

**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 September 13, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. in the City of Las Cruces Council Chambers, 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trent Doolittle (NMDOT)
Councillor Jack Eakman (CLC)
Trustee Linda Flores (Town of Mesilla)
Councillor Olga Pedroza (CLC)
Commissioner Isabella Solis (DAC)
Councillor Gill Sorg (CLC)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mayor Nora Barraza (Town of Mesilla)
Commissioner Benjamin Rawson (DAC)
Commissioner John Vasquez (DAC)

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Jolene Herrera, NMDOT
Harold Love, NMDOT
Becky Baum, RC Creations, LLC, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (1:02 PM)

Flores: So I'm going to call this meeting to order. It's 1:00 and we'll start with the Pledge of Allegiance. Oh, I guess, did we do the roll call? Don't we start with the roll call?

Wray: Either way.

Flores: Determine if we have a quorum.

Wray: Let's do roll call first Madam Chair.

Flores: Okay.

Wray: Commissioner Solis.

Solis: Present.

1 Wray: Councillor Pedroza.
2
3 Pedroza: Here.
4
5 Wray: Councillor Sorg.
6
7 Sorg: Here.
8
9 Wray: Councillor Eakman.
10
11 Eakman: Here.
12
13 Wray: Mr. Doolittle.
14
15 Doolittle: Here.
16
17 Wray: Madam Chair.
18
19 Flores: I'm here and I just would like to say that Mayor Barraza is not going to be
20 able to attend. She had another meeting that she had to go to and she
21 sends her apologies. So I take it we have a quorum and we'll start with
22 the Pledge of Allegiance.
23
24 ALL STAND FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.
25
26 **2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST INQUIRY**
27
28 Flores: So next is the conflict of interest inquiry. Does any Committee Member
29 have any known or perceived conflict of interest with any item on the
30 agenda? If so that Committee Member may recuse themselves from
31 voting on a specific matter or if they feel that they can be impartial we will
32 put their participation up to a vote by the rest of the Committee. Anyone?
33 None?
34
35 Sorg: Concerning discussion item 6.2.
36
37 Flores: Okay.
38
39 Sorg: If you've been in a crash does that recuse yourself?
40
41 Flores: Well the only thing that I've seen in the law as far as conflict of interest is if
42 you have a financial interest and the rest ...
43
44 Sorg: No.
45
46 Flores: It isn't really defined that I know of.

1
2 Sorg: Yeah.

3
4 Flores: So I think that's your ...

5
6 Sorg: In that case I'm okay.

7
8 Flores: Okay.

9
10 Doolittle: Madam Chair.

11
12 Flores: Yes.

13
14 Doolittle: Andrew, just to clarify a discussion that we had a little bit earlier, on the
15 consent agenda was the approval of the minutes but I thought that the
16 minute package was incorrect.

17
18 Wray: Madam Chair, Mr. Doolittle. There are a couple of issues with the
19 minutes. When we get to the consent agenda staff was going to request
20 that those be pulled from the agenda. So staff requests that the minutes
21 be pulled from the agenda.

22
23 Flores: So I think that's what we're going to call to do, is have a motion to
24 postpone that until the next meeting.

25
26 Doolittle: Okay.

27
28 Flores: So ...

29
30 Doolittle: I was just curious. That's the only thing on the consent agenda.

31
32 Flores: Right. So we haven't gotten there though. We're still on the conflict.
33 Okay.

34
35 **3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

36
37 Flores: So moving to public comment. Do we have anybody from the public that
38 would like to make a comment? Okay. Seeing none.

39
40 **4. CONSENT AGENDA ***

41
42 Flores: Now we're on consent agenda and it's been noted that the date is wrong,
43 it seems like the minutes are fine but the staff would like that we just pull
44 them. So if I could have a motion to postpone until the next meeting I'd
45 appreciate it.
46

1 Sorg: Well I'll move to accept the agenda with the pulling of the minutes of
2 August 9th.

3
4 Flores: I think that's all that we have on the consent though, so okay. Pulling
5 them until the next scheduled MPO meeting?

6
7 Sorg: Until the next scheduled MPO meeting, yes.

8
9 Flores: Okay. Do I hear a second?

10
11 Pedroza: Second.

12
13 Flores: Okay. All in favor?

14
15 MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY.

16
17 Flores: Anyone against? Okay, seeing none.

18
19 **5. * APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

20
21 **5.1 * August 9, 2017**

22
23 - VOTED ON VIA THE CONSENT AGENDA

24
25 **6. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

26
27 **6.1 NMDOT Safety Targets**

28
29 Flores: We'll move on to discussion items, 6.1: New Mexico DOT Safety Targets.

30
31 Wray: Thank you Madam Chair. In the presentation today MPO staff is going to
32 go over the safety targets that have been announced by the New Mexico
33 Department of Transportation. These safety targets are in compliance
34 with 23 CFR 490, the final rule on the highway safety improvement
35 program, also known as HSIP. This rule went into effect on April 14th of
36 this year. This rule requires that each state set annual performance
37 targets for five performance measures. The performance measures
38 specified are: Number of fatalities; rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle
39 miles traveled, also known as VMT; number of serious injuries; the rate of
40 serious injuries per 100 million VMT; and the number of nonmotorized
41 fatalities and serious injuries. The first three are common measures that
42 must be identical to the targets established for the State's Highway Safety
43 Program.

44 To give a little bit of background, ever since the passage of the
45 FAST Act it's been known that this was coming. So NMDOT started work
46 on developing what the safety targets were going to be. They went

1 through a comprehensive statewide stakeholder process to develop these
2 targets. The process also included assistance from FHWA and the
3 various MPOs including this one. We participated in the conversation
4 developing these as well. NMDOT used the stakeholder process to
5 assess the potential safety impacts of the various strategies and methods
6 that were under discussion. And lastly NMDOT worked with UNM
7 to develop the methodologies that were used to create the targets.

8 Now before I get started into the meat of the presentation I just
9 want to say that there are going to be a number of graphs that are going to
10 be a part of this presentation and a lot of numbers, so if at any point during
11 this, feel free to interrupt me, ask me to go back to a previous slide, ask
12 for clarification. Feel free to go ahead and do that because there is a lot of
13 information to take in.

14 But what you're seeing on the slide here is the NMDOT's safety
15 target for the crash fatalities. The statement reads, "Limit the Increase in
16 Total Fatalities to 6.4% from 342.2 in 2015 to 364.1 by December 31,
17 2018." As you can see on the graph, the number of fatalities in New
18 Mexico has been a bit uneven over the past couple of years. There's
19 been a distinct kind of jagged line of variability in the number of fatalities
20 across the state. The five-year moving average you can see there. This
21 was sort of the baseline that the State used to project forward as to the
22 estimated fatalities and that's the base mark that the State utilized to set
23 the performance target. Down here where my cursor is we have the Dona
24 Ana County fatalities for the years that we have, the three most recent
25 years that we have the crash data. We do not have 2016 crash data as of
26 yet. The most current year that we have is 2015. I do want ...

27
28 Pedroza: Madam Chair. Over here.

29
30 Flores: Olga Pedroza.

31
32 Pedroza: May I ask a question?

33
34 Wray: Can I finish this one last caveat before?

35
36 Pedroza: Okay.

