a more developed multimodal facility containing a side path and, and turn lanes but it certainly would not fit within the required right-of-way. I apologize. I thought that was, that slide, section was in there. We'll make that available.

So this is a, what we're facing with right-of-way. The, the eastern end is, there's good amount of right-of-way, in the far western there's an average. The middle red spot there's some constrained right-of-way but we've been
talking with EBID, feel that if we pipe, if we pipe their irrigation channel there could be room to fit into it. The tightest part would still be, would be this red section to the west where there's some built-out residential and probably take some factors of, of reducing some of the widths for that short run but again that would be identified in later study phases once we, once we develop the preferred alternative. Other additional, a third alternative would be that we develop multiuse paths along the lateral system in the vicinity. This, this is another potential that could, could connect into that, into that loop around the, the metropolitan area.

So our next steps we're going to, the, have the report finalized after this last public meeting, get recommendations from the TAC and BPAC, and then we hope to have the study finalized by the end of this calendar year. And I do believe that is the presentation. So I will stand for any questions.

Flores: Anyone, Commission, Councilor Sorg.

Sorg: Thank you Madam Chair. Thank you Mr. Murphy. On the right-of-way map with the colors there, did you explain what the green parts are like?

Murphy: The, the green parts range from I think from, from 50 up to 100 feet of right-of-way meaning ...

Sorg: Okay.

Murphy: Meaning that we don't anticipate needing any right-of-way in those sections.

Sorg: Okay, just, it's, the right-of-way's good.

Murphy: Yes.

Sorg: Okay. I, I was just going to comment Madam Chair. This is a pretty important connection between the Town of Mesilla and University for bicycle and pedestrian, and we've been talking about this a long time. I'm glad we're working on it and I hope we can find a way to get it done. Also Safe Routes to School, it's very important for that too with the Vista Middle, not Vista, Zia Middle School. Okay. Thank you Madam Chair.

Flores: Anyone else? Councilor Small.

Small: Thank you very much Madam Chair and Mr. Murphy. On the, the section there is not a separated bike lane, that's mainly due to the right-of-way constraints?

Murphy: That's correct.
Small: Is there any way to look at, cause I know that's being considered I believe for some of the Alameda and some of the work within the city that's been done and it's such a, I really compliment the work that's been done in constrained right-of-way here. I, there just would be no way to, to separate that lane given the current right-of-way constraints and if so that's certainly understandable but ...

Murphy: Madam Chair, Councilor Small. The, the other, the section that's being forwarded I, I think does, does have some separation with, it, it has using, utilizing the EBID facility it has an elevated trail there that's, that's wide enough to be used for a bicycle trail. That anticipates a more substantial acquisition of right-of-way so it's not going to be advanced as the, the preferred but it is being advanced for further study so if, if at some point we decide as a region that we really want to, to try and, to develop it more fully and we commit the funding we do have, we do have that other section that, that is being forwarded and I, I will, I will have that sent out to the Committee because, I, and I apologize, I thought it was in this presentation.

Small: No, no, thank you very much for going and real briefly one more time Madam Chair, I guess even within the in-road facilities like this, would there, would the constraints simply again be too, too significant not for moving it outside of the roadway. It seems like there's good arguments and, and in some places on University I know feedback is very negative for the path on the south side of East University that's along the road. It actually presents more dangers and, and far greater difficulty but is there a way to have in-road rip-rap or other striping or other ways to, that, that provide a small barrier although one that can be traversed obviously between the main vehicular roadway and the bike lane itself? So like a, yeah like even reflective I don't know something that, that fits within the right-of-way constraint. And if that's prohibited, I'm sorry just to, if that's prohibited by technical pieces that I'm not aware of I certainly accept that. It's just something that I've, we've seen in other places. Thank you.

Murphy: I, Madam Chair, Councilor Small. I, I do believe FHWA and others have come in now with some guidelines on separated bike lanes and we'll certainly ask the consultant to kind of do a review to see what, what of those measures can be implemented within this corridor.

Small: Thank you very much Mr. Murphy. Thank you Madam Chair.

Flores: Mayor Barraza.

