MESILLA VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The following are minutes for the meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) which was held April 3, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. at Dona Ana County Government Building, 845 N. Motel Blvd., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Bartholomew (CLC Transit)
Larry Altamirano (LCPS)
Harold Love (NMDOT)
Jolene Herrera (NMDOT)
Louis Grijalva (CLC Public Works)
John Gwynne (DA Flood Commission)
Bill Childress (BLM)
Greg Walke (NMSU)
John Knopp (Town of Mesilla)
Willie Roman (CLC Transportation)
Luis Marmolejo (DAC)
Jesus Morales (EBID)
Debbie Lujan (Town of Mesilla)
Rene Molina (DAC Engineering)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jack Valencia (SCRTD)

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Denise Westin, Bohannon-Huston
Jennifer Hill, Bohannon-Huston
Zach Libbin, EBID

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 4:01 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Larry Altamirano motioned to approve the agenda.
John Gwynne seconds the motion.
All in favor.
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1 March 6, 2014

Bill Childress motioned to approve the minutes of March 6, 2014.
Greg Walke seconds the motion.
All in favor.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT – No public comment

5. ACTION ITEMS

5.1 Functional Classification

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends that states review the functional classification of their road system every 10 years (following the decennial Census).

Current Functional Classification in the MPO region does not group ‘Collectors’ into Major and Minor subcategories. The new guideline necessitates categorizing Collectors into one of the two classes.

Murphy: Mr. Chair last month we had for you as a discussion item some work with updating of the functional classification for the roadway system in the Mesilla Valley MPO. We presented some preliminary findings, preliminary work on it, and asked for some direction. The main cause or the main work item was we needed to separate our collectors into major and minor collectors, for both urban and rural areas. From my staff Chowdhury Siddiqui has a presentation. From the item we'll be asking for a recommendation to the policy committee on the work.

Chowdhury Siddiqui gave a presentation.

Bartholomew: Any questions?

Love: So how many is the City looking at….any of its roadways to higher than what's currently being classified?

Siddiqui: Mr. Love, Mr. Chair, no we are not yet.

Love: Okay.

Bartholomew: Any other questions? Anybody want to see a particular road, I heard he had a more high resolution map if anybody wanted to look at it.
Gwynne: I noticed on Soledad Canyon Road you have it as a major collector. Is there a particular reason why you labeled it as a major without traffic counts?

Siddiqui: I'm sorry Mr. Gwynne; can you repeat the name of the road please?

Gwynne: Soledad Canyon.

Siddiqui: Oh, okay. Mr. Murphy do you want to go ahead and add something, if you want?

Murphy: Mr. Chair, members of the committee, I think probably the reasoning for Soledad Canyon being listed a major collector, is it does, that the point that we do have as a collector status, it is part of a roadway that leads to a lot of residential and then ultimately, also what is a regional traffic generator with the existing further east along that alignment the BLM trails at the terminus of Soledad Canyon. Although we only have it up to the point where it's interconnected with other MPO thoroughfares. I think we have Padre, Lost Padre as a future collector, so that determines where the terminus of Soledad Canyon as a collector exists.

Walke: And yet you have Dripping Springs Road past Soledad Canyon as also a major collector and again there aren't any traffic count numbers. So I wonder, I see minor, you have a lot of streets that don't have traffic counts and some are minor and some are major. Do they all kind of follow that classification system where you just look at it and kind of see how many roads are leading into it or something like that?

Murphy: That's the initial basis. We look at where it fits in with the rest of the system as far as connectivity, when there's not an AADT. I will state that all of these roads that are being identified as a collector will be put on to the traffic count program. So moving forward in the future we will have those AADT numbers. But right now it was just kind of a subjective call on the part of staff as far as what land uses that facility served and it's connectivity within the greater system.

Childress: So when making a decision on the Dripping Springs route, was it, did you take into consideration the FLAP program where we're looking at potentially upgrading that road from dirt to pavement?