37
38 Wray: The caveat that I want to state about all the Dona Ana County numbers
39 that we have here, not just on this slide but on the subsequent slides, that
40 is Dona Ana County in total. That is not the MPO area specific. So this is
41 going to include the fatalities, serious injuries, etc. from portions of the
42 county that are in the El Paso MPO, portions that are in Hatch, etc. that
43 sort of thing. So when you see Dona Ana County statistics, that's for
44 Dona Ana County entirety, not just for the MPO. So I'll pause now for a
45 question.
46

1 Pedroza: Thank you. That was ...
2
3 Flores: Councillor Pedroza.
4
5 Pedroza: Thank you very much. That was part of my question because I want to
6 know how the statistics for Dona Ana County would compare with the
7 graph that we have up on the top. Are they, they sound to be a lot better
8 but you know.
9
10 Wray: These numbers that are down here in the Dona Ana County statistics,
11 they are a part of the '13, '14, and '15 numbers.
12
13 Pedroza: The statewide numbers.
14
15 Wray: Yes.
16
17 Pedroza: Okay.
18
19 Wray: Yes. The statewide numbers, yes.
20
21 Pedroza: Who would be responsible for presenting the statistics just for the Mesilla
22 Valley MPO, Dona Ana County?
23
24 Wray: Madam Chair, Councillor Pedroza. Staff can do that. The issue that we
25 ran into when we were thinking about this presentation is that would take
26 some time for us to pull just the MPO-specific numbers out and we were
27 still working on the best way to go about doing that when we decided that
28 we needed to make this presentation. There is a little bit of a timeline that
29 we're operating under here and I'll get to that later on. But we thought it
30 best to go ahead and start this conversation now and try to narrow those
31 numbers down to MPO-specific numbers later on. So what we have today
32 for you is the Dona Ana County numbers.
33
34 Pedroza: Thank you.
35
36 Wray: Are there any other questions before I move on? Okay. Justification that
37 you'll see in the memo that was provided by NMDOT as well, provided
38 here in the PowerPoint is that five-year average fatalities fell by 7%
39 between 2011-2015 but are expected to rise again in 2016 based on
40 preliminary data. And if you'll indulge me to go back, speaking about the
41 five-year average is what the statement is referring to. The five-year trend
42 line indicates an increase of 6.4% from 2015 to 2018 and this is what
43 NMDOT determined to be the realistic target to set to be in compliance
44 with the Federal Rule. Are there any questions?
45

1 Sorg: Yes. Does DOT explain why there is this variability from year to year?
2 Can they find conditions or reasons why it goes up and down?
3
4 Wray: Madam Chair, Councillor Sorg. To some extent it is just an unfortunate
5 tragic variability in happenstance. There are ...
6
7 Sorg: Coincidental?
8
9 Wray: Beg your pardon?
10
11 Sorg: Coincidental?
12
13 Wray: I said "happenstance" but not, I wouldn't use the word "coincident" but I'd
14 say ...
15
16 Sorg: Okay.
17
18 Wray: Some things just happen that are beyond control. There are certain
19 situations where, and this is exactly the sort of thing that the Safety
20 Projects and Safety Targets are intended to address where there are
21 problems of geometry at a particular location, things of that nature which
22 this entire portion of the law is intended to target and improve in these
23 areas, and so that's exactly the sort of analysis that is being called for on
24 the part of the Federal Government to the recipients of the federal aid, is
25 to improve these numbers. As far as the specific variability that you see
26 over the previous years, I personally am not in a position to be able to
27 answer that question. I would have to literally go through each one of the
28 reports to see what happened where, etc. etc. so ...
29
30 Sorg: I didn't ask you to do it. I was wondering if DOT did it.
31
32 Wray: The University of New Mexico is responsible for the crash reporting for the
33 state. So they do have people who go through the crash reports. That's
34 where the data comes from, that's where the information comes from. We
35 do have access to that for the previous years. Those are given to us. So
36 such information can be assembled and done, that's sort of the whole
37 point of the exercise. It's just it's a time-consuming process.
38
39 Flores: I have a question. I remember talking about Valley and I think it was
40 Molzen Corbin was giving a report and stated that there weren't any
41 fatalities and we all remembered the fatality that took place there, and it
42 was my memory that the State Police were supposed to keep track of the
43 fatalities. So do they keep track of them and then give them to New
44 Mexico?
45
46 Wray: Madam Chair. I'm not familiar with that ...

1
2 Flores: How is that ...
3
4 Wray: Part of the process. I mean they do ...
5
6 Flores: Because I thought that's what I was told, is well they're the ones that keep
7 track of it at the time.
8
9 Wray: I don't know about keeping, I mean they certainly keep the records of the
10 one, in the case of State facilities are the ones making the report but as far
11 as I know all of the aggregation and tabulation, that's the responsibility of
12 the UNM people. But I'll defer to Mr. Murphy.
13
14 Murphy: Madam Chair. My understanding of the process is that all local law
15 enforcement agencies up to and including county sheriffs and the State
16 Police are required to submit their reports annually to UNM who is on
17 contract with the New Mexico Department of Transportation and then it
18 enters a process where they analyze them for inconsistencies, they
19 standardize them, they put them into a geographical computer file which
20 we then get back and then we're able to analyze it spatially with what
21 happened. A lot of times I think, my impression is we remember, for
22 instance it's 2017. If there was a fatality that happened in 2016 it would all
23 be fresh on our minds but the data we're looking at, that's gone through
24 this exhaustive process is 2015. So I think the case for Molzen Corbin ...
25
26 Flores: Is that (*inaudible*)?
27
28 Murphy: On the Valley Drive is the data was just a little bit too old and then the next
29 release, that fatality that everybody remembered was included in that data
30 set because it happened early in the year so we think it was a long time
31 ago but ...
32
33 Flores: Okay.
34
35 Murphy: It takes two years for us to get the data back to start doing an analysis.
36
37 Flores: Okay. Councillor Pedroza.
38
39 Pedroza: I do have a question but I believe that Councillor Eakman had a question
40 ahead of me.
41
42 Eakman: Actually I was just going to comment here that the variables here are
43 almost infinite and so trying to look at a gross number and make a wag on
44 what's going to happen in the next couple of years would be an exercise
45 but pretty futile. Thank you.
46

1 Pedroza: Okay.
2
3 Flores: I'm just going to ...
4
5 Pedroza: Okay.
6
7 Flores: Make a comment and it's kind of similar to yours. I just think our
8 population is so low, and I've said this before, we have such a small
9 population it just seems that you have one bus accident and that's going to
10 throw the numbers way off, or with such a small population, you know a
11 few kids in a car and that year's a really horrible year. We just don't have
12 the numbers that you have on the east coast where those kind of things
13 are going to average out, I would think, mathematically. I just remember
14 taking some math classes and them talking about you needing a certain
15 number in order to have it be valid, and so I worry about that. But anyway.
16 Councillor Pedroza.
17
18 Pedroza: Thank you Ma'am. My question is, is there some way to use these
19 statistics to find possibly those spots that need most change?
20
21 Wray: Madam Chair, Councillor Pedroza. Yes, absolutely. I don't know if you
22 remember but late last year we in fact gave a couple presentations to the
23 advisory committees and to this Committee about the intersections in the,
24 I believe it was mostly within the urban core of Las Cruces. My memory
25 doesn't go back that far. But we did do an analysis, sort of looking ahead
26 to this very conversation that we're starting today, it's going to last over the
27 next couple of months just looking at what intersections in the Las Cruces
28 area are the worst. So the answer Councillor is yes. Yes, absolutely.
29 That's the sort of ...
30
31 Pedroza: Okay. Thank you.
32
33 Wray: Thing that we intend to do.
34
35 Pedroza: And can we look forward to getting, in the foreseeable future, this
36 information so that we can say, "Hey, yes. That's right. The intersection
37 of such-and-such and such-and-such are really prone to more accidents
38 than others," etc. I know that there's a gentleman in my district, District 3
39 who lives right near one particular intersection and he thinks, even though
40 I don't believe it's quite accurate, it may just be the emotional kind of thing,
41 that that intersection is more prone to accidents than others. But I would
42 like to know who do I address that question to?
43
44 Wray: Madam Chair, Councillor Pedroza. Yes. We can certainly bring that
45 information back to this Committee sometime within the very near future.
46

1 Pedroza: Thank you very much.

2
3 Wray: Moving on to the next target, the second of the five, this is the serious
4 injuries target that we're going to discuss here, and here we have a very
5 positive trend line of the number overall is going down along with the five-
6 year average. So that in and of itself, is a good thing to see. The DOT
7 Safety Target reads, "Decrease the Number of Serious Injuries by 15.6%
8 from 1,445.0 in 2015 to 1,219.4 by December 31, 2018." And again we
9 have the Dona Ana County serious injuries statistics there on the slide as
10 well. There are different classifications within the reports about the degree
11 of injury, and so that's what we utilized. We pulled out the highest class of
12 injury. There is still some uncertainty about what specifically the definition
13 of "serious injuries" is but we decided that's probably going to be the best
14 metric and so that's the one that we brought before you today. The
15 background that NMDOT provided for the target-setting is that again the
16 average has fallen by 22.8% between 2011 and 2015. NMDOT
17 anticipates a continued reduction in serious injuries and believes that the
18 1,219.4 is an achievable and realistic target for 2018. I'll pause again just
19 in case anybody has any questions for this target. All right.