Barraza: Madam Chair. I, I just first of all would like to invite everyone to the public hearing tomorrow evening at 7:30 there at the Community Center in the
Town of Mesilla. Our last public hearing was not very well-attended but I can attest that Mayor Pro-Tem Flores has been going door to door in her neighborhood and passing out flyers trying to get that communication so that we do get a good turnout and also therefore we can have a lot of comments, suggestions, at least hear from the public so we're hoping to have a good turnout tomorrow evening. And the other is I, I just want to stress the importance of this project not only to the Town of Mesilla but to the City of Las Cruces. It is beginning to be a main road that is connecting the two communities together and with the Convention Center being there and the increase of activities at the Convention Center and with the designation of the Organ Mountains National Monument we have seen a significant increase in traffic whether it's bicyclists, walkers, but vehicle traffic also, and I think as time goes by we're going to see a lot more traffic up and down University cause it also connects to, to NMSU. So this is a project that I have put my whole heart into and just hopefully will become a reality here really soon. Thank you.

Flores: I'll just quickly add there aren't sidewalks in the neighborhood for kids to take to school and so I really would like to see that. I know my husband sometimes walks to work or rides his bike to work and he has to cross Main Street and anytime I see somebody, a student coming I always you know my heart just beats a little bit faster cause I'm concerned about their safety in that area so I would like to see something here in addition to that. Since Commissioner Garrett isn't here I'll just bring up that that is part of our corridor planning for Viva Dona Ana. One of the things that we have said that we would like to see is a bike path and we talked to Secretary Barela and he was very enthusiastic about that, especially in light of Steinborn's ...

Small: Rio Grande Trail.

Flores: Rio Grande Trail effort is he was thinking that, "You know we were trying to sell this as you know think of it as a backbone." It would nice, it would be nice to have these bicycle paths not just down the, the corridor of Camino Real but maybe in some of those smaller towns and he thought it would be nice if it would, if we could have something that would connect to the river. So anyway, so that's just another aspect that would make this a nice project as well. So okay. Thank you very much.

7.2 NMDOT Update

Flores: So we'll move on to 7.2: New Mexico DOT Updates,

Doolittle: Thank you Madam Chair. In your package there was a list of projects and I'll just go through each one of those and then I have one extra one at the end.
The first one is the I-10 mill and inlay project basically from the I-10/I-25 interchange down to the Texas state line. That's the one that last month I informed the Committee that that was a redistribution so ultimately that project is getting funded, December 2015 is our current letting. So we'll have some, some more construction on that section of road. Again it's just a pavement preservation to fix the four lanes that we did not construct as part of the original six-lane expansion.

1100820 is the West Mesa study. Right now we are currently awaiting RFP. If you'll recall we voted to include that so we are moving forward with the Phase C, right? Is that right Tom? Phase C.

Next one is 1100830. That's the bridge replacement on Union. Currently we're on schedule with that one. We set beams just a couple of weeks ago. That project is actually moving along very well. Still working on the westbound lanes and then once we get those finished we'll flip it over and do the eastbound. We're also working on the bridges over the, what we call Ramp E which is the on-ramp eastbound at the Valley/University intersection. That project's working, working real well.

Sorg: Still done by December?

Doolittle: That one is the Union project, not Missouri. So Union is scheduled for a full year so we'll be, that one won't be finished until the summer of next year.

The LC00100, that's the Missouri project. We've switched to the southbound lanes with the traffic and are working on the northbound. That one is currently scheduled to be finished by December. So right there, they are moving very quickly on that project. So as long as weather continues to be 80 degrees and we've got the cooperation of Mother Nature, that contractor is working very quickly on that project. I'm real happy with the southbound lane so flip it over and do it all over again on the north side.

Next one is LC00120, that's the intersection at Spitz, Solano and Three Crosses. We're currently working with the City of Las Cruces staff. We actually have a meeting tomorrow afternoon to start moving forward with the design of that project. That's scheduled for a June 2016 letting.