Murphy: We have not looked at it with that, specifically. I think that would be one of the things, once something like, once that project's completed we would reevaluate it.
Childress: On the Soledad Canyon the road makes the distinction between major and minor collector. That is just short of the Sierra Vista Trail, is that correct?

Murphy: I don’t know right off. But I do believe it is, it does end west of that trail.

Childress: Thank you.

Marmolejo: Mr. Chair?

Bartholomew: Yes

Marmolejo: Also, I would look at number 66, Tortugas Drive. It’s listed as a minor. There also is a note of the traffic counts there. That right, I can, just by me, there’s a lot of traffic going through there and there’s also a bottleneck when you’re coming out of the village and towards Main. There are a lot of pedestrians making their way to the gas station and Pic Quik there. So I would look at that also, as well.

Murphy: So you’d like to see Tortugas listed as a major collector?

Marmolejo: Collector, if nothing else, because it’s acting also as a, you’re getting people off of the, is it Stern Drive? They make their way down through Tortugas through Tigua and then on down through Tortugas Drive, down to Main Street. I’m not sure you’d call it a major but it does that, act as a collector and it also, you could get some transit that people just go through that segment.

Murphy: Mr. Chair, Mr. Marmolejo, we do have it as a minor collector right now but if it’s this Committee’s, if the Committee agrees, we can change that to a major collector.

Marmolejo: I guess what I want to say is that, I mean without traffic count, but there’s also, there’s a lack of, there’s a lot of pedestrian, pedestrians going up through that roadway, and there’s a lack of sidewalks. Especially if you see the lateral going north and south there. Right there is a really, people are walking along that bank, and on the south side, towards that commercial strip. I would think maybe, that maybe the traffic count would warrant some additional improvements in that area.

Murphy: This list doesn’t list anything as far as ranking it for improvements. So as far as, as far as from a regional standpoint, its existence as a minor collector or major collector is not gonna affect its priority for improvements. Our design standards do not have any, our regional design standards do not have any difference between major and minor collector, and since it’s urban, I think also, from a funding standpoint and have Jolene pop in if
she, if she knows the answer different than I do, that urban major and
minor collectors are both eligible for federal aid. However, given the
nature of funding conversations in Washington, I would say that the
likelihood of getting federal aid for anything that’s not on the state
highway, not on interstate highway or the national highway system, is
probably pretty low.

Herrera: Mr. Chair?

Bartholomew: Yes Ms. Herrera.

Herrera: Yeah, Tom you’re right, it’s in the urban areas, minor collectors are eligible
funding. But I think it’s really important to make it clear that just because a
road is functionally classified a certain way does not guarantee funding
ever in any scenario. So it’s really about how the road is functioning right
now. If it’s functioning as a major collector then that’s one thing but I don’t
want anyone to think that because we’re gonna classify it as a major
collector it’s gonna be higher in priority for funding.

Marmolejo: But would a traffic count at least sets the stage for possible local funding
for this or would it be up to local entity to make those traffic counts?

Murphy: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Marmolejo, we actually are also using this exercise
here to better organize our traffic count program. Through this exercise
we’ve discovered things that were listed in the last Transportation Plan
were classified collector, arterial and so on, and we did not at the same
time put them on to the traffic count program. So what I’m saying, every
single one of these that we are giving the designation or the classification
now, will be added to the traffic count program. So moving forward in the
future, all of these roadways will have traffic counts.

Marmolejo: Thank you.

Bartholomew: Are there any other questions?

Grijalva: I was looking at Wisconsin from Locust to Triviz; it looks like that’s just like
big commercial lots adjacent to that road.

Siddiqui: Mr. Chair, Mr. Grijalva that is correct. That’s why when we started looking
into the land use pattern. I adjusted land use pattern for each road. We
identified that and we, that for this particular segment adjusted land use
pattern as non-commercial for this case. I’m sorry, non-residential.