20 Moving on to the fatalities per million VMT metric, again you'll
21 notice that this is also a very pronounced irregular line for the absolute
22 numbers. The target statement is, "Limit the Increase in the Fatality Rate
23 to 0.31% from 1.326% in 2015 to 1.330% by December 31, 2018." And
24 the background is that although fatalities are expected to increase in 2018
25 from 2015, NMDOT has determined that the projected fatality rate is an
26 achievable target. And the five-year average for 2018 projections for
27 urban and rural fatality rates were determined to be achievable targets.

28 Now I'll pause at this moment and I do want to go back to the
29 previous slide to sort of feed off of what Madam Chair said a few minutes
30 ago. You'll note that we don't have a local number statistic on this slide as
31 we have for the previous. That's exactly because of what Madam Chair
32 mentioned a few minutes ago about the difficulties in sort of building these
33 mathematical formulas and that we do have a relatively small population in
34 this area that can, a singular event can really throw the numbers out of
35 whack. And so that's the reason why we do not have a specific Dona Ana
36 County local number presented with this particular target statement.

37 And here we have the rate of serious injuries target. Again, positive
38 trend line, the trend line is going down over time. The target statement is
39 "Decrease the Rate of Serious Injuries from 5.597% in 2015 to 4.456% by
40 December 31, 2018." Again the caveat that I explained for the previous
41 target applies here as well, that we do have a small population and
42 averages are difficult to do. The five-year serious injuries fell by 27.3%
43 between 2011 and 2015, and NMDOT continues to anticipate a reduction
44 and so believes that the reduced target is an achievable target by 2018.

45 And this is the last target that was called out by the federal rule.
46 This is the nonmotorized fatalities and serious injuries target. You'll notice

1 unfortunately that these trends are on the rise over the past several years.
2 DOT does anticipate that this is going to continue to rise over the course
3 of time. The target statement is "To Limit the Increase of Nonmotorized
4 Fatality and Nonmotorized Serious Injuries to 228 by December 31, 2018."
5 Part of the reason why the increase is expected is that VMT is starting to
6 go up again nationwide so that there's greater exposure for the vulnerable
7 user and so that's part of the reason why there's an anticipated increase.
8 Again, even though I don't say so these are just the Dona Ana numbers,
9 not specific to the MPO but we do have the bicycle fatalities, which
10 thankfully we did not have any in 2014 or 2015. Then the pedestrian
11 fatalities, which we did have some in each one of the three years that are
12 listed. And then the bicycle injuries and the pedestrian injuries for 2013,
13 2014, and 2015. Again NMDOT expects nonmotorized fatalities to
14 increase in 2018 from 2015. NMDOT determined that the projected
15 number of 228 nonmotorized fatalities is an achievable target for 2018.

16 In conclusion, and this is where I'll sort of discuss the timeline that
17 the MPO is facing, we have to have a resolution setting the targets for the
18 Mesilla Valley MPO no later than February of 2018. That's why staff felt
19 that it was important to go ahead and begin this conversation now. The
20 MPO Policy Committee may choose to endorse the NMDOT targets or set
21 targets of its own. I want to at this point again reference what Madam
22 Chair said about we do have kind of a small population in this area and
23 singular events can really throw things out of whack. If the MPO does
24 choose to set its own target it does need to be cognizant of the fact that it
25 must be realistic in target-setting. If ambitious targets are set and then not
26 met there are punishments in store for those who fail to meet the targets.
27 This is not a situation of "carrot-and-stick." This is only "stick." So in
28 order, even aside from that concern there are also concerns about the
29 level of work that would be involved in the reporting because there's
30 ongoing annual reporting that must be done by an MPO that decides to
31 set its own targets. DOT, for their own work they contract UNM to do at
32 least a portion of it as well as doing work in-house, so the amount of work
33 that would be required of staff would be hard to overstate, I'd have to say.
34 But that is at the decision of this body as to whether or not the MPO
35 wishes to set targets of its own. So that concludes my presentation. If
36 anyone has any questions for me, wants me to go back over a previous
37 slide or look at a previous graph by all means I'm here to.

38
39 Pedroza: I do.

40
41 Flores: Councillor Pedroza.

42
43 Pedroza: Thank you. Are the two Committees, I guess one is Technical Committee
44 and there is a Bicycle and Pedestrian ...

45
46 Flores: Yeah.

1
2 Pedroza: Committees. Are they, do they have any opinions or any suggestions as
3 to how to make it a little bit better, how to make, what changes might be
4 good to reduce accidents and nonmotorized fatalities, etc. etc.?

5
6 Wray: Madam Chair, Councillor Pedroza. Yes I'm sure that they do. While we
7 will certainly be having those conversations in the months and years to
8 come and we will be including the advisory committees in the discussion
9 of this process, this particular process is not so much focused necessarily
10 on specific treatments for specific facilities. This is really more a process
11 of target-setting on a broader, higher level scale as to where we want to
12 go in the future, whether we want to support the DOT targets that they
13 have set or proceed on our own. That's really the specific process that
14 we're trying to examine at this moment in time. But yes. The answer to
15 your question's also yes. Yes. And we will be looking at that as part of
16 our ongoing role as time moves forward.

17
18 Pedroza: Thank you. I think it might be very instructive for our Committee, the
19 Policy Committee, to also learn what kinds of suggestions the advisory
20 committees have. Thank you.

21
22 Flores: Mr. Doolittle.

23
24 Doolittle: Thank you Madam Chair. And if you'll allow, I have a few comments that
25 I'd like to share just on behalf of the Department and to answer a couple of
26 questions that have been asked. Earlier the question was asked, "What's
27 leading to some of these fluctuations and even the rise in fatalities and
28 accidents?" We've seen a substantial increase in truck traffic, specifically
29 the southeast part with the oil boom, so they've had a lot of fatalities and
30 accidents because of that. So that's part of the increase. Distracted
31 driving is another big one, and that's a high priority for the Department for
32 public involvement and try to reduce that. So those are some of the
33 reasons that you're seeing the increases, but specifically some of those
34 spikes have to do with increased truck traffic. One truck causing a major
35 accident, an oil rig or something like that, certainly does affect that trend
36 line. So with that being said, I agree with what Andrew presented.
37 Utilizing the State's targets are probably the most conservative and most
38 realistic targets. If this body were to implement their own based on our
39 low population and we do have one major accident like that, or we have
40 an oil boom or because of the growth in the Industrial Park, you know that
41 filters up into Dona Ana County and the Mesilla Valley MPO and
42 something happens, ultimately we would not meet our targets and those
43 consequences could financially impact this area. So I would encourage
44 this Body to strongly consider utilizing the State targets. Even the El Paso
45 MPO which is bi-state, bi-national is strongly considering ways to

1 incorporate both the Texas targets and the New Mexico targets because
2 they just don't feel it's realistic to develop their own targets.

3 So again I just want to encourage the body to consider that. As
4 Andrew said this is truly an opportunity to establish targets. Once we get
5 the targets established and we start having discussions on where the
6 hotspots are, for instance I was at a presentation just last week at the
7 General Office where we have some software that's statewide, based on
8 data highlights areas on a map in bright red. And so once we establish
9 the targets then we'll start having those exercises on how we focus on
10 those hotspot areas, what specifically can be done to reduce those
11 accidents and injuries and fatalities that are taking place in that area. But
12 by this February 2018 deadline we need to have our targets established.

13 And so that's just my perspective from the Department based on
14 my involvement with the target workshops, what I've observed with the El
15 Paso MPO. The other thing that I want to mention and will just expand a
16 little bit on what Andrew said, is if this MPO establishes their own targets,
17 this staff of four people will be the ones responsible for tracking and
18 reporting on all of that data, whereas if you use the state targets they can
19 just utilize the data that UNM puts together and then their reports that we'll
20 generate. So those are my comments and I'd be happy to answer any
21 questions I can on that, and Jolene's also here so she's been involved too.
22 So thank you Madam Chair.

23
24 Flores: Councillor Sorg.

25
26 Sorg: Yeah. I just want to get clear. When you are asking for, or suggesting we
27 could set targets of our own, are we talking about targets for the state or
28 as targets for our county?

29
30 Wray: Madam Chair, Councillor Sorg. These would be targets for the MPO area
31 specific. It wouldn't even cover the entirety of Dona Ana County, just the
32 MPO area.