LC00140, that's a signal improvement at the corner of US-70 which is Picacho and 17th Street. As you'll all know that intersection's heavily traveled by the school buses. We currently have that one scheduled for a January 2017 letting. And that was actually safety funding so that's additional to what our normal budget is so that was good for the district.
LC00150, that is the mill and inlay basically from the Corralitos or the Love's interchange down to the I-10/I-25 intersection. We do have a notice of award for Mountain States Construction, Constructors. We're having a preconstruction conference on the 26th of this month so you should expect to see some construction shortly thereafter unless they take advantage of the ramp-up time but I'll know more after the 26th meeting. So next month I'll have a more accurate update on that project.

LC00160, that's the Valley Drive project. On that one we're also working with the City of Las Cruces to design that, considering some of the things with the Alameda Proximo. We're, had that one still scheduled for a May 2017 letting.

The next three are all railroad projects. I don't have any more updates you know than I've had the past few month. That's handled out of the Railroad Bureau and they interact directly with the agencies. District doesn't get involved with those at all.

LC00240, that is the safety project over the San Augustin Pass to expand the bicycle lanes, put some bicycle facilities through there, deal with some drainage issues that we've got over the pass and that one is currently scheduled for a February 2017 letting.

Small: Madam Chair. I, I apologize Madam Chair. May I ask a ...

Flores: Councilor Small. Sure.

Small: brief question on that? Thank you very much Madam Chair. Thank you Mr. Doolittle. I've asked in the past in, for that one the, it's still part of the conception in the plan to look at wildlife linkages through some of the drainage to the east of the actual pass. Is that correct?

Doolittle: Madam Chair, Councilor Small. This project doesn't include any of those major drainage structures.

Small: Okay.

Doolittle: All this project is going to deal with is the, the real steep rock slopes right as you come over the pass. We have some pretty bad drainage behind the concrete wall barrier.

Small: Okay.

Doolittle: And for us to install the multiuse, or the, the bicycle path behind the wall barrier ...
Small: You have deal with the drainage there.

Doolittle: We have to address the drainage there.

Small: Okay.

Doolittle: The wildlife crossing that you refer to that's further east is actually a separate study and a separate project.

Small: Okay.

Doolittle: That one is currently not in our STIP until we get the study finished but it is still an ongoing effort by the Department and believe Game and ...

Small: Game and Fish.

Doolittle: Fish is involved.

Small: Thank you and, and thank you for correcting the, what, the actual facts as you do. Is there a sense of what the timeline for that study is?

Doolittle: Councilor Small. I, I don't. I just jotted myself down a note. I will try to get with my environmental section and, and have an update for the next meeting.

Small: Understood. Great. Thank you very much. Thank you Madam Chair.

Flores: Okay. Go ahead and proceed.

Doolittle: All right Madam Chair. I just have four more quick updates.

The E100180, that's the pavement preservation on NM-478. We finished everything in town and we're actually down way further south in Dona Ana County. That project continues to move along real well. I don't have a substantial completion yet. We're, just kind of depends on weather but ultimately when we finish that one all of 478 will be new pavement. We, we did go full width on that one so the shoulders have been really improved for the, the bicycling community. Eliminated some drop-off problems that we were having so we're real happy with that project and the way it's turning out. We will chip seal that one sometime next year to even better solidify that pavement but ultimately 478's a, a really nice, a really nice roadway at this point.

LC00250, that's the University interchange. That's a ways out. It's Fiscal Year '18. It's actually going to be a dual year funded project but we haven't really even started the project development on that one.
LC00270, that is the study from the Three Crosses interchange to the I-25 interchange. We're awaiting RFP award on that one but ultimately we'll look at capacity issues along that corridor and at the Elks interchange but I don't have much of an update on that one.

The last one that I've got that was not on the list is always the US-70/North Main project. We're actually out there, I just passed them on our way in. They're out straight-lining or straight-edging to determine the smoothness of the pavement. Looks like they're finally starting to tie some loose ends. We will have some punch list work to take care of, once we straight-edge they'll start doing some diamond grinding, hopefully get started by the end of the week. We're still probably looking at a, a substantial completion some time after the end of the month but ultimately the restrictions of the traffic are slowly and surely being lifted. Madrid now is fully operational but we're, we're finally getting down to the end of that project.

Madam Chair that's all of the updates I have for our ongoing projects and I'll stand for any questions.