Bartholomew: Any other questions at this time? I guess what the staff needs is a
recommendation to bring this revised classificational system forward to the
Policy Committee. Is that correct?
Siddiqui: Yes Mr. Chair.

Bartholomew: If there's no further discussion and anybody want to make that motion?

Childress: I'll make a motion to accept the proposal to move forward.

Altamirano: I second.

Bartholomew: It's been moved and seconded, and the since there is an action item, is there anybody out there in the audience that wants to speak to it? If not then call for the motion. All those in favor of recommending this to the Policy Committee, please say aye.

All in favor.

Bartholomew: The next is a discussion item. I did have just a point of clarification, is this additional handout we got, is that something on the agenda somewhere?

Murphy: That's gonna be some information on the TIP and we're gonna handle that through staff comments.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

6.1 Transportation Safety and Asset Management Plan

Bartholomew: Okay thank you. So the next item is discussion item 6.1 Transportation Safety and Asset Management Plan.

Tom Murphy gave a brief presentation.

Bartholomew: Thank you Tom and maybe before the presentation, I believe there were three Committee members that came in after we made introductions over at the table over here, if we could just have you state your names for the record, so we know that you were here.

Lujan: Debbie Lujan, Town of Mesilla

Roman: Willie Roman, City of Las Cruces

Herrera: Jolene Herrera, NMDOT

Bartholomew: Thank you.

Morales: Good morning also present, Jesus Morales, EBID
Denise Weston and Jennifer Hill from Bohannon-Huston gave a presentation.

Bartholomew: Thank you.

Bartholomew: Any questions from the Committee?

Marmolejo: Could you go back to that last frame please? The last slide. On the GIS framework data management, who, at this point in time, who do you see as the best to manage that GIS data?

Westin: Well as you know, the County has a pretty, pretty sophisticated system for the whole county and, but the City also has one and NMSU also has one. You know, I think it would be really who wanted to take on that champion effort and was given the political, you know, leadership to do that. I think any one of the agencies could do it, no offense, other than the Town of Mesilla. But any one of the agencies could do that.

Marmolejo: What about the MPO? I know they’re not....

Westin: Well I meant the City, but the MPO, you use the City’s GIS system but absolutely the MPO could do that if that were the regional boundary for your asset management plan.

Murphy: Yes, to echo Denise, I think that the MPO would be a very convenient place to locate that. I think the way we would work that is we would work with each of your agencies to input that data. We’re working closely with the City’s GIS system in order to develop these databases and we’re also participating in Dr. Brown’s effort at NMSU to kind of develop a regional GIS portal so that everybody within the region can view it. But I would see that, as far as a work product, I see that as MPO staff reaching out to each of your agencies to gather the data that you’ve collected and house it in the one location so that it’s readily accessible for the decision makers.

Walke: Have you developed a cost estimate for this leadership, the leadership recommendations? How much would it cost the MPO or any other agency to do these things?

Westin: That’s a good question. We have not done that. We’d be willing to do a little research on that and see if I could get maybe; I have a couple of locations that have done it. I could try to collect some numbers for you, if that would be helpful.

Walke: It would be. Thanks.

Bartholomew: Any other questions? I had one. I don’t know if I know exactly how to ask it but in terms of measurement of this and I assume that if the MPO would
kind of be the coordinator of this, at some point, there's gonna be decisions made and you have to digest this into the measurements of this data, based on this data and everything. Is there gonna be, or wouldn't this might be something the leadership team would have to work on, are there gonna be like a software that everybody could share to manage it, or how is it, or are we all gonna be kind of comparing apples and oranges, because we might be doing it a little differently?