33
34 Sorg: Yeah, I don't think we can do that because we don't have any numbers
35 that are separate or unique to our MPO. What you gave us was county-
36 wide and, yeah. I don't think we'll do that. I'm in favor of going with the
37 State.

38
39 Eakman: Madam Chair.

40
41 Flores: Councillor Eakman.

42
43 Eakman: I would really like this not to be an exercise in futility because of something
44 we have no control to produce or to monitor or to overview. Whenever we
45 do set these targets, I would like to see us educate our public on what the
46 targets are for the future. Otherwise they're not going to get any

1 information on this. They're not going to know that anybody's even
2 looking at it. And so rather than pass something as a function, I would like
3 to see us do something with it if we're going to do something with it.
4 Thank you.

5
6 Sorg: I agree.

7
8 Flores: I just have a suggestion. If you would like to do something with this
9 maybe ask Emily Guerra if you could do an interview and just discuss the
10 targets and let her know. And that's some community outreach, so as a
11 way of community outreach besides putting it on our web page. I don't
12 know how many people look things up on the MPO website, but basically
13 just, that's a suggestion.

14
15 Eakman: Well I really think the City and the County both would publicize this
16 through their regular events also. Don't you agree, Madam Chair?

17
18 Flores: I do. I think that's a really good idea.

19
20 Pedroza: I have one other suggestion, if I may. And that is that as we reach out to
21 educate, we review and possibly discuss some of the statistics that we
22 learn from UNM, because if there is indeed an increase in accidents be
23 they serious or fatal or not so serious that it's due to distracted driving, if
24 we could pinpoint where that distraction is most prevalent. I just came
25 from a trip up to Santa Fe and back, and the number of billboards and the
26 number of flashing signs I think have tremendously increased. And I don't
27 know if that is what distracts drivers but I think that that's their object, is to
28 distract drivers and that's the way, paint the billboard. So that would be
29 very very interesting and that might even provide the basis for later on
30 saying that there is some relationship between the flashing billboards, the
31 ones that change and change and change and change, the ones that say,
32 you know, and the reduced safety. And if we have the basis for saying
33 that then maybe we might be able to reduce the number of billboards in
34 specific areas, so I would suggest that we look into that, then include that
35 as part of our education of the public. Thank you.

36
37 Flores: We have one of those signs that changes off of Main, by the way. But
38 anyway. Anyone else? Okay.

39
40 **6.2 Reducing Speeding-Related Crashes Involving Passenger Vehicles**

41
42 Wray: Thank you Madam Chair. Mr. Murphy is now going to present on the
43 NTSB Speed Report.

44
45 Murphy: Madam Chair, Members of the Committee. I'm intending to present on a
46 recently released report from the National Transportation Safety Board but

1 I would like to lead in as one of the rationales of why we're bringing this
2 report to your attention at this time and I think it has to do a lot with the
3 conversations that happened in the previous item. Staff hopes you do
4 decide to support the NMDOT Safety Targets that does not mean our
5 work stops there. What we need to do then is find ways that this MPO can
6 support those targets and the State's efforts in reaching those targets, and
7 we do that through things, like Councillor Pedroza suggested we identify
8 hotspots for collisions, we direct our safety projects to those locations. We
9 also develop standards for what goes on our TIP. When we put
10 something on our TIP we're going to have to show that it does forward the
11 effort to meet those targets. So if you do adopt a resolution supporting the
12 State's targets we're not going to be standing idly by. And I brought this
13 report, put the executive summary in your packets, and planned on talking
14 about it today. I think this is probably an area that I think that we ought to
15 concentrate on.

16 Speeding, why we need to be concerned, I heard it brought up. It
17 was mentioned that when you do have speeding you have more crashes
18 and the crashes are of a more serious nature. You have more fatalities,
19 you have more serious injuries. Those are two specific measures that
20 we're looking to limit or to reduce. We're also going to look at the safety
21 issues and countermeasures that this report suggests and we're also
22 going to look at what we plan or we hope to plan to do further for the
23 Mesilla Valley MPO.

24 So, scope of the part, speeding accounts for many fatalities. Nearly
25 a third of fatalities nationwide are as a result of speeding, and that's
26 looking back though 2015. Looking back at our last two years we're also
27 speaking to the high variability of our numbers. And these are the Dona
28 Ana County fatality rates: 2014, none were attributed to speeding-related
29 causes; 2015 we nearly matched that 31% of the nationwide numbers.
30 And next slide I want to speak a little bit more on that because I think at
31 this level, this number's misleading and this is something that we as an
32 MPO can go out and speak with our leaders in our law enforcement about
33 changing. The crash reports which Andrew had in his presentation pulled
34 items out of that report the "Killed" which is the fatalities, the "Class A"
35 which is what results in the serious ones. As far as factors, what gets
36 reported in that previous slide is what was the top factor. At least the
37 report that we get back from UNM does not list all of the factors. So I went
38 back and I looked through the 18 fatalities in 2014 that weren't speed-
39 related. Six of them the top factor on them was overturned vehicle, so
40 although I don't have the data report that tells me that's speeding-related I
41 can make a guess that it's hard to overturn your vehicle going very slow.
42 So that's one of the things that I think we want to do from an MPO level is
43 work on improving the reporting of the data that gets to us.

44 The definitions of speeding: 1) is exceeds the speed limit, 2) is too
45 fast for conditions and we're aware with driving in rain and snow we need
46 to slow down, but I want to speak a little more to "exceeds the speed limit"

1 and talk a little bit about how our speed limits are set. For the most part
2 the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, or the MUTCD as it's
3 known in shorthand utilizes what's called the 85th percentile to set speed
4 limits and that means they'll go out, conduct a speed study on a stretch of
5 road, and they'll set the speed limit to where 85% of the people would not
6 violate that speed limit. Is that a rational way to set the speed limit?
7 Some people would say, "Not entirely," and there are other factors that the
8 MUTCD allows traffic engineers to utilize such as crash history, presence
9 of vulnerable users, there's kind of a longer list set aside in the safety
10 report that I would like everyone to read at some point, though it's a bit
11 long.

12 What we're doing in the MPO here, for the past three or four years
13 every time we've done a traffic count we've also collected speed data for
14 that roadway segment. And I just kind of hand-picked two different
15 roadways from our area I think that you're most familiar with, Solano from
16 Idaho to Lohman of which we've done a road diet on, and then Sonoma
17 Ranch, Calle Jitas to Northrise which is the area just north of the
18 Community College. I'd like to direct your eyes to the bottom of the charts
19 for both of those charts. On the road diet facility we had 12% of the
20 people exceeding the speed limit, only 2% of them were five miles an hour
21 over and less than 1% went over ten miles an hour over the speed limit.
22 On the other roadway, a fairly wide roadway with multiple lanes, we saw
23 88% of the people over the speed limit. Over half of them were five miles
24 an hour over and more than 17% ten miles an hour. So I think I'd like to
25 put this out as an example where our road design does affect how people
26 drive their vehicles and I think that's one of the things that we can
27 influence, the MPO can influence through the transportation planning
28 process, is that we can build more roadways like the Solano and less on
29 the Sonoma Ranch style and have a result of having fewer fatalities and
30 fewer serious crashes the more roadways we build that are safe.

31 And here's the graph from the report identifying those points. As
32 you increase speed, increases the likelihood of being in a crash and it
33 increases the severity of injuries up to and including death. And this graph
34 is broken down to urban and rural and it shows the speed limit versus the
35 total crashes that were attributed to speeding.

36
37 Sorg: Do we know what the speed limit was in these cases?

38
39 Murphy: If I'm reading the x-axis correctly, the far left is speed limits under 20 miles
40 an hour increasing in increments up to 65 and above to the right.

41
42 Sorg: Oh, that's miles per hour in the bottom.

43
44 Murphy: Yes.

45
46 Sorg: Okay.

1
2 Murphy: Yes.
3
4 Sorg: That is the limit, okay, yeah.
5
6 Murphy: That's the limit for the streets and then these are the fatalities that
7 happened on these speed roadways that were attributed to speeding.
8
9 Sorg: Doesn't say how fast the speeding was?
10
11 Murphy: It does not. Well it's ...
12
13 Sorg: Was it one mile an hour over the limit or was it 25 miles an hour over the
14 limit? Doesn't matter?
15
16 Murphy: Imagine it's from ...
17
18 Sorg: They're all together?
19
20 Murphy: It's from one mile to infinity.
21
22 Sorg: Okay. Thank you.
23
24 Pedroza: Madam Chair.
25
26 Flores: Councillor Pedroza.
27
28 Pedroza: Yes. Another kind of clarification. Who determines whether the highway
29 that's being reported on is rural or urban? Would something like Highway
30 70 have a clear definition?
31
32 Murphy: Yes, Madam Chair, Councillor Pedroza. That determination will be
33 determined whether it happens inside an ...
34
35 Pedroza: The city.
36
37 Murphy: Urbanized zone per the ...
38
39 Pedroza: Or just outside.
40
41 Murphy: Or outside the urban, as you recall I think about two, three years ago this
42 Board went through a process where we did an adjustment to the Las
43 Cruces Urbanized Area Boundary where we brought the airport in and ...
44
45 Pedroza: Right.
46

1 Murphy: Kind of squared up the boundaries. So if a crash happens within those
2 boundaries ...
3

4 Pedroza: I see.
5

6 Murphy: Which this Board helped set, it's classified as urban, or if it happens in the
7 Albuquerque or El Paso's version those are urban as well and if it happens
8 outside of those it's classified as a rural and ...
9

10 Pedroza: May I just ...
11

12 Murphy: And again this is national data so this is the east coast, west coast, and
13 us.
14

15 Pedroza: I just have some personal observations. I drive on Sonoma Ranch
16 Boulevard quite frequently and it seems to me as if there are very
17 consistent and continued efforts to control the speed, and it's true I have
18 seen a great deal of speed and now because of the stop signs and
19 crosswalks and so on and so on and so on, it begins to calm people down.
20 Thank you.
21

22 Murphy: Okay. Moving on. The report also suggested countermeasures, kind of
23 Councillor Pedroza just alluded to, there are engineering, enforcement,
24 education countermeasures. From an MPO perspective we look more
25 towards the engineering ones: Installation of roundabouts can slow
26 speeds, the road diets as our locally-collected data shows slows speeds,
27 and then as I had mentioned I think a lot happens on street design which I
28 think is something that we as an MPO can influence with our member
29 jurisdictions to help us contribute to lower crashes and severe injuries and
30 fatalities.
31 The NTSB report comes out with several recommendations
32 identifying speeding-related performance measures and I think from our
33 aspect what I'd like to do is kind of as we develop our TIP and as we
34 develop our goals and our Metropolitan Transportation Plan we start
35 identifying speeding locations as a priority for a closer look and
36 investment. They also recommend revising the MUTCD which is the
37 process that sets the speeds by the 85th percentile. They're
38 recommending that on a national basis. And I think we need to also keep
39 open communication with the law enforcement officers and the public. I
40 think we need to always stress the importance of collecting data, collecting
41 good data to help us make our decisions and I'd like to recommend a
42 couple of changes to the crash reports where multiple factors are
43 identified, speeding, where they call out alcohol-involved, they call out
44 pedestrian-involved I'd like to see also where they call out speeding-
45 involved because I think that will help the data collection. I think it'd also

1 help us target our investment to the problem locations. And with this I will
2 stand for any questions.
3
4 Flores: Councillor Eakman.
5
6 Eakman: Yes, thank you Madam Chair. Just an observation. We have various
7 entities that seem to keep attention manifested when it comes to traffic.
8 One branch wants to keep traffic moving for the sake of ease, for the sake
9 of economic development, for the sake of commerce. And the other is
10 keeping everyone safe. And that, to me, should be working more
11 collegially than it is. There doesn't seem to be a common focus that ease
12 of access has to come with the responsibilities. I think I've heard other
13 Members here talking about addicted driving and electronic addiction is
14 just as important nowadays as anything else, and so I just wanted to make
15 that comment that we, as government agencies, don't have our ducks in a
16 row when it comes to aggressive policies on these things. We're allowing
17 these tensions to even develop further and we're not doing our part I think
18 in ensuring that safety is always a part of this traffic flow. Just stating.
19
20 Flores: Councillor Sorg.
21
22 Sorg: Thank you Madam Chair. Tom, do you have a list of problem streets in
23 the City here for speeding?
24
25 Murphy: Madam Chair, Councillor Sorg. We are working on doing that. The
26 software system that we input the speeding data is not the same software
27 system that we're able to look at things geographically so I need to devote
28 some staff time to getting that inputted. I would like to do that. It is my
29 goal to do that. I do not have that as of yet.
30
31 Sorg: So you only go by what your measurements with your devices tell you.
32 You don't go by what people observe? Human observation? Or do you?
33
34 Murphy: Councillor Sorg.
35
36 Sorg: To identify problem locations, I mean. That's what I'm getting at here.
37
38 Murphy: On the previous slide I put up that I wanted to do more data-driven things
39 so that we have a body of evidence that we've been dispassionately
40 collecting it, that we know that it's actually not influenced by human
41 perception.
42
43 Sorg: Very good.
44
45 Murphy: And I think that makes some better things. I think if I could kind of tell,
46 make my point, jump back to some of Councillor Eakman's points is I

1 think, we've heard that people feel that economic development is helped
2 by having more traffic flow faster and if I could be a little bit facetious with
3 that I think the only business that that helps is auto body shops.
4
5 Sorg: Yeah.
6
7 Murphy: There's really no data showing that having consistent high-speed traffic ...
8
9 Sorg: Right.
10
11 Murphy: Is good for the economy.
12
13 Sorg: Well what about safety?
14
15 Murphy: I think it's quite clear on the safety that the higher that speed a crash
16 happens at the greater the likelihood that: 1) the crash happens in the first
17 place and 2) that there'll be worsening injuries ...
18
19 Sorg: Yeah.
20
21 Murphy: With that crash in the higher speed.
22
23 Sorg: Well that's what I was getting at. People observe vehicles as they drive
24 along or if they watch them go by as you're trying to get out into a street
25 seem to be going very fast. And I understand there's a lot of
26 perception/misperception too in many cases. But well I tell you if you talk
27 to people that's in the top five complaints they have about certain streets
28 in the City.
29
30 Murphy: And that's ...
31
32 Sorg: And I can give you those streets if you ever want them, yeah.
33
34 Murphy: And that's, I think that's part of our public education process is that ...
35
36 Sorg: Yeah.
37
38 Murphy: We need to ...
39
40 Sorg: Yes.
41
42 Murphy: We need to educate them. I'm not un-guilty of this. I also am addicted to
43 speed sometimes when I'm driving. I need to sometimes be more
44 cognizant of other users on the streets.
45
46 Sorg: Yeah.

1
2 Murphy: It is not important that I get to work 30 seconds quicker or 15 seconds
3 closer, more actuality.
4

5 Sorg: And that's all it amounts to.
6

7 Murphy: And it's a society ...
8

9 Sorg: Just a few seconds.
10

11 Murphy: And as a society we're addicted to driving fast and perhaps we need to
12 start working on changing that.
13

14 Sorg: You lose that with age, by the way. Most people do. Thank you very
15 much.
16

17 **6.3 BPAC Recommendation on Design Standards** 18

19 Flores: Are we ready to move along to 6.3: BPAC Recommendation on Design
20 Standards?
21

22 Murphy: Okay. And I will turn this over to Mr. McAdams to go through this item.
23

24 McAdams: Thank you Tom and good afternoon Policy Committee. Today we'd like to
25 discuss about the National Association of City Transportation Officials and
26 Urban Bikeway Design. If you look at, these are all elements to make
27 streets safer and to reduce speed as well. The use of the NACTO Urban
28 Bicycle Design Guide by all member jurisdictions was recommended by
29 the BPAC and the City of Las Cruces Bicycle-Friendly Task Force. A goal
30 of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is to design or redesign facilities
31 that encourage walking and biking to create healthy and safe
32 communities. The NACTO Guide provides cities with practical, current
33 solutions and additional tools to create streets that accommodate all
34 modes of traffic in an urban setting. The NACTO Guide has specific
35 recommendations to create safer streets by slowing traffic by various
36 means such as diversions, chicanes or roundabouts, and narrow travel
37 lanes. NACTO specifically says that a lane width of ten feet is
38 recommended. The narrower the lanes the slower the traffic. The MPO
39 staff is urging that the MPO Policy Committee consider recommending the
40 Guide for adoption by the implementing Members of the Policy
41 Committee.

42 What are the basis of the guidelines? They're based on experience
43 of best cycling cities in the world. They're for urban environments as
44 opposed to a lot of the AASHTO and MUC which are rural-based. They
45 are permitted under the Manual on Unified Traffic Control Devices which is
46 the standard for all cities. In August 2013 the FHWA Memorandum

1 officially supported the use of the Guide. The Guide treatments are used
2 in international and many cities around the United States. The Guide
3 discusses several different types of forms or elements. One would be
4 bicycle lanes. Another would be cycle tracks. The other would be
5 intersection treatments, bicycle signals, also markings, and then bicycle
6 boulevards. The Guide is just that, it's a guide for giving engineers and
7 other people implementing a tool, like a reference. "Here's where we'd
8 look at bicycle lanes," you know different types of facilities for bikes.

9 One thing we like to point at is the buffered bike lanes which we
10 now use on Alameda, Boutz, and we've also planned for Valley to have
11 buffered bike lanes as well, and also Dripping Springs has buffered bike
12 lanes. What they are continual bike lanes with a buffer that's to protect
13 bicyclists from, or give an additional comfort level so that bikes don't
14 conflict with cars. And the narrowing of the lanes is usually associated
15 with the retro finishing of bike roads and streets so that also has the effect
16 of slowing down traffic. And if you noticed in the parking zone, the outside
17 but the buffer is so that there'll be enough space it will be called (*inaudible*)
18 by the bikes too.

19 Bicycle boulevards, one of our favorite topics in the MPO, I hope it
20 is yours, one of our top ten. We've been recommending for many years a
21 highly-built bike boulevard. And bike boulevards are streets with low
22 traffic volumes and speeds. Often they're designated 25 miles an hour.
23 They're designated and designed to give bicycle travel priority. And you
24 can do this through use of signs, pavement markings, say "This is bike
25 lane," etc. speed and volume measures such as chicanes, such as
26 roundabouts, such as diversions.

27
28 Sorg: Is there a bike boulevard in Las Cruces?

29
30 McAdams: There is not.

31
32 Sorg: There isn't one here.

33
34 McAdams: We would like to have ...

35
36 Sorg: Could we do one on Main Street?

37
38 McAdams: Well we could consider any street for a bike boulevard, I think.

39
40 Sorg: Okay.

41
42 McAdams: Yeah. It's really, it's different bike boulevard but our favorite what we have
43 recommended, it's not our favorite, it's recommended in the Transportation
44 Plan is Hadley for a bike boulevard. Yes. Hadley and Las Cruces. One
45 thing when we're talking about creating safer environments, if we have
46 safer environments for bicycles that's being safe for everybody, for the

1 vehicles and for walking too. Often you heard the term "traffic calming"
2 and that is really to reduce speeds. And we can do that through a variety
3 of means. One is through the chicanes that we said, traffic diversions,
4 small little roundabouts can also do, parking can also reduce speeds too.
5 If you ever noticed you're in places might be parking, often only one lane
6 can pass so those are good examples. Wider streets, as Tom referred to
7 generally increase traffic. People will naturally go the designed speed. It
8 doesn't matter if you have the speed limit at 35 or 25, if the design of the
9 road is 45, people will naturally gravitate toward that if there's not other
10 disincentives. A result of having the diversions, the roundabouts,
11 chicanes, etc. would be we think, not we think, we know that would result
12 in fewer, less severe collisions between motorized vehicles and bicycles.
13 But they've proven that when you go up to 25 miles an hour as far as
14 collisions with bicycles and pedestrians it goes upward and before you get
15 25 an hour generally people survive but after that it's like almost
16 exponential between 35, 55, when 35 it goes up very rapidly and people
17 don't survive. So slower speeds benefits pedestrians, bicycles, and
18 vehicles as well.

19 Here's some discussion questions. What is the applicability of
20 NACTO Guide to the jurisdictions of MPO? What are some of the
21 advantages of incorporating the Guide into the design practices of the City
22 of Las Cruces, Town of Mesilla, and Dona Ana County? And what is the
23 relationship between the Guide, the reduction of speed, and pertaining
24 reduction in bicycle collisions with motorized vehicles? I want to put a little
25 thing, so a footnote to this. These are not ordinances. You can have
26 ordinance maybe adopted. These are guidelines for the City of Las
27 Cruces, Town of Mesilla, the DOT, and the County as additional tools. We
28 can go to this and we say, "What is, how should we build bike lanes?" It is
29 also complementary with Complete Streets as well. So we think it's a very
30 positive thing. In addition we're urging all member jurisdictions to become
31 NACTO members as well. So I stand for questions Madam Chairman.

32
33 Flores: Olga Pedroza.

34
35 Pedroza: Thank you. I'm not sure that what I'm about to say, it seems to me that
36 when I've been driving on certain roads, say, I'm going to just remember
37 one right now, Triviz. It'll have a bike lane and then suddenly, almost
38 without any forewarning, it says "Bike Lane Ends." I think that needs to
39 get taken away. I think that needs to be repaired, fixed, or removed. I
40 can't imagine being on a bike and suddenly your lane just ended.

41
42 McAdams: Madam Chair, Councillor Pedroza. We agree entirely. We're looking at
43 that, of course. If I said "no" that'd be sort of contrary to what our
44 message is. Of course we're looking at that. What we're looking at,
45 there's two different things. One, we're looking at through the planning
46 process, through our Long-Range Plan which we'll be updating fairly soon,

1 also through the BPAC and the Active Transportation is directly looking at
2 that and the MPO's participating in that. So you're exactly right and it is a
3 complaint by bicyclists alike. So hopefully through the ATP, through our
4 planning process, and the City Council as well we can address these
5 issues. Thank you very much.
6

7 Pedroza: Can you tell me what the NACTO Guide would do in relation to this?
8 Would they support it or bring it out explicitly or, what would being part of
9 the NACTO Guide help us to do?
10

11 McAdams: Madam Chairman, City Councillor Pedroza. The NACTO standards is
12 generally related to design standards for different type of facilities. It is not
13 directly, and the bicycle standards, the Urban Guide does I think, but the
14 bicycle standards is not exactly addressed continuity issues. Of course it's
15 inherent in Complete Streets and the NACTO philosophy. But what the
16 continuity issue or connectivity issue is not directly related to the design
17 standards. So what they do is kind of like, "We know about this and we
18 address it in other ways and looking at our plans through connectivity."
19 But these are like, "Give us how wide should a bike lane be," "What is
20 approved for buffer bike lanes," "We want to do cycle tracks here is how
21 these are to be designed." Right now we don't have that. The standards
22 we've used are MUTC standards which are for rural areas and not for
23 urban. So this is really, and this is what we emphasize the BPAC and
24 hopefully the TAC as well. These are not standards. They're not, you
25 have to address, these are like, "If you want to do this, this is the way you
26 do it." And really we've had a really good reception from engineers from
27 the Dona Ana County, from the City of Las Cruces, and the DOT also
28 uses the NACTO's Guide. So it's not something that said, "You have to do
29 this." It's like, "Here's additional tools you can do," and most of the
30 engineers I have talked who said, "Yeah, this is a great thing. We should
31 have this so we can," now we can say, "What do we base our decision?"
32 "Well here's this, how we do it." So eventually we'd like to see some of
33 these adopted into the City and the County ordinance as far as bicycle
34 width etc. and other things.
35

36 Pedroza: Thank you very much. I agree. And one of the things that might possibly
37 come before the Council soon, maybe, we don't know exactly, is a practice
38 that I've seen in other cities where they have stands of bicycles and the
39 person can borrow it, use it, and then deposit it at his or her destination.
40 So for instance there's a park and people are walking along the park and
41 want to get to a bus depot or something like that, or they can borrow a
42 bike, put in whatever, I don't know how much money, and then take that
43 bike, ride it over to where their destination is, and they will have bicycle
44 racks there where the person can then deposit his bicycle, or not his or
45 her but the borrowed bicycle. But in order for that to be safe we have to

1 have the streets equipped to be safe. So anything that you can do in that
2 behalf will be very much appreciated. Thank you.

3
4 McAdams: Madam Chair, Councillor Pedroza. We have, the first time I think we
5 introduced bike sharing, was what you're talking about, was introduced in
6 the Short-Range Transit Plan. You remember that discussion. There
7 have been other discussions also about that with the City and other
8 officials about bicycle sharing. There are some efforts right now to look at
9 bicycle sharing but I think they're in the preliminary stage. So again, El
10 Paso, several, Albuquerque has bicycle sharing. There are, we have to
11 look at what's appropriate for our area too. Which is, we're not
12 Albuquerque, we're not El Paso. But there are smaller cities around the
13 nation that do have bike sharing programs. It's not exactly, it's not a
14 panacea. If you have bike stands they don't necessarily people use them,
15 and I agree with you. Before you look at bike sharing or in tandem you
16 have to say, "Are bicycle comfortable to drive?" When you do bike
17 sharing programs it will not necessarily, if the streets are not safe people
18 won't use the bicycles. Thank you very much.

19
20 Sorg: Madam Chair.

21
22 Flores: Councillor Sorg.

23
24 Sorg: Thank you. Good presentation. These are some of the things that we
25 should be conscious of all the time. But I wanted to make a comment on
26 the encouraging of walking and biking for everyone, as many people that
27 can or want to. We need to make the locations that you walk and bike to
28 for the public, that travel distance that they can do it, you know the travel
29 distance they can walk or bike to such as schools and commercial
30 shopping, jobs, and parks and recreation. We have to have all those
31 within that walking, or as many as possible I should say, within walking or
32 biking distance. And therefore I'm just trying to emphasize the fact that we
33 need to have our Comprehensive Plan a mixed development plan where
34 there are as many different zonings within an area that allows people to
35 work and play and go to school and shop within that biking and walking
36 distance from their homes. Okay. Thank you.

37
38 Flores: Thank you. And thank you for your presentation. So I think, you're done,
39 right?

40
41 McAdams: Yes. The end. Thank you.

42 43 **6.4 NMDOT Update**

44
45 Flores: Okay. We'll move on to 6.4: New Mexico DOT Update. Mr. Doolittle.

1 Doolittle: Thank you Madam Chair. I'll go over a few of our projects that we have
2 ongoing right now.

3 The North Main/Spitz/Three Crosses project, we're continuing to
4 work on the Three Crosses area, hoping to start paving within the next few
5 weeks which is good because that's really all the public sees, is the stuff
6 that's on top, not necessarily the utility work underneath. But at least then
7 it'll appear we're making some progress. They continue to work on the
8 curb and gutter on Main Street. We are still working with the City on their
9 storm drain and water utility work throughout the project. Councillor Sorg
10 every month asks about our public meeting. I finally got those confirmed.
11 They are going to be standard, every third Thursday of the month. So our
12 next one is the 21st. Those are always at our Solano Project Office.

13 The next project is the US-70 roadway widening that we've got over
14 the hill on Organ. That was a safety project where we're widening out for
15 the continuation of the designated bike route over the pass. They're
16 working on the concrete wall barrier/shoulder widening on both sides but
17 they're expected to be finished by the end of the calendar year. I believe
18 they're a little bit ahead of schedule but as we start moving into the fall and
19 winter you never know what it'll do up on the hill with weather, but
20 Mountain States is doing a good job trying to get that finished before
21 weather impacts them too terribly bad.

22 Our 17th Street signal there at Picacho is finished. So those
23 signals are operational. We're working with the contractor on a few small
24 punch list items but for the most part that project is complete. Seems to
25 be working real well with the new turning lanes and then allowing those
26 buses to get in and out safely.

27 Last month I mentioned our two capital outlay projects. They're
28 sidewalk projects, one in Tortugas south of town and then one in Thorpe
29 in Dona Ana. Both of those they just continue to work on. All it is is curb
30 and gutter and sidewalk. They're 60-day projects so about three months'
31 worth of work. We should be finished completely sometime in November
32 with both of those projects. But real small but really good projects for the
33 community to allow some alternate modes of transportation to those
34 convenience stores and whatnot that are at those intersections. Those
35 are all of our ongoing projects that we have in the area.

36 The other one I wanted to mention to this Board specifically is the
37 University/I-25 interchange. We're actually having our kickoff public
38 meeting on September 28th. We're going to manage that one just like we
39 did our first one on the Valley Drive, so Molzen Corbin, our consultant for
40 the design is going to have a live social media public meeting scenario.
41 So what they do is it's televised over the television, we'll actually have a
42 small portion that's prerecorded, kind of round table discussion and then
43 after that it will be open to live comments and interaction with the public
44 through social media, a phone call, and that public meeting will take place
45 on the evening of September 28th. We'll start sending out a little more
46 public information through our PIO and through Molzen Corbin as we get a

1 little bit closer. But I'm excited about that project. It's going to improve the
2 safety of that interchange tremendously. Right now the tentative design is
3 very similar to Lohman so Triviz will run under the University Avenue and
4 tie directly into the Pan Am parking lot so you'll have direct access from I-
5 25 directly onto and off of I-25 from the Pan Am parking lot. And then if
6 you're headed into town or headed east on University to Centennial for
7 instance, that access will all still be there. So I'm excited about this project
8 but our kickoff meeting is September 28th. As we move through the public
9 involvement I'll certainly keep this Board involved. I know last month
10 Councillor Pedroza was asking about making sure you all are involved in
11 the medians and the public involvement. So this is the initial step to that.

12

13 Pedroza: Thank you. May I ask a question?

14

15 Flores: Yes.

16

17 Pedroza: Thank you very much Trent. In terms of people who do not have a facility
18 with social media, is there going to be an in-person meeting as well and if
19 so where and when?

20

21 Doolittle: Councillor Pedroza. I don't know that for sure. I believe last time we did
22 this they did set up a room separate from the public meeting panel where
23 people could either call in or text those questions. I don't have ...

24

25 Pedroza: Okay.

26

27 Doolittle: Those specifics but I'll work on trying to get that.

28

29 Pedroza: But if you would I would certainly appreciate it and making the phone
30 number if it is by phone because a lot of people specifically in my district
31 are not that familiar with, maybe they don't have computers, etc. so they
32 don't have access to social media, Facebook and, but they certainly do
33 have phones, be they cell phones or what ...

34

35 Sorg: Land line.

36

37 Pedroza: Land lines, thank you. And, but if they don't have the phone number to
38 call then they still are going to be left without a voice. So if you could let
39 us know that, even if it's before the meeting for the MPO because
40 September 28th is coming pretty quick. I would appreciate it if you could
41 e-mail us. Thank you.

42

43 Doolittle: Madam Chair. If I may just address a couple of quick things. So last time
44 they did this, typically we have face-to-face public meetings.

45

46 Pedroza: Yeah.

1
2 Doolittle: And in the past our attendance has been very low.
3
4 Pedroza: Yeah.
5
6 Doolittle: We don't get a whole lot of participation at those meetings. They did this
7 through social media on the Valley Drive project and the involvement that
8 keeps track of who's logging into the website, it keeps track of who's on
9 the Facebook page and the involvement and just the participation itself
10 was tremendous.
11
12 Pedroza: Okay.
13
14 Doolittle: So we're going to try it again and see what happens. I believe we even
15 showed it through the City of Las Cruces' local TV channel.
16
17 Pedroza: Sure.
18
19 Doolittle: But again I'll get those details from Molzen Corbin and I'll be sure to
20 forward it to the Board through the MPO staff.
21
22 Pedroza: Thank you very much. And congratulations.
23
24 Doolittle: Thank you.
25
26 Flores: Councillor Sorg.
27
28 Sorg: Thank you Madam Chair. Couldn't you do both at the same time? Is that
29 what you're planning to do? And if so where's the location of in-person?
30
31 Doolittle: My understanding, Councillor Sorg. Last time they had, and it may have
32 even been here, is they allowed people to come in in person with a
33 moderator at the face-to-face but with the panel itself it was a separate
34 facility only because what they do is the questions are sent in, it runs
35 through a moderator who reviews them to determine which panel member
36 would best have the information related to that question, and then that
37 person would respond live through the telephone or Facebook. But it was
38 separate from the panel itself only to allow the process to work. I didn't
39 have the ability to sit in on it last time so this'll be new to me as well. I
40 don't have a face for TV so I delegated to somebody else.
41
42 Sorg: Your face is great.
43
44 Doolittle: But last time I believe they did have a face-to-face but it was separate
45 from the panel itself and the participants in the live meeting submitted their
46 questions through the moderator at that location.

1
2 Sorg: Okay. Well the panel would still be here in Las Cruces or ...
3
4 Doolittle: Yes.
5
6 Sorg: Okay. Then I would like to get an estimated time when you think both the
7 Valley Drive project and the University/I-25 project might begin
8 construction.
9
10 Doolittle: Valley Drive is currently out for bid right now, I mean out for, what's the
11 word I'm looking for, advertisement, is out for advertisement right now.
12 Jolene, do you happen to have the specifics for Valley and University?
13 Sorry, I'll bring up the person who knows everything.
14
15 Herrera: Afternoon. Jolene Herrera, NMDOT. Valley Drive is scheduled to let I
16 believe this Friday is when bids open. It's out for advertisement so
17 probably two months after that we'll have a contract and then it's probably
18 going to start in spring of 2018. University we anticipate having the design
19 completed August of 2018 and so then it would have to go through the bid
20 process so we're looking at probably construction starting fall of 2019.
21
22 Doolittle: Just to be a little more specific, if Valley Drive lets Friday, Jolene's right.
23 We'll have a contract in two months, I believe that project has a 30-day
24 ramp-up time, 30-calendar-day ramp-up time. September, October,
25 November, so we very likely would start construction early 2018, not even
26 as late as spring.
27
28 Sorg: February? March?
29
30 Doolittle: My guess is it'll probably be January. If you do ...
31
32 Sorg: January.
33
34 Doolittle: Thirty-days from the award of contract that puts us between Thanksgiving
35 and Christmas. Once we get a contractor on board, I would approach
36 them and Federal Highway to see if we could hold off until January so as
37 not to interfere with Christmas but I won't know that until we have a
38 contractor on board.
39
40 Sorg: And the intersection, thank you of Main and Solano won't be finished by
41 then, will it?
42
43 Doolittle: No. Absolutely not.
44
45 Sorg: So you'll have two projects going on at once.
46

1 Doolittle: Correct.
2
3 Sorg: Okay and then fall of 2019, that's, Valley Drive should be done by that
4 time, wouldn't you think?
5
6 Herrera: Madam Chair. Can I correct that? I'm sorry. I meant spring of 2019 is
7 when we would start that project.
8
9 Sorg: The University would, spring of 2018?
10
11 Herrera: 2019.
12
13 Sorg: Oh, spring of 2019, not fall.
14
15 Herrera: Yeah, I'm sorry. I misspoke. Not fall, it would be spring of 2019.
16
17 Sorg: Okay.
18
19 Doolittle: Correct. If we have an August letting we'll have a contract in October and
20 we'll have a 30- or 60-day ramp-up time just based on the size of that
21 project, so it'll be midwinter or very early spring of 2019.
22
23 Sorg: So when, the contract for Main and Solano interchange there, when is that
24 scheduled to be finished?
25
26 Doolittle: That will be summer of 2018.
27
28 Sorg: June?
29
30 Doolittle: Councillor Sorg. I don't know ...
31
32 Sorg: May?
33
34 Doolittle: Specifically. I'll have that information for you next month once I get an
35 updated schedule ...
36
37 Sorg: April?
38
39 Doolittle: From the contractor. No, it, that was scheduled for I believe a one-year
40 period so we're talking summer. But again it's a weather working day so it
41 depends on what the weather does to us ...
42
43 Sorg: Yeah.
44
45 Doolittle: Over the course of the winter.
46

1 Sorg: Understand. Does the contractor get any reward for finishing early?
2
3 Doolittle: No. There is only a ...
4
5 Sorg: Penalty.
6
7 Doolittle: Penalty for finishing late. It's basically the same contract stipulations that
8 we had on North Main.
9
10 Sorg: Yeah. Does DOT ever consider a policy of rewarding for early finishing?
11
12 Doolittle: We have the capabilities of doing that and we have considered it. For
13 instance the I-10/I-25 interchange had an incentive for finishing earlier.
14 The problem with that is that comes out of the same budget as
15 construction so if we implement an incentive to finish early, ultimately you
16 have to find savings on the project for reduced construction.
17
18 Sorg: Okay. There's another project. You're going to resurface Highway 70
19 between Elks Drive and Del Rey. When was that supposed to be done? I
20 think we had it on the TIP.
21
22 Doolittle: I'll refer to Jolene.
23
24 Herrera: Councillor Sorg. That project is scheduled to let in December of 2018,
25 open for bid in December of 2018.
26
27 Sorg: Okay.
28
29 Herrera: But we anticipate that one possibly being funded earlier it just depends on
30 what happens ...
31
32 Sorg: What the money is.
33
34 Herrera: In Santa Fe. But it's a relatively small amount of funding.
35
36 Sorg: Yeah.
37
38 Herrera: And so typically those projects are funded early. So hopefully it will be
39 earlier than that but it's scheduled right now for December 2018.
40
41 Sorg: What process are you going to do there? Are you going to scrape the top
42 off and put a new surface on?
43
44 Herrera: Yeah.
45
46 Doolittle: Councillor Sorg. That's, it's a mill and inlay project ...

1
2 Sorg: Yeah, a mill and inlay.

3
4 Doolittle: For all of the pavement in that area, to include the ramps at the
5 interchange. We are going to incorporate some bridge work, some bridge
6 rehab work just to address some of the seals and the laminated concrete,
7 small stuff. My hope is a majority of that work will be done at night. We
8 may have to have some closures of the ramps with detours either at Dona
9 Ana or Lohman depending on what we have to do with the bridgework
10 itself, but I'm hoping that a majority of that work specifically on US-70
11 pavement will be done at night.
12

13 Sorg: Okay. Thank you. Thank you Madam Chair.

14
15 Flores: Anyone else? Okay. Seeing none.
16

17 **7. COMMITTEE AND STAFF COMMENTS**
18

19 Flores: We'll move on to Committee and staff comments. Does anyone from the
20 Committee want to make any comments? I just have one and that is I
21 would like to invite everybody to Mesilla's fiestas we have this weekend on
22 Saturday and Sunday. We have a parade that starts at 11:00 a.m. At
23 noon on the plaza we have opening ceremonies and one great thing about
24 our fiestas is we don't charge for them so. Yeah, Saturday and Sunday
25 and with the band generally, I don't remember the bands that we're going
26 to have playing. So should be a good time. You're all invited. And so any
27 comments from the staff?
28

29 Wray: Yes Madam Chair. The City of Las Cruces is currently pursuing an Active
30 Transportation Plan. MPO is supporting them in this. Today as a matter
31 of fact, at tonight's Farmers' Market the consultants are going to be there
32 from 5:00 to 9:00 to engage the public. Mr. Loya's currently handing out
33 the survey. All of the Committee Members are invited to attend.
34

35 Flores: Okay.
36

37 Wray: Believe that was our only comment.
38

39 Flores: All right. Thank you. Any comment from the public? Seeing none I'll, oh,
40 actually we have a comment from Councillor Sorg again.
41

42 Sorg: Just a question. This Active Transportation Plan, can we distribute this?
43

44 Wray: I believe the consultant's going to be distributing the survey but I guess if
45 you want to give it to someone, sure.
46

1 Pedroza: When do we want it back? Who would they give it back to?

2
3 Wray: I guess the survey would be returned to the Community Development
4 Department and we'll get it to the correct people or you could give it to us
5 and we can ...

6
7 Pedroza: Okay.

8
9 Sorg: So in other words we could mail this out if we wanted to, an e-mail,
10 electronic copy?

11
12 Wray: Certainly. I don't see any reason ...

13
14 Sorg: Check on that.

15
16 Wray: Would that ...

17
18 Murphy: Councillor Sorg. I am uncertain about the timeline on that so I would say
19 go ahead and try it. Actually at the next meeting that I have to run off to I'll
20 probably find that timeline but I would say go ahead, definitely disseminate
21 it to your constituents and return it to us and we'll make every effort to
22 make sure that City staff and the consultant get the information that you
23 give us.

24
25 Sorg: Okay. Thank you.

26
27 Flores: Okay. Anyone else?

28
29 **8. PUBLIC COMMENT**

30
31 **9. ADJOURNMENT (2:32 PM)**

32
33 Flores: All right. Well then I will adjourn.

34
35
36
37
38
39 
Chairperson