Flores: Any questions? Seeing none, thank you very much.

7.3 Committee Training

Flores: We'll move on to 7.3: Committee Training.

McAdams: Good, okay. I have to get sort of positioned. Madam Chair and Policy Board Members, I'd like to talk about some things that are very relevant I think in looking at transit-oriented development, actually should probably be called pedestrian/bicycle transit-friendly but that's a little bit too long so let's just, we'll put transit-oriented development is a, or TOD is a type of community development that includes a mixture of housing, office, retail, and other amenities integrated to walking neighborhood within about I'd say a half mile or quarter mile of the neighborhood in quality. We look, TOD is not a new idea. In fact it's been around for quite a while, since the early 1900s. It was introduced by a, a planner called Ebenezer Howard in, in the United Kingdom and basically the idea of, of a set of neighborhood, a set of neighbors or cities joined by a loop, you know a transit system etc. and within garden communities, pedestrians, schools, etc. There'd be stand-alone communities and this was incorporated into, you know everything old is new again. New (inaudible) took the garden city movement and took it as a, actually was a very old idea of that. We have two, Wycliffe and Letchworth were existing in UK and actually Letchworth is still a, both are viable communities and very much transit-oriented before transit-oriented was a buzzword. And you can see this actually the, the bottom photograph is a downtown area in Letchworth and it's actually redesigned and what you can see is like very narrow lanes for
traffic, parking, and a wide sidewalk so these are, could be transit, Letchworth I think is about 100,000 or maybe less so it's very appropriate I think to discuss that. And the little poster is you know to sort of, they're trying to promote this as well.

What is a driving mood toward transit-oriented development? Rapidly growing mind-numbing and congestion. Thank God we don't have it but many areas do with two-hour commutes one way, and a distaste for suburbia and fry-pit strip development, fast food chains etc. basically you know we have it too. A growing desire for quality urban lifestyle, growing desire for walk-able lifestyles away from traffic, changes in family structure. We know that millennials don't exactly like suburbia. They like to be, even with children, they like to be in a denser urban areas with activities and interaction. If you look at others, you, that are empty-nesters or senior citizens, they would like to be able to walk places, bike places, and transit, not be isolated from things too. And so a lot of different things, and also smart growth, how do we, obviously more dense development, more walk-able pedestrian will decrease the need for, for infrastructure. And then of course this is federal law too when we're asked to look at transit and another thing they want to, they encourage transit-oriented development.

What are the elements of transit-oriented development? Mixed development, we'll discuss this later; pedestrian bicycles priorities; walking distance shopping and areas of employment; bicycle access to areas beyond the TOD air; a sense of place; and mobility for all sectors of the population; preservation of existing transportation system; safe and easy walking, bikes, biking to transit stops; and of course healthy environments. We know mixed development it's like everything is new is old again. You know this is, this is very common for a house, housing to be above commercial and then wide, you know narrow sidewalks or wide side, this narrow and to eliminate, you know eliminate the distance between commercial and residential. In fact this is kind of the model of a streetcar side, streetcar streets. We can have the streetcars that going down the street and we have stores and residential. We don't have it here because I don't think we had really streetcars in Las Cruces. I don't, I don't think so. Is that correct? There were no streetcars in Las Cruces? I don't know.