Westin: It's a little bit of both I think because I think that's important that each agency and you can speak up Jennifer if you have a different thought, but each agency needs to develop their own criteria for level of service and performance measures. So you will be comparing apples to apples within your agency, within your jurisdiction, and the assets that are under your ownership. But, yes, you know, the comparison between the expectations of sidewalks in the county are gonna be different that the expectations of sidewalks within the city. So those will be different. But, the data collection process, that would be part of the goal of building one GIS format to develop a consistent process, a consistent list of attributes, a consistent way and the way the data is collected, so that it could be compared and used, sort of efficiently across all the agencies. There is software out there. There definitely is, and I know that the County, I don't know if you want to speak up, if you know more about that, but there is certainly software programs that you can pay a lot of money for, and you can have them come in and build sort of your system for you. But you can also do it yourself if you want to collect the data and work with the leadership team, and build your own framework. I don't know that that answered it, except it is a good question, it's valid, and it has to be worked out.

Bartholomew: Right. Well like even with sidewalks, it would, say you're having county sidewalks and city sidewalks, you could still measure things in some ways, in the same way.

Westin: Totally, and you can make decisions on measuring your condition the same because I would assume that you would all want the same, you know type, like a good, bad and fair sidewalk, right? You could make a decision to do your measurements that way, absolutely, as a region and those are examples that we've put in there and you can choose as a region, "you know I like that way that they measured that, let's just all keep that." Yeah.

Bartholomew: Okay. Any other questions. Yes sir.

Libbin: Hello, my name is Zack Libbin, I'm an engineer for the EBID. The comment that I have is a little bit too specific maybe about the plan or about the document. It's on the trails. So I have a concern that there's a
ton of trails on the map specifically and then many miles donated, demarcated as proposed unpaved EBID trail and I’d like to make the clarification that those aren’t EBID trails. They, a little bit of background would be that EBID can’t have trails on our property. We have, EBID can’t own the trail, we take too much liability by having a trail on our own. So EBID showed quite a bit of cooperation for having trails, but an example of that is working through a memorandum of understanding with the City of Las Cruces so all the trails that are on here that are within the City of Las Cruces are acceptable even if they’re only planned, they’re acceptable. The ones outside the City limits are nothing more than a plan, they are not a trail, and they’re nothing more than a plan, and in fact there’s no agreement between EBID and the County, not much future for a plan maybe too, so, I mean for an agreement, so the trails outside the City limits are nothing more than just a future hope, or a future plan, and not something that should be included in an inventory of trails. Then again, specifically, if there are gonna be trails on the EBID property, outside of the City limits, they will be, have to be licensed to the Dona Ana County, to the County itself, and so they shouldn’t be marked as an EBID trail. It could be clarified maybe that it’s Dona Ana County trail on EBID property, but they won’t be an EBID trail, and then again, I would say a key issue for trails is that there, there needs to be agreements in place for the property owners of the trails, with the owner and the maintenance agency for the trails. I would recommend that to be key issue, is that these agreements need to be in place before there’s trails. That’s all I have unless there’s any questions.

Bartholomew: Any other questions on that point?

Westin: I’ll just make a comment. Thank you Zack. We’ll update that map and I’ll send it to you, just to make sure you feel comfortable before we put it in the next draft. I’ll coordinate directly with him.

Marmolejo: I concur with EBID on this matter. The County and EBID are looking at a possible MOU for trails on EBID property managed by the County, but I would definitely put us in on that, on that conversation if you would please.

Westin: Absolutely.

Marmolejo: Because I would imagine that you could possibly remove a lot of the proposed trails on EBID, I would consider that, at least keep us in the loop on that if you would, please.

Westin: Absolutely.

Bartholomew: Any other comments or questions? Seeing none, I guess thank you. This will be brought forward next month, is that correct Tom?
Westin: Thank you.

Murphy: That's correct.

Westin: Will we get their comments in time to integrate them?

Murphy: We ask, probably give, maybe a two week window to get comments back, if we'd like to get that in the final draft version.

