

Cheyenne Metropolitan Planning Organization

Policy Committee Meeting

June 22, 2020

Virtual Zoom meeting

1:00pm



Attendance:

Voting Members:	Marian Orr, Chair Buck Holmes Tom DeHoff	City of Cheyenne, Mayor Laramie Co. Commissioner WYDOT, District Engineer
Non-Voting Members:	Charles Bloom Dave Bumann Steven Call Bryan Cawley Tom Cobb Juli Monahan Vicki Nemecek Mark Wingate	City Planning Director Laramie County Public Works FHWA FHWA City Engineer WYDOT Planning City Public Works WYDOT Planning
Staff:	Tom Mason Jillian Harris Christopher Yaney	MPO Director MPO Senior Planner MPO Senior Tech
Guests:	Craig Russell	Russell-Mills Studio

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Mayor Orr.

1. **Approval of the December 19, 2019 minutes and the March 26, 2020 Written Update.**
Moved by Mr. DeHoff and seconded by Commissioner Holmes. Motion passed.

2. **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Mayor Orr called for nominations for Chair. Traditionally the position goes back and forth between the County and the City. Commissioner Holmes suggested that since he and the Mayor are both up for re-election this year, they leave the officers as is, and revisit electing new officers until after the general election. Motion for Chair. Mr. DeHoff nominated Mayor Orr and Commissioner Holmes seconded. Motion passed.

Vice Chair: Mr. DeHoff nominated Commissioner Holmes as Vice Chair and Mayor Orr seconded. Motion passed.

3. **Presentation and Approval of the *Municipal Complex Pedestrian Routing Plan***

Mr. Mason introduced Craig Russell from Russell-Mills and said that this plan is complete. It has gone through the City Planning Commission with their approval and will be introduced at the July Governing Body to approve and certify the Resolution. Chair Orr asked what Mr. Mason's preference would be. Mr. Mason recommended that we hear the presentation and

then after the Governing Body approves the Plan, vote for approval at the next Policy meeting in September.

Mr. Russell said that the project started in 2018 and is intended to be a guiding document when the site renovations occur for the Civic Center and the Municipal Building. The project was paused after some initial stakeholder input, because the Civic Center was developing a plan for renovation. The four considerations to keep in mind are Civic Uses, Parking, Senior Activity Center and Pedestrian Connections. Early on we realized that along Thomes Ave. there is a civic “spine” that connects civic uses so the goal would be to enhance the intersections and the streetscape. The memorials could be all integrated into a Memorial Plaza, landscape could be trimmed and integrated more. The drainage should be more natural and lower maintenance.

The goals were to enhance connections to the Municipal Complex and beyond, increase overall pedestrian safety, comfort and function including better lighting, and establish a municipal complex character. The north parking lot had three different configurations with more spaces and bus parking if the city storage building was removed. Public input and surveys favored the parking lot with more parking and the public space with a large central plaza. The character of amenities was shown. A simple enclosed stairwell was desired at the northwest corner of the Cox Parking Structure. The front entrance of the Civic Center would be enhanced with drop-off parking moved west.

Phase 1 would be around the Civic Center and Phase 2 would be around the northside of the municipal building and the north parking lot. Each Phase would cost about \$1.1 million.

Commissioner Holmes was happy with more parking spots available for the area. Mayor Orr asked where the funding would come for these Phases. Tom answered that back when Mr. Briggs was the City Planner, the thought was a future 6th Penny initiative might pay for the proposed renovations.

Mayor Orr gave a heads up to consultants concerning the response by City Council to this plan. Background was given regarding the State of Wyoming lost revenue stream from coal and the Legislature will not likely be giving Cheyenne the \$4 million they have in the past. Future 6th Penny will be centered on health, safety and welfare items. Fire stations are a priority. Mr. Mason said the MPO will take this to the Governing Body and then come back to Policy for a vote.

Commissioner Holmes moved to acknowledge receipt of the plan. Mr. DeHoff seconded. Motion passed.