Also as you know we've been talking about bicycle boulevards, you've seen this before and making the pedestrian and bicycle priorities. In this situation we see that it is impossible for the, the, the traffic can go, cannot go ahead. It's blocked and so but the, or the bicycles and pedestrians can go ahead. You notice a green lane bicycles, we like that I think I do. And also notice the children in front of the, front of the car so it's being this, traffic slow down through traffic calming etc. and that bicycles you know
have a right-of-way, we have diversion for streets. Very low cost, it's
done, it's not unique. It's done in many communities now. And also
walking distance shopping, employment, services. You have a cafe, you
people walking, relaxed, you know their houses may be in the same
vicinity. Again this is nothing new either but it means that what TODs
means is eliminates trips from, vehicles trips, keeping our facilities much
more efficient. And here's a little cartoon I thought we, well Peanuts is
asked, "We just got back from trip. Did you learn have a good time?" And
this George says, "Well everything looked the same you know, you know
shopping stores." And says, "It doesn't matter where you go you've never
left." And I think that's so appropriate and that if you look, if you look at
across the nation every one of these strip, we have them too, arterials look
exactly the same. Same, a lot of the times, maybe the big box have
changed but basically the same stuff over and over again. And this is not
particularly attractive, it's congestion, access control, we know on Valley
and on El Paseo same stuff. This is old stuff and in fact this is probably
the, the dying era of this stuff too. Can, areas like, some of the areas in
Chicago you can see abandoned shopping malls. People just don't want
this anymore and also we know the detriment to traffic so we're going to
have to reorient it, to re-engineer. And also we know that as we get older
that we, we sometime night is, is hard to travel or maybe we can't even
travel at all and the youth are also involved too. So we look at the TOD of
development mean for everybody. We know that low-income individuals,
the working poor often have to save for cars and often (inaudible) and
then when a car breaks what do they do. They're, they're without a job
because they can't get to, to the job. So really what we're talking about, if
you want to give up a car you can or you, you, you don't, you don't
necessarily need a car, all right. It's a choice. And I think this is real, and
even in our size community we can do this too you know. So many
people in this, when they, the rural areas and they're out maybe in
subdivisions, what do when they do when they get elderly if they have, if
they have nobody to take and often we know that in these cases that
people take advantage of them, you know $20 to go to the doctor, $10 to
go and this is what TODs will do and also transit-oriented development,
being near transit lines.

Neighbor TODs are really like a neighborhood, like the old-time
neighborhood. Residential, open space, the transit stop in the middle but
we think the transit stop would actually be on the outside in the
commercial, a core commercial area and office and employment. You can
mix these all around. Basically it's a, it, this is a, sort of antithesis to
Euclidean zoning, you know what it, basically Euclidean means
segregated zoning and have all mixed well this is kind of a back to, back
to the future things, where we're really looking at a mix. And we know the
Euclidean segregated zoning is actually not good for transit at all. In fact it
makes it very boring and also makes it where people can’t walk to places too.

If you look at this, this is the, this is the corridor plan, a TOD based on Curitiba, Brazil. I’ve been there. One of my favorite places in the world. But basically you’re looking at this is the BRT system. From the BRT road, the bus rapid transit in middle with the streets on the outside, then a, a sort of triangle or pyramid of, of densities. High density and the, towards the core then decreasing densities from that point on. Of course we’re not Curitiba but you can still see some of the same techniques here. Here is, of course this is, this is nothing like us but is high rises but all, and then the bus, you can see the bus is in the center and they, basic BRT actually runs like a, like rapid transit, very similar. That’s the thing. But we don’t have to, that’s long way in our area. And you see trees etc. but the idea of densities around the corridor, higher densities would be two-story buildings, whatever and commercial and then decreasing from that point on.

When you look at Walkscores, Walkscores is actually a, a website. I put the website down at the bottom, it’s easy to remember, walkscore.com. We’re not third, we have to talk about the rating for, the closer you get to 100 the better walking score you have. I don’t think any place in the United States has that, come close and of course zero would like no, excuse me nothing’s in walking distance all right. So we don’t, we don’t do as well as other, we’re not as bad, worse either. So this is basically can, how, how close are shopping, commercials, I mean commercial, employment areas, doctors office, etc. to this area. You notice that Charleston is an older community where the downtown is 93 but actually the walking score in the suburban area is not so good all right. It’s because basically once the ’50s happened you know that, that became history. Here’s a Walkscore, basically Walkscore of 100 is like walker’s paradise, very walk-able, you go down to 70-89 yeah and then decrease some of the walk, car dependent. We are in the car dependent area and then the other areas like Boulder are more in the, the very walk-able area. And you have 0-24 of course you know car city to a certain degree.

Here is some, just some suggestions. We know some of this already but looking at potential TOD areas in, in Las Cruces area basically put the whole shebang, I put you know some of the bike trails. I put the transit lines. I put the proposed bicycle boulevard and we already have some areas that are already, are like TODs already. Mesilla’s very much a TOD. You can walk, there’s services, it’s close to transit, etc. and that’s because it was founded and built before the car. The roads are also smaller. The University area is also a potential TOD with the area of high density, the bus routes, in fact with the new bus system will be 30 minutes frequency, very good. And then other areas like we discussed before the potential in
the future transfer center around Lohman, it was not sure but that would also make a good TOD anchor and then the corridor, the new transit system with a express route not a, not a BRT but express route going from the mall to the transfer center and again you can see already mixed use residential and really that's a TOD area too. All this area and we're in right now the Mesquite area, the central area and the Amador Proximo area, all are TOD type of situations. We know that they're close to, they have bicycle facilities and with the bicycle boulevard on Hadley and Las Cruces that would definitely be an anchor and an asset for the area to increasing this access to walkability, bicycle, etc. and transit. And also well mention see the area around the new, the old golf course around would be a, is a potential POD area, TOD area with transit coming there and then of course the, the various land, mixed land uses.

So all this are combined. We have a lot of the essentials I think but if we encourage higher density, also more important is, is encouraging shopping and offices particularly, shopping particularly many areas we have, have no shopping areas. In the, this area, Mesquite and, and the Amador Proximo area you can't, you have to get on a car or, to get to a shopping area. So this is some and many neighborhoods like that. In other areas it may be just have paths or bike ways connecting shopping areas to the residents. We know that when these areas were developed the car was supreme. We, you know no would count for shopping. Everybody had to go in the car. But actually the connections, bike ways are really very miniscule compared to highways. Million dollar for intersection redesign, $200,000 for just to do signalization and so you know what we're talking about is very low-scale.

And is this what we want? Basically Phase 2 of more of the same. We can see this, and it's just not Las Cruces. Everything cookie-cutter, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing. It's just like you, you know a carpet. Is that what we want? I don't think most people are saying, "That's not what we want." Millenials, everybody saying, "We want a community. We want a place we can walk and bike, etc. We don't want same-ole, same-ole." And, and basically developers saying the same thing. You talk to realtors now they will say, "Our clients don't want this stuff. They don't want be stuck up in the middle of nowhere. They want somewhere they can walk. They want to be near coffee shops or Starbuck's or whatever, to grocery stores." And I think that so many of the developers are, it's easier to develop like this, it's just, "Here's the land. We just do, do, do, dee, dee. We put in the subdivision." But the basically people are saying, "We don't want it." So it's sort of a, a, a little gap you know between what the people want and what the developers are, are really doing. But they're coming around because they can't sell some this stuff.
Or do we want this, do want this? A, it's kind of like a Ramblys in Barcelona if you ever been there with people walking, conversing, look at the children play, of course it's an artist rendition. Cars are noted to be, not to be seen, shops, etc. An area of communication we know that today we are doing more cocooning than ever. People drive, their house, sit inside video games, children do it, perhaps it's hard to get them outside, and then we go to sleep, we go, repeat the pattern over and over again. So really this kind of TODs would be a good way to facilitate more communication, right. And one of the, last, or you know I lived in Istanbul. I had a choice between, many people had cars, I did not. Within my house I could go to cafe just across the street, to a small grocery store, down to three or four blocks I'd go to a larger bus, a grocery store, and then a, there service bus for free to take me to grocery stores or one, a bigger grocery store. Within three blocks I could, I'd take not two but three buses almost in, well into 12:00 and taxis were also cheap relative, see. This, but this is, well it was a difference. I could see the, the populous of Las Cruces be, from my window. This how it is. So the density was much better but the, the accessibility we could do with our own communities too, as well.

So I think this, this is kind of a buzzword. I think we need to get beyond this, lot of this you know transportation stuff but basically say this as I said before, we should name it pedestrian/bicycle you know transit friendly or, but TOD is good enough. We're doing a lot already. In fact TOD could probably be a lot of places already. And so as we move through as you know we're closing out the short-range transit plan. The next step is to really create demand for transit and create more than anything a quality of life and that's, we know that's what's selling any community.

And do I, Madam Chair do I have any questions or from the ...

Flores: Any, any questions? Councilor Pedroza.

Pedroza: Thank you Madam Chair. I'm not sure if this question is for you or if, possibly for Mr. Murphy. Does this that we've just heard, this plan does it coincide with the Uniform Development Code that's coming out of Viva Dona Ana?

McAdams: I'm not really aware of the, the, the ordinance, the Community Development Code. I would think, well in general I know that the County and the City are completely together in trying to create higher densities, create a livable environment, and trying to push away from what has been done for the last almost hundred years now, at least 75 years. So in principle I think exactly we're talking about mixed development, going away from Euclidean zoning, and I think that's what being pushed, you know bicycles, etc. So although I don't know the ordinance exactly I would
say that the Dona, Viva Dona Ana and the Comprehensive Plan for the,
the City are probably saying the same thing. I think we're all on the same
page, it's just a matter of, I think of a reversing what we've done for so
many years and that's going to ...

Pedroza: Tom would you agree?

Murphy: Madam, Madam Chair, Councilor Pedroza. Yes, I, I would agree. I think
that a lot of these, you know these are ideas that are converging together
and the purpose behind this Committee Training was to, to really
familiarize you with the, with the term transit-oriented development, I know
in your other roles in government, you're, you're sitting up there
and people are going to be throwing term at you, "Well I'm doing a transit-
oriented development," we wanted to give you a taste of what really that,
what that, what that looks like in other areas so when you encounter it in
your, in your other duties you're more familiar.

Pedroza: Thank you.


Sorg: Thank you Madam Chair and thank you for that presentation. I'm, I'm, as
I'm listening to you I'm hearkening back and those on the Committee here
will remember well that former Mayor Pro-Tem Thomas spoke of this a lot
in the past and, and we actually did a tour down, for the transit in El Paso,
the Sun Metro they call it and as we went down one corridor on the west
side it was demonstrate, it was pointed out that, that this was a TOD that
they were, they were instituting, doing. Yeah I had the same question is, if
this TOD is also in, being incorporated into our Comprehensive Plan and
so forth both in the Unified Code too. Yeah in fact it also comes to mind is
this kind of development would lower the vehicle miles traveled that we
have to do and that is, that is another good thing.

McAdams: Exactly. We're trying to eliminate ...

Sorg: Yeah.

McAdams: Madam Chair and Commissioner Sorg. We're trying to eliminate people
from getting in their cars.

Sorg: Yeah.

McAdams: And I think that's very ...

Sorg: Yeah.
McAdams: So but there's also phenomenon we've noticed that VMT is going down anyway so this will decrease ...

Sorg: Boy it sure doesn't look like it out there.

McAdams: Oh yeah. But actual we found it does. Not, it's going down gradually but there is a decline. We're not really sure what it's related, it'd be related to people internet shopping, etc. or away from other things ...

Sorg: Yeah.

McAdams: Sort of phenomena but it looks like it is a continuing trend which is ...

Sorg: Good.

McAdams: Really good.

Sorg: Good.

McAdams: But also we can, by people walking, bicycles, using transit and you can see it's very popular now too.

Sorg: I do see more walk, people walking.

McAdams: Yes.

Sorg: I see more bicyclists going around. I, the only thing that restricts it is that they don't have good pathways to do it on and, and you see still a lot of that in the city here. I, I was just referring to Elks Drive at night; I do a little walking on Elks Drive and I can't believe the traffic, how heavy it is and where are they going is beyond me. I, how fast and where are you going?

McAdams: We could model that if you'd like but, in fact we will be but I think that a lot of what, one time is it, at one point asking for bicycle lanes and for sidewalks was like an extra. Now with the Federal regulations you can demand them. The ADA say, "This is the law."

Sorg: Extra.

McAdams: ADA's in law, bicycle facilities, walking facilities, sidewalks is the law. I think that this is what we, we were both with the Ocotillo Committee too and this where we get citizens to come up with board and say, "This is, this is not only right, it is demanded by law."

Sorg: Okay.
McAdams: So I think but this is one thing, this development the last 30, 40 years which I think is, Madam Chair and Commissioner Sorg is a wonderful thing that we can all use at all levels, for DOT levels, for local levels, and citizens levels. Something that's very important so we can do this by now.