Westin: And I'm happy to take those comments any way that works for you. If you want to do them electronically on the PDF version, that's fine. If you want to give a hard copy to Tom, I'll have someone from my Las Cruces office pick it up and get it to me. If you want to email me comments, really I don't know Tom, if you're okay with that, but I'm really flexible about taking your comments anyway that makes it the easiest way for you to comment.

Bartholomew: I don't know, did you have your email in this document somewhere?

Westin: I'll give you a card. I'll give everyone a card.

Murphy: And anyone can contact me for Denise's email as well.

Bartholomew: Okay, thank you Tom. Okay.

7. COMMITTEE AND STAFF COMMENTS

Bartholomew: Looks like the next item is, first of all, are there any comments from the Committee? Any. I know Jolene, sometimes you've made updates on the DOT projects. Did you want to do anything on that today?

Herrera: I can if anybody has specific questions. I didn't bring the printout with me but I'll be more than happy to either wing it or get the answers and distribute them tomorrow.

Bartholomew: I'd be curious to know when is the North Main work going to be.

Herrera: So that project was let in January. It's probably gonna start in June. We don't have an exact date yet, but it'll likely be in June. We're coordinating with the City right now on that project. There's gonna be extensive utility work done and I think that's gonna come first.

Bartholomew: And is it gonna be what like a 12, 14 month project or a year?

Herrera: We really don't know. That's part of the coordination that's ongoing, is I think kind of once we get more of a feel of how we're gonna coordinate the
utilities with the City, then we'll have a schedule. But like with all of our big projects we'll have monthly meetings during construction to kind of update everybody on how the process is going, and address any issues.

Bartholomew: Okay and then also I know one that will affect us is the Missouri bridge project too, which will be happening at the same time, I assume, as North Main.

Herrera: That one will actually let in October so this fall. It likely won't start until maybe late 2014, early 2015. And again, I'm not sure on the amount of time for that. I haven't seen any projections on that yet.

Bartholomew: Okay thank you. Mr. Altamirano?

Altamirano: Mr. Chair, we, the School District met with Bridgette Spedaleri yesterday and because of the North Main project and, we had a little discussion, and I know that they were setting dates for the public hearing. Just off the top of my head, I don't remember my notes there but it appears that it is gonna be at least a year and there are only gonna be certain intersections that are gonna be open. The reason I'm bringing it up and more so for you as well, is because of the buses, whether or not we can get in, make left or right turns back on to Main Street. We've already discussed some of that with Bridgette and the engineer, I can't remember his name. So it is gonna be interesting during that period of time and I think it is gonna create some real nice congestion.

Herrera: And that's definitely something that will be coordinated with Roadrunner Transit, as well as the School District. We do our best to try to accommodate everything during construction. It's just not always possible.

Bartholomew: Thank you. Any other committee comments at this time? If not I'll move on to staff comments.

Wray: The other sheet that we handed out to you before the meeting, MPO staff has to offer an apology to this Committee. Do to some oversight this was supposed to be an action item for you tonight, it was not advertised so on the agenda. Due to the nature of the TIP timetables, we're unable to wait to give the TAC another opportunity to vote on this. We'll need to go ahead and bring this to the Policy Committee next week. This particular project is a new project in the TIP. Its pavement preservation for the length of NM28 and this will also be coordinated with the El Paso MPO. So if you have any comments or questions you can ask them now or if you wish to comment next Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. at the Policy Committee meeting you can do so then.
Bartholomew: Any questions or comments on this item?

Gwynne: Just one question. The pavement preservation is that basically crack sealing, is that what we're talking about?

Wray: I would have to defer to Ms. Herrera, I don't know exactly what they're going to be doing.

Herrera: Right now what we're discussing, the maintenance folks are kind of handling that. They're looking at chip seal.

Gwynne: Thank you.

Bartholomew: Any other questions? Thank you Andrew. Any other staff comments at this time?

8. PUBLIC COMMENT – No public comment

9. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Harold Love motioned to adjourn.
Greg Walke seconds the motion.

Chair