4. Presentation and Approval of the FY `20 - `23 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment

Mr. Mason said that the MPO is in the year to do amendments and not a full TIP. Both the Technical and Citizens’ committees recommended approval by the Policy. The red text explains what was changed. It will be either the year, the amount or both. He asked the Committee for questions as he went page-by-page.

Mr. Cawley said that WYDOT Director Reiner announced budget cuts will be forthcoming. Has anyone from WYDOT reached out to the MPO Policy Committee? Mr. DeHoff said

discussions are ongoing and there have not been any decisions yet. The TIP as presented has no changes.

Comm. Holmes moved to approve with the caveat that funds are available. Mr. DeHoff seconded the motion. Motion passes.

5. Budget Amendment to the FY `20 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Mason said the main change to the UPWP is the MPO has now hired a senior planner and the salary for Ms. Harris will be added for four months. Mr. Mason added \$3,000 for AVI to finish the final touches to the Whitney Plan. There is a new plan to add to the UPWP; a Greenway trail and drainage plan for the East Park connection to the LEADS open space. The plan will design drainage structures under the UPRR track because the current drainage uses an historical arched culvert for and in the future, it could be used for the Greenway.

Maintenance Parts and Hardware was increased to match expenditures. Undesignated is now \$0 and decreased Walterscheid and Ave. C to add funds to Greenway project. The proposed order of the plans will be the E. Greenway first and then Converse Traffic and Drainage. Mr. Mason showed a map of the proposed area for the Greenway underpass of the UPRR. It is anticipated that grants could be used for most of this proposed work.

Commissioner Holmes mentioned to Mr. Mason that when the East Park area was in the County, they had a FEMA floodplain study done. Mr. Mason said they were aware and would use the study. Mr. Wingate asked if there was a change in scope or change order in design? AVI needed more money to format and complete the document. It is only an estimate.

Mr. DeHoff asked about the priority of the remaining projects and does he think the MPO will be able to do all projects this year. Mr. Mason responded that the MPO will do its best to get them started but there may be one that does not get started. Mr. DeHoff asked if the Committee is okay with the priorities. Mayor Orr asked Mr. Cobb to weigh in. He said that Converse might be moved to first. He has had initial conversation with UP regarding the GW plan and it will take a long time to get their clearance. Mr. Bloom said there is a lot of development on the Converse corridor. Mr. Mason said that both plans would be started very soon.

Mayor Orr gave more information on the bipartisan bill passed in Congress called the Great American Outdoors Act where there will be billions of dollars available for all levels of government. The committee and their staff need to be on the look-out for outdoor recreation grant opportunities.

Mayor Orr called for a motion. Commissioner Holmes moved and Mr. DeHoff seconded to approve the budget amendment. Motion passed.

6. Update on Planning Projects

a. Whitney Plan

Mr. Cobb reported that he will be done this week with the Plan for Whitney Road. Then AVI will take another week to finish their part.

b. Connect 2045 - Master Transportation Plan Update to PlanCheyenne

Mr. Mason introduced Allison Fluitt from Kimley Horn to give the update. She stated that Kimley Horn has been hard at work on major initiatives: Recommendations Development Report, a second round of Public Engagement to get feedback on public priorities and refining the project goals and project prioritization.

The Eight Goal Statements are: Safety, Growth Integration, Choices, Efficiency, Connectivity, Resiliency, and Maintenance with supporting statements that help clarify the goals.

After the goals, they went into development of recommendations. It includes a wide breadth of recommendations ranging from livability principles to larger travel modes with infrastructure recommendations like roadways and intersections, bikeways and pedestrian facilities and transit. They are drawing from previous plans as well as the public and the travel demand model.

They are looking beyond local transit to interregional transit. New Transportation, Safety, and particular emphasis like Travel and Tourism and Resiliency. What is the impact of tourism and how can the transportation system better facility that industry? What is greatest impact to the community with widespread flooding. Freight was also looked at and emerging technologies like micro-mobility and connected transportation and autonomous vehicles. Policy development will consider how to deal with unincorporated enclaves that will have positive results for the area.