Sorg: Yeah. In fact together with some other Councilors and Commissioners I've seen this very thing in places like even Wichita, Kansas, Denver, Colorado. I haven't actually been in Boulder but I've seen a lot of pictures of Boulder and then San Diego, La Joya, California for example, in particular. So yeah it's, it's kind of a nice thing. And then when I talk to people that are downtown. You were saying there's nothing to, to shop downtown unless you buy running shoes. There's a nice running shoe shop down there but I talk to other people in the, that come to the downtown area that are under 35 shall we say. They love it down there. They said, "This is where I want to live." And, and you're exactly right. It, with, how'd you point the millenials the, that want this kind of a thing and as I get older I, it's looking more and more appealing to me all the time. Thank you Madam Chair. I've had a, enough to say.

Flores: Okay. Councilor Small.

Small: Thank you very, very, thank you very much Madam Chair. Thank you so much for the presentation really to the entire staff orientation that has helped bring it to this point. Particularly I love these trainings. I know the cartoon, I recall also the John Oliver segment on infrastructure. The, you all as staff deserve the award for creativity in, in bringing in other media.

Sorg: Right.

Small: But what all, what, what certainly deeply resonates is fundamentally you're advocating and working to expand resident choice, working to expand economic opportunity and value for individual property owners and for the community as a whole, and to increase commerce and safety. And those points, while they're I think as has been pointed out much more widely bought into and agreed upon from different viewpoints, we can never go wrong reemphasizing them because there's a lot of different ways of approaching transportation challenges and what, again what we see here in the ways that it expands choice and opportunity and safety we can never go wrong highlighting those pieces and so I am very excited to, to be reminded of that and to have further education including the, the historical background which is very interesting and appropriate. Thank you Madam Chair.

Flores: Thank you. Okay. So seeing no further comments, thank you very much for that presentation.
8. COMMITTEE AND STAFF COMMENTS

Flores: And we'll move along to Committee and Staff Comments. Anyone on the Committee have any other comments? I'll just say that last time we talked about an Amador Proximo field trip and I just wanted you to know that that was not forgotten about. Did you want to comment on that Councilor Small?

Small: Madam Chair. Thank you for reminding me. I dropped the ball on that but I'll look at getting something together for November.

Flores: I think staff is working on it so if you can get together with ...

Small: If you ...

Flores: Staff as well then ...

Small: Absolutely. I'll be there when they tell me to. That, that's the easiest way then.

Flores: All right. Thank you.

Small: Thank you Madam Chair.

Flores: Any more Committee comments? No. Then we'll go with Mr. Murphy on staff comments.

Murphy: Thank you Madam Chair. We'll, we'll work with Councilor Small on that but he did enter, he did distract Mayor Barraza as he entered so we're going to kick him off the Committee and as such, seriously we have a, we have a plaque commemorating this is his last meeting. We don't, do not have a November meeting so by December he'll be, he'll be retired from, from his current spot so we wanted to present him with a little plaque commemorating his service to this, to this Committee, something to remember us by and we do appreciate you know your, your thoughtful consideration and, and your input on transportation matters. Thank you.

Small: Thank you very much Mr. Murphy.

Flores: Thank you.

Murphy: And it, that, other than just one final mention, meeting tomorrow night, University area study corridor.

Flores: That's at 7:30 at the Community Center which is right down the street from the plaza and as you pass the, the church on Calle de Santiago you'll see
a park on one side and the Community Center is on the other. And I, I know I asked Debbie Lujan our Public Works person to invite Greg Smith because that's an area of interest for him as well and this is the MPO and I was wondering if we had invited Mary Kay Papen.

Barraza: We invited Mayor Pro-Tem Smith and we have invited Senator Papen and Representative Bill McCamley.

Flores: Okay. Thank you. I, I know I spoke with Bill McCamley as well. He said he wouldn't be able to make it but he would like a report on it so just to let you know.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Flores: So moving on to Public Comment. Do we have anybody from the public that would like to make a comment and for approach? Okay. The person in the back is shaking her head no.

10. ADJOURNMENT (2:05 p.m.)

Flores: So we'll move to adjournment. So I'll just adjourn and thank you again Father Rochelle for applying. Now. Okay.

Chairperson