

MEETING MINUTES

Technical Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 22, 2012

1:30 p.m.

Room 113, County/City Building

Members Present: Miki Esposito, Roger Figard, Randy Hoskins, Public Works/Utilities/RTSD; Marvin Krout, David Cary, Planning; Don Thomas, Doug Pillard, County Engineering; Brian Praeuner, StarTran; Rick Thorson, Health; Randy Eldorado, Tom Goodbarn, Nebraska Department of Roads; Justin Luther, Federal Highway Administration; Barb Fraser, Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Others Present: Rick Haden, Felsburg Holt & Ullevig; Thomas Shafer, Susie Filipi, Holly Lionberger, Engineering Services; Mike Brienzo, Michele Abendroth, Planning.

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

Review and action on the draft minutes of the February 9, 2012 Technical Committee meeting

Figard moved approval of the February 9, 2012 meeting minutes, seconded by Cary. The motion carried unanimously.

Rotation of the Technical Committee Chairs

Figard moved to appoint Esposito as the Chair of the Technical Committee, seconded by Cary. The motion carried unanimously.

Review and action on revisions to the FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program

Brienzo stated that there are five proposed amendments to the FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program. The first amendment is to add a Bridge Repair project over Salt Creek for the state that is located on state Link-55X (North 56th Street). The state requested this amendment and there are no issues with fiscal constraint. The next two amendments are for City of Lincoln projects; the first is for the rehabilitation of the Sheridan Boulevard "Penny Bridges" using federal transportation enhancement funds; second is for a project to redesign and extend the eastbound on-ramp from North 14th Street onto Cornhusker Highway (US-6). The last two amendments are from City of Lincoln, Parks & Recreation; first is renovation of Pioneers Park Trail to replace existing asphalt with concrete using Recreational Trails Program funds; second is for the design and construction of Stonebridge Trail at 14th & Alvo. This is to be a 10' wide, concrete bicycle/pedestrian trail connecting the North 14th Street Trail with the Alvo Road Trail. This trail will begin at North 14th Street and Humphrey Avenue and proceed through the Stonebridge neighborhood and end at the north entrance of Kooser Elementary at Alvo Road (Total 1.25 miles). This project will use federal transportation enhancement funds.

Figard moved approval of the five proposed amendments, seconded by Thomas. The motion carried unanimously.

Briefing on the South 14th/Warlick Blvd/Old Cheney Road Intersection project RFP and design competition process

Holy Lionberger briefed the Committee on the South 14th Street, Warlick Blvd and Old Cheney Road intersection project. They are in the initial phases of this project. The RFP just went out this week. This is a challenging location as there are a lot of competing interests with pedestrians, bicycles, properties/businesses, as well as storm drainage issues. They are encouraging some friendly competition between firms which they are hoping to identify some unique solutions. From the RFP, they will select three of the firms, and they will contract with each of the three firms for \$125,000. This is the first time they have used this process. They anticipate giving each firm three months to come up with a preliminary design. They will then present that to the selection committee. They also plan to have an open house to showcase the firms' designs. They are requesting three main services from the firms: preliminary design and cost analysis, a visual simulation model, and public involvement. The goals are to enhance safety, increase capacity, minimize right-of-way impacts and impacts to existing properties, to be cost effective, to be multi-modal, to incorporate sustainable elements, and to make aesthetic improvements.

Lionberger explained the schedule for the process as follows: the RFP was sent out last week, proposals are due mid-April, interviews are the first of May, the notice to proceed will be mid-June, a public open house in early November, right-of-way acquisitions and design in 2013, and construction in 2014.

Lionberger noted it is possible that two different firms could provide the same solution. If they see that two firms are going toward the same solution, then they will select one of the two firms. They feel that this process is a good fit for this area.

Cary asked what would happen if two different firms are presenting different solutions and the City feels the solution is a combination of the two. Lionberger stated that they will base the decision on how the process went with each of the firms and if there were any issues during the process.

Krout asked if there will be a cost/benefit analysis done for a traditional solution. Shafer stated that if the traditional solution is the best solution, they will choose that one. Esposito asked if the firms will be asked not to provide a traditional model. Lionberger stated that they do not want to pigeon-hole any of the firms. Shafer added that three firms have looked at this, and none of them have proposed a traditional model. The traditional model may be the most cost effective, but it is important to not forget about the benefit.

Figard commended staff for having the courage to use a creative, alternative approach.

ElDorado asked if there has been any interest with the architects. Lionberger stated that there has been a great deal of interest from the firms. She hopes that there is interest from regional firms as well.

Cary asked if this process is more expensive than a traditional approach. Shafer stated that they will spend no more money than with a traditional approach. He believes they will get a better project with this approach.

Esposito asked if the simulation could be standardized. Shafer noted that it is possible someone could change the headway, for instance, which would make their model better, but these are professionals, and they want to be treated like professionals. They will put their trust in these professionals. Eldorado commented that they are professionals, but it is a fiercely competitive field as well.

Other topics for discussion

Brienzo stated that he wanted to brief the Technical Committee on a corrective action the Technical sub-committee on programming and funding was working. They have been reviewing and documenting the MPO's **Project Prioritization and Selection Process** which is one of the two remaining federal corrective actions from 2009. This states that the MPO must document the project selection criteria and process used for the development of the TIP. This process has been identified and documented in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Technical Report. But the process linking the LRTP to the TIP needed to be made clear. The sub-committee has met and discussed this process and thinks the draft document they have developed will make the process visible and address this correction action. He distributed the document identifying the process drafted by the sub-committee and requested comments from the Committee on this document. They will bring this back to the Technical Committee at its next meeting.

Hoskins asked if FHWA has reviewed this process. Luther responded that FHWA is planning to review the document soon.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

*** Please note that these minutes will not be formally approved until the next meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Committee. ***

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