The second round of public involvement was during COVID and was done entirely online using the visually appealing MetroQuest survey. They received 84 overall participants and 1,300 different data points with 220 written comments. The survey asked people the importance of the different goals and tradeoffs. Budget is finite and we must make decisions on where to spend the money. Results showed the public wanted a balance of projects and a balance in funding those. Allison said they are working on project prioritization process to be used in a financially constrained plan. The prioritization is focusing on roadway capital projects. There have been prioritization of transit and bike and pedestrians with past Transit and Greenway Plans. For Urban and Rural projects, the weighting values will be the big difference for prioritization.

Next steps will be arriving at the Project Prioritization List and the Financially Constrained plan. Draft document will be arriving in August with final adoption of the plan in December of this year.

Comm. Holmes asked how far along are they on creating the documents. Allison and Tom said the Community Assessment is on the MPO webpage, and the Recommendations Development Report is being editing and will be available soon.

7. Update on current and upcoming projects

- a. *City of Cheyenne* - Mr. Cobb gave the update. The City is just about done with 20th Street from Evans to Bent and Pershing Blvd from Pioneer to Evans. Finishing up Ridge Rd. and Dell Range intersection; and working on Converse Ave. north of the VA to Jr. League parking lot, replacing curb, gutter and sidewalk. Walterscheid south of 5th and Deming with a curb and gutter, sidewalk and mill and overlay. Kennedy Rd. has a new wearing course and waiting for City crews to do striping. Rue Terre north of Sam's Club entrance up to Frontier Mall Dr. is getting a wearing course. Next year is 5th St. bridge replacement and Yellowstone and Dell Range intersection realignment and concrete paving. Mr. Bloom reported that the City Planning Department is working hand-in-hand with the Deputy City Engineer on the Reed Ave. Corridor Rail Project to meet with the public and to get input on zoning changes to match desired uses.
- b. *Laramie County* - Tom read the note that Mr. Bumann left: The county is doing 20 miles of chip seal; County Rd 213 and 164. Bidding out 5 miles of Railroad Road for complete rehabilitation and paving. County crews are repairing potholes, signs, and miscellaneous road work.
- c. *WYDOT* - Mr. DeHoff reported that the new Chief Engineer is Mark Gillette. The STIP meetings are coming up in mid-July. Mr. Morton reported that I-25 has three contracts going on now continuing into late fall. Contractors don't have to shut down for Frontier Days but may have some traffic control for the Thunderbirds. Continuing with slab repair on I-80. The Central and Warren structures over UPRR are continuing through late summer. Happy Jack Rd. Gate 2 signal systems starting soon. Chip seal on WYO 210 in mid-July. District doing epoxy striping. Next year I-25 bridge rehabs and signal system replacements for Lincolnway and Evans and Pershing and 8th to let this fall.
- d. Mr. Mason wanted to add that the Environmental Assessment for the I-25 and I-80 interchange is complete and available for review on the MPO website and a hard copy is in our office. The MPO Facebook page had some comments on the I-25/ I80 project which WYDOT may want to respond to.
- e. Commissioner Holmes reported that the Cheyenne Airport got CARES act money to repave the east/west runway next year.
- f. Tom introduced Steven Call from FHWA filling in for Walt Satterfield and Jillian Harris the new senior planner for the MPO.
- g. Brian Cawley reported on the Highway Trust Fund status. Background funding from receipts are: 59% gas tax, 25% diesel tax, truck and trailer sales 12%, heavy vehicle use tax 3% and truck tire sales, 1%. Two separate accounts: Highway Acct. is made up of FHWA, Federal Motor Carriers Admin, National Highway Safety Admin and Office of the Secretary of Transportation.
- h. The Transit Account is what FTA administers from. Over the last 12 years, there has been spending annually of \$12 billion more than the receipts are taking in. The shortfall is made up by the general transfers into the fund. The President's 2021 budget estimated

that the Highway Trust fund will be out of money by the end of 2021 or spring of 2022. With the current decrease in travel, the latest projections are that it could be out of money by this fall. It means to us that the Safety Cash Management strategy kicks in when there is a \$4 billion deficit so the cash balance in outlay must align with input.

8. Other Business

- a. Next meeting: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at the Commissioner's Conference Room or Zoom